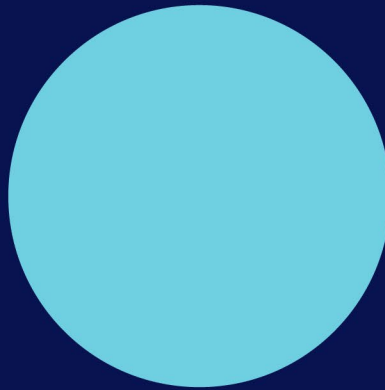
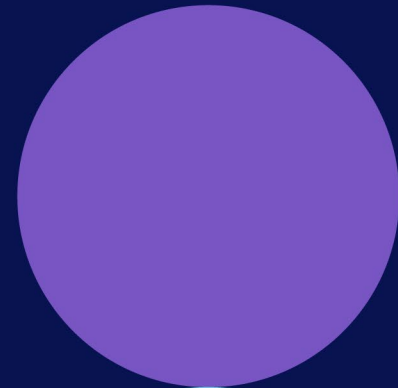
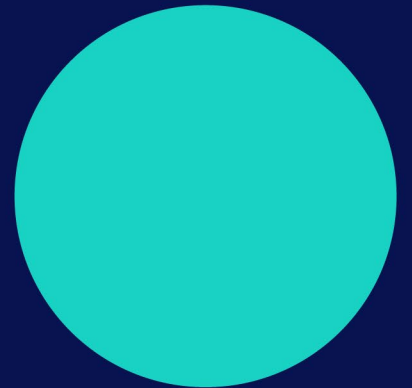


Reed



Salary guide 2026

Marketing
& sales

Navigating the new jobs landscape



James Reed CBE
Chairman and CEO, Reed

Welcome to our 2026 salary guides. As we look ahead, it is clear that the UK labour market is navigating one of the most profound transformations in living memory. In my four decades in recruitment, I have never witnessed a period of such rapid and fundamental change.

Our economic landscape has defied traditional expectations. Historically, periods of economic growth have aligned with rising job vacancies, but that relationship is no longer guaranteed. Recent trends suggest a structural shift in the labour market, where vacancy levels can decline even as the economy expands. This disconnect signals deeper changes in how businesses approach hiring and workforce planning. For employers and jobseekers alike, understanding these dynamics is critical - because the old assumption that growth equals more jobs is increasingly outdated.

The AI revolution: A white-collar recession

One of the primary drivers behind this permanent change to the jobs market, alongside policy, regulation, changing worker expectations, globalisation and supply chain pressures, I believe is artificial intelligence. The advancement and adoption of AI technologies have been breathtakingly fast, and its appetite for consuming tasks, particularly in white-collar professions, is the biggest story of our time.

AI is incredibly effective at reducing costs for employers, and it achieves this primarily by reducing the number of employees required. This is not a distant, future threat; it is happening right now. A recent survey we conducted of 500 companies revealed that 15%

were already reducing their hiring plans specifically because of the arrival of AI. Combined with other pressures, such as National Insurance increases and general hiring freezes, the overall impact on job creation has been noticeable.

We are witnessing what I term a 'white-collar recession,' which mirrors the blue-collar recession of the 1980s when automation hollowed out many industrial and manufacturing jobs. Today, it is entry-level and process-driven roles in sectors like administration, finance, and even law that are being consumed. These are the traditional gateways for many professionals starting their careers, and their rapid decline poses a significant threat to social mobility and future workforce development. The very nature of what constitutes a 'good job' is being redefined before our eyes. Roles that once seemed secure and promised a stable career path are now vulnerable to automation. This forces us, as employers and as a society, to rethink our approach to education, skills, and career progression.



The advancement and adoption of AI technologies have been breathtakingly fast, and its appetite for consuming tasks, particularly in white-collar professions, is the biggest story of our time.



The graduate dilemma: A shrinking horizon

Nowhere is this shift more acutely felt than among our young people and recent graduates. The data is deeply concerning. Our own figures at Reed show that the number of graduate jobs advertised on Reed.co.uk has plummeted from around 180,000 just a few years ago to a mere 50,000 at the end of 2025. This represents a staggering two-thirds reduction in opportunities for those leaving higher education. Other job sites are reporting similar, sobering figures. This is not just a dip; it is a collapse in the entry-level market.

This 'graduate crunch' is creating a generation of highly educated individuals who are struggling to find a foothold in the professional world. Nearly half of all jobs lost since mid-2024 have been among those under 25, and youth unemployment has soared to its highest level in a decade, excluding the pandemic period standing at 15.3%. The UK's top 100 employers reduced their graduate hiring by 14.6% in 2024, the steepest fall since the 2009 recession.

For those who do manage to secure a role, the rewards are often diminished. We are seeing entry-level graduate jobs offering salaries that are perilously close to the minimum wage, especially when factoring in the long hours often expected of new recruits. This situation challenges the long-held assumption that a university degree is a guaranteed ticket to a prosperous career. We must encourage aspiring families and young people to broaden their horizons. While a degree remains valuable, it is no longer the only path.

The jobs that are proving most resilient to the AI wave are those that require a human touch, creativity, and manual dexterity. Roles in skilled trades, hospitality, and healthcare, for example, involve a level of nuanced interaction and physical skill that AI is far from replicating. We must guide the next generation towards developing practical, hands-on skills. Learning to do things with your hands, whether in a highly educated field like osteopathy or a skilled trade, is becoming an increasingly wise career strategy.

Thriving through purpose: The PhilCo advantage

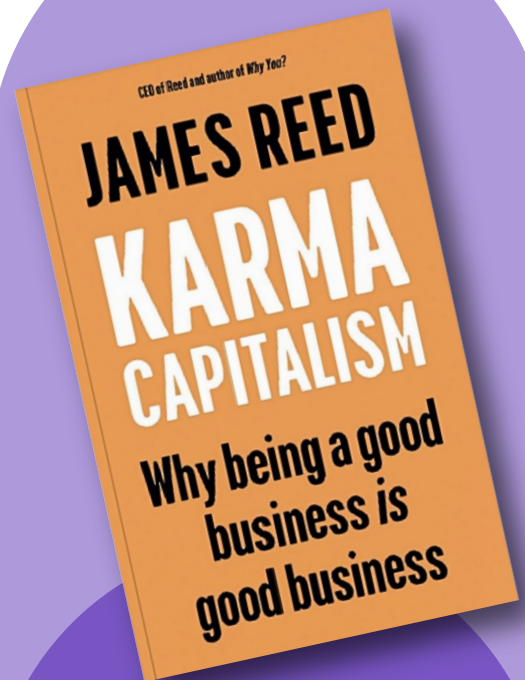
In this challenging environment, how can businesses not only survive but thrive? How can you attract and retain the talent you need when the market is so volatile? The answer, I believe, lies in purpose. Today's employees, especially the younger generation, are not just looking for a salary; they are seeking meaning and a sense of contribution from their work. This is where the concept of a philanthropic company, or PhilCo, becomes a powerful competitive advantage.

A **PhilCo** is a business that has committed a significant portion of its ownership - typically 10% or more - to a charitable foundation. At Reed, we are proud to be a PhilCo, with 18% of our company owned by the Reed Foundation. This is not just a footnote in our corporate structure; it is a

fundamental part of our identity. It means that a portion of our success is directly channelled back into the community. Our dividends help fund a wide array of good causes, many through our partnership with the Big Give, which has raised hundreds of millions for thousands of charities.

Being a PhilCo has a tangible and profound impact on our business. It is a cornerstone of our employee engagement strategy. Our team members - known as co-members - know that their hard work contributes to something larger than the bottom line. This shared purpose fosters a culture of responsibility, collaboration, and pride. It creates a powerful reason for people to join us and, just as importantly, to stay with us.

As hyper-capitalism has created vast inequalities - with the top one per cent in the UK holding more wealth than the bottom 70% - models like the PhilCo movement offer a way to transform business for good. It aligns profit with people and the planet, ensuring that corporate success contributes to societal wellbeing. This is not just corporate social responsibility; it is a sustainable and highly impactful business model for the 21st century.



Find out more about being a PhilCo in James' book 'Karma Capitalism, Why being a good business is good business'

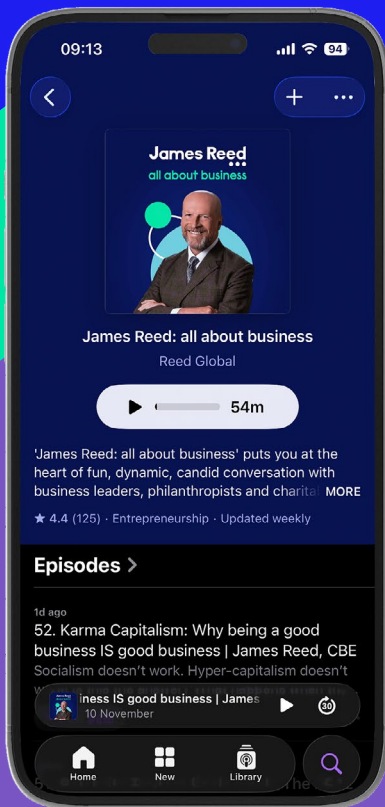
A look to the future

The road ahead is undoubtedly challenging. The forces of AI, economic uncertainty, and shifting market dynamics require us all to be more agile, more innovative, and more people centric than ever before. For employers, this means rethinking recruitment strategies. You must look beyond traditional qualifications and focus on skills, adaptability, resilience and potential. It means investing in upskilling and reskilling your existing workforce to meet the demands of the new economy. And it means building a strong employer brand rooted in a genuine purpose that will attract the best people.

For individuals, the message is clear: continuous learning is no longer optional. Developing a diverse skill set, particularly one that blends technical knowledge with people-centric abilities like communication, empathy, and critical thinking, will be crucial. We must all become lifelong learners to stay relevant and valuable in this evolving landscape.

These salary guides are designed to provide you with the data and insights you need to navigate this complex environment. They offer a benchmark for compensation in a time of great flux, helping you make informed decisions to attract and retain the talent that will drive your organisation forward. While the headlines may be daunting, there is always opportunity in disruption. By understanding these trends and adapting proactively, we can build a more resilient, skilled, and purposeful workforce for the future.

James Reed CBE
Chairman and CEO, Reed



Listen to James Reed's podcast 'all about business'.

Hosted by **James Reed CBE**, the Chairman and CEO of Reed Group, you'll hear the highs and lows of what it means to be a true business leader to empower you to implement smarter, more meaningful strategy in your business or career.

[Listen here](#)

Why use Reed's marketing & sales salary guide?

For both jobseekers and employers alike, Reed's salary guide stands as an invaluable resource, offering unparalleled insights to keep you well-informed and ahead of the curve in 2026.



Unmatched data insights

This comprehensive guide draws upon a vast dataset derived from over 18 million jobs posted on [Reed.co.uk](https://www.reed.co.uk) since 2017, solidifying its status as the most trusted salary guide in existence. The analysis of such an extensive volume of data offers an unparalleled view of the sector, ensuring accuracy and reliability.



Local and national expertise

Our specialism experts provide key insight into the sector, with Reed's regional directors discussing the local job landscape. This distinctive perspective, not available elsewhere, enhances the guide's richness and relevance.



Evolving landscapes and emerging trends

Delving into the intricacies of roles across 12 UK regions, our guide highlights noteworthy developments using graphics to depict key salary changes over the past year. With a robust dataset spanning four years, it includes salary projections for the upcoming year and average salary data dating back to 2017.

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Navigating the 2026 marketing landscape: trends, salaries and skills

Bianca Halliburton
Marketing Expert, Reed



The last 12 months in the marketing sector have been a story of recalibration and resilience. We've witnessed a job market that started strong, then faced a challenging period of cost-cutting and redundancies, only to begin picking up momentum again as we head into 2026. For businesses and professionals alike, this has created a landscape filled with both opportunity and uncertainty.

Companies have had to rethink their hiring strategies, often trimming marketing departments first when budgets tighten. Yet, many are quickly realising the indispensable link between marketing and sales, leading to a renewed focus on building effective teams. For those looking for work, a surplus of available talent has made the market competitive, forcing many to reassess their salary expectations and career priorities.

This year is defined by a fascinating mix of trends. We're seeing the continued rise of digital and AI-driven roles alongside a surprising resurgence of traditional marketing methods. Flexibility in the workplace continues to evolve, and the skills that employers demand are shifting. In this guide, we'll explore these key dynamics to provide you with the insights needed to navigate the marketing world of 2026, whether you're looking to hire or take the next step in your career.

The state of the marketing job market in 2026

The marketing job market has been a mixed bag over the past year. After a strong start where digital roles in social media and eCommerce were in high demand, the sector experienced a significant slowdown. Economic pressures led many companies to reduce costs, and historically, marketing departments are often the first to be streamlined. This resulted in a wave of redundancies, creating a candidate-rich market.

However, the tide is turning. We are now seeing a definite uptick in hiring as businesses acknowledge that they cannot afford to neglect their marketing function. While agencies can fill a gap, the cost and lack of in-house knowledge often prove unsustainable. An internal marketer understands the business intimately, allowing for agile and authentic brand communication that an external agency struggles to replicate.

One of the most notable trends is a gap in the mid-level manager range, specifically for roles in the £40,000 to £55,000 salary bracket. Companies appear to be either hiring junior talent they can develop or relying on existing senior leadership. This 'squeezed middle' means that experienced marketing managers are facing a more competitive field for fewer available positions.

Looking ahead, we anticipate a continued increase in executive-level roles. As businesses leverage AI to handle more routine tasks, the need for skilled marketing executives to provide strategic direction, manage projects, and ensure brand consistency will grow. These roles offer a cost-effective way for companies to rebuild their marketing capabilities while taking advantage of the large pool of available talent.

Salary trends: a buyer's market?

With a high number of skilled marketing professionals looking for work, salary dynamics have shifted. While advertised salaries for new roles have remained relatively stable and competitive, many experienced professionals are accepting

positions with lower pay than their previous roles. We've seen senior marketers, including those at a 'head of' level, take significant salary drops of £5,000 to £10,000 to secure an exciting new position.

This isn't about a lack of options. Marketers are demonstrating a willingness to prioritise job satisfaction, company culture, and opportunities for growth and learning over a higher salary.

While getting an experienced marketer for less may seem like a win for employers, it's crucial to approach this situation with a long-term perspective, as retaining them requires more than just a good deal. Companies that succeed will be those that offer a compelling overall package: a great workplace environment and culture, a clear path for progression, and a role that genuinely excites and challenges the individual.

