



# Optimism makes a COMEBACK

Salaries in 2012 generally remained steady - particularly in the junior ranks - but over the past few months, there are signs that the market has started to grow again.

In the job market, 2012 saw many big clients changing agencies, which translated to lots of redundancies and an increase in the need for freelance contractors as some agencies resourced up while pondering their longer-term staffing options.

## SHORTAGES IN DIGITAL

These movements, alongside a slowly rising demand for qualified people, have exacerbated the shortage of talent across many roles - notably digital producers, suits, strategists and developers; direct marketing; account management; creative (especially those with planning expertise); developers, and experiential.

Needless to say, the numbers of jobs with a social media component are increasing quickly.

AD AGENCY - ACCOUNT MANAGEMENT			
Position	Low (\$000s)	Average (\$000s)	High (\$000s)
Managing Director	220	300	500
CEO	220	300	500
General Manager	160	200	240
Group Account Director	140	180	200+
Senior Account Director	120	130	150
Account Director	100	110	130
Senior Account Manager	75	80	95
Account Manager	45	55	65
Account Executive	35	40	45
Business Development Manager	90	100	150+
Strategic Planning Director	180	200	250
Strategic Planner	90	100	150
Planner	65	85	100



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“This trend will continue as the technology constantly evolves,” says Portfolio Recruitment’s Debbie Kitson.

Digital continues to be a strong growth area. “Everyone wants digital solutions,” says The Pond’s Leighton Howl.

There are currently many vacancies for digital developers, designers, front-end web developers, interactive designers and technology-minded creatives.

#### DEMAND OUTWEIGHS SUPPLY

“Demand for digital producers and digital account managers has outweighed supply,” says The Creative Store’s Louise Lawton.

“And I think this will continue well into 2013. This is also reflected in the contract growth across this area.”

MEDIA AGENCY			
Position	Low (\$000s)	Average (\$000s)	High (\$000s)
Managing Director/GM	170	220	300
Media Director	120	150	250
Senior Planner/Buyer	85	100	120
Intermediate Planner/Buyer	55	80	95
Junior Planner/Buyer	45	50	60

“Digital specialists with true depth, rather than generalists, will be very employable,” says Firebrand’s Julie Prentice.

In fact, digital skills at all levels and in all disciplines are in demand – although this does not come at the expense of

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GRAPHIC ARTS			
Position	Low (\$000s)	Average (\$000s)	High (\$000s)
Production Manager	80	100	130
Traffic Manager	60	80	90
Senior Mac Artist	70	80	90
Intermediate Mac Artist	45	55	60
Junior Mac Artist	30	35	45

PUBLIC RELATIONS			
Position	Low (\$000s)	Average (\$000s)	High (\$000s)
Group Account Director	130	140	150
Account Director	100	110	120
Senior Account Manager	65	75	80
Account Manager	50	55	65
Senior Consultant	65	100	150
Consultant	35	40	45

more traditional suiting, creative, media and sales roles, all of which are in short supply.

Demand across the board, however, has not generally meant higher salaries – with one recruiter pointing out that production and traffic salary levels have dropped slightly, while other candidates are choosing to take reductions for the right role.

Salaries, clearly, are not the only criterion being chased by job-seekers.

### IT'S ABOUT MORE THAN MONEY

“The consistent feedback we get from candidates is they are looking for the right environment and culture, opportunities to learn and be mentored, they have a desire to be challenged and they want room to grow,” said Jobmedia’s Michael Bowie.

“Very rarely is it just about more money.”

In the executive ranks, stability is returning – particularly at senior levels – indicating a confident entry into the new year.

The international trade in ad people continued unabated in 2012, continuing to cause headaches – but bringing many benefits.

“We have extended our search for talent offshore again this year,” says Davies & Partners Billie Davies.

