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2012 Linux Jobs Report

*Strong Demand Drives Higher Salaries,
More Perks for Linux Professionals*



A survey and report by Dice and The Linux Foundation
February 16, 2012



Executive Summary

It is well accepted that the IT job market is a bright spot in otherwise uneven economies. In the United States, the unemployment rate for tech professionals is 3.8 percent, a vast improvement from 5.3 percent just 12 months ago and far better than the 8.3 percent national unemployment rate.¹ With strong evidence of job creation tied to increased adoption and use of Linux, Dice and The Linux Foundation teamed up to better understand the global 2012 hiring outlook for Linux professionals.

So just how big is the demand for Linux talent? And what does it tell us about the career outlook for Linux developers, system administrators, and other open source professionals? The findings of the joint survey tell a conclusive story: Companies everywhere need trained Linux professionals, and they need them now.

The comprehensive survey includes responses from more than 2,000 hiring managers at corporations, Small and Medium Businesses (SMBs), government organizations, and staffing agencies from across the globe. The combination of Dice's network of tech-focused hiring managers and The Linux Foundation's access to Linux-specific employers has surfaced an insightful report on Linux job trends.

Key findings from the 2012 Linux Jobs Survey and Report include:

- **Demand for Linux talent is on the rise, but finding those professionals is difficult.**
Eight in 10 (81%) survey respondents say that hiring Linux talent is a priority in 2012. This pressing matter is particularly evident when Linux demand is compared to hiring in other skill sets: 63 percent of hiring managers are increasing Linux hires relative to jobs created in other skill areas. The issue? A full 85 percent say finding Linux talent is somewhat to very difficult, making Linux professionals some of the most sought talent in 2012.
- **Companies are making significant investments to attract and retain Linux talent.**
Linux professionals garner more full-time positions and better salaries, bonuses and perks. While the pay increase for tech professionals averaged just two percent in 2011, Linux professionals have seen a five percent increase in salaries year-over-year and a 15 percent jump in bonus payouts².
Flexible work schedules (37%) additional training and certification programs (30%) and salary increases above the company norm (28%) are among the perks Linux gurus can expect.
- **Mid-level Linux developers and system administrators are the most in-demand.**
Employers are seeking mostly Linux developers – 67 percent - and systems administrators – 55 percent - with varying levels of experience; though, mid-level professionals appear to be the most highly sought: 75 percent of respondents say they're looking for Linux talent with three to five years of experience.

1 Bureau of Labor Statistics, January 2012 Computer & Mathematical Operations unemployment rate (not seasonally adjusted), and overall unemployment rate (seasonally adjusted)

2 2012-2011 Dice Salary Survey

Demand for Linux Talent Exceeds Supply

Even as overall unemployment rates remain high worldwide, the tech job market continues to thrive — and the demand for Linux talent, in particular, is booming. Eight in 10 (81%) survey respondents say that hiring Linux talent is a priority in 2012. This urgency is driving a substantial uptick in recruiting activity, with nearly half (47%) of hiring managers expecting to add more Linux professionals to their firms in the first six months of 2012 than they did in the previous six months.

The career outlook for Linux developers, system administrators, and other open source professionals is strong, particularly when compared to demand in other skillsets: 63 percent of hiring managers are adding Linux hires relative to other skill areas.

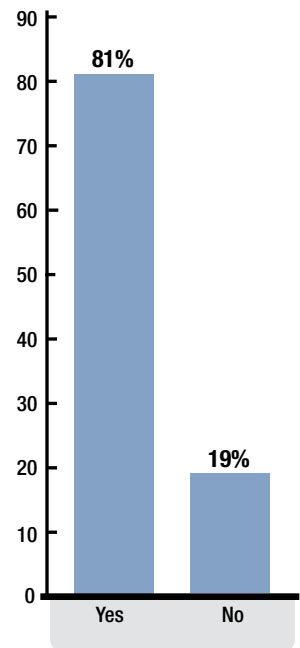
Likewise, 56 percent of respondents that are adding more staff anticipate these positions will be full-time jobs. In an economy where part-time and contract work has become more prevalent, the survey results indicate that trained Linux professionals have a unique ability to command more stable and secure full-time positions.

But, the Linux expertise that companies seek isn't always easy to find. In fact, 85 percent of hiring managers say that finding Linux talent is "somewhat to very" difficult.

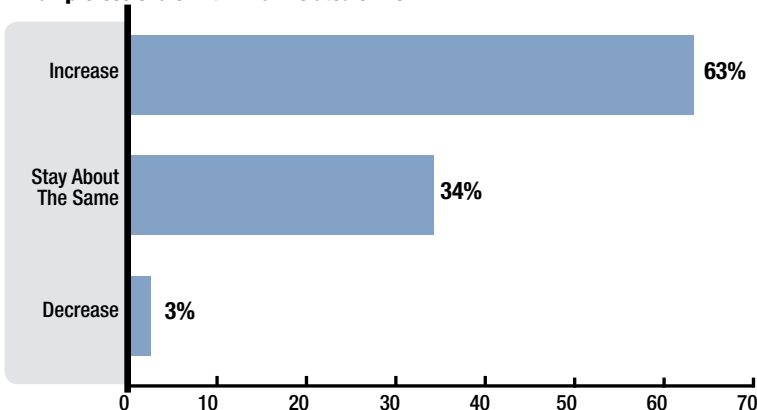
To cope with this shortage in the talent pool, respondents say they'll use a variety of strategies including: continuing to search until they find the right person (49%); seeking training for existing employees (39%); and hiring a consultant (31%).

