

Digital Salary Survey H1 2011

Introduction

Whenever we speak to businesses in the digital space, they all share a common challenge – the attraction and retention of talent. In fact, we think that talent is the single biggest challenge that the digital industry collectively faces.

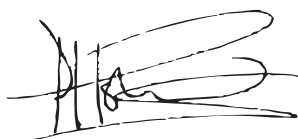
A shortage of talent has wide-ranging potential consequences for business in the digital industry. Projects can be delayed, budgets can be cut, and the day-to-day activities of simply “being” in digital can be all-consuming. Getting, and staying ahead of the curve requires proper, sustained investment in people at all levels of seniority.

We see firsthand how competitive and fast-paced the digital recruitment market can be. Our business is based around helping individuals and employers, to cope with those demands. Salary insights can help both of those parties in a variety of ways, so we’re keen to share them as much as we can.

The future of the digital industry is full of virtually limitless potential for success – as professionals, as businesses, and as a whole sector. The key to unlocking that potential is to build a workforce that is highly skilled, commercially viable, and above all else satisfied and genuinely passionate about the digital space. Understanding the salary landscape is one significant part of that process, and one we hope is helped by this survey.

All too often recruitment companies can be seen as interested in one thing alone - the pursuit of placements. Don’t get me wrong, we’re fully dedicated to recruitment success, but we’re about much more than that too. We’re passionate about the digital industry and fascinated by what happens in it. We have, after all, a vested interest in its success. It’s our sincere hope that by producing work like these salary surveys, and through our continued efforts to deliver excellent recruitment experiences for digital people and businesses, we can contribute in some way to it.

Thanks for reading.



Phil Haslehurst, Marketing Manager

About the data used in this survey

As a recruitment company we’re in a unique position - every time an employer registers a vacancy with us they provide information about the lower and upper boundaries of the salary that they’re willing to pay the successful applicant.

It’s this data, and this data alone, that we use to provide the insights of this survey.

For each specialist area of digital that we operate in we have provided the range of salaries found, as well as the average salary in that area, and an indication of the change since our last survey at the end of 2010.

This is a survey of job vacancies in the digital space as briefed to Propel London, and their value according to the prospective employer. This is not a survey of digital professionals and their reported salaries.

Contents:

1. Introduction
2. The top line
3. The top line continued...
4. Creative agencies
5. Creative agencies continued...
6. Media + Performance
7. Media + Performance continued...
8. Brands
9. Brands continued...
10. Design + Technical
11. Design + Technical continued...
12. Mobile
13. Mobile continued...
14. UX + IA
15. Social
16. Social continued...
17. Conclusions

The top line

The first half of the year is widely considered to be the busiest period for recruiters - and of that period, January is normally the single busiest month. In 2010 this logic was defied as a slow start to the year gave way to a busier late summer period. H1 2011 threw up no such surprise - January was the busiest month of the first half of the year as employers began to search for digital talent in earnest after the traditional Christmas slowdown (p.3).

Media and performance marketing roles continue to make up a large proportion of overall vacancies in the digital sector (p.3). Search marketing and display advertising both fall into this category, and make up the vast majority of digital adspend (see IAB Digital Ad Spend reports for more information on this - www.iabuk.net) so it's unsurprising that this fact is reflected in size of the associated jobs market.

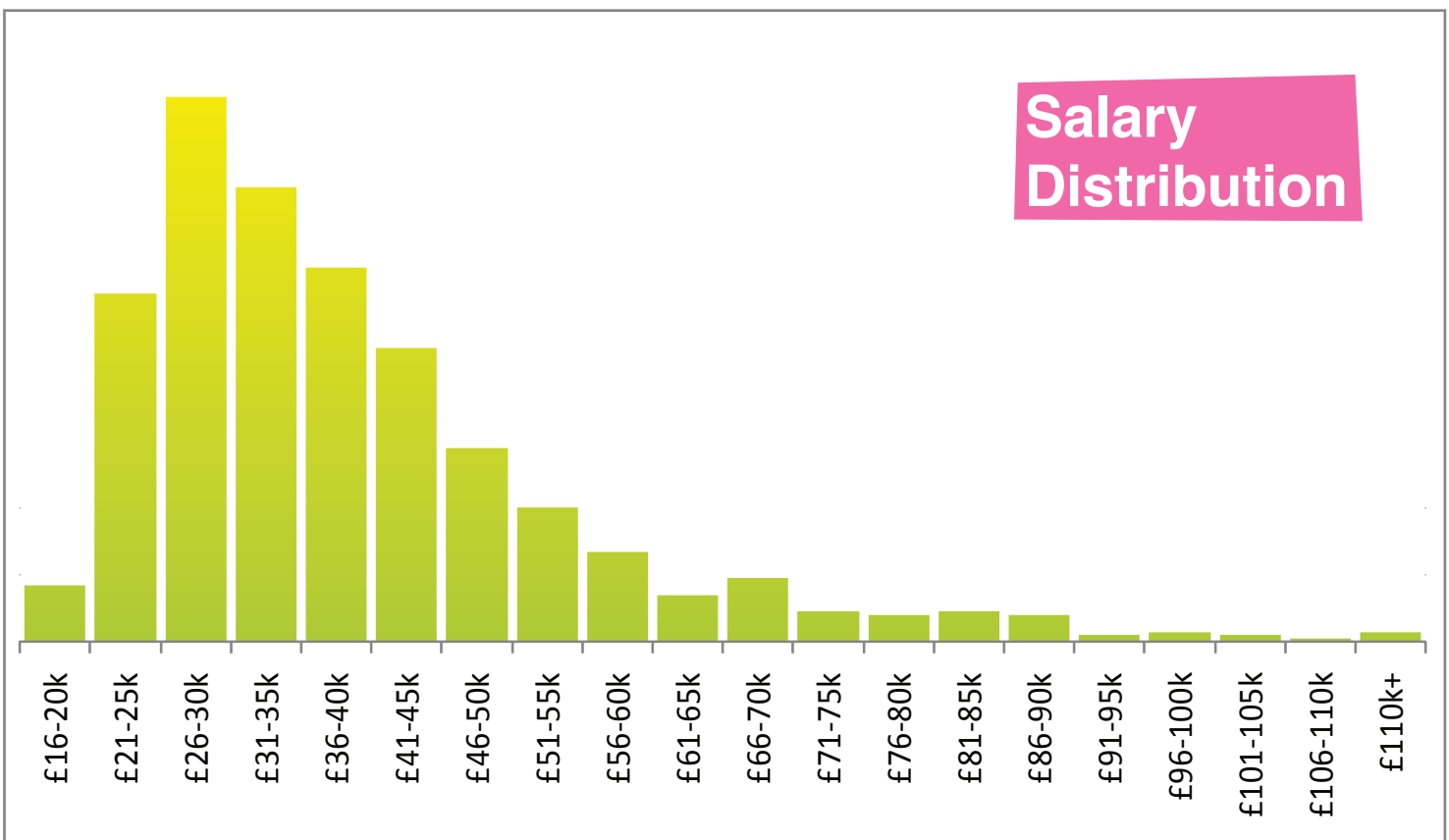
Brands continue to grow their digital teams apace - their vacancies made up 19% of our total activity in H1 (p.3). Their focus generally is on hiring senior level, experienced digital professionals and the above average salaries available for these roles show just how seriously brands now take digital as a channel.

