2015 Linux Jobs Report

*Unstoppable Linux Job Market Shows
No Signs of Slowing Down*

March 2015

Executive Summary

Recruiters are in hot pursuit of Linux talent. As business continues its tectonic shift to an open source model, employers are hungrier than ever for skilled Linux professionals who can demonstrate their competencies.

With its ability to adapt faster than any other platform to new technologies and markets, Linux is today's defacto choice for everything from open cloud operating systems like OpenStack to product innovations like Tesla automobiles—and the opportunities abound for professionals who can support these increasingly ubiquitous Linux-based systems and projects. The time is right for professionals with experience on other operating systems to learn Linux.

To better understand the clear advantage that professionals with Linux expertise have in the job market, and to learn how employers can attract and retain the best of them, Dice and The Linux Foundation surveyed both hiring managers and job candidates. The 2015 Linux Jobs Report reveals and analyzes the responses from more than 1,000 hiring managers at corporations, small and medium businesses (SMBs), government organizations, and staffing agencies across the globe—as well as responses from more than 3,400 Linux professionals worldwide.

Key findings from the 2015 Linux Jobs Survey and Report show that:

- **Nearly all hiring managers are looking to recruit Linux professionals in the next six months.** With new Linux-based systems, projects and products constantly emerging, hiring the right talent to support all the growth continues to be a priority among employers. Ninety-seven percent of hiring managers report they will bring on Linux talent relative to other skills areas in the next six months.

- **The rise of open cloud platforms is creating even more demand for Linux professionals with the right expertise.** Forty-two percent of hiring managers say that experience in OpenStack and CloudStack will have a major impact on their hiring decisions, while 23 percent report security is a sought-after area of expertise and 19 percent are looking for Linux talent with Software-Defined Networking (SDN) skills.

- **Linux-certified professionals will be especially well positioned in the job market this year**, with 44 percent of hiring managers saying they're more likely to hire a candidate with Linux certification, and 54 percent expecting either certification or formal training of their Systems Administrators (SysAdmins) candidates.

Employers are hungrier than ever for Linux talent.

The demand for skilled Linux professionals just keeps growing. More than nine in ten hiring managers plan to bring professionals with Linux skills on board in the next six months—and 50 percent say they'll hire even more Linux talent this year than they did last year. This burst in Linux staffing, up four points over 2014, has been fueled primarily by the rise in open cloud platforms, Linux-based technologies and the innovative new products that run on them. The recovering economy has also played an important role, with 44 percent of hiring managers saying that the current economic environment has prompted them to hire more Linux talent this year.

But will companies actually be able to fill their Linux-based positions? According to the survey, it won't be easy. Hiring managers are still struggling to find professionals with Linux skills, with 88 percent reporting that it's "very difficult" or "somewhat difficult" to find these candidates. And when they do find Linux pros with the right stuff, they'll do everything they can to keep them happy. The majority of hiring managers (70 percent) say their companies have increased incentives to retain Linux talent, with 37 percent offering more flexible work hours and telecommuting, and 36 percent increasing salaries for Linux pros more than in other parts of the company.

While employers struggle to recruit and retain top Linux talent, the majority of Linux professionals surveyed (55 percent) believe it will be "very easy" or "fairly easy" to land new opportunities in 2015. A central factor contributing to this confidence is the fact that they're routinely recruited, with 72 percent of respondents reporting that they've received at least one call from recruiters in the past six months and 28 percent receiving six or more calls within the same time period.

Advances in Cloud Computing, Security and Software-Defined Networking Bring New Opportunities to Linux Pros

Over the last year, the rise of open cloud platforms has created even more demand for Linux professionals who have the right expertise. Forty-two percent of hiring managers say experience with or knowledge of OpenStack and CloudStack are having a big impact on their Linux hiring decisions, and 49 percent of Linux professionals believe open cloud will be the biggest growth area for Linux in 2015.

