

Annual Ad Talent Salary Survey: Know your worth

Ad Talent has officially released the results of its annual talent survey, providing a glimpse into the 2023 remuneration packages for various positions in the advertising, digital, creative, IT, marketing and communications industries, as well as the media sector.



Image source: wirestock – [123RF.com](https://www.123RF.com)

"There were many interesting observations in Ad Talent work space in 2023," says Stacey Bossenger, MD of Ad Talent. "While there was not a great deal to reflect on in terms of salary changes, the trends in the industry were particularly interesting. Remote and hybrid working has been a key driver in the narrowing of the gap between salaries in Johannesburg, Cape Town and other centres."

General observations from the Ad Talent team are:

1. **The salary gap between Johannesburg and Cape Town is closing.** Hybrid working has contributed to the flattening of the salary curve across the country, especially in the tech space. The Covid pandemic introduced work from home on a large scale and it seems that despite many employers wanting their employees to return to the office, this has met with more resistance than many anticipated.

Being paid what the job is worth, irrespective of where you physically reside, has flattened the curve. Technology, flexibility, commuter costs and time, load shedding and demand for a more balanced work-life have been factors that have strongly influenced working environments.

"It will be interesting to see how organisations and the workforce embrace this in 2024 and beyond," Bossenger continues.

2. **Job descriptions and titles have become less rigid** than in previous surveys, and roles are becoming more hybridised. Employers expect candidates to have more than one core skill and contribute to the company in a variety of ways. Skills before qualifications are becoming more top of mind for hiring as the tech and digital space expand.

This has become evident in the tech and digital job descriptions which are less binary than before. Many job descriptions for Gen Z candidates, for example, expect them to have a level of these skills as a standard tool in their box.

3. **International markets have come to South Africa.** "We have seen more candidates accept work from overseas companies (who value the work ethic, skills and cost-effectiveness of employing South Africans) that give them the flexibility and lifestyle they are looking for," Bossenger notes. "Skilled candidates are in demand, as has always been the case, but now there is serious competition from pound and dollar-based countries."
4. **Skills shortage remains a problem.** Skills, experience and slow decision-making have been key observations in the hiring process this year. Continued economic uncertainty along with the challenges to replace skills have strongly influenced hiring decisions.

"Ad Talent has seen an increase in counter-offers from employers when resignations are tendered as a result of the skills shortage and the loss of experience that comes with resignations," Bossenger continues. "The counter-offer generally implies a salary increase, but employee flexibility is also a strong factor that influences the decision."

5. **Temporary employment services have gained traction** amongst some employers, especially in tech and creative sectors. The flexibility it gives them to hire on fixed contracts, assignments or a non-permanent basis has created a freelance salary band that is steadily growing. More and more candidates are freelancing as a way to create the lifestyle and revenue that gives them the flexibility for which they are looking.



SA firms are budgeting for pay increases in 2024 - survey

11 Aug 2023



Survey info

This survey was compiled:

- using figures of actual placements made by Ad Talent
- using figures from salary information obtained from all candidates interviewed by Ad Talent from January 2023 to December 2023
- using figures from salary information obtained from candidates who have submitted their CVs to Ad Talent
- using cost to company (CTC) figures
- using the average salaries per sector

Interpretation:

- Salaries vary significantly depending on many factors, including size of the company, desirability to work for a particular company and status
- Salaries for media sales roles vary significantly depending on the commission structure / incentives
- 0-2 years (light) means 0 to 2 years experience in that particular position and not 0 to 2 years total working experience
- The same applies to medium and heavyweight. It is experience in the particular position and not total working experience
- This survey is not intended to be prescriptive but is a report on what Ad Talent (not the entire industry) has experienced in the past 12 months



