News You Can Use

by Haidee E. Allerton

Survey Says

Here are some stats on business travel from Homewood Suites Hotels:

❑ Sixty-nine percent of respondents said they travel at least five times a year on business.

❑ Almost 70 percent said at least two annual business trips require them to stay five consecutive nights or longer.

❑ An equal number—37 percent—said what they like about being on the road is either the excitement of their jobs or traveling to a new town.

❑ The three things business travelers miss most while away from home (other than family) are
1. their computers, 34 percent
2. the camaraderie of co-workers, 23 percent
3. their administrative support, 22 percent.

❑ The most important hotel room amenity respondents want is a comfortable bed (38 percent), followed by Internet access and a space to relax.

❑ The six things that business travelers want to see in their rooms most (in descending order of importance) are
1. a large work desk
2. voicemail
3. a data port
4. a two-line phone

New Sheriff in Town

Talent officer may just be the next new job title for HR managers and directors.

In fact, Hire.com, an e-recruiting application service provider based in Austin, Texas, held the first Talent Officer Conference in June, by invitation only. Executive-level HR professionals met to discuss innovative ways to attract and retain talented employees in the increasingly competitive job market.

Some HR managers like it; some don't. Says one exec at a New Jersey communications firm, "We have chief knowledge officers, so why not a chief talent officer?"

Source www.workforce.com

Hacker 101

Classes in computer security are increasingly popular.

Foundstone is one institution that teaches Ultimate Hacker, in which students learn how to break into their own systems to discover the weak spots. The class shows how to exploit security flaws that exist in popular software and how to identify open access ports in the network.

Foundstone director of training Dane Skagen also gives advice on guessing master passwords, obtaining password files in transit, and using software that decrypts passwords.

Source *Los Angeles Times*

Send press releases or short articles on news, trends, and best practices to **News You Can Use,** *Training & Development, 1640 King Street, Box 1443, Alexandria, VA 22313-2043. Email NYCU@astd.org.*

Trend Watch

As dot.com stock options look less enticing than they once did, tech firms are scrambling to offer other, more creative perks, reports the *Washington Post.*

For instance, Net2000 Communications, a Herndon, Virginia, telecom firm whose share price went from $40 to about $5 at press time, now offers an optional four-day workweek, in which people work four 10-hour days or four 9.5-days.

ThinkXML, a Rockville, Maryland, firm, lets employees participate in a sabbatical program to combat boredom and burnout that seem to go hand-in-hand with tech careers. People who stay with the firm for three years get a month off with pay and benefits, five-year vets get a three-month vacation, and those with seven years get six months off with pay.

Other companies are offering leases to BMWs, "appreciation credits" redeemable at retail shops, and free
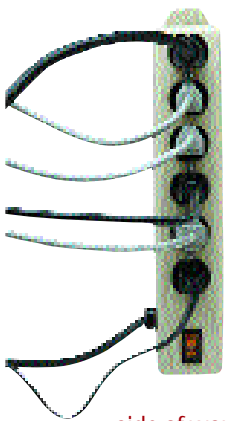
5. an ergonomic chair

6. a VCR.

Respondents named the most frequently visited U.S. cities for business as Chicago, Dallas/Ft. Worth, and New York.

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Here are some key findings from New Horizons Computer Learning Centers Y2000 IT Training Trends Survey:

Most students taking computer training outside of work are mid-career professionals seeking higher salaries and advancement, and

❏ are male, 75 percent

❏ make $35,000 (61 percent) to $65,000 (6 percent) a year

❏ expect up to a 20 percent pay increase upon completion of training.

More findings show that of all respondents,

❏ 49 percent plan to change careers after completing training

❏ 45 percent have college degrees; 40 percent graduated from high school

❏ 71 percent are younger than 40 years old

❏ 22 percent are unemployed.

With certification, students can earn $10,000 to $15,000 more than the typical college graduate. Certification takes a year, while a B.A. takes four years.

For the complete survey, call 310.785.0515, ext. 264.

News Flash

One of the newest and biggest environmental threats is the dumping of old, used computers. Hoping to provide some relief to the problem, Big Blue is going green.

For just $29.99, IBM will accept all types (and brands) of PC parts through its IBM PC Recycling Service. To take advantage of IBM's program, all consumers have to do is box up the used equipment and send it via UPS to Envirocycle in Hallstead, Pennsylvania, a recycling firm. The $29.99 fee covers the shipping cost. Consumers can sign up at time of purchase or contact IBM.

The program is aimed at individual consumers and small-business owners—two good-sized groups of computer users who haven't had many ways to get rid of unwanted hardware.

In general, unwanted computer stuff has either gathered dust in people's garages or been shipped to China, where environmental laws regarding hazardous disposal are not as strict as in the United States. Inner parts of computers contain toxic chemicals, though the shell of a monitor and hard drive can be used again.

IBM will donate usable equipment to such organizations as job training and family services centers.

Hewlett-Packard says that it has a recycling program in the works. As for laws, Massachusetts just enacted a ban on the personal disposal of computer screens, as well as TV sets and other glass picture tubes, in landfills or incinerators. The European Union plans to require computer makers to take back their products at no cost once the equipment becomes outdated.

For more info www.ibm.com;www.recycle.net/recycle/tradenvcycle.html; U.S. Public Interest Group, www.pirg.org

❏ **In 1998, 20.6 million personal computers became obsolete, according to the National Safety Council's Environmental Health Center.**

❏ **Only 2.3 million of those PCs were recycled.**

❏ **NSC estimates that 315 million additional computers will become outdated by 2004.**

or low-cost training in hot skills such as e-commerce and global information and technology management.

The Dark Side

Creative, nice perks aside, the recruitment war may be getting ugly. No longer are recruiters nice people who visit college campuses, says *Trend Alert* e-newsletter. They've become more like…predators.

Check out these aggressive recruiting techniques:

❏ A recruiter sits in a competitor's parking garage approaching employees as they leave work.

❏ Service recruiters observe people doing a good job and offer them a new job and more pay on the spot.

❏ Hospitality recruiters visit other hotels and restaurants and hand out business cards.

❏ IT recruiters go to college campuses and recruit undergraduates before they get their degrees, without bothering to work through the placement office.

There are even rumors of some recruiters getting themselves hired by targeted companies and then recruiting from within.

Source www.herman.net