

Press release
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Hong Kong companies increasingly turn to contract IT workers

Contract work offers flexibility and diversity and new skillsets to Hong Kong IT professionals

- 94% of Hong Kong CIOs are planning to increase the temporary IT headcount in their company by an average of 17% over the next 12 months.
- Demand for contract IT workers is strongest within software/application development (48%), data/database management (33%) and digitisation (32%).
- The main drivers behind hiring temporary professionals: cost efficiency (61%), challenges finding the requisite skills on a permanent basis (56%), and increased flexibility (48%).

Hong Kong, 1 December 2017 – Under pressure to remain ahead of the curve amidst a skills shortage, Hong Kong CIOs are increasingly turning to contract IT workers to help deliver more results while maintaining permanent headcount. In good news for IT professionals, new independent research commissioned by specialised recruiter [Robert Half](#) shows the overall majority (94%) of Hong Kong CIOs are planning to increase their contract IT headcount by an average of 17% over the next 12 months, highlighting the possibilities for IT professionals in today's market.

The functional areas where contract IT workers are most in demand are software/application development (48%), data/database management (33%) and digitisation (32%).

Adam Johnston, Managing Director at Robert Half Hong Kong said: *“While Hong Kong is currently contending with an IT skills shortage, there’s a shift taking place in how Hong Kong organisations staff their IT department. Industry demands and the changing dynamic of the Asian workplace is driving IT leaders to employ a combination of permanent and temporary IT staff to manage both ongoing operational requirements as well as upcoming projects, thereby making temporary workers an inherent part of the workforce.”*

The benefits of temporary staffing for companies

Financial incentives are a key motivator for 61% of CIOs who say they will be increasing their temporary headcount over the next 12 months because of cost efficiency, which is closely followed by challenges in sourcing permanent candidates with the required IT skillsets (56%). Increased flexibility without putting pressure on staff headcount is another primary driver for 48% of Hong Kong CIOs, while 41% say the hiring process of contract workers is faster. Interestingly, just 8% refer to a lack of financial resources to hire permanent employees as a key reason, pointing to the appeal of temporary staff beyond purely financial considerations.

“In a market that is rapidly being shaped by a growing lack of skilled IT talent, by hiring contract IT workers across all seniority levels, CIOs will be able to access a much larger talent pool of technology candidates. By balancing staff headcount with a dynamic mix of permanent and temporary professionals, Hong Kong’s employers are taking on a big-picture staffing approach that gives them access to the skills they need throughout the year and allows them to remain flexible when it comes to their organisation’s needs day in and day out, all year-round.”

“While the use of temporary workers is on the rise in Hong Kong’s IT sector, many local professionals who would thrive in IT contract work are cautious about accepting this type of work because they are used to being employed on a permanent basis. Temporary work however can provide valuable experience to a resume and the ability to expose themselves to multiple new skillsets. And on the other hand, it is also very common for temporary work to evolve into a permanent job. Temporary working assignments are a prime opportunity for professionals to present themselves as the best person for a permanent role, as an employer

will already be aware of their strengths first hand, including working style and personality,” concluded Adam Johnston.

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Notes to editors

About the research

The annual study is developed by Robert Half and was conducted in June-July 2017 by an independent research firm, surveying 75 CIOs/CTOs in Hong Kong. This survey is part of the international workplace survey, a questionnaire about job trends, talent management and trends in the workplace.

About Robert Half

Robert Half is the world’s first and largest specialised recruitment consultancy. Founded in 1948, the company has over 325 offices worldwide providing interim management, temporary and permanent recruitment solutions for accounting and finance, financial services and technology professionals in Hong Kong. More information on roberthalf.com.hk.

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[Contractor vs employee: what your business needs to know before hiring](#)

If you are in the midst of expanding your workforce, it can be an exciting opportunity for your business. However, it’s also important to ensure that the right decisions around recruitment are made during this process. Some employers may choose to go down the path of employing a full-time employee for stability and availability, whilst others may choose an independent contractor due to flexibility and speciality. Read more here.



[Should I quit my job without a back-up plan?](#)

Have the questions ‘should I quit my job’ or “should I look for another job” been popping up in your mind lately? Making the decision to leave a company is rarely easy, but is a decision that should be a careful, informed and rational one. Read here to find out the five questions you should ask yourself first before deciding to quit your job.

For more information

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