



**ASIA JOB INDEX Q1 2015**  
A TRUSTED SOURCE ON ASIA'S JOB MARKET

[www.asiajobindex.com](http://www.asiajobindex.com)

ROBERT WALTERS

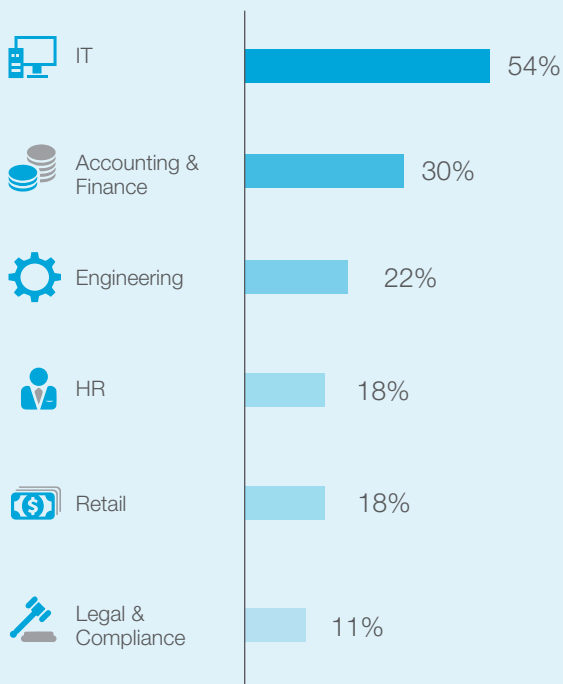
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# ROBERT WALTERS ASIA JOB INDEX Q1 2015: ASIA AT A GLANCE

Hiring activity in Asia picked up in the first quarter of 2015, with job advertising volumes up 22% from a year ago. Japan led the regional growth as the shortage of professional talent continued to spur job advertising. South Korea also saw a lift in job advertising volumes as a result of improved business confidence. As competition for highly specialised professionals continued to intensify across the region, companies have increasingly started to focus on offering better remuneration packages as well as talent development and retention.

## PERCENTAGE CHANGE BY PROFESSION Q1 2014 VS Q1 2015



## KEY HIGHLIGHTS OF THE QUARTER:

# +22%

Overall increase in job advertising volumes compared to Q1 2014



Job advertisements increased in volume particularly in core business functions such as information technology, human resources, accounting and finance

# +54%

The IT sector posted the largest growth in job advertisement volumes due to the continued trend of establishing IT shared services functions and growth in online products

# +18%

Advertising volumes for HR positions rose by 18% due to an increased demand for talent acquisition amid fierce competition in candidate markets

# CHINA: SALARY GROWTH IN CONSUMER AND SERVICES SECTORS



Arthur Wang  
Managing Director  
China

China overall

**+16%**

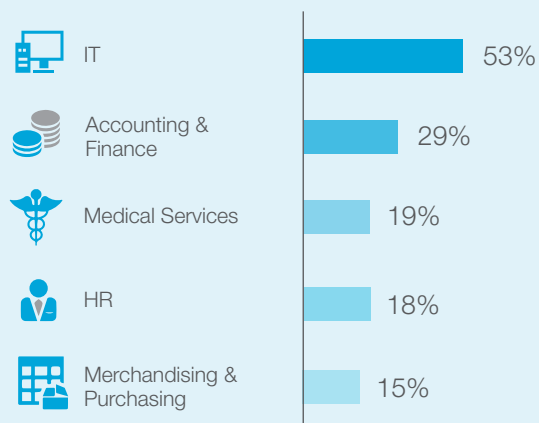
Annual  
growth in job  
advertisements

**“China’s recruitment market started off positively in 2015 with a 16% annual growth in the number of job advertisements in Q1. With the Chinese government setting its GDP target at 7% this year, the jobs market will likely grow at a stable pace. As the government continues to steer the economy towards being consumption-led, we expect to see the creation of more high-paying jobs within the consumer and services sectors in order to encourage spending. There will also be a growing emphasis on developing the healthcare and environmental industries to support sustainable growth in society. This is reflected by the 19% year-on-year increase in job advertising from the medical services sector in the last quarter.”**

