



## THE CONFERENCE BOARD

### News Release

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**For Immediate Release**

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## The Conference Board Help-Wanted Online Data Series™ Dips in April

### **New Online Ads Are Down in All Nine U.S. Regions from Last Month, But Up Sharply From a Year Ago**

**May 16, 2006**...New online job ads dipped in April to 2,262,700, according to **The Conference Board Help-Wanted OnLine Data Series™**. The April level was 138,400, or 6 percent, below the previous month and followed a sharp rise in March. Despite the decline, the number of new ads for online jobs in April was the second highest since The Conference Board launched the Help-Wanted OnLine series in April 2005 and well above last year's level.

In April, there were 1.51 online job ads per 100 persons in the U.S. labor force, compared with 1.60 in March and 1.33 in February.

The Conference Board now has 13 months of data for the Help-Wanted OnLine Data Series. From April 2005 to April 2006, new online job ads increased 26 percent, an increase that is consistent with the rise seen in other labor market indicators during the same period.

“This rate of change is in line with growth rates of other vacancy measures during periods of economic expansion,” said Gad Levanon, Economist at The Conference Board. “It is typical for measures related to job openings to show much greater movement, both up and down, than you typically see in the overall employment data. The monthly net change in employment is reflective of the

underlying dynamic of the job market which includes people leaving jobs as well as new hires. In the Bureau of Labor Statistics' JOLTS (Job Openings and Labor Turnover Survey) series, which measures job vacancies at the national level, 2006 monthly figures are running on average about 10-20 percent above the 2005 levels.”

The monthly figures reported in the Help-Wanted OnLine Data Series include all unduplicated new online job ads for each day of the calendar month. The series is new, with data available monthly beginning in April 2005. It does not yet have a sufficient history to allow for seasonal adjustments.

### **A Cross-Country Decline Over Last Month**

Declines in new online job ads were evident in all nine census regions in April compared to the March level. The largest declines for the month were in the Middle Atlantic region (New Jersey, New York and Pennsylvania) and the South Atlantic region (Delaware, District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Maryland, North Carolina, South Carolina, Virginia, West Virginia), down 10 percent and 8 percent respectively. The smallest declines were in the Mountain region (Arizona, Colorado, Idaho, New Mexico, Montana, Utah, Nevada, and Wyoming), the West South Central region (Arkansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma and Texas) and the West North Central region (Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota), down 3, 4 and 4 percent respectively. New England remains the region with the highest number of new online jobs per 100 persons (2.30), and the East South Central with the lowest (0.95).

But the figures for April 2006, compared with April 2005, show that the number of new job ads was up in all nine census regions, with the largest gains concentrated in the west and southwestern parts of the country. The largest increase was in the West South Central region, up 53 percent, where the volume of ads rose significantly after last season's hurricanes, reflecting the rebuilding efforts and population movements in the area. Other areas with substantial year-over-year gains in online job ads were the Mountain and Pacific regions (43 percent and 31 percent, respectively). In contrast, online job ads in the East South Central region (Alabama, Kentucky, Mississippi and Tennessee) rose only 2.7 percent between April 2005 and April 2006, a rate that is substantially lower than the national average of 26 percent over the same period. “The East South Central is also the region with the lowest number of new online jobs per 100 persons,” said Levanon. “So the slow increase in the number of new ads in the region might well reflect the low usage of online job advertising rather than an especially weak economy.”

### **San Diego Tops the Nation in New Online Job Ads**

Adjusting jobs ads for the size of the local labor force, San Diego with 3.43 job ads per 100 persons in the labor force leads the way among the 52 metropolitan areas for which data is published separately. Other metropolitan areas with over 3 ads per 100 persons in the labor force include Denver (3.24), San Francisco (3.34) Seattle-Tacoma (3.28), Boston (3.29) and Washington D.C. (3.06). In April, the Detroit metropolitan area with less than one online job ad per 100 persons in the labor force (0.77) had the lowest number of ads adjusted for the labor force.