Annual Ad Talent Salary Survey

25 Jan 2023



Advertising

	0-2 yrs (light)	2 – 5 yrs (medium)	5 – 9 yrs (heavyweight)
Managing Director			
Johannesburg	R90 000 – R100 000	R100 000 – R150 000	R150 000+
Cape Town	R75 000 – R100 000	R100 000 – R140 000	R140 000+
Deputy MD			
Johannesburg	R85 000 – R94 000	R94 000 – R100 000	R100 000+
Cape Town	R75 000 – R90 000	R90 000 – R100 000	R100 000+
Client Service/Business Unit Director			
Johannesburg	R60 000 – R70 000	R70 000 – R85 000	R85 000+
Cape Town	R50 000 – R55 000	R55 000 – R80 000	R80 000+
Group Account Director			
Johannesburg	R49 000 – R54 000	R54 000 – R60 000	R60 000+
Cape Town	R45 000 – R50 000	R50 000 – R55 000	R55 000+
Account Director			
Johannesburg	R40 000 – R45 000	R45 000 – R50 000	N/A
Cape Town	R38 000 – R42 000	R42 000 – R48 000	N/A
Account Manager			
Johannesburg	R25 000 – R27 000	R27 000 – R36 000	N/A
Cape Town	R20 000 – R25 000	R25 000 – R32 000	N/A
Account Executive			
Johannesburg	R18 000 – R20 000	R20 000 – R25 000	N/A
Cape Town	R12 000 – R15 000	R15 000 – R17 000	N/A
Project Manager			
Johannesburg	R27 000 – R40 000	R40 000 – R45 000	R45 000+
Cape Town	R23 000 – R34 000	R34 000 – R43 000	R43 000+
Operations			
Johannesburg	R49 000 – R60 000	R60 000 – R80 000	R80 000+
Cape Town	R45 000 – R57 000	R57 000 – R70 000	R70 000+
Production			
Johannesburg	R14 000 – R22 000	R22 000 – R40 000	R40 000+
Cape Town	R12 000 – R20 000	R20 000 – R35 000	R35 000+
Traffic			
Johannesburg	R15 000 – R22 000	R22 000 – R40 000	R40 000+
Cape Town	R15 000 – R20 000	R20 000 – R37 000	R37 000+
Strategic Planning Director			
Johannesburg	R63 000 – R70 000	R70 000 – R89 000	R89 000+
Cape Town	R58 000 – R68 000	R68 000 – R85 000	R85 000+
Strategic Planner			
Johannesburg	R18 000 – R30 000	R30 000 – R47 000	R47 000+

Cape Town	R18 000 – R30 000	R30 000 – R47 000	R47 000+
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Digital

	0-2 yrs (light)	2 – 5 yrs (medium)	5 – 9 yrs (heavyweight)
Digital Strategist			
Johannesburg	R27 000 – R38 000	R38 000 – R55 000	R55 000+
Cape Town	R25 000 – R38 000	R38 000 – R55 000	R55 000+
Social Media Manager			
Johannesburg	R23 000 – R35 000	R35 000 – R48 000	R48 000+
Cape Town	R20 000 – R30 000	R30 000 – R40 000	R40 000+
Head of Social Media			
Johannesburg	R45 000 – R50 000	R50 000 – R65 000	R65 000+
Cape Town	R40 000 – R48 000	R48 000 – R62 000	R62 000+
Social Media Community Manager			
Johannesburg	R18 000 – R28 000	R28 000 – R40 000	R40 000+
Cape Town	R15 000 – R25 000	R25 000 – R35 000	R35 000+
Influencer Marketer			
Johannesburg	R18 000 – R30 000	R30 000 – R45 000	R45 000+
Cape Town	R15 000 – R28 000	R28 000 – R40 000	R40 000+
Campaign Manager			
Johannesburg	R25 000 – R35 000	R32 000 – R42 000	R42 000+
Cape Town	R22 000 – R32 000	R32 000 – R38 000	R38 000+
Content Manager			
Johannesburg	R20 000 – R38 000	R38 000 – R43 000	R43 000+
Cape Town	R20 000 – R30 000	R30 000 – R40 000	R40 000+
Digital Account Executive			
Johannesburg	R18 000 – R22 000	R22 000 – R28 000	R28 000+
Cape Town	R16 000 – R20 000	R20 000 – R25 000	R25 000+
Digital Account Manager			
Johannesburg	R28 500 – R35 000	R35 000 – R45 000	R45 000+
Cape Town	R25 000 – R32 000	R32 000 – R42 000	R42 000+
Digital Account Director			
Johannesburg	R40 000 – R48 000	R48 000 – R55 000	R55 000+
Cape Town	R40 000 – R45 000	R45 000 – R52 000	R52 000+
Digital Group Account Director			
Johannesburg	R55 000 – R60 000	R60 000 – R70 000	R70 000+
Cape Town	R52 000 – R58 000	R58 000 – R65 000	R65 000+
SEO Specialist/Manager			
Johannesburg	R25 000 – R32 000	R32 000 – R52 000	R52 000+
Cape Town	R25 000 – R32 000	R32 000 – R52 000	R52 000+
PPC Specialist/Manager			
Johannesburg	R30 000 – R40 000	R40 000 – R50 000	R50 000+
Cape Town	R30 000 – R40 000	R40 000 – R50 000	R50 000+
Digital / Media / Marketing Analyst			
Johannesburg	R25 000 – R33 000	R33 000 – R45 000	R40 000+
Cape Town	R22 000 – R28 000	R28 000 – R42 000	R42 000+