## MARKET COMMENTARY

- Job advertising for IT professionals grew a significant 53% year-on-year, as companies sought to increase their product and service offerings online. Internet finance was another key growth area as e-commerce firms expanded their services into the financial services sector, spurring the demand for strong IT talent.
- HR professionals remained highly sought-after as companies stepped up talent retention, leading to an 18% growth in job advertisements compared to Q1 2014.
- The ongoing expansion of shared services centres created a strong demand for accounting and finance professionals, with the number of job advertisements up 29% from 2014.
- Merchandising and purchasing jobs saw a 15% increase in advertising volumes, as companies aimed to achieve costs savings by strengthening their procurement function.

## PERCENTAGE CHANGE BY PROFESSION Q1 2014 VS Q1 2015



# HONG KONG: CAUTIOUS MARKET SENTIMENT LED TO MODEST GROWTH



Matthew Bennett  
Managing Director  
Greater China

Hong Kong overall

**+2%**

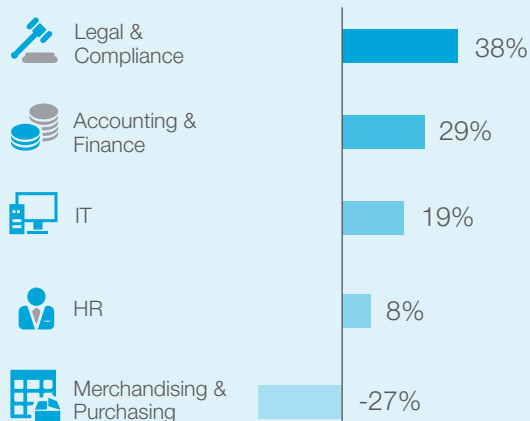
Annual  
growth in job  
advertisements

“We observed a strong level of hiring activity in the first half of 2014, and recruitment activity in Q1 2015 had remained relatively steady compared to the same time last year. Looking ahead, we expect to see an uplift in hiring activity in Q2 as bonuses are being paid out and the holiday season comes to an end. However, the market will remain cautious as the transition of the Chinese economy and uncertainties in the European markets continue. This will affect the city’s manufacturing and trade industries, as seen from the decrease in job advertising in the merchandising and operations functions in Q1. As companies continue to focus on managing costs and increasing profits, we will see more opportunities for accounting and finance professionals who can identify areas for cost-saving, as well as strong sales professionals who can help to grow revenue.”

## MARKET COMMENTARY

- Legal and compliance job advertising volumes saw the largest growth, increasing by 38% year-on-year. Mandarin-speaking lawyers were particularly in demand as more boutique law firms established their presence in Hong Kong in association with mainland Chinese law firms. Compliance professionals were most sought-after by the buy-side and private equity firms.
- The increasing implementation of cloud technology continued to create a strong demand for IT professionals, with job advertising volumes up 19% over the same period last year. IT security, e-commerce and digital specialists were also highly sought-after.
- Companies continued to focus on talent management and also actively sought talent acquisition specialists to help them build a stable talent pipeline, leading to an 8% increase in HR job advertising volumes.

## PERCENTAGE CHANGE BY PROFESSION Q1 2014 VS Q1 2015



# JAPAN: SHORTAGE OF SPECIALISTS SUPPORTS STRONG HIRING



David Swan  
Managing Director  
Robert Walters  
Japan & Korea

Japan overall

**+33%**

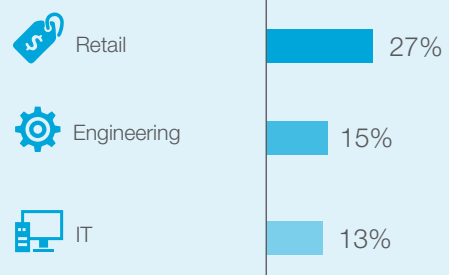
Annual  
growth in job  
advertisements

**“The Japanese recruitment market continued to experience a shortage of professional talent. This is reflected by the sharp increase in job advertising volumes, which grew by 33% in the first quarter from a year ago, reinforcing the strong hiring activity we’ve seen throughout the quarter. The growth could also be partly attributed to Japanese companies adding new headcount to their teams before their new budget year starts in April. Business confidence has remained strong as a result of the Japanese government’s economic policies. Companies are motivated to increase their capital investment and seek further business expansion. This has encouraged companies within the automotive and machinery sectors in particular to increase their headcounts, leading to a strong demand for engineers.”**