### **About The New Online Job Series**

The Conference Board Help-Wanted Online Data Series™ measures the number of new, first-time online jobs posted on more than 1,200 major Internet job boards and smaller job boards that serve niche markets and smaller geographic areas.

Like The Conference Board's long running Help-Wanted Advertising Index of print ads (which has been published since 1951), the new online series is not a direct measure of job vacancies. The level of ads in both print and online may change for reasons not related to overall job demand.

The Conference Board, as a standard practice with new data series, considers the estimates in The Conference Board Help-Wanted OnLine Data Series™ to be developmental. As a not-for-profit business research organization, The Conference Board is publishing the early months of this series for use by the media, analysts, researchers and the business community. Persons using this data are urged to review the information on the database and methodology available on our website and contact the economists listed at the top of this release with questions and comments.

Background information and technical notes on this new series are available at: <http://www.conference-board.org/economics/helpwantedOnline.cfm>. The underlying data for this series is provided by Wanted Technologies, Inc. CareerBuilder, Inc. provides financial support for the series.

### **About The Conference Board**

Non-partisan and not-for-profit, The Conference Board is the world's leading business membership and research organization. The Conference Board produces The Consumer Confidence Index and the Leading Economic Indicators for the U.S. and other major nations. These barometers can have a major impact on the financial markets. The Conference Board also produces a wide range of authoritative reports on corporate governance and ethics, human resources and diversity, executive compensation and corporate citizenship. Our conference and council programs bring together more than 10,000 senior executives each year to share insights and learn from each other. Visit The Conference Board's award-winning website at [www.conference-board.org](http://www.conference-board.org).

### **About Wanted Technologies Inc.**

Founded in 1997, WANTED Technologies Inc. is a leading provider of real-time sales and business intelligence. Through its proprietary data mining and aggregation technology, WANTED delivers concise, accurate and actionable data, aimed at helping to increase sales and profitability for its clientele throughout North America. WANTED was recently bestowed the Model of Excellence Award by the InfoCommerce Group in recognition of online business innovation. For more information, visit [www.wantedtech.com](http://www.wantedtech.com).

### **About Careerbuilder.Com**

CareerBuilder.com is the nation's largest online job site with more than 20 million unique visitors and over 1 million jobs. Owned by Tribune Company, Gannett Co., Inc., and Knight Ridder, Inc., the company offers a vast online and print network to help job seekers connect with employers. CareerBuilder.com powers the career centers for more than 550 partners that include 165 newspapers and leading portals such as MSN and America Online. For more information about CareerBuilder.com products and services, visit <http://www.careerbuilder.com>.

## The Conference Board Help-Wanted OnLine Data Series™

Location*	Number of New Online Help Wanted Ads (in 1000s)**					Number of New Online Help Wanted Ads per 100 Participants in the Labor Force***		
	April-05	February-06	March-06	April-06	12-month percent change	February-06	March-06	April-06
<b>National</b>	1,797.3	1,986.6	2,401.2	2,262.7	25.9	1.33	1.60	1.51
<b>Mountain</b>	159.7	191.3	234.4	227.9	42.7	1.84	2.25	2.18
<b>West South Central</b>	137.2	181.7	218.3	210.0	53.0	1.11	1.33	1.28
<b>Pacific</b>	389.6	454.9	537.0	510.4	31.0	1.90	2.24	2.13
<b>South Atlantic</b>	371.7	411.5	502.4	461.2	24.1	1.46	1.78	1.63
<b>West North Central</b>	108.3	112.3	140.2	134.3	24.0	1.03	1.29	1.24
<b>East North Central</b>	219.9	222.8	273.9	256.1	16.4	0.94	1.15	1.08
<b>East South Central</b>	78.1	71.8	85.9	80.2	2.7	0.85	1.02	0.95
<b>Middle Atlantic</b>	273.6	280.5	338.6	306.1	11.9	1.39	1.68	1.52
<b>New England</b>	139.3	148.5	185.0	173.5	24.5	1.96	2.45	2.30

Source: The Conference Board

Technical definitions and methodology available at <http://www.conference-board.org>.

\* Boundaries are as defined by the US Census Bureau.

