



# DIRECT

 PRINT THIS

Powered by 

 Click to Print

[SAVE THIS](#) | [EMAIL THIS](#) | [Close](#)

## Nearly Half Of DM Firms Plan Staff Increases: Bernhart

Jan 20, 2010 1:42 AM

The first quarter of 2010 will see the job market for direct marketers loosen. Nearly half (46%) of them plan to add staff, compared with 30% last quarter. Just over one quarter anticipate hiring freezes, down from 45% in fourth-quarter 2009, according to the latest employment trends survey from Bernhart Associates Executive Search LLC.

Most of the hiring will be done by suppliers, followed by agencies, 37% of which foresee adding headcount during the quarter. Marketers plan the fewest number of new hires, the survey found.

The percentage of companies planning layoffs during the first quarter dropped slightly, to 7%. Not one agency or supplier responding to the survey expected further layoffs.

◆ About half of the client-side marketers who participated in our first-quarter survey said they still have a hiring freeze, ◆ Jerry Bernhart, principal of Bernhart Associates Executive Search said in a statement. ◆ Hiring on the supplier side, by contrast, is on a fast track with more than 60% telling us they plan to add to head count this quarter. We haven't seen numbers in that range for more than two years. ◆

Consumer firms are stepping up their hiring more quickly than their business-to-business counterparts, Bernhart added. This is most likely the result of the deeper job cuts they made last year.

Analytics remains the most-desired capability sought by employers, followed by Internet marketing knowledge, sales, creativity, technology expertise and campaign management.

"We're seeing some newer job categories emerge," Bernhart added. "A couple of companies will be looking for senior-level social media strategists and online video experts."

Among employers who imposed pay cuts last year, 37% said they plan to either partially or fully reinstate those reductions in 2010. Only 20% said pay cuts will remain in effect for this year, and 43% said they are unsure when salaries will be restored to previous levels.

In addition to hiring data, the Bernhart survey sought comments on the current hiring marketplace. According to respondents:

Quality applicants are hunkering down where they are. Those with digital, healthcare and mobile expertise are staying where they are, frustrating employers with these needs;

Finding creativity and execution skills in the same individual remains a tricky combination;

The rising cost of benefits is presenting obstacles for smaller digital and direct marketing employers to add to headcount;

Employers are having difficulty finding training opportunities for employees by competent, experienced subject experts.

Younger hires come to their positions with a lack of strategic insight, a lack of solid direct response testing and analysis, and a sense of entitlement;

Employers are concerned that they will face much higher churn as the economy recovers and good talent bolts.

The keys to retaining employees include keeping the company transparent, providing an atmosphere of collaboration, encouraging innovation, rewarding success, investing in current technology, and making the workplace fun, along with solidifying relationships with top performers, paying them top dollar, and challenging them.

Bernhart Associates' first-quarter survey was emailed to more than 9,700 senior executives and hiring managers, human resource officials, and other key participants in online and offline direct marketing during the first two weeks of January 2010. DataCo, LLC, contributed research and analysis to the survey.

Companies interested in participating in the Bernhart Associates Quarterly Digital and Direct Marketing Employment Report should send an email to [survey@bernhart.com](mailto:survey@bernhart.com) with "Opt-In" in the subject line, or they can sign up directly on the Bernhart Associates' Web site.

**Find this article at:**

<http://www.directmag.com/news/half-dm-firm-staff-increase-0120>

 [Click to Print](#)

[SAVE THIS](#) | [EMAIL THIS](#) | [Close](#)

Check the box to include the list of links referenced in the article.