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Direct Marketing Hiring Outlook Reflects Economic Landscape

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Owatonna, MN - Direct marketers may expect more layoffs, hiring freezes and cutbacks in hiring until at least Spring, according to the first 2009 Employment Outlook Report, based on findings from a recent study conducted jointly by the Direct Marketing Association and Bernhart Associates Executive Search, LLC.

"Each of our key employment indicators are at all-time lows, with almost half of all participants telling us they currently have a hiring freeze," said Jerry Bernhart, who has been conducting quarterly employment reports for the DM community since 2001. "The worsening economic climate is taking its toll on direct marketers just like everyone else."

Among those responding, 21% said they will be adding to staff during the first quarter of 2009, down from 31% last quarter. The percentage of companies planning to reduce staff rose from 17% last quarter to 20% this quarter, and 48% report they currently have a hiring freeze, up from 34% last quarter.

When asked when they plan to lift their hiring freezes, nearly two-thirds said they don't know.

Bernhart said that despite all of the economic pain, direct marketers appear to be doing better than the U.S. economy as a whole.

"According to the latest Employment Outlook Survey by Manpower Inc. in December, 16% of U.S. employers said they anticipated an increase in their staff levels during the first quarter of 2009, compared with 21% among direct marketers who responded to our study."

"A closer look at our numbers also shows that while quarter-to-quarter changes in planned staffing and hiring freezes are both sharply deteriorating, layoffs are going up at a much more moderate pace," said Bernhart. "All of this suggests that direct marketers are being spared the massive job cuts that we're seeing in some other sectors of the economy."

Bernhart also observed that among companies planning to hire this quarter, new jobs will out-number replacements 5-to-1.

"Recent published surveys show that many businesses are actually planning to increase their direct marketing budgets in 2009 while reducing their spending on less targeted advertising campaigns, and I think that is helping to ease the blow," said Bernhart.

A total of 264 companies participated in the detailed employment study, which was emailed in mid-January to a combined list of DMA members and past participants of the Bernhart employment survey.

Complete survey results, with expert commentary on direct marketing hiring trends by Jerry Bernhart, can be found in the 2009 Employment Outlook Report. This report will include information on hiring patterns within the direct marketing arena, new employee compensation, bonuses, and incentives used to attract new hires. This report can be ordered via the NMOA Bookstore. <http://www.nmoa.org/catalog>

In 2008, direct marketing accounted for approximately 10 percent of total U.S. gross domestic product, employing more than 10 million people in the United States.

Results of past Bernhart Associates employment surveys can be found in the DMA's *Statistical Fact Book*. The 2009 Edition of DMA's *Statistical Fact Book* is scheduled for release in February 2009.

Companies interested in participating in the next quarterly Bernhart Associates Direct Marketing Employment Survey should send an email to survey@bernhart.com with "Opt-In" in the subject line.

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About Bernhart Associates:

[Bernhart Associates Executive Search, LLC](#) is owned by Jerry Bernhart, a leading and nationally recognized **direct marketing recruiter** and sought after speaker on key direct marketing talent management issues. The Bernhart Associates Direct Marketing Employment Survey, conducted quarterly and now in its 8th year, 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*. Bernhart has written dozens of articles for leading direct marketing publications and is currently writing a book on direct marketing jobs and careers.

About Direct Marketing Association (DMA)

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The Direct Marketing Association (www.the-dma.org) is the leading global trade association of businesses and nonprofit organizations using and supporting multichannel direct marketing tools and techniques. DMA advocates standards for responsible marketing, promotes relevance as the key to reaching consumers with desirable offers, and provides cutting-edge research, education, and networking opportunities to improve results throughout the end-to-end direct marketing process. Founded in 1917, DMA today represents more than 3,400 companies from dozens of vertical industries in the US and 48 other nations, including half of the Fortune 100 companies, as well as nonprofit organizations.

In 2008, marketers - commercial and nonprofit - spent \$176.9 billion on direct marketing, which accounted for 52.1 percent of all ad expenditures in the United States. Measured against total US sales, these advertising expenditures generated approximately \$2.057 trillion in incremental sales. Last year, direct marketing accounted for approximately 10 percent of total US gross domestic product. Also, there are today 1.6 million direct marketing employees in the US. Their collective sales efforts directly support 9.3 million

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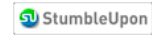
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