

Technology Trends 2018: A Silicon Valley Recruiter Perspective

By Kathryn Ullrich



TECHNOLOGY TRENDS 2018: A SILICON VALLEY RECRUITER PERSPECTIVE

By Kathryn Ullrich, Partner, Odgers Berndtson

Here are 2018 Technology Trends with implications for talent as seen from the perspective of a Silicon Valley executive recruiter at one of the largest global executive search firms, Odgers Berndtson.

Cybersecurity: Today's cybersecurity threats are pervasive, moving beyond email and network hacks directly to device hardware and data in the cloud. Corporate boards and Chief Information Security Officers need to stay ahead of threats while users of electronic devices from phones to tablets/PCs to ATMs and on-line purchases need to understand how to minimize security risks.

Cloud, Digital economy: Businesses continue to harness value from being cloud-enabled and reaching customers digitally. New work flows focus beyond verticals to customer use cases. With transformation, companies require strategy, marketing and technology talent. Consulting firms also continue to increase their capabilities in digital innovation, design and transformation.

Big data/data analytics: Several years ago, we saw initial forays into data science and analytics as companies developed data lakes and pipes. Now companies are deriving incredible value from these rich data sets to improve operations and better target prospective customers. Companies who already took the plunge need talent to focus on leveraging data for business strategy and building analytics into regular processes.

AI/machine learning: Artificial intelligence and machine learning take data science a step further in the move from analytics to prediction. This next phase of data requires deep technology skill sets.

Virtual reality/augmented reality: Virtual reality is not just fun and gaming, with applications for training and development, eg managers learning how to merchandise a store. Talent needs are for technology skill sets and B2B business development.

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Autonomous vehicles, electric cars, smart cities: Exciting advances include self-driving connected cars, trucks or vans for pop-up location; business models for autonomous fleets; battery technologies for longer range electric vehicles; smart city traffic management, parking and other technologies. The automotive sector, in particular, is accelerating the needs for talent in innovation, software/sensors/GPS/battery technologies, and corporate development.

Blockchain, cryptocurrencies: Though not yet mainstream, cryptocurrencies are now rated and traded. The underlying blockchain technology enabling transparent and trusted electronic exchange is expanding into commercial trade. Talent is focused on building efficient infrastructure and creating business applications for work flows that demand secure transactions.

Smart home: Alexa meet Google Home, two leading AI-driven smart home technologies. Companies are competing for the underlying hub technology and interface for control of residential appliances, electronics, utilities, lighting, security, etc. —and all the consumer data. Talent needs include innovation, networking/AI/IoT technologies, developer relationships for partner connectivity, and cool consumer electronics UI.

Do the right thing: Within the technology industry, like across any environment, the golden rule need apply; the current discussions on pay parity, diversity & inclusion, sexual harassment, ethics and integrity remind us that there are consequences -- particularly with today's aggressive social media -- for ignoring this. Smart boards, corporate executives, and human resources departments are proactively ensuring companies and employees do the right thing.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



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Kathryn Ullrich is a Partner in Odgers Berndtson's Silicon Valley office and a member of the Technology practice. She focuses on senior executive searches for major corporations and venture-capital-backed companies in software, systems and services, and has specific expertise in autonomous vehicle technology, cloud, cybersecurity, data analytics, Internet, IoT, SaaS, and other disruptive technologies.

Prior to Odgers Berndtson, Kathryn spent nearly twenty years in executive search at Heidrick & Struggles, Russell Reynolds Associates and her own boutique search firm. Earlier in her career, Kathryn worked in software product marketing at Siebel Systems (now Oracle), strategy consulting at Accenture, and engineering at GTE (now Verizon) and Motorola.

Kathryn is passionate about diversity. She is the founder of a Silicon Valley non-profit for women in technology and actively works with clients on increasing diversity in technology. In 2016 she was honored by Silicon Valley Business Journal as a Woman of Influence for her work in diversity and inclusion.

She has a BS cum laude in electrical engineering from University of Michigan and an MBA with Carter Award top honors from UCLA Anderson School of Management.

ABOUT ODGERS BERNDTSON

Odgers Berndtson is a leading global executive search and organizational leadership firm, with more than 250 partners managing client engagements from offices in 57 cities across 28 countries. Its diverse team of experienced search consultants in the U.S. provides executive search, leadership consulting, and candidate assessment services to organizations in an equally broad range of industries and sectors, both here and abroad.

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