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**UK
CREATIVE
INDUSTRIES
CENSUS**

Certified



Corporation

2025

WELCOME TO THE UK CREATIVE INDUSTRIES SALARY CENSUS 2025

This year's Salary Census brings together insights from 4,140 professionals, and 150 brands and agencies, representing a further 30,000+ professionals across digital, marketing and creative sectors. This has been combined with ongoing data collected from our online salary benchmarking tool and insights from our senior talent partners.

For the fifth year, we have continued to collect demographic data to provide the industry's most up-to-date snapshot of diversity, equity and inclusion within the industries. We have classified gender, ethnicity, sexuality, identity, class, and disability and neurodivergence using the government's recommended grouping.

The salary and day rate tables represent an overview of job levels and salary averages in all listed disciplines, and are correct at the time of publication (May 2025).



4140 respondents completed our 2025 Salary Census survey.



150 brands and agencies also took part in our inaugural client Survey, representing over 30,000+ workers



350,000+ data points from the 2025 Salary Census findings



7150 entries via our online Salary Benchmarking Tool

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FOREWORD



► By Rosa Rolo,
Managing Director

Now in its 10th year, our annual Salary Census is the industry's most trusted resource for professionals and organisations navigating an ever-changing landscape. With detailed insights into workplace, career, and salary and day rate trends, it empowers businesses and professionals to plan strategically and try to make better, more-informed decisions. Over 20,000 businesses rely on our Census each year for

clear, data-backed perspectives that guide their strategies and enable them to navigate today's unpredictable market.

For many, the past 12 months have been nothing short of relentless. The world of work has continued to evolve at a rapid pace, driven by financial pressures, emerging technologies, and shifting expectations around how, where, and why we work. Amidst this transformation, many have found themselves operating in a near-constant state of adaptation - stretching capacity, juggling uncertainty, and striving to maintain momentum.

Last year we shared the term 'polycrisis norm' and I believe this is still very much at play - the reality that continues; geopolitical turmoil, economic turbulence, environmental challenges, and technological advancements are not merely momentary disruptions, but persistent aspects of our daily lives. Moreover, this has led to a mental fragility within our society, which has meant that leading and developing in this rapidly changing sphere, continues to be a challenge.

For businesses, planning for the future has become a balancing act. Rising costs have made operations more expensive than ever, forcing companies to make tough decisions which has a huge impact on morale and natural attrition. In the past 12 months alone, over half (53%) of businesses have made redundancies in response to sustained macroeconomic pressures. We're yet to see the impact of Labour's recent NI contribution changes, but these reforms are expected to further impact employment costs, potentially affecting hiring strategies, workforce planning, and overall labour market stability.

Job insecurity and the repercussions of layoffs are causing significant anxiety among employees; affecting the majority of workers. Analysis of those

referencing layoffs indicates that concerns extend beyond those at risk of redundancy; even employees who have survived staff reductions report stress due to the anticipation of future layoffs or the pressures of managing increased responsibilities within leaner teams¹.

Despite this challenging backdrop, businesses are persevering with their growth strategies, with nearly half of companies (46%) planning to hire in the next 6 months. However, there is prioritisation on roles that deliver immediate value and ROI. Beyond hiring, businesses are finding ways to boost efficiency and cut costs, such as leveraging new technologies, implementing automation, and building offshore teams to maximise results.

From a candidate's perspective we've seen a record low in terms of the number of candidates moving roles, with less than a quarter (23%) taking up new positions in the last 12 months, and many prioritising job security. However the appetite for change is there, with 53% actively looking to move roles, and a further 19% passively looking.

This presents both a challenge and an opportunity. While talent remains understandably cautious, there's a growing sense of restlessness among employees. One of the most significant drivers for change is compensation - over half (53%) of professionals believe they're not paid fairly for their skills and experience.

This sentiment comes despite permanent salaries increasing by 28% and freelance day rates by 26% over the past four years. The disconnect lies in the broader economic context: rising interest rates, inflation, and the cost-of-living crisis have eroded the impact of these pay increases. For many, financial progress feels out of reach - and the desire for change is, in part, a response to that reality.

Whilst market data suggests that the year ahead will continue to be challenging economically, there is a calm sentiment that change is inevitable. Businesses and candidates willing to make bold, thoughtful moves today are finding ways to adapt and thrive; making gains in a challenging environment. For those willing to keep pushing, will reap the benefits and rewards later down the line.

If you'd like to discuss any of our findings, or request bespoke data sets, then please do reach out and get in touch.

Rosa Rolo

THE CREATIVE INDUSTRIES IN 2025

The UK's Creative Industries are one of the core driving forces in the national economy, contributing £14 billion in gross value added (GVA) annually and accounting for 5.2% of the overall UK economy. The sector has grown by 35% between 2010 and 2023, outpacing much of the broader economy².

Powered by approximately 2.4 million professionals, the Creative Industries account for 7% of all jobs filled in the UK annually. What makes our industries more unique is the high concentration of freelancers, which is double the national average at 30%.

Whilst recent economic volatility has tempered the sector's growth, the government has identified the Creative Industries as a key driver for future economic success. The 2024 green paper³ outlined their strategy, prioritising industrial growth, private investment, skilled workforce development, and boosting exports. By capitalising on creative clusters and improving access to skills, the goal is to ensure that the UK remains a global leader and a hub for top-tier talent.

"To enable growth in the sector, the government will leverage UK creative industries' global comparative advantages by unlocking private investment, boosting exports, and developing its highly skilled workforce. The government needs to ensure that the UK sector remains globally competitive as a home for world class talent while maximising access to important markets to tour and collaborate. The sector plays an important role in driving growth across regions and nations, through creative clusters and corridors across the country that spread opportunity and prosperity in communities, as well as driving growth by enhancing access to skills, spillovers and knowledge sharing."

Rachel Reeves, Chancellor of the Exchequer

The Creative Industries potential is also amplified by the growing integration with technology. The UK's tech sector recently hit a record \$1 trillion valuation, highlighting its global impact. This convergence has led to new 'Createch' roles, blending creativity with technology and blurring the boundaries between these two dynamic sectors.

Businesses and individuals operating within the Creative Industries need to equip themselves with the digital skills required to thrive in this fast-changing landscape.

However, one of the significant challenges is the widening skills gap. Over the past decade, enrollments in creative further education courses have dropped by a staggering 57%, largely due to funding cuts and accessibility barriers⁴. At the same time, emerging technologies are transforming the skills landscape, further exacerbating this divide. These are critical barriers to growth, especially as the sector is expected to create around 300,000 new jobs in the next five years.

Throughout our Census, we will delve deeper into the challenges and opportunities ahead. In essence, creativity is one of the UK's most valuable assets. The ideas and skills we nurture today will define the industries, communities, and cultures of tomorrow. It's a future worth investing in.

"The UK advertising industry is home to all kinds of talent – creative, strategic, technical, production – a melting pot of skills, experience and capabilities that powers our sector to help businesses innovate, compete and grow here in the UK and around the world. The better we understand our skills base, and the more we invest in its development, the greater the positive economic and social impact we can have."

Sharon Lloyd Barnes – Commercial Director
Ad Association



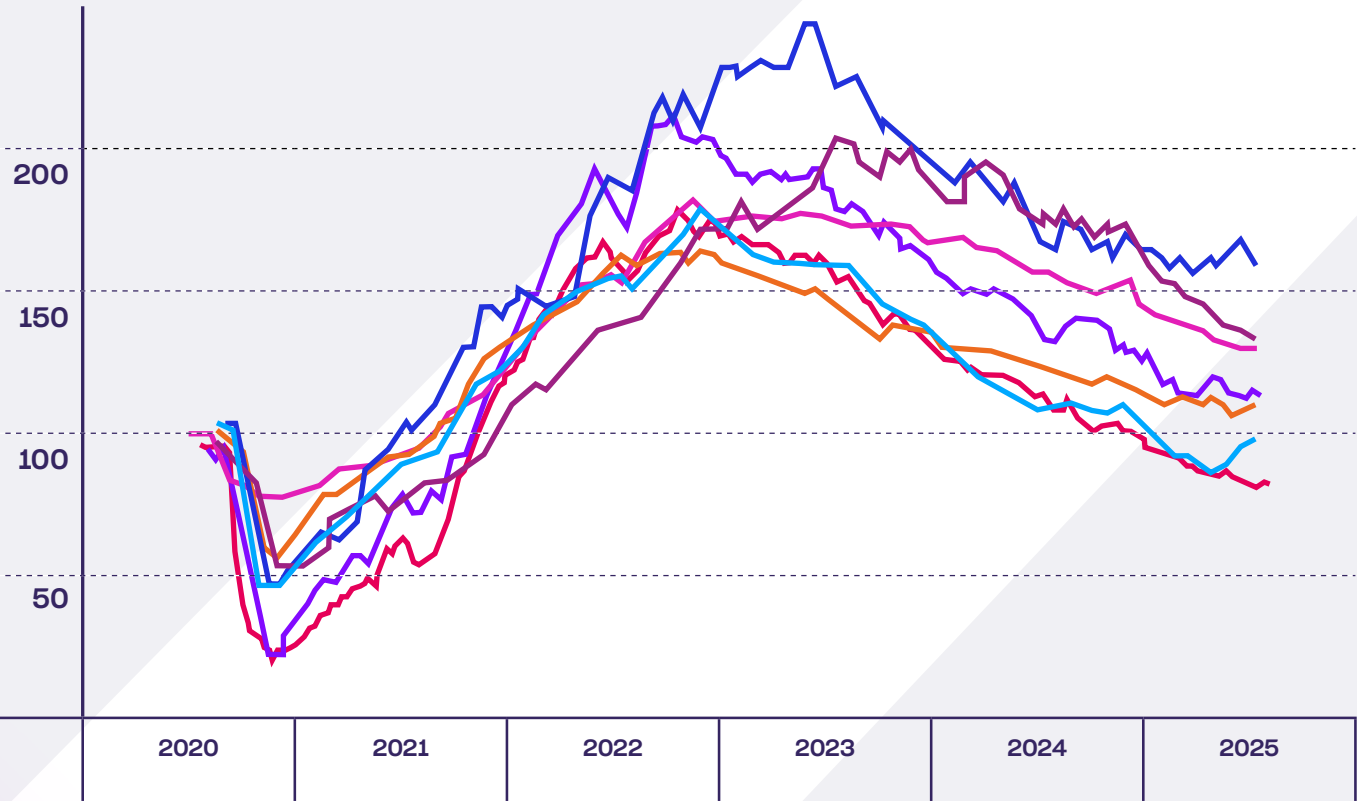
7%

of all UK jobs annually are filled by the Creative Industries

UK TALENT TRENDS

While the Creative Industries have shown consistent growth over the past decade, the labour market has continued to face unique challenges, specifically in the last couple of years. These challenges have been magnified by economic turbulence, leading to hiring slowdowns when compared to other industries. For context, UK job openings across digital, marketing, creative and tech are down 40% compared to 2019⁵.

The UK's slowdown in hiring has been sharper than elsewhere globally



Source: Indeed Hiring Lab



Initially in January of 2025 the IMF raised its UK growth forecast to 1.6% citing factors such as improved household finances, investment increases, and potential interest rate cuts⁶. However risks like the tariff trade wars have slightly destabilised this outlook with the IMF adjusting the forecast to 1.1%. Despite this decrease the UK is still set to be the fastest growing market in Europe.

LinkedIn's latest Q1 Talent Insights Report⁷ highlighted record-low global employee confidence in areas such as finances, career prospects, and job stability. Growing job insecurity means businesses have to step up to provide transparency and support. Forbes highlights this as particularly important, noting that employee financial stress negatively affects morale, innovation, and productivity, costing businesses nearly half a trillion dollars annually⁸.

Our data shows that while only 23% of employees changed jobs last year (a record low), half of candidates (50%) are actively job hunting, while an additional 19% are open to new opportunities. This means the challenge for employers lies not only in preventing top talent from leaving but also in attracting fresh, motivated candidates who can deliver quickly.

