

Packaging Salary Guide 2026

Throughout 2024, we continued to engage closely with senior leaders, hiring managers, candidates, and industry stakeholders across the Packaging & Containers sector to build a clear and accurate picture of salary levels, hiring trends, and talent availability.

As a specialist Executive Search firm focused exclusively on Packaging & Manufacturing, we are uniquely positioned to observe how market conditions influence remuneration, recruitment strategies, and candidate expectations.

Following several years of significant salary inflation across many packaging disciplines, 2024 saw the market begin to stabilise. Whilst salary levels remained strong, businesses became increasingly focused on balancing commercial pressures with the need to attract and retain high-performing talent.

One trend that remained consistent was the continued demand for experienced individuals with proven sector expertise. Many organisations continued to prioritise candidates from within packaging, often seeking direct experience within the same product category, market segment, or operational environment.

As a result, competition for top-tier talent remained high, particularly for leadership, operational, commercial, technical, and business development positions. Employers recognised that attracting individuals with a demonstrable track record of delivering results often required competitive salary packages, enhanced benefits, and clear long-term career opportunities.

Counteroffers also continued to play a significant role in the recruitment process. Businesses were increasingly reluctant to lose experienced employees and, in many cases, responded to resignations with improved remuneration packages or accelerated career progression opportunities.

The findings within this report are based on extensive conversations conducted throughout 2024 and provide a practical benchmark for organisations seeking to remain competitive in an evolving talent market.

A few recent stats about Cloud 9:

- 250+ Successful placements made
- Average Assignment Completion 6-8 weeks
- 100% Success rate (Retained)
- 100% Retention rate (Retained)
- 18+ Years Trading

*Figures taken from 2023 and 2024

The results are in: Typical salaries

Packaging Designer

£25k - £30k	11%
£31k - £35k	31%
£36k - £40k ✓	36%
£41k - £50k	23%

Internal Sales / Customer Service

£25k - £30k ✓	47%
£30k - £35k	37%
£35k - £40k	16%

Field Service Engineers

£30k - £40k	16%
£40k - £50k ✓	38%
£50k - £60k	27%
over £60k	19%

Sales Representative

£30k - £40k	14%
£40k - £50k ✓	38%
£50k - £60k	32%
over £60k	16%

Customer Services Manager

£40k - £50k ✓	60%
£50k - £60k	24%
£60k - £70k	16%

New Business Development 'hunters'

£50k - £60k	26%
£60k - £70k ✓	34%
£70k - £80k	21%
£80k - £90k	19%

Sales Director (UK Based)

under £65k	7%
£65k - £80k	25%
£80k - £95k	33%
over £95k ✓	35%

General Manager / Managing Director

£70k - £80k	7%
£80k - £90k	11%
£90k - £100k	23%
over £100k ✓	59%

The market continues to evolve, and access to the right talent has never been more important. If you would like to discuss your hiring plans, talent strategy, or career aspirations, we welcome the opportunity to speak with you.

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