

Market Trends & Salary Report Q4 2020

Marketing & BD in Professional Services

BUILDING BETTER FUTURES

ambition

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Professional services is a robust sector. The need for lawyers, accountants and management consultants is never more apparent than at a time of crisis and 2020 has certainly been a highly disruptive and challenging year for many.

Workloads at many practices and consultancies have, in certain disciplines, increased in recent months. The knock-on effect this has had on most of the supporting business services functions has been interesting to observe.

Recruitment Trends

A good business will always need a strong marketing and comms team and for consultancies and practices tendering for new work, a capable BD and bids function is a necessity. During this pandemic however, we have seen certain skill sets prioritised over others.

Increased focus on specialist skillsets

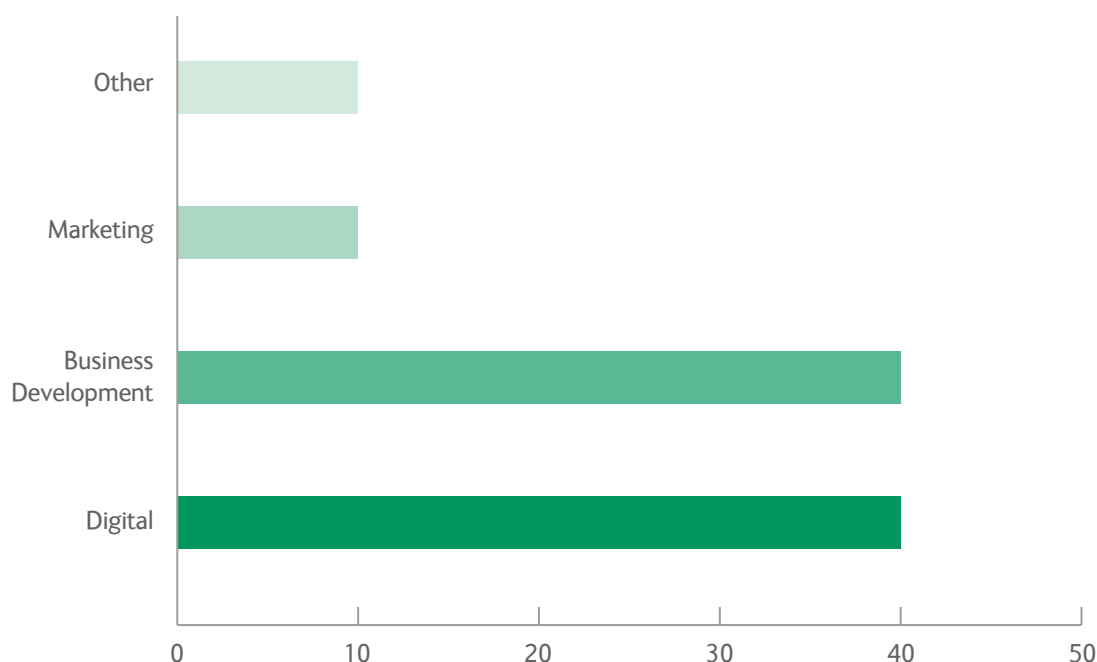
Traditionally, the bulk of our recruitment within professional services has been within more generalist, core marketing mix roles, from Executive to Manager level. However, since March, when the UK entered its first national lockdown, the types of candidates that were hired and that are now required by our Practice & Consultancy clients have been those with more specialist skill sets, most notably:

- **Digital Marketing**
- **Comms and Branding experts**
- **Strategic Bids specialists**
- **Business Development and Account Management specialists**

Candidates with these specialist skills have been in far greater demand than those with a more generalist marketing skill base.

Our own independent market research seems to confirm this trend. 80% of the CMOs, Heads of BD and Heads of Marketing that we surveyed as part of this report, stated that in the next 6 months, their business would be focusing more on digital marketing and BD activity.

Over the course of the next six months do you anticipate an additional focus on any of the following specialisms?