Essential skills for 2026: The generalist reigns supreme

The demand for specific skill sets is constantly evolving, reflecting broader industry changes. Here are the key areas where we're seeing the most activity and demand:

The rise of the versatile marketer

While specialisms will always have their place, there is a growing demand for 'all-rounder' marketers. As companies operate with leaner teams, they need professionals who possess a broad range of cross-functional skills. A single team member may be expected to manage social media, write website content, perform basic design work using tools like Canva, and contribute to product marketing strategy. This trend is likely to accelerate, as it allows businesses to achieve more with a reduced headcount.

Digital dominance and AI integration

Digital skills remain paramount. Roles in social media management, SEO, and digital marketing continue to be among the most common. However, the conversation has expanded to include artificial intelligence.

The impact of AI is complex. Some employers are actively seeking people with experience using tools like ChatGPT, particularly for content-heavy and SEO-focused positions. They see AI as a powerful tool for increasing efficiency and output. On the other hand, many companies remain cautious, especially those where brand voice and content originality are critical. These businesses often explicitly ask candidates not to use AI in application tasks, as they value the unique creativity of a human marketer.

The reality for 2026 is that AI will be a co-pilot, not a replacement. Professionals who can effectively leverage AI to support their work, while still providing the strategic oversight, tone of voice, and creative spark that only a human can, will be invaluable.

The surprising comeback of traditional and event marketing

In a world saturated with digital noise, traditional marketing is making a comeback. We have seen an increase in roles that require skills in direct mail, print advertising, and other 'old school' techniques. Businesses are discovering that a well-timed, physical piece of marketing can cut through the digital clutter and capture attention in a way an email can't.

Alongside this, event marketing has returned with force. After years of webinars and virtual conferences, face-to-face interaction is once again a priority. We're seeing a high number of roles for event and field marketers who can organise and execute everything from large-scale exhibitions to intimate client gatherings. This signals a return to relationship-based marketing, where personal connection is key to building brand loyalty.

What marketers want: beyond the pay cheque

While salary is still a major factor, the current market has amplified the importance of other elements. With more options to consider, jobseekers are placing a premium on the overall work experience.

1. Culture and connection: A positive company culture and a good relationship with management are non-negotiable for many. Marketers want to feel valued and connected to the business and its mission.

2. Growth and development: The opportunity to learn new skills and progress within a company is a powerful motivator. A role that offers the chance to work in a new industry or take on fresh responsibilities can be more appealing than a higher paying, but stagnant, position.

3. Flexibility and work-life balance: Hybrid working remains a standard expectation. However, companies unable to offer remote work are getting creative with flexibility. We're seeing an increase in benefits like compressed hours (e.g., a nine-day fortnight) or early finishes on a Friday. These perks demonstrate a commitment to employee wellbeing and can be just as attractive as the ability to work from home.

Advice for a successful 2026

Looking ahead into 2026, both employers and jobseekers in the marketing sector have opportunities to succeed by thoughtfully approaching the changing landscape. For businesses, attracting and retaining good people goes well beyond pay - companies that showcase a vibrant culture, clear career progression, and genuine support for work-life balance will stand out.

For jobseekers, a proactive and open-minded approach is essential. The market may require some professionals to accept salaries lower than those received in previous roles; however, salary is just one aspect of a wider opportunity. Those looking for work should weigh the complete package, considering the role's responsibilities, the culture, and the prospects for long-term growth and learning. Marketing generalists who can evidence their impact across various channels and disciplines are particularly valued right now, so it's worth highlighting versatility and adaptability on CVs and in interviews.

Developing digital fluency and keeping pace with AI-driven trends can open new doors, but if you're looking for work you shouldn't underestimate the renewed appreciation for more traditional marketing and the creativity it demands. Staying visible through networking - as well as maintaining an engaging online presence - can make the difference when it comes to being considered for the best opportunities.

Ultimately, success in the 2026 marketing sector will belong to employers who create compelling, flexible workplaces and to professionals who present themselves as agile, multifaceted contributors ready to thrive amid ongoing change.



The human touch: Navigating the 2026 sales labour market



Dave Oldfield
Sales Expert, Reed

Over the past year, economic uncertainty, coupled with rapid technological advancements, has reshaped the sales landscape. As we look towards 2026, the market is showing signs of a dynamic recovery, driven by new strategies, evolving skill sets, and a renewed emphasis on the irreplaceable value of human connection in a world increasingly influenced by automation.

Economic headwinds and hiring realities

2025 told a story of two halves. The first three quarters were marked by a notable slowdown, heavily influenced by wider economic pressures and governmental instability. This uncertainty led many businesses to pause on hiring, particularly for senior-level positions. The result was a candidate-heavy market, with a surplus of experienced sales leaders seeking new opportunities.

Many of these leaders, who would typically be headhunted, found themselves competing for a limited number of roles. This led to a ripple effect, with senior professionals considering individual contributor positions, thereby increasing competition across the board. Redundancies and restructures were common as companies, especially those backed by private equity, scrutinised costs. Leadership roles, with their higher salaries, were often the first to be re-evaluated.

However, the final quarter of the year saw a distinct and welcome upturn. A renewed sense of stability has encouraged businesses to invest again. We've observed a rise in acquisitions and private equity funding, which had been dormant for some time. This fresh capital is translating into the creation of new roles and a more booming market for sales professionals.

Shifting demand: from leadership to new business

The market slowdown reshaped hiring priorities. For much of the year, leadership roles were scarce. Many private equity-backed businesses, disappointed with performance, opted

to bring in new leaders from their own networks rather than recruiting openly. This was part of a strategy to reinvigorate struggling teams and drive revenue growth in a challenging climate.

As the market has recovered, we've seen a clear shift in demand for:

- **Sales development representatives (SDRs):** There is a growing need for professionals at the entry-level, focused on initial outreach and lead generation. Companies are rebuilding their sales funnels from the ground up, placing a premium on those who can initiate conversations and create new opportunities.
- **New business hunters:** Roles focused on acquiring new clients are once again a priority. As businesses pivot back to growth, the ability to generate fresh revenue streams is highly valued.
- **Account management:** In contrast, the demand for pure account management roles has been less pronounced. The focus for now is firmly on expansion and account acquisition.
- **Sales leaders:** The freeze on senior roles has thawed. The last few months have seen a resurgence in demand for sales leaders, signalling that companies are now confident enough to invest in the strategic direction and management of their sales functions.

This pattern suggests a market that is actively rebuilding. The emphasis on SDRs and new business roles indicates that companies are laying the foundations for future growth,

creating a pipeline of talent and opportunities that will filter up through the ranks over time.

The AI paradox: enhancer, not replacement

The integration of artificial intelligence into the sales process has been a major talking point. While the potential of AI is vast, its practical application is revealing a crucial distinction: AI is a powerful tool for efficiency, not a substitute for the salesperson.

Sales enablement platforms, which assist with data gathering (e.g., Cognism, ZoomInfo), CRM management, and automating administrative duties, are now considered essential. Experience with these tools is a prerequisite for most leadership roles, as they allow teams to work smarter and focus on what they do best: selling.

However, an over-reliance on AI for customer outreach is proving to be a mistake. Buyers are becoming adept at spotting AI-generated emails and robotic-sounding calls. The old saying, "people buy from people," has never been more relevant. In a sea of automated messages, a genuine human interaction - a phone call, a face-to-face meeting - stands out.

The most successful sales professionals are those using AI to handle the operational side of their role, freeing up time to engage directly with prospects. The human touch is the key differentiator. You can't delete a person standing in front of you, but you can easily ignore a generic email. Salespeople who hide behind AI are finding it difficult to gain traction, while those who embrace traditional, personal outreach are finding their efforts are more impactful than ever.

Evolving jobseeker expectations: culture is king

The dynamics of what people look for in an employer have undergone a significant transformation. While compensation remains important, it is no longer the primary driver for many sales professionals. The post-pandemic hiring boom, where money was often the deciding factor, has given way to a more considered approach.

Today, the two most important factors for sales professionals are:

1. Company culture: Professionals are seeking positive, collaborative work environments. They want to be part of a team where sales, marketing, and customer success work together towards a common goal.

2. Career progression: The opportunity for growth is a major draw. Those looking for a new job want to see a clear path for advancement within a company. They are looking for employers who are willing to invest in their development and promote from within.

This shift is partly a reaction to the volatility seen in certain sectors. For example, some US private equity-backed tech companies have a reputation for having a 'hit your number or you're out' mentality. Many salespeople are now wary of

such environments, preferring businesses that offer stability and take a more balanced, long-term view of performance.

Flexibility also remains a key consideration, but the landscape has changed. The fully remote roles that were common a couple of years ago are now few and far between, particularly for desk-based sales positions. The market has settled on a hybrid model as the new standard, with most software as a service (SaaS) sales roles requiring some office presence. Field-based roles, by their nature, continue to offer more autonomy, but the expectation for internal sales teams is increasingly a blend of home and office work.

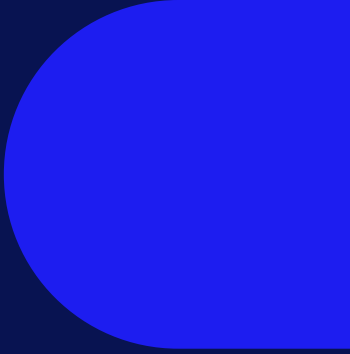
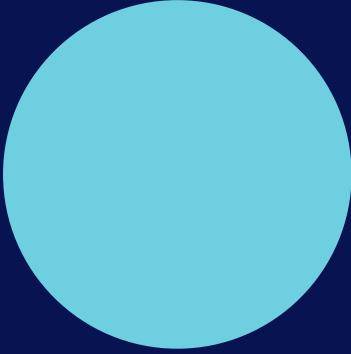
A look ahead: opportunities for growth in 2026

As we move further into 2026, the outlook for the sales industry is optimistic. While challenges remain, the recent market upswing and shifting business priorities are creating new avenues for growth.

For businesses, the key to success will be attracting and retaining employees by offering more than just a competitive salary. A strong culture, clear opportunities for progression, and a commitment to sustainable growth will be the hallmarks of an employer of choice.

For sales professionals, the message is clear: embrace the human element of your role. Use technology to become more efficient but never let it replace the personal connections that build trust and close deals. In 2026, the most valuable asset in sales will not be an algorithm or an automation tool; it will be you.





Our survey says...

At the end of 2025, Reed conducted its annual snap survey of 5,000 professionals. The research asked UK workers about their current and preferred salary and benefits, their organisation's performance and priorities, how they rated their job satisfaction and career prospects, as well as the key recruitment and skills trends they're witnessing.

Here are the top trends that the survey revealed:

1. Financial strain is widespread

The overwhelming reason for salary dissatisfaction (52% of unhappy respondents) is that pay hasn't kept pace with the cost of living. This far outweighs other factors, such as workload or industry pay.

- **Declining affordability:** Only a quarter of the population (25%) feels they're earning more in terms of what they can afford compared to four years ago, before the cost-of-living crisis.

- **Limited disposable income:** A concerning 26% of respondents have **£100 or less leftover** each month after essential bills, with seven per cent stating their entire salary goes to essentials. This highlights a struggle for many to save or enjoy non-essential spending.

2. The growing 'comfort gap'

There is a stark **£11,110.38 gap** between what people are currently earning and what they say is their comfortable living wage.

- **Desired vs. current earnings:** Our research found the average current annual salary is **£40,638.35**. However, the average income people believe they need to live comfortably is **£51,748.73**.

3. Salary remains the dominant job motivator

To switch jobs, individuals expect a substantial average pay increase of **£12,139.55**. This is significantly higher than the average **£3,923.62** pay rise that would satisfy them at their current employer, indicating a clear financial incentive is needed to overcome the inertia of changing roles.

- **Increased importance:** A vast majority (73%) report that salary is more important now when considering new job opportunities than it was before the cost-of-living crisis - 40% even say it's "significantly more important".
- **Higher progression expectations:** Nearly half of the 5,000 people surveyed (44%) have increased their expectations for salary progression within their current role over the last four years.

4. Benefits are secondary to cash

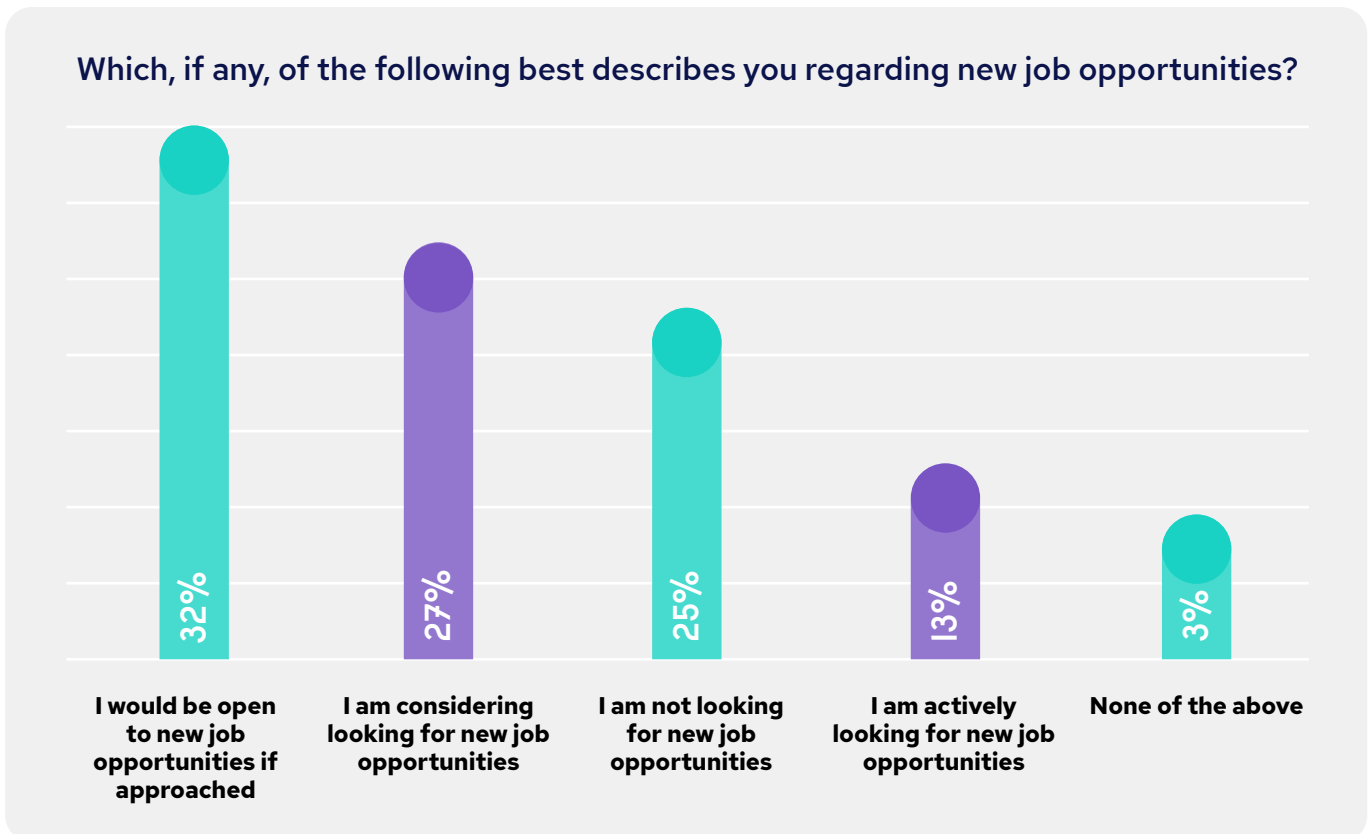
Many employees are willing to sacrifice 'soft' benefits like free refreshments (11%), cycle-to-work schemes (11%), onsite parking (eight per cent), and wellness programmes (seven per cent) for higher pay. Even some 'harder' benefits like health insurance are on the table for six per cent of those who took part.