Mobile is another significant growth area - more vacancies across ever-broadening skill sets, above-average salaries and no sign of slow-down (p.12 & 13). What's more, mobile is still a relatively new and emerging space. There continue to be opportunities for digital professionals with little or no mobile experience to make the transition into it.

A large proportion of the vacancies surveyed fall into salary brackets between £21k and £45k - what we would loosely refer to as junior and middleweight vacancies. It's clear to us, and to those that we speak to in the digital sector, that there is still a huge demand for new talent in the industry. This is testament to the ongoing skills shortage in the digital sector, and to the rapid growth of the industry - growth that continues to fuel that shortage.

In many ways digital is a victim of its own success - the price of rapid growth is that shortfalls in talent can emerge and slow business down. We see, in the cyclic nature of salary rises and falls, the constant tension between talent supply and employer demand. There is a clear relationship between the availability of talent and the average salary levels in a given specialism, as the table overleaf demonstrates.

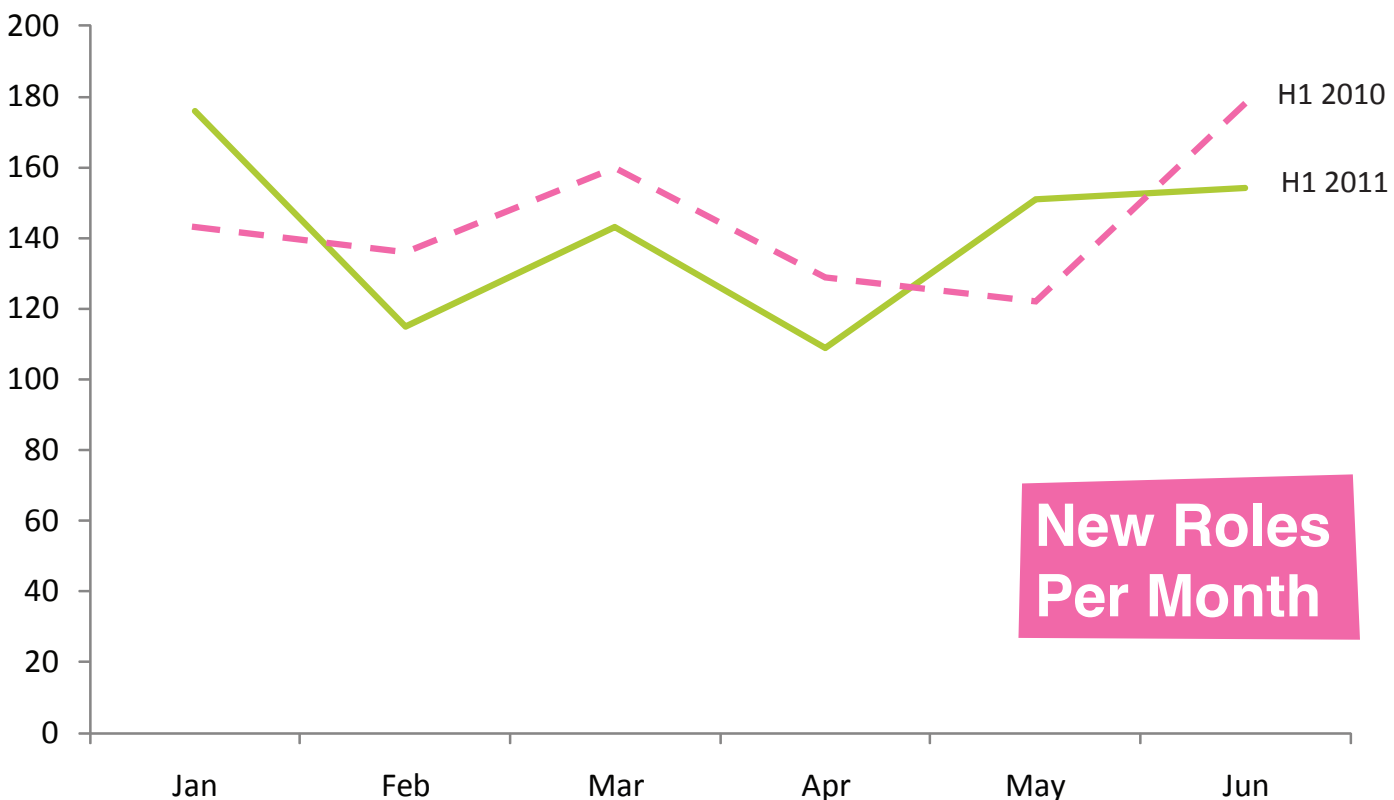
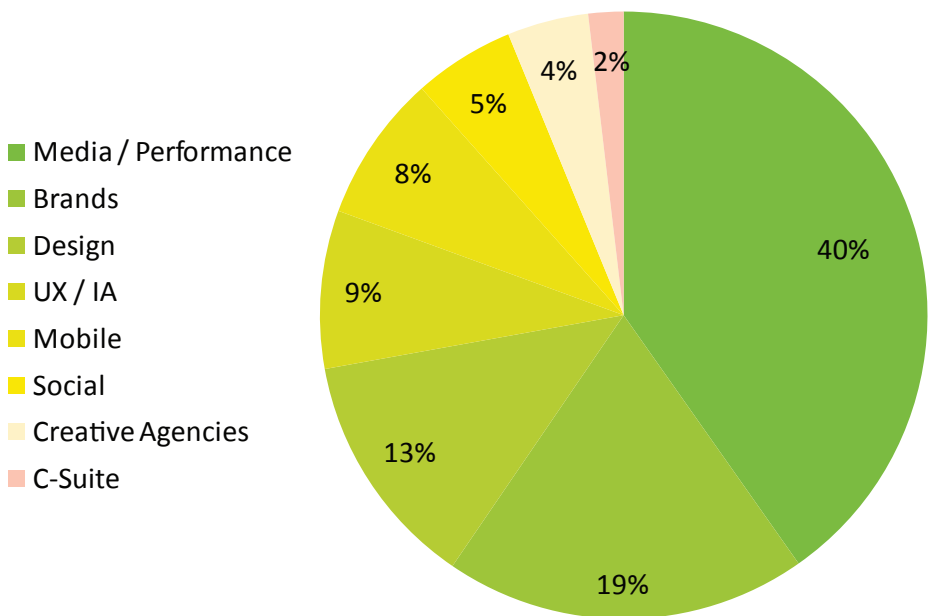
H1 has provided a relatively solid start to 2011 - average salaries continue to grow, albeit more slowly than at the end of 2010. The digital industry continues to diversify and create new opportunities. Talent remains the most significant challenge, and asset, to businesses in digital. For the digital professional, that is a massive positive.