Over the next 12 months, the employment market is expected to continue to evolve as Labour's proposed **Make Work Pay** reforms become law. These 28 individual reforms aim to create a more equitable and inclusive workplace by implementing measures

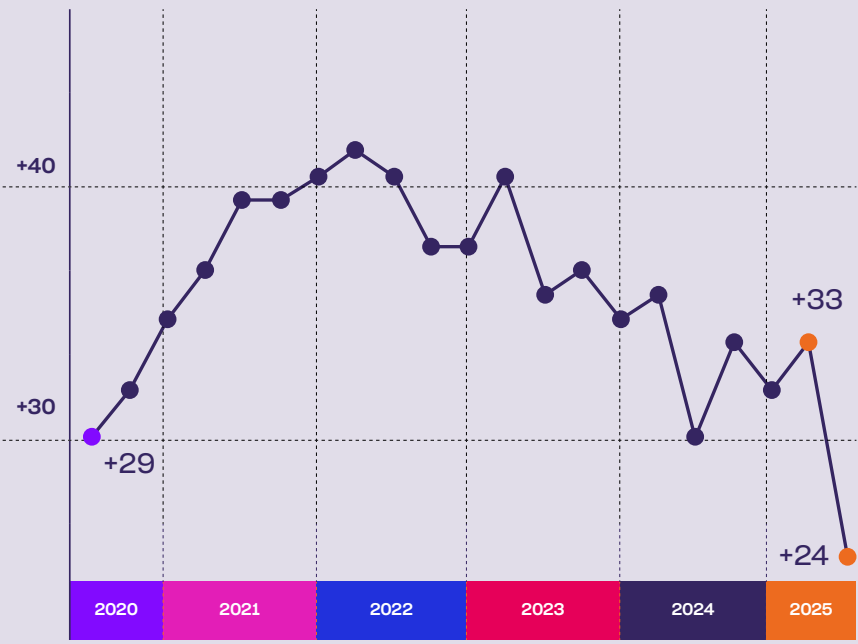
such as day-one rights for employees, stronger workplace protections, and enhanced legislation. While these changes champion fairness, they also introduce new considerations for businesses.

Combined with the recent NI increases, the cost implications of hiring permanent employees may deter some organisations from traditional recruitment methods.

Instead, we anticipate a growing shift towards hiring freelancers and contractors. This approach offers businesses greater flexibility while continuing to meet their resourcing needs.

If the IMF's growth projections hold true, whether at 1.1%-1.6%, we might see opportunities start to open up through greater natural attrition, people leaving their roles of their own volition, and via newly created job roles. There is also clearly a desire for change and the juxtaposition of salary importance vs. the companies doing pay reviews will impact attrition too.

Workforce confidence index



Source: LinkedIn Market Research

"The proposed Employment Rights Bill signals a shift for organisations, with earlier protection from unfair dismissal and increased focus on employee rights. Organisations will need to adapt by strengthening probation management processes, improving onboarding, and ensuring fair treatment of all employees from day one, highlighting a growing focus on employee experience and retention."

Danielle Meola, Journey HR



23%

of employees changed jobs in the last year – a record low



50%

of candidates are actively job hunting with a further 19% passively looking

SALARIES & DAY RATES

Financial pressures continue to weigh heavily across the workforce and businesses alike. While we've seen some relief with easing interest rates and inflation, many people are still facing lower living standards - for some, it's the third year in a row. Even as companies try to adjust compensation, the feeling of being undervalued remains widespread. Over half (53%) of permanent employees believe their pay doesn't reflect their skills and experience, while a further 19% are unsure.

On paper, there has been progress. Permanent salaries have grown by an average of 5.8% in the last 12 months, mirroring the UK national average reported by the Office of National Statistics (March 2025)⁹. However, rising costs have diminished the real impact of these increases. With three-quarters of the workforce earning under £85,000, many employees are finding that their pay simply isn't stretching far enough. This gap between perception and reality points to a bigger issue: when the cost of living outpaces pay increases, employees are left feeling discouraged. For business leaders, this presents an ongoing challenge in keeping teams motivated and engaged; and ensuring the lights stay on.

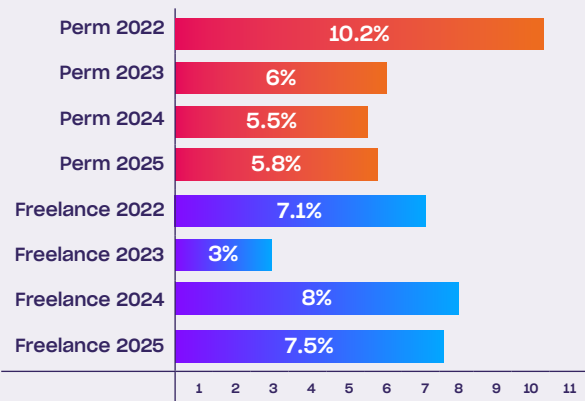
When we look closer, certain disparities become clear. Those working in agency roles earn, on average, £2,992 less annually than their brand-side counterparts. For some industries, the gap is even larger - professionals in SaaS and Tech businesses often take home up to £10,000 more than those in other sectors.

Freelancers and contractors have had a different experience in the last 12 months. Their earnings show stronger growth, with average day rates rising by 7.5% to £402 per day. Freelancers working for agencies earn an average of £412 per day, while those hired directly by brands average slightly less at £389. However, despite these rising rates, a significant portion of freelancers (33%) report that clients are actively pushing for lower fees, underscoring the ongoing cost-consciousness within organisations.

Amidst these increases, more than half (53%) of professionals are planning to change jobs in the coming year, with salary and bonuses cited as their the top motivator. Career progression is a close second, highlighting the importance of feeling valued and having the opportunity to grow. Yet, many businesses may be falling short in meeting these expectations. Only 57% of companies conduct annual salary reviews, leaving a significant portion of employees in the dark about how their hard work will be recognised.

Beyond just the salary reviews, businesses need to be creating environments where people feel valued, supported and can grow. Recognising employee contributions, committing to regular reviews, and offering meaningful growth opportunities are all essential strategies for retaining talent and building long-term advocacy.

YoY Salary or Day Rate Change:



"With clients spending less and costs rising, salary expectations are becoming harder to manage. Aligning pay with skills and ensuring fair wages is key—but when salary increases aren't possible, investing in development, meaningful feedback and growth must accelerate. Supporting people's futures helps bridge the gap when pay alone can't."

Katie McCambley – Managing Director
MullenLoweUK

£ **43%**

of permanent employees received a salary increase in the last 12 months

THE RESKILLING REVOLUTION

The rapid pace of technological change is reshaping the way we work, pushing us all to learn and adapt. For businesses, this means that by 2030, around 1 billion workers globally will need to upskill or reskill to stay relevant¹⁰. That's a huge challenge, especially for organisations that are already balancing tighter budgets and competing priorities.

According to LinkedIn's Workplace Learning Report¹¹, companies that invest in career development consistently outperform their peers. Yet 36% of permanent employees haven't received formal training in the past year, which highlights a significant gap in employee expectations. With 72% of employees identifying learning opportunities as a key factor in choosing their current or future roles, it's clear there's both appetite and opportunity for change.

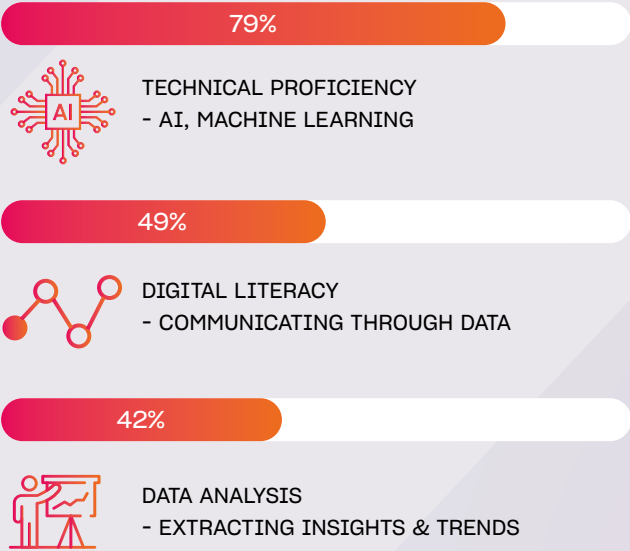
As accessible technologies continue to evolve, addressing the technical skills gap remains crucial for workforces to fully capitalise on emerging opportunities. However, businesses must also recognise the growing significance of interpersonal skills - such as communication, adaptability, creativity, and problem-solving - as the true drivers of innovation and resilience. These skills empower teams to navigate complex challenges, collaborate effectively, and build more meaningful connections in today's fast-paced, ever-changing workplace.

Research shows that embedding learning makes employees 56% more motivated to acquire new skills¹². By fostering a culture that values continuous learning, leaders can help employees feel recognised and supported as they adjust to new tools and processes.

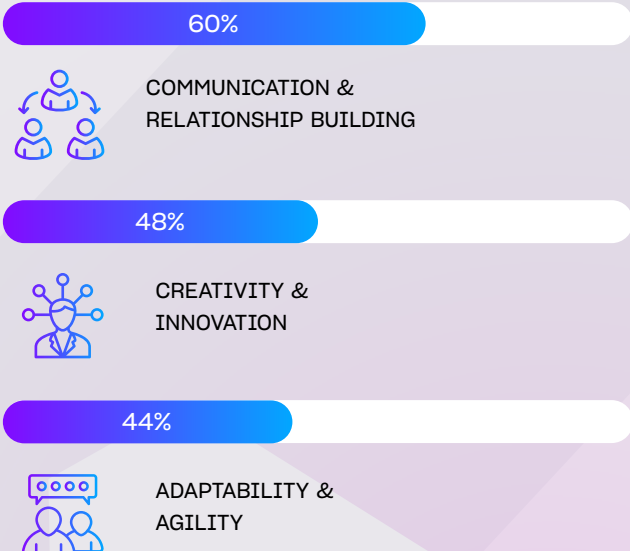
The clock is ticking though. With 70% of workplace skills predicted to change by 2030, businesses need a clear and actionable strategy¹³. Future-focused leaders are already identifying critical technical and interpersonal skills and shaping learning programmes to close those gaps. Upskilling and reskilling isn't just an investment in employees; it's an investment in gaining a competitive advantage.

The top skills that respondents felt would be important to the future of work, include:

► Technical skills



► Interpersonal skills



The types of training respondents felt would be most beneficial to their current skill set, include:

► Permanent



► Freelance



The skills first imperative

The fast-evolving pace of technology demands more than just a reskilling revolution; it demands a shift in how businesses approach talent acquisition.

Traditional recruitment methods that focus on degrees or job titles are no longer enough to meet the demands of innovation-driven industries. Instead, businesses need to explore skills-first hiring strategies, prioritising candidates and abilities and skill sets, rather than their education and past career experience.

By evaluating skills over qualifications, companies open themselves up to a more diverse and dynamic talent pool. Research shows this approach can expand the talent pool by up to 6x, offering access to a wealth of untapped potential.¹⁴

Beyond just widening the search, a skills-first approach also helps tackle skill gaps head-on. By identifying candidates with demonstrable abilities, organisations can match talent to specific needs more effectively, leading to greater performance and productivity. Those hired through this method are 2.8x more likely to be top performers in their roles. Switching to a skills-first strategy can also diversify

hiring pipelines by up to 10.2x, enabling businesses to discover candidates they might have otherwise overlooked. This adds fresh perspectives, drives innovation, and strengthens overall resilience within teams.

Ultimately, prioritising skills is about futureproofing. It's about finding the most capable people who can deliver the best work, quickly and efficiently.

"I strongly believe the success of my team is rooted in each and every one of them having a clear career path, one that has been jointly reached, provides growth for the individual and which aligns with our overall objectives. The access we have to Publicis L&D facilitates this growth, we have a wealth of resources to tap into and a great Groupe team that keeps us updated on new developments and offerings."

Glega Minaidis – Operations Director
Digitas

by 2030

around 1 billion workers globally will need to upskill or reskill to stay relevant

EMERGING TECHNOLOGIES & HUMAN CENTRED AI

The potential of artificial intelligence (AI) is immense, but to realise its full potential, it must be guided by human ingenuity. With the right strategy, these technologies can become powerful tools that enhance human creativity, decision-making and problem-solving. A human-centred approach to AI ensures that technology complements human strengths, driving innovation, boosting productivity and fostering sustainable growth.

Yet there is currently a disconnect between what businesses expect, and what talent is currently delivering: 9 out of 10 business leaders consider AI a strategic priority, while only 15% of employees fully understand their company's AI strategy¹⁵. These gaps exacerbate anxiety, with nearly a third of full-time employees and nearly half of freelancers concerned about being replaced by AI systems. And yet, 75% believe that when used correctly, AI has the potential to enrich their work rather than threaten it. These divides highlight both challenges and opportunities.

"In a rapidly changing world its more vital than ever that you have relentless focus on self-development, what new skills do I need? How do I pivot to adapt? The question everyone should be asking themselves is, NOT what skills do I need to not for my current job BUT my future job."

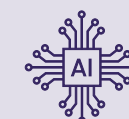
Ronnie Smith – Head of Talent Acquisition
Unlimited Group

Productivity for commercial success

For business leaders, the key question is: how can they boost workforce productivity and efficiency amid rising employment costs and talent shortages in the UK? The answer lies in harnessing technology to drive smarter efficiencies. By leveraging AI – not as a replacement for people, but as a partner to human creativity – businesses can streamline processes, reduce repetitive tasks, and unlock the full potential of their workforce. This strategic use of AI not only enhances operational efficiency and adaptability but also creates a clear path to sustained commercial advantage.

This is, in part, already happening, with 60% of employees experimenting with AI tools at least a few times a week, primarily for content creation, research and problem solving. Yet, the rapid rise of access to generative AI tools continues to present a major challenge for businesses – with only 13% currently feeling fully equipped to navigate this shift. Without a clear strategy, robust governance, and comprehensive upskilling initiatives, companies risk losing ground in both competitiveness and innovation.