- **Underutilised benefits:** Some commonly offered benefits, such as cycle-to-work schemes (11% unused) and the ability to purchase additional annual leave (seven per cent unused), are not being fully utilised by employees. This suggests that while benefits are appreciated, their perceived value can be lower than direct cash compensation, especially in the current financial climate.
- **Prevalence of benefits:** Common benefits include onsite parking (27%), hybrid working (23%), and Christmas shutdown (21%). However, 15% of respondents receive no benefits at all.

5. A highly mobile workforce

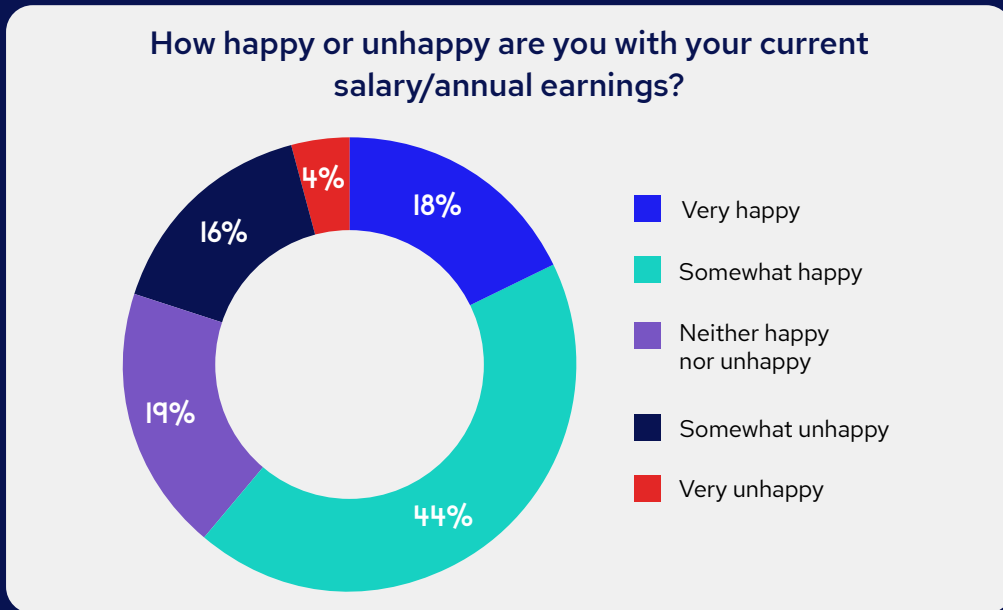
While the **average tenure is 8.54 years**, the high openness to new roles suggests that even long-serving employees are not immune to the pull of better compensation.

- **Open to new opportunities:** A significant majority (72%) of the workforce is considering a new role. A third (32%) are open to new job opportunities if approached, 27% are considering looking and 13% are actively looking. Only a quarter of employees (25%) are not looking for a new job opportunity at all.



Money, money, money

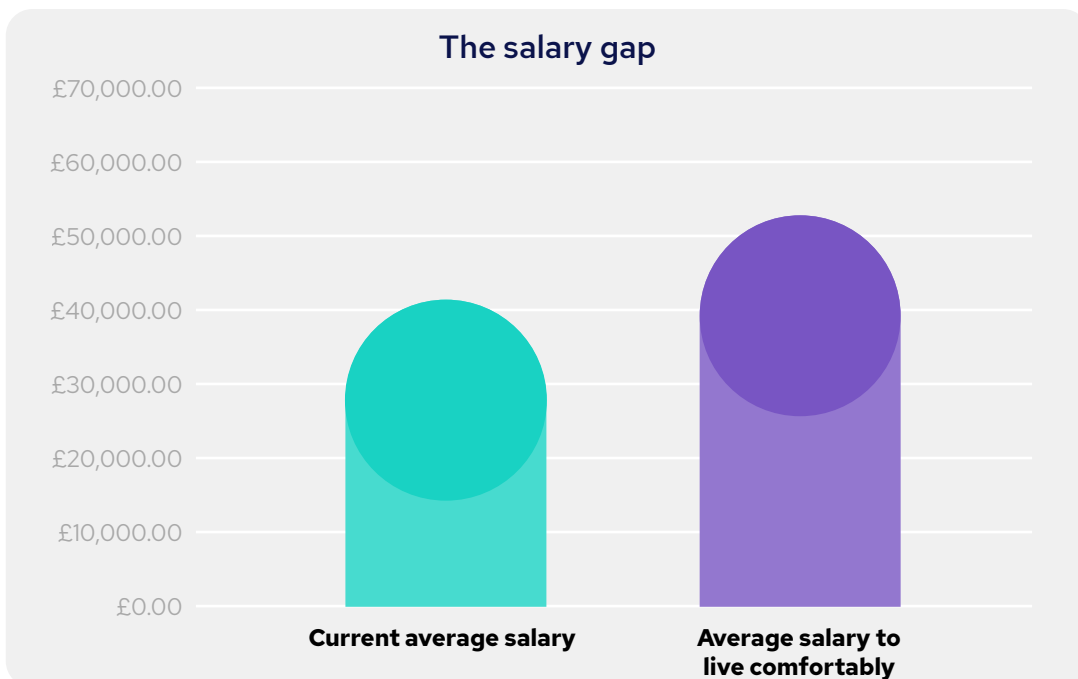
With ongoing cost-of-living challenges, salaries continue to be a huge area of discussion in the employment market, for both professionals and businesses. The data reveals the UK workforce is under significant financial pressure, with a clear and growing emphasis on salary as a primary driver of job satisfaction and career decisions.



Currently, over half (61%) of workers are happy with the pay they receive. However, that leaves a significant 20% of professionals feeling unhappy with their current salary, and another 19% feeling ambivalent (“neither happy nor unhappy”).

Of those who are unhappy, the overwhelming reason, cited by over half (52%), is that their pay hasn’t risen with the cost of living. Other key reasons include feeling they “do so much more than my job role” (39%), being “unable to save enough to meet my financial goals” (37%), and their salary “not being enough to live the lifestyle I want” (35%).

The disparity between the average current wage and the salary people would be comfortable with remains substantial. This year, the average current salary for survey respondents stands at **£40,638.35**. However, the average income people believe they need to live comfortably is **£51,748.73**, representing an average **£11,110.38 gap**. This ‘comfort gap’ indicates a widespread desire for higher earnings.



The financial strain is evident in monthly disposable income. A concerning **seven per cent of respondents have £0 leftover** each month after essential bills, with their entire salary going towards necessities. Overall, **26% have £100 or less remaining** for non-essential spending, savings, or leisure.



As a direct consequence of the financial climate as we enter 2026, 73% of professionals state that salary is more important now than it was before the cost-of-living crisis began in 2021, with 40% saying it is "significantly more important." Expectations for salary progression within the same role have also increased for 44% of workers. **To switch jobs, individuals expect a substantial average pay increase of £12,139.55.**

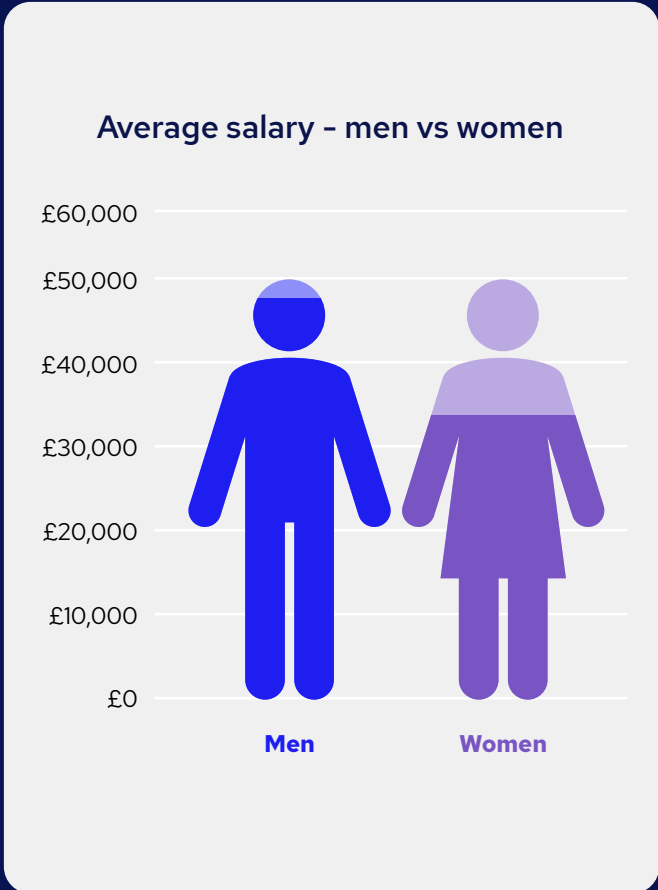
A deeper dive...

- **Gender pay gap:** There remains a significant gender pay gap. The survey found that on average, men earn £48,367.15, while women earn £33,852.12, **a difference of over £14,500.** This disparity extends to satisfaction: 66% of men are happy with their salary compared to 57% of women, and women are more unhappy (24%) than men (16%). Men also perceive a higher comfortable salary (£59,688.07) than women (£44,707.25).

- **Disposable income gap:** Women have significantly less disposable income, with an average of £626.61 left over monthly compared to £983.38 for men. Women are also twice as likely to have £0 leftover.

- **Age and earnings:** Current salaries peak in the 25-34 age group (£49,853.43), while the desired comfortable income peaks in the 25-34 age group (£65,341.10). Salary satisfaction is highest for younger workers (18-34) and lowest for the 45-54 age group, where only 51% are happy with their pay. This 45-54 age group also reports the highest percentage (nine per cent) with £0 leftover monthly.

- **Job mobility:** Younger workers (18-34) are most willing to change jobs for salary increases, while older workers (55+) are significantly less likely to change jobs for more money, indicating that other factors become more important with age.



All about the benefits

While offering a higher salary remains the most direct way to attract and retain employees, the benefits package also plays a role, especially for businesses unable to match top-tier salaries. **However, 15% of respondents currently say they receive no workplace benefits at all.**

Commonly offered benefits include onsite parking (27%), hybrid working (23%), and Christmas shutdown (21%). However, there's a noticeable disconnect between offered and desired benefits, and also a willingness to sacrifice many perks for higher pay.



A deeper dive...

- Sacrificing perks for pay:** Many employees are willing to sacrifice 'soft' benefits for higher pay. Free refreshments (11%) and cycle to work schemes (11%) are the benefits most employees would be willing to give up.
- Age and benefits:** Younger workers (25-34) are most willing to sacrifice benefits for higher pay, while older workers (55+) are significantly less willing to do so, suggesting they value their existing benefits more.
- Gender benefit gap:** Women are more likely to receive no benefits (17% vs. 12% for men) and, on average, men report receiving more benefits overall.

Key takeaways for businesses:

Over two-thirds of professionals (72%) are currently looking or open to looking for a new job – highlighting a critical need for businesses to audit what they are offering their current and future talent. The primary drivers for this job market engagement are financial, with the cost-of-living crisis acting as a significant catalyst.



Address the 'comfort gap': The £11,110.38 gap between current and desired comfortable income is a major source of dissatisfaction and a driver of job mobility. Competitive salaries are no longer just about attracting talent but retaining it.



Targeted retention: Mid-career professionals (25-44) are a high-risk group, demanding the largest pay increases to switch jobs and showing the highest increase in salary progression expectations. Retention strategies must be robust for this segment.



Acknowledge gender disparities: The significant gender pay gap, lower salary satisfaction, and reduced financial flexibility for women are critical issues. Businesses must address these disparities to foster equity and retain female talent.

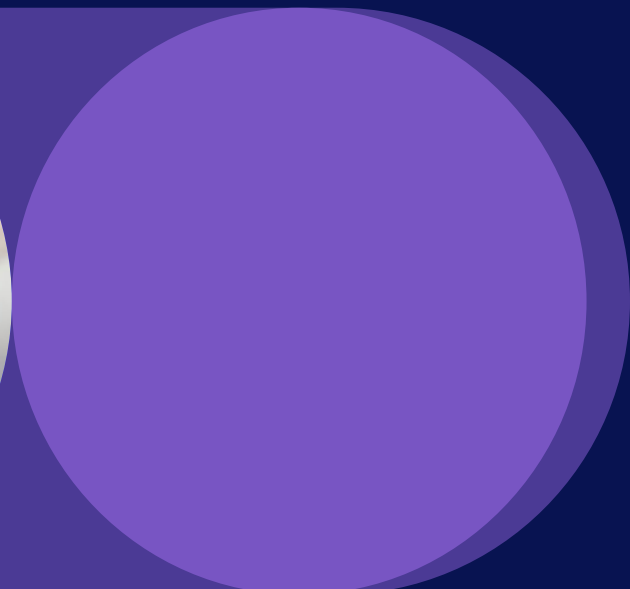


Strategic benefits offerings: While salary is king, benefits can still make a difference. However, businesses should evaluate the relevance and perceived value of their benefits packages. Many employees are willing to sacrifice less-valued benefits for higher pay, suggesting that resources might be better allocated to more impactful perks or direct compensation.



