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MONSTER ONLINE JOB INDEX FALLS IN DECEMBER

The Monster Employment Index, a monthly gauge of U.S. online job demand, fell four points from November to December. The index dropped to 115 last month after registering a 119 in November. Senior Vice President Jesse Harriott said the drop "is typical due to end-of-year seasonality." On a positive note, the index is down 12 percent on a year-over-year basis, which is the mildest decline in the past 18 months. "The improvement in the annual rate of decline lends evidence to a slight firming in underlying employer demand for workers at the end of the year," Harriott said. "Despite a challenging economic climate, hiring conditions seem to continue to stabilize, if not already slowly improving." Online job availability rose in just three of the Index's 20 industry sectors and six of the 23 occupational categories monitored. The Monster Employment Index was launched in April 2004 and is a monthly analysis of U.S. online job demand. The margin of error is around plus or minus one percent.

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