Informal or inconsistent adoption of AI tools by employees could lead to inefficiencies, security risks, and missed opportunities to fully leverage AI's potential at scale across the organisation.



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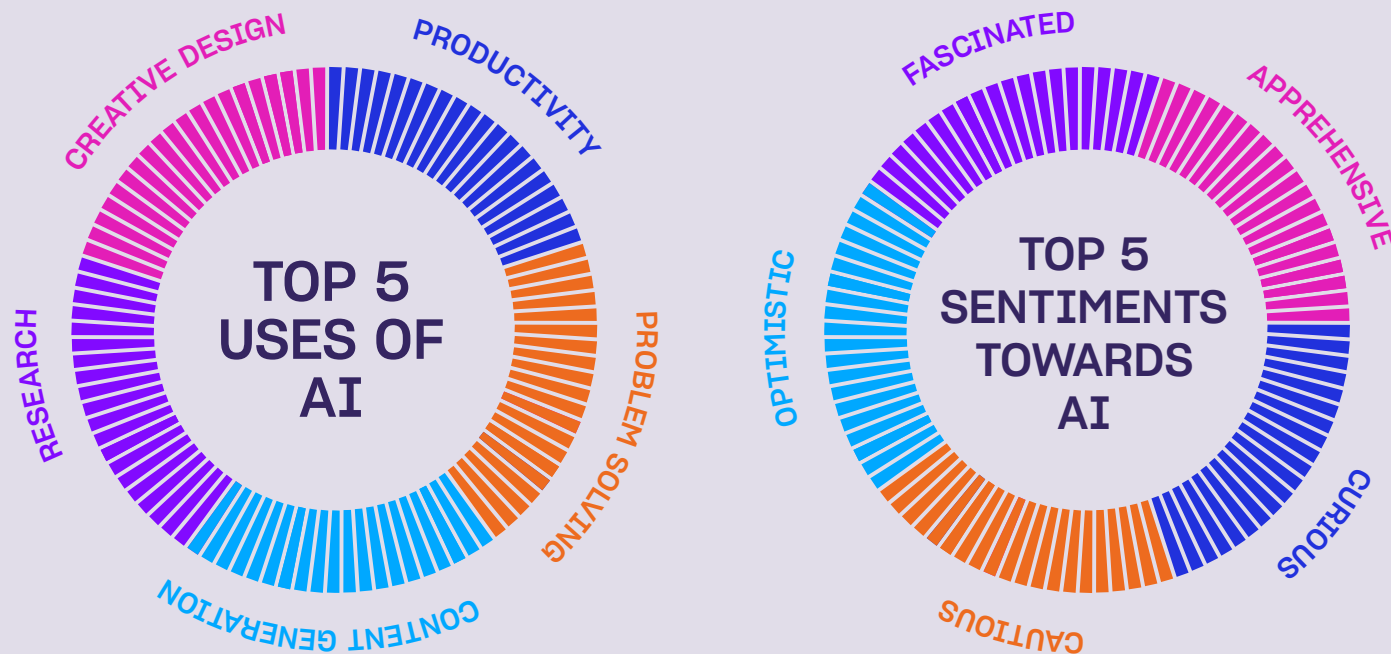
Where creativity meets technology

Over the last year, generative AI has continued to disrupt the Creative Industries, offering new possibilities, but also sparking critical discussions about originality, intellectual property, and authenticity. While AI tools can generate content quickly and at scale, they often lack the strategic nuance and originality needed to deliver truly impactful work. This is where human creativity remains indispensable. Conceptual Creatives play a critical role in guiding AI-generated outputs, ensuring they are authentic, on-brief, and aligned with the broader strategy. It's the human touch that brings emotional intelligence, contextual understanding, and brand voice - elements that AI alone can't replicate.

Over-reliance on AI also risks homogenising creative output, making it harder to stand out in a world

already saturated with content. A human-centred AI strategy ensures that technology remains a collaborator, not a replacement, enabling people to focus on strategic and conceptual tasks that drive lasting impact. This balance safeguards the originality and emotional depth that defines human creativity¹⁶.

There is a critical need for proactive, deliberate strategies that emphasise human collaboration and transparency. Leaders play a pivotal role in bridging these gaps. By articulating a clear vision for AI adoption, addressing employee concerns with empathy, and investing in upskilling the workforce, they can transform fear into curiosity and uncertainty into confidence. Cultivating a culture of inclusivity around AI not only streamlines adoption but also fuels innovation and drives lasting business success.



THE MENTAL FRAGILITY CRISIS

We've been living in times of unprecedented change and uncertainty, where individuals are continually being stretched to adapt. This reality presents a growing challenge: maintaining mental resilience in the face of mounting pressures. This has now shifted into a fundamental change, as a society we are in a mentally fragile place - in this section, we'll talk about the direct impact we are seeing on individuals' mental health but it's important to frame this as a collective challenge as we navigate change.

The demands of our always-evolving workplace environments are impacting how we think, feel, and perform. Anxiety levels are rising, and for many, this translates into diminished productivity, reduced creativity, and limitations on innovation. Mental wellbeing now plays a central role in workplace satisfaction, with individuals across demographics ranking it among their top five priorities. For those aged 18-24, it's second only to learning and development.

However, despite clear demand, workplace mental health support remains inadequate. This gap is most noticeable amongst freelancers, with 50% describing their mental health as "fair" or "poor." Even among permanent employees, 34% believe changing jobs could improve their wellbeing. The message is loud and clear: businesses must address mental health or risk losing talent and productivity.

The financial impact is equally stark. Studies show that 80% of employers recognise that financial stress or unknowns impact employee performance, costing businesses nearly half a trillion dollars annually. Yet, despite acknowledging the cost, many organisations are failing to act - with 59% offering basic or no support.

Failing to support mental fragility isn't just an ethical oversight - it leads to decreased productivity, higher absenteeism, and increased employee turnover, all of which can significantly impact a company's bottom line.

Leaders have an opportunity and responsibility to foster psychologically safe and supportive environments that not only enhance employee wellbeing but also build resilience, strengthen trust, and drive productivity.

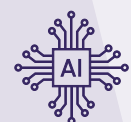
Leading from the front

Leadership in today's workplace isn't just about strategy; it's also about empathy, adaptability, and empowerment. The best leaders don't just manage change; they create environments where teams are comfortable with change.

Yet, there's a critical gap in leadership training. Findings from the Chartered Management Institute (CMI), which revealed that 82% of managers transitioned into leadership roles without any formal training¹⁷, and are therefore navigating challenges without the tools needed to succeed. It's no surprise then that 63% of professionals express a desire for Leadership and Management training, and 47% feel unsure about their abilities in areas like transparency, communication, and strategic vision.

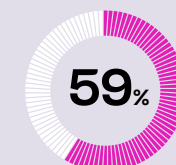
"In these turbulent times, 'strong leadership' is needed more than ever, but the definition needs a re-think. A focus on action and results is not enough. We have normalised rational, 'thinking' leadership to the point where the skills of being truly present, paying close attention, active listening and responding from a place of empathy, have taken too much of a back seat. We need to prioritise leading with humanity to effectively guide, inspire and empower those in our charge."

Charlie Hurrell - Former CCO and MD of Engine, Dentsu mcgarrybowen and mullenlowe London

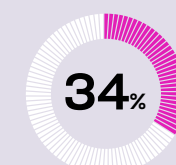


75%

believe that when using AI correctly, it has the potential to enrich their work



of businesses are offering little to no support for mental fragility



believe changing jobs will improve their mental fragility

MULTI-GENERATIONAL WORKFORCES

The evolving demographics of the UK, marked by an aging population and extended working lives, have resulted in nearly three-quarters (73%) of senior business leaders now managing multi-generational workforces¹⁸. The presence of five distinct generations – Traditionalists, Baby Boomers, Generation X, Millennials, and Generation Z – each bringing a unique blend of skills, experience, and perspectives, presents both exciting new opportunities and intricate management challenges.

This demographic shift necessitates a fundamental change in approach; a singular, "one-size-fits-all" strategy for the workforce is no longer viable. However, cultivating harmony and maximising productivity within a multi-generational environment is a complex undertaking, presenting multifaceted challenges ranging from differing communication styles and technological adaptability, to varying workplace expectations.

While expectations on what we get out of work differs, it's unsurprising given the current economic climate, that salary and bonuses remain the key driver in employment. There has been a universal shift amongst most age groups towards career progression, which is likely to stem from the need to adapt to technological advancements, and the imperative for continuous upskilling. This drive is further fuelled by the direct link between career advancement and increased remuneration. Consequently, employees across all generations recognise career progression as crucial for job security, skill development, and financial growth in a dynamic job market.

For those in mid-life, a greater emphasis on work-life balance and flexibility is understandable as caring responsibilities often become more significant. This life-stage frequently involves balancing career demands with looking after children or elderly relatives. The ability to manage work alongside these personal obligations becomes a key priority for this demographic.

Top 5 work requirements in order of importance by age demographic



Gen Z: creating future leaders

This year marks a significant shift in the global workforce, with Generation Z (born mid-1990s to early 2010s) now making up over 27% of the working population, surpassing Baby Boomers. By 2030, their presence is expected to grow to 58%¹⁹, offering both immense potential and important challenges for businesses.

Yet, as organisations increasingly lean on outsourcing and AI to cut costs and drive efficiencies, a critical issue is emerging: a decline in accessible entry-level roles. While these strategies may improve short-term productivity, they inadvertently reduce vital opportunities for young professionals to gain real-world experience. Without these foundational career-building opportunities, we risk under preparing an entire generation, creating a shortage of mid and senior-level leaders, compounding the already critical skills gap facing many industries.

"At 20/20 Levels, we work with underrepresented young talent to prepare them for a career and running their own business. We have noticed this generation is more confident, more tech savvy, and more entrepreneurial. They are ready and hungry for the working world. However, they lack access to opportunities. Companies that have actively recruited underrepresented young talent have realised benefits not just in terms of the bottom line, but also employee engagement."

Duro Oye – CEO & Founder
2020 Levels

However, Gen Z brings tremendous advantages. As the first truly digital-native generation, they possess a natural fluency with emerging technologies that are shaped by global connectivity. This has influenced not only their skills but also how they perceive work, with many arriving more adaptable and tech-savvy than previous generations. Employers, however, must balance these strengths with realistic expectations and provide the clarity, development, and purpose that Gen Z needs to thrive.

Narratives around "quiet quitting" often misrepresent this generation. Almost half of Gen Z workers (49%) view their jobs as central to their identity.

They also show the highest confidence in senior leadership (62%) and are least likely to be actively job-seeking. These trends highlight Gen Z's openness to commitment when their needs are met with meaningful opportunities and support.

While it's understandable that businesses are implementing short-term measures to protect the bottom line, it's vital they don't lose sight of long-term talent development. Gen Z brings fresh perspectives, digital fluency, and a strong desire for meaningful work. Those who invest in their growth and wellbeing will not only close future skills gaps but also position themselves as leaders in an innovation-driven economy.


Ageism in the workplace

The declining UK birth rate, projected to reach a total fertility rate of 1.41 children per woman by 2027, alongside 38% of the population being aged 50+ and increasing life expectancy, signals a shrinking talent pool²⁰.

This demographic shift necessitates businesses actively re-engaging older workers, especially given that there are 3.5% less professionals aged 45+ in digital, marketing, and creative than a year ago. This stat underscores the urgency of retaining and attracting experienced talent across all age groups, and particularly those aged 45+, to avoid critical workforce shortages and maintain economic competitiveness.

However, ageist attitudes, as highlighted by a UN report²¹ indicating that roughly half the global population holds such biases, present a considerable barrier to leveraging this experienced demographic. Stereotypes about older workers' capabilities and adaptability often lead to their underutilisation and undervaluation within organisations. This is despite 58% of those aged 50 and over desire to continue working beyond traditional retirement ages, with 80% even willing to take a pay reduction to reskill or transition to new industries.

To effectively counter ageism and capitalise on the wealth of knowledge and experience within the "older" workforce, businesses must actively defy these outdated stereotypes. Creating inclusive workplace cultures that value intergenerational collaboration, offer flexible working arrangements, and provide opportunities for reskilling and career development are crucial. Particularly focussing on engaging this generation with new skills in emerging technologies is vital.



58%

of the workforce will be made up of Gen Z by 2030

























By dismantling age-related biases, organisations can not only tap into a previously underutilised and undervalued talent pool but also foster more diverse, innovative, and resilient workforces capable of navigating future challenges, who have arguably, “seen it all”. This inherently resilient generation views acquiring AI skills as yet another valuable string to their bow, further enhancing their adaptability.

Instead of viewing generational differences as obstacles, businesses should embrace them as catalysts for progress by actively seeking input

from employees across all levels to cultivate adaptable workplace environments and benefits packages. Meeting workers where they are or aspire to be, fosters collective engagement, synergy, and team resilience.