Supply & Demand

	Applications per vacancy	Average salary
UX / IA	1.47	£47.7k
Mobile	1.58	£43.5k
Media / Performance	2.65	£40.8k
Design	3.25	£39.4k
Creative	3.63	£40.6k
Brand	3.85	£40k
Social	10.46	£36.9k

Role Breakdown



New Roles Per Month

Creative Agencies

Client Services

	Low	Average	High	H2 2010 Average	Change
Account Executive	£20k	£22.5k	£25k	£23.3k	- 3.4 %
Account Manager	£30k	£36.6k	£50k	£34.5k	+ 6 %
Account Director	£40k	£56.2k	£70k	£46.7k	+ 20 %
Head of / GAD	n/a	n/a	n/a	£65k	n/a

Project Management

	Low	Average	High	H2 2010 Average	Change
Junior Project Manager	£24k	£25.5k	£28k	£25k	+ 2 %
Project Manager	£30k	£40.3k	£60k	£35.6k	+ 13.2 %
Senior / Project Director	£35k	£41.2k	£50k	£47.2k	- 12.7 %

Production

	Low	Average	High	H2 2010 Average	Change
Producer	£28k	£32.1k	£35k	£33.5k	- 4.1 %
Senior Producer	£34k	£37k	£40k	£49.3k	- 24.9 %

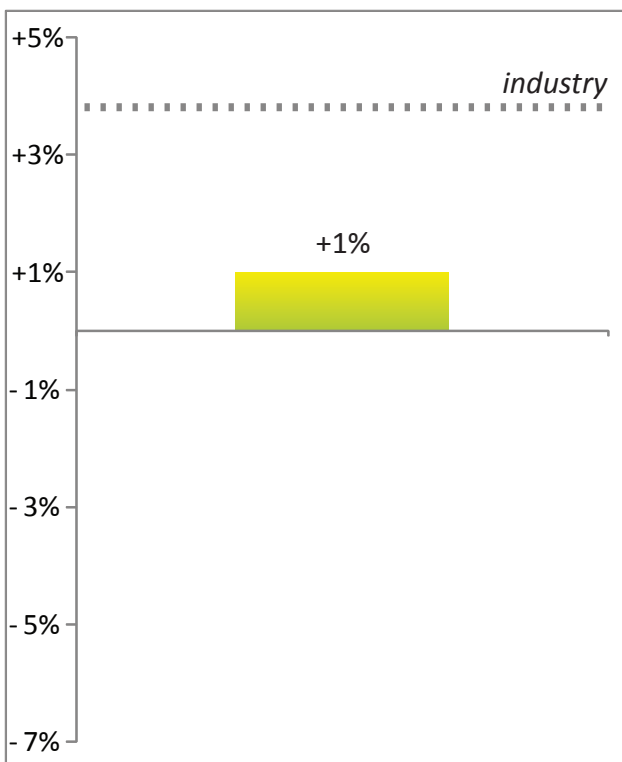
Strategy

	Low	Average	High	H2 2010 Average	Change
Planner	£20k	£34.1k	£50k	£30.5k	+ 11.8 %
Senior Planner	£40k	£52.5k	£65k	£45k	+ 16.6 %
Head of / Director	£65k	£69.5k	£90k	£80.6k	- 13.7 %

Business Development

	Low	Average	High	H2 2010 Average	Change
Business Development	n/a	n/a	n/a	£61.2k	n/a

Sector Salary Growth vs. Industry Salary Growth



Growth in the average salary of a creative account director since H2 2010:

+20%

The Lowdown

The digital creative sector continues to be a desirable prospect for job seekers. In terms of candidate supply, it is the third most popular area surveyed, outstripped only by client-side and social media roles (p.3).

This is hardly surprising when you consider the vibrant and exciting work coming out of London's digital creative agencies right now - exceptional and unique implementations of cutting edge technology are produced with remarkable regularity.

It can be the case that, as demand from job seekers increases, salaries decrease accordingly. We've seen this effect markedly in social media, for example (p.3).

In the main, creative agencies have bucked the trend. Salaries at junior and midweight levels remain above the industry average. This is a positive situation - great creative output, fantastic working environments, and good salaries all combine to attract the best talent in the market.

Strategic roles in particular offer great opportunities to earn an above-average salary. These positions continue to be considered extremely valuable and important to the overall success of a creative agency. The premium attached to them is, therefore, unsurprising.

It's concerning that salaries at senior levels in the space have fallen below the industry average. That being said, during 2010 senior salaries in creative agencies were well above the average - we may simply be seeing a natural correction in the market.

Consultant's view

"There's huge demand for client services talent: across account & project management and strategy & planning. Agencies are looking for people who not only have a creative background, but also experience within the account's specific sector. What's more, they're looking for people with a broad digital skill-set which covers client insight, technical experience and industry knowledge alongside creative flair.

The perceived risk of client service roles, particularly when attached to a single client, is also a factor. Many mid-weight candidates are opting to remain in their current roles for now and take advantage of in-house career progression opportunities." - Leon Dowle, Creative Development Team Leader.

Sector Average Salary vs. Industry Average



“Great creative output and good salaries combine to attract the best talent available”

Media Planning

	Low	Average	High	H2 2010 Average	Change
Account Executive	£18k	£21k	£25k	£22.4k	- 6.2 %
Account Manager	£23k	£31.9k	£50k	£31.7k	+ 0.6 %
Account Director	£32k	£47.2k	£70k	£45.8k	+ 3 %
Head Of	£60k	£66.4k	£110k	£61.1k	+ 8.6 %

Search

	Low	Average	High	H2 2010 Average	Change
Account Executive	£15k	£23k	£30k	£23k	0 %
Account Manager	£20k	£33.4k	£45k	£32.7k	+ 2.1 %
Account Director	£30k	£48.8k	£65k	£41.5k	+ 17.5 %
Head Of	£40k	£62.2k	£85k	£64k	- 2.8 %

Affiliates

	Low	Average	High	H2 2010 Average	Change
Account Executive	£18k	£22.1k	£25k	n/a	n/a
Account Manager	£20k	£26.7k	£35k	£29.6k	- 9.7 %
Account Director	£25k	£34.6k	£40k	£35k	- 1.1 %
Head Of	£75k	£77.5k	£80k	£50k	+ 55 %

Media Sales

	Low	Average	High	H2 2010 Average	Change
Sales / Account Exec	£18k	£26.5k	£40k	£24.5k	+ 8.1 %
Sales / Account Mgr	£25k	£33.8k	£50k	£33.3k	+ 1.5 %
Sales / Account Director	£40k	£53.4k	£80k	£50.4k	+ 5.9 %

Publisher Services

	Low	Average	High	H2 2010 Average	Change
Executive	£18k	£22.5k	£26k	n/a	n/a
Manager / Head	£26k	£34.4k	£45k	£32.7k	+ 5.1 %
Head of / Director	£38k	£54.3k	£70k	£80k	- 32.1 %

Ad Ops / Trafficking

	Low	Average	High	H2 2010 Average	Change
Executive	£18k	£23.7k	£35k	£23.7k	0 %
Manager	£24k	£29.2k	£35k	£33.9k	- 13.8 %
Head of	£50k	£60k	£70k	£52.1k	+ 15.1 %

Business Development

	Low	Average	High	H2 2010 Average	Change
Executive	£20k	£22.5k	£25k	£22.5k	0 %
Manager	£25k	£37.2k	£80k	£33.3k	+ 11.7 %
Head of	£50k	£81k	£120k	£68.4k	+ 18.4 %

Analytics

	Low	Average	High	H2 2010 Average	Change
Analysts	£20k	£28k	£35k	£30.2k	- 7.2 %
Senior / Head of	£40k	£61.5k	£100k	£59.3k	+ 3.7 %

