

“Given current hiring plans, vacancy activity will add momentum in 2010 with a return to a candidate-short market expected mid calendar year.”

Hong Kong

Towards the end of 2009 demand was high for candidates in retail operations, corporate communications and strategic sales/business development. This was in response to the broader economic recovery, which has seen organisations become more confident to rebuild their teams.

Increased IPO and M&A activity has created a significant need for corporate communications candidates, including investor relations. Those with specialised skill sets in the financial sectors have been able to secure salary increases.

Senior executives in the FMCG sector, including Retail Operations Directors, Category Managers and Sourcing Directors, are needed as major retailers focus on increasing market share. Trilingual language skills, regional exposure and relevant experience in the Chinese market are three key factors for employers when looking to hire new staff. There have been only marginal salary increases. Given the availability of quality candidates there will be no significant increases until later in 2010.

Organisations are continuing to develop and implement salary packages that include bonuses linked to both the company's performance and the individual's contribution. Such packages now extend to marketing as well as sales and business development roles.

In recognition of the importance of retention, employers are once again investing in the training and development of their staff. They want to ensure their focus is on maximising revenue and profit rather than recruiting. When employers do need to recruit, the process is extremely vigorous.

Now is not the time to change roles for a slight salary increase. Loyalty and stability can provide more value than a five per cent salary increase. When seeking a new opportunity, we also suggest candidates develop a detailed resume focused on outstanding achievements and detailing any relevant MNC and China experience.

Singapore

While recruiting activity was slow in the first six months of 2009, demand strengthened noticeably in the second half of the year. As the Singaporean economy recovered, organisations across most industries planned for and started to recruit new or replacement staff.

Given current hiring plans, vacancy activity will continue this upward momentum in 2010, with a return to a candidate-short market expected by mid calendar year.

The demand for sales staff has increased most markedly in the FMCG, information technology and telecommunications sectors. Strong Product Managers are also sought by FMCG employers as Singapore continues its expansion as a regional centre for this sector.

Across most sectors a steady demand exists for communications professionals at all levels. This includes internal and external communications, media and public relations experts.

Marketing candidates with specific experience in product development and marketing, in particular FMCG experience, and marketing communications candidates can expect a base salary increase of between 10 and 15 per cent this year. Typical base/OTE splits are now set at circa 80/20 per cent.

Those sales professionals with a proven track record, an excellent network and industry expertise can expect a base salary increase of up to 25 per cent, with an average increase of 15 per cent. For these roles, base/OTE splits now sit at 60/40 per cent. More aggressive organisations set them at circa 55/45 per cent.

As the market becomes candidate short once again, employers will focus on retaining critical staff members. Along with increased salaries, training and tailored career plans will feature in the retention plans of human resources departments and line managers.

China

Despite economic conditions, 2009 was a successful year for China's retail industry. The Chinese consumer maintained their previous consumption levels so market remained steady. By comparison, the advertising and media industry endured a trying first six months of the year. However by September 2009 this area had improved in response to the push towards digital, customer relationship management (CRM) and below-the-line (BTL) advertising.

Area Managers for retail roles and Brand Managers for FMCG and luxury brands are skills in demand. Within the advertising and media industry, firms are recruiting for middle to high level positions. Advertising employers in particular need Group Account Directors with a specialisation in Digital and BTL. Media employers want Planners.

Firms were conservative in their salary offerings. Any increases were minimal, determined on a case-by-case basis. The only notable increases were offered to those in very senior positions.

An intense push towards localisation for nearly all roles in retail, FMCG, advertising and media was the most salient change in this industry. Consequently, Chinese candidates returning from overseas need a network of useful connections and should be prepared to accept a lower salary.

Employers also became increasingly selective about a candidate's background. They now demonstrate a strong preference for candidates from select firms.

Those looking for a new role should be prepared to market and sell themselves. They need to emphasise their network of connections and be ready to accept long working hours. Advertising and media candidates need to gain a deeper understanding of e-commerce, digital and CRM – there is a strong trend towards being more integrated between these three fields.

Japan

Vacancy activity is rising in this sector. In line with this increase in available jobs has been an increase in employer expectations. As candidates are employed, the quality and quantity of the available candidate pool reduces. Compared to early 2009, employers have less candidate choice. Yet their demand for quality is higher than ever.

Consequently, employers have extended the interview process. To ensure they select the best candidate that matches their strict criteria, more interviews are taking place.

There is high demand for aggressive mid-level salespeople. Sales candidates in niche sectors such as pharma are also needed. On the consumer side, marketing and public relations vacancies are rising in sharp contrast to much of 2009.

Salary increases in 2009 were minimal, less than five per cent compared with the 15 to 20 per cent of 2008. With high candidate availability, employers had no need to negotiate on salary. Those candidates not already employed were offered up to 10 per cent less than their previous salary.

2010 is not the year to be overly selective. Jobseekers should look for opportunities that might provide short-term benefits and add to their experience rather than stay focused a long-term career move. Also, those who get an interview should prepare thoroughly. Contact details for background and reference checks have become a standard procedure in the recruiting process.

Sales & Marketing

	Group Account Director	Account Director	Account Manager	Advertising Account Manager	Product / Brand Manager
Hong Kong	480 - 720	360 - 540	240 - 360	300 - 480	300 - 480
Singapore	190 - 300	100 - 180	75 - 105	55 - 90	90 - 175
China	400 - 600	250 - 300	200 - 250	220 - 280	180 - 250
Japan	N/A	10 - 15	6 - 9	5 - 14	6 - 8

	Business Development Manager	Channel Manager	Customer Service Manager	Direct Marketing Manager	Marketing Communications Manager
Hong Kong	400 - 600	480 - 600	360 - 480	400 - 550	520 - 800
Singapore	60 - 110	90 - 140	80 - 150	70 - 120	100 - 180
China	200 - 350	200 - 300	120 - 180	216 - 280	240 - 300
Japan	6 - 14	6 - 12	N/A	6 - 9	7 - 10

	Marketing Director	Marketing Executive	Merchandising Manager	Sales Manager	National Sales Director
Hong Kong	900 - 1,000	300 - 480	400 - 600	480 - 720	1,200 - 1,800
Singapore	170 - 250	45000 - 75	90 - 145	90 - 180	200 - 350
China	600 - 800	100 - 150	300 - 400	72 - 150*	1,000 - 1,500^
Japan	10 - 15	N/A	5 - 7	8 - 9	14 - 20

*(base) ^ (w/bonus)

	Country Manager	Public Relations / Communications Manager	Visual Merchandising Manager	Service Delivery Manager	Sales Operations Manager
Hong Kong	960 - 1,200	450 - 600	300 - 360	360 - 480	450 - 600
Singapore	300 - 450	80 - 130	90 - 150	160 - 300	160 - 250
China	800 - 1,000	400 - 550	250 - 300	200 - 300	350 - 450
Japan	15 - 40	7 - 10	5 - 8	6 - 9	6 - 9

Notes

- Typical Salary Range in '000 (excluding Japan which is stated in millions)
- All Salaries are represented in local currencies