Prioritise financial wellbeing: The struggle to meet financial obligations and save for goals is widespread. Benefits that directly support financial wellbeing (e.g., better pensions, performance bonuses) are likely to be highly valued, especially when employees are willing to trade other perks for them.

The current economic climate has made salary a paramount concern for the majority of the UK workforce. Businesses that fail to recognise and adapt to these heightened financial expectations and disparities risk losing valuable talent in a highly mobile job market.





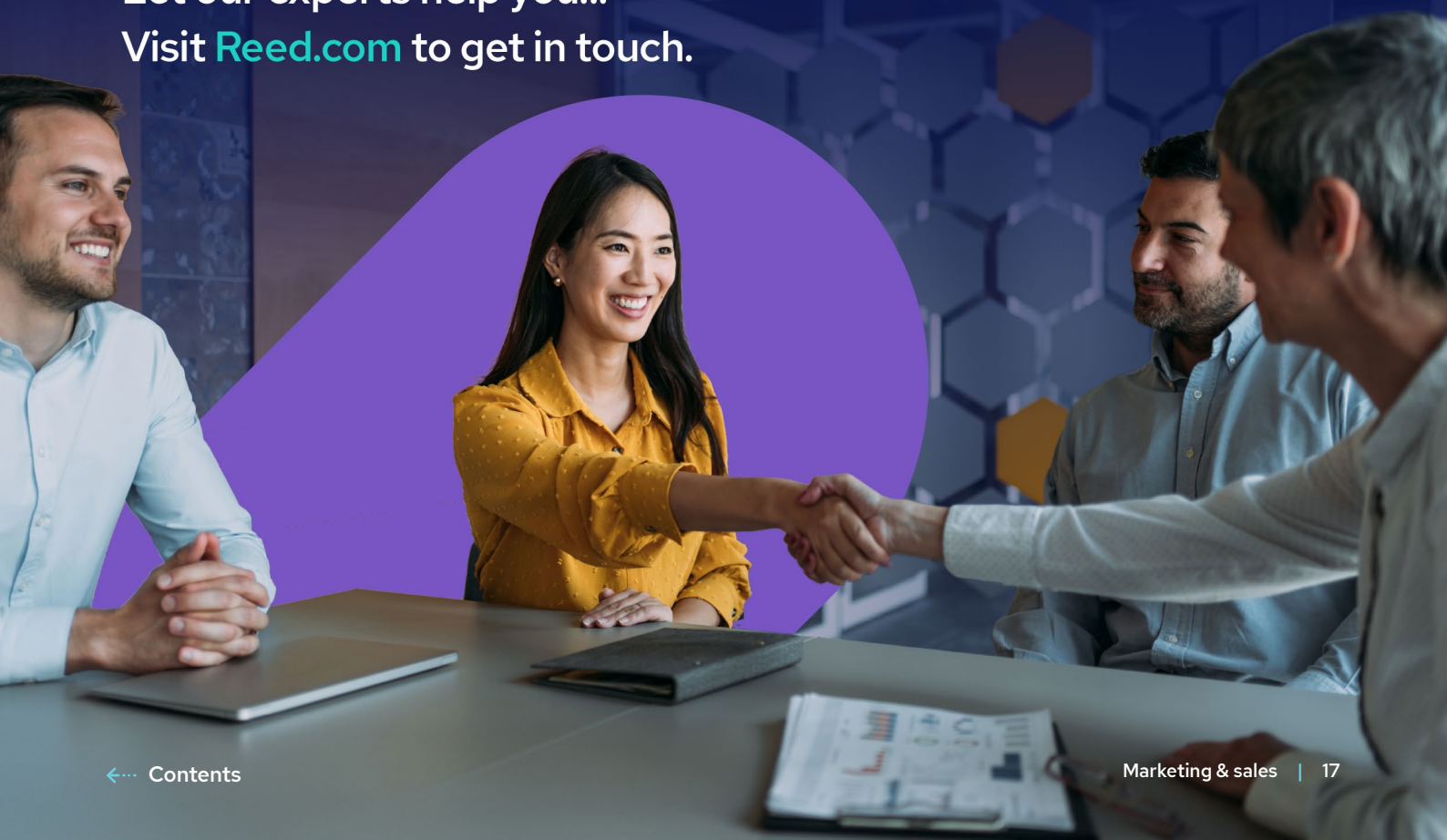
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Role	2026			2025	2024	2027
	Min	Average	Max	Average	Average	Projection
Account Manager	£34,300	£37,500 ↗	£40,700	£34,400	£33,900	£39,300
Brand Manager	£41,700	£47,800 ↗	£53,900	£44,400	£43,300	£50,000
Business Development Executive	£30,700	£33,700 ↗	£36,600	£32,600	£30,400	£35,300
Business Development Manager	£40,500	£45,900 ↗	£51,300	£44,300	£43,200	£48,100
Commercial Director	£62,800	£68,900 ↘	£75,000	£89,200	£94,000	£71,900
Communications Manager	£47,900	£53,400 ↗	£58,800	£52,700	£44,100	£56,000
Communications/PR Executive	£29,600	£29,800 ↘	£30,000	£30,700	£31,300	£31,200
Copywriter	£33,800	£37,500 ↗	£41,100	£34,300	£30,900	£39,300
CRM Executive	£27,000	£28,000 ↗	£29,000	£27,700	£27,500	£29,300
Digital Director	£52,100	£70,700 ↘	£89,500	£79,200	£79,500	£73,900
Digital Marketing Manager	£44,800	£48,000 ↗	£51,200	£41,800	£40,300	£50,300
Ecommerce Manager	£42,100	£49,100 ↗	£56,100	£40,200	£32,500	£51,600

↗ **7.7%** increase in Brand Manager average salaries this year.

↗ **9.3%** increase in Copywriter average salaries this year.

Role	2026			2025	2024	2027
	Min	Average	Max	Average	Average	Projection
Graphic Designer	£29,800	£32,900 ↘	£36,000	£35,700	£28,200	£34,400
Marketing Director	£74,300	£91,100 ↘	£107,900	£95,000	£78,800	£95,400
Marketing Executive	£28,600	£31,300 ↗	£34,100	£29,900	£29,500	£32,800
Marketing Manager	£41,400	£46,000 ↗	£50,600	£44,100	£42,700	£48,200
Public Relations Manager	£39,500	£40,300 ↗	£41,000	£38,000	£42,000	£42,200
Sales Director	£76,400	£90,000 ↗	£103,500	£85,000	£79,300	£94,300
Sales Engineer	£39,400	£44,400 ↘	£49,400	£44,900	£40,300	£46,500
Sales Executive	£29,400	£34,200 ↗	£39,100	£33,600	£31,800	£35,800
Sales Manager	£44,700	£49,700 ↗	£54,800	£47,500	£45,500	£52,000
SEO/PPC Executive	£33,200	£38,700 ↗	£44,300	£31,800	£29,600	£40,600
Telesales Manager	£34,400	£36,400 ↗	£38,400	£34,200	£35,700	£38,100
UX/UI Designer	£47,700	£57,100 ↗	£66,500	£38,300	£44,500	£60,000

↘ **4.1%** decrease in Marketing Director average salaries this year.

↗ **4.6%** increase in Sales Manager average salaries this year.



2.9%

salary growth
versus 3.1% UK
average growth

Roles on the rise

Digital Marketing Manager

2024 £40,300

2025 £41,800

2026 £48,000

Marketing Manager

2024 £42,700

2025 £44,100

2026 £46,000

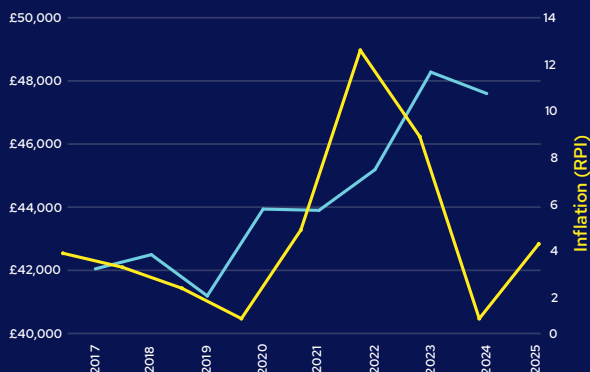
Sales Director

2024 £79,300

2025 £85,000

2026 £90,000

Average salary in region vs UK inflation rate (RPI)



Regional insight

Melanie Marjoram
Regional Director, Reed

“ The marketing and sales landscape in East Anglia is experiencing a significant transformation, moving away from traditional roles towards a more dynamic, skills-based market. Confidence is returning to the sector, and businesses are once again investing in their marketing functions, but with a new set of priorities.

We are seeing a clear demand for professionals with tech-centric skills. Expertise in AI, automation, data analytics, and storytelling is now highly sought after. This shift is also evident in the rising need for content strategists and video creators, particularly as luxury brands in the region look to enhance their digital presence. Core competencies like SEO and a focus on customer experience remain crucial, but they are now integrated within a broader, more technologically advanced skill set. The growth of tech startups across East Anglia is a key factor driving this demand, as new businesses compete for skilled marketers to establish their brand.

While hybrid and remote working arrangements are still the norm, salary expectations are becoming more complex. Salaries in East Anglia are generally lower than in London, with internal regional variations - Cambridge commands higher rates than cities like Norwich or Peterborough. However, remote work is blurring these geographical lines, allowing local professionals to access London-based roles and salaries.

For employers, attracting top marketing talent now goes beyond offering a competitive salary. Those looking for new opportunities are increasingly focused on a company's value proposition, sustainability policies, and overall culture. They want to see a clear company vision and understand the team structure before discussing pay. Benefits such as flexibility, wellbeing support, and private healthcare are also becoming powerful differentiators in securing the best people. //

East Midlands



Role	2026			2025	2024	2027
	Min	Average	Max	Average	Average	Projection
Account Manager	£36,800	£40,800 ↗	£44,800	£40,200	£36,700	£42,700
Brand Manager	£45,700	£50,300 ↗	£54,900	£47,500	£45,300	£52,700
Business Development Executive	£28,900	£32,300 ↗	£35,700	£31,200	£31,000	£33,800
Business Development Manager	£43,300	£49,100 ↗	£54,800	£46,000	£44,500	£51,400
Commercial Director	£80,800	£92,700 ↘	£104,600	£97,500	£92,300	£97,000
Communications Manager	£40,400	£42,900 ↘	£45,400	£47,700	£43,400	£44,900
Communications/PR Executive	£30,400	£32,600 ↗	£34,800	£31,300	£31,100	£34,100
Copywriter	£37,100	£39,500 ↗	£41,900	£39,400	£33,100	£41,400
CRM Executive	£30,600	£32,200 ↘	£33,900	£32,700	£30,000	£33,700
Digital Director	£53,100	£71,400 ↘	£89,700	£81,900	£83,500	£74,600
Digital Marketing Manager	£45,200	£48,500 ↗	£51,800	£42,700	£38,000	£50,800
Ecommerce Manager	£46,100	£51,700 ↗	£57,200	£46,200	£46,800	£54,200

↘ **4.9%** decrease in Commercial Director average salaries this year.

↗ **4.2%** increase in Communications/PR Executive average salaries this year.

Role	2026			2025	2024	2027
	Min	Average	Max	Average	Average	Projection
Graphic Designer	£28,800	£32,400 ↗	£36,100	£31,900	£30,500	£33,900
Marketing Director	£78,900	£88,100 ↗	£97,300	£86,000	£75,700	£92,300
Marketing Executive	£28,700	£30,600 ↗	£32,500	£30,400	£28,900	£32,000
Marketing Manager	£46,200	£50,400 ↗	£54,500	£46,100	£42,200	£52,800
Public Relations Manager	£46,000	£50,800 ↗	£55,700	£47,100	£42,400	£53,200
Sales Director	£78,500	£92,300 ↗	£105,900	£83,600	£83,600	£96,700
Sales Engineer	£42,100	£45,600 ↗	£49,000	£40,200	£42,800	£47,800
Sales Executive	£28,000	£31,900 ↘	£35,900	£34,300	£33,300	£33,400
Sales Manager	£42,900	£47,800 ↘	£52,800	£47,900	£45,700	£50,000
SEO/PPC Executive	£36,400	£40,800 ↗	£45,200	£36,400	£31,100	£42,800
Telesales Manager	£35,400	£37,300 ↗	£39,300	£33,600	£37,700	£39,100
UX/UI Designer	£38,300	£45,000 ↘	£51,700	£56,700	£54,500	£47,000

↗ **13.4%** increase in Sales Engineer average salaries this year.

↗ **12.1%** increase in SEO/PPC Executive average salaries this year.



1.4%

salary growth
versus 3.1% UK
average growth

Roles on the rise

Business Development Manager

2024	£44,500
2025	£46,000
2026	£49,100

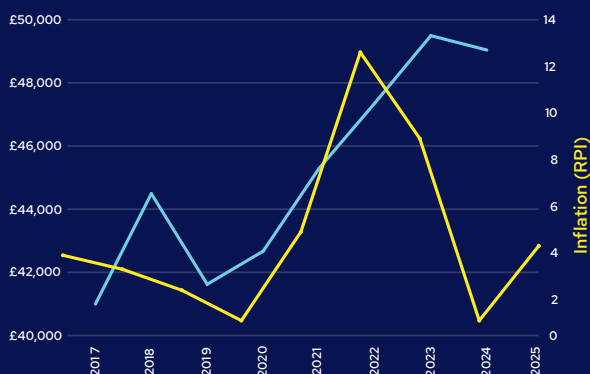
Digital Marketing Manager

2024	£38,000
2025	£42,700
2026	£48,500

Public Relations Manager

2024	£42,400
2025	£47,100
2026	£50,800

Average salary in region vs UK inflation rate (RPI)



Regional insight

Chris Willsher

Senior Regional Director, Reed

“ As we head into 2026, the marketing and sales sector in the East Midlands continues to navigate a landscape shaped by economic shifts and rapid technological evolution. Businesses are adapting their hiring and operational strategies to find value and secure talented people in an increasingly competitive environment.

The integration of AI in marketing is set to accelerate. Companies are moving beyond simple adoption and are actively seeking professionals who can skilfully use AI tools like ChatGPT for sophisticated SEO (search everywhere optimisation), content generation, and data analysis. The most valuable marketers in 2026 will be those who can blend AI’s efficiency with a brand’s unique, human voice. This technological push is complemented by a sustained role for traditional marketing. Having seen the limits of purely digital strategies, businesses are continuing to use direct mail and print to cut through online saturation and create tangible connections with their audience.