## MARKET COMMENTARY

- Job advertising for engineers grew by 15 % from the same quarter last year, as both the automotive and industrial machinery sectors aggressively sought mechanical, electrical and electronic engineers.
- IT-related positions recorded a 13% increase in job advertisement volumes year on year. Companies across the board sought IT consultants and application engineers partly due to the continued establishment of system integration projects.
- Retailers and other companies continued to focus on online marketing and e-commerce projects, creating a further demand for web designers and web marketing directors.
- The market also saw increased hiring activity for retail sales positions within the financial services space, particularly for insurers and brokerages. This demand came on the back of the government’s policy which encourages retail investors to increase their investments in financial products.

## PERCENTAGE CHANGE BY PROFESSION Q1 2014 VS Q1 2015



# MALAYSIA: RAISED PROFILE AS A REGIONAL HUB



Sally Raj  
Managing Director  
Malaysia

Malaysia overall  
**+15%**

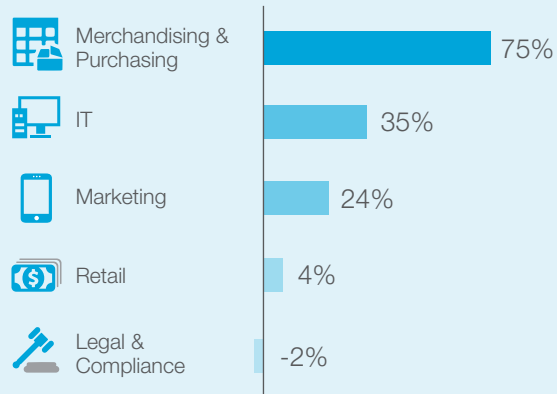
Annual  
growth in job  
advertisements

**“Malaysia has enjoyed constant growth in the last five years, with significant progress seen predominantly within the Shared Services and FMCG sectors. This has in turn created job opportunities for accounting, finance and IT professionals. Existing firms have even expanded their Malaysian hubs from regional to global operations. The main challenges for businesses currently are largely external factors. The drop in oil prices has affected a number of companies in the industry and caused some to downsize its operations. In addition, many companies are adopting a ‘wait-and-see’ approach with regards to the implementation of the Goods and Services Tax (GST) and to measure its impact along their supply chain and business operations. However, market sentiments in Malaysia remain positive and we are seeing employers being more committed to the long-term strategy of investing in talent.”**

## MARKET COMMENTARY

- Job advertising in merchandising and purchasing grew a significant 75% from 2014. The procurement function has become increasingly critical as companies sought to achieve cost savings and economies of scale.
- Companies moved from generic job advertising towards specialist recruiters to attract professionals in areas of high demand. As a result, we saw a 2% annual dip in job advertising numbers for roles in legal and compliance.
- Healthy growth in FMCG firms led to a strong demand for branding and strategy professionals – pushing job advertising volumes for marketing roles up by 24% from 2014.
- Job advertising for positions within cloud computing and software development grew by 35% year on year, as firms continue to establish their IT shared services in Malaysia.

## PERCENTAGE CHANGE BY PROFESSION Q1 2014 VS Q1 2015



# SINGAPORE: DOMESTIC TALENT ACQUISITION A KEY PRIORITY



Toby Fowlston  
Managing Director  
Southeast Asia

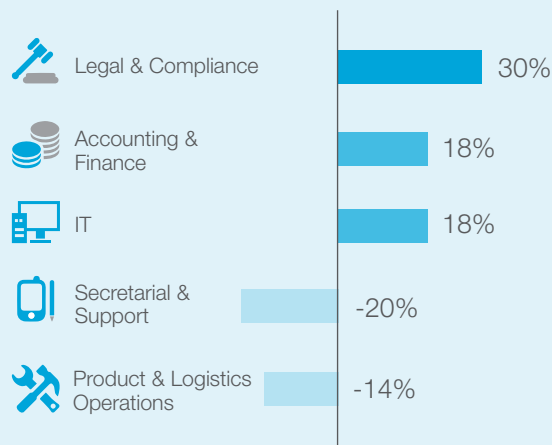
Singapore overall  
**+0.4%** | Annual  
growth in job  
advertisements