Creative

	0-2 yrs (light)	2 – 5 yrs (medium)	5 – 9 yrs (heavyweight)
Chief Creative Officer			
Johannesburg	N/A	N/A	R150 000+
Cape Town	N/A	N/A	R150 000+
Group/Executive Creative Director			
Johannesburg	N/A	R90 000 – R120 000	R120 000+
Cape Town	N/A	R90 000 – R120 000	R120 000+

Creative Director			
Johannesburg	N/A	R68 000 – R95 000	R95 000+
Cape Town	N/A	R55 000 – R90 000	R90 000+
Head of Design			
Johannesburg	R38 000 – R52 000	R52 000 – R62 000	R62 000+
Cape Town	R35 000 – R40 000	R40 000 – R55 000	R55 000+
Designer			
Johannesburg	R10 000 – R18 000	R18 000 – R45 000	R45 000+
Cape Town	R10 000 – R17 000	R17 000 – R40 000	R40 000+
Creative Group Head			
Johannesburg	R38 000 – R45 000	R45 000 – R55 000	R55 000+
Cape Town	R30 000 – R40 000	R40 000 – R50 000	R50 000+
Art Director			
Johannesburg	R12 000 – R25 000	R25 000 – R45 000	R45 000 – R65 000
Cape Town	R10 000 – R25 000	R25 000 – R45 000	R45 000 – R50 000
Copywriter			
Johannesburg	R18 000 – R25 000	R25 000 – R52 000	R52 000 – R70 000
Cape Town	R15 000 – R20 000	R20 000 – R45 000	R45 000 – R60 000
Proofreader			
Johannesburg	R15 000 – R20 000	R20 000 – R30 000	R30 000 – R47 000
Cape Town	R10 000 – R15 000	R15 000 – R25 000	R25 000 – R40 000
Creative/Content Strategist			
Johannesburg	N/A	R23 000 – R38 000	R38 000 – R50 000
Cape Town	N/A	R20 000 – R35 000	R35 000 – R45 000
Studio Manager			
Johannesburg	R33 000 – R36 000	R36 000 – R42 000	R42 000 – R55 000
Cape Town	R28 000 – R35 000	R35 000 – R40 000	R40 000 – R50 000
DTP Operator			
Johannesburg	R9 500 – R16 000	R16 000 – R25 000	R25 000 – R40 000
Cape Town	R8 000 – R15 000	R15 000 – R24 000	R24 000 – R36 000
Promo Director/Producer			
Johannesburg	R22 000 – R32 000	R32 000 – R60 000	R60 000 – R80 000+
Cape Town	R22 000 – R32 000	R32 000 – R60 000	R60 000 – R80 000+
Animator			
Johannesburg	R14 000 – R18 000	R18 000 – R35 000	R35 000 – R57 000
Cape Town	R12 000 – R16 000	R16 000 – R26 000	R26 000 – R45 000
Video Editor			
Johannesburg	R10 000 – R17 000	R17 000 – R30 000	R30 000 – R48 000
Cape Town	R10 000 – R15 000	R15 000 – R25 000	R25 000 – R40 000
Multimedia Designer/3D			
Johannesburg	R13 000 – R20 000	R20 000 – R38 000	R38 000 – R52 000
Cape Town	R13 000 – R16 000	R16 000 – R30 000	R30 000 – R45 000
User Experience (UX) Lead			
Johannesburg	N/A	N/A	R78 000+
Cape Town	N/A	N/A	R65 000+
User Experience (UX) Designer			
Johannesburg	R18 000 – R27 000	R27 000 – R48 000	R48 000+
Cape Town	R15 000 – R20 000	R20 000 – R40 000	R40 000+
User Interface (UI) Designer			
Johannesburg	R19 000 – R28 000	R28 000 – R44 000	R44 000+
Cape Town	R17 000 – R22 000	R22 000 – R35 000	R35 000+
Motion Designer			
Johannesburg	R20 000 – R38 000	R38 000 – R45 000	R45 000+
Cape Town	R18 000 – R35 000	R35 000 – R42 000	R42 000+