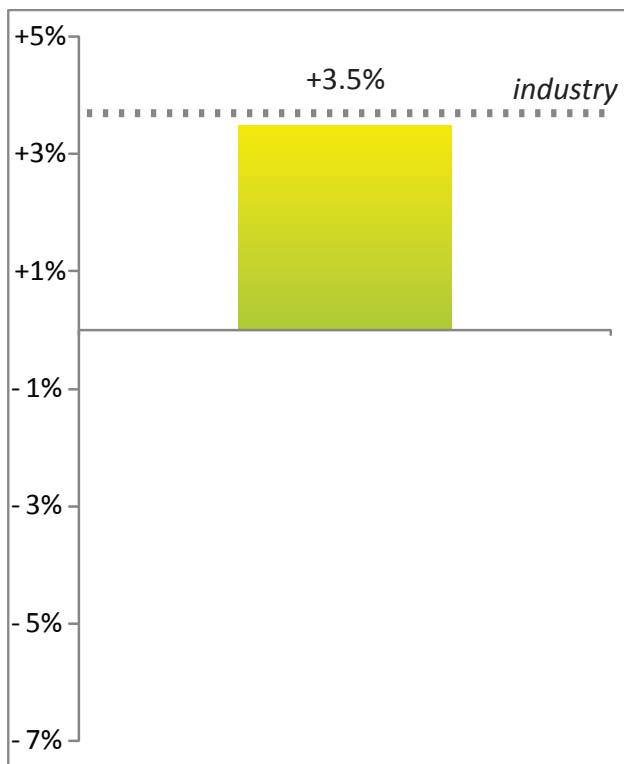
The Lowdown

In H2 2010 we saw encouraging signs of recovery in the previously waning media and performance marketing sectors. Where average salaries had been shrinking we saw a turnaround to growth in most parts of the space - perhaps salaries had simply been correcting from past periods of over-inflation?

That renewed growth has slowed in the first half of 2011, but only to a level close to the industry average of +3.8%. Areas like media planning, search, and media sales all saw very positive growth. Business development roles in performance marketing took a major boost too - this is indicative of the perceived value, amongst employers, of building new and profitable commercial relationships.

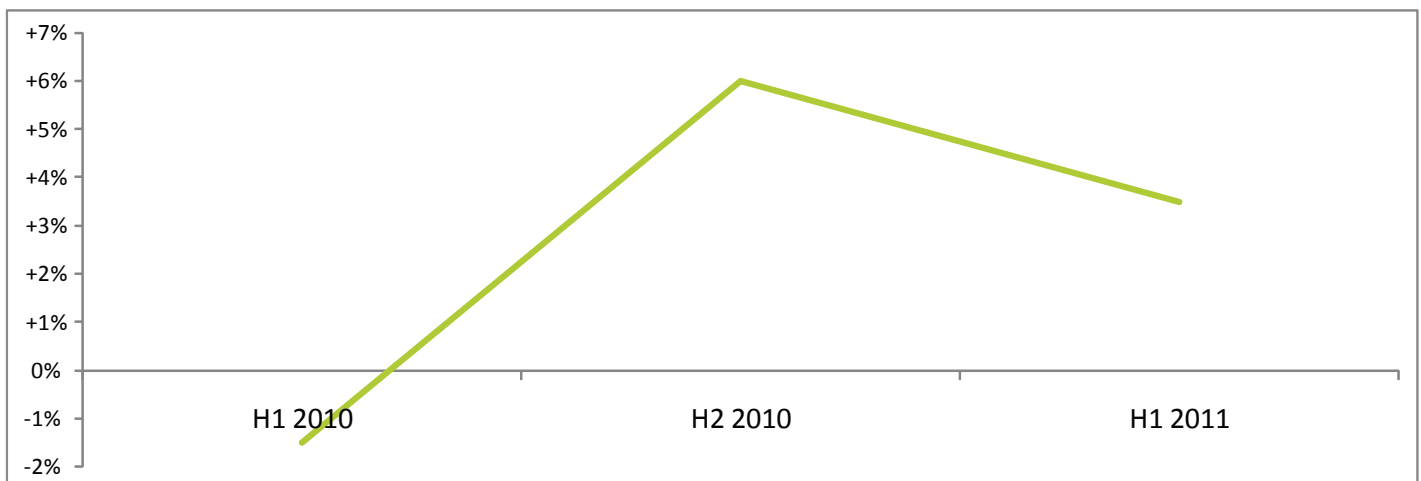
All in all, media and performance roles seem to have taken a boost over the past 12 months. Demand for talent is high, salaries in general are increasing, and this is cause for optimism. The increased attention on new technologies and innovative approaches has breathed new life into the sector, and the jobs market it supports.

Sector Salary Growth vs. Industry Salary Growth



“Demand for talent is high, salaries in general are increasing.”

Sector Salary Growth Trend



Online Marketing

	Low	Average	High	H2 2010 Average	Change
Executive	£18k	£25.8k	£35k	£25.1k	+ 2.7 %
Manager	£30k	£39.9k	£60k	£39.1k	+ 2 %
Senior Manager	n/a	n/a	n/a	£48k	n/a
Head of / Director	£60k	£65k	£80k	£65k	0 %

ECRM

	Low	Average	High	H2 2010 Average	Change
Executive	£17k	£24.4k	£30k	£25k	- 2.4 %
Manager	£27k	£35.7k	£50k	£38.3k	- 6.7 %
Head of	n/a	n/a	n/a	£70k	n/a

Search

	Low	Average	High	H2 2010 Average	Change
Executive	£20k	£26.4k	£38k	£27.6k	- 4.3 %
Manager	£27k	£40k	£50k	£41.8k	- 4.3 %
Head of	£40k	£53.1k	£60k	£66.2k	- 19.7 %

Affiliates

	Low	Average	High	H2 2010 Average	Change
Executive	n/a	n/a	n/a	£24.7k	n/a
Manager	£35k	£42.1k	£65k	£39k	+ 7.9 %
Head of	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

Sales (in house media)

	Low	Average	High	H2 2010 Average	Change
Executive	£23k	£27.4k	£30k	£21.5k	+ 27.4 %
Manager	£22k	£32.6k	£37k	£33.8k	- 3.5 %
Senior	£32k	£39.7k	£45k	£57.5k	- 30.9 %
Head of	£42k	£46.7k	£55k	n/a	n/a

Business Development

	Low	Average	High	H2 2010 Average	Change
Executive	£20k	£32.5k	£50k	£32.5k	0 %
Manager	£35k	£40k	£45k	£38.5k	+ 3.8 %
Head of	£95k	£97.5k	£100k	£59.1k	+ 64.9 %

Ad Ops / Trafficking

	Low	Average	High	H2 2010 Average	Change
Executive	£22k	£25.5k	£30k	£24.7k	+ 3.2 %
Manager	£40k	£42.5k	£45k	£36k	+ 18 %
Head of	n/a	n/a	n/a	£57.5k	n/a

Analysts

	Low	Average	High	H2 2010 Average	Change
Analyst	£18k	£31.2k	£50k	£29k	+ 7.5 %
Head of	n/a	n/a	n/a	£48.2k	n/a

Product Management

	Low	Average	High	H2 2010 Average	Change
Executive	£24k	£27.7k	£33k	£24.1k	+ 14.9 %
Manager	£33k	£45k	£60k	£42.7k	+ 5.3 %
Head of	n/a	n/a	n/a	£58.6k	n/a