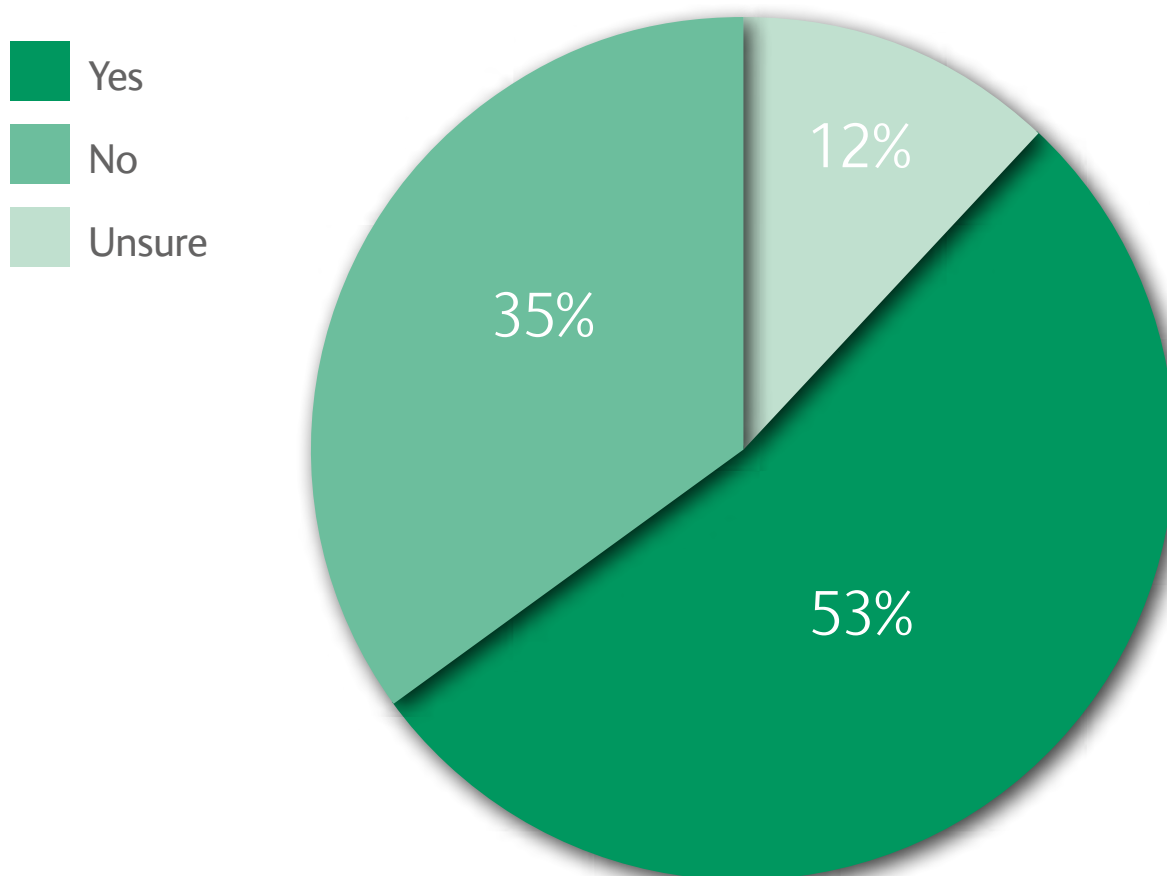
The Managing Partners Forum recently released data on the ‘areas that carry most weight in Partner/ Director discussions.’ ‘Marketing and Business Development’ has risen from fifth to second place behind ‘Finance and Cashflow’ in these leadership discussions which only further emphasises the importance of attracting and retaining the best marketing and BD talent available at this time.

Identifying talent with these specialist skill sets has never been easy, especially those that have prior experience operating within the professional services sector. It has also been more challenging to subsequently make a hire without a face to face assessment of a candidate’s abilities. This goes for all recruitment.

Professional services firms are continuing to recruit

Fortunately, these challenges have not stopped recruitment from taking place. We have continued to support clients with their recruitment activity over the past 6 months, albeit the number of jobs in the market has significantly reduced from the levels seen prior to the March lockdown.

Have you recruited directly within Marketing & BD in Q3 2020?



Just over 50% of HR and internal recruitment contacts working at accountancy practices and consultancies have made a direct hire into the marketing and/or BD team during Q3. While this figure is lower than this time last year, it is still encouraging given the current climate.

Our research suggests that many of these hires will have been in a Business Development capacity.

Skills shortages

There is still very much a shortage of high-quality talent in the more specialist areas of Bids, BD and Digital Marketing. Attracting the right candidates with the required experience, whilst ensuring a diverse and inclusive workforce, remains a major challenge.

Impact of remote working

Another consideration for many of our clients has been the remote onboarding of new talent. There have also been concerns about whether working from home has had any impact on overall productivity levels.

Interestingly, exactly 50% of hiring managers surveyed have seen a positive impact on team productivity while the other 50% have seen no change.

