

IT appointments on the increase

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Employers are starting to hire IT staff again, as recruitment freezes thaw and companies look to bring in specialist skills at knockdown rates.

In the past month alone, Facebook announced plans to double the size of its Dublin based EMEA headquarters, creating 70 jobs; Buy.com unveiled plans to open a European Operations Centre in Galway, with 40 new positions; and Google said it would increase staff numbers in Ireland where it already employs 1,500.

Clever companies are buying in talent at rates unseen during the boom years, according to **Gráinne Bagnall, senior IT contracts consultant, Sigmar IT**. "It is a client market, hence the ability of employers to attract highly skilled people at a lower premium. Candidates have to come down ten to twenty per cent in their salary expectations in some cases in order to secure employment," said Bagnall.

Bagnall said that some highly qualified individuals were still out of work. "There is certainly still a pool of IT candidates looking for work, a lot of whom are at the senior end of the market," she said.

"We have been seeing a number of excellent candidates in the project management space, likewise at senior IT management level. Any opportunities in the area of desktop support or systems administration also generate a large pool of candidates."

"If we advertise a role at the moment, we might get 25 CVs in one day. Candidates should ensure their application reflects the job spec." Companies in the social media and web sectors offered most opportunities in the current market, Bagnall said. "They are looking for web designers and software developers. Candidates need to have expertise in areas like .NET, AJAX, PHP or Flash."

Bagnall said some smaller companies operating in global markets were seeking specialist IT skills. "There are a number of niche tech companies, from mobile telecoms to gaming software to e-learning and bioinformatics, hiring at this point. It is a global marketplace, and companies here are continuing to win international business," she said.

Bagnall said that demand for 'smart' skills would continue to grow. "The increasing popularity of social networking and the migration of more business to mobile devices, as well as the huge push on green technologies, will escalate employment opportunities in the sector," she said.

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