As multigenerational workforces continue to expand, proactively implementing inclusive policies that address the diverse needs of all generations will be essential for attracting and retaining talent, ultimately building more productive, satisfied, and healthier workforces for sustained success.

The top 5 benefits that age demographics seek from their workplace

	18-24 years	25-34 years	35-44 years	45-54 years	55+ years
1	 L & D	 FLEXIBLE WORKING	 HOLIDAY ALLOWANCE	 HOLIDAY ALLOWANCE	 PENSIONS
2	 MENTAL WELLBEING	 L & D	 PENSIONS	 PENSIONS	 HOLIDAY ALLOWANCE
3	 FLEXIBLE WORKING	 MENTAL WELLBEING	 FLEXIBLE WORKING	 BONUS & COMMISSION	 BONUS & COMMISSION
4	 PROGRESSIVE POLICIES	 PROGRESSIVE POLICIES	 BONUS & COMMISSION	 FLEXIBLE WORKING	 FLEXIBLE WORKING
5	 HEALTHCARE	 HEALTHCARE	 MENTAL WELLBEING	 MENTAL WELLBEING	 MENTAL WELLBEING

DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION

Major Players will keep championing insight and awareness within the creative industries, while - through our data and partnerships with exceptional organisations - delivering to support marginalised groups. We believe that those who create the work ultimately shape it. In a climate where revenue generation and measurable impact on every audience are under sharper scrutiny than ever, progressive marketing and a genuine sense of belonging stand out as the most critical areas of focus.

This marks the fifth consecutive year we've gathered demographic data, focusing on key areas such as age, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, identity, socio-economic background, and disability or neurodivergence. By collecting this information, we're able to offer meaningful insights into diversity, equity, and inclusion across the industries - delivering the only annual snapshot of representation and equity available.

Over the last 6 months, DE&I initiatives have increasingly intersected with political discourse, particularly in the US, where recent legislative developments and policy shifts have introduced new challenges for organisations. These changes are beginning to influence how global businesses navigate and implement DE&I strategies across different regions. At the same time, continued economic headwinds have contributed to a quiet deprioritisation - or in some cases, abandonment, of DE&I efforts. The momentum that was once widely championed, appears to be stalling.

Findings from this year's Census highlight this trend starkly: 55% of businesses report having no dedicated DE&I budget, while an additional 25% are unsure if such budgets exist at all. This suggests that up to 80% of businesses may now be operating without any specific financial allocation for DE&I - a significant decline from 2021, when 75% reported having defined budgets in place.

This trend is beginning to manifest across industries, where early signs point to the degradation in both representation and equity. As support structures are scaled back or dissolved, the progress made in fostering inclusive workplace cultures is increasingly at risk. As the leading talent agency in digital, marketing and creative, we have a responsibility to continue to shine a spotlight on DE&I, and positively impact the industries we work within.

Gender & Identity
Over the past two years, there has been a 5% decline in the number of women and non-binary individuals working across the digital, marketing, and creative sectors, equating to approximately 120,000 professionals leaving the industry.

While last year's data showed signs of progress with the gender pay gap narrowing to 10.1%, the trend has since reversed. In the past 12 months, the gap has widened to 12.5%, with women in permanent roles earning an average of £8,099 less than their male counterparts.

Representation at senior levels also remains imbalanced. Just 14% of women earn above £85,000, a salary atypical of senior or C-suite positions, compared to 25% of men. Despite this disparity, men are marginally more likely to report feeling underpaid, relative to their skills or experience, and more likely to leave their current roles.



120,000

women have left the industry in the last 2 years

Within freelance roles, the pay gap has widened significantly in the last 12 months, with men earning £38.70 more than women, representing a 9.74% pay gap.

Age

Workers aged 45 and older now represent just 11.4% of the workforce - a sharp decline from 15% in 2024. This 3.6 percentage point drop within a single year signals an exodus of experienced professionals from the digital, marketing, and creative sectors in the last 12 months. This representation gap lags behind the UK average, which is 30%, while the number of workers aged 50+ continues to grow.

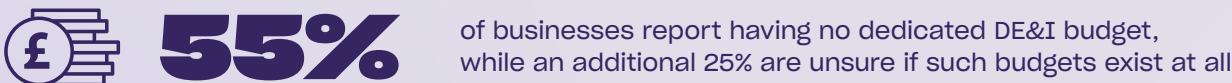
There are some industries that have better representation than others, most notably: business development, client and creative services, and production & studio. Those with the least representation include social & influencer, making up just 3.5% of the workforce, and performance and digital marketing, making up 6.7%.

There is strong female representation in the formative years, with almost double the number of women than men aged 18-34 (63% female vs 34% men).



Sexuality

The number of individuals who identify as being LGBTQIA+ has remained the same at 14%, although it must be noted that 8.4% preferred not to disclose their sexuality. This stats is well above the national average²², which suggests 3.8% of the UK population identify as LGBTQIA+, which is greatly encouraging.



Despite this relatively strong representation, pay equity remains a challenge. While the pay gap has closed in the last 12 months, the difference in LGBTQIA+ earning is £5,283 less than their heterosexual counterparts - equating to an 8.1% pay gap, down from 12% last year.

LGBTQIA+ freelancers and contractors are earning, on average, £379 per day, which is 3% less than heterosexual counterparts. This represents a 5% swing in the last two years.

Disability & Neurodiversity

There has been a 5% decrease in the number of individuals in the Creative Industries identifying with a disability, neurodivergence and/or mental health condition, now representing just under a quarter (24%) of professionals.



Data shows that those who have a disability, mental health condition, or neurodivergence are, on average, paid up to £6459 less in permanent salaries, and £21 less in day rates. These represent 9.6% and 5% pay gaps - which have grown since last year, in addition to less representation.

Ethnicity

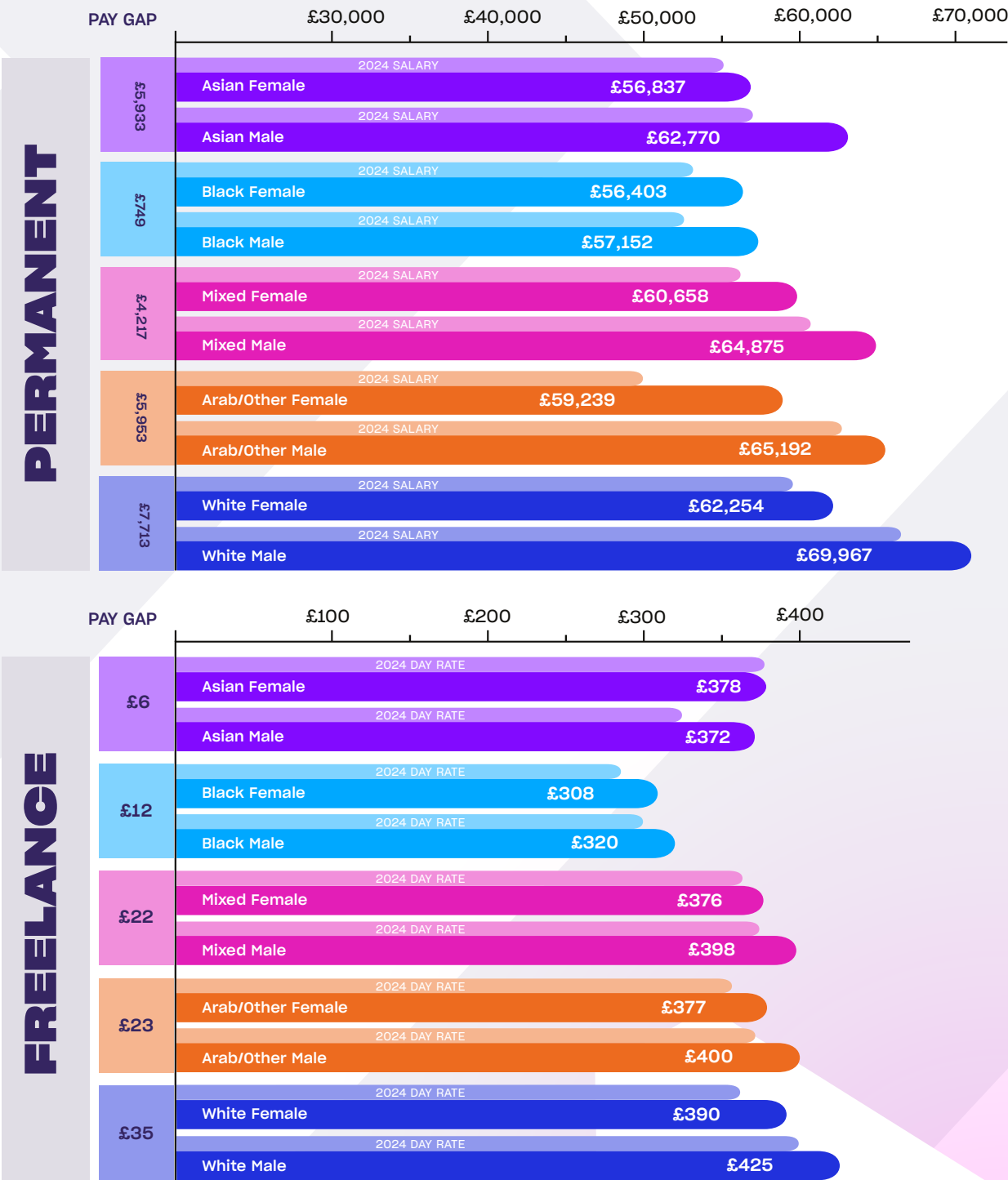
Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic representation has increased in the last 12 months from 14.8% to 16.3%. While progress has been made, this is still short of the UK national average of 18.3%, and considerably short of London's 39.9% ethnic make-up.

Intersectional data from this year's Census across gender and ethnicity, shows that Black males and females continue to earn least across both permanent salaries and freelance day rates within the Creative

Industries; this is despite collectively, receiving above industry average increases, at 7.5% for permanent employees and 7.9% for freelancers. Black females are paid 24% less than the industry average.











Despite being the lowest paid cohort, those who identify as Black are the most confident demographic in leadership overall, and the least likely to leave their roles in the next 12 months (21%).

Salary and day rates by ethnicity



Our eco-system

As the UK's most trusted talent agency, we have a responsibility to positively impact diversity, equity, and inclusion within the industries we service, making a more equitable society for all. We continue to invest into our networks and partners, creating an eco-system of like-minded organisations to enable greater representation, and to challenge the status quo:

	CREATIVE EQUALS – An award-winning global non-for-profit consultancy, challenging the status-quo, to push for a world of fairness, difference and belonging.		OUTVERTISING – A non-for-profit LGBTQIA+ advertising and marketing, advocacy group – promoting more, positive representation within the world of advertising.
	BLOOM UK – A professional network for women in communications with a mission to ensure equal opportunities.		WITH NOT FOR – A disability-led and founded talent and content agency that exclusively represents Disabled creatives.
	SHE SAYS – A global creative network for woman to help advancement within the creative and tech industries; through events, meet-ups, campaigns & mentorships		SPRING BACK GUIDE – A digital-based coaching solution that supports women returning back into the workplace after a career break
	20/20 LEVELS – is a multi-award-winning social enterprise leading the way to a more diverse and inclusive workforce in the UK.		LOLLIPOP MENTORING – A dedicated mentoring community for Black women in the marketing and advertising industries: empowering, connecting, and uplifting through meaningful mentorship, networking, and shared guidance.
	GOOD NUGGET – A non-profit organisation empowering underrepresented talent to take their first steps towards a career in the exciting world of branding, communications and marketing		AVENIR NETWORK – a future-of-work consultancy helping organisations adapt to change, embrace innovation, and lead with purpose. We partner with organisations of all sizes to create inclusive, sustainable, and future-ready workplaces that empower people and drive business success.

In addition, we continue to pledge our support to organisations in creating long-term strategies, that enable businesses to attract, engage, and retain talent, including:

▶ Investing in and utilising our ecosystem of networks and partners	▶ Building diverse talent pools through our eco-system
▶ Creating 'long-list' quotas	▶ Collecting and analysing data
▶ Anonymous CV's	▶ L&D training
▶ Embracing Earn Your Worth	▶ Psychometric testing

EARN YOUR WORTH - FAIR PAY FOR ALL

We believe that talent should be paid fairly based on their skills, experience, and ability to do the job; not on their perceived worth or ability to negotiate. At Major Players, we made a commitment to stop asking our candidates to divulge in their current or previous salaries, in a bid to cut pay gaps.

There is clear evidence which indicates when making this simple, low-cost change

Find out more: www.majorplayers.co.uk/earn-your-worth

to the hiring process, it can positively impact pay inequality.

We are calling on all employers to sign up to our #EarnYourWorth pledge to make salary disclosure a thing of the past. We are also calling on individuals to sign our petition, in order for us to lobby the UK Government into making legislative change around salary history.



Pledge your support here:



IMPACTFUL WORK

The concept of Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) faces a critical inflection point. Once celebrated as the future of sustainable business, ESG now faces the risk of being dismissed as a mere marketing ploy.