It is impressive to see such a positive response, given that the majority of these companies rarely had their teams working remotely before the first national lockdown.

Has working from home impacted your teams productivity?



The level of remote working seen this year has also given rise to the number of Marketing, Bids and Business Development roles being moved away from their traditional London base to regional office locations.

Impact of Covid-19

The past six months have been nothing like we have experienced before. The impact of Covid-19 upon the global economy, political systems, environment, and our way of life has been significant. There is no rule book on what to do during a global pandemic like this as we all try our best to adjust to a new way of working and living under conditions that are still very fluid and uncertain.

Many corporations needed to adapt quickly when the UK first went into lockdown and major changes were implemented fast out of necessity. Employees working remotely full-time would have been very alien for many organisations in the professional services sector.

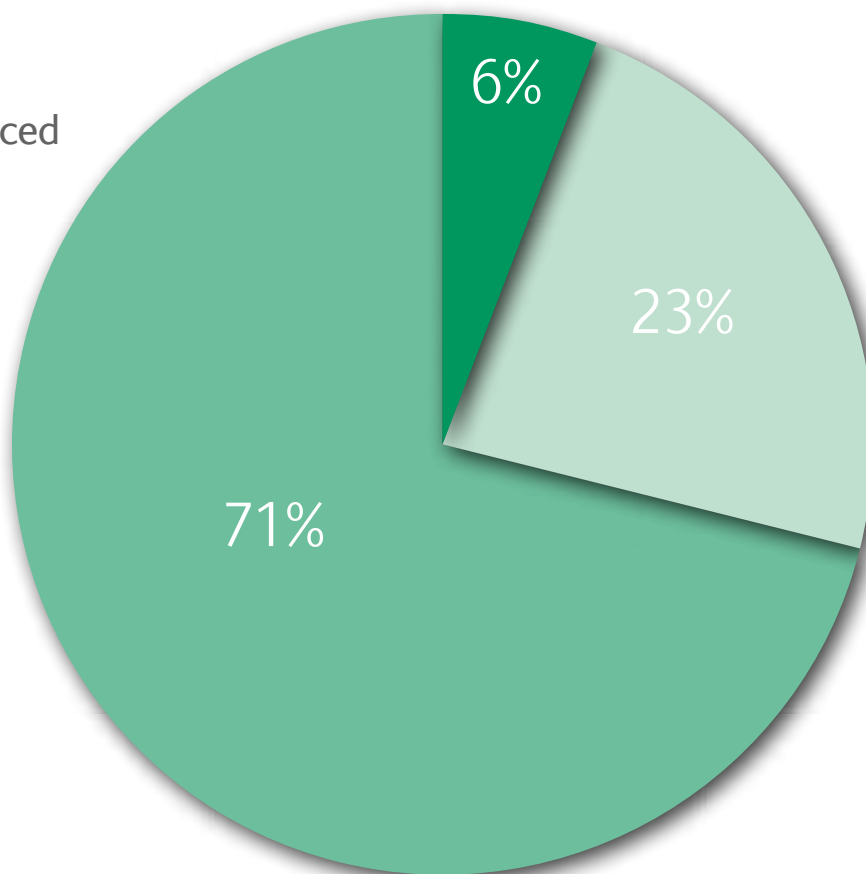
The concept of lawyers, accountants and management consultants working away from the office and remotely from client site just did not fit the model. But it often takes something major and sometimes unexpected to change a set system, or at least prompt the discussion.



Returning to the office

Do you see the firm moving back to an office working environment in H1 2021?

- Yes
- Yes, but reduced capacity
- No



Reintroducing staff back into an office working environment is something that many of our clients within professional services will look to do over the next 6 months, albeit on a reduced capacity. This may only be a short-term measure, but it will in some practices have highlighted the need to operate a more flexible business model in the future.

