

## IT sector revs up on West Coast

National Post  
Wednesday, January 17, 2007  
Page: WK5  
Section: FP Working  
Byline: Jim Jamieson  
Dateline: VANCOUVER  
Source: CanWest News Service  
Idnumber: 200701170010  
Edition: National  
Story Type: Business; Statistics  
Length: 395 words  
Keywords: OLYMPICS; BRIBERY

VANCOUVER - When you juxtapose "hot jobs" and "Vancouver" in the same sentence, many would immediately think of the construction industry.

With all the Olympic-related work and other infrastructure projects dotting the landscape in the Lower Mainland, it's obvious the trades are in high demand.

A little less obvious is a large and growing group of Information Technology workers, that has been spurred by a bubbling provincial economy and the continuing demand for computer-based services both at the front and back end of companies.

A recent national report by IT staffing services provider CNC Global pinpointed Vancouver as posting the fastest growth in full-time positions in the country, with demand up more than 130% from the previous year. Overall, the year-end numbers for Canada also confirm the demand for IT professionals is up 14% from 2005.

CNC Global said 2006 represented the strongest hiring demand in the company's 25-year history, even surpassing the run up to Y2K.

The results don't surprise Rob Davidson, vice-president of Build Direct ([www.builddirect.com](http://www.builddirect.com))-- a Vancouver-based online wholesaler of building supplies. The company brings manufactured goods to customers by handling the sales, marketing and shipping itself. Mr. Davidson said the private company is in the process of adding to its IT staff as a natural consequence of business growth. "We've been seeing double-digit growth in the last couple of years and we will continue to make an investment in our IT area to support that over the next few years," Mr. Davidson said. "Our approach to IT is not that it's in its own silo. It is something that is cross-functional. A lot of our projects require IT resources."

Mr. Davidson said Build Direct is feeling the pinch of a short supply of IT workers. "Definitely, on the IT side it's a tighter labour market," he said. "Sometimes it's about word of mouth, people already knowing someone who works here. Having the right culture and environment is key to attracting good talent. We've got a very flexible culture here."

But the IT demand is not just being felt in traditional

businesses. The Vancouver Organizing Committee for the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games (VANOC) is already ramping up for its IT needs. Dick Vollet, vice-president workforce planning for VANOC, said the organization will be adding infrastructure positions to build games time systems and data base management in 2007.