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ENERGETIC LEVELS OF RECRUITMENT REFLECT STRENGTH OF UK MR INDUSTRY

Recruitment activity across the UK Market Research (MR) industry has been “very, very buoyant” over the past six months, signalling that the industry is currently enjoying a sustained period of growth, according to Sinead Hasson, Operations Director at RPCushing Recruitment.

“When recruitment activity picks up, it is generally a sign that things are on the up in an industry. Since summer 2005 there has been significant movement in the MR industry at all levels, and this has been sustained throughout the first five months of 2006.

“We are noticing that presently there is particular interest, amongst both big and small players, in recruiting at a mid-management level. We have also, quite recently, made a number of very senior placements with global companies in the capital. This appears to indicate that the focus continues to be on London as the European headquarters for many international agencies.

“We currently have quite a number of larger clients with bulk vacancies to fill. This often happens at the end of the financial year, when companies have performed well and are expecting further growth in the year ahead. Generally speaking, it is a sign of a strong industry with high expectations.

“Due to the high demand for strong research professionals, the MR jobs market is very much candidate-led at present. There is a lot of competition for excellent mid-level candidates who really have the ability to make an impact on their employer’s business. Unfortunately for the industry, this type of candidate is few and far between, due to cut backs in graduate training and recruitment programmes a few years ago, when the market was slow.

“As such, clients are being flexible with their job offers and most are definitely open to negotiating salaries in order to secure the right person for their vacancy. Some of the larger players have also been talking about extending the benefits they offer employees, but I’ve yet to see anything materialise along these lines.

“Despite being flexible to secure good candidates, clients are becoming more accountable than ever. They are certainly not being frivolous and recruitment decisions are well thought out and commercially focused.”

Commenting on the twelve months ahead, Sinead observes that MR employers need to pay particular attention to developing young and junior talent, if they are to bring on the next generation of ‘star’ performers and retain talent within the MR profession.

“To address the current shortage of middle-weight researchers, employers should consider recruiting strong junior research professionals, who have the ability and ambition to become high-flying middle management within a year or two, with the right training and mentoring. Employers must be aware of the need to nurture and bring on younger talent, to ensure the continued strength of the UK MR industry.”

RPCushing Recruitment is one of the UK’s fastest growing market leaders in the provision of recruitment solutions for the market research, design and marketing communications industries.

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