Business culture

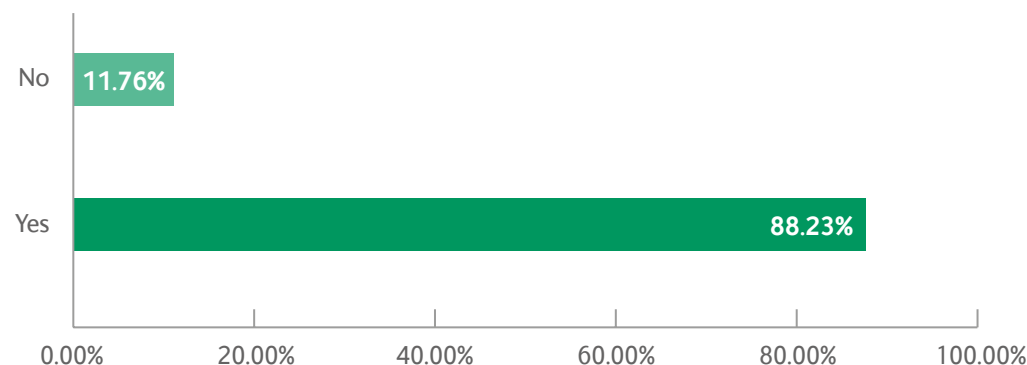
From the survey we conducted, 88% have made proactive changes to their 'employee experience' because of the global pandemic. Whilst there have been some obvious changes for new employees: video interviews, remote onboarding, and inductions; it has also been a challenge for firms to underpin what the employee experience means now for the existing workforce.

So much of what employees deem to be the culture of their business is linked to tangible, physical benefits: attractive office space, gym memberships, social activities, and clubs etc. Since the pandemic, this has largely been stripped away.

It has therefore been interesting to see more firms doubling down on defining and redefining their values, vision statements, internal communications and wellbeing initiatives which will foster a far stronger employee experience and firm culture than before.

Future work arrangements

Has the Global Pandemic led you to make changes to your 'employee experience'?



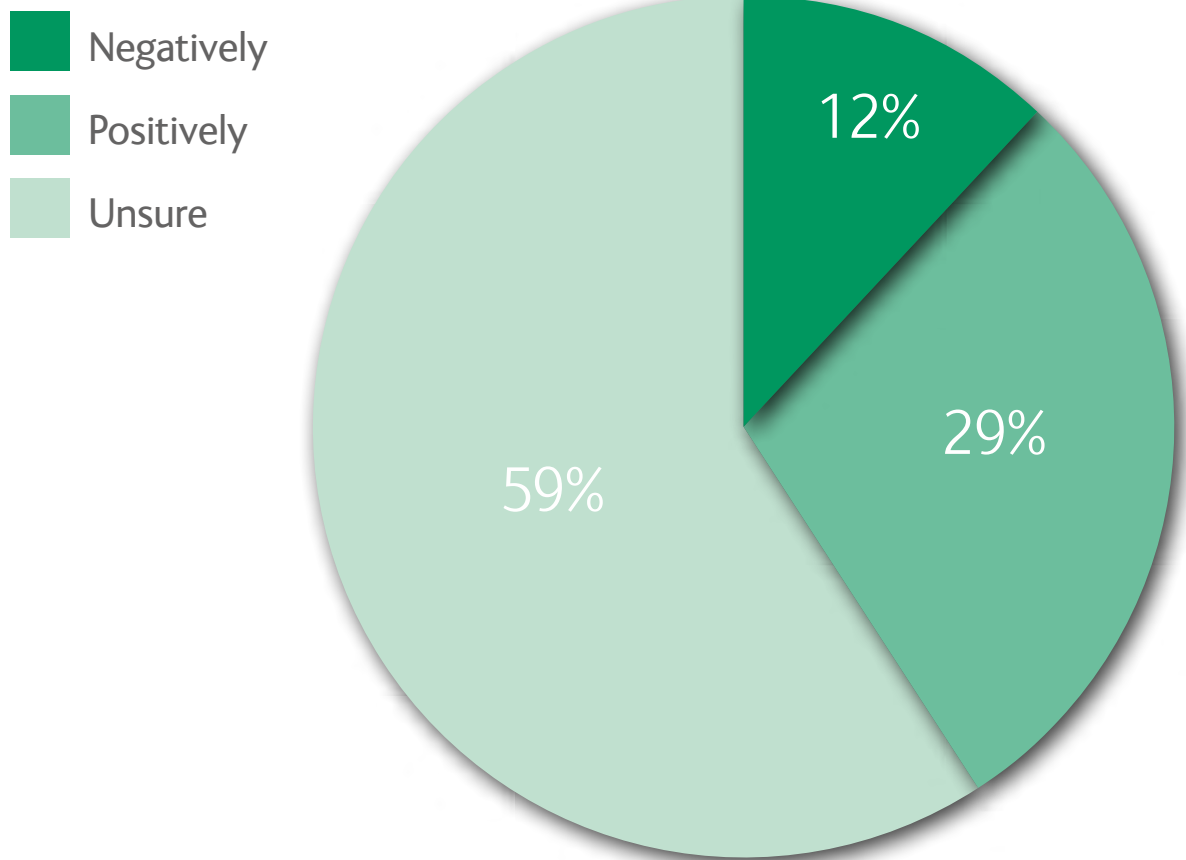
For a sector not always renowned for major innovation and substantial change, the professional services model seems to be adapting to a new way of working. Post-vaccine, there will no doubt be organisations that will revert to their former working patterns but for others, Covid-19 will have been the catalyst that brought about a major cultural overhaul.

