



**ASIA JOB INDEX Q2 2015**  
A TRUSTED SOURCE ON ASIA'S JOB MARKET

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ROBERT WALTERS

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# ROBERT WALTERS ASIA JOB INDEX Q2 2015: ASIA AT A GLANCE

As more multinationals establish themselves in the region's key markets, recruitment advertising levels increased year-on-year for core operating functions such as IT, accounting & finance and HR. The key emphasis across most industries was on streamlining their recruitment processes to secure the best professionals in the market as well as strengthening retention strategies to prevent losing top talent to competitors. With a positive 11% year-on-year increase in job advertising volumes, the employment market remained largely candidate-driven. In addition, the most sought-after professionals were those who displayed strong communication and leadership skills.

## KEY HIGHLIGHTS OF THE QUARTER:

# +11%

Overall increase in job advertising volumes compared to Q2 2014

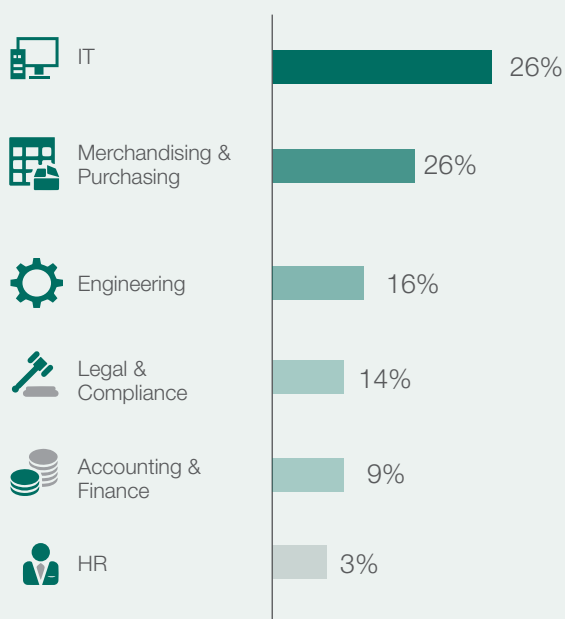
# +26%

The largest growth in job advertising from 2014 was seen in the IT sector as e-commerce and mobile applications became increasingly popular



The merchandising and purchasing sectors also saw a notable rise in job advertising numbers due to the rise in multinationals establishing their sourcing hubs in Asia

## PERCENTAGE CHANGE BY PROFESSION Q2 2014 VS Q2 2015



Talent attraction and retention remained a key priority for hiring managers across Asia as they continued to face the challenge of recruiting in increasingly candidate-driven markets



# CHINA: ACTIVE HIRING IN DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY



Arthur Wang  
Managing Director  
China

China overall  
**+4%**

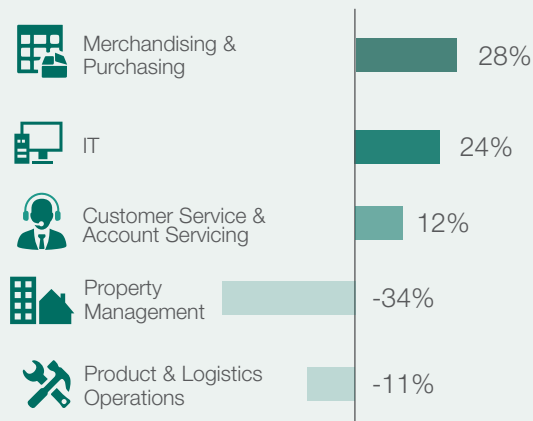
Annual  
growth in job  
advertisements

**“As China continues to focus on building a service-led economy, the market is developing at a more cautious and stable pace. This is reflected by the modest annual increase in job advertising volumes in Q2. Heavy industries, such as construction and property, might see a further slowdown as the government seeks to fully utilise vacant buildings. However, the food and beverage, healthcare and medical services as well as environmental sectors will potentially see further growth due to a strong demand from the country’s rising middle class and an ageing population. The digital technology industry in particular will also see more active hiring, due to the government’s ‘Internet Plus’ strategy to drive economic growth by integrating internet technologies with manufacturing and business. Hence IT and bilingual professionals with regional experience will be highly sought-after as more local companies expand overseas and multinational companies set up regional offices in China.”**

## MARKET COMMENTARY

- China’s position as a global sourcing centre continued to drive the demand for merchandising and purchasing professionals, with the number of job advertisements up 28% year-on-year. The quality management function has become increasingly important as companies sought to improve product quality.
- IT professionals remained highly sought-after as companies expanded their IT centres to enhance product and service offerings, leading to a 24% annual growth in job advertisements.
- Customer service and account servicing job advertising volumes rose by 12% as companies responded to increasing demand for better service quality. The growth also reflected China’s transition towards a more service-based economy.
- The real estate sector remained relatively quiet due to the oversupply of properties along with a weak demand for new houses. As a result, there was a 34% annual drop in job advertising for property management roles.

