

Dark Wages

STATE OF PAY
BERLIN 2025

REDSOFA

The data in this REDSOFA State of Pay is based on real figures from 2024/5, gathered from both a survey conducted by 1,000 industry-focussed participants and the REDSOFA team across London, Berlin and Amsterdam.

Pulled from over 100 active REDSOFA clients — from scrappy startups to award-winning network agencies, tech giants, and global consultancies — it covers the full spectrum of creative, product, and tech salaries.

We’ve included top and bottom brackets, midpoints, and emerging trends — so you can benchmark your offer, sense-check your raise, or just finally figure out if you’re being lowballed.

For clients, it keeps pay competitive. For candidates, it shows where you really stand.

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Foreword

An Age of Uncertainty, Neo-Feudalism, the Great Replacement. Whatever you want to call it, our industry has faced weird and uncharted times over the last few years. While technological progress keeps on... progressing, creativity still fuels innovation, and design still shapes our world. But let's face it: we're finding the path of our own careers slightly more unclear with each Midjourney prompt (and yes, everything you read here may already be out of date — that's just how time works now).

Inflation and its effects have fluctuated heavily across creative and tech hubs such as London, Berlin, and Amsterdam, yet salaries and day rates have remained frustratingly stagnant, leaving many professionals wondering: are we truly valued? Organisations that genuinely value their staff find themselves trapped in a cycle, wanting to offer higher compensation to keep their talent and attract fresh blood, but constrained by clients or users who cannot afford to pay higher rates. Rinse and repeat.

Let's not avoid this; let's acknowledge it. Our fields have faced some dark times, so we want to bring some light. One thing we can be sure of: nothing is permanent. And 2025 is slowly but surely breathing life back into the industry.

Budgets are opening, freelance is emerging once again, and new jobs are coming. It looks different, but we are all ready.

The aim of The State of Pay is, and always will be, to bring transparency and offer useful tools that help level the playing field for talent from all walks of life in our industry. We want to replace uncertainty with clarity. To offer information in an age of misinformation.

To light the way, we've asked industry leaders and emerging talent to bring us invaluable insights discussing the Future of Work in our industry. You'll hear from voices shaping policy at the European Commission, redefining content with AI, challenging enforced RTO, and calling out the cultural cost of cancel culture. Whether it's Creative Technologists in Berlin, DEI champions in Amsterdam, or founders building new models of leadership. This is a raw, honest look at where we're heading next.

Outside of the editorial, our community has come together to provide essential salary information, which we've balanced against our own market observations and salary trends from clients across Europe. With over one thousand people answering our survey, and polls responded to by a network of over ninety thousand, we're genuinely grateful for how the Creative, Design, and Tech world has rallied around this.

With that said, welcome to The Dark Wages.

“Let’s not avoid this, let’s acknowledge it. Our fields have faced some dark times, so we want to bring some light.”

What You Think

We asked our network of almost 100,000 creatives, technologists and strategists what they really think — about AI, DEI, leadership, remote work, and what's next for the industry.

This is what came back: strong opinions, fast takes, and some numbers that say more than a keynote.

REDSOFA

Do you feel current diversity initiatives in the creative industry are effective?

Yes 17%

Kind of 24%

No 59%

REDSOFA

Would you prefer to work freelance or perm over the next five years?

Freelance 39%

In-house 44%

Not sure 17%

REDSOFA

Do you think 'native' level language skills for creative roles is fair?

Yes 33%

No 57%

REDSOFA

Is creative output better if teams were not working remote, or is the difference negligible?

Yes 29%

No 71%

REDSOFA

Would you stay at your current company if you'd have to go back to 5 days a week in the office?

Yes 10%

No 90%

REDSOFA

Should companies be legally forced to be transparent about the use of AI in their advertising?

Yes 81%

No 19%



REDSOFA

What You Said

We asked. You answered. Loudly. From frustrations about remote work to love letters for flexible hours, this is what respondents really think about pay, culture, leadership, and the state of the industry. No filters. Just facts (and a few feelings).

"Freelance daily rates have been frozen since forever, yet inflation and cost of living keep rising. We're expected to do more in less time, for the same money."

ON UNDERPAY & INFLATION

"Women and Queers are still underrepresented in higher roles and often hired into junior positions with low-entry salaries."

It saves companies money in the long run."

ON DEI & LOW-ENTRY OFFERS

"I'd rather risk the freelance rollercoaster than go back to the 'what's a life outside work?' treadmill."

ON RETENTION

"Agencies have an offspring problem — they still expect insane hours and pay that doesn't reflect the workload, so many of us go in-house or freelance."

ON AGENCY CULTURE

"If the fully remote option was cancelled by management, I'd start searching for a new job immediately."

ON REMOTE WORK AS A DEAL-BREAKER

"Salaries in Germany aren't keeping pace with housing costs. Meanwhile, companies act like it's 2018 rates in a 2025 market."

ON RETENTION

"I have a great setup here — 4 days a week for 90% salary. The flexibility is worth it for the work-life balance!"

ON UNDERPAY & INFLATION

"If the fully remote option vanished, I'd leave. Thankfully, my employer understands that. I'm paid fairly and get to do my job from anywhere."

ON REMOTE FREEDOM

"Even though it's not huge, my company actually does yearly raises and offers a clear promotion track. I feel recognised for my work, so I'm staying put."

ON ANNUAL SALARY INCREASES

"Our leadership invests heavily in staff training and personal development. I've grown more here in one year than in three years at my old agency."