It is still too early for many practices and consultancies to commit to what their future working arrangements and culture will look like once we are in complete control of the current pandemic. COOs and other board members will no doubt be discussing throughout next year whether to implement and change work patterns, staff onboarding, interview processes, office space etc. based on the needs and demands of the business.

Employee wellbeing

59% of employers we surveyed are still unsure about the impact home working has had on the mental health of their employees and this is clearly a key consideration when making cultural changes. It is understandable for organisations to not yet know the full extent of home working on overall employee wellbeing but as time goes on, more emphasis will need to be placed on understanding, and subsequently supporting, the existing workforce.

How has working from home impacted employee mental health?





Advice for Jobseekers

Seek advice

It is always good to be aware and stay connected with the market, whether you are currently active or passive in your job search. Speaking to a specialist recruitment professional in your area is the best thing to do. We will be aware of the market trends, hiring patterns and skills in demand as well as advise on your salary benchmark against the market rate. Marketing and Business Development related roles have always been competitive; therefore, it is advisable to review your CV with your recruiter. What is going to make you stand out?

Counter offers

The reality is that it is rather challenging to re-hire and replace specialist skills in the market right now and so counter offers are being utilised by employers more than ever.

Strongly consider your reasons for leaving or initiating a search in the first place and, if you receive a counter offer from your employer, ask yourself why you had to hand in your notice to get them to give you what you desired? Often, similar frustrations which led to you wanting to leave creep up again several months after accepting a counter offer. Consider this carefully.

Review your position

What are your goals? Short-medium-long term? How do you personally position yourself within the business? Also, how does the business position you? Often this is mis-aligned, and now may well be a good moment to reflect on why this is.

We would always encourage individuals to speak to your employer before making any drastic decisions and open up to them about the challenges you are facing and the areas of improvement that would fulfil your job satisfaction. Transparency is key and it is good to gain a sense of clarity on what your employer's plans are for the future, both for you and the business. With this information, you can then consider whether it is necessary to explore alternative options.



Advice for Employers

Recognise the market rates

internal salary bandings often provide a stumbling block when competing with salaries in the wider market. The bottom line is, if you want to attract the right talent, you need to offer a competitive salary.

A specialist recruiter will always manage salary expectations carefully with the candidate to help the client secure the desired individual. However, in a market that is still very competitive, it is important to ensure that you put forward your best offer when making an offer to a candidate, to show that you are serious and committed.

Be open

Some candidates are passive or hesitant to move in this market but will do so for an excellent opportunity. A great way of engaging with a high calibre passive candidate is to set up an initial informal conversation before the process becomes more formal.

There may also be times in which you receive a strong CV, but the candidate may be slightly too senior or junior for the role. When talent for specialist marketing and BD roles is scarce, it can be beneficial to not automatically discount these individuals before an interview. They could grow into the role quickly or bring invaluable expertise from operating in a more senior capacity.

Speed

With likely competition from other firms for the same talent, moving quickly is key. If candidates have a positive recruitment experience and there is momentum throughout the interviewing process, it usually enhances the candidate's engagement towards the firm and the role more than anything.

Lockdown Recruitment Case Studies

Moving jobs and hiring during the pandemic has been a new experience for us all. We asked some of our candidates and clients to share their first-hand experience of job hunting and hiring during lockdown.

Candidate Experience

Role: BD Manager in a Management Consultancy

How did you find the job-hunting process during the pandemic?

I found it quite frustrating at times as there were lots of jobs that were still being advertised but were no longer live vacancies due to Covid and subsequent hiring freezes.

How did you find the interview process experience over video call rather than face-to-face?

A lot less nerve-racking than a face-to-face meeting. Video interviewing still allows you to really sell your services and experience but it's definitely different.

What was the experience like, joining a new firm remotely?

I actually found it easier. Sometimes you can feel pressured in an office environment. Working remotely allowed me to pick up things at my own pace and my team are always at the other end of a MS Teams or Zoom call should I get stuck on anything.

