Computer and Digital Forensics Industry Overview

Congratulations! You’re already thinking ahead to graduation and subsequent employment! Your instructors and personal career exploration have probably prepared you for the fact that this is a rapidly growing field that’s changing every day.

So, how can you know what kind of job to look for… and where to look for it?

Following are some suggestions to help you in your job search. As you review this information, please keep in mind that this is only a sampling of the resources available to you. The more you search, the more you’ll discover, so your investigative skills are sure to serve you well!

Let’s start by looking at the kinds of employers who could have positions for someone with your training and interests. Truly, any organization that electronically manages confidential data would benefit from your knowledge; unfortunately, they may not know it! Therefore, it may be necessary for you to help an employer see the benefit of hiring you or, more likely, creating a position for you. Often this realization is the result of your already being on staff in another capacity, perhaps as a helpdesk technician or junior network administrator.

To begin your search, consider companies in these industries:

- Accounting
- Banking
- Consulting
- Education
- Government Contracting
- Healthcare
- Insurance
- Investments
- Legal
- Online Vendors

Don’t forget to look at government and law enforcement agencies, including:

- Department of Justice
- Department of State
- FBI
- IRS
- Police Departments
- Postal Service
- Secret Service
- State Government
- National Security Agency
- Department of Homeland Security

One of the best places to find out about job opportunities within a specific organization is the internet. Go to the company’s homepage and then select the tab marked “Employment” or “Careers” (or similar heading).

The job titles you’ll be looking for include:

- Security Specialist
- Global Security Investigator
- Forensic Computer Analyst
- Forensic Technologist
- Computer Forensic Examiner
- Special Agent
- Terrorism Liaison Officer
- Criminal Investigator: Computer Forensics
- Vulnerability Security Research Engineer
- Security Engineer
- Information Assurance Engineer
- Ethical Hacker
- Security Forensics Consultant
- Computer Training Specialist
- Digital Forensic Analyst
- Intelligence Technology Analyst
As you visit corporate websites, be sure to explore beyond the employment page. Many sites feature articles and white papers that will give you a feel for current events that could be helpful in an interview or useful for a class project. For example, a recent trip to Sensei Enterprises’ homepage (http://www.senseient.com/) revealed an interesting story on corporate theft via iPods. At Kessler International (http://www.investigation.com/), editions of the popular Kessler Report are available free of charge.

Professional organizations also provide a host of resources for you to access, from membership lists to job postings, blogs and webinars. Here are a few associations related to the field of computer and digital forensics:

- American Academy of Forensic Sciences  http://www.aafs.org/
- Association for Digital Forensics http://www.adfsl.org/
- Association of Information Technology Professionals http://www.aitp.org/index.jsp
- Digital Forensics Association http://www.digitalforensicsassociation.org/Home_Page.html
- Forensic Association of Computer Technologists http://www.byteoutofcrime.org/
- High Technology Crime Investigation Association http://www.htcia.org/
- International Association of Computer Investigative Specialists http://cops.iserver.net/drupal/
- International Association of Financial Crimes Investigators  http://www.iafci.org/

Magazines and periodicals to supplement your career development and job search include:

- Forensic Focus http://www.forensicfocus.com/computer-forensics-jobs
- Graduating Engineer http://www.graduatingengineer.com/
- Security Focus http://www.securityfocus.com/
- ISN Digest http://www.infosecnews.org/mailman/listinfo/isn
- Win4n6 Mailing List http://tech.groups.yahoo.com/group/win4n6/

Here are additional online resources that you’ll want to bookmark:

- Internet Resources for Computer Forensics http://faculty.ncwc.edu/toconnor/426/426links.htm

Finally, be sure to tag these terrific general job sites (many of which offer automatic alerts for jobs that meet your criteria):

- Career Builder http://www.careerbuilder.com/
- Craig’s List http://www.craigslist.org/
- Dice http://www.dice.com/
- Indeed http://www.indeed.com/
- Jobs in VT http://www.jobsinvt.com/
- Riley Guide http://www.rileyguide.com/
- USA Jobs http://www.usajobs.gov/

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