With demand for Linux talent clearly outpacing the supply of qualified professionals, Linux experts with the right skills are in a good position in 2012.

In 2012, is hiring Linux talent a priority for you?



Relative to other skill areas, in the next six months do you think your hires for Linux professionals with Linux-related skills will:



To understand what is driving this demand, we asked what has changed in their organizations to prompt this hiring activity. The results paint an optimistic picture about company growth and the use of Linux to support it. Forty-nine percent say their company is growing, which is creating the need for additional Linux-focused team members, while another 48 percent say that they are increasing their use of Linux and need in-house talent to support it. And 30 percent say that Linux has become core to their business and they need to increase participation in the Linux community through new hires.

The full breakdown of demand drivers is as follows:

What has changed in your organization that is driving hiring of Linux professionals in 2012, as opposed to 2011?

1. Company is growing, creating need for additional Linux-focused team members (49%)
2. Increasing use of Linux in our company and need in-house support (48%)
3. Linux has become core to our business and we need to increase our participation in the Linux community (30%)
4. Replacing systems with Linux and need Linux expertise to assist with migrations (27%)
5. Difficulty in retaining Linux-related talent is creating openings that we need to backfill (13%)
6. I don't know (7%)
7. Other (5%)

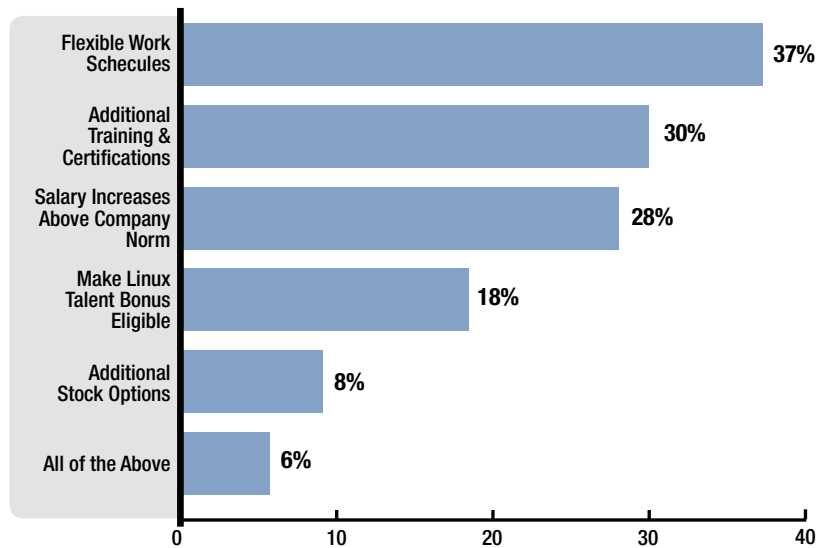
Linux Pros Command Better Pay Raises and Perks

As Linux and open source continue to provide the foundation upon which the Internet, smartphones, supercomputers, and more are built, the survey results show that the companies that rely on it are increasingly willing to loosen their purse strings and policies to recruit and retain the best Linux talent.

Nearly two-thirds (66%) of survey respondents are taking aggressive steps to ensure that they retain and reward top Linux professionals.

While the average pay increase for tech professionals averaged just two percent in 2011, the 2012 Linux Jobs Report indicates that Linux experts can expect and command more. In fact, according to Dice's annual Salary Survey, in 2011, **Linux professionals saw a five percent increase, year-over-year, in their pay as well as a 15 percent jump in bonus payouts.** It's clear that professionals with expertise in open source software and the collaborative development model have unmatched levels of job security, as well as unique opportunities for career growth.

What steps are you taking to retain Linux-based talent?