\*\* An online help wanted ad is counted as "New" only in the month it first appears and only once per defined geographic area.

\*\*\* Help-wanted online ads per 100 participants in the civilian labor force are based on the average of the total number of persons in the civilian labor force for each geographic area over the most-recent 6 months as defined by the Bureau of Labor Statistics. The labor force is defined as

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## The Conference Board Help-Wanted Online Data Series™

### New Online Help Wanted Ads, April 2006 \*\*

Location*	Number (in 1000s)	Number per 100 Participants in the Labor Force***	Location*	Number (in 1000s)	Number per 100 Participants in the Labor Force***
<b>New England</b>	173.5	2.30	<b>West North Central</b>	134.3	1.24
Providence	16.1	2.28	Kansas City	14.0	1.35
Boston	80.2	3.29	Minneapolis-St. Paul	34.5	1.86
Hartford	12.1	2.12	Saint Louis	16.5	1.13
<b>Mountain</b>	227.9	2.18	<b>East North Central</b>	256.1	1.08
Denver	42.7	3.24	Indianapolis	11.1	1.26
Salt Lake City	15.6	2.75	Cincinnati	13.7	1.25
Tucson	11.3	2.55	Chicago	75.3	1.59
Phoenix	51.3	2.62	Cleveland	15.3	1.41
Las Vegas	23.6	2.68	Detroit	16.8	0.77
<b>Pacific</b>	510.4	2.13	Milwaukee	13.3	1.70
San Jose	23.4	2.77	Columbus	13.0	1.41
Portland	32.3	2.91	<b>East South Central</b>	80.2	0.95
Sacramento	29.2	2.84	Louisville	9.1	1.48
Seattle-Tacoma	57.9	3.28	Nashville	10.8	1.44
Honolulu	6.5	1.44	Memphis	6.7	1.12
Los Angeles	138.5	2.14	Birmingham	8.8	1.63
San Francisco	72.9	3.34	<b>West South Central</b>	210.0	1.33
Riverside	16.2	0.94	Oklahoma City	9.3	1.58
San Diego	51.8	3.43	New Orleans****	10.4	2.34
<b>South Atlantic</b>	461.2	1.63	Austin	22.6	2.76
Richmond	12.4	1.98	San Antonio	13.4	1.48
Atlanta	45.3	1.73	Houston	39.0	1.46
Baltimore	25.7	1.86	Dallas	56.8	1.85
Norfolk	10.7	1.34	<b>Middle Atlantic</b>	306.1	1.52
Miami	55.3	2.04	Philadelphia	49.0	1.66
Tampa	29.7	2.27	Buffalo	8.3	1.41
Charlotte	15.6	1.93	Rochester	5.5	1.05
Washington, DC	88.8	3.06	Pittsburgh	16.7	1.38
Jacksonville	11.3	1.79	New York	141.8	1.54
Orlando	17.2	1.67			

**Source: The Conference Board**

Technical definitions and methodology available at <http://www.conference-board.org>.

\* Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSA cities) are as defined by the US Census Bureau

\*\* An online help wanted ad is counted as "New" only in the month it first appears and only once per defined geographic area.

\*\*\* Help-wanted online ads per 100 participants in the civilian labor force are based on the average of the total number of persons in the civilian labor force for each geographic area over the most-recent 6 months as defined by the Bureau of Labor Statistics. The labor force is defined as persons in the civilian population, age 16 and over, who are employed and those looking for work.

\*\*\*\* The most recent 6 months of data for the labor force are October 2005 - March 2006. Reflecting the impact of Hurricane Katrina the labor force in New Orleans has dropped to the monthly average of around 440,000 for the October 2005 - March 2006 period from the monthly average of 645,000 for the May - August 2005 period.

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# Technical Notes

## Background

The Conference Board has been following online help-wanted advertising, and Internet job boards in particular, over the last three years. The new The Conference Board Help-Wanted OnLine Data Series™, which made its debut July 2005, marks the first time The Conference Board has published data covering online job advertising activity.