Donald Trump's 2024 victory, buoyed by agendas dedicated to combating so-called "woke capitalism," has thrown a wrench into the ESG movement in the United States, which has had an impact on some strategies and programmes in the UK. However, some territories, like Europe and Asia, appear to be doubling down despite the anti-ESG sentiment, and are charging ahead with ambitious sustainability plans - unfazed, so far, by negative rhetoric elsewhere.

A notable shift in workplace priorities is evident, with a considerable drop in the number of employees who consider purpose an important quality at work. This figure has fallen from 70% to 46%, a change likely influenced by candidates increasingly prioritising earning potential in the current economic climate. However, it's important to note that Gen Z continues to demonstrate a stronger inclination towards purpose-driven work compared to other generations.

There is still an expectation on businesses to consider their impact on people, places and culture at large. For business leaders, this means embracing transparency and innovation to stay ahead - align themselves with clear sustainability outcomes and demonstrate real-world impact, rather than simply checking off an ESG box.

Businesses that choose to place purpose at the foundation of their developments will be more effective at attracting, engaging and retaining top talent. Inspired employees are believed to be 50% more productive. Having a clear purpose can organise diverse personalities and strengths around achieving a common goal.

Moreover, customer surveys²³ show that behaviour isn't just softer towards purpose-driven companies, but consumers are four times as likely to trust, buy from and recommend purpose-driven companies. Stakeholders might want to solely focus on driving revenue, but injecting purpose and ESG into business strategies is the exact way to build a future-fit operation.

In 2022, Major Players was awarded B Corp accreditation, joining over 2300 other UK businesses, and more than 9500 globally, in redefining business success. The rigorous and holistic certification framework looks at five core areas: governance, workers, community, environment and customers. It ensures that businesses are used as a force for good, putting people, purpose and planet alongside profit in their decision-making. Using the B Corp framework (or similar accreditations) allows businesses to benchmark the aforementioned areas and highlight opportunities that either cement purpose or derive from it.

Simply naming a purpose is not enough anymore. To access the benefits on offer requires an open dialogue with workers and transparency from leadership. Yes, purpose will drive progress, but only if it's implemented with sincerity. Businesses must practice it in all aspects of their operations, internally and externally. This forms part of an EVP - an opportunity to define the essence of your company through values, culture, uniqueness and purpose. It captures what team members, prospective candidates and customers can expect, and vice versa.



46%

of employees consider purpose as important in their current or future workplace

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CLIENT SERVICES & STRATEGY

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CLIENT SERVICES & STRATEGY

OVERVIEW OF MARKET

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The current demand for talent is seemingly at a junior to midweight level (Account Manager to Senior Account Manager) for both permanent and freelance positions. Candidates at this level are also more up for moving roles - perhaps less risk-averse than more senior candidates who have more commitments? We've seen an increase in redundancies at a senior level and continue to see change afoot at a leadership level. To address this, businesses are engaging senior freelance talent (Account Director/Senior Account Director) on longer contracts or making permanent hires to bridge the gap.

Furthermore, businesses are eager to acquire well-rounded talent with skills across Client Services and Project Management. Strong pitching skills are now essential for senior roles, reflecting the focus on new

business development for agencies. We've seen a trend that this talent pool is showing interest in moving into brand-side positions, equally with brands showing openness to onboard these candidates - especially those with dual Client Services and Project Management capabilities.

The demand for short-term Strategic freelance pitch development and ideation support is high. Additionally, there is a distinct rise in the need for Strategists with niche expertise in areas like gaming and AI. The surge in demand extends across both Creative and Brand Strategists, with an increasing preference for hybrid talent that seamlessly bridges brand thinking with creative ideation.

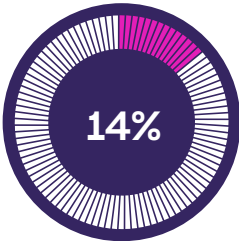
ROLES IN DEMAND

- Senior Account Managers
- Account Directors
- Digital Brand Strategists

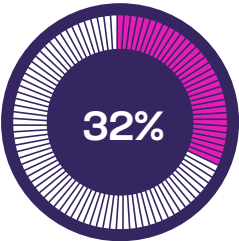
DEMOGRAPHICAL SNAPSHOT*

61% FEMALE
38% MALE
1% NON-BINARY
21% LGBTQIA+
14% AGED 45+

* some respondents chose not to disclose their demographical data, and therefore may not total 100%

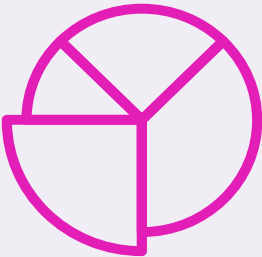


14% Black, Asian or Minority Ethnic backgrounds



32% disability, mental health condition or neurodivergence

TALENT SNAPSHOT



- 46% received a salary increase in the last year
- 56% believe they are not being paid their worth based on their skills and experience
- 21% changed roles in the last 12 months
- 60% had seen their employer make redundancies in the last year
- 46% are actively looking to move roles
- 27% believe moving roles in the next year will improve their mental health
- 24% are not confident in their current leadership
- 59% are using AI either every day or a couple of times a week

Salary information:

CLIENT SERVICES & STRATEGY

PERM	MP Average Salary 2025	Salary Range 2025
Account Executive	£30,000	£28-32k
Senior Account Executive	£33,000	£30-35k
Account Manager	£40,000	£35-45k
Senior Account Manager	£50,000	£45-55k
Account Director	£65,000	£55-70k
Senior Account Director	£75,000	£65-80k
Business Director	£90,000	£80-100k
Head of Client Services	£110,000	£90-130k
Strategy/Planning Director	£95,000	£90-110k
Head of Strategy/Planning	£145,000	£130-170k
Junior Strategist/Planner	£40,000	£35-45k
Mid Strategist/Planner	£50,000	£45-55k
Senior Strategist/Planner	£75,000	£65-85k
Chief Strategy Officer	£180,000	£150-220k

CLIENT SERVICES & STRATEGY

FREELANCE	MP Average Day Rate 2025	Day Rate Range 2025
Account Executive	£180	£150-200
Account Manager	£250	£200-250
Senior Account Manager	£300	£275-325
Account Director	£350	£300-400
Senior Account Director	£400	£350-450
Business Director	£450	£425-500
Head of Client Services	£450	£425-500
Junior Strategist / Planner	£300	£300-400
Mid Strategist / Planner	£350	£350-450
Senior Strategist / Planner	£600	£400-800
Strategy / Planning Director	£750	£500-1000
Head of Strategy / Planning	£800	£750-1000+

FACTORS & BENEFITS The top 3 factors candidates consider in their next role



87%
Holiday Allowance



89%
Flexible Working Hours



79%
Pension

CREATIVE SERVICES & PROJECT MANAGEMENT

OVERVIEW OF MARKET

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It's been a tough climate for the roles in Creative Services that aren't directly linked to revenue for agencies, most notably Studio, Resource, Traffic, and Operations. Due to this, we've seen more of these functions being made redundant; their tasks being redistributed to Project Managers and other team members. This has led to a decrease in demand for these specialist positions across both permanent and freelance, especially at agencies that tend to only need freelance support for short bursts or seasonally.

On the other hand, we've found that brand-side, there is still a need for operational candidates to handle Resource, Traffic and overall Studio Management. Project Management roles are still in high demand, but the job descriptions have expanded to include broader functions like client communication.

ROLES IN DEMAND

- ▶ Integrated Project Managers
- ▶ Digital Project Managers
- ▶ Operations Managers

DEMOGRAPHICAL SNAPSHOT

68% FEMALE
30% MALE
1% NON-BINARY
19% LGBTQIA+
17% AGED 45+

* some respondents chose not to disclose their demographical data, and therefore may not total 100%



14% Black, Asian or Minority Ethnic backgrounds



30% disability, mental health condition or neurodivergence

TALENT SNAPSHOT



- ▶ 39% received a salary increase in the last year
- ▶ 52% are actively looking to move roles
- ▶ 55% believe they are not being paid their worth based on their skills and experience
- ▶ 35% believe moving roles in the next year will improve their mental health
- ▶ 19% changed roles in the last 12 months
- ▶ 36% are not confident in their current leadership
- ▶ 59% had seen their employer make redundancies in the last year
- ▶ 54% are using AI either every day or a couple of times a week

Salary information:

CREATIVE SERVICES & PROJECT MANAGEMENT

PERM	MP Average Salary 2025	Salary Range 2025
Resource / Traffic Co-Ordinator	£35,000	£30-40k
Resource / Traffic Manager / Studio Manager	£55,000	£45-55k
Creative Services Manager	£55,000	£45-55k
Head of Creative Services	£70,000	£65-75k
Creative Services Director	£90,000	£80-100k
Operations Manager	£65,000	£60-70k
Operations Director	£75,000	£70-80k
Head of Operations	£85,000	£80-90k
Programme Manager	£65,000	£60-70k
Packaging Project Manager	£50,000	£45-55k
Project Coordinator	£28,000	£25-30k
Junior Project Manager	£32,000	£28-35k
Project Manager	£45,000	£40-50k
Senior Project Manager	£65,000	£55-70k
Digital Project Manager	£60,000	£55-65k
Senior Digital Project Manager	£75,000	£65-80k
Project Director	£85,000	£80-90k
Head of Project Management	£90,000	£85-100k

CREATIVE SERVICES & PROJECT MANAGEMENT

FREELANCE	MP Average Day Rate 2025	Day Rate Range 2025
Resource / Traffic Co-Ordinator	£200	£200-250
Resource / Traffic Manager / Studio Manager	£350	£300-450
Creative Services Manager	£350	£300-450
Creative Services Director	£400	£350-500
Operations Manager	£350	£350-450
Operations Director	£400	£400-500
Project Coordinator	£200	£180-225
Project Manager	£300	£250-350
Senior Project Manager	£375	£350-450
Digital Project Manager	£400	£350-500
Project Director	£450	£400-500
Programme Manager	£500	£450-600

FACTORS & BENEFITS The top 3 factors candidates consider in their next role



88%
Holiday Allowance



89%
Flexible Working Hours



77%
Pension

PRODUCTION & STUDIO

OVERVIEW OF MARKET

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The Production market is highly competitive for both freelance and permanent roles. What's interesting is that agencies appear to be leaning towards using freelance talent over making permanent hires. This ties in with how their clients now favour project-based production work.

Regarding skills, we've found that specialist digital production skills (AR, VR, MR, AI, CGI, UX, UI) are highly sought-after. Yet because of the increased popularity of short-form content, the biggest buzz lately is around Social-First Producers and Integrated Producers. TV Producer roles aren't experiencing the

same level of traction anymore, since production departments are no longer split into separate disciplines. Add to that, it looks like more brands and in-house studios are choosing to outsource their production needs.

Unfortunately, we've seen more redundancies in Post Production roles, with those responsibilities being absorbed into the main Producer role. People in permanent positions are staying put with few voluntary job shifts - the hesitancy for change is likely due to the current uncertainties in the broader industry, making a stable position worth holding on to.

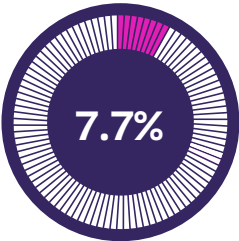
ROLES IN DEMAND

- ▶ Digital Producers
- ▶ Integrated Producers
- ▶ Social Content Producers

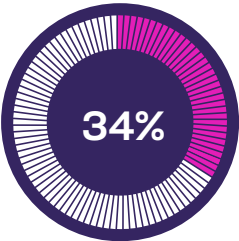
DEMOGRAPHICAL SNAPSHOT

55% FEMALE
44% MALE
1% NON-BINARY
14% LGBTQIA+
18% AGED 45+

* some respondents chose not to disclose their demographical data, and therefore may not total 100%

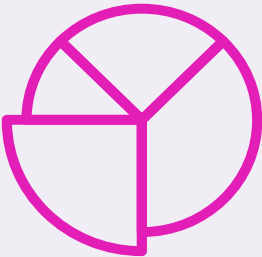


7.7% Black, Asian or Minority Ethnic backgrounds



34% disability, mental health condition or neurodivergence

TALENT SNAPSHOT



- ▶ 42% received a salary increase in the last year
- ▶ 59% believe they are not being paid their worth based on their skills and experience
- ▶ 12% changed roles in the last 12 months
- ▶ 51% had seen their employer make redundancies in the last year
- ▶ 42% are actively looking to move roles
- ▶ 30% believe moving roles in the next year will improve their mental health
- ▶ 23% are not confident in their current leadership
- ▶ 43% are using AI either every day or a couple of times a week

Salary information:

PRODUCTION & STUDIO – INTEGRATED

PERM	MP Average Salary 2025	Salary Range 2025
Junior Producer	£35,000	£33-40k
Producer	£55,000	£45-60k
Senior Producer	£75,000	£65-85k
Executive Producer	£90,000	£80-100k
Digital Producer	£70,000	£60-80k
Production Assistant / Coordinator	£32,000	£28-35k
Production Manager	£45,000	£40-50k
Head of Production	£105,000	£90-120k

PRODUCTION & STUDIO – STUDIO

PERM	MP Average Salary 2025	Salary Range 2025
Artworker	£30,000	£28-35k
Senior Artworker	£40,000	£35-45k
Presentation Designer	£40,000	£35-45k
Illustrator	£45,000	£40-50k

PRODUCTION & STUDIO – INTEGRATED

FREELANCE	MP Average Day Rate 2025	Day Rate Range 2025
Junior Producer	£250	£225-275
Producer	£300	£250-300
Senior Producer	£400	£350-450
Executive Producer	£450	£400-500
Production Assistant / Coordinator	£200	£180-225
Production Manager	£350	£300-400
Head of Production	£450	£450-500
Runner	£200	£180-225

PRODUCTION & STUDIO – STUDIO

FREELANCE	MP Average Day Rate 2025	Day Rate Range 2025
Artworker	£250	£200-250
Senior Artworker	£350	£275-350
Retoucher	£330	£250-325
Senior Retoucher	£400	£350-450
3D Visualiser	£350	£350-500
Presentation Designer	£400	£250-500
Illustrator	£380	£300-450

FACTORS & BENEFITS The top 3 factors candidates consider in their next role



87%
Holiday Allowance



90%
Flexible Working Hours



81%
Pension

CREATIVE

Creative, Design, UI Design and UX

32

CREATIVE, DESIGN, UI DESIGN AND UX

OVERVIEW OF MARKET

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It's clear that Generative AI has become a ubiquitous tool in creative workflows. From creative writing and retouching to graphic design and 3D rendering, all freelancers have integrated these tools into their skillsets as clients expect them to know the basics.

