

~ CURRENT MARKET FORCES & MARKET REALITIES ~

Notes on the Media Labour Marketplace

Less production, less funding and uncertain financial markets = less jobs. Employment is down in traditional media, but holding steady in non-traditional, new & mobile media.

Note: all industries are being affected, not just entertainment and media. And it's all about margins! Major firms (eg., ABC NY) recently announced a series of internal cost-cutting initiatives to save what little margins they have. These included sending fewer employees to markets and conferences, execs traveling economy class and staying at lower grade hotels, reduction or cancellation of business meals and trade subscriptions, and even Christmas parties are now in question. These may appear to be drastic measures but they improve the bottom line in a very uncertain market.

The good news for media professionals is that there is a marked increase in pro-active career planning, maintenance and management and a deeper understanding of the competitive edge planning brings. Candidates are also self-screening for jobs more appropriately, determining in advance if they have the 80-85% skills requirements to apply for and be short-listed for the job/position.

In-Demand Media Job Functions

Finance & Business Managers
Policy & Privacy Specialists
Project Management
Asset/Records Management

in-Demand Media Job Skills

Digital Interactive
Management: versatility / well-roundedness
Viral marketing
Business development (B2B, B2C, P2P)

Tips on how to keep your job in the current economic climate

- Carefully assess the situation and work hard to find solutions for your company and options for yourself
- Become the "indispensable" or "go to person" in your organization/department
- Actively network within the company; establish and solidify relationships with senior management
- Ask for increased responsibility – and honour it
- Save your firm money by streamlining processes and being innovative. Make sure your boss knows it
- Bring your "A game" to your work place everyday
- Perform well and deliver on time
- Become a "profit centre" for your company – if you don't know what this is, find out, OR, try to make a lateral shift to a profit centre of the company
- Get along with your boss

How to Survive a Lay-off

- Pause, take some time to process the situation
- Evaluate your goals in order to determine where you want to take your career
- Seek and maintain the support of peers who are experiencing similar challenges
- Ensure your portfolio materials, CV, business card, references, and cover letters are all

- up to date and industry standard
- Research small and medium sized companies (geography is important too) and try to get your foot in the door
- Prove yourself (once again!) on the job

A 2007 survey of 93 Canadian organizations found “critical disconnects between employer and employee views on the reasons employees join organizations, and the reasons they leave. Employers believe the top reasons employees leave are dissatisfaction with compensation, lack of career development opportunities and promotion prospects, strained relationships with management and stress. Employees, however, cite stress as the number one reason for leaving, followed by lack of work-life balance, dissatisfaction with promotional opportunities, lack of confidence in management and base pay. “Consistent with global findings, the challenge is compounded by the fact that many organizations do not fully grasp what employees or prospective hires value in an employment arrangement,” the firm reported. <http://www.watsonwyatt.com>

Policy Reviews currently affecting the Canadian media sector ... *“If you can read a broadcast licence, you can get a job...Richard Gray, A-Channel, Victoria”*

- Conventional TV: 2008
- Canadian Television Fund: 2008
- BDU and Discretionary Services: 2008
- New Media public hearings: 2008
- Increased focus on Privacy, Security & Financial Reporting

Major issues are advertising revenues, carriage and rights management.

Interactive Web (Web 2.0)

While Internet users seek greater entertainment and greater functionality from social networks, businesses seek to aggregate and measure their return from social networks. Individual professionals don't necessarily know how to take advantage of social media: all are encouraged to keep expectations realistic and internet profiles pristine! From the business perspective, social networks are still immature and businesses continue to struggle to increase their value and reach.

Mobile web (Web 3.0)

Mobile media is on the rise, and viral marketing tools and strategies are being integrated into all business objectives.

~ *CURRENT MARKET TRENDS & MARKET FINDINGS ~

Strategic recruitment and retention of skilled workers: Larger companies with HR infrastructures are committed to formal recruitment programs and have implemented strategic approaches to recruitment, while smaller employers have less formalized approaches. There is very little shortage of talented people to fill roles in cultural occupations. Larger organizations experience specific skills shortages; smaller organizations face a shortage of cultural workers with management skills.

Impact of technological change and global competition on the labour force: Canada's largest cultural employers have varying degrees of vulnerability to global competition. To remain viable, larger cultural enterprises must maintain operations within the international context. The development of global markets opens up avenues for financing and sales in new markets.

Impact of current and future demographic patterns on the labour force: Developments in technology have opened up many opportunities for younger generation to enter the cultural industries. Many organizations across the cultural industries see succession planning – both in ownership transition as well as in succession for vital positions, as significant issues.

Need for upgrading the workforce’s understanding of broadband communications tools: Entry-level cultural workers are now expected to have information technology skills over and above what was formerly the threshold. Cultural workers in general are increasingly required to acquire technology skills that enable them to participate in the creation and distribution of content over multiple platforms, implying the need for additional technology training, and making it easier than ever for younger age groups with more technology skills to enter the cultural industries.

Attracting creative professionals to work outside the major urban centers: While some tax incentives are offered to regional enterprises, it often means long commutes and/or dislocations for cultural workers living in the larger urban centers. Communications technologies provide increased opportunities for the independent cultural worker to stay in their particular region.

Retaining knowledge of contract employees: Large and medium sized employers, in the cultural industries, pay little attention to the training of freelancers and the self-employed. Freelancers and contract workers are expected to be highly skilled, having acquired these skills through experience and prior training at educational and professional development seminars and courses.

Need for specialized training in management and management hiring: At the largest employers in the cultural industries, training is very organized and formalized: policies are in place to facilitate training and employee performance is continually monitored and measured. In smaller organizations, with some exceptions, training is still largely “on the job”.

*Source: Profile of Cultural Workers at Large and Medium Sized Employers in the Cultural Industries: (February, 2008) Cultural Human Resource Council, Nordicity Group Ltd., PricewaterhouseCoopers & mediaINTELLIGENCE.ca Inc.