**“Recruitment in Singapore is largely driven by competition in the candidate-short market, hence key challenges generally lie in attracting the best talent for the right positions. To address this, the employment market has evolved to focus heavily on talent development and retention. Companies prioritise Singaporean professionals when hiring and that emphasis will continue throughout the year. Only when all channels of recruiting domestic talent have been exhausted do hiring managers expand their search to foreign candidates. Despite offshoring within the foreign investment banking industry in the last six months, financial services still remains a major part of the Singapore economy and we look forward to a more buoyant sector in the year ahead.”**

## MARKET COMMENTARY

- The legal and compliance space saw the largest jump in job advertising volumes, up 30% from 2014. Positions in anti-money laundering and financial crime are particularly in demand.
- IT job advertising rose by 18% from 2014 as companies strengthened their presence on social media and digital platforms.
- Increasing operating costs drove the offshoring of manufacturing plants to other more cost-efficient countries in Asia, leading to an annual 14% drop in advertisements for product and logistics operations jobs.
- The rising importance of the HR function to include business partnering and talent acquisition fuelled the demand for these positions, with advertising for HR roles increasing by 10% annually.

## PERCENTAGE CHANGE BY PROFESSION Q1 2014 VS Q1 2015





# SOUTH KOREA: IMPROVED CONFIDENCE LIFTS HIRING



Duncan Harrison  
Country Manager  
South Korea

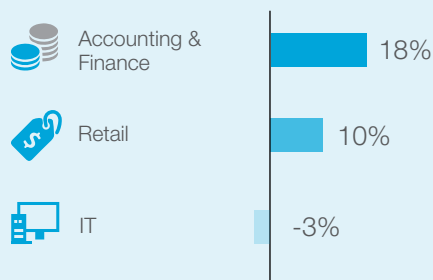
South Korea overall  
**+14%** Annual  
growth in job  
advertisements

“There was evidently increased confidence among candidates and companies, with the number of job advertisements showing double-digit growth in the first quarter. This was largely due to more foreign companies entering the South Korean market, thanks to the relaxation of regulations, an increase in the number of free trade agreements signed by Korea and a change in the tax system. The increase in foreign investment has also boosted the demand for bilingual specialists, with finance and office managers being in particularly high demand. These professionals were highly sought-after particularly within the online and gaming industries as well as international law firms, many of which have opened new offices in Seoul in 2015. In the retail sector, an influx of Chinese tourists has motivated luxury brand operators to actively hire store managers to help set up and manage their new retail outlets. The luxury and retail market has been active in Korea this year with sales volumes significantly up from 2014 levels.”

## MARKET COMMENTARY

- Job advertising for accounting and finance positions rose by 18%, in part due to a modest improvement in the South Korean economy. Start-ups and law firms aggressively sought finance/office managers following the recent hiring of country managers and country heads.
- An influx of Chinese tourists generated a further demand for store managers of luxury brand operators. There was also a significant increase in sales and operational positions within the automotive sector, with international cars continuing to gain popularity among South Korean consumers, outselling Korean cars for the first ever for the first three months of this year.
- IT specialists and technical staff were in high demand, which encouraged high-tech and mobile app companies to look for skill sets outside of Korea, and relaxed their requirements in terms of language abilities.

## PERCENTAGE CHANGE BY PROFESSION Q1 2014 VS Q1 2015



# ROBERT WALTERS ASIA JOB INDEX Q1 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)  
Classifiedpost.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

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

# ROBERT WALTERS ASIA JOB INDEX Q1 2015: CONTACT US

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## NOTES FOR EDITORS

Robert Walters is the leading professional recruitment firm in the Asian market and currently has a footprint of 14 offices covering Hong Kong, Singapore, China, Japan, Malaysia, Thailand, Indonesia, Vietnam, Taiwan and South Korea.

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