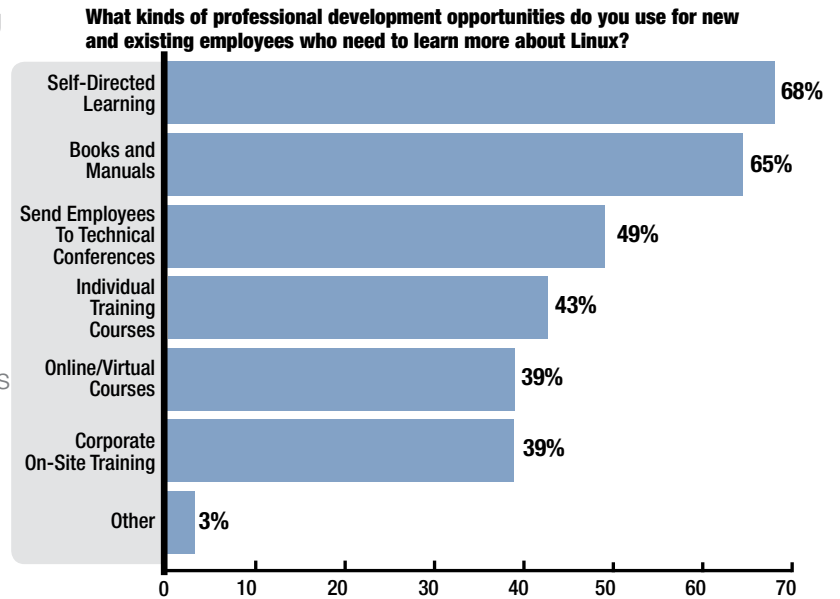


Hottest Openings: Linux Development and Systems Administration

To start 2012, hiring managers are pursuing Linux developers (67%) and systems administrators (55%) most often to fill open positions, although IT managers (20%) and outside consultants (15%) are also in demand. The survey finds that companies are most aggressively targeting the mid-level professional, with 75 percent of respondents looking for Linux professionals with three to five years of experience.

It's important to note that among the world's largest organizations (companies with 500+ employees), the most sought-after skills are different. Large enterprises are seeking Linux application development (49%) and kernel development skills (46%) above all others. Not only do these companies rely on Linux-based systems to power their businesses, they're also becoming increasingly involved with core Linux kernel development and contributing more back to the kernel. They require in-depth understanding at the kernel and application levels, providing a lucrative niche for some Linux developers.

To help existing Linux professionals come up to speed on the most important skills, our respondents report that they primarily use self-directed learning opportunities, books and manuals, technical events and individual training courses.



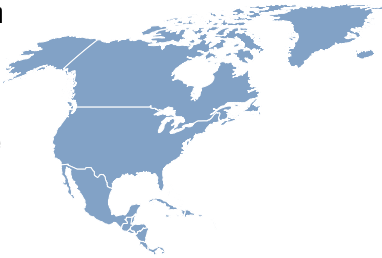
Seizing the Opportunities

According to the 2012 Linux Jobs Report, Linux professionals with the right open source chops have lots of reasons to be optimistic about the future. For people with well-honed Linux skills and up-to-date training, the job market is thriving — and the opportunities put Linux professionals directly in the center of disruptive and exciting innovations that are changing the way we work and live.

Regional Notes

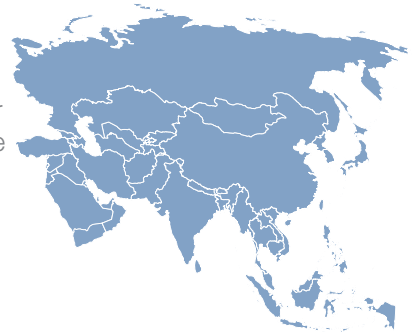
North American Growth

More than half of all North American survey respondents cite company growth as the primary driver for their increase in Linux job creation and workforce demands, indicating that as the economy strengthens, Linux is helping drive innovation in the third industrial revolution. Additionally, 71 percent of these respondents are primarily seeking Linux developers.



Booming Asian Market

Asia shows an even higher percentage of respondents looking for Linux talent. Nearly nine in 10 (86%) of survey respondents from Asia say that hiring Linux talent is a priority in the year ahead, citing an increased use of Linux as the primary driver. This is consistent with reports about the increasing use of Linux among consumer electronics makers largely concentrated in the Asia/Pacific market.



2012 Linux Jobs Report Methodology

From December 6 to December 16, 2011, Dice and The Linux Foundation surveyed hiring managers at corporations, Small and Medium Businesses (SMBs), government organizations, and staffing agencies. More than 2,300 responded with 42 percent indicating their company was headquartered in the United States, 27 percent in Europe, 11 percent in Asia, seven percent in South America, as well as Africa, Australia/New Zealand, Japan, the Middle East, Mexico and Central America. Respondents needed to have hired at least one Linux professional in the last year, or have plans to hire Linux professionals in 2012 to participate in the survey, and were allowed to check as many responses to questions as appropriate.

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About The Linux Foundation

The Linux Foundation is a nonprofit consortium dedicated to fostering the growth of Linux. Founded in 2000, the organization sponsors the work of Linux creator Linus Torvalds and promotes, protects and advances the Linux operating system by marshaling the resources of its members and the open source development community. The Linux Foundation provides a neutral forum for collaboration and education by hosting Linux conferences, including LinuxCon, and generating original Linux research that advances the understanding of the Linux platform. Its web properties, including Linux.com reach approximately two million people per month. The organization also provides extensive [Linux training courses](#) that feature the Linux kernel community's leading experts as instructors. www.LinuxFoundation.org