Client experience

Role: Recruitment Manager in a Global Accountancy Practice

In general, how have you found the remote recruitment process?

On the interview side, this has generally been very positive. The firm has been using Teams and we've had no problems with the technology. Partners have adapted well to this approach and candidate feedback has been favourable.

Remote onboarding has been interesting, really having to think about the employee experience and enabling people to be set up for success from day one. Generally, this has gone well – there

is an opportunity for new starters to have more dedicated time from Partners and an increased feeling of a 'duty of care' for new employees right across the firm.

Onboarding new hires remotely has also given us the opportunity to get the full induction process delivered in a more timely and focused way, which has resulted in new employees being up and running in their roles more quickly. For example, a recent new fee earner that joined the business was able to complete their induction and mandatory training and be supporting on billable work within three days of joining the firm.

What challenges has hiring remotely created?

Candidates have not had the chance to 'commute test' their journey or to get a feel for the office vibe or see the physical workspace for themselves.

Whilst there is opportunity to work from an office location, this is currently limited to support employees whose mental health would benefit from being in an office environment or are not in a safe environment at home whilst the restrictions continue.

What has worked well and what might you keep doing once we see a return to a more 'normal' world?

The virtual interview process has given us the opportunity to have more people involved throughout the process, which has provided a real diversity of thought. There has been more flexibility when scheduling interviews – it may well be that first stage interviews are carried out via video call in the future, as the feedback has been that this is a better use of everyone's time, on both sides.

Conversely, the remote recruitment process has allowed people to be more 'human' as often there is a glimpse into people's lives outside of the office whilst people remain working from home. There has been more transparency across the whole process.

Marketing & Business Development Salaries in Professional Services – Q4 2020

Job title	Annual salary range (£)
Bids/Proposals	
Head of Bids	80k – 120k
Senior Bid Manager	65k – 90k
Bid Manager	50k – 70k
Senior Bid Exec	40k – 50k
Bid Exec	30k – 42k
Bid Assistant	25k – 32k
Business Development	
BD Director	100k +
Head of BD	75k – 120k
Senior BD Manager	70k – 90k
BD Manager	55k – 70k
Senior BD Exec	35k – 55k
BD Exec	30k – 45k
BD Assistant	25k – 32k
Client Relationship Management/Account Management	
Head of Client Relationship	80k – 120k
Senior Client Relationship Manager	70k – 90k
Client Relationship Manager	50k – 75k
Senior Client Relationship Exec	35k – 50k
Client Relationship Exec	30k – 40k
Communications (incl Internal Comms & CSR)	
Head of Comms (Global remit)	80k – 140k
Head of Comms (national/Europe)	70k – 100k
Comms Manager	50k – 60k
Senior Comms Exec	38k – 45k
Comms Exec	30k – 35k
CRM Database	
CRM Database Manager	50k – 65k
CRM Database Executive	32k – 36k
CRM Database Administrator	25k – 30k

Marketing & BD Salaries in professional services – Q4 2020

Job title	Annual salary range (£)
Design	
Senior Designer	45K – 55K
Executive Designer	30K – 42K
Assistant Designer	25K – 30K
Digital Marketing	
Head of Digital	70K – 120K
Digital Marketing Manager	50K – 65K
Digital Marketing Executive	35K – 45K
Social Media Manager	45K – 55K
Social Media Executive	30K – 40K
Digital Automation Manager	50K – 65K
Events	
Head of Events	60K – 80K
Events Manager	45K – 60K
Senior Events Executive	35K – 45K
Events Executive	30K – 35K
Marketing	
Chief Marketing Officer	120K +
Marketing Director	90K +
Senior Marketing Manager	65K – 75K
Marketing Manager	48K – 65K
Senior Marketing Executive	35K – 45K
Marketing Executive	28K – 35K
Marketing Assistant	34K – 30K
PR	
Head of PR (Global remit)	80K – 120K
Head of PR (National/Europe remit)	70K – 90K
PR Manager	50K – 70K
PR Senior Executive	45K – 55K
PR Executive	32K – 40K
PR Assistant	23K – 30K

Footnote

For daily and hourly temp rates across all the above levels, please do message us directly for an accurate and bespoke range as some rates vary based on NI, pension contributions and holiday pay.

Ambition Contacts

We would like to thank everyone who contributed to the surveys and market trends report. We would also like to take the opportunity to send a warm thank you to all our candidates and clients for their continued support.

If you have any questions about the report or would like to book in a consultation to talk about how the report and salary guide applies to your firm, please do get in touch with the team below:



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