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UC San Diego Extension Releases ‘Hot Careers 2014’ Report: Computer Systems Analysts Tops List



As the economy continues to rebound in the aftermath of the Great Recession, job prospects for the most recent class of college graduates appear to be considerably brighter than in recent years, according to a new free report issued by [UC San Diego Extension](#).

The sixth annual report, titled [Hot Careers for College Grads and Returning Students 2014](#), tracks a number of positive trends for college graduates and mid-career professionals, with the goal of identifying the job opportunities most likely to expand in the foreseeable future.

Based on the ever-increasing demands of technological innovation and change in a global technology age, the top ten hottest careers are as follows:

1. Computer systems analysts
2. Market research analysts and marketing specialists
3. Accountants and auditors
4. Management analysts
5. Elementary school teachers (excluding special education)
6. Cost estimators
7. Financial analysts
8. Database administrators
9. Computer programmers
10. Meeting, convention, and event planners

Nine of the top 10 careers are technology- and business-oriented, with elementary school teachers (#5) as the lone exception.

As the UC San Diego Extension research team analyzed the economic landscape, one overarching theme emerged: Technology continues to drive job creation, with many of the growing careers tied to technological changes ranging from cloud computing to the need for easily accessible data in such emerging fields as healthcare and biotech.

Overall, tech-oriented sectors continue to seek a high level of analytical and marketing skills as the prime hiring criteria. Equally so, education remains a transformative element in hiring decisions.

“The financial sector continues to need college graduates with analytical and marketing skills who help make companies more competitive,” said Mary L. Walshok, associate vice chancellor of public programs and dean of UCSD Extension, “Additionally, education remains a transforming force in an economy that values not only a skilled workforce, but a flexible one.”

As with previous editions, the “Hot Careers 2014” report predicts realistic areas of employment where recent graduates and mid-career professionals can leverage or build upon their skills to enter the workforce.

The list is intended as a broad analysis of the best opportunities for those job-seekers who have at least an undergraduate degree. Data for the “Hot Careers 2014” designation is based on wage and employment data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics’ (BLS) Occupational Employment Statistics.

Four major criteria were considered in the “Hot Careers 2014” list:

1. current employment in the field
2. projected growth in the occupation between 2010 and 2020
3. median annual salary in the occupation; and
4. workplace environment characteristics

According to the report, the economy has shown promising progress and nearly all new-hire indicators appear to be headed in a positive direction.

A recent survey by the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) reported that more than 30 percent of graduating college seniors from the Class of 2014 who applied for a job had been hired prior to graduation. The figure is a slight improvement over the numbers for

the two previous graduating classes.

Another recent NACE survey reported that U.S. businesses expect to increase the number of new college graduates they hire this year by nearly 9 percent.

The careers cited do not typically require a master's or doctorate degree, though additional training beyond a college degree is recommended.

Recent college graduates as well as working professionals who desire a mid-career change likely would benefit from “bridges” to high-quality employment – such as the wide range of courses and professional certificate programs offered by continuing education programs.

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