



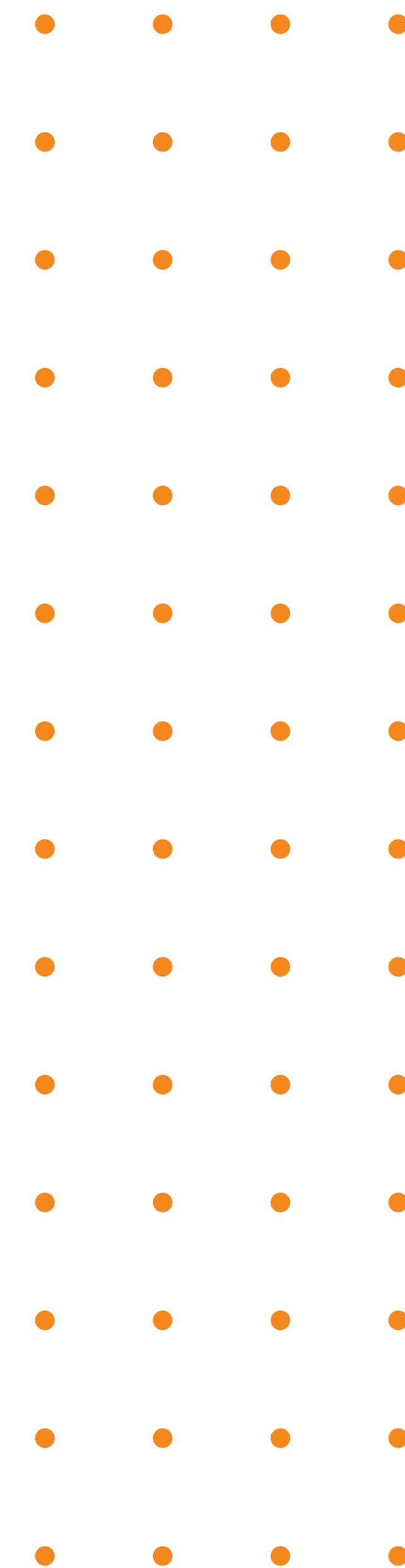
Digital & Creative

Salary Guide

2022

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State of the Industry

The pandemic ebbed and flowed throughout 2021, leaving massive changes in its wake. Employers of every size and industry were forced to choose between new modes of working that once seemed obscure or temporary, such as fully remote and hybrid models. The very idea of benefits or perks in the workplace evolved, too. After all, what good is a premium parking spot or free on-premises gym if nobody's in the office to use it?

Employees, on the other hand, had their day in the sun during the same period. With more than 19 million U.S. workers leaving their jobs since April of 2021, journalists and thought leaders have concocted myriad terms to describe the mass exodus. Whether you call it “The Great Resignation” or “The Great Reconsideration,” the impact has been—without a doubt—great. Candidates are leaving the status quo behind to seek out exactly what they want, often fielding multiple prime offers in the process. This bull market of perfect jobs won't last, but for the moment, its complexities need to be unraveled.

As with previous KORE1 salary guides, we looked at the demand for specialists in areas like IT, emerging hiring trends, crucial skill sets, and what businesses were paying for talent in order to maintain their competitive edge in the market. Depending on where you look and who you ask, predictions regarding the U.S. employment landscape in 2022 can differ greatly. To help navigate this uncertainty, our 2022 Digital & Creative salary guide condenses our years of experience in staffing and our in-depth knowledge of the markets in which we operate into an easy-to-use compendium. We hope the information within proves useful as you plan for the future in these uncertain times.

Sources: [McKinsey](#), [WIRED](#)

2022 Employment and Hiring Trends

Companies Must Care (About Everyone)

The pressure is on for corporate entities to show they care—whether they mean it or not. Social responsibility sits high on the list of priorities for business leaders as they determine their corporate agendas. This shift comes not a moment too soon: With concerns about the threat of climate change and the daily struggles of underrepresented people breaking into the national conversation, the onus is on corporate America to enact some form of meaningful change in combating these issues. Where once the bottom line was the noblest pursuit in business, sustainability must now be embedded as a key determinant of success.

Hiring managers across the country are waking up to the fact that diverse hiring prompts innovation by corralling a greater variety of thoughts and opinions under one organizational roof. Business leaders used to search for talent just in their own homogeneous networks, essentially looking for one needle in one haystack. But the truth is, with the advent of more inclusive hiring practices, companies are finding out that there are more needles within reach than they imagined, making their search less imposing than they originally imagined. The possibilities for restructuring the workplace are endless, which is as exhilarating as it is daunting.



Compensation Complications

The ways in which we work show no signs of changing, and the ways we get appraised as workers are changing at a commensurate rate. Location matters less and less in the evolving work landscape.