AD AGENCY – CREATIVE			
Position	Low (\$000s)	Average (\$000s)	High (\$000s)
Executive Creative Director	300	350	400+
Creative Group Head	160	180	250
Creative Director	180	220	250
Production Director	110	130	150
Senior Creative	100	140	180
Intermediate Creative	70	80	90
Junior Creative	35	40	45
Studio Manager	70	80	90
Production Manager	75	85	110
TV Producer (in-house)	75	100	140

“We have placed senior talent across creative, planning and client service to make up for the local shortage.”

Young Kiwis, of course, travel widely, and the exodus is fuelled further by the talented people who take their skills offshore, chasing bigger money.

Most recruiters tackle the shortages by hiring offshore, and have stepped up their efforts to lure top people home from Europe and Australia.

Although Australia is always a strong source of talent, the movements in New Zealand’s direction have been hampered

by a significant imbalance in comparative pay rates between Australia and New Zealand.

As a result, the recruiters are seeing a drift of mid-level executives to Australia.

### CREATIVE DESTINATION

And even skilled Kiwis returning from their OE in Europe are being diverted away from New Zealand by the higher pay rates across the Ditch. Many of these are finding homes at agencies intent on increasing their integrated offering. "There is value in candidates having a skill-set which spans the communications mix, rather than being one-dimensional," says Metro's Caroline Lynch.

There is, however, increasing interest in New Zealand as a creative destination.

"Social media and creative advertising has played a significant part in attracting hard-to-reach candidates from around the globe," says Marsden Inch's Robert Roydhouse.

"And more Australian candidates are now interested in New Zealand creative jobs - they recognise that we produce exceptional, world-class work that can quickly advance their careers without moving too far from home."

Many of the shortages, of course, could be immediately alleviated if ad agencies were not so bewitched by youth. Age discrimination continues to rear its ugly head in this country, with agencies almost universally refusing to consider good candidates.

### OVER THE HILL?

"Is age 50 really over the hill for this industry?" wonders Jobmedia's Michael Bowie.

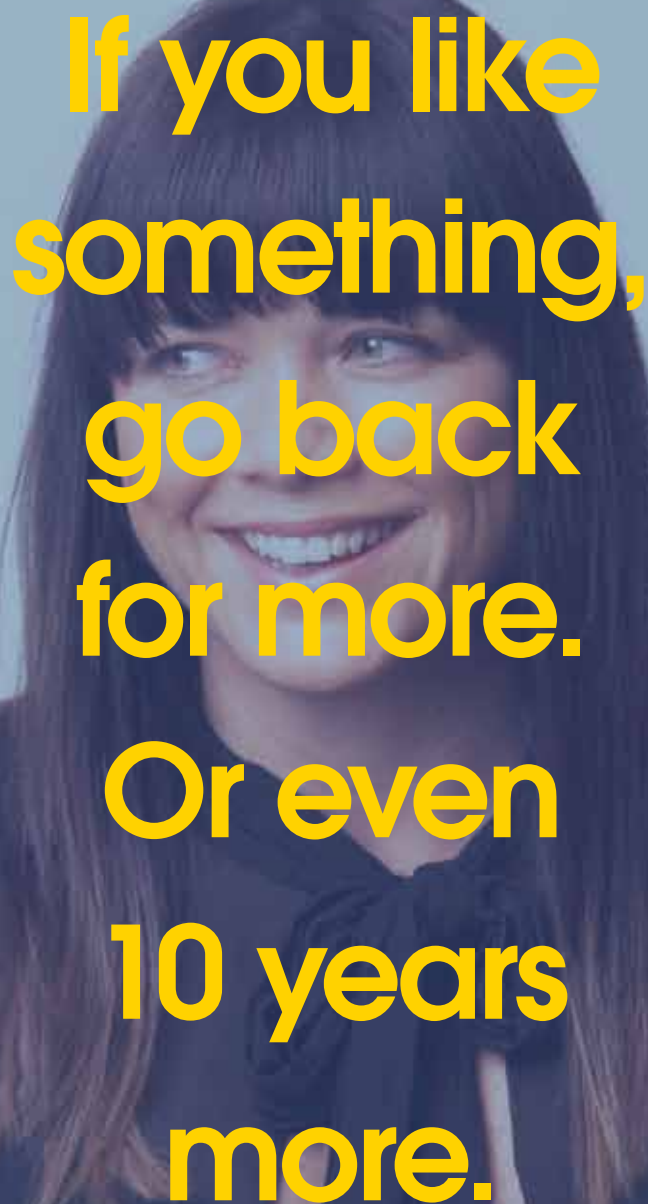
Julie Andrewes agrees: "It makes me wonder why it is so hard, in an ageing population, to place skilled, experienced 50+ candidates into a role they could nail with their eyes closed, and substantially occupy a void in the market?"