### PERCENTAGE CHANGE BY PROFESSION Q2 2014 VS Q2 2015



# HONG KONG: DIVERSIFIED ECONOMY SUPPORTS STEADY GROWTH



Matthew Bennett  
Managing Director  
Greater China

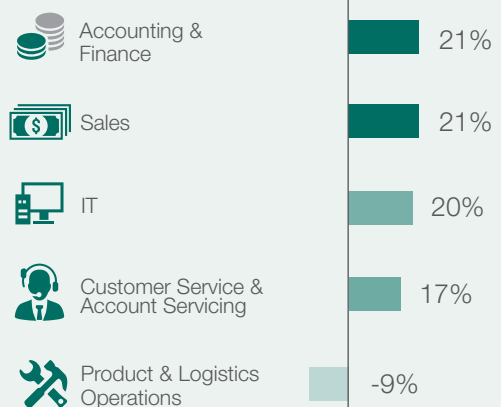
Hong Kong overall  
**+9%** Annual  
growth in job  
advertisements

**“We saw a steady increase in the number of job advertisements in Hong Kong this quarter, which can be largely attributed to the city’s diversified economy. The slowdown in luxury retail and export trading led to a drop in hiring, particularly in sectors such as product and logistics operations as well as merchandising and purchasing. However the overall recruitment market outlook remained positive, with active hiring seen in the accounting and finance, sales and IT sectors. Hong Kong remains the preferred gateway to China for many businesses. China’s economic growth, although in relative terms slower than previous years, will continue to benefit the city. We expect the optimistic market sentiment to continue through to the second half of the year.”**

## MARKET COMMENTARY

- Job advertising within the accounting and finance sector grew by 21% year-on-year, as companies sought to transform their finance function to better support decision making by hiring professionals with strong communication and stakeholder management skills. Internal auditors were also in high demand to help mitigate risks under the tightening regulatory environment.
- Intense competition for strong sales professionals to develop new businesses and increase revenue led to a 21% growth in the number of job advertisements for sales roles.
- Developments in big data and social media created a strong demand for IT professionals, with job advertising volumes up 20% year-on-year. IT security specialists, developers and programmers were highly sought-after due to the continued growth in cloud, mobile and application technologies.
- The slowdown in some European markets and the Chinese economy has weakened consumer demand and led to a decrease in exports in Hong Kong. As a result, we saw a 9% drop in job advertising for product and logistics operations roles.

### PERCENTAGE CHANGE BY PROFESSION Q2 2014 VS Q2 2015



# JAPAN: IMPROVED BUSINESS CONFIDENCE ADDS JOBS



David Swan  
Managing Director  
Robert Walters  
Japan & Korea

Japan overall  
**+26%**

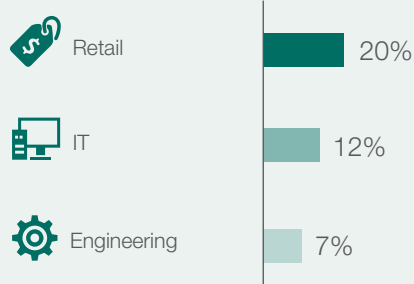
Annual  
growth in job  
advertisements

**“Japan saw strong growth in the number of job advertisements in Q2, as companies regained their confidence following last year’s sales tax hike. The weak Yen remained a key driver of active hiring within the export-driven manufacturing sector, especially for automotive companies and related industries such as spare part suppliers, as well as industrial machinery and electric device manufacturers. In particular, engineers were in high demand due in part to the creation of technical centres in Japan. New market entrants as well as companies expanding their operations in the country also added new headcount in the IT, HR as well as finance and accounting functions. With Japan’s job vacancies reaching the highest levels for the first time in 23 years in May, finding talent has become an increasing challenge for companies. As such, we saw a corresponding rise in demand for HR specialists in talent management and acquisition.”**

## MARKET COMMENTARY

- The FMCG space saw a strong demand for sales staff and business development managers due to a recovery in consumer sentiment. This has contributed to a 20% growth in the number of retail job advertisements annually.
- IT job advertising volumes rose by 12% from a year ago, as companies strengthened their presence on social media and digital platforms. System engineers and project managers were also in high demand due to increased business activity in this area.
- Improved profits at Japan’s major manufacturers helped stimulate the hiring activity for automotive companies and related industries. These companies created new roles and replacement positions, with engineering job advertisements up 7% year-on-year.
- Expanding companies and new market entrants sought HR specialists in talent management and acquisition to identify and retain professionals with appropriate skill sets. Bilingual accountants were also in high demand, especially within multinationals.