The current economic climate has resulted in a candidate-rich market, particularly impacting mid-level roles. We are seeing experienced marketing managers considering more junior positions or accepting salary compromises for roles that promise a strong company culture, creative fulfilment, and clear progression paths. This trend is leading employers to either hire junior executives supported by AI or focus on retaining senior leaders.

To attract and retain the best people, East Midlands businesses are innovating beyond salary. While compensation has seen modest growth, flexible benefits have become a deciding factor. Hybrid working is now a standard expectation, but forward-thinking firms are offering compressed hours, a nine-day fortnight, and other flexible working arrangements to promote a healthier work-life balance, proving that adaptability remains the key to building a resilient and motivated team. //

London



Role	2026			2025	2024	2027
	Min	Average	Max	Average	Average	Projection
Account Manager	£42,700	£49,100 ↗	£55,400	£46,500	£43,700	£51,400
Brand Manager	£51,300	£57,200 ↗	£63,100	£56,600	£59,700	£59,900
Business Development Executive	£36,400	£41,400 ↗	£46,500	£37,700	£34,600	£43,400
Business Development Manager	£50,400	£56,800 ↗	£63,300	£56,100	£52,000	£59,500
Commercial Director	£101,900	£119,300 ↘	£136,800	£127,900	£117,500	£124,800
Communications Manager	£62,100	£68,000 ↘	£73,900	£73,600	£60,900	£71,200
Communications/PR Executive	£37,600	£41,500 ↘	£45,300	£42,300	£41,600	£43,400
Copywriter	£45,800	£50,200 ↘	£54,600	£53,300	£44,300	£52,500
CRM Executive	£37,800	£41,000 ↘	£44,100	£44,200	£40,100	£42,900
Digital Director	£75,500	£102,100 ↘	£128,700	£102,600	£111,800	£106,800
Digital Marketing Manager	£46,000	£53,200 ↗	£60,300	£52,100	£51,900	£55,700
Ecommerce Manager	£57,000	£65,700 ↗	£74,400	£62,500	£62,600	£68,800

↘ **7.6%** decrease in Communications Manager average salaries this year.

↗ **2.1%** increase in Digital Marketing Manager average salaries this year.

Role	2026			2025	2024	2027
	Min	Average	Max	Average	Average	Projection
Graphic Designer	£37,700	£41,600 ↗	£45,500	£40,000	£41,400	£43,500
Marketing Director	£97,500	£112,00 ↘	£126,500	£116,400	£101,300	£117,200
Marketing Executive	£33,300	£36,100 ↗	£39,000	£35,900	£33,900	£37,800
Marketing Manager	£55,500	£61,600 ↘	£67,700	£62,600	£55,900	£64,500
Public Relations Manager	£56,800	£64,600 ↗	£72,500	£63,700	£56,800	£67,600
Sales Director	£85,400	£101,000 ↗	£116,500	£95,100	£93,500	£105,800
Sales Engineer	£42,100	£47,500 ↘	£52,900	£52,200	£49,500	£49,700
Sales Executive	£32,900	£39,000 ↘	£45,100	£39,100	£35,200	£40,800
Sales Manager	£48,100	£55,900 ↘	£63,700	£56,200	£51,800	£58,500
SEO/PPC Executive	£45,000	£51,900 ↗	£58,700	£49,200	£41,600	£54,400
Telesales Manager	£44,600	£48,000 ↗	£51,400	£44,100	£48,000	£50,200
UX/UI Designer	£64,800	£71,600 ↘	£78,300	£73,400	£74,200	£74,900

↘ **9%** decrease in Sales Engineer average salaries this year.

↗ **8.8%** increase in Telesales Manager average salaries this year.



0.5%

salary decline
versus 3.1% UK
average growth

Roles on the rise

Account Manager

2024	£43,700
2025	£46,500
2026	£49,100

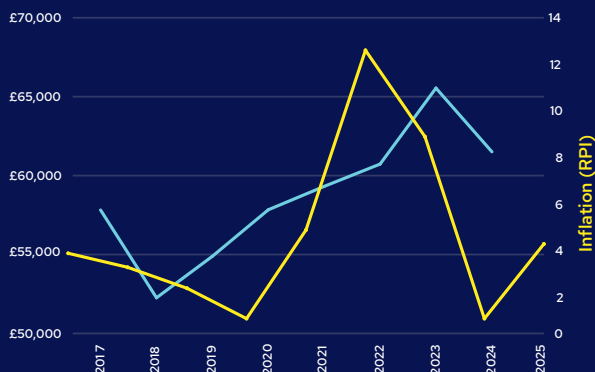
Marketing Executive

2024	£33,900
2025	£35,900
2026	£36,100

SEO/PPC Executive

2024	£41,600
2025	£49,200
2026	£51,900

Average salary in region vs UK inflation rate (RPI)



Regional insight

Sharmini Byrne
Regional Director, Reed

“ As we enter 2026, London’s marketing labour market is undergoing a significant transformation, marked by a fractured yet evolving landscape. Employers and jobseekers alike are navigating a climate defined by economic pressures, shifting priorities, and the growing influence of technology.

A primary trend is the move towards hyper-specialisation by industry. Employers are increasingly demanding those with direct experience in their specific sector, such as B2B, tech, or FMCG. This has narrowed the talent pool for each role, forcing a change in recruitment strategy from quantity to quality, with fewer, more targeted applications. This contrasts with previous years, where a broader B2B or B2C skill set was sufficient.

Salary dynamics have also shifted. While B2B roles continue to command higher salaries than their B2C counterparts, there is a noticeable trend of those looking for work accepting lower offers. Widespread redundancies, particularly in the B2C and D2C spaces, have created a pool of immediately available talent more focused on securing stable employment than negotiating higher pay. It’s not uncommon to see professionals who previously earned £85,000–£90,000 per year accepting roles around the £75,000 mark.

The demand for ‘360-degree’ marketing generalists remains strong, particularly for manager-level positions. However, specialists in areas like pay per click (PPC) and search engine optimisation (SEO) are facing challenges, with many moving into freelance work. Simultaneously, hiring managers are becoming more patient in their hiring processes, willing to wait for the perfect fit rather than hiring quickly, likely due to budget constraints.

Looking ahead, the market is expected to remain challenging. While AI is having an impact, the industry’s success will ultimately depend on the quality of its talent and products. The consensus is that 2026 will mirror the difficulties of the previous year, with a potential recovery not expected until 2027. ”

North East



Role	2026			2025	2024	2027
	Min	Average	Max	Average	Average	Projection
Account Manager	£33,700	£37,800 ↗	£41,800	£36,700	£37,900	£39,600
Brand Manager	£40,000	£44,200 ↗	£48,400	£40,500	£42,400	£46,300
Business Development Executive	£28,400	£34,500 ↗	£40,600	£32,200	£31,800	£36,100
Business Development Manager	£41,300	£46,400 ↗	£51,400	£45,800	£44,600	£48,600
Commercial Director	£77,500	£87,600 ↘	£97,800	£91,800	£87,500	£91,600
Communications Manager	£46,000	£49,400 ↘	£52,900	£51,300	£45,000	£51,700
Communications/PR Executive	£26,600	£28,700 ↗	£30,700	£26,500	£28,900	£30,000
Copywriter	£32,500	£34,700 ↗	£37,000	£33,300	£30,800	£36,300
CRM Executive	£26,800	£28,300 ↗	£29,900	£27,700	£27,900	£29,600
Digital Director	£52,900	£70,700 ↘	£88,400	£80,100	£77,600	£73,900
Digital Marketing Manager	£37,500	£40,400 ↗	£43,300	£35,100	£41,300	£42,300
Ecommerce Manager	£40,400	£45,400 ↗	£50,400	£39,100	£43,500	£47,600

↗ **3%** increase in Account Manager average salaries this year.

↘ **3.7%** decrease in Communications Manager average salaries this year.

Role	2026			2025	2024	2027
	Min	Average	Max	Average	Average	Projection
Graphic Designer	£26,700	£29,100 ↗	£31,600	£26,500	£27,800	£30,500
Marketing Director	£69,100	£77,400 ↗	£85,700	£72,900	£70,300	£81,000
Marketing Executive	£28,200	£31,000 ↗	£33,800	£30,300	£28,000	£32,500
Marketing Manager	£39,700	£44,100 ↗	£48,400	£41,600	£42,200	£46,200
Public Relations Manager	£40,300	£44,700 ↗	£49,100	£39,900	£39,400	£46,800
Sales Director	£75,300	£87,200 ↗	£99,000	£78,700	£79,300	£91,300
Sales Engineer	£43,000	£48,100 ↗	£53,200	£42,900	£40,700	£50,400
Sales Executive	£29,100	£32,800 ↘	£36,600	£35,800	£30,300	£34,300
Sales Manager	£42,800	£47,000 ↗	£51,200	£43,500	£45,400	£49,200
SEO/PPC Executive	£31,900	£35,900 ↗	£39,800	£30,800	£28,900	£37,600
Telesales Manager	£33,900	£35,300 ↗	£36,700	£31,700	£35,700	£37,000
UX/UI Designer	£39,700	£42,300 ↘	£44,900	£45,800	£44,100	£44,200

↗ **10.8%** increase in Sales Director average salaries this year.

↗ **16.6%** increase in SEO/PPC Executive average salaries this year.



3.9%

salary growth
versus 3.1% UK
average growth



Regional insight

Charlotte Rickwood
Regional Manager, Reed

“ The labour market in the North East for marketing and sales professionals is navigating a period of careful adjustment. As businesses continue to manage tight budgets, we are seeing specific trends emerge around recruitment, remuneration, and the very nature of roles themselves.

In the marketing sector, there is a noticeable scarcity of available roles, creating a competitive environment for those looking for work. Many businesses are responding to economic pressures by consolidating positions. Instead of hiring specialists for different marketing functions, employers are creating hybrid roles, seeking a ‘360-degree’ marketer who can wear multiple hats. Experience across various disciplines, from social media to email marketing, is becoming highly desirable as companies aim to maximise the value from a single hire.

This cost-conscious approach is also reflected in salaries, which have been trending lower than candidate expectations. To bridge this gap, benefits have become a key differentiator. Flexibility and the option to work from home remain significant motivators for professionals in marketing, often influencing their decision when considering a role with a more modest salary.

The sales market in the North East as we enter 2026 is certainly more active at the junior end. Many companies, particularly within the growing software as a service (SaaS) and energy brokerage sectors, are actively recruiting for entry-level positions. This strategy allows businesses to expand their sales teams while managing salary costs. For experienced sales professionals with higher salary expectations, finding suitable senior-level opportunities has become more challenging.

Commission remains the primary motivator in the sales field, with the potential on-target earnings (OTE) being a major attraction. The structure of the role often dictates workplace flexibility; desk-based account management positions are typically office-based, while field sales and business development roles naturally offer more freedom.

Looking ahead, a key challenge for the region will be balancing the strategy of hiring less experienced talent with the need for seasoned expertise to drive significant growth. We are also seeing the emergence of blended sales and marketing roles, though these non-commissioned positions can struggle to attract traditionally money-motivated sales professionals. //

Roles on the rise

Business Development Manager

2024	£44,600
2025	£45,800
2026	£46,400

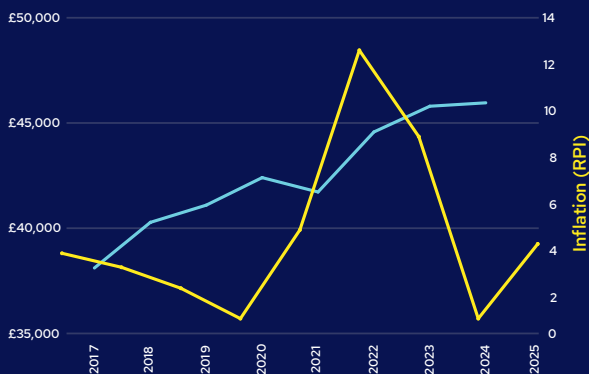
Copywriter

2024	£30,800
2025	£33,300
2026	£34,700

Marketing Director

2024	£70,300
2025	£72,900
2026	£77,400

Average salary in region vs UK inflation rate (RPI)



North West



Role	2026			2025	2024	2027
	Min	Average	Max	Average	Average	Projection
Account Manager	£36,600	£40,500 ↗	£44,300	£39,400	£36,100	£42,400
Brand Manager	£42,600	£46,500 ↗	£50,500	£44,000	£45,000	£48,700
Business Development Executive	£29,300	£32,200 ↘	£35,200	£32,400	£30,600	£33,700
Business Development Manager	£41,500	£47,100 ↗	£52,800	£46,600	£43,700	£49,300
Commercial Director	£79,300	£92,100 ↘	£105,000	£96,700	£88,700	£96,400
Communications Manager	£50,700	£55,000 ↗	£59,200	£50,100	£47,200	£57,600
Communications/PR Executive	£29,100	£30,700 ↘	£32,200	£31,100	£29,600	£32,100
Copywriter	£28,900	£30,600 ↘	£32,300	£32,800	£29,300	£32,000
CRM Executive	£29,400	£31,000 ↔	£32,600	£31,000	£30,700	£32,400
Digital Director	£54,900	£73,700 ↘	£92,400	£82,300	£83,000	£77,000
Digital Marketing Manager	£42,300	£46,300 ↗	£50,300	£45,700	£44,200	£48,500
Ecommerce Manager	£45,200	£49,600 ↗	£53,900	£44,300	£51,500	£51,900

↗ **9.8%** increase in **Communications Manager** average salaries this year.

↘ **10.4%** decrease in **Digital Director** average salaries this year.

Role	2026			2025	2024	2027
	Min	Average	Max	Average	Average	Projection
Graphic Designer	£28,500	£31,100 ↗	£33,700	£30,100	£29,200	£32,600
Marketing Director	£86,000	£98,200 ↗	£110,500	£82,000	£84,400	£102,900
Marketing Executive	£28,700	£30,700 ↗	£32,700	£30,300	£28,800	£32,100
Marketing Manager	£43,600	£47,500 ↘	£51,500	£48,100	£42,900	£49,700
Public Relations Manager	£42,800	£47,000 ↗	£51,200	£43,000	£42,100	£49,200
Sales Director	£86,000	£94,800 ↗	£103,600	£90,000	£94,900	£99,200
Sales Engineer	£39,400	£43,200 ↗	£46,900	£42,400	£39,400	£45,200
Sales Executive	£29,200	£34,100 ↗	£38,900	£33,300	£31,900	£35,700
Sales Manager	£43,300	£48,400 ↗	£53,600	£47,000	£45,900	£50,700
SEO/PPC Executive	£33,900	£37,700 ↗	£41,500	£33,200	£30,900	£39,500
Telesales Manager	£34,700	£37,100 ↗	£39,400	£33,300	£36,200	£38,800
UX/UI Designer	£57,400	£63,900 ↗	£70,300	£54,100	£50,200	£67,000

↗ **3%** increase in **Sales Manager** average salaries this year.

