

Online advertised job vacancies take a seasonal dip in January

by Bend Weekly News Sources

Job demand strongest in Management and Business/Finance occupations

In January there were 3,141,800 online advertised vacancies, a largely seasonal decline of 6 percent from December, according to The Conference Board Help-Wanted OnLine Data Series released today. Over the year, online advertised vacancies were up 12 percent for the nation as a whole. In January there were 2.1 advertised vacancies online for every 100 persons in the national labor force.

"January's job vacancy data points to a labor market that is definitely holding its own," said Gad Levanon, Economist at The Conference Board. "Although this online series does not have sufficient history to seasonally adjust the monthly data, it is clear from the weekly data that the declines were all in the holiday weeks at the end of December and the beginning of January when hiring activity is very low. Like last year, the numbers rebounded to their pre-holiday levels by the second week of January. In addition, the number of online advertised vacancies grew significantly during the last 12 months and do not signal any weakness in the labor market."

The National Picture

The 3,141,800 unduplicated online advertised vacancies in January include 1,987,800 new ads that did not appear in December, as well as reposted ads from the previous month. During January, total ads fell 6 percent and new ads were down 5 percent from the previous month. Over the year (January'06 - January'07) total ads and new ads rose 12 percent and 15 percent, respectively. The January data is the sum of unduplicated ads that appeared during the mid-December to mid-January time period.

While this series does not have a sufficiently long history to allow for seasonal adjustment, the monthly decrease of 202,800 in total ads is consistent with seasonal declines in other labor market indicators, and was widespread across the nation. Monthly percent change declines were greatest in the Pacific, Middle Atlantic, and Mountain regions. States with the largest declines included California (-57,600), New York (-14,600), New Jersey (-12,200), Illinois (-10,500), and Pennsylvania (-9,600). Major metropolitan areas contributing to these declines were Los Angeles (-25,000), New York (-17,800), San Francisco (-8,000), Chicago (-6,800), and Philadelphia (-6,200).

The only five states to post an increase this month were Mississippi, Wyoming, Vermont, Maine, and Idaho. Each of these states inched up by less than 500 ads from last month.

Over the year, the regions with the fastest year-over-year growth were the West South Central (28%) and West North Central (20%) regions. Across the nation, states with the largest over-the-year gains in advertised vacancies were Maine (68%), Oklahoma (50%), Idaho (38%), and Vermont (35%).

Metropolitan areas with the fastest over-the-year growth were heavily concentrated in areas where labor markets were disrupted by the 2005 Gulf Coast hurricanes -- Oklahoma City (93%), Houston (58%), and Austin, TX (51%).

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