



French executive search market survey reveals large global firms dominate market

The five largest executive search firms in France account for over a third of the domestic search market, according to the results of a new market share survey conducted by Executive Grapevine International in collaboration with the Association of Executive Search Consultants (AESC).

The survey revealed that the largest five firms, all global, contribute 36% of the total net fee income generated by the 54 firms asked to participate; the top ten firms, again all international or part of international networks, own a huge 56% of the market.

Peter Felix, President of the AESC, commented, "This is indicative of a polarisation in the industry, not untypical of other professional service industries. The largest firms have spent many years building their international networks and brands and have held a significant share of the industry's turnover for many years. However, does this mean that the boutique firm or network won't win business? No it does not, in fact these large firms help create and expand the market for the smaller firms. The important thing is that the profession as a whole should offer a wide range of choice to client organisations whose needs will range from the global to the very specialised and local. Within this demand structure the executive search profession has always provided a high level of quality service and alternative providers."

Only firms that work predominantly in retained search and who command fees upwards of €150k were invited to submit figures. Net fee income for retained work in 2006 was chosen as it gives the clearest indicator of activity in the market, and all results were benchmarked and checked for accuracy. There was a high level of cooperation from the firms, resulting in only four estimates out of the top 25 listed here. The purpose of the survey is not to highlight which individual firm has the largest market share, but to be used in conjunction with other data and directories to give clients a better understanding of where specialist expertise lies in the French market.

Market Share of Net Fee Income: France Jan - Dec 2006

1	EGON ZEHNDER INTERNATIONAL S.A.	9.6%
2	RUSSELL REYNOLDS ASSOCIATES (FRANCE)	9.2%
3	KORN/FERRY INTERNATIONAL (FRANCE)	6.8%
4	SPENCER STUART (FRANCE)*	5.5%
5	HEIDRICK & STRUGGLES (FRANCE)	4.9%
6	ALEXANDER HUGHES (FRANCE)	4.6%
7	ERIC SALMON & PARTNERS (FRANCE)	4.4%
8	RAY & BERNDTSON (FRANCE)	4.3%
9	PROGRESS SCA (FRANCE)	3.6%
10	CHRISTIAN & TIMBERS (FRANCE)	3.4%
11	NEUMANN INTERNATIONAL	3.4%
12	TRANSEARCH (FRANCE)	3.3%
13	SINGER & HAMILTON (FRANCE)	3.0%
14	WHITEHEAD MANN (FRANCE)	3.0%
15	BOYDEN (FRANCE)	2.7%
16	STERLING INTERNATIONAL FRANCE	2.7%
17	SIRCA (FRANCE)	2.7%
18	LEADERS TRUST INTERNATIONAL (FRANCE)	2.5%
19	EDWARD W KELLEY & PARTNERS LTD (FRANCE)	1.9%
20	JOUVE & ASSOCIES (FRANCE)*	1.9%
21	RT&A (FRANCE)	1.6%
22	HOMMES & ENTREPRISES (FRANCE)	1.4%
23	STANTON CHASE INTERNATIONAL (FRANCE)	1.4%
24	VENDOME ASSOCIES (FRANCE)*	1.3%
25	SEARCH PARTNERS INTERNATIONAL (FRANCE)*	1.1%

* estimates in bold

Twelve months net fee income from retained French search firms handling assignments above the €150k level

(Net Fee Income include fees gained from permanent assignments only. If there are a number of assignments where the fee income has been shared across international offices, the French share of fees have been included. For the purposes of our survey we have excluded advertising costs, expenses, interim assignments, assessment or other added value services.)

For more information on the international search industry, copies of the 2007 Directory of Executive Recruitment (International Edition) are now available from Executive Grapevine for £249 - see page 24 for more details.