IT/Tech

	0-2 yrs (light)	2 – 5 yrs (medium)	5 – 9 yrs (heavyweight)
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Front-end Developer			
Johannesburg	R25 000 – R35 000	R35 000 – R60 000	R60 000+
Cape Town	R25 000 – R35 000	R35 000 – R60 000	R60 000+
Back-end Developer			
Johannesburg	R18 000 – R30 000	R30 000 – R65 000	R65 000 – R110 000
Cape Town	R18 000 – R30 000	R30 000 – R65 000	R65 000 – R110 000
Full-stack Developer			
Johannesburg	R25 000 – R40 000	R40 000 – R70 000	R70 000 – R125 000
Cape Town	R25 000 – R40 000	R40 000 – R70 000	R70 000 – R125 000
Web Developer			
Johannesburg	R36 000 – R50 000	R50 000 – R90 000	R90 000 – R140 000
Cape Town	R36 000 – R50 000	R50 000 – R90 000	R90 000 – R140 000
Java Developer			
Johannesburg	R20 000 – R38 000	R38 000 – R70 000	R70 000+
Cape Town	R20 000 – R38 000	R38 000 – R70 000	R70 000+
Scrum Master			
Johannesburg	R25 000 – R42 000	R42 000 – R66 000	R66 000 – R150 000
Cape Town	R25 000 – R42 000	R42 000 – R66 000	R66 000 – R150 000
IT Manager			
Johannesburg	R32 000 – R60 000	R60 000 – R100 000	R100 000+
Cape Town	R32 000 – R60 000	R60 000 – R100 000	R100 000+
Solutions Architect			
Johannesburg	R30 000 – R50 000	R50 000 – R100 000	R100 000+
Cape Town	R30 000 – R50 000	R50 000 – R100 000	R100 000+
Data Engineer			
Johannesburg	R25 000 – R50 000	R50 000 – R85 000	R85 000 – R120 000
Cape Town	R25 000 – R50 000	R50 000 – R85 000	R85 000 – R120 000
Data Scientist			
Johannesburg	R30 000 – R50 000	R50 000 – R90 000	R90 000 – R125 000
Cape Town	R30 000 – R50 000	R50 000 – R90 000	R90 000 – R125 000
AI & ML Engineer			
Johannesburg	R30 000 – R55 000	R55 000 – R90 000	R90 000+
Cape Town	R30 000 – R55 000	R55 000 – R90 000	R90 000+

