

Q1 W E ' 1 6 H
E **P** U L **S** E L P
S M A R T P E O
M A R K E T P L
E I N T E L L I
G E N C E F I N
D E A C H O T H
E R **R** E P O R T

OUR RESEARCH AT WORK FOR YOU

2015 IN REVIEW

LABOUR AND TECHNOLOGY TRENDS

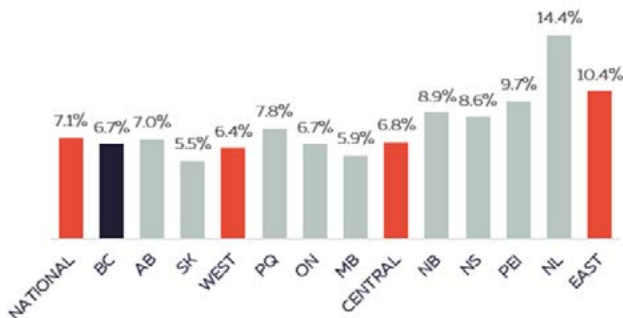
IT OUTLOOK FOR 2016

2015 IN REVIEW

NATIONAL EMPLOYMENT TRENDS

2015 was largely a plateau year, with only modest fluctuations to the national employment rates. There was a slight uptick in national unemployment, rising 0.4% to 7.1% over the course of the year. Full-time employment increased 1.0% across Canada, matched by a 1% increase in the average number of hours worked by Canadians. Western provinces has shown the highest spikes in employment on average at 1.8% and BC's rate increasing by 1.2% over 2014. Despite this increase in unemployment, BC led the provinces with the fastest employment growth rate in 2015, having added an additional 52,000 jobs (2.3%) over 2014. Western provinces also enjoy much lower unemployment rates than the rest of Canada on average, with BC's rate of 6.7% being third-lowest, behind Saskatchewan and Manitoba.

2015 UNEMPLOYMENT RATES

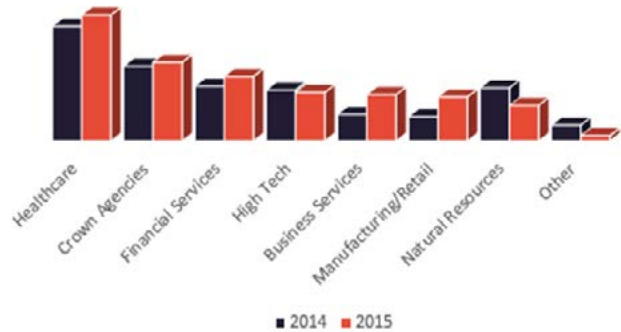


The most significant industry employment fluctuation was seen in the natural resources sector, which dropped by 6.8%; mostly affecting the Alberta markets as the oil and gas industry contends with plummeting prices. IT however, played a notable part in creating new jobs, as professional, scientific and technical services led all other market sectors with a 5.2% growth rate.

LOCAL TRENDS

The tech sector in BC remained steady, with demand for IT professionals increasing by 8% over 2014. Following the trend from 2014, Healthcare created most of the demand for IT professionals in 2015, followed by Crown Corporations and Agencies. The most significant changes noted in 2015 was a 4.9% drop in demand from the Natural Resources sector, as commodity prices affected several organizations in the local market.

Industry Performance



Among those clients seeking to supplement their teams, technical roles were in high demand throughout 2015; particularly for developers. While Microsoft development technologies continue to dominate the local market, 2015 saw a significant increase in demand for open-source development technologies including PHP, Python and Ruby.

CLIENT REQUISITIONS BY SKILLSET



LOOKING AHEAD TO 2016

ECONOMIC FLUX

According to almost every news source, 2016 is gearing up to be a year of extremes.

On the global stage, all world markets are starting the year with losses, with the markets in China and Brazil reeling from sharp declines. Meanwhile, Canadians are struggling with the tumbling commodities' prices, and a dollar valuation lower than it's been in over a dozen years. The [International Monetary Fund](#) cut Canada's economic growth outlook to only 1.7% this year, and analysts almost

universally predict struggles for the year ahead.

Despite the gloomy outlook on the national and international scale, the economic forecasts for BC on the whole seem to be optimistic. [RBC predicts](#) BC's unemployment rate to continue to dip to 5.8%, prompted by large investments in the public sector. RBC also suggests a modest recovery within the commodity prices, which should have a positive impact on several key employers within BC. When looking at BC's IT industry, there is a unique set of trends influencing the tech job market that seems to be completely impervious to the broader economy.

From the province's [\\$100m commitment to fund tech startups](#), to the inaugural [#BCTECH Summit](#) celebrating innovation in BC's tech industry, to the significant influx of new entrants to Vancouver's tech community – the IT sector remains the lone bull amidst a field of bears. This trend is a result of several factors; least of which being the soft Canadian dollar.



