

Jobs aplenty — but only in key sectors

By Geoff Kirbyson

MANITOBA may be in the midst of an economic downturn, but you'd never know it by talking to people in the headhunting game.

Some sectors, such as manufacturing, have suffered layoffs. But if you beat the right employment bushes, experts say there are sufficient openings to pick up the slack.

One of the highest-demand areas is information technology, an area that continues to grow in complexity and usage.

Sergio Mateus, president of Sapphire Technologies, a Toronto-based IT staffing organization with offices across the country, including Winnipeg, said demand for business analysts, systems analysts, project leaders and project managers is up 10 to 15 per cent in the last two months.

"Some projects that were mothballed for six to 12 months are once again getting the

green light," he said.

Shale Reider, managing partner of Reider Insurance, is equally bullish. He said insurance is as recession-proof an industry as you can get as people need to insure their vehicles, homes and businesses no matter how the economy is performing.

"If everybody is doing really well, people need insurance. If people are doing badly, people still need insurance," he said. "If anything, when things are tighter, people are more inclined to buy insurance."

That's what has fuelled Reider Insurance's growth over the last year, during which time its five locations have grown to 42 employees from 30, and why it hopes to increase its



Shale Reider

workforce by another 10 per cent this year.

"There is a very high demand for workers in insurance. We're looking to add another two salespeople and another couple of administrative people," he said.

Wade Miller, CEO of Pinnacle Professional Inc., a Winnipeg firm, said his clients are looking to fill high-paying positions in information technology, construction and accounting and finance as well as trades such as electrical, plumbing and millwrighting.

The demand would be even stronger in those sectors if it weren't for the growing number of skilled people moving back to Manitoba from other provinces, most notably Alberta, he said.

Wilf Falk, chief statistician for the province, said Manitoba has added 1,800 full-time jobs since October. Nationally, 406,000 jobs were lost during the same period.

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