What's interesting about the free-to-use creative tools like Canva, Figma, and Blender is seeing how they are helping people level up their skills without huge costs. This lowers the barrier to entry for developing design skills. This is reflected in the rate at which candidates are reskilling and upskilling, particularly in AI-related skills. Creatives are jumping on these new tools to ensure they remain competitive.

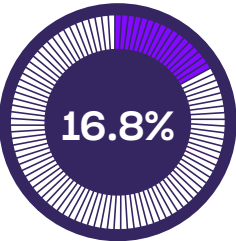
Client side, there is a growing preference towards freelancers and Fixed-Term Contract (FTC) roles. Faced with increasing costs and the liabilities associated with permanent hires, businesses are leaning towards the flexibility of temporary staff.

Lastly, we're seeing more creative work pop up in regional hubs like Glasgow, Belfast, and Manchester. This shift is caused by more investment happening outside London.

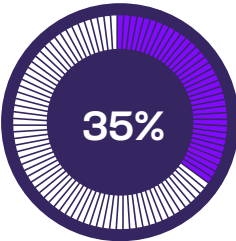
ROLES IN DEMAND ▶ Senior Designers ▶ Motion Designers ▶ Creatives

DEMOGRAPHICAL SNAPSHOT

50% FEMALE
48% MALE
1% NON-BINARY
15% LGBTQIA+
18% AGED 45+

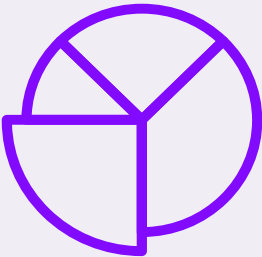


16.8% Black, Asian or Minority Ethnic backgrounds



35% disability, mental health condition or neurodivergence

TALENT SNAPSHOT



- ▶ 43% received a salary increase in the last year
- ▶ 54% believe they are not being paid their worth based on their skills and experience
- ▶ 20% changed roles in the last 12 months
- ▶ 52% had seen their employer make redundancies in the last year
- ▶ 51% are actively looking to move roles
- ▶ 33% believe moving roles in the next year will improve their mental health
- ▶ 27% are not confident in their current leadership
- ▶ 59% are using AI either every day or a couple of times a week

Salary information:

CREATIVE, BRANDING & DESIGN

PERM	MP Average Salary 2025	Salary Range 2025
Junior Designer	£30,000	£28-32k
Designer	£40,000	£35-45k
Senior Designer	£55,000	£50-65k
Design Director / Head of Design	£70,000	£60-80k
Junior Creative	£32,000	£30-38k
Creative	£45,000	£40-50k
Senior Creative	£60,000	£55-65k
Junior Creative Team (AD/CW/Team)	£32,000	£30-35k
Creative Team (AD/CW/Team)	£42,000	£40-45k
Senior Creative Team (AD/CW/Team)	£65,000	£50-80k
Creative Lead/Head of Creative	£70,000	£65-80k
Associate Creative Director	£75,000	£70-85k
Creative Director	£95,000	£90-120k
Executive Creative Director	£150,000	£140-220k+
Junior Copywriter	£26,000	£25-28k
Copywriter	£32,000	£30-35k
Senior Copywriter	£45,000	£40-50k
Head of Copy	£65,000	£60-70k
Junior Videographer	£26,000	£25-28k
Senior Videographer	£40,000	£35-45k
Video Editor	£30,000	£25-35k
Senior Video Editor	£48,000	£40-52k
Motion Graphics Designer	£40,000	£35-45k
Senior Motion Graphics Designer	£55,000	£50-60k
3D Designer	£40,000	£35-45k
Senior 3D Designer	£58,000	£50-65k

DIGITAL, UI & UX

PERM	MP Average Salary 2025	Salary Range 2025
Junior Digital Designer	£30,000	£28-32k
Digital Designer	£40,000	£35-45k
Senior Digital Designer	£55,000	£50-65k
Digital Design Director	£75,000	£70-80k
UI Designer	£40,000	£35-45k
Senior UI Designer	£70,000	£65-75k
Junior UX Designer	£35,000	£30-40k
UX Designer	£45,000	£37-55k
Senior UX Designer	£65,000	£60-70k
UX Copywriter	£40,000	£35-45k
Product Designer	£43,000	£40-50k
Senior Product Designer	£60,000	£55-65k
Head of Product	£90,000	£80-100k

CREATIVE, BRANDING & DESIGN

FREELANCE	MP Average Day Rate 2025	Day Rate Range 2025
Junior Designer	£200	£150-200
Designer	£250	£200-250
Senior Designer	£300	£275-350
Design Director / Head of Design	£450	£400-600
Junior Creative	£200	£175-225
Creative	£300	£250-300
Senior Creative	£375	£325-400
Junior Creative Team (AD/CW/Team)	£300	£250-300
Creative Team (AD/CW/Team)	£350	£300-400
Senior Creative Team (AD/CW/Team)	£450	£400-500
Creative Lead/Head of Creative	£400	£375-450
Associate Creative Director	£450	£400-500
Creative Director	£500	£500-600
Executive Creative Director	£650	£600-750+
Junior Copywriter	£200	£150-200
Copywriter	£275	£250-300
Senior Copywriter	£375	£325-400
Head of Copy	£550	£450-600
Junior Videographer	£200	£175-225
Senior Videographer	£350	£300-400
Video Editor	£300	£250-325
Senior Video Editor	£400	£350-450
Motion Graphics Designer	£350	£300-400
Senior Motion Graphics Designer	£450	£400-500
3D Designer	£350	£300-400
Senior 3D Designer	£450	£400-500

DIGITAL, UI & UX

FREELANCE	MP Average Day Rate 2025	Day Rate Range 2025
Junior Digital Designer	£200	£175-225
Digital Designer	£300	£250-325
Senior Digital Designer	£380	£325-400
Digital Design Director	£550	£450-600
UI Designer	£350	£275-350
Senior UI Designer	£400	£350-450
Junior UX Designer	£250	£200-250
UX Designer	£400	£300-400
Senior UX Designer	£500	£400-500
UX Copywriter	£350	£300-400
Product Designer	£400	£350-450
Senior Product Designer	£500	£450-550
Head of Product Design	£700	£600-800

FACTORS & BENEFITS The top 3 factors candidates consider in their next role



89%
Holiday Allowance



92%
Flexible Working Hours



80%
Pension

DIGITAL & MARKETING

CRM, Data & Analytics	36
Performance & Digital Marketing	38
E-commerce	40
Experiential, Events and Partnerships	42
Marketing, Brand, PR & Comms	44
Business Development	46
Social, Content & Influencer	48

CRM, DATA & ANALYTICS

OVERVIEW OF MARKET

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The push for “data-driven” campaigns is fueling growth for the data and analytics freelance market. More businesses are coming to the realisation that they need data expertise to remain competitive.

Further, the integration of AI features into CRM tools (e.g. Klaviyo & AI, Braze with Sage AI) enables hyper-personalisation at scale. Candidates familiar with these tools are highly sought after.

Something else we’re seeing is a significant increase in Customer Relationship Management (CRM) and retention-focused roles. This makes sense because during turbulent economic times, it’s better to maximise value from existing customers. So, focussing on reliable channels for source of income is currently a priority for businesses. That’s why CRM professionals with strong technical and strategic skills are in high demand.

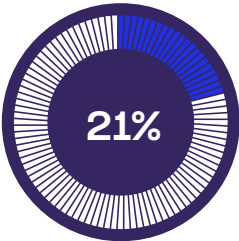
ROLES IN DEMAND

- Data & Analytics Managers
- CRM Managers
- Email Marketing Specialists

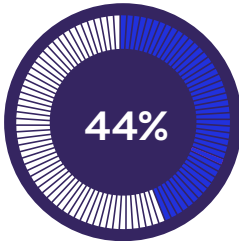
DEMOGRAPHICAL SNAPSHOT

50% FEMALE
40% MALE
3% NON-BINARY
16% LGBTQIA+
8% AGED 45+

* some respondents chose not to disclose their demographical data, and therefore may not total 100%



21% Black, Asian or Minority Ethnic backgrounds



44% disability, mental health condition or neurodivergence

TALENT SNAPSHOT



- 54% received a salary increase in the last year
- 54% believe they are not being paid their worth based on their skills and experience
- 25% changed roles in the last 12 months
- 54% had seen their employer make redundancies in the last year
- 44% are actively looking to move roles
- 38% believe moving roles in the next year will improve their mental health
- 25% are not confident in their current leadership
- 72% are using AI either every day or a couple of times a week

Salary information:

CRM, DATA & ANALYTICS

PERM	MP Average Salary 2025	Salary Range 2025
CRM Executive	£40,000	£35-45k
CRM Manager	£55,000	£50-60k
CRM Account Manager	£55,000	£50-60k
CRM Account Director	£70,000	£60-80k
Head of CRM	£95,000	£90-110k
Retention Specialist	£58,000	£55-65k
Web/Digital Analyst	£55,000	£50-60k
Insight Analyst	£50,000	£30-50k
Senior Web Analyst	£67,000	£60-80k
Social Analyst	£55,000	£50-60k
Research Analyst	£45,000	£40-50k
Data Analyst	£48,000	£40-60k

CRM, DATA & ANALYTICS

FREELANCE	MP Average Day Rate 2025	Day Rate Range 2025
CRM Executive	£200	£180-220
CRM Manager	£325	£300-350
CRM Account Director	£400	£350-450
Head of CRM	£450	£400-500
Retention Specialist	£400	£375-425
Web/Digital Analyst	£350	£300-400
Insight Analyst	£350	£300-400
Senior Web Analyst	£400	£375-425
Social Analyst	£400	£375-425
Research Analyst	£350	£300-400
Data Analyst	£400+	£400+
Data Scientist	£500+	£500+

FACTORS & BENEFITS The top 3 factors candidates consider in their next role



96%
Holiday Allowance



96%
Flexible Working Hours



83%
Pension

PERFORMANCE & DIGITAL MARKETING

OVERVIEW OF MARKET

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We've noticed a clear shift towards performance and digital campaigns. For businesses, it's all about what they can tangibly measure to ensure ROI is maximised - this is what gives performance marketing its edge over traditional avenues.

Add to that, there is a significant trend of businesses choosing to bring their Performance Marketing talent in-house. The competitive market created a need for hands-on control over channel management, campaign tweaks and optimisation - external agencies cannot offer this extensive overview. Because of this shift, creative candidates with a strong performance focused foundation are highly valued since their expertise boosts engagement and effective ad spend.

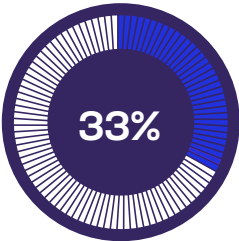
Further, businesses are beginning to use AI management across platforms like Performance Max (Pmax) for better results.