With the Canadian dollar currently [trading at \\$0.71](#), several foreign organizations have been taking advantage of the favourable exchange rates and opening Vancouver satellite offices. Amazon, Kabam and Animal Logic, for example, are recent entrants to the Vancouver market and are establishing large local teams. Other US-based companies such as Microsoft, xMatters and Fortinet have had Vancouver offices for some time, but are making concerted efforts to increase their local IT presence to capitalize on their increased buying power in Canada. Some of these large entrants are seeking top talent and are willing to pay for it – in some cases offering salaries as much as 20% over the going rate.

Familiar high-tech brands such as EA, Best Buy Canada and Shoes.com are matching the hiring pace that these US-based employers have set and are seeking consultants to supplement their existing teams. In fact, organizations from all market sectors are now struggling to compete with one another as the IT market seems poised for another boost in 2016.

MOBILE AND CLOUD COMPUTING

Mobile and cloud computing have been familiar buzzwords recently, and continue to be the most disruptive technologies in the local market.



The race to provide mobile delivery and the demands for mobile services consumption are ubiquitous across market segments. As mobile devices become more powerful and capable, demands for feature-rich, integrated and fully synchronized mobile experiences become louder from both customers and internal teams alike.

As we have seen across all market segments, the ubiquity of mobile computing is driving the migration to cloud solutions. While a mass-migration to the cloud is unlikely, we have noted a clear increase in clients choosing cloud-based solutions when considering new system implementations. While these decisions are made taking multiple factors into consideration, data synchronization across multiple devices (often mobile), is often a deciding factor.



One of the most significant inhibitors to broadscale adoption of cloud-based platforms is data sovereignty, and the physicality of the data centers. Several organizations are unwilling to implement cloud solutions built on US-based

data centers due to the implications of the USA Patriot Act, which permits US law enforcement officials to access personal records stored in the United States. To date, there have been [no reported cases](#) of a Canadian's personal information being accessed under the USA Patriot Act, however the potential risk of inadvertently breaking Canada's Privacy Act is prompting caution. This obstacle is temporary, however, as several solutions vendors are either investigating or actively deploying data centers in Canada to service national clients.

Meanwhile, Cloud BC – a collaborative body representing key public sector employers (including Crown Corporations, Health Authorities and others) – has been [assessing BC's readiness, and defining a roadmap](#) for greater adoption of cloud-based services in BC. We have seen a marked increase in demand for specialists in Software-as-a-Service, mobile, and other related technologies, and anticipate this demand will only be increasing throughout 2016 and onwards.

QUICK HITS

• BLENDED ROLES

Independent of technology, we have also noted a distinct increase in employers seeking a broader range of skills when seeking talent. Where organizations would have hired developers purely for their technical capabilities in recent years, many are now seeking developer analysts; technical consultants that have the ability to interface directly with the business. Similarly, pure QA testers are often being overlooked in favour of technical QA analysts with development experience.

• DATA-DRIVEN DECISIONS



Throughout 2015, business intelligence, data analysis, information management and other related skills were in high demand and we have seen no evidence of this demand slowing in any way. As new reporting and data visualization tools become available and proven, issues like latency and implementation scale has been eliminated. This in turn results in highly accessible tools that can be used as a “plug and play” into virtually any enterprise.

GIVE US A CALL!

Our research indicates that the demand for skilled IT professionals will continue to rise throughout the quarter, and into 2016. While the high-tech sector is driving much of this employment activity, the impacts will be felt in other industries as well.

If you are ready to take the next step along your career path, IT/IQ can help. Let our team know what types of positions you may be interested in, and keep an eye on our open opportunities at www.it-iq.com/jobs.

“The number one benefit of information technology is that it empowers people to do what they want to do. It lets people be creative. It lets people be productive. It lets people learn things they didn't think they could learn before, and so in a sense it is all about potential.”

Steve Ballmer



linkedin.com/company/it-iq

it-iq.com



twitter.com/ITIQTech



bit.ly/ITIQTech/



plus.google.com/+ItiqTech

Current-generation BI tools are powerful, yet still allow non-technical users to quickly gain meaningful insight into their own business and make substantiated decisions.

• EMPLOYMENT FLEXIBILITY

We have noticed a gradual but significant shift in willingness to engage IT professionals without local – and in many cases, Canadian – experience. In today's competitive market, many employers are accessing much broader talent pools by considering candidates from across Canada and beyond. These employers not only have first pick from a fresh pool of talent, they also benefit from a sense of loyalty and commitment that's built when giving an out-of-town consultant their first employment opportunity in Vancouver.



Other organizations are establishing deeper loyalty with their workforce by offering flexible employment options, such as greater work/life balance, work-from-home options, and other incentives.

ABOUT THE PULSE

As always, it is our goal to provide you with the most relevant information possible to help you make informed career decisions. Data referenced in this document is the result of extensive research and analysis of local, regional and national studies, but is prepared for the local Vancouver market.

Please speak with any of our consultants to learn more or to provide feedback that might help us improve future editions of the Pulse Market Analysis Report.

CONTACT US

680-1111 West Georgia Street
Vancouver, BC V6E 4M3
Main: 604-294-1200
Email: info@it-iq.com
Web: www.it-iq.com