↗ **11.4%** increase in **Telesales Manager** average salaries this year.



3.8%

salary growth
versus 3.1% UK
average growth



Regional insight

Douglas Turkington
Regional Director, Reed

“ One of the most noticeable shifts in the North West’s marketing and sales sectors is the evolution of job titles. New roles are emerging that reflect a greater emphasis on performance, growth, and digital channels. In marketing, titles such as ‘performance marketing lead’ and ‘growth lead’ are becoming more common, signalling a move towards data-driven strategies focused on measurable results.

This trend is particularly prevalent in the fast-paced B2C market, including retail, beauty, and consumer goods. These sectors are actively seeking professionals who can drive engagement and sales across various social media platforms, through strategic content and paid media campaigns.

In contrast, the B2B market, especially within traditional sectors like manufacturing, tends to retain more conventional roles - like ‘marketing manager’. However, the expectations for these roles have expanded. While B2B companies may still rely on agencies for specialised digital execution, they now expect their in-house marketing managers to possess a solid understanding of digital principles.

Salaries have risen, particularly for specialised digital roles in Manchester, which can command up to £70,000. However, locations like Liverpool and Chester often see salaries that are £5,000 to £7,000 lower.

The recruitment process itself faces challenges. Finding high-quality people is difficult, prompting many organisations to partner with recruitment specialists who can tap into the passive market and headhunt exceptional talent. A concerning development is the complexity of final-stage interview tasks. Some employers request in-depth strategy work, which can deter top candidates who are already in demanding roles. Furthermore, there’s a growing insistence on hiring professionals with direct, like-for-like industry experience, which narrows the talent pool and hinders cross-sector mobility. ”

Roles on the rise

Public Relations Manager

2024	£42,100
2025	£43,000
2026	£47,000

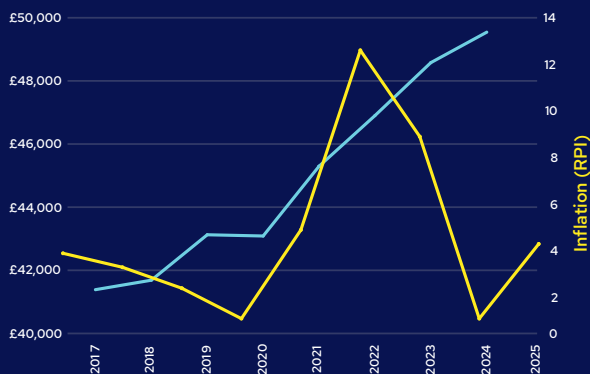
Sales Executive

2024	£31,900
2025	£33,300
2026	£34,100

SEO/PPC Executive

2024	£30,900
2025	£33,200
2026	£37,700

Average salary in region vs UK inflation rate (RPI)



Northern Ireland



Role	2026			2025	2024	2027
	Min	Average	Max	Average	Average	Projection
Account Manager	£36,700	£41,800 ↘	£46,800	£43,000	£39,200	£43,700
Brand Manager	£41,800	£45,900 ↘	£50,000	£51,600	£45,200	£48,100
Business Development Executive	£26,400	£29,200 ↗	£32,100	£28,000	£24,500	£30,600
Business Development Manager	£36,800	£41,500 ↗	£46,100	£41,100	£35,100	£43,500
Commercial Director	£70,200	£81,600 ↘	£93,100	£86,200	£73,100	£85,400
Communications Manager	£45,500	£49,300 ↘	£53,100	£54,200	£41,600	£51,600
Communications/PR Executive	£26,300	£28,600 ↗	£30,800	£28,000	£26,700	£29,900
Copywriter	£32,100	£34,600 ↘	£37,100	£35,200	£28,400	£36,200
CRM Executive	£26,500	£28,300 ↘	£30,000	£29,200	£25,800	£29,600
Digital Director	£48,800	£65,700 ↘	£82,600	£74,100	£71,800	£68,700
Digital Marketing Manager	£36,800	£40,600 ↗	£44,400	£38,900	£35,500	£42,500
Ecommerce Manager	£40,000	£45,300 ↗	£50,600	£41,300	£40,200	£47,400

↘ **11%** decrease in Brand Manager average salaries this year.

↗ **2.1%** increase in Communications/PR Executive average salaries this year.

Role	2026			2025	2024	2027
	Min	Average	Max	Average	Average	Projection
Graphic Designer	£26,400	£29,000 ↗	£31,700	£28,000	£25,700	£30,400
Marketing Director	£68,300	£77,200 ↗	£86,100	£77,000	£65,000	£80,800
Marketing Executive	£25,200	£27,200 ↗	£29,200	£27,000	£23,400	£28,500
Marketing Manager	£40,100	£44,100 ↗	£48,000	£43,400	£37,000	£46,200
Public Relations Manager	£39,800	£44,600 ↗	£49,300	£42,100	£36,500	£46,700
Sales Director	£68,200	£81,200 ↗	£94,200	£73,900	£66,200	£85,100
Sales Engineer	£33,900	£37,300 ↗	£40,800	£35,700	£31,400	£39,100
Sales Executive	£25,100	£29,200 ↘	£33,300	£29,500	£25,200	£30,600
Sales Manager	£37,100	£41,900 ↗	£46,700	£41,000	£35,500	£43,900
SEO/PPC Executive	£31,600	£35,800 ↗	£39,900	£32,600	£26,700	£37,500
Telesales Manager	£30,700	£32,800 ↗	£35,000	£29,700	£29,800	£34,400
UX/UI Designer	£49,100	£54,000 ↗	£59,000	£50,900	£47,900	£56,600

↗ **1.6%** increase in Marketing Manager average salaries this year.

↗ **6.1%** increase in UX/UI Designer average salaries this year.

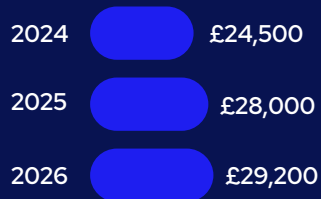


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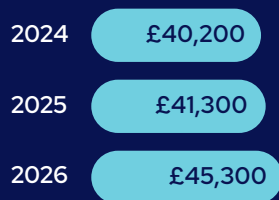
salary growth
versus 3.1% UK
average growth

Roles on the rise

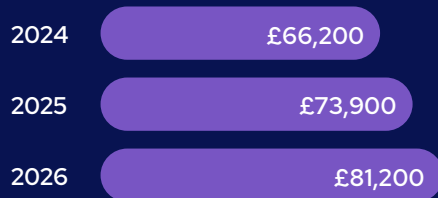
Business Development Executive



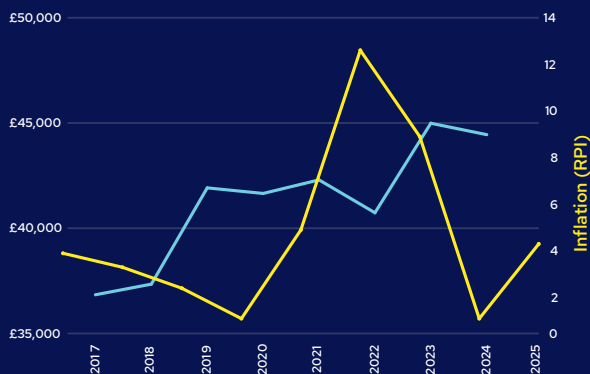
Ecommerce Manager



Sales Director



Average salary in region vs UK inflation rate (RPI)



Regional insight

Paula Gallagher
Regional Director, Reed

“ As we look towards 2026, the market is characterised by a demand for multifaceted professionals, a noticeable reduction in team sizes, and a growing divide in working models between the public and private sectors.

One of the most prominent trends is the rise of the ‘all-in-one’ marketing role. Many private sector companies are seeking marketing executives who can single-handedly manage all aspects of the marketing function, from strategy and content creation to digital analytics and sales support. This creates a challenging situation for those who may lack the experience or desire to operate without the structure and support of a larger team.

Fuelled by this drive for efficiency, artificial intelligence is making a tangible impact on headcount. Organisations are leveraging AI tools to streamline content creation and data analysis, which has led to companies streamlining their marketing teams and, in some cases, making redundancies. This trend is expected to continue, placing a greater emphasis on upskilling and a marketer’s ability to utilise these new technologies effectively.

Recruitment patterns have also shifted. The market has seen a slowdown in the hiring of both senior-level strategists and entry-level graduates. Instead, the focus remains on experienced executives who can ‘hit the ground running.’ This creates a bottleneck, with fewer opportunities for those starting their careers and limited movement at the top end.





Finally, a clear distinction has emerged in workplace flexibility. The public sector and some larger charities continue to offer hybrid working arrangements, which remain highly attractive to jobseekers. In contrast, many private sector organisations are mandating a full-time return to the office. This reluctance to offer flexibility can place them at a disadvantage when competing for top talent in a candidate-led market, where work-life balance is a key consideration. For employers, navigating these trends requires a strategic approach to recruitment, compensation, and workplace culture to attract and retain the skilled marketers they need. ”

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Scotland



Role	2026			2025	2024	2027
	Min	Average	Max	Average	Average	Projection
Account Manager	£35,900	£41,900 ↗	£47,800	£41,000	£39,400	£43,900
Brand Manager	£39,600	£44,000 ↘	£48,500	£50,400	£50,000	£46,100
Business Development Executive	£29,600	£33,200 ↗	£36,900	£32,800	£32,600	£34,700
Business Development Manager	£40,300	£45,600 ↘	£50,900	£46,200	£43,300	£47,700
Commercial Director	£75,200	£90,900 ↘	£1,06,700	£92,300	£87,500	£95,100
Communications Manager	£40,800	£45,500 ↘	£50,200	£64,600	£55,400	£47,500
Communications/PR Executive	£26,300	£28,600 ↘	£30,800	£32,800	£34,500	£29,900
Copywriter	£32,100	£34,600 ↘	£37,100	£41,300	£36,700	£36,200
CRM Executive	£26,500	£28,200 ↘	£30,000	£34,300	£33,200	£29,500
Digital Director	£54,500	£75,200 ↘	£96,400	£80,500	£92,600	£78,600
Digital Marketing Manager	£36,800	£40,600 ↘	£44,300	£45,700	£45,700	£42,400
Ecommerce Manager	£39,900	£45,200 ↘	£50,500	£48,400	£51,900	£47,200

↗ **2.2%** increase in Account Manager average salaries this year.

↘ **16.2%** decrease in Copywriter average salaries this year.

Role	2026			2025	2024	2027
	Min	Average	Max	Average	Average	Projection
Graphic Designer	£26,300	£29,000 ↘	£31,700	£32,800	£33,200	£30,300
Marketing Director	£68,300	£77,100 ↘	£85,900	£90,300	£83,900	£80,600
Marketing Executive	£29,500	£31,700 ↗	£33,900	£30,800	£30,300	£33,200
Marketing Manager	£38,600	£43,000 ↘	£47,500	£45,700	£43,600	£45,000
Public Relations Manager	£39,800	£44,500 ↘	£49,200	£49,400	£47,000	£46,500
Sales Director	£73,000	£90,500 ↗	£108,000	£79,100	£79,300	£94,800
Sales Engineer	£42,200	£46,100 ↗	£50,100	£42,000	£39,500	£48,300
Sales Executive	£27,900	£32,400 ↗	£36,800	£32,100	£30,100	£33,900
Sales Manager	£41,100	£45,900 ↗	£50,700	£43,300	£44,900	£48,000
SEO/PPC Executive	£31,500	£35,700 ↘	£39,900	£38,200	£34,500	£37,400
Telesales Manager	£32,900	£36,600 ↗	£40,100	£31,800	£35,700	£38,300
UX/UI Designer	£40,300	£57,800 ↘	£75,300	£65,300	£61,700	£60,400

↘ **9.9%** decrease in Public Relations Manager average salaries this year.

↗ **6%** increase in Sales Manager average salaries this year.



6%

salary decline

versus 3.1% UK average growth

Roles on the rise

Account Manager

2024	£39,400
2025	£41,000
2026	£41,900

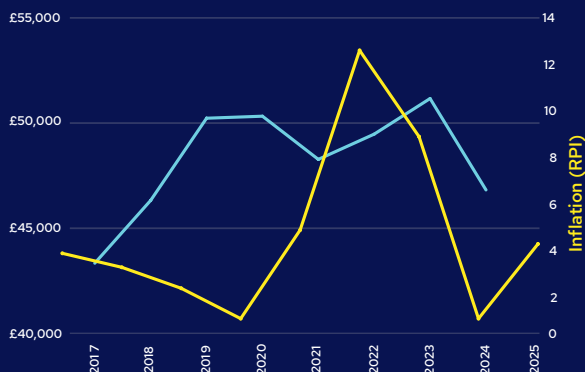
Marketing Executive

2024	£30,300
2025	£30,800
2026	£31,700

Sales Engineer

2024	£39,500
2025	£42,000
2026	£46,100

Average salary in region vs UK inflation rate (RPI)



Regional insight

Gillian Dolan
Regional Director, Reed

“ For in-house marketing teams, the prevailing trend is one of stability rather than expansion. Companies are generally not adding new roles to their marketing structures; instead, they are focusing on a ‘one-in, one-out’ replacement strategy when vacancies arise. This makes new opportunities highly dependent on timing and existing team movements. Consequently, roles that do become available are often in high demand.

The sales sector shows a steady, if not booming, level of activity. The residential property market, particularly in cities like Edinburgh, remains a consistent source of employment. On top of this, software as a service (SaaS) is booming. However, these sectors are largely candidate-driven. With many professionals choosing to stay in their current roles due to market stability, attracting new talent has become a significant challenge for employers who choose not to use a recruiter.