ROLES IN DEMAND

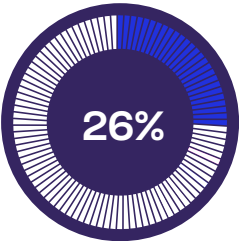
- ▶ Performance Marketing Managers
- ▶ Paid Media Managers
- ▶ SEO Managers

DEMOGRAPHICAL SNAPSHOT

53% FEMALE
47% MALE
12% LGBTQIA+
11% AGED 45+



33% Black, Asian or Minority Ethnic backgrounds



26% disability, mental health condition or neurodivergence

* some respondents chose not to disclose their demographical data, and therefore may not total 100%

TALENT SNAPSHOT



- ▶ 38% received a salary increase in the last year
- ▶ 49% believe they are not being paid their worth based on their skills and experience
- ▶ 35% changed roles in the last 12 months
- ▶ 48% had seen their employer make redundancies in the last year
- ▶ 71% are actively looking to move roles
- ▶ 43% believe moving roles in the next year will improve their mental health
- ▶ 22% are not confident in their current leadership
- ▶ 75% are using AI either every day or a couple of times a week

Salary information:

PERFORMANCE & DIGITAL MARKETING

PERM	MP Average Salary 2025	Salary Range 2025
SEO Executive	£40,000	£35-45k
SEO Manager	£60,000	£50-70k
Head of SEO	£85,000	£70-100k
Digital Outreach Specialist	£35,000	£30-40k
PPC Executive	£45,000	£40-50k
PPC Manager	£65,000	£60-70k
Paid Media / Biddable Account Director	£80,000	£75-85k
Head of PPC Search / Biddable	£70,000	£65-75k
Programmatic Manager	£68,000	£60-80k
Performance Marketing Manager	£60,000	£55-65k
Growth Marketing Manager	£60,000	£55-65k
Head of Performance	£90,000	£80-110k
Head of Growth Marketing	£90,000	£80-110k
User Acquisition Specialist	£65,000	£60-75k

PERFORMANCE & DIGITAL MARKETING

FREELANCE	MP Average Day Rate 2025	Day Rate Range 2025
SEO Executive	£250	£225-275
SEO Manager	£325	£300-350
Head of SEO	£400	£350-450
PPC Executive	£225	£200-250
PPC Manager	£300	£275-325
Paid Media / Biddable Account Director	£375	£350-400
Head of PPC Search / Biddable	£400	£375-425
Programmatic Manager	£325	£300-350
Performance Marketing Manager	£325	£300-350
Growth Marketing Manager	£325	£300-350
Head of Performance	£450+	£400-450+
Head of Growth Marketing	£450+	£400-450+
User Acquisition Specialist	£450+	£400-450+

FACTORS & BENEFITS

The top 3 factors candidates consider in their next role



91%
Holiday Allowance



96%
Flexible Working Hours



79%
Pension

E-COMMERCE

OVERVIEW OF MARKET

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The current market presents a high number of available candidates. We've seen many recent redundancies, that's led to plenty of experienced senior professionals (Heads of E-commerce and E-commerce Directors) looking for new opportunities. Adding to the market's instability is the emergence of AI tools able to understand buying patterns, shifts in consumer behaviour, and product performance analysis.

On top of that, despite it being a new tool, many clients want to leverage TikTok Shop. Candidates are expected to have experience using it to its full capabilities.

As customer retention is a big focus across the board, subscription-based models are being used as a strategy to keep customers loyal - both on apps and websites. Keeping customers engaged is a more cost-effective way to drive revenue than constantly acquiring new business.

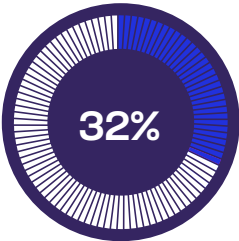
ROLES IN DEMAND

- eCommerce Managers
- Heads of eCommerce
- eCommerce Directors

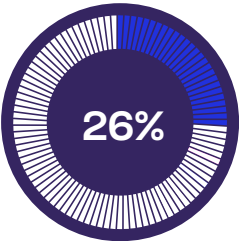
DEMOGRAPHICAL SNAPSHOT

53% FEMALE
43% MALE
2% NON-BINARY
12% LGBTQIA+
12% AGED 45+

* some respondents chose not to disclose their demographical data, and therefore may not total 100%



32% Black, Asian or Minority Ethnic backgrounds



26% disability, mental health condition or neurodivergence

TALENT SNAPSHOT



- 38% received a salary increase in the last year
- 50% believe they are not being paid their worth based on their skills and experience
- 38% changed roles in the last 12 months
- 53% had seen their employer make redundancies in the last year
- 52% are actively looking to move roles
- 62% believe moving roles in the next year will improve their mental health
- 38% are not confident in their current leadership
- 64% are using AI either every day or a couple of times a week

Salary information:

E-COMMERCE

PERM	MP Average Salary 2025	Salary Range 2025
E-Commerce Executive	£32,000	£28-35k
Senior E-Commerce Executive	£38,000	£35-40k
E-Commerce Manager	£50,000	£42-55k
Senior E-Commerce Manager	£65,000	£58-70k
Head of Online / Digital	£80,000	£75-90k
Head of E-Commerce	£80,000	£75-90k
Director of Online / E-Commerce	£100,000	£90-120k
Ecommerce Category Manager	£50,000	£42-55k
Online Trading Manager	£50,000	£42-55k
Ecommerce Marketplace Manager / Amazon Manager	£55,000	£50-60k
Marketplace Executive	£40,000	£35-45k

E-COMMERCE

FREELANCE	MP Average Day Rate 2025	Day Rate Range 2025
E-Commerce Executive	£200	£180-220
Senior E-Commerce Executive	£220	£200-240
E-Commerce Manager	£300	£250-300
Head of Online / Digital	£450	£400-500
Head of E-Commerce	£500+	£500+
Director of Online / E-Commerce	£500+	£500+
Ecommerce Category Manager	£300	£250-300
Online Trading Manager	£300	£250-300
Ecommerce Marketplace Manager / Amazon Manager	£325	£300-350
Marketplace Executive	£200	£180-220

FACTORS & BENEFITS The top 3 factors candidates consider in their next role



85%
Holiday Allowance



91%
Flexible Working Hours



77%
Pension

EXPERIENTIAL, EVENTS AND PARTNERSHIPS

OVERVIEW OF MARKET

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The most notable trend is the continued demand for 'content-worthy' events. It seems organisations want to really use physical experiences as a way to create content that can be utilised in a broader scope. This ensures the demand for 'hybrid' candidates remains constant, especially those who can execute Production, Account Management, and Project Management functions. That's why we've seen a reduction in more traditional Client Services roles.

Even though brands still value the opportunity to connect with their audience face-to-face, prevailing budget constraints have led to fewer freelance hires. However, we are noticing a bit more demand for mid-level roles - this is probably because these candidates are cost-effective but still carry enough experience to execute successfully.

ROLES IN DEMAND

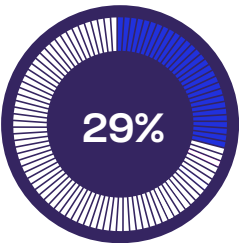
- Mid/Senior Producers
- Project Managers
- Production Managers

DEMOGRAPHICAL SNAPSHOT

73% FEMALE
26% MALE
14% LGBTQIA+
15% AGED 45+



15% Black, Asian or Minority Ethnic backgrounds



29% disability, mental health condition or neurodivergence

TALENT SNAPSHOT



- 57% received a salary increase in the last year
- 43% believe they are not being paid their worth based on their skills and experience
- 12% changed roles in the last 12 months
- 43% had seen their employer make redundancies in the last year
- 30% are actively looking to move roles
- 26% believe moving roles in the next year will improve their mental health
- 16% are not confident in their current leadership
- 43% are using AI either every day or a couple of times a week

Salary information:

EXPERIENTIAL, EVENTS & PARTNERSHIPS

PERM	MP Average Salary 2025	Salary Range 2025
Account Manager	£40,000	£35-45k
Senior Account Manager	£50,000	£45-55k
Account Director	£60,000	£55-65k
Senior Account Director	£70,000	£65k-75k
Events Co-Ordinator / Assistant	£32,000	£28-35k
Events Manager	£40,000	£32-45k
Senior Events Manager	£55,000	£50-60k
Head of Events	£75,000	£65-85k
Event Director	£80,000	£65-85k
Project Cooridnator / Assistant	£33,000	£28-35k
Project Manager	£45,000	£40-50k
Senior Project Manager	£60,000	£50-65k
Project Director	£75,000	£65-85k
Junior Producer	£38,000	£35-43k
Producer	£50,000	£45-55k
Senior Producer	£65,000	£55-70k
Executive Producer	£85,000	£75-90k
Production Coordinator	£33,000	£28-35k
Production Manager	£50,000	£45-55k
Senior Production Manager	£60,000	£55-65k
Production Director	£70,000	£60-75k
Partnerships Account Manager	£45,000	£30-50k
Partnerships Account Director	£64,000	£60-75k
Partnerships Director	£80,000	£70-100k

EXPERIENTIAL, EVENTS & PARTNERSHIPS

FREELANCE	MP Average Day Rate 2025	Day Rate Range 2025
Account Manager	£275	£250-300
Senior Account Manager	£325	£300-350
Account Director	£375	£350-400
Senior Account Director	£400	£350-450
Events Co-Ordinator / Assistant	£200	£180-200
Events Manager	£250	£225-275
Head of Events	£400	£350-450
Senior Events Manager	£325	£300-350
Event Director	£400	£350-450
Project Cooridnator / Assistant	£225	£200-250
Project Manager	£350	£325-375
Senior Project Manager	£375	£350-425
Project Director	£450	£400-500
Junior Producer	£225	£200-250
Producer	£350	£300-400
Senior Producer	£400	£350-450
Executive Producer	£500	£450-550+
Production Coordinator	£225	£200-250
Production Manager	£350	£325-375
Senior Production Manager	£375	£350-425
Production Director	£450	£400-500+
Partnerships Account Manager	£300	£275-325
Partnerships Account Director	£375	£350-400
Partnerships Director	£400	£350-450

FACTORS & BENEFITS The top 3 factors candidates consider in their next role



92%
Holiday Allowance



89%
Flexible Working Hours



80%
Pension

MARKETING, BRAND, PR & COMMS

OVERVIEW OF MARKET

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In the freelance market for Marketing, Brand, Public Relations, and Communications, the current demand is seemingly at mid-level and executive-level roles. In the perm market, the demand is for mid-level, and mid senior level roles. Marketing positions increasingly require a multi-channel skillset; businesses are especially interested in candidates who can both develop social and digital campaign strategies and execute said strategies. There is a discernible trend towards roles that blend hands-on implementation with strategic thinking.

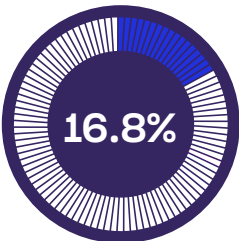
With brands having to balance retention strategies with customer acquisition plans, we've seen a bigger need for professionals able to craft some powerful brand messaging.

ROLES IN DEMAND

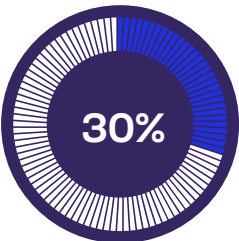
- ▶ Marketing/Brand Managers
- ▶ Marketing Execs
- ▶ PR Account Directors

DEMOGRAPHICAL SNAPSHOT

68% FEMALE
32% MALE
13% LGBTQIA+
13% AGED 45+



16.8% Black, Asian or Minority Ethnic backgrounds



30% disability, mental health condition or neurodivergence

* some respondents chose not to disclose their demographical data, and therefore may not total 100%

TALENT SNAPSHOT



- ▶ 42% received a salary increase in the last year
- ▶ 50% believe they are not being paid their worth based on their skills and experience
- ▶ 29% changed roles in the last 12 months
- ▶ 48% had seen their employer make redundancies in the last year
- ▶ 57% are actively looking to move roles
- ▶ 39% believe moving roles in the next year will improve their mental health
- ▶ 27% are not confident in their current leadership
- ▶ 67% are using AI either every day or a couple of times a week

Salary information:

MARKETING

PERM	MP Average Salary 2025	Salary Range 2025
Marketing Assistant	£32,000	£30-35k
Marketing Executive / Co-ordinator	£35,000	£30-35k
Senior Marketing Executive	£40,000	£35-45k
Marketing Manager	£55,000	£45-60k
Campaign Manager	£55,000	£45-60k
Senior Marketing Manager	£65,000	£60-75k
Head of Marketing	£100,000	£80-120k
Marketing Director	£150,000	£120k+
Chief Marketing Officer / VP	£140,000	£150k+
Brand Executive	£35,000	£30-35k
Brand Manager	£55,000	£45-60k
Head of Brand	£90,000	£80-120k
Head of Brand Marketing	£90,000	£80-120k
Global Brand Director	£120,000	£120k+
Chief Brand Officer	£150,000	£150k+