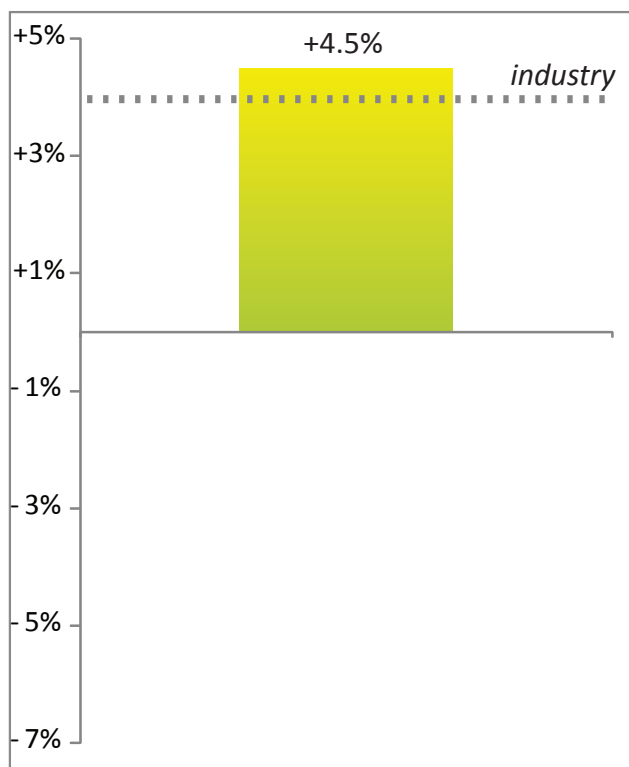
The Lowdown

Salary growth for digital roles in brands is the largest in the industry. This is primarily attributable to a single figure - average salaries for senior business development roles have increased by 64.9% compared with H2 2010 - phenomenal and, we suspect, somewhat misleading growth.

Take this figure out of the reckoning and brand roles are still seeing their average salaries growing, albeit more slowly than the industry average: +1.1% versus +3.8%. What's probably more significant is that for the third survey running midweight and senior positions on the client-side have been paid well above the average.

What does this tell us? That brands continue to take digital ever more seriously, valuing experience and skill in the space as absolutely crucial to their ongoing success. Vacancies on the client-side take up nearly 20% of our business - a significant chunk and one we expect to grow further.

Sector Salary Growth vs. Industry Salary Growth



Sector Average Salary vs. Industry Average



Consultant's view

“Client-side senior roles tend to cover a very broad range of responsibilities and therefore require a wide-ranging skill-set from prospective employees - taking a project from inception to completion, from a business and ROI focussed viewpoint as well as a technical, hands on position.

Responsible for the entire 360 degree campaign cycle, these individuals are often required to have a much broader base of expertise than their agency counterparts who will tend to focus on a particular specialism.

Additionally, offering a higher salary than the average is also used as an incentive by brands to entice agency-side talent to move into what is often perceived by them as a less dynamic working environment.” - Rodney Crouch, Senior Consultant, Client Side.

“Brands continue to take digital seriously, valuing experience in the space as absolutely crucial to their ongoing success”

Web Developer

	Low	Average	High	H2 2010 Average	Change
Junior	£18k	£22.7k	£27k	£26.8k	- 15.2 %
Midweight	£25k	£32.5k	£45k	£32.7k	- 0.6 %
Senior	£30k	£41.1k	£60k	£48.7k	- 15.6 %

Front / Back End Developer

	Low	Average	High	H2 2010 Average	Change
Junior	£20k	£26.2k	£30k	£30.1k	- 12.9 %
Midweight	£25k	£37.3k	£50k	£36.9k	+ 1 %
Senior	£40k	£46k	£55k	£63.7k	- 27.7 %

Flash / Actionscript Developer

	Low	Average	High	H2 2010 Average	Change
Junior	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Midweight	£40k	£45k	£50k	£35.8k	+ 25.6 %
Senior	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

Designers

	Low	Average	High	H2 2010 Average	Change
Junior	£18k	£24.8k	£33k	£26.2k	- 5.3 %
Midweight	£25k	£33.2k	£45k	£32k	+ 3.2 %
Senior	£30k	£41.4k	£60k	£47.2k	

Management

	Low	Average	High	H2 2010 Average	Change
Head Of	£28k	£48.6k	£60k	£62.5k	- 22.2 %

Creative Direction

	Low	Average	High	H2 2010 Average	Change
Art Director	£40k	£45k	£50k	£50k	- 10 %
Creative Director	£45k	£67.1k	£90k	£75k	+ 1.1 %

Creative Technologist

	Low	Average	High	H2 2010 Average	Change
Creative Technologist	£30k	£40.8k	£50k	n/a	n/a

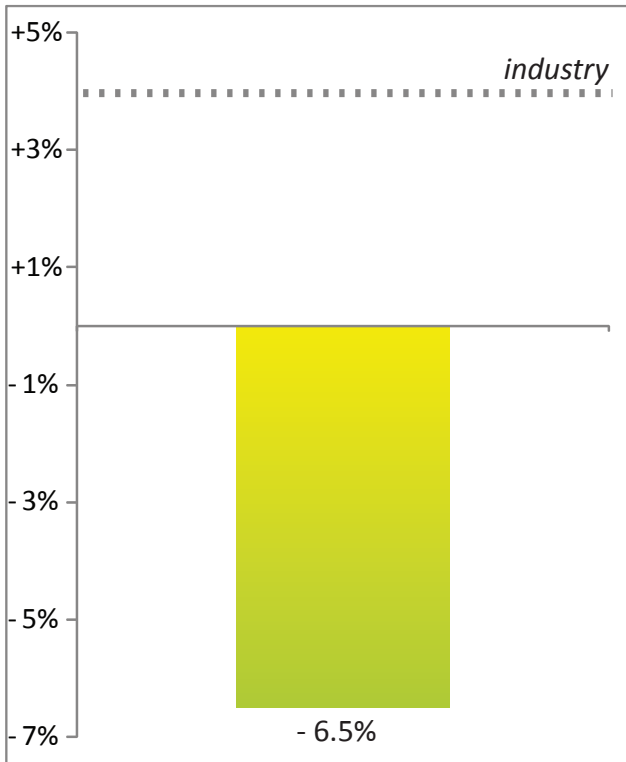
The Lowdown

Design and technical roles are the only positions in our survey to defy the correlation between candidate supply and employer demand. Vacancies in the space attract relatively few applications, and yet average salaries remain firmly below industry norms (p.3).

Why is this the case? It's possible that other roles with a more commercial focus are regarded as more valuable to a business, in a financial sense at least. There is, perhaps, the perception amongst employers that design work in particular is done "for the love of it", and that therefore salaries can be relatively low.

Recently we've seen the development of a new kind of role in the space - that of the creative technologist. This position has grown out of the changing skill demands in creative design and build agencies, and presents new opportunities for individuals with design and development skills. Bridging the gap between the creative process and the hard technical disciplines of executing builds, these roles demonstrate a new appetite in creative agencies to bring their entire process, and team, closer together.