Marketing

	0-2 yrs (light)	2 – 5 yrs (medium)	5 – 9 yrs (heavyweight)
Head of Digital Marketing			
Johannesburg	R55 000 – R66 000	R66 000 – R85 000	R85 000+
Cape Town	R45 000 – R58 000	R58 000 – R78 000	R78 000+
Digital Marketing Manager			
Johannesburg	R35 000 – R48 000	R48 000 – R60 000	R60 000+
Cape Town	R32 000 – R45 000	R45 000 – R55 000	R55 000+
Group Marketing Head			
Johannesburg	R75 000 – R90 000	R90 000 – R145 000	R145 000+
Cape Town	R65 000 – R80 000	R80 000 – R135 000	R135 000+
Marketing Director			
Johannesburg	R60 000 – R75 000	R75 000 – R90 000	R90 000+
Cape Town	R55 000 – R72 000	R72 000 – R82 000	R82 000+
Marketing Manager			
Johannesburg	R55 000 – R60 000	R60 000 – R80 000	R80 000+
Cape Town	R52 000 – R55 000	R55 000 – R70 000	R70 000+
Brand Manager			
Johannesburg	R35 000 – R50 000	R50 000 – R70 000	R70 000+
Cape Town	R30 000 – R45 000	R45 000 – R60 000	R60 000+
E-Commerce Manager			
Johannesburg	R35 000 – R45 000	R45 000 – R65 000	R65 000+
Cape Town	R35 000 – R45 000	R45 000 – R65 000	R65 000+

Brand/Marketing Assistant			
Johannesburg	R25 000 – R32 000	R32 000 – R40 000	N/A
Cape Town	R20 000 – R30 000	R30 000 – R40 000	N/A
Martech (Marketing Technology Specialist)			
Johannesburg	R38 000 – R55 000	R55 000 – R70 000	R70 000+
Cape Town	R35 000 – R50 000	R50 000 – R65 000	R65 000+

Corporate Communications

	0-2 yrs (light)	2 – 5 yrs (medium)	5 – 9 yrs (heavyweight)
Communications Manager			
Johannesburg	R30 000 – R40 000	R40 000 – R68 000	R68 000 – R90 000
Cape Town	R25 000 – R42 000	R42 000 – R47 000	R47 000 – R75 000
Communications Officer/Consultant			
Johannesburg	R20 000 – R30 000	R30 000 – R40 000	R40 000 – R45 000
Cape Town	R18 000 – R26 000	R26 000 – R35 000	R35 000 – R41 000

PR Consultancies

	0-2 yrs (light)	2 – 5 yrs (medium)	5 – 9 yrs (heavyweight)
Managing Director			
Johannesburg	R65 000 – R80 000	R80 000 – R100 000	R100 000+
Cape Town	R60 000 – R70 000	R70 000 – R90 000	R90 000+
Account Director			
Johannesburg	R38 000 – R45 000	R45 000 – R58 000	R58 000+
Cape Town	R35 000 – R42 000	R42 000 – R50 000	R50 000 +
Account Manager			
Johannesburg	R28 000 – R35 000	R35 000 – R40 000	R40 000+
Cape Town	R28 000 – R33 000	R33 000 – R38 000	R38 000+
Account Executive			
Johannesburg	R22 000 – R26 000	R26 000 – R28 000	N/A
Cape Town	R19 000 – R25 000	R25 000 – R28 000	N/A

Media

	0-2 yrs (light)	2 – 5 yrs (medium)	5 – 9 yrs (heavyweight)
Media Sales Director			
Johannesburg	R40 000 – R50 000	R50 000 – R70 000	R70 000+
Cape Town	R38 000 – R48 000	R48 000 – R65 000	R65 000+
Digital Sales Executive			
Johannesburg	R30 000 – R35 000	R35 000 – R45 000	R45 000+
Cape Town	R25 000 – R30 000	R30 000 – R42 000	R42 000+
Media Sales Executive			
Johannesburg	R25 000 – R35 000	R35 000 – R45 000	R45 000+
Cape Town	R25 000 – R28 000	R28 000 – R38 000	R38 000+
Events Manager			
Johannesburg	R20 000 – R25 000	R25 000 – R45 000	R45 000+
Cape Town	R18 000 – R22 000	R22 000 – R40 000	R40 000+

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