The Conference Board is publishing this new series in an effort to provide data on online job demand that will complement its long-standing Help-Wanted Advertising Index™ of print advertising (<http://www.conference-board.org/economics/helpwanted.cfm>), as well as labor market data series from the U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), and data gleaned from other private organizations.

This new series focuses on new, unduplicated first-time ads posted on job boards during the course of a calendar month. Similar to the Help-Wanted Advertising Index™ of print ads, the new data series is an indirect measure of job vacancies. The strength of the relationship between The Conference Board Help-Wanted OnLine Data Series™ and job vacancies, however, will not be fully understood for some time.

The level of ads, both in print and online, may change for reasons that are not related to overall job demand. For example, postings on internet job boards include a significant number of duplicate ads, as the same job advertisement often appears on several boards simultaneously. While this duplication serves the primary purpose of increasing the likelihood that interested applicants will see the ad, duplicate ads do not represent separate job openings. For this reason The Conference Board Help-Wanted OnLine Data Series™ presents data on new, unduplicated ads. Also, internet usage varies across communities, affecting the correlation between new job openings and new job postings online across geographies.

Since online job advertising continues to be a young and dynamic market, changes in its use and application may result in distortions that are not currently envisioned.

## **Uses of the Data**

The estimates from this series are considered developmental and caution should be exercised in drawing conclusions from them. As the time series grows longer and its correlation to other data series becomes clearer, its value in assessing the interaction of labor supply and demand and changes in the economy will increase. The early months of this series are published for cautious use by analysts and researchers and the business community. The Conference Board welcomes input from this broad community on all aspects of this new data series.

These data are not for redistribution or public posting without express permission of The Conference Board.

## **Future Releases**

The Conference Board plans to release monthly data for the nation as a whole, the nine Census regions and, as the data warrant, 52 of the largest metropolitan statistical areas (MSAs).

Upcoming releases are scheduled for the third Tuesday of every month following the month of analysis.

#### Release Dates

Release date:	Data referring to:
January 17, 2006	December, 2005
February 21, 2006	January, 2006
March 21, 2006	February, 2006
April 18, 2006	March, 2006
May 16, 2006	April, 2006

The releases will be available online at The Conference Board Web site:

<http://www.conference-board.org>.

Future and special releases will incorporate additional data on specific aspects of online job advertising including data such as occupations and industries that will be helpful to corporations in assessing their strategies for hiring in various markets.

The following notes refer to the data published through the October 2005 release. The Conference Board anticipates providing information on additional aspects of online job advertising in future releases. The definitions and methodology description will incorporate additional explanations as needed.

## Definitions

Definitions appear below for the following terms:

- **Coverage**
- **Data Source**
- **Duplicate Ads (Removal of)**
- **Duplicate Ads by Geographic Area**
- **Job Board**
- **Location**
- **New Ads**
- **Regional and Metropolitan Areas**
- **Total Ads**

- **Coverage** The Conference Board Help-Wanted OnLine Data Series™ covers about 1,200 job boards in the United States. It includes the largest job boards and most boards posting at least 500 jobs. (See definition of **Job Board** below.) Some smaller boards that service specific niche markets or smaller cities are also included in the total. The Conference Board Help-Wanted OnLine Data Series™ does not include corporate Web sites that post their own openings. The data series also does not include job boards that are limited to replicating other boards. New job boards are added to the data source on a continuous basis.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The overall online job board industry has established itself throughout the last few years. However, the relatively low cost of business entry in this industry means that there is still tremendous churn in the universe of job boards, especially among the smaller boards. The industry includes a large number of very small job boards, with many of these boards joining and leaving the industry each month.



The Conference Board Help-Wanted OnLine Data Series™ is national in scope and is not stratified for geographic or industry balance. The data are not seasonally adjusted. Regional and national data include ads for locations that are not reported separately. Please see the definition for **Duplicate Ads by Geographic Area** below for an explanation of how ads appearing in more than one geographic area are counted.