Sector Salary Growth vs. Industry Salary Growth



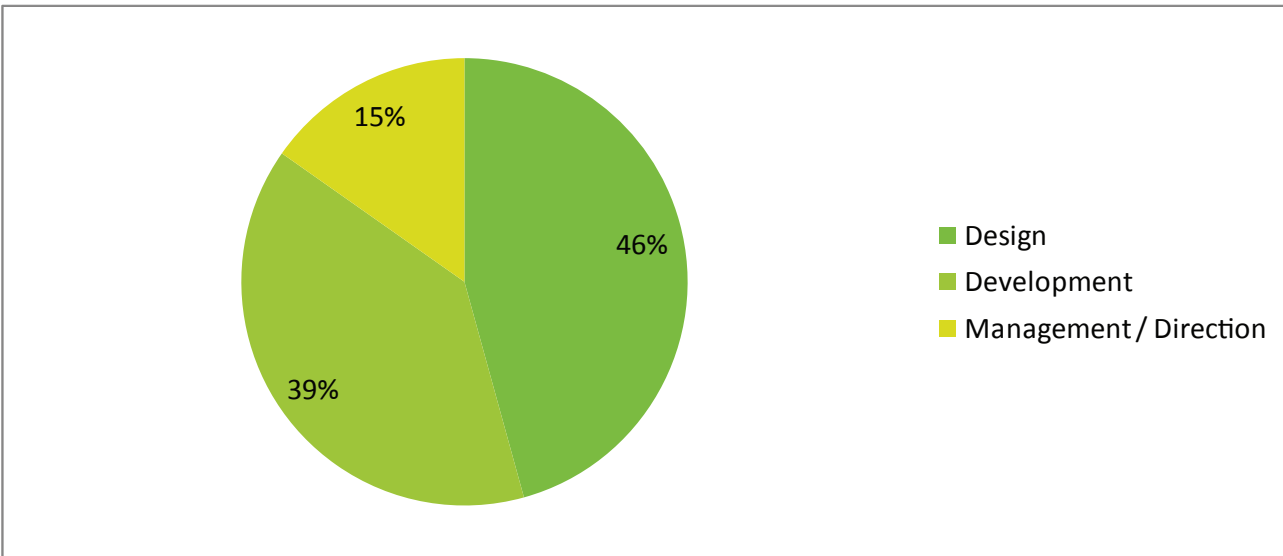
“There is a new appetite in agencies to bring the process and team closer together”

Consultant’s view

“Salary levels within the technical sector are still feeling the after-effects of the recent recession, but they are also affected by technical budgets being spread thinner to accommodate new and emerging channels such as mobile and social media.

What’s more, we have found that these new channels, platforms and technologies have created such diversity within technical departments that those within the sector are content to stay where they are on the same pay scale in order to up-skill on the job. With so many professionals staying put for their current salaries, significant pay increases are harder to come by.” - Andrew Rogers, Technical Consultant.

Role Breakdown



Marketing

	Low	Average	High	H2 2010 Average	Change
Mobile Marketing Manager	£50k	£56.2k	£60k	£40.8k	+ 37.7 %
Mobile Product Manager	£30k	£56k	£100k	£46.6k	+ 20.1 %

Development

	Low	Average	High	H2 2010 Average	Change
Mobile Developer	£20k	£41.5k	£60k	£37.6k	+ 10.3 %
Lead Mobile Developer	£50k	£52.5k	£55k	£51.2k	+ 2.5 %
Mobile Project Management	£25k	£35k	£45k	£45k	- 22.2%

Media Sales

	Low	Average	High	H2 2010 Average	Change
Executive	£20k	£30.3k	£40k	£35.8k	- 15.3 %
Manager	£35k	£44.3k	£55k	£54.1k	- 18.1 %

Business Development

	Low	Average	High	H2 2010 Average	Change
Executive	£22k	£25k	£28k	£30k	- 16.6 %
Manager	£25k	£38.3k	£70k	£45k	- 14.8 %
Director	£50k	£65k	£100k	n/a	n/a

Mobile Marketing Agency

	Low	Average	High	H2 2010 Average	Change
Account Executive	£20k	£22.5k	£25k	£20k	+ 12.5 %
Account Manager	£25k	£34.5k	£40k	£31.6k	+ 9.1 %
Account Director	£50k	£55k	£60k	£50k	+ 10 %
Head of / Senior	£60k	£70k	£80k	£70k	0 %

Design

	Low	Average	High	H2 2010 Average	Change
Junior	£25k	£32.5k	£45k	n/a	n/a
Midweight	£30k	£38.5k	£50k	n/a	n/a
Senior	£40k	£54.6k	£83k	n/a	n/a

Ad Ops

	Low	Average	High	H2 2010 Average	Change
Management	£30k	£35.8k	£50k	n/a	n/a
Head	£50k	£52.5k	£55k	n/a	n/a

Strategy

	Low	Average	High	H2 2010 Average	Change
Planning Manager	£30k	£35k	£40k	n/a	n/a
Planning Director	£50k	£62.5k	£70k	n/a	n/a

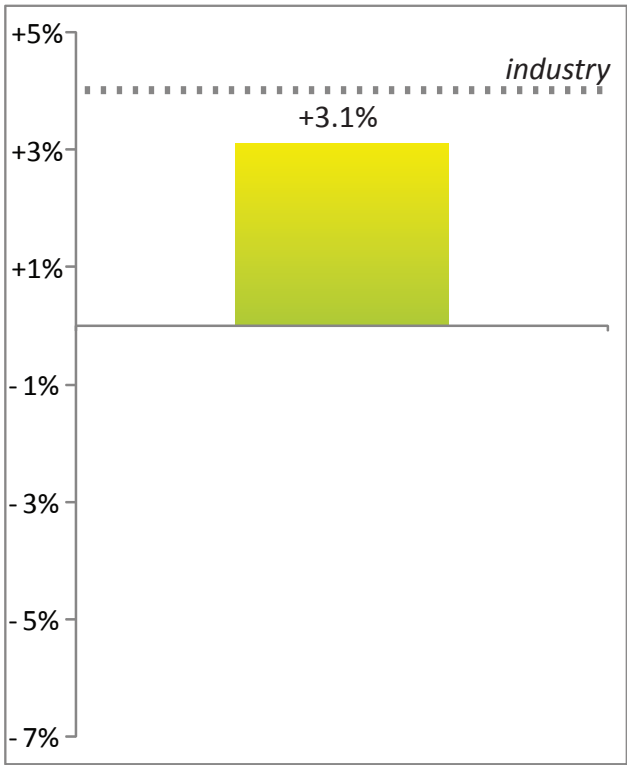
The Lowdown

Mobile can now shake off the perennial jokes about the “year of mobile” and stand proudly as a serious contender in the digital mix. Mobile ad spend is ever-increasing, brands attach more and more strategic importance to the channel, and creative teams develop more engaging and exciting work for mobile platforms with every project. In short, mobile is in great shape.