PR & COMMS

PERM	MP Average Salary 2025	Salary Range 2025
PR/Comms Executive	£35,000	£30-35k
PR/Comms Manager	£55,000	£45-60k
Internal Comms Manager	£55,000	£50-60k
Senior PR/Comms Manager	£65,000	£60-70k
PR Assistant	£30,000	£28-32k
Press Officer	£32,500	£30-35k
Senior PR/Comms Manager	£65,000	£60-75k
Publicist	£32,500	£30-35k
Senior Publicist	£37,500	£35-40k
Head of PR / Head of Media Relations	£95,000	£80-120k
Head of Internal Comms	£92,000	£80-120k
Group Head of Comms	£100,000	£80-120k
PR Director	£95,000	£80-120k

MARKETING

FREELANCE	MP Average Day Rate 2025	Day Rate Range 2025
Marketing Assistant	£190	£180-200
Marketing Executive / Co-ordinator	£225	£200-250
Senior Marketing Executive	£250	£225-275
Marketing Manager	£300	£275-350
Campaign Manager	£300	£275-325
Senior Marketing Manager	£375	£350-400
Head of Marketing	£400	£400-500
Marketing Director	£400	£400-500
Chief Marketing Officer / VP	£675	£650-700
Brand Executive	£225	£200-250
Brand Manager	£300	£250-350
Head of Brand	£400	£400+
Global Brand Director	£500+	£500+
Chief Brand Officer	£600+	£500+

PR & COMMS

FREELANCE	MP Average Day Rate 2025	Day Rate Range 2025
PR/Comms Executive	£200	£180-220
PR/Comms Manager	£275	£250-300
Internal Comms Manager	£300	£275-325
Senior PR/Comms Manager	£300	£275-325
PR Assistant	£180	£160-200
Press Officer	£200	£180-220
PR Consultant	£400+	£400+
Senior PR/Comms Manager	£325	£300-350
Publicist	£275	£250-300
Senior Publicist	£300	£275-325
Head of PR / Head of Media Relations	£400	£350-450
Head of Internal Comms	£400	£340-450
Group Head of Comms	£450	£400-500
PR Director	£450	£400-500
Director of Communications	£450 +	£450+

FACTORS & BENEFITS The top 3 factors candidates consider in their next role



88%
Holiday Allowance



92%
Flexible Working Hours



82%
Pension

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

OVERVIEW OF MARKET

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There is an increased demand for Business Development roles and proactive Sales outreach, especially for agencies hoping to boost their revenue stream. This surge is largely due to the rise of project-based work with clients, meaning agencies need a consistent pipeline of pitches and new business wins to retain workflow.

Similar to what we're seeing in other sectors, there is an underlying need for business development to foster longer-term customer relationships and retention, beyond just initial project wins.

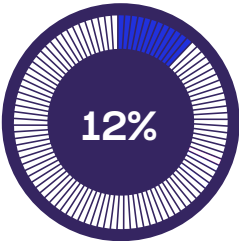
ROLES IN DEMAND

- ▶ Business Development Manager
- ▶ Cheif Growth Officer

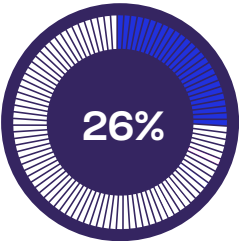
DEMOGRAPHICAL SNAPSHOT

57% FEMALE
42% MALE
1% NON-BINARY
13% LGBTQIA+
18% AGED 45+

* some respondents chose not to disclose their demographical data, and therefore may not total 100%



12% Black, Asian or Minority Ethnic backgrounds



26% disability, mental health condition or neurodivergence

TALENT SNAPSHOT



- ▶ 53% received a salary increase in the last year
- ▶ 39% believe they are not being paid their worth based on their skills and experience
- ▶ 35% changed roles in the last 12 months
- ▶ 40% had seen their employer make redundancies in the last year
- ▶ 36% are actively looking to move roles
- ▶ 29% believe moving roles in the next year will improve their mental health
- ▶ 21% are not confident in their current leadership
- ▶ 65% are using AI either every day or a couple of times a week

Salary information:

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT & PARTNERSHIP

PERM	MP Average Salary 2025	Salary Range 2025
Business Development Exec	£37,000	£35-45k
Business Development Manager	£55,000	£50-60k
Snr. Business Development Manager	£70,000	£60-75k
Business Development Director	£90,000	£80-100k
Head of Business Development	£120,000	£110-150k
Chief Growth Officer	£160,000	£140-180k

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT & PARTNERSHIP

FREELANCE	MP Average Day Rate 2025	Day Rate Range 2025
Business Development Exec	£225	£200-250
Business Development Manager	£300	£275-325
Snr. Business Development Manager	£350	£325-375
Business Development Officer	£400	£350-450
Head of Business Development	£450+	£450+

FACTORS & BENEFITS The top 3 factors candidates consider in their next role



92%
Holiday Allowance



86%
Flexible Working Hours



92%
Pension

SOCIAL, CONTENT & INFLUENCER

OVERVIEW OF MARKET

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We've seen some significant shifts in the past year, with TikTok taking the lead as the go-to platform to drive growth and engagement. Instagram has remained relatively stable, and X is experiencing a substantial decrease in usage.

Building meaningful customer relationships is a priority for many brands, which means that the demand for Community Management roles is increasing. The popularity of TikTok has led to more businesses looking for employees with a dedicated focus on this platform.

When it comes to technology, we're seeing how AI is used more to help with writing content for paid social

ads. There's a feeling that organic social captions still require that uniquely human touch. Furthermore, AI is being used for video content more frequently, and even for AI models for on-screen appearances.

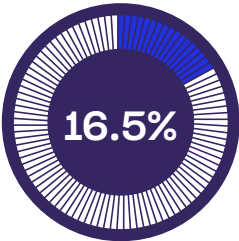
The other in-demand roles we've seen pick up are requests for nano content creators and influencers with versatile skillsets. These creators need to be the on-camera personality, work behind the scenes to film and edit, and even handle the copywriting. Because of the rise of short-form video consumption, brands are actively looking to partner with video-based content production talent.

ROLES IN DEMAND

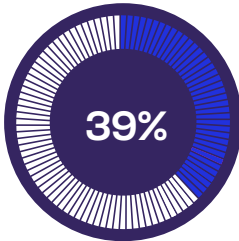
- Content Creators
- Social Media Managers
- Community Managers

DEMOGRAPHICAL SNAPSHOT

75% FEMALE
25% MALE
22% LGBTQIA+
5% AGED 45+



16.5% Black, Asian or Minority Ethnic backgrounds



39% disability, mental health condition or neurodivergence

* some respondents chose not to disclose their demographical data, and therefore may not total 100%

TALENT SNAPSHOT



- 34% received a salary increase in the last year

► 53% believe they are not being paid their worth based on their skills and experience

► 28% changed roles in the last 12 months

► 46% had seen their employer make redundancies in the last year
- 48% are actively looking to move roles

► 34% believe moving roles in the next year will improve their mental health

► 28% are not confident in their current leadership

► 66% are using AI either every day or a couple of times a week

Salary information:

SOCIAL, CONTENT & INFLUENCER

PERM	MP Average Salary 2025	Salary Range 2025
Content Manager	£45,000	£40-50k
Content Lead	£55,000	£50-60k
Content Strategist	£55,000	£50-60k
Content Writer	£45,000	£40-50k
Content Executive	£35,000	£35-40k
Content Creator	£50,000	£45-50k
Head of Content	£75,000	£60-80k
Influencer Executive	£35,000	£30-40k
Influencer Manager	£50,000	£45-55k
Influencer Director	£75,000	£60-80k
Influencer Strategist	£65,000	£60-70k
Social Media Editor	£45,000	£40-50k
Social Marketing Manager	£55,000	£45-60k
Social Account Manager	£40,000	£35-45k
Senior Social Account Manager	£50,000	£45-50k
Social Account Director	£55,000	£50-60k
Social Campaign Manager	£40,000	£35-45k
Social Creative	£50,000	£40-60k
Social Creative Manager	£60,000	£50-70k
Social Media Executive	£35,000	£30-40k
Senior Social Media Executive	£40,000	£35-45k
Social Media Manager	£50,000	£45-55k
Social Media Strategist	£60,000	£50-65k
Social Media Lead	£60,000	£55-65k
Paid Social Executive	£35,000	£30-40k
Paid Social Manager	£50,000	£45-55k
Paid Social Strategist	£60,000	£55-65k
Head of Social	£85,000	£70-90k

SOCIAL, CONTENT & INFLUENCER

FREELANCE	MP Average Day Rate 2025	Day Rate Range 2025
Content Manager	£300	£250-350
Content Lead	£350	£300-400
Content Strategist	£400	£350-450
Content Writer	£300	£250-350
Content Executive	£250	£200-300
Content Creator	£350	£300-450
Head of Content	£400	£350-450
Influencer Executive	£250	£200-300
Influencer Manager	£350	£300-400
Influencer Director	£400	£350-450
Influencer Strategist	£450	£350-500
Social Content Strategist	£400	£350-450
Social Media Editor	£300	£250-350
Social Marketing Manager	£300	£275-350
Social Account Manager	£300	£250-325
Senior Social Account Manager	£325	£300-350
Social Account Director	£375	£350-450
Social Campaign Manager	£350	£300-375
Social Creative	£350	£300-400
Social Creative Manager	£400	£350-450
Social Media Executive	£250	£225-275
Senior Social Media Executive	£300	£275-325
Social Media Manager	£350	£300-400
Social Media Strategist	£400	£350-550
Social Media Lead	£400	£350-500
Paid Social Executive	£250	£200-300
Paid Social Manager	£300	£275-350
Paid Social Strategist	£350	£325-450
Head of Social	£450	£400-700

FACTORS & BENEFITS The top 3 factors candidates consider in their next role



87%
Holiday Allowance



95%
Flexible Working Hours



79%
Progressive Policies

Our data set



4140

candidates



+ 150

business insights



APPENDIX

1. Negative Effects of Employee Layoffs (Ashique Rahman on LinkedIn, 2023)

2. Creative industries: Growth, jobs and productivity (Nicola Newson, 2025)

3. Invest 2035: The UK's Modern Industrial Strategy (Gov, UK, 2024)

4. New research points to a looming creative economy skills shortage across the UK (Creative PEC, 2024)

5. Hiring falls more sharply in UK than other major economies (Financial Times, 2024)

6. IMF upgrades UK growth forecast and takes swipe at Trump plans (Phillip Inman for The Guardian, 2025)

7. Global Talent Trends (LinkedIn, 2024)

8. Crisis: Worker Financial Stress Costs Employers Billions Of Dollars Annually (Colleen Reilly for Forbes, 2020)

9. What is the true cost of replacing an Employee? (Sandra Berns for Centric HR, 2022)

10. Average weekly earnings in Great Britain: March 2025 (Office for National Statistics, 2025)

11. Reskilling Revolution: Preparing 1 billion people for tomorrow's economy (World Economic Forum, 2025)

12. Workplace Learning Report (LinkedIn, 2025)

13. Employee Upskilling Is Vital in Rapidly Evolving Job Market (Emily Lorenz for Gallup, 2024)

14. Skills on the Rise in 2025 (Jen Dewar on LinkedIn, 2025)

15. Skills-Based Hiring: Increasing Access to Opportunity (Silvia Lara for LinkedIn Economic Graph, 2025)

16. AI in the Workplace: Answering 3 Big Questions (Kate den Houter for Gallup, 2024)

17. What is Human-Centered AI (HCAI)? (Interaction Design Foundation, 2024)

18. Better Management Report (CMI, 2023)

19. Working Together: Maximising the opportunities of a multigenerational workforces (Asli Atay Budak and Emelia Williams, 2024)

20. How is Gen Z changing the workplace? (Zurich, 2024)

21. How is the fertility rate changing in England and Wales? (Office for National Statistics, 2024)

22. Global Report On Ageism (United Nations, 2021)

23. Sexual orientation, UK: 2023 (Office for National Statistics, 2025)

24. Why purpose should be a top priority for founders and entrepreneurs (Simona Clarkson for HSBC, 2024)

ABOUT THE SALARY CENSUS

This Census was compiled by Major Players using data collected from 11,440 respondents from our 2025 Salary Census survey, our online Salary Benchmarking Tool, and combined with insights gathered from senior talent partners. These insights equate to over 350,000 data points across careers, salaries/day rate and workplace trends.

The tables represent an overview of job levels and salary averages in all listed disciplines; and are correct at time of publishing.

As part of our commitment to progressing the creative industries, we collect demographical data to provide an up-to-date snapshot of DE&I. We classified gender, ethnicity, sexuality, identity, disability and neurodivergence using government recommended grouping.

For further information on these, please visit: www.gov.uk.

ABOUT MAJOR PLAYERS

We are the UK's leading digital, marketing, and creative talent agency, committed to accelerating ambitions, building brands, and creating instrumental partnerships.

Over the last 33 years, our consultative and solutions led approach has helped revolutionise businesses, from trailblazing start-up's through to household names; across a variety of disciplines across the creative industries. With a network of over 500,000+ candidates in the UK, Europe and US, we are well placed to accelerate business and career transformations.

For full information on specific job roles or to speak to a talent partner:

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UK CREATIVE INDUSTRIES CENSUS 2025

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