The young, too, have problems getting jobs.

"Many agencies - not all - are reluctant to take on new graduates, because they lack practical experience," says Andrewes.

"Many lack the resource of time to train them, and often the grads leave after 18 months to go on the mandatory OE.

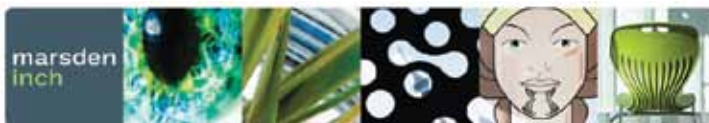
"The intermediate market is barren, because



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for more.  
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WEB DESIGN			
Position	Low (\$000s)	Average (\$000s)	High (\$000s)
Senior Designer	90	100	130
Intermediate Designer	50	60	70
Junior Designer	35	45	50
Interactive Producer	90	120	150
Senior Interactive Producer	100	150	180

DESIGN AGENCY – DESIGN & STUDIO			
Position	Low (\$000s)	Average (\$000s)	High (\$000s)
Design Director	90	120	140
Senior Designer	80	100	120
Intermediate Designer	50	60	70
Junior Designer	32	35	38
Senior Mac Artist	55	65	75
Intermediate Mac Artist	45	60	70
Junior Mac Artist	30	35	45

DIGITAL AGENCY – DESIGN & PRODUCTION			
Position	Low (\$000s)	Average (\$000s)	High (\$000s)
Digital Creative Designer	90	120	150
Senior Digital Designer	80	90	120
Intermediate Digital Designer	60	70	80
Junior Digital Designer	40	55	60

FREELANCE			
Position	Low (\$000s)	Average (\$000s)	High (\$000s)
Senior Designer	80	100	130
Intermediate Designer	60	70	80
Junior Creative	90	120	150
Intermediate Creative	70	80	90
Senior Front End Designer/Developer	90	100	120
Senior Digital Developer	90	110	130
Specialist Content Writer	80	100	130
Senior Mac Artist	45	55	65

they're all in the UK, resulting in agencies promoting juniors ahead of time, at greater cost, to retain them, which skews salary expectations.


"If agencies took on more graduates each year, the situation would surely level out."

Overall, most recruiters we spoke to were optimistic that the slow recovery was pointing towards better times.

"Domestic economic growth, plus that

of many of our nearest trading neighbours, means we are supremely confident and excited about a vibrant marketplace going into 2013, and see positive recruitment trends continuing," concludes Marsden Inch's Robert Roydhouse.

"It is better this year than any other since the recession to be looking for a better job," says The Pond's Leighton Howl. "2013 looks set to be very similar to 2012," says 3rdeye's Lucy Pearce.

"We are already working on roles to be quickly filled in the New Year, and the market is feeling very confident." 

*This survey was completed using data supplied by specialist advertising & communications recruiters 3rdeye, The Creative Store, Davies & Partners, Firebrand, Jobmedia, Marsden Inch, Metro Recruitment, The Pond, and Portfolio Recruitment.*

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