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DIRECT MARKETING HIRING PLANS SOFTEN, FINDS BERNHART ASSOCIATES DM EMPLOYMENT SURVEY

July 17, 2007 — Direct marketers expect fewer new hires this summer compared with spring, according to the latest employment survey by Bernhart Associates Executive Search, LLC., the Owatonna, MN-based executive search firm.

"There was also a small increase in the percentage of companies planning staff cutbacks," said Jerry Bernhart, president of Bernhart Associates. "Overall, the numbers show a slight softening in the employment outlook for direct marketers this quarter."

Bernhart said 61 percent of the respondents said they will be adding to staff during the current third quarter compared with 66 percent last quarter, while 28 percent are forecasting no change. Bernhart said 7 percent plan to reduce headcount, up from 3 percent last quarter.

The remainder said they were unsure about their hiring plans.

"We also asked about the ease or difficulty companies are having finding qualified candidates," said Bernhart. "Survey results showed 26 percent are having a 'very difficult' time, unchanged from the second quarter."

Bernhart added that the supply-demand pendulum has shifted decisively to the candidate's side of the fence. "Nearly all of the respondents said they are having some degree of difficulty finding qualified candidates."

Bernhart said customer service was listed as the position that will be in strongest demand this summer, followed closely by direct marketing managers and sales support.

Past survey results can be found in the Direct Marketing Association's [Statistical Fact Book](#).

A total of 112 companies responded to the survey, which was emailed to a random sample the week of July 8th.

Companies interested in being added to the Bernhart Associates quarterly direct marketing employment survey should send an email to survey@bernhart.com, with "Opt-In" in the subject line.

About Bernhart Associates:

Bernhart Associates Executive Search, LLC is a leading and nationally recognized direct marketing search firm, owned and managed by Jerry Bernhart. The Bernhart Associates Direct Marketing Employment Survey, conducted quarterly, has become the most widely followed and quoted employment report in the direct marketing industry and is published annually in the Direct Marketing Association's *Statistical Fact Book*, the most comprehensive publication of facts and trends in the direct marketing industry. Bernhart is a frequent speaker at DMA conferences and has written dozens of articles for leading direct marketing publications. He is a Charter Board Member of Data University and is also owner of the Internet job posting site www.directmarketingcareers.com.

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