- **Data Source** The raw data are obtained electronically every 24 hours from over 1,200 job boards in the Wanted Technologies, Inc. database. Using its text parsing software, Wanted Technologies, Inc. categorizes each job ad under a set of business rules approved by The Conference Board. The categorized job ads are then counted to form the foundation of The Conference Board Help-Wanted OnLine Data Series™. The definitions and methodology included in these technical notes summarize the business rules used in categorizing the raw data.

- **Duplicate Ads** Duplicate ads have been removed from the new ad data in The Conference Board Help-Wanted OnLine Data Series™. (See definition for **New Ads** below.) An ad is considered a duplicate if another ad already appears in the same time period with the identical job title, company, city and state. A unique ad does not have a duplicate appearing elsewhere in the data series per time period. Simply a difference in wording or length of the ad is not sufficient to classify the ad as unique. An ad for the same job can be very different in appearance from job board to job board, reflecting the fact that each board has its own criteria for the maximum number of characters allowed in ads, for example. Strictly defining duplicate and unique ads based on job title, company, city, and state, as The Conference Board Help-Wanted OnLine Data Series™ does, minimizes the likelihood of classifying a “repackaged” ad as new.

- **Duplicate Ads By Geographic Areas.** There are job ads that are posted in several geographic areas. For example, a posting for a job in Houston, Texas might appear on a job board for Houston as well as on a board for Austin, Texas. In this situation, the ad is included in the count for both Houston and Austin. However, it is only counted once in the regional data and once nationally. As a result, the national total of ads may be smaller than the sum of the ads by region.

- **Job Board** Job boards are defined as sites that require an employer to take positive action to advertise a position beyond posting an ad on the employer’s own business Web site. Job boards as defined here are distinguished from and do not include “Corporate Boards”—corporate Web sites posting their own openings for positions internal to the company. (A help-wanted ad that is posted by a corporation on its own corporate job board would only be

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WANTED Technologies, Inc. adds new boards to the raw data underpinning The Conference Board Help-Wanted OnLine Data Series™ by utilizing its own independent research, as well as WEDDLE’s Directory of Employment-Related Internet Sites. While there are no official estimates of the industry’s overall size, WEDDLE’s Directory of Employment-Related Internet Sites is often cited as the most reliable industry listing ([www.weddles.com](http://www.weddles.com)).

included in The Conference Board Help-Wanted OnLine Data Series™ after it had appeared on a job board “external” to the Corporate Board.)

Both job boards that charge a fee for placing an ad as well as boards that do not charge a direct fee are included within our definition of Job Board. We do exclude from our definition of Job Boards those websites that limit themselves to replicating ads of other job boards.

- **Location** Location of the job is determined first by the city cited in the text of the ad itself. A review of the raw data over the last year indicates that the majority of the ads state in the ad itself the location of the job. If the location is not designated, the location of the job board is stipulated as the location of the ad. Some jobs are designated simply as nationwide. In this case the ad would appear in the national total but not in any regional total.

- **New Ads** New ads are first-time ads within the designated time period. Each new online advertisement is given a date stamp for the date it first appears on a job board. Like all of the counts for this data series, new ads do not include duplicate ads.

- **Regional and Metropolitan Areas** The nine regional areas and the states they encompass, defined as the Census regions are:

NEW ENGLAND	WEST NORTH CENTRAL	SOUTH ATLANTIC	MOUNTAIN
MASSACHUSETTS	MISSOURI	FLORIDA	ARIZONA
CONNECTICUT	MINNESOTA	GEORGIA	COLORADO
NEW HAMPSHIRE	IOWA	NORTH CAROLINA	UTAH
MAINE	KANSAS	VIRGINIA	NEVADA
RHODE ISLAND	NEBRASKA	MARYLAND	NEW MEXICO
VERMONT	SOUTH DAKOTA	SOUTH CAROLINA	IDAHO
	NORTH DAKOTA	WEST VIRGINIA	MONTANA
		DELAWARE	WYOMING
		WASHINGTON, DC	
MIDDLE ATLANTIC	EAST SOUTH CENTRAL	WEST SOUTH CENTRAL	PACIFIC
NEW JERSEY	ALABAMA	LOUISIANA	CALIFORNIA
NEW YORK	KENTUCKY	TEXAS	WASHINGTON
PENNSYLVANIA	MISSISSIPPI	OKLAHOMA	OREGON
	TENNESSEE	ARKANSAS	HAWAII
			ALASKA
EAST NORTH CENTRAL			
ILLINOIS			
MICHIGAN			
INDIANA			
WISCONSIN			
OHIO			