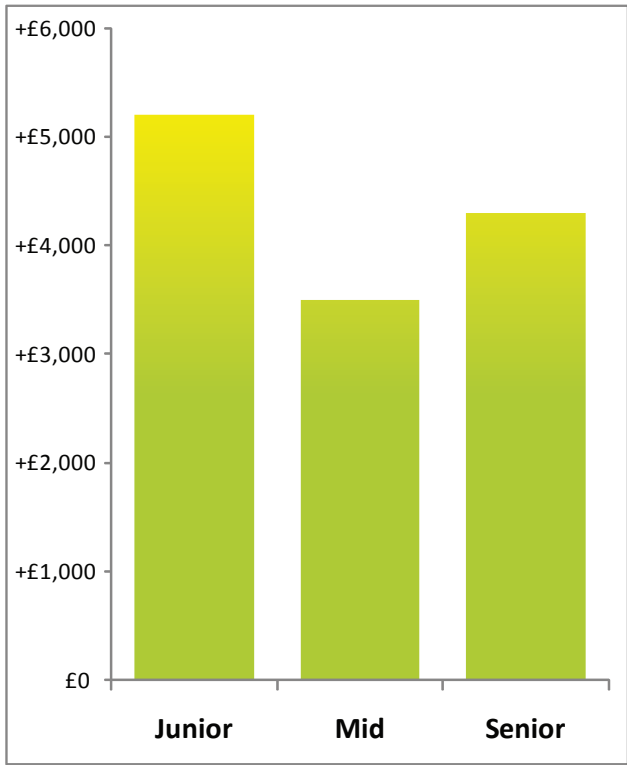
We’ve seen serious demand for talent across the mobile spectrum, especially in the more creatively focused areas: marketing, development, design and agency roles. What’s more, new skill sets are also required as the mobile industry grows - design, ad operations and strategists. It’s a far cry from the days of WAP.

Average salaries at all levels of seniority are well above industry norms, indicative of just how seriously mobile specialists, and companies making first steps into the space, are taking their quest to stay ahead of the curve.

Sector Salary Growth vs. Industry Salary Growth



Sector Average Salary vs. Industry Average



Consultant’s view

“Mobile as a whole is exploding – all of our brand clients have set aside a budget for mobile. They are hiring across the sector because of how mobile complements existing digital activity, yet also adds something extra that is both relevant, engaging and profitable.

As smartphones and the mobile internet have become part of the mass market, mobile has developed into a highly credible channel for advertisers.

The really exciting part though is the level of innovation and creativity that drives the channel because of the unique place mobile has in consumer’s lives. The channel is already delivering incredible results for brands, publishers and innovators and the mobile web / apps space continues to grow at an unbelievable rate.” - Matt Hawkes, Senior Mobile Consultant.

£5k

Junior roles in mobile paid £5k more than the industry average

Information Architecture

	Low	Average	High	H2 2010 Average	Change
Junior	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Middleweight	£30k	£43.1k	£60k	£40k	+ 7.7 %
Senior	£35k	£43.7k	£50k	£60k	- 27.1 %
Lead	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

User Experience

	Low	Average	High	H2 2010 Average	Change
Junior	£18k	£21.5k	£25k	£25k	- 14 %
Middleweight	£25k	£39.7k	£55k	£39.8k	- 0.2 %
Senior	£35k	£57.5k	£70k	£50.5k	+ 13.8 %
Lead	£70k	£80.8k	£90k	£65k	+ 24.3 %

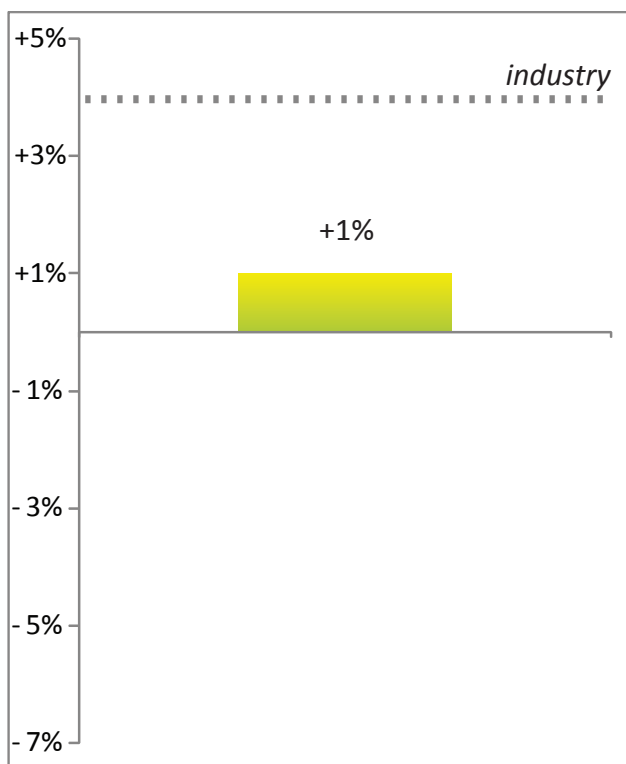
The Lowdown

Compared with H2 2010 the first half of this year has been a mixed bag in UX and IA. Growth across the board has been replaced by some declining average salaries - at senior levels in IA, and at junior levels in UX.

Overall salaries in the space are still growing steadily, and compared with the rest of the digital industry middle-weight and senior professionals are very well-paid. There is still, it's fair to say, a great premium attached to experience in these extremely niche areas. Employer demand outstrips candidate supply significantly, leading to the marked boost in average salaries (p.3).

UX and IA positions are at one extreme of the supply and demand spectrum of roles in this survey - a very small number of individuals apply per vacancy in this space, and average salaries are the highest of all areas surveyed.

Sector Salary Growth vs. Industry Salary Growth



Sector Average Salary vs. Industry Average



Client Services

	Low	Average	High	H2 2010 Average	Change
Account Executive	£23k	£24k	£25k	£23k	+ 4.3 %
Account Manager	£24k	£30.6k	£38k	£36.7k	- 16.6 %
Account Director	£35k	£43.7k	£50k	£45.7k	- 4.3 %

Strategy / Direction

	Low	Average	High	H2 2010 Average	Change
Social Media Strategist	£25k	£35.8k	£45k	£37k	- 3.2 %
Head of Social	£40k	£51.6k	£65k	£59.3k	- 12.9 %

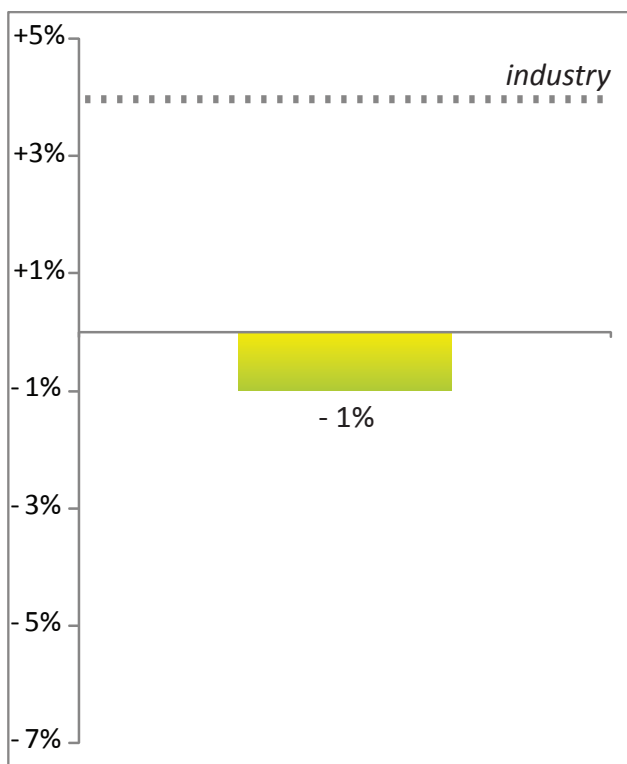
Analysis / Insight

	Low	Average	High	H2 2010 Average	Change
Executive	£24k	£27.2k	£30k	£22.5k	+ 5.3 %
Manager	£25k	£30k	£35k	£26k	+ 15.3 %
Head of	£35k	£35k	£35k	£35k	0 %