In a market where salary increases are modest, employees are weighing their options more carefully than ever. A small pay rise of £1,000 to £2,000 is often not enough to justify the upheaval of changing jobs. Professionals are now looking for a more substantial salary increase of £4,000 to £5,000 before considering a move, unless they are actively unhappy in their current role.

This means employers must differentiate themselves in other ways. While competitive pay is important, the overall package is what truly sets a company apart. Benefits, company culture, and flexible working arrangements are becoming key decision-making factors.

When recruiting, businesses are increasingly prioritising those with relevant industry experience. For example, a role in the hospitality sector will likely require a professional who understands the unique marketing challenges and opportunities within that field. This preference for sector-specific knowledge is a clear trend across various industries.

Furthermore, there is a growing demand for marketing ‘generalists’ - professionals who can handle a wide range of responsibilities rather than specialising in a single area like pay per click (PPC) or search engine optimisation (SEO). ”

South East



Role	2026			2025	2024	2027
	Min	Average	Max	Average	Average	Projection
Account Manager	£36,500	£40,100 ↗	£43,700	£39,800	£37,600	£42,000
Brand Manager	£45,200	£49,800 ↘	£54,400	£50,900	£49,800	£52,100
Business Development Executive	£30,800	£34,000 ↗	£37,200	£32,300	£31,200	£35,600
Business Development Manager	£42,400	£47,800 ↗	£53,100	£47,300	£44,100	£50,000
Commercial Director	£79,900	£93,600 ↘	£107,300	£96,300	£91,600	£97,900
Communications Manager	£44,100	£47,200 ↘	£50,300	£53,100	£52,400	£49,300
Communications/PR Executive	£30,300	£32,900 ↗	£35,500	£31,800	£31,600	£34,400
Copywriter	£34,100	£36,400 ↘	£38,600	£36,700	£35,300	£38,100
CRM Executive	£32,400	£34,000 ↗	£35,700	£32,200	£31,500	£35,600
Digital Director	£53,500	£71,900 ↘	£90,200	£79,900	£86,600	£75,100
Digital Marketing Manager	£42,800	£46,600 ↗	£50,400	£45,200	£46,800	£48,800
Ecommerce Manager	£45,200	£51,100 ↗	£57,000	£50,800	£46,400	£53,500

↗ **3.5%** increase in Communications/PR Executive average salaries this year.

↗ **5.6%** increase in CRM Executive average salaries this year.

Role	2026			2025	2024	2027
	Min	Average	Max	Average	Average	Projection
Graphic Designer	£31,500	£33,900 ↗	£36,300	£32,600	£32,300	£35,500
Marketing Director	£65,000	£71,800 ↘	£78,600	£80,300	£81,500	£75,000
Marketing Executive	£30,200	£32,500 ↗	£34,800	£31,800	£30,500	£34,000
Marketing Manager	£44,900	£49,100 ↗	£53,300	£47,400	£45,800	£51,400
Public Relations Manager	£43,700	£50,100 ↗	£56,500	£47,100	£45,800	£52,500
Sales Director	£78,700	£98,100 ↗	£117,600	£82,800	£83,900	£102,800
Sales Engineer	£38,700	£43,100 ↗	£47,400	£41,500	£40,900	£45,100
Sales Executive	£30,300	£35,500 ↗	£40,800	£34,600	£32,900	£37,200
Sales Manager	£42,300	£48,400 ↗	£54,500	£47,200	£45,100	£50,700
SEO/PPC Executive	£33,600	£37,600 ↗	£41,600	£34,000	£32,300	£39,400
Telesales Manager	£35,000	£37,600 ↗	£40,300	£33,200	£37,400	£39,400
UX/UI Designer	£52,900	£56,900 ↗	£60,900	£52,400	£57,500	£59,500

↘ **10.6%** decrease in Marketing Director average salaries this year.

↗ **6.4%** increase in Public Relations Manager average salaries this year.



1.6%

salary growth
versus 3.1% UK
average growth

Roles on the rise

Account Manager

2024	£37,600
2025	£39,800
2026	£40,100

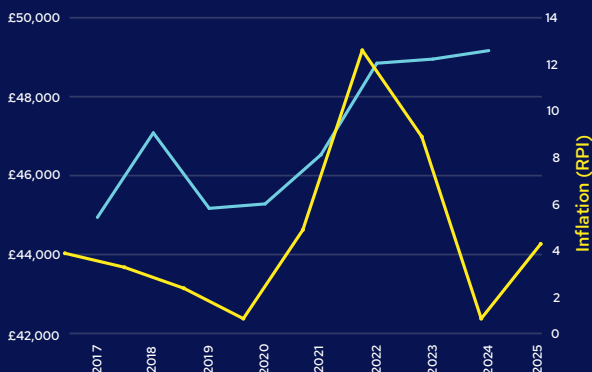
Ecommerce Manager

2024	£46,400
2025	£50,800
2026	£51,100

Marketing Manager

2024	£45,800
2025	£47,400
2026	£49,100

Average salary in region vs UK inflation rate (RPI)



Regional insight

Grant Rigler
Regional Director, Reed

“ The marketing landscape in the South East has undergone a significant transformation. The dynamics have shifted from a candidate-short market to one with more skilled professionals looking for work. This change is reshaping roles, salaries, and workplace expectations across the region for 2026.

Traditional marketing executive positions are becoming less common. Instead, we are seeing a clear demand for more strategic and specialised roles. Companies are actively recruiting for positions focused on AI implementation, optimisation, and growth marketing. The primary objective is to find professionals who can directly contribute to increasing traffic and driving measurable business growth.

While these roles have a specific primary function, employers now expect marketers to be versatile all-rounders - often required to handle everything from data analysis and strategy to video editing and content creation.

A notable trend is the increase in marketing jobseekers, partly due to redundancies in the sector. This has created a more competitive environment. This shift has put downward pressure on salaries. With more competition for fewer roles, many professionals are prioritising securing a position over holding out for a like-for-like salary, opting to get their foot in the door and negotiate for increases later.

The move towards full-time office work continues to solidify, with hybrid working becoming increasingly rare in the South East. An estimated 80% of marketing roles now require employees to be in the office five days a week as businesses look to maximise the use of their physical premises.

Demand for marketing expertise is particularly strong in industries benefiting from shifts in consumer spending. Sectors like home improvement, landscaping, and direct-to-consumer food and drink (such as bespoke wines and craft beers) are recruiting actively. These businesses are adapting their strategies to capture a market of consumers who are spending more on experiences and products for the home. ”

South West



Role	2026			2025	2024	2027
	Min	Average	Max	Average	Average	Projection
Account Manager	£35,000	£38,000 ↗	£41,100	£37,000	£35,800	£39,800
Brand Manager	£42,700	£46,600 ↗	£50,400	£44,500	£46,900	£48,800
Business Development Executive	£31,000	£33,800 ↗	£36,700	£30,400	£32,200	£35,400
Business Development Manager	£42,600	£47,600 ↗	£52,600	£46,000	£43,900	£49,800
Commercial Director	£79,200	£90,800 ↘	£102,300	£95,500	£87,900	£95,000
Communications Manager	£56,000	£58,400 ↗	£60,900	£52,900	£46,800	£61,200
Communications/PR Executive	£29,000	£32,100 ↗	£35,200	£30,500	£32,600	£33,600
Copywriter	£28,300	£29,500 ↘	£30,700	£37,600	£33,700	£30,800
CRM Executive	£28,600	£29,900 ↘	£31,100	£30,200	£31,000	£31,300
Digital Director	£54,600	£73,400 ↘	£92,200	£79,500	£86,400	£76,700
Digital Marketing Manager	£40,400	£43,900 ↘	£47,400	£45,000	£43,400	£45,900
Ecommerce Manager	£43,100	£47,800 ↗	£52,500	£42,600	£48,400	£50,000

↗ **11.2%** increase in Business Development Executive average salaries this year.

↘ **7.7%** decrease in Digital Director average salaries this year.

Role	2026			2025	2024	2027
	Min	Average	Max	Average	Average	Projection
Graphic Designer	£28,800	£32,000 ↗	£35,200	£30,600	£33,500	£33,500
Marketing Director	£73,700	£81,600 ↗	£89,300	£79,400	£78,300	£85,400
Marketing Executive	£28,000	£30,000 ↗	£32,000	£29,800	£29,300	£31,400
Marketing Manager	£44,300	£48,500 ↗	£52,800	£46,400	£43,600	£50,800
Public Relations Manager	£43,000	£47,100 ↗	£51,200	£43,500	£43,900	£49,300
Sales Director	£73,100	£82,400 ↘	£91,600	£82,700	£78,100	£86,200
Sales Engineer	£40,200	£43,600 ↗	£47,000	£41,800	£41,000	£45,600
Sales Executive	£29,800	£34,500 ↘	£39,200	£36,300	£33,600	£36,100
Sales Manager	£42,800	£47,900 ↗	£53,100	£46,700	£44,500	£50,100
SEO/PPC Executive	£34,100	£37,800 ↗	£41,500	£33,600	£32,200	£39,600
Telesales Manager	£34,700	£36,500 ↗	£38,400	£32,900	£35,900	£38,200
UX/UI Designer	£58,300	£60,200 ↗	£69,100	£49,900	£61,100	£102,300

↗ **8.3%** increase in Public Relations Manager average salaries this year.

↗ **10.9%** increase in Telesales Manager average salaries this year.



2.5%

salary growth
versus 3.1% UK
average growth

Roles on the rise

Business Development Manager

2024	£43,900
2025	£46,000
2026	£47,600

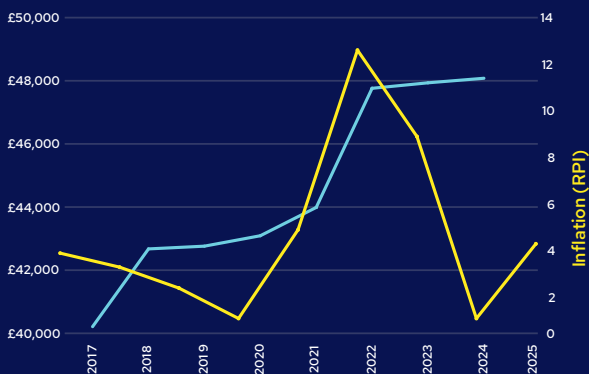
Communications Manager

2024	£46,800
2025	£52,900
2026	£58,400

Marketing Manager

2024	£43,600
2025	£46,400
2026	£48,500

Average salary in region vs UK inflation rate (RPI)



Regional insight

Katie Cartner

Regional Director, Reed

"The sales sector in the South West has seen a notable surge in job opportunities as companies invest in skilled sales professionals to expand market share and drive growth. However, this boom comes with a caveat: employers are increasingly seeking salespeople with niche expertise. For instance, roles often require experience in specific industries or familiarity with particular products. This shift reflects a growing preference for experienced professionals who can 'hit the ground running', equipped with the technical knowledge and client understanding to deliver immediate results. While the talent pool remains relatively strong, the demand for specialised skills has created a competitive environment for those looking for work.

In contrast, the marketing sector has faced significant challenges. The early part of 2025 saw widespread redundancies, with many businesses scaling back their marketing teams. This has left a surplus of qualified marketers vying for a limited number of roles, particularly at the entry level. However, there are signs of recovery as we enter 2026, with contract roles and demand for digital marketing skills - such as SEO, PPC, and eCommerce expertise - on the rise. Employers are prioritising professionals with experience in platforms like HubSpot and Monday.com, as well as those adept at managing Amazon listings and multi-channel campaigns. Unfortunately, traditional creative roles like graphic design have seen a decline, as online tools such as Canva increasingly fulfil these needs.

Salaries in marketing remain a point of contention, with many roles in the region lower paid compared to national averages. Marketing managers, for example, are often advertised at £30,000-£35,000, well below the £40,000-£50,000 benchmark. Sales roles, however, have remained more competitive. Hybrid working remains a key expectation for jobseekers, though some employers are pushing for more in-office presence, creating friction in the hiring process.

As we move further into 2026, the South West job market reflects broader national trends: a growing emphasis on specialisation, the impact of AI on traditional roles, and the need for competitive salaries and flexible working arrangements to attract the right people, with the right skills. "

Wales



Role	2026			2025	2024	2027
	Min	Average	Max	Average	Average	Projection
Account Manager	£37,200	£40,800 ↑	£44,400	£37,700	£34,100	£42,700
Brand Manager	£41,400	£45,100 ↑	£48,800	£44,500	£41,300	£47,200
Business Development Executive	£26,800	£27,700 ↓	£28,500	£28,700	£27,500	£29,000
Business Development Manager	£39,100	£43,100 ↓	£47,100	£45,800	£41,900	£45,100
Commercial Director	£77,500	£88,100 ↓	£98,600	£92,300	£82,000	£92,200
Communications Manager	£47,600	£50,400 ↓	£53,300	£56,400	£44,200	£52,800
Communications/PR Executive	£27,600	£29,300 ↑	£31,000	£29,100	£28,400	£30,700
Copywriter	£33,600	£35,400 ↓	£37,300	£36,600	£30,200	£37,100
CRM Executive	£27,800	£28,900 ↓	£30,100	£30,400	£27,300	£30,200
Digital Director	£52,600	£70,200 ↓	£87,500	£76,200	£76,200	£73,400
Digital Marketing Manager	£38,500	£41,500 ↑	£44,600	£40,500	£37,600	£43,400
Ecommerce Manager	£41,800	£46,300 ↑	£50,800	£43,000	£42,700	£48,500

↑ **8.2%** increase in Account Manager average salaries this year.

↓ **4.6%** decrease in Commercial Director average salaries this year.

Role	2026			2025	2024	2027
	Min	Average	Max	Average	Average	Projection
Graphic Designer	£27,600	£29,700 ↑	£31,800	£29,100	£27,300	£31,100
Marketing Director	£71,500	£79,000 ↓	£86,400	£80,100	£69,000	£82,700
Marketing Executive	£29,400	£31,800 ↑	£34,200	£29,700	£28,500	£33,300
Marketing Manager	£41,300	£45,700 ↓	£50,100	£46,000	£42,000	£47,800
Public Relations Manager	£41,700	£45,600 ↑	£49,500	£43,800	£38,700	£47,800
Sales Director	£75,300	£87,600 ↑	£99,800	£79,100	£74,200	£91,800
Sales Engineer	£37,400	£40,300 ↑	£43,200	£38,200	£35,200	£42,200
Sales Executive	£30,800	£35,900 ↑	£41,100	£34,300	£32,500	£37,600
Sales Manager	£42,900	£47,900 ↑	£52,900	£44,600	£40,200	£50,200
SEO/PPC Executive	£33,000	£36,600 ↑	£40,100	£33,800	£28,400	£38,400
Telesales Manager	£33,900	£35,400 ↑	£37,000	£31,800	£33,500	£37,100
UX/UI Designer	£51,300	£55,300 ↑	£59,200	£53,000	£50,800	£57,900

↑ **7.1%** increase in Marketing Executive average salaries this year.

