



Tech sector hiring is hot again as Google, Twitter, etc., grow

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By **Jon Swartz**, USA TODAY

SAN FRANCISCO — **Silicon Valley** companies are swooping in and scooping up potential employees in a frenzy of hiring not seen since the **Internet bubble** of a decade ago.



Martin E. Klimek for USA TODAY Inside Zynga offices in San Francisco. The social-gaming behemoth is planning to move to larger headquarters.

By

iPads, nifty cubicles, shuttle service and meals to harvest top talent in engineering, social-media, website and product design, data crunching and analysis, and management.

A surge in tech hires in California could portend an upturn for the larger U.S. economy, says Jesse Harriott, chief knowledge officer at online job site Monster.com.

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Nationally, 148,000 tech jobs are expected to be added by the end of 2011, says Sophia Koropecyk, an economist at Moody's Analytics. Between the second quarter of 2008 and the first quarter of 2010, during the economic swoon, 308,000 tech jobs were lost. For non-tech companies, things aren't as bullish. Many are sitting on cash instead of hiring. In February, there were about 6.1 million tech jobs in the U.S., up 2.4% from a year ago.

"It is an incredibly competitive marketplace

Enlarge

By Martin E. Klimek for USA TODAY

Inside Zynga offices in San Francisco. The social-gaming behemoth is planning to move to larger headquarters.

The tech industry is beginning to resemble an economic Nirvana, as established companies and start-ups alike hire aggressively and court prospective recruits. The competition is so fierce, many employers are dangling goodies such as

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for (tech) talent," says Square COO Keith Rabois, drawing a comparison to the dot-com mania of the early 2000s. Since he joined the mobile-payment service eight months ago, the company has grown to 80 employees from 25. By the end of this year, it should have a staff of 150. Square is snapping up engineers and designers who it believes are candidates to eventually start their own companies, says Rabois, an early employee at [PayPal](#), [LinkedIn](#) and Slide.

Fueled by the tech sector, California alone added nearly 100,000 jobs in February, reducing the unemployment rate there to 12.2% from 12.4% in January, according to a California Economic Development Department report last week.

Tech jobs here in the city are closing in on the record 34,116 of 2000, the zenith of the Internet bubble. San Francisco had 32,180 tech jobs last year, says an analysis by real estate consultant [Jones Lang LaSalle](#). In 2004, there were 18,210 tech jobs. The percentage of tech workers here was 17% in 2010, vs. 14% in 2000, according to the analysis.

Nationally, tech job listings soared about 30% in March and in February, from the same period a year ago, according to [Craigslist](#). It did not provide specific numbers.

LEADING THE HIRING BINGE

[Google](#) says 2011 should be its biggest hiring year (it did not disclose specific numbers). Its previous record was 2007, when it added nearly 6,200 people worldwide. The Internet search engine employs 30,000.

[Facebook](#), with more than 2,000 workers, is

growing at a rate of about 50% a year. This summer, it's moving from Palo Alto, Calif., to a 57-acre site in Menlo Park, that can accommodate 3,600.

[Zynga](#), a popular social-gaming company, is moving into larger headquarters in San Francisco. It expects to double its 1,500-person workforce in the next year.

[Twitter](#) has more than 400 workers and plans to expand to 3,000 by July 2013. A year ago, it had 140.

[Skype](#), itching to go public this year, expanded its head count to 911 at the end of 2010, from 733 at the end of 2009. It plans to add 350 jobs, most in Silicon Valley, this year.

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