More Wages, More Worried: Dice Salary Survey Reveals Conflicted Job Market

IT Workers Say Updating Skills is Top Priority for 2009

New York, January 21, 2009 – Technology professionals are seeing a spike in salary increases despite a recessionary economy, according to the 2008-09 Annual Salary Survey from Dice, the leading career site for technology and engineering professionals. Gathering the responses of more than 19,000 technology workers between August and November 2008, Dice tracked a 4.6 percent increase in average pay from the previous year to $78,035.

The top worries for technology professionals in 2009 are keeping skills up to date (22 percent), job elimination (20 percent), lower salary increases (14 percent), cancelled projects (12 percent) and increased workload due to staff cuts (10 percent). Supporting this theme, Dice reports a 67 percent increase in the number of new resumes posted to its site in the fourth quarter (year over year). Given that the majority of technology professionals who utilize Dice are currently employed, such "passive job hunting" indicates greater anxiety about the job market.

Still, individuals with specific training and capabilities received outsized raises in 2008: for example, Security Analysts saw increases of 8.4 percent, Software Engineers were up 7 percent, and Applications Developers enjoyed 6.6 percent raises.

"That average tech salaries are rising even as the economy falls reveals how much has changed since the dot-com days," said Tom Silver, SVP & CMO, at Dice. "Today many technology professionals are seen as core assets where they work. As they enhance their skills, they'll need to align those efforts with the market's shifting demands. However, over the long-term, updating and broadening one's skill set is the key to continued salary gains."

Additional findings of the survey include:

- In major technology centers, IT salaries are up 5.8 percent in New York, 3.8 percent in Chicago, 3.6 percent in both Silicon Valley and Washington, D.C., and just 0.4 percent in Dallas/Fort Worth.
- By metropolitan area, smaller, less traditional tech markets such as Charlotte saw the biggest salary increases, up 14.7 percent to $81,426, followed by St. Louis, up 12.5 percent to $72,819.
- Topping the compensation/skill set list are workers in the areas of ABAP – Advanced Business Application Programming ($106,975), ETL - Extract Transform and Load ($102,364) and Business Intelligence databases ($101,585).
- Project managers earned, on average, $103,424 in 2008, the highest earning title outside of top technology executives. Those workers, often holding CIO and CTO titles, earned an average of $111,998 in 2008.
- On an industry-by-industry basis, technology professionals in the Computer Hardware field received average raises of 9.4 percent to $77,387. Salaries in the Internet Services industry were boosted by 8.8 percent to $77,819. Retail/Mail Order/E-Commerce and Government/Defense fields were allotted the smallest raises, up 2.4 percent and 3.4 percent, respectively.
- Women technology professionals, as a group, earned 12% less on average than men. However, when comparing women IT professionals with their equivalent male counterpart (controlling for years of experience, education levels and job titles), the so-called gender gap disappeared.

Dice Salary Survey: Methodology

The Dice Salary Survey was administered online with 19,444 registered Dice job seekers and visitors responding between August 27 and November 15, 2008. Respondents were invited to participate in the survey through a notification on the Dice home page, and registered job seekers were sent an email invitation. A cookie methodology was used to ensure that there was no duplication of responses between or within the various sample groups, and duplicate responses from a single email address were removed.