Community Management

	Low	Average	High	H2 2010 Average	Change
Executive	£20k	£22.5k	£25k	£23k	- 2.1 %
Manager	£25k	£32.3k	£47k	£31k	+ 4.1 %

Sector Salary Growth vs. Industry Salary Growth



Sector Average Salary vs. Industry Average



The Lowdown

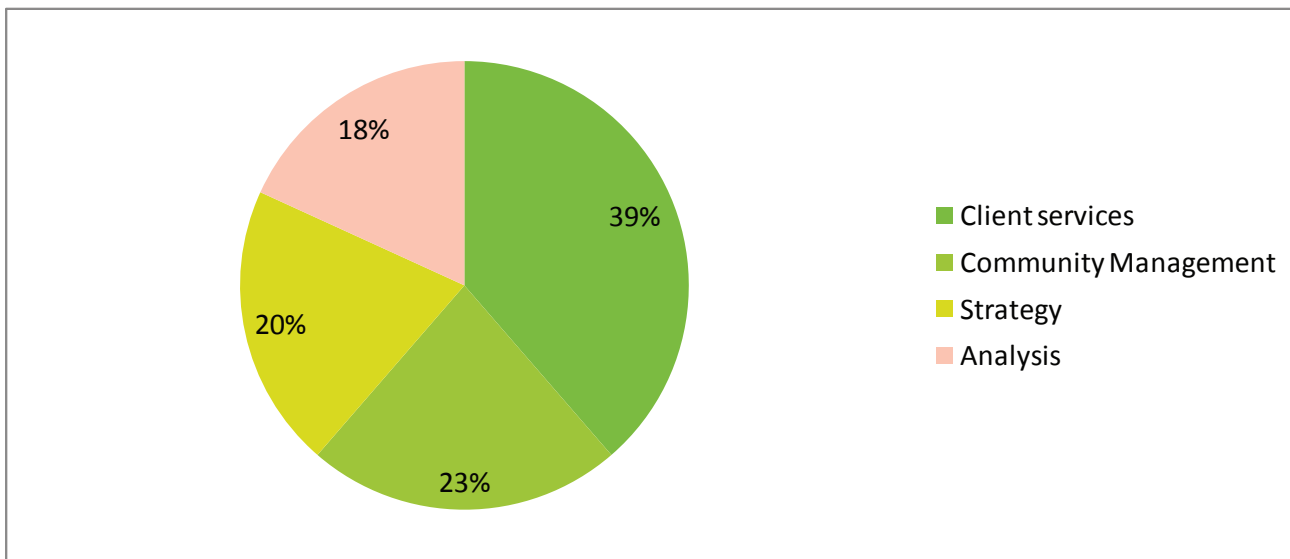
H2 2010 was a crazy period in social media recruitment. Some roles in the space attracted more than 50 applicants per position (see our H2 2010 survey for more details). Salaries were significantly below industry averages. Candidate demand for social media jobs was enormous.

To say that this situation has radically changed would be an overstatement - candidate demand for jobs in social media is still very high compared with any other part of the industry (p.3). As a result salaries in the space remain below average, particularly at senior levels: the implication being that there are plenty of skilled digital professionals willing to make moves into the social media space.

And that's perfectly understandable - social media retains its appeal as a market-leading, cutting-edge piece of the digital industry. What's more, the attention it receives from brands ensures that there is plenty of exciting campaign work to get involved in. There are ample opportunities for new and interesting career challenges which can override concerns about money.

There are signs, however, of the beginnings of positive adjustment in salary levels. Salaries for junior and midweight analysts, for example, have increased since H2 2010. As the social media sector stabilises we expect that this effect will become more widespread.

Role Breakdown



Consultant's view

“While PR agencies, integrated agencies, WOM agencies, digital agencies, search agencies & specialist social agencies all seek the same kinds of candidates, there is not yet the volume of genuinely qualified or experienced candidates to meet that demand.

There are a lot of candidates in the social space saying they can do the job – when only a few actually have relevant experience. With only a few top notch candidates, agencies compromise on the experience that their new hires have, but adjust salaries appropriately.

A further factor worth considering is that, on the agency side at least, budgets for social media teams can be tight. As social continues to establish its value to brands, we can expect to see budgets increase.” - Laura Cheetham, Social Media Consultant

“Social media retains its appeal as a market-leading, cutting edge part of digital...”

Since we started producing salary surveys we have seen average salaries in digital maintain growth for 18 months. This fact alone speaks to the continued demand in the space for talent. It's rare for us to speak to a business that isn't hiring for digital talent in some form.

However, the level of that growth has slowed in H1 2011 – from 8% to 4%. Could we see further slowdown in the next 6 months?

Slowdown in salary growth does not necessarily indicate a collapse in demand for talent of course. Throughout our 10 year history we've seen the market regularly adjust to meet the tension between a demand for talent and a need to be commercially viable. Salaries boom as demand grows, but at some point a threshold is reached and the floodgates close.

Talent attraction will continue to be a challenge and an opportunity in digital for years to come, of that fact we have no doubt.

But talent retention is just as crucial for businesses looking to succeed.

If the skilled and experienced employees of a business feel they need to move to pastures new in order to secure the best salaries for themselves then that business has major potential problems.

It takes time and money to make staff as useful and effective as possible – allowing them to take that investment to competitors, or just away from your business is at best undesirable, and at worst disastrous.

Likewise, if you're a digital professional you should be aware of where your salary sits versus industry averages – if you expect to earn more, there's no better way to make a compelling case than by developing your skills and contributing significantly to your business. Asking for a raise without the skills to back it up could work in the short term, but you may end up creating a rod for your own back.

For digital as an industry the key challenge continues to be that of attracting and developing talent quickly enough to keep pace with the growth of the space.

Those companies that take this challenge seriously, and devise effective strategies to meet it, will reap the rewards.

Some small print

The data in this survey is directly collated from information given to Propel London by its employer clients. No other data is used – we don't survey individual professionals in the digital sector, adjust the figures we have to reflect our consultant's opinions, or aggregate salary data from third party sources.

Consequently, the data that we use for this survey can on occasion throw up erroneous results. There are always employers or vacancies that defy the usual margins of the industry for a variety of reasons.

Every effort has been taken in our analysis to account for extraordinary results and to focus on areas where we can draw firm and valid conclusions. However, interpreting salary averages, growth trends and variations in demand will always be subjective to a degree.

We should point out, therefore, that this salary survey is not intended as a stand-alone document to be relied upon in isolation to inform your hiring strategy, or career choices. It is, rather, intended as a guide to the trends in the digital recruitment marketplace as we see them through the information that our clients provide.

We cannot guarantee the accuracy of the information contained herein, and it goes without saying that your experiences may well vary from ours. In fact, if they do we'd love to hear from you so that we can further improve upon our analysis.