Think of it this way: If a Silicon Valley-based startup hires two equally skilled full-stack developers to work remotely, and one lives locally in San Francisco while the other resides in Cincinnati, should those developers be compensated at the same rate? Is the employer responsible for the differing living expenses of remote workers? This is just one example of the shifting goal posts companies must face when determining salary.

The very nature of KPIs is changing, too. Purpose-driven metrics with an altruistic bent are getting baked into compensation and performance decisions. Companies across industries have chosen to reconfigure the system to reward sustainability and ethical decisions. For example, a leading producer of cleaning and personal-care products recently built sustainability targets into its incentive system for the company's entire workforce, in service of its goal of being a zero-waste company by 2025. For those in the C-suite and in HR, it's becoming almost as common to manage a company's carbon footprint as it is to manage internal resources.

Sources: [Forbes](#), [McKinsey](#), [PwC](#)

How to Use this Guide

This salary guide includes the national average salary and the national top 10% salary for a broad range of positions within the Digital & Creative industry. If you'd like to learn what these national average salaries translate to in your part of the country, you can use our City Cost Calculator to get a salary estimate.

We've also included a cost-of-living percentage, allowing you to determine how salaries in the Digital & Creative industry compare to cost of living in your area.

Interested in a personalized salary estimate? [Reach out to KORE1](#) for salary details based on your experience level and specific job function.



Industry Trends

Digital & Creative

1. Move Over Minimalism

Maximalism is on the rise, according to many prominent designers. It's the driving force behind a visual renaissance that is setting fire to the "graphic sameness brought on by previously limiting functional requirements of living in a digital space." In its place is a clear desire for a more bombastic approach. Visceral narratives and thrilling visual experiences are becoming the norm, replacing flat, geometric, austere brand systems. As younger generations find more and more value in authenticity and distinctiveness, there is less and less room for modular approaches that may feel like cookie cutter designs. Think brighter colors and bolder fonts, and you'll have a decent mental image of what maximalism entails.

2. The Rise of Eco-aesthetics

What began as careless greenwashing has evolved into more nuanced “eco-aesthetics.” To show they’re putting the planet first, brands are turning to materials and finishes that are sustainable, recyclable, and have the lowest carbon impact possible to meet the demands of a more eco-savvy consumer base, all without sacrificing visual impact. As an example, metallic foil manufacturers have already made strides in making their products biodegradable. Water-based inks are gaining greater use, but it is no good using them on virgin paper and then applying a soft-touch laminate, as this would negate their eco-benefits. The key is how these processes are used in an intelligent way. That will be the difference between something that appears green, and those which are truly sustainable.

Source: [Creative Boom](#)

National Creative Positions	2022 Salaries	
Creative & Digital	Average Salary	Top 10%
Art Director	\$79,000	\$125,000
Brand Manager	\$104,000	\$171,000
Chief Marketing Officer	\$177,000	\$361,000
Content Manager	\$75,000	\$130,000
Content Strategist	\$103,000	\$175,000
Copywriter	\$58,000	\$91,000
Copy Editor	\$51,000	\$80,000
Creative Director	\$126,000	\$233,000
Creative Services Manager	\$77,000	\$114,000
Digital Designer	\$60,000	\$93,000
Graphic Designer	\$50,000	\$76,000
Illustrator	\$55,000	\$98,000

• • • •	Marketing Automation Manager	\$111,000	\$181,000
• • • •	Marketing Manager	\$104,000	\$179,000
• • • •	Media Buyer	\$53,000	\$75,000
• • • •	Mobile Developer	\$97,000	\$151,000
• • • •	Motion Designer	\$70,000	\$116,000
• • • •	Multimedia Designer	\$59,000	\$87,000
• • • •	SEO Specialist	\$58,000	\$88,000
• • • •	SEO Manager	\$73,000	\$112,000
• • • •	Social Media Manager	\$55,000	\$90,000
• • • •	User Experience Specialist	\$96,000	\$135,000
• • • •	User Interface Specialist	\$62,000	\$102,000
• • • •	Vice President of Marketing	\$181,000	\$278,000
• • • •	Video Editor	\$55,000	\$95,000
• • • •	Web Designer	\$58,000	\$88,000

Salary Calculator

Multiply the national average salary by the percentage below in your region for a salary estimate.

So Cal	120%
Nor Cal	127%
Denver	9%
Boston	103%
Tri State	110%
Cincinnati	105%

Looking for more than an estimate? [Reach out](#) for precise salary insight for yourself or your open roles.

Refer to the chart below to contrast the average salary for your role against the average cost of living for your area.

Region	Cost of living % above or below national average
So Cal	48%
Nor Cal	80%
Denver	12%
Boston	48%
Tri State	129%
Cincinnati	-8%