



ROBERT WALTERS REAL ESTATE MARKET UPDATE DECEMBER, 2008

MARKET UPDATE

In comparison to the first half of the year, quarter three 2008 saw reduced hiring levels within the Japanese commercial real estate sector. Many organisations experienced lengthy sign-off procedures for both permanent and temporary hires when increasing headcount. Despite a slowing in overall hiring volumes, organisations continued to recruit and there were still skills shortages in certain areas of the market. As a result of the slowing in the hiring process, many organisations missed out on top tier candidates - the ability to retain momentum from interview to offer stage is still important to ensure the best talent is secured.

Job Volume

The volume of permanent jobs coming to market varied greatly from firm to firm, but there was a continuing emphasis on strategic and business critical hires in quarter three. This was due to permanent headcount replacement for areas of the business where strong talent is necessary regardless of market conditions. We saw particularly strong demand from our clients for bilingual talent in the accounting and finance as well as asset management spaces, and we expect this trend to continue. As such, we expect the relative lack of talent in these areas to remain an issue firms will face heading into 2009 and beyond. The greatest slowdown in hiring took place within most firms' front offices, with very little demand for acquisitions and execution talent. Cutbacks in these areas were more the market norm during the past few months. As is typical in a slower permanent hiring market, we saw companies look to contract solutions to meet key hiring needs.

As most hiring managers reviewed their 2008 hiring requirements in quarter three, we envisage a slowing in recruitment over the fourth quarter and into the coming year. Firms will continue to assess headcount, and we expect to see a continuation of rigid approval processes for new hires. We expect contract hiring will continue but have begun to see the rigid approval processes extend to that area as well. This will likely continue through the fourth quarter and into the early parts of 2009.

Candidate Flow

Candidate flow, particularly in the real estate valuation, securitization and corporate finance areas, increased significantly in the latter half of 2008 compared to the same period for 2007. Restructuring in real estate lenders, developers and funds lead to some of the strongest talent the market has seen in recent years beginning to seek new opportunities. Even candidates employed at stable firms began checking the market in preparation for potential issues their firms may have to deal with in the coming quarters, and we also saw a wider variety and more senior level of candidate becoming open to contract and temp-to-perm opportunities.

However, one important area of note is that candidates are more cautious about moving to certain firms, and those looking for a new role are carefully assessing an organisation's stability and scope for progression in a role. In comparison to this time last year, candidates are being more realistic in their salary expectations and are becoming increasingly receptive to moving into roles which use their current skill sets, rather than exploring new areas. However, it is still not a perfect buyer's market when it comes to procuring top industry talent, and it still requires extra effort on the part of employers to attract the right talent for their business.

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Robert Walters was established in 1985 and operates across five continents with 38 offices in 17 countries. Robert Walters is one of the world's leading global, specialist professional recruitment consultancies and has earned a well-deserved reputation for satisfying the career aspirations of the highest calibre professionals.

Since 2000, **Robert Walters Japan** has specialised in permanent, contract and interim recruitment across all industry sectors, and our clients in Tokyo and Osaka include some of the world's leading investment banks and multinational, blue chip commercial companies. Operating at all levels of seniority, we manage the careers of the best professionals in the fields of accounting, banking & securities, real estate, insurance, IT, investment, legal & compliance, sales & marketing, human resources, administration support, supply chain, retail, hospitality and healthcare.

OUTSTANDING CANDIDATES

REAL ESTATE

Accountant

After graduating from a top-tier American university, this candidate started their career in one of the Big 4 accounting firms in the United States, where they audited financial services companies for six years. After returning to Japan five years ago, they joined a large real estate investment management company where their strong performance and leadership skills lead them into one of the top positions in the finance team. USCPA and CFA qualified with a wealth of experience in the real estate market, this candidate is completely bilingual and comes across as ambitious with proven experience and a forward thinking approach.

Analyst

This real estate investment analyst candidate spent the past two and a half years at a top-tier U.S. investment bank after finishing their undergraduate and graduate studies at Tokyo University. In their first year at the investment bank, they participated in an analyst rotation program where they received training and exposure to a variety of investment approaches. They then joined the real estate financing team, where they were involved in real estate underwriting, valuations and due diligence and gained a deep understanding of the commercial real estate market here in Japan. With business level English and great interpersonal skills this is a strong analyst candidate who is looking for an opportunity to further develop their career in real estate investment in Japan.

Asset Management

This top-tier candidate has an excellent skill set and broad experience within the real estate investment market. They began their career in one of the industry-leading Japanese real estate firms and are currently working as a senior asset manager for an international real estate investment fund. They have progressed from property management of office, residential and other asset classes to asset and portfolio management and have spent the most recent eight years responsible for acquisition and asset management of both office and residential properties. With proven skills in pricing, sourcing, due diligence, valuation, transaction execution and disposition, this candidate has a solid skill set for both acquisition and asset management roles. With a wealth of management experience, solid presentation and strong English skills, they are looking for an opportunity where they can play a key role in the growth and success of your business.

Contract Hiring Options

Did you know that Robert Walters is the first company to establish a dedicated recruitment team to focus on finance-related positions on a contract basis? Our contract division specialises in all non-permanent employment categories, from temp staffing (haken) and temp to perm (shokai yotei haken), to direct (keiyaku) contract solutions, across three major disciplines: IT contract, operations & accounting contract and support contract.

For enquiries, please call Casey Wahl on (03) 4570 1500 or email at contract@robertwalters.co.jp.

Expansion in Kansai

From January 2009, our Robert Walters Japan Kansai branch will move to a larger office location in the sleek and modern Pias Tower in order to provide even more capability for servicing clients in the Kansai region.

For enquiries, please call John McCrohon on (06) 4964 2660 or email at osaka@robertwalters.co.jp.

Salary Survey 2009

Our annual salary survey provides a significant insight into recruitment trends and salary movements within the financial services, IT and commerce & industry markets. Currently, we are correlating the data for the 2009 salary survey, our tenth annual edition. Look for the 2009 salary survey in print and available for download in early Q1 of 2009. The Japan market version in Japanese will be available soon after.

To reserve a copy in advance, email your name and mailing address to info@robertwalters.co.jp.

2009 Calendars

Our 2009 Robert Walters Japan calendars, featuring photographs from locales around the world printed on high quality paper, are a compact and attractive addition to any workspace. If you haven't yet received our 2009 calendar, please contact us right away.

To request a copy, email your name and mailing address to info@robertwalters.co.jp.

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