Table 1: Technology Salaries

	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	Previous Year % Change
U.S. Average	$69,700	$73,308	$74,570	$78,035	4.6%
By Industry:					
Bank / Financial / Insurance	$76,092	$82,504	$82,961	$87,257	5.2%
Computer Software	$74,730	$77,582	$79,756	$84,094	5.4%
Telecommunications	$72,430	$78,003	$77,312	$81,006	4.8%
Medical / Pharmaceutical	$71,714	$72,717	$74,689	$79,928	7.0%
Government / Defense	$69,078	$75,086	$77,187	$79,843	3.4%
Manufacturing	$66,732	$71,878	$73,470	$77,864	6.0%
Internet Services	$65,426	$71,854	$71,538	$77,819	8.8%
Computer Hardware	$66,462	$69,987	$70,740	$77,387	9.4%
Retail / Mail Order / E-Commerce	$55,909	$63,830	$66,782	$68,394	2.4%
By Job Title:					
IT Management	$102,326	$106,272	$107,830	$111,998	3.9%
Project Manager	$93,009	$96,475	$101,292	$103,424	2.1%
MIS Manager	$82,824	$82,510	$88,934	$93,318	4.9%
Software Engineer	$78,807	$83,524	$84,122	$90,031	7.0%
Database Administrator	$81,301	$85,441	$85,092	$89,742	5.5%
Developer: Systems	$72,732	$78,476	$88,361	$87,211	-1.3%
Security Analyst	$74,837	$79,411	$80,052	$86,778	8.4%
Business Analyst	$77,158	$82,288	$84,101	$85,933	2.2%
Developer: Applications	$73,636	$78,037	$79,421	$84,672	6.6%
Developer: Database	$73,768	$79,911	$83,163	$84,176	1.2%
Developer: Client/Server	$75,941	$74,602	$78,173	$78,560	0.5%
Programmer/Analyst	$65,174	$69,757	$71,623	$74,851	4.5%
Technical Writer	$68,125	$73,094	$73,133	$73,762	0.9%
Network Engineer	$65,122	$67,202	$68,391	$72,496	6.0%
Systems Administrator	$63,698	$64,917	$66,388	$70,307	5.9%
Metropolitan Area (by largest annual increase)**:**					
Charlotte	n/a	n/a	$70,985	$81,426	14.7%
St. Louis	n/a	n/a	$64,715	$72,819	12.5%
Pittsburgh	n/a	n/a	$58,221	$65,135	11.9%
Portland, OR	n/a	n/a	$71,182	$77,801	9.3%
Baltimore	$68,161	$70,170	$70,590	$77,079	9.2%

Table 1: Technology Salaries (con't)

Metropolitan Area (by highest salary*):	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	Previous Year % Change
Silicon Valley	$85,430	$90,310	$93,876	$97,259	3.6%
Washington D.C.	$77,064	$81,957	$83,788	$86,841	3.6%
Los Angeles	$73,911	$79,583	$81,039	$86,766	7.1%
New York	$76,382	$80,006	$80,770	$85,452	5.8%
Boston	$79,211	$80,308	$83,465	$84,627	1.4%
Seattle	$73,105	$79,787	$79,636	$82,514	3.6%
San Diego	$72,163	$79,416	$75,994	$82,302	8.3%
Austin, TX	n/a	n/a	$76,605	$81,833	6.8%
Sacramento	$72,355	$75,197	$83,410	$81,193	-2.7%
Denver	$74,823	$77,317	$77,846	$80,646	3.6%
Chicago	$71,496	$75,154	$76,407	$79,320	3.8%
Philadelphia	$71,881	$72,786	$74,442	$78,860	5.9%
Atlanta	$73,684	$72,323	$74,822	$78,036	4.3%
Hartford	$72,265	$71,796	$73,372	$77,584	5.7%
Phoenix	$70,023	$74,976	$71,246	$77,303	8.5%
Dallas/Ft. Worth	$71,494	$74,656	$76,560	$76,836	0.4%
Houston	$68,358	$71,526	$72,733	$75,199	3.4%
Miami	n/a	n/a	$69,149	$74,448	7.7%
Kansas City	n/a	n/a	$71,149	$73,647	3.5%
Detroit	$64,154	$67,080	$67,271	$73,327	9.0%

Table 2: Top 10 Average Salaries for Popular Skills and Experience

	2008-09
ABAP – Advanced Business Application Programming	$106,975
ETL – Extract, Transform & Load	$102,364
Business Intelligence	$101,585
Informatica	$101,337
ERP – Enterprise Resource Planning	$99,332
Data Warehouse	$99,323
SOAP – Simple Object Access Protocol	$98,826
Korn Shell	$98,517
JBoss	$98,111
ITIL – Information Technology Infrastructure Library	$97,863

Table 3: For 2009, what is the biggest concern you have about your career?

Keeping Skills Up-to-Date / Being Valuable to Employer	22%
Position Elimination	20%
Lower Salary Increases / Lower Billing Rates	14%
Cancelled Projects / Fewer Projects	12%
Increased Workload (due to staff cuts)	10%
Increased Outsourcing	7%
Position Relocation	3%
No Concerns at this Time	12%

*Excluding metropolitan areas that were provided under the largest annual increase designation.

About Dice
Dice is the leading career site for technology and engineering professionals. With an 18-year track record of meeting the ever-changing needs of technology professionals, companies and recruiters, our specialty focus and exposure to highly skilled professional communities enable employers to reach hard-to-find, experienced and qualified technology and engineering candidates.

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