superior consulting services

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Latest Trends in IT & Engineering Staffing and Solutions

IT & Engineering Services Update

IT spending expected to accelerate in 2015

Gartner Inc., the leading IT research and advisory company, recently published its 2015 IT spending forecast. Overall, 2015 IT spending is projected to increase 2.4 percent – up from 1.9 percent growth in 2014.

According to Gartner, the category with the highest growth rate is enterprise software (5.5 percent), followed by device hardware (5.1 percent), IT services (2.5 percent), data center systems (1.8 percent), and telecom services at (0.7 percent).

The analysts at Forrester Research are more optimistic projecting 5.3 percent growth for 2015 and accelerating to 5.9 percent in 2016. They estimate that the spend on software projects will expand by 9.2 percent in 2016 because software is how companies will "differentiate in the age of the customer." By contrast, the spending on computer equipment is projected to grow by 5 percent in 2016.

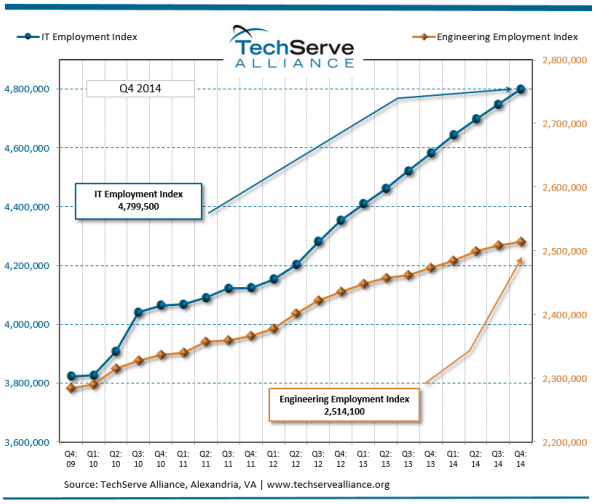
IDG Enterprise, which publishes a number of technology-related magazines and websites, surveyed IT decision-makers projects an overall budget growth of 4.3 percent for 2015.

Spiceworks, an online community of tech professionals, offers a different take on the 2015 IT projected spending. A third (33 percent) of their members are expecting to see a budget increase in 2015, 44 percent say "no change", and 12 percent expect a decrease. One-quarter are projecting an increase in IT staff headcount.

According to Spiceworks, about 40 percent of their IT budgets are allocated to hardware projects, about 33 percent to software projects, 12 percent to cloud-based service projects, 10 percent to managed service projects and the remainder are unsure.

And how are some of those hardware dollars spent? Surprisingly, desktops top the list at 22 percent of the hardware budget, followed by 17 percent for servers, 14 percent for laptops, 9 percent for networking equipment (routers, switches, etc.), 9 percent for external storage, and only 8 percent for tablets. There was no mention of smartphones.

IT jobs continue to grow at healthy rate



The number of IT jobs continues to grow at a healthy pace, adding more than 54,000 per quarter through 2014. Although fewer in number, engineering jobs had an average growth rate of a little more than 10,000 per quarter throughout 2014.

IT & engineers pros continue to be in high demand as unemployment rates remain low

The unemployment rate remained considerably lower for IT and engineering professionals than the overall labor force. While the overall unemployment was 5.7 percent, one-third of IT and engineering occupations had an unemployment rate of less than one percent.

IT Occupations (Q4 2014)	
Computer and information systems managers	0.9%
Computer hardware engineers	3.0
Computer network architects	0.8
Computer programmers	2.5
Computer support specialists	3.3
Computer systems analysts	2.3
Database administrators	1.5
Network and computer systems administrators	0.6
Software developers, applications and systems software	2.4
Web developers	3.3
Engineering Occupations (Q4 2014)	
Aerospace engineers	0.6%
Architectural and engineering managers	0.9
Chemical engineers	6.3
Civil engineers	3.8
Electrical and electronic engineers	3.7
Industrial engineers, including health and safety	5.0
Mechanical engineers	0.4
Engineers, all others	2.1
Source: unpublished tabulations of Current Population Survey data furnished by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics	

"DevOps" – friend or foe to IT organizations?

The latest hot trend in the world of technology is "DevOps" or "devops." Google Trends confirms that searches of the word have skyrocketed in the past year and a half. The word is a mash-up of development (writing software) and operations (maintaining that software as well as the tech required to run it).

The effort to connect application development and operations was around long before it received the label DevOps. This effort has been fraught with difficulties due to differing goals and a lack of communication. Application developers want to produce new and innovative software and get it into the marketplace quickly. On the operation side, the focus is on ensuring the entire system is up and running and free from bugs.

The drive to move faster and push out code quicker in an increasingly competitive environment can create problems. After writing the software to meet the business requirements for the enterprise, the development team tests the software. If its strategic requirements are met, the code is released to the operations team to deploy and subsequently maintain. Since these two teams basically work separately, problems can arise when those in development may not be aware of operational issues that inhibit the application from working as planned. By integrating the two pieces, DevOps ensures the entire end-to-end process is more agile and able to respond to user requirements.

According to open source software producer Red Hat CEO Jim Whitehurst in an interview in *Business Insider*, DevOps is a potential challenge for IT departments as employees increasingly use their own devices at work and use outside cloud services. IT managers may find their budgets being shifted. According to Whitehurst "… today's IT departments are going to fight for their survival." IT managers are going to have to learn to embrace DevOps, including hiring DevOps engineers and developers as a part of their team.

The growing Importance of Information security creates new opportunities

Information security continues to be a hot button issue with growing budgets and teams. In the Global State of Information Security Survey® 2014, a worldwide study by PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP, CIO Magazine, and CSO Magazine, survey respondents reported a 25 percent rise in detected security incidents globally in the past year. Budgets for IT security have increased.

In response to these increased threats, analysts at Gartner, Inc. are seeing a new senior management role emerge to handle what is being called "digital risk." According to its latest 2014 CEO and Senior Executive Survey, more than 50 percent of CEOs responded that they will have a senior digital risk leader by the end of 2015 and "one-third of large enterprises will have a digital risk officer (DRO) role or equivalent" by 2017.