

# BUSINESS

Vol. 21 No. 6

# Journal

## IT job market strong, but finding certified specialists is challenging

by David Kubicek

The large number of IT corporations and the ever-evolving IT industry is driving the competitive market for IT professionals in Lincoln and surrounding areas.

Because of the abundance of IT professionals, it's challenging to find certified specialists for a product-centric market dictated by a hyperactive technology ecosystem, according to Kim Larsen, VP of managed IT solutions at Scantron Technology Solutions.

"I believe that finding the right candidates for the right solutions and integrating them into an organization is an issue spanning all markets," she said.

Small and medium-sized businesses in most industries have employees already wearing multiple hats and roles within an organization. Most companies choose to outsource their IT functions because of the need for highly specialized skillsets their environments require.

"They need IT experts, but only part time, or for projects," Larsen said.

Industries with the greatest need for IT employees are those dealing with large quantities of sensitive information, like health care, government services, financial services, technology giants like Amazon and

Microsoft, and manufacturing.

"There's a high need for data 24/7 with the increasing demand to have access to your data at all times," Larsen said. "The hours we work are expanding. The other trend with data on demand has led to the ability and commitment to make our solutions mobile. We can run all our technology solutions with an internet connection empowering our staff to work from almost anywhere."

The outlook for the IT job market has never been more positive, according to Kara M. Strong, senior IT sales executive at Aureus Group-IT, an affiliate of C&A Industries.

"There's a desperate need for IT talent in both hardware and software," she said. "Every industry has a demand for great IT talent; however, we've found that some of our larger clients have come from the insurance, banking, utilities, construction and service industries."

Strong said most of the firm's clients are seeking applicants with two to 10 or more years of experience. Ideally, employers want an associate degree — a bachelor's is even better — but most of the firm's clients value actual experience over an educational

background. Certifications can be helpful but aren't usually required.

"The need for IT talent is so high, our clients are willing to bend on some of their previous requirements and consider experience alone," Strong said.

Clients are looking for candidates with experience working in an AGILE environment. C# and Java have been the most common development languages. There has been an increase in the need for Cisco, Windows Server, VMware, and old Legacy technology.

"Employees with those skill sets are retiring or nearing retirement, and we don't see the mainframe technology going," Strong said.

Linda Bettinger, program co-chair of computer information technology at Southeast Community College (SCC), said the demand for IT professionals seems to be on a steady uphill climb.

"We have employers regularly contacting us to recruit current computer information technology students as well as new graduates," she said.

Currently there is a big demand for application and web developers. Employers are



Larsen

hiring graduates who can develop in-house applications, program behind the scenes of websites, and produce in-demand mobile apps.

Cybersecurity is another growing area. Recently, SCC developed cybersecurity curriculum training students to monitor, secure and defend computer networks.

"There continues to be a need for networking and technical support workers to maintain the systems and provide assistance to computer users," Bettinger said. "Employers are looking for graduates who have hands-on training and can hit the ground running. Many employers are hiring graduates right out of school with no previous work experience. With a two-year associate degree, graduates can begin a professional career with an average starting wage over \$21.00 an hour."

*Reprinted with permission  
from the publisher of MBJ Inc.  
from the June 2018 issue of the  
Lincoln Business Journal*

*This permission is for photo and article reproduction or placement on your  
Web site. Under no circumstances, because of spamming and other issues,  
will permission be granted to transmit our stories by e-mail.*

# *Jack of All Trades, Master of None.*

## *This week, Jack handled it all.*

He answered phones, recovered passwords, paid bills, made payroll, attended meetings, took a sledgehammer to the POS system, bought lunches for the team (but skipped his own), rebooted systems, and unjammed the printer for the 32nd time.

Don't be like Jack. Work with just one vendor to handle all IT support. Scantron Technology Solutions has been helping businesses in Lincoln and the surrounding area for almost 50 years. We support your critical hardware, software, network, security, cloud applications and printing, with a fixed fee.

Master your business. We'll take care of the IT.

**SCANTRON**<sup>®</sup>  
TECHNOLOGY SOLUTIONS

Experience IT that's secure, faster and more reliable, with a fixed cost for support. Contact us to learn how our customers experience IT today with Scantron. We'll give you a no-obligation consultation.

Call us at **402.697.3000** or visit **[www.scantron.com](http://www.scantron.com)**