Metropolitan areas follow the definition for Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSAs) as published by the U.S. Census Bureau. For more information on MSAs see: [www.bls.gov/lau/lausmsa.htm](http://www.bls.gov/lau/lausmsa.htm)

- **Total Ads** Total ads for this data series are defined as all ads minus **Duplicate Ads**. In addition to **New Ads** appearing within the time period, the total volume of non-duplicative ads includes those that have remained posted for more than 30 days.

## Methodology

During the early months of the development stage of The Conference Board Help-Wanted OnLine Data Series™, The Conference Board intends to present data in a simple form. The data series is not seasonally adjusted as adjustments for seasonality and industry trends will require a series of several years to determine relevant patterns.

The Conference Board is publishing the actual count of new online job ads, rounded to thousands, on a monthly basis.

New job ads will also be presented as the number of ads per 100 persons in the labor force. Ads per 100 persons in the labor force are presented for the 52 metropolitan areas beginning with the September 2005 release. Labor force is defined as the number of persons who are employed as well as those that are actively seeking employment. Using the labor force data for the relevant geographic area has the effect of normalizing the data series for the size of the area as well as for seasonal movements up and down in the size of the pool of labor. The Conference Board will use the latest labor force data for the previous six month period.

The labor force data is provided by the U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) from the monthly household survey, The Current Population Report. The Conference Board utilizes the average labor force data for the most recent six-month period. Additional information on the BLS labor force data and changes and adjustments in that series are available on the BLS website ([www.bls.gov](http://www.bls.gov)).

**Revisions to Data** With the September 20, 2005 release revisions were published for the June and July data for the nation as a whole and the nine Census areas. These revisions had a less than 1% impact on the total number of new ads reported for all of these geographic breaks. Revisions for the national and Census region data reflect the addition of some small job boards to the database. An adjustment of greater than 1% in a geographic area will be noted as a break in series.

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### ***About The Conference Board***

Non-partisan and not-for-profit, The Conference Board is one of the world's leading business membership and research organizations.

The Conference Board produces The Consumer Confidence Index and the Leading Economic Indicators for the United States and other major nations. For over 50 years it has produced The Conference Board Help-Wanted Advertising Index™ of print advertising. The Conference Board also produces a wide range of authoritative research on corporate governance and ethics, human resources and diversity, and executive compensation and corporate citizenship. Our conference and council programs bring together more than 10,000 senior executives each year to share insights and learn from each other. Visit The Conference Board's award-winning website at [www.conference-board.org](http://www.conference-board.org).

### ***About WANTED Technologies, Inc.***

WANTED Technologies, Inc. (**TSX:WAN**) gathers and processes the data underpinning The Conference Board Help-Wanted OnLine Data Series™.

Founded in 1997, WANTED Technologies, Inc. is a leading provider of real-time sales and business intelligence. Through its proprietary data mining and aggregation technology, WANTED delivers concise, accurate and actionable data aimed at helping to increase sales and profitability for its clientele throughout North America. WANTED was recently bestowed the Model of Excellence Award by the InfoCommerce Group in recognition of online business innovation. For more information, visit [www.wantedtech.com](http://www.wantedtech.com).

### ***About CareerBuilder.com***

CareerBuilder.com has provided financial underwriting for The Conference Board Help-Wanted OnLine Data Series™.

CareerBuilder.com is the nation's largest online job site with more than 20 million unique visitors and over 1 million jobs. Owned by Tribune Company, Gannett Co., Inc., and Knight Ridder, Inc., the company offers a vast online and print network to help job seekers connect with employers. For more information, visit [www.careerbuilder.com](http://www.careerbuilder.com).