## PERCENTAGE CHANGE BY PROFESSION Q2 2014 VS Q2 2015





# MALAYSIA: TALENT ATTRACTION REMAINS KEY PRIORITY



Sally Raj  
Managing Director  
Malaysia

Malaysia overall

**+9%**

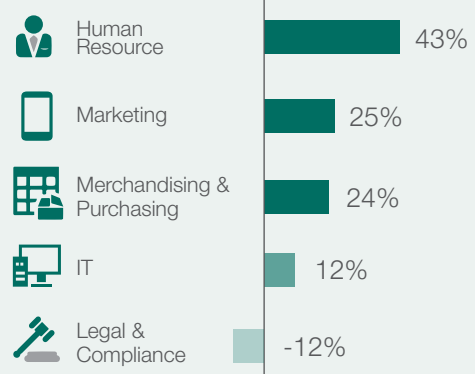
Annual  
growth in job  
advertisements

**“Employment in Malaysia saw a better Q2 after market apprehension around the GST implementation in April cooled off. Generally, positions which were put on hold in Q1 also saw fruition this quarter due to the lesser economic tensions. On the upside, the FMCG and consumer industries remained fairly resilient to the GST implementation as Malaysians accustomed themselves to the price hikes rather quickly. We also saw increased recruitment activity within the shared services space among accounting and finance professionals, as many of them had clocked in two years’ work experience and felt it was time to explore other job opportunities. The Malaysian market however faced more challenges: the largest two being the fall in crude oil prices which had a direct impact on the country’s export economy as well as the weakened Ringgit. These affected investor confidence, and hence a majority of hires were replacement roles or a result of expansion within existing companies as opposed to demand from new entrants.”**

## MARKET COMMENTARY

- In efforts to stem the talent brain drain, companies tightened acquisition and retention policies with more flexible employee benefits. This led to a notable 43% yearly growth in job advertising for HR professionals, particularly those specialising in talent management as well as compensation & benefits.
- The drive from multinationals to centralise purchasing functions in Malaysia fueled the demand for procurement professionals to achieve cost efficiency, increasing advertising for such roles by 24% annually.
- As e-commerce continues to grow and develop, businesses strengthened their back office technology infrastructure to cope with the increasing demand. This drove an increase in advertising volumes for IT jobs of 12% year-on-year.
- Recruitment in the traditionally active legal and compliance sector dropped 12% annually as a result of market stabilisation and low attrition rate in the industry.

## PERCENTAGE CHANGE BY PROFESSION Q2 2014 VS Q2 2015



# SINGAPORE: RECRUITMENT LED BY DIGITISATION



Toby Fowlston  
Managing Director  
Southeast Asia

Singapore overall

**-3%**

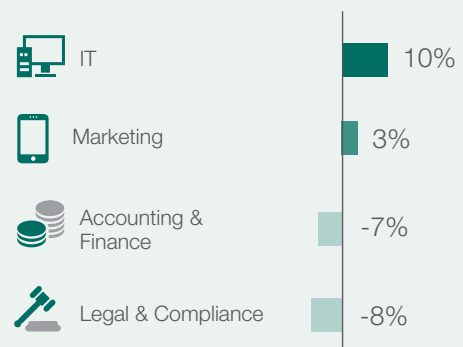
Annual  
growth in job  
advertisements

**“The annual dip in job advertising this quarter did not come as a surprise. What we have seen is a softening in the investment banking market, which has resulted in some banks downsizing and off-shoring to cheaper locations. However, the positive atmosphere in other industries such as marketing and IT should not be overlooked. Due to the surge in e-commerce and mobile applications, candidates with the relevant skill sets are seeing multiple job opportunities. Hence, senior decision makers need to be more involved in the recruitment process to ensure they make swift assessments and decisions to secure the best professionals. Singapore remains the gateway to businesses in Southeast Asia due to its sound infrastructure and will continue to attract multinationals in the commerce industry.”**

## MARKET COMMENTARY

- More companies have started to increase their investment in digital technology in a bid to stay connected with their clients. As a result, IT job advertisement volumes saw a 10% increase year-on-year with the corresponding demand for skilled IT professionals.
- This growth in the digital space has also increased job advertising by 3% annually for marketing professionals. Talent with sound online experience in e-commerce, social media and consumer media consumption were specifically sought after.
- The decline in investment banking activity has also affected traditionally strong sectors such as accounting and finance as well as legal and compliance. These industries saw a weaker quarter compared to 2014 as seen by the 7% and 8% dip in annual job advertising.