↑ **4.7%** increase in Sales Executive average salaries this year.



1.3%

salary growth
versus 3.1% UK
average growth



Regional insight

Becky Hole

Regional Director, Reed

“ Over the past year, organisations across the country have grappled with cost pressures, leading many to re-examine the value and structure of their marketing departments.

This approach has not only led to headcount reductions, but also to broader changes in the kinds of roles that are in demand. Companies under economic strain are scrutinising every hire, with a clear focus now on roles that are easily quantifiable in terms of ROI. As a result, there is a marked rise in demand for growth-focused and performance marketing positions.

At the same time, businesses are consolidating jobs in the face of budget constraints. It's common to see job descriptions that request skills spanning digital marketing, content creation, social media, CRM administration, and analytics. This amalgamation means that many responsibilities that once required two or three people are now bundled into one role. Yet, the corresponding salary uplift seldom follows, adding further pressure on marketing professionals to deliver results while juggling a broader workload.

This trend has significant implications for the talent pipeline. Graduate and entry-level roles have noticeably dwindled, making it harder for new talent to enter the industry. Instead, organisations prefer experienced professionals who can 'hit the ground running' and handle multifaceted roles with less supervision.

For those navigating the job market, priorities have noticeably shifted. While competitive salary remains important, marketing professionals – especially at mid and senior level – are increasingly valuing work-life balance, hybrid working options, and a positive organisational culture. At the same time, marketers recognise the benefits of in-office collaboration, particularly for brainstorming, mentoring, and team cohesion.

As 2026 unfolds, it's clear that the Welsh marketing industry remains dynamic, but not without its challenges. The increased emphasis on performance, digital capability, and workplace flexibility is shaping recruitment strategies and candidate experiences. For businesses that adapt quickly to these new realities and genuinely value the diverse skill sets and motivations of their marketers, there is still a rich, motivated pool of talent equipped to drive commercial success. ”

Roles on the rise

Ecommerce Manager

2024 £42,700

2025 £43,000

2026 £46,300

Public Relations Manager

2024 £38,700

2025 £43,800

2026 £45,600

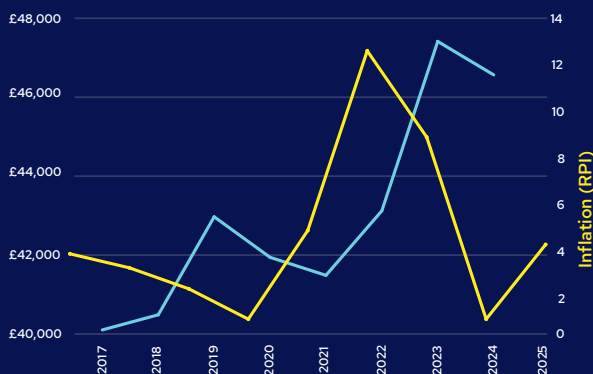
Sales Director

2024 £74,200

2025 £79,100

2026 £87,600

Average salary in region vs UK inflation rate (RPI)



West Midlands



Role	2026			2025	2024	2027
	Min	Average	Max	Average	Average	Projection
Account Manager	£38,600	£42,500 ↗	£46,400	£41,500	£37,400	£44,500
Brand Manager	£44,700	£50,000 ↗	£55,400	£46,200	£48,000	£52,400
Business Development Executive	£31,600	£34,700 ↗	£37,700	£32,400	£32,200	£36,300
Business Development Manager	£44,600	£49,800 ↗	£55,000	£47,500	£45,200	£52,100
Commercial Director	£86,000	£100,600 ↔	£115,300	£100,600	£95,000	£105,300
Communications Manager	£54,300	£59,400 ↗	£64,400	£59,100	£50,200	£62,200
Communications/PR Executive	£28,400	£36,200 ↗	£44,100	£34,400	£33,300	£37,900
Copywriter	£28,000	£30,500 ↘	£33,000	£34,400	£35,700	£31,900
CRM Executive	£30,000	£32,100 ↗	£34,200	£31,400	£31,700	£33,600
Digital Director	£56,200	£75,600 ↘	£95,000	£81,900	£88,300	£79,000
Digital Marketing Manager	£42,000	£45,400 ↗	£48,700	£43,900	£44,200	£47,500
Ecommerce Manager	£44,500	£50,100 ↗	£55,600	£46,500	£54,500	£52,400

↗ **8.2%** increase in Brand Manager average salaries this year.

↗ **5.2%** increase in Communications/PR Executive average salaries this year.

Role	2026			2025	2024	2027
	Min	Average	Max	Average	Average	Projection
Graphic Designer	£32,700	£38,200 ↗	£43,700	£30,100	£32,000	£40,100
Marketing Director	£85,500	£96,000 ↗	£106,400	£85,400	£79,100	£100,600
Marketing Executive	£28,700	£31,300 ↗	£33,900	£30,600	£28,900	£32,800
Marketing Manager	£42,900	£47,200 ↗	£51,400	£46,000	£46,200	£49,400
Public Relations Manager	£45,000	£50,600 ↗	£56,100	£45,300	£44,800	£53,000
Sales Director	£90,200	£116,100 ↗	£142,100	£86,500	£80,400	£121,900
Sales Engineer	£39,600	£43,700 ↗	£47,900	£42,400	£39,800	£45,800
Sales Executive	£28,600	£32,700 ↘	£36,800	£33,500	£32,500	£34,200
Sales Manager	£46,300	£51,800 ↗	£57,300	£47,300	£46,600	£54,300
SEO/PPC Executive	£35,700	£40,600 ↗	£45,500	£35,000	£32,900	£42,600
Telesales Manager	£37,700	£40,500 ↗	£43,300	£34,700	£38,800	£42,400
UX/UI Designer	£65,100	£70,600 ↗	£76,100	£53,000	£61,000	£74,100

↗ **2.6%** increase in Marketing Manager average salaries this year.

↗ **16.7%** increase in Telesales Manager average salaries this year.



7.8%

salary growth
versus 3.1% UK
average growth



Regional insight

Theresa Robinson
Regional Manager, Reed

" The marketing and sales job markets in the West Midlands is undergoing a significant transformation as we start to navigate 2026. Economic pressures have reshaped hiring strategies, creating a landscape where adaptability and value are paramount for both businesses and professionals.

A defining feature of the 2026 West Midlands market is the emphasis on adaptable, cross-functional skills. When deciding who to take to interview stage, employers are prioritising those who can thrive in varied roles. On the marketing side, professionals who combine digital expertise, content creation, social media management, and the ability to engage with both traditional and emerging marketing channels are the most valued. Additionally, strong communication, creative problem-solving, and comfort with AI-driven tools are now essential for success in both sectors.

Another trend we have seen this past year is the evolution of jobseekers' expectations. Marketers and sales professionals are seeking more than just competitive salaries - they want flexible or hybrid working, creative autonomy, and clear development paths. Opportunities for upskilling, diverse projects, and working within a supportive company culture are now top priorities.

In response, employers must offer flexible arrangements, foster environments where innovation is valued, and provide structured progression to stand out. An authentic commitment to flexibility, growth, and work-life balance is quickly becoming the standard for attracting and keeping the best talent in both sectors.

Marketing and sales teams are intrinsically linked, working together to drive revenue and strengthen brand presence. In today's climate of economic uncertainty, businesses are scrutinising every hire to ensure measurable impact. For professionals in the West Midlands - whether in sales or marketing, and at any level - this means the ability to clearly demonstrate value is non-negotiable. Employers are looking for people who can not only execute their core responsibilities but also contribute directly to growth objectives. This includes showcasing skills in lead generation, customer engagement, data-driven decision-making, and adaptability to shifting market conditions. Those who can articulate how their strategies and actions translate into tangible business outcomes will stand out in a competitive job market. "

Roles on the rise

Business Development Manager



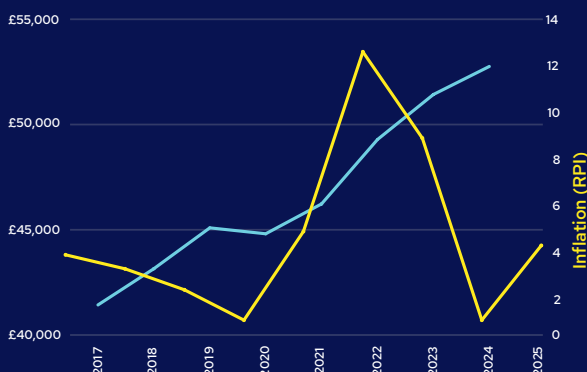
Marketing Director



Sales Manager



Average salary in region vs UK inflation rate (RPI)



Yorkshire & Humberside



Role	2026			2025	2024	2027
	Min	Average	Max	Average	Average	Projection
Account Manager	£38,200	£42,500 ↗	£46,700	£37,800	£36,000	£44,500
Brand Manager	£45,900	£50,900 ↗	£55,900	£44,100	£43,500	£53,300
Business Development Executive	£30,800	£33,400 ↗	£36,100	£30,200	£30,500	£35,000
Business Development Manager	£41,000	£45,900 ↘	£50,900	£46,200	£43,400	£48,000
Commercial Director	£77,600	£88,700 ↘	£99,700	£96,300	£88,400	£92,800
Communications Manager	£45,500	£49,000 ↘	£52,400	£53,900	£46,700	£51,300
Communications/PR Executive	£30,500	£33,000 ↗	£35,400	£28,800	£29,700	£34,600
Copywriter	£37,200	£39,900 ↗	£42,700	£36,200	£31,700	£41,800
CRM Executive	£30,700	£32,600 ↗	£34,500	£30,100	£28,700	£34,100
Digital Director	£53,200	£71,200 ↘	£89,000	£83,500	£79,900	£74,400
Digital Marketing Manager	£45,700	£49,700 ↗	£53,800	£44,500	£42,800	£52,100
Ecommerce Manager	£42,900	£47,200 ↗	£51,500	£46,300	£46,300	£49,400

↗ **15.4%** increase in Brand Manager average salaries this year.

↗ **10.2%** increase in Copywriter average salaries this year.

Role	2026			2025	2024	2027
	Min	Average	Max	Average	Average	Projection
Graphic Designer	£29,700	£33,100 ↗	£36,500	£31,100	£29,200	£34,700
Marketing Director	£79,200	£89,100 ↗	£99,000	£79,100	£72,400	£93,400
Marketing Executive	£28,200	£30,400 ↗	£32,700	£29,800	£28,000	£31,800
Marketing Manager	£44,400	£48,000 ↗	£51,500	£45,700	£41,500	£50,300
Public Relations Manager	£46,200	£51,400 ↗	£56,700	£43,300	£40,600	£53,900
Sales Director	£75,400	£88,200 ↗	£100,900	£82,600	£80,100	£92,400
Sales Engineer	£39,500	£44,000 ↗	£48,600	£39,600	£39,700	£46,100
Sales Executive	£28,800	£33,000 ↘	£37,100	£35,100	£31,800	£34,500
Sales Manager	£43,600	£48,800 ↗	£54,000	£47,500	£44,500	£51,100
SEO/PPC Executive	£36,600	£41,300 ↗	£45,900	£33,500	£29,800	£43,300
Telesales Manager	£34,000	£35,700 ↗	£37,400	£33,200	£36,100	£37,400
UX/UI Designer	£57,100	£60,700 ↗	£64,200	£40,500	£49,400	£63,800

↗ **6.8%** increase in Sales Director average salaries this year.

↘ **6%** decrease in Sales Executive average salaries this year.



5.9%

salary growth
versus 3.1% UK
average growth

Roles on the rise

CRM Executive

2024	£28,700
2025	£30,100
2026	£32,600

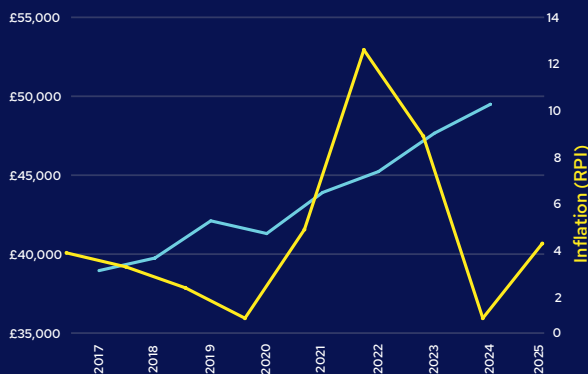
Digital Marketing Manager

2024	£42,800
2025	£44,500
2026	£49,700

Sales Manager

2024	£44,500
2025	£47,500
2026	£48,800

Average salary in region vs UK inflation rate (RPI)



Regional insight

Helen Barber
Regional Manager, Reed

“ A prominent theme in the marketing sector in Yorkshire and Humberside is a move towards outsourcing; companies appear to be restructuring their marketing functions, often resulting in the dissolution of in-house teams. In their place, we are seeing a rise in demand for junior and specialist positions. Businesses are focusing on hiring graduates, apprentices, and executives for roles in social media and SEO, aiming to upskill talent internally rather than investing in senior management. This indicates a strategy geared towards cost-saving and developing specific, results-driven skill sets.

In the sales sector, a similar pattern emerges, with fewer senior roles like sales director available locally. The most prominent vacancies are for account managers and business development managers, often in national roles. There is a strong demand for salespeople with highly specific industry experience, particularly within the technology, manufacturing, and renewables sectors. Employers are often unwilling to consider transferable skills, preferring a like-for-like background, which creates a challenging market for those looking to switch industries.

Salary expectations are a point of contention. In sales, many companies are offering salaries below current market rates, sometimes by a significant margin. While bonus structures can sometimes compensate for a lower basic salary at the senior end, this is less common for junior to mid-level roles.

Sales roles that involve travel naturally incorporate remote work, but office-based sales teams are often expected to be onsite. Manufacturing firms tend to prefer onsite work, whereas agencies and newer companies are more open to hybrid models.

The primary challenge for jobseekers remains finding roles that meet their salary expectations and, in sales, overcoming the demand for niche experience. For employers, the focus will be on attracting talent with competitive packages and fostering a positive company culture, which is an increasingly important factor for jobseekers. ”

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