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## Confidence, hiring and turnover forecasts all rising in ad industry - IAPI Census Report

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This year has seen a marked return to optimism in the Irish advertising industry, according to IAPI, which has released its 2014 IAPI Industry Census.

IAPI said that in the year since the last census, the industry has experienced a significant shift in outlook. It said the census shows an industry reenergised and seeking to diversify, which is a stark contrast to the cautious stance reported last year.

Of the 45 agencies that participated in this year's survey, 78pc estimate that turnover for the industry as a whole will increase in 2014. This compares to just 20pc this time last year.

And the majority of agencies now envisage an average 13pc increase in business by year end. IAPI said there is also "a sense of vigour in the pursuit of new business opportunities both domestically and overseas". A key challenge for agencies, however, remains the level of investment involved in pitching for new business. Pressure from clients to lower hourly rates is also a concern.

On a more positive note, the industry is now hiring at pre-recession levels. Employment stands at 1,545 full time jobs. The census reports a 22pc increase in new hires by creative agencies last year (264 recruited). More than half of the agencies surveyed expect their staff levels to increase further this year. However, agencies are reported increased competition for skilled staff which is leading to an increase in staff turnover.

As part of a bid to retain talent, in particular female talent, many agencies now offer some form of paid maternity leave, while a significant number also offer paternity leave.

IAPI said women now make up 25pc of boards in the advertising industry, compared to the national rate of 13pc. The industry remains predominately young, with the average age being 35 and a third of all employees are under 30.

"The census shows a marked improvement in optimism across the industry," said Orlaith Blaney, CEO McCannBlue Dublin and president of IAPI. "It's encouraging that agencies are generally more positive in their outlook not just for their own agencies but for the industry as a whole. While there are undoubtedly real challenges to overcome, in particular the cost of pitching and retaining and recruiting talented staff, there are a lot of positives in this report."

"IAPI's 2014 census points to a transformation in the fortunes of Ireland's ad land," said Tania Banotti, IAPI CEO. "Not only have members witnessed an improvement in their own performance, they are also much more bullish about prospects in the wider industry. Crucially, IAPI member agencies are also reporting returning confidence of advertisers and other indicators of growing customer demand."



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