## PERCENTAGE CHANGE BY PROFESSION Q2 2014 VS Q2 2015





# SOUTH KOREA: NEW ENTRANTS INCREASE JOB OPENINGS



Duncan Harrison  
Country Manager  
South Korea

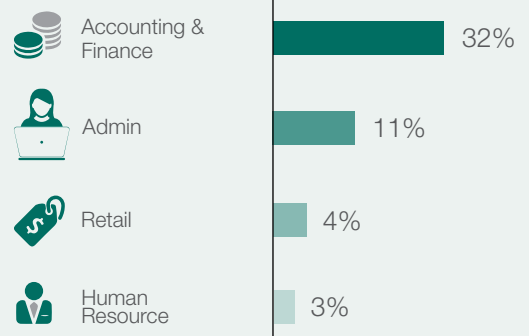
South Korea overall  
**+17%** Annual  
growth in job  
advertisements

“South Korea saw strong levels of recruitment activity in Q2, which was evidenced by a 17% annual growth in the number of job advertisements. Foreign companies continued to enter the South Korean market in the wake of newly signed free trade agreements. Accounting and finance professionals as well as HR specialists have been in particularly high demand. However, due to the outbreak of Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS), some sectors such as retail and hospitality suffered a temporary slowdown in recruitment levels during June, with a number of companies putting hiring on hold. For the next quarter however, we expect recruitment activity to remain buoyant amongst international companies operating in Seoul.”

## MARKET COMMENTARY

- Job volumes for accounting and finance professionals rose by 32% from a year ago. An increase in new market entrants created many job openings for finance and office managers across all industries. Companies also hired more finance staff to deal with increased regulation.
- The retail sector showed signs of picking up after a slow 2014. Strong hiring demand by luxury brand operators contributed to a 4% rise in job advertising volumes, although the outbreak of MERS slowed things down with the increasingly influential Chinese tourists postponing trips to the country.
- HR professionals with recruitment experience were in high demand due to active hiring amongst international companies in the South Korean market. Companies also actively sought HR specialists capable of dealing with the labour unions - which remain a powerful force in the country.

## PERCENTAGE CHANGE BY PROFESSION Q2 2014 VS Q2 2015



# ROBERT WALTERS ASIA JOB INDEX Q2 2015: METHODOLOGY

Robert Walters is an award-winning business and one of the world's leading professional recruitment consultancies with offices in 24 countries and regions. The Asia Job Index tracks advertisement volumes for executive appointments across the leading job boards and national newspapers in the following:

## China

51job.com  
ChinaHR.com  
Efinancialcareers.com  
Jobchina.net  
Linkedin.com  
Zhaopin.com

## Hong Kong

Classified Post  
Recruit (Tuesday, Friday edition)  
Cpjobs.com  
CTgoodjobs.hk  
Efinancialcareers.com  
Jobmarket.com.hk  
Jobs.gov.hk  
Jobsdb.com.hk  
Linkedin.com  
Monster.com.hk

## Japan

Daijob.com

## Malaysia

The Star  
Efinancialcareers.com  
Jobstreet.com.my  
Linkedin.com  
Monster.com.my  
Mystar.com.my

## Singapore

The Straits Times  
Efinancialcareers.com  
Jobscentral.com.sg  
Jobsdb.com.sg  
Jobstreet.com.sg  
Linkedin.com  
Monster.com.sg  
ST701.com.sg

## South Korea

Incruit.com  
Jobkorea.co.kr  
Peoplenjob.com/home

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## NOTES FOR EDITORS

Robert Walters is the leading professional recruitment firm in the Asian market and currently has a network of offices covering China, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, Singapore, South Korea, Taiwan, Thailand and Vietnam.



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BRAZIL  
CHINA  
FRANCE  
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HONG KONG  
INDONESIA  
IRELAND  
JAPAN  
LUXEMBOURG  
MALAYSIA  
NETHERLANDS  
NEW ZEALAND  
SINGAPORE  
SOUTH AFRICA  
SOUTH KOREA  
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