Security vulnerabilities like the 2014 Heartbleed bug have also fueled a need for Linux professionals, especially those with the skills to help secure and improve critical infrastructure projects. Twenty-three percent of hiring managers say security experience has an impact on hiring decisions, as companies look for skilled support of open source security projects.

Despite being a hot topic in the press and at conferences this year, only 5 percent of hiring managers say that knowledge of containers has impacted their hiring decisions, and just 19 percent of Linux professionals see it as the biggest area of growth in the industry.

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Linux-certified professionals poised to win big.

The Linux professionals who receive the most recruiting calls, and the best incentives, are those who can quickly demonstrate their skills and knowledge — and the predominant proof points in 2015 will be formal training and certification. Forty-four percent of hiring managers say they're more likely to hire a candidate with Linux certification, and 54 percent expect either certification or formal training when hiring SysAdmins. With 66 percent of hiring managers looking to fill the SysAdmin role, Linux professionals with expertise in the operational support of Linux systems, backed by Linux certification, will be the most in-demand talent in this year's job market.

While most Linux pros keep their skills up-to-date with free resources like online tutorials (92 percent), many also engage in professional networking to learn from peers (45 percent), attend conferences and events (43 percent), and attend formal Linux training (28 percent). This year, as more employers seek highly skilled IT professionals, Linux certification will become an increasingly important attribute on a well-rounded candidate's resume. And with 38 percent of employers saying they're willing to help employees with the cost of obtaining Linux certification, more Linux professionals will be incentivized to continue their professional education and get certified.

Linux professionals get paid to do what they love.

For most professionals we surveyed, Linux isn't just a job or even a career. It's a lifelong passion—and fortunately, it's a passion that pays off. As the recruiting calls, job offers, and employment perks continue to roll in, 90 percent of professionals acknowledge that knowing Linux has advanced their careers, an increase of four points from last year.

Their love for all things Linux continues to grow, too. Last year, 51 percent cited a passion for Linux as their primary reason for seeking a Linux career. This year, that number was up to 75 percent. And it's no wonder. As open source expands into more areas of computing, business, and daily life, the future keeps getting brighter for Linux professionals who've followed their dreams and—and they'll have plenty of opportunities to continue pursuing them in 2015. Sixty-six percent reported the ubiquity of Linux drove them to seek out a career in this area, and 42 percent cited wanting to be involved in the collaborative development model that is fueling how most software is being built today.

2015 Linux Jobs Report Methodology

During December 2014, Dice and The Linux Foundation surveyed both hiring managers and Linux professionals about their Linux jobs needs and preferences. Hiring managers from corporations, small and medium businesses (SMBs), government organizations, and staffing agencies were surveyed. More than 1,000 responded with 66.9 percent indicating their company was headquartered in North America, 13.3 percent in Europe, 6 percent in Asia, 3.8 percent in South America, 1.9 percent in Africa, 2 percent in Mexico and Central America, less than 1 percent in Japan, 1.6 percent in the Middle East, and less than 1 percent in Australia/New Zealand. Respondents needed to have hired at least one Linux professional in the last year, or have plans to hire Linux professionals in 2015 to participate in the survey, and they were allowed to check as many responses to questions as appropriate. In addition, more than 3,400 Linux professionals responded to a survey, with 27 percent indicating they've been working as a Linux professional for 10 years or more.

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About The Linux Foundation

The Linux Foundation is a nonprofit consortium dedicated to fostering the growth of Linux and collaborative software development. Founded in 2000, the organization sponsors the work of Linux creator Linus Torvalds and promotes, protects and advances the Linux operating system and collaborative software development by marshaling the resources of its members and the open source community. The Linux Foundation provides a neutral forum for collaboration and education by hosting Collaborative Projects, Linux conferences including LinuxCon, and generating original research and content that advances the understanding of Linux and collaborative software development. More information can be found at **www.linuxfoundation.org**.