



NEWS RELEASE

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Bay Area employers able to pay more, CompAnalysis survey shows

OAKLAND, Calif. (Nov. 21, 2007) - While Bay Area workers make more money than their fellow legal assistants or accountants or secretaries elsewhere in the country, it is apparently not an overwhelming challenge for their employers to step up.

The 2007 *Greater San Francisco Bay Area Compensation Survey* of 130 employers representing 40,000 employees conducted by CompAnalysis, an Oakland-based compensation consulting firm, primarily gathered and reports specific pay and benefit data. It also surveyed trends and opinions, and shows that area pay rates are continuing to rise steadily, if slowly; the number of jobs at these organizations is growing; and the future looks even better, if by just a little bit, on both counts.

This year's survey is available at www.SalarySurveys.com.

"Employers compete with each other to attract and keep the best employees," said Shari Dunn, who founded CompAnalysis in 1980. A significant part of an employer's competitive advantage "relates to pay and your ability to access reliable sources of pay data that are specific to your location(s), jobs, and organization's size. It is more critical than ever to have access to current data."

CompAnalysis published its first Salary Survey in 2003.

The 151-page 2007 survey report includes details on 70 types of jobs that apply to most workplaces. CompAnalysis also frequently does custom surveys of more specialized, industry-specific positions in its consulting work for specific clients.

The companies that responded to the 2007 Survey appear relatively bullish about their own futures, only slightly more so than their confidence in the local economy: Only 18 percent reported that they expect the local economy to get worse next year, and 8 percent said that about their own business or organization.

Making payroll isn't generally regarded as a significant problem, with 69 percent reporting that they feel they are able to pay competitively, as opposed to just 14 percent that reported they were unable to be competitive on salaries.

These workforces have been growing or at least remaining stable. Nearly half (45 percent) of employers reported growing their workforces in the first half of this year, by a median increase of 8 percent, and an identical percentage said they would also grow, by a median increase of 10 percent, in the last half of 2007.

Among some other findings of the 2007 Salary Survey are the following:

- While employers have consistently listed health care inflation, tight salary budgets and potential problems with labor supply as "important issues" over the last four years, the Survey found high housing costs are now becoming more of a concern for a group that has doubled from 2003 to 2007 (from 16% to 35%).

(more)

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- Pay might never rise as fast as employees would prefer, but pay freezes have dropped substantially in the last four years. (Only 7.8 percent reported any pay freezes in 2007, down from 13.5 percent last year and 38.4 percent in 2003.) Pay reductions have nearly disappeared, from 8.1 percent of employers reporting pay cuts in 2003 to just 1 percent four years later in 2007.
- Budgets for salary increases in 2008 are expected to be rock solid across the board, up 3.5 percent, unchanged from this year, and insignificantly lower than in 2006.
- Benefits costs, and the need to share them with employees, have consistently been major concerns, but fewer bosses reported actually shifting costs to employees this year, dropping by half from 2003 (54 percent) to 2007 (just 26 percent.)
- Bay Area jobs generally command more base pay than national averages, but some jobs are more special than others. Bay area legal assistants earn 52 percent more than their average U.S. counterpart (\$65,188 per year here compared to \$42,846.) Bay Area human resources assistants enjoy a 28 percent differential, as do senior level accountants and customer service representatives. On the other hand, the difference between the salary of an administrative assistant and her or his counterpart elsewhere is not that great - just 5 percent.
- There are also differences within the Bay Area itself, with base pay in Silicon Valley averaging 110 percent of the Bay Area average, while San Francisco and the Outer East Bay rank at 101 percent, the Inner East Bay just 97 percent and the North Bay 95 percent of the Bay Area averages.

CompAnalysis has been working directly with Bay Area employers since 1980. The need for a specific survey of regional job data became clear several years ago, Dunn said, as the differences between Bay Area and national figures grew.

“It continues to be more and more evident that the quality of available location-specific pay data on core staff jobs in our area has been deteriorating,” Dunn said. “There has been significant erosion in both sample sizes and data specificity” in localized statistics reported from large national surveys, she said.

CompAnalysis, an independent compensation and performance management consulting firm, has worked with more than 700 diverse clients from a broad variety of industries including technology, healthcare, manufacturing, agribusiness, financial services, professional firms, not-for-profits and government agencies. The company specializes in custom pay and performance management plans for small businesses, mid-sized companies and nonprofits. Learn more at www.compensation.com.

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A PDF copy of the CompAnalysis 2007 Salary Surveys report, including various charts that graphically report some of these data, is available to media representatives for reporting purposes upon request. Contact Jack Lyness, jlyness@e-agency.com, 510-304-2411. A CompAnalysis logo and a photo of Shari Dunn, scanned specifically for print publication, can be easily downloaded at http://www.givememore.com/comp_analysis.