ON AGENCY CULTURE

"As a cofounder and chief design officer, a big part of my compensation is equity. It works well for me — the potential upside is worth more than a higher base salary."

ON ANNUAL SALARY INCREASES

"I love the creative freedom we have, and the team is amazing. Management is actually respectful of personal time — which is rare in this industry."

ON POSITIVE TEAM CULTURE



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Opinions May Vary

3 Ideas from inside the industry, and occasionally just outside the box. Writers, directors, technologists and consultants share what's on their minds — and what's keeping them up at night.

Time to Break The Glass Ceiling

SANDRA
SHILLING

EXECUTIVE
CREATIVE DIRECTOR
WE ARE SOCIAL
EX IBMIX, BBDO

As a woman in a leadership position in advertising, I've experienced firsthand how challenging it can be to reach the top. Despite nearly two-thirds of agency employees being women, senior positions are still largely held by men.

Leadership structures have been slow to evolve, making it more difficult for talented women to break through. While progress is happening, achieving true gender parity in leadership is still a work in progress.

Many women find themselves stuck in middle management — not due to lack of ambition or skill, but because of biases and a lack of mentorship. Work-life balance concerns — especially around parental leave — continue to impact career progression.

That said, positive change is underway. More women are stepping up, supporting one another, and pushing for leadership that reflects the diversity of the workforce. Still, one of the biggest challenges remains age-related bias — something I, and many women around me, have encountered.

According to the GWA Diversity Study 2023, women now hold 44% of management roles in German agencies — a promising step forward.

However, for those over 40, career advancement can still feel like an uphill battle. Age-related discrimination is a persistent issue, disproportionately affecting women.

While men in their 40s and 50s are often seen as experienced and authoritative, women of the same age face outdated assumptions about their adaptability and innovation.

This bias limits career opportunities and discourages many from even aiming for leadership roles. I've seen brilliant, experienced women overlooked for leadership positions in favour of younger, often male, colleagues. The notion that women "peak" earlier in their careers, while men continue to rise into leadership, is outdated and needs to change. Recognising experience — regardless of gender or age — is crucial to building a more inclusive industry. Despite these challenges, the industry is evolving.

More agencies are embracing diverse perspectives and rethinking traditional leadership models. Conversations around flexible career paths, mentorship, and inclusive management approaches are gaining momentum.

There's still work to do, but the progress is undeniable. Women — myself included — are driving change. As more voices demand inclusivity, the future of advertising leadership in Germany is becoming more diverse, balanced, and open to everyone.

“There's still work to do, but the progress is undeniable. Women — myself included — are driving change.”



A Hill to

Navigating the Divide

ANDY
CORINDE

Earlier this year, companies like Meta, Amazon, and Walmart in the US announced plans to scale back their DEI policies. This followed a series of executive orders from the US president restricting DEI initiatives within federal agencies and contractors.

So what's the fallout in Europe and the UK? In contrast to the US, the EU has taken a more progressive stance — mandating that companies with over 100 employees report key DEI metrics, with non-compliance carrying fines of up to €10 million. A sharp divergence in direction.

For companies operating in both the US and EU, this creates a clear challenge: navigating two different policies, leading to a potential “split personality” in their brand. “Is you is, or is you ain’t, for DEI?” A brand can’t claim to be all for DEI, but just not in the US. That’s an employer-branding nightmare.

MD, REDSOFA
AMSTERDAM

It will be fascinating to see how large companies like Microsoft, Google, and Netflix navigate this double standard. Political pressure aside, it’s not just about legislation — it’s about doing what’s right for the brand and the people it serves. Let’s look at the data.

According to McKinsey’s 2023 “Diversity Matters Even More” report, companies with more than 30% women in executive teams are significantly more likely to outperform those with fewer women in leadership.

This is just one of many examples showing that DEI isn’t just the right thing to do — it’s good for business.



DEI on

And then there’s Gen Z and Millennials. (Yes, it sounds like a band name — but these generations are also at the core of why DEI still matters.) Studies show that 69% of them actively seek out workplaces that prioritise diversity, and they’re more likely to stay in environments with a strong DEI culture.

So what happens if DEI budgets get slashed? The people behind the work won’t just disappear. Yes, roles may be cut — but the work itself can, and will, continue.

It might evolve: more grassroots, more employee-led, perhaps more activist in nature. But DEI will survive — and thrive — if employees keep it alive.

“DEI is more critical than ever. The EU’s stance is a step in the right direction, but if the US model starts to influence change in Europe, we’ll need to adapt creatively and continue building on the foundation we’ve worked so hard to establish over the last decade.”

ELLIOT
LEAVY

FOUNDER
ACQUAINTED

You
Don't
Need
to
Read
this

I mean, you can, but you don't need to. Content is fluid now. It will find you. It arrives pre-shaped to your liking, anticipating your taste like a clairvoyant sommelier. We saw early signs with Google's NotebookLM, but now it's creeping elsewhere — like TIME's "Talk to Me" feature, where you can chat with an article about Trump — what a time to be alive...

But this is just at the beginning. We're now at the dawn of a great content cambrian explosion — where anyone with a vague idea and a WiFi connection can summon images, videos, and entire games with the ease of a Roman emperor demanding grapes. The idea that "content is king" is dead — but long live the king anyway, forever and ever.

Because content isn't just king, it can now be anything, and everything. What we're witnessing is a full-blown creative uprising, where AI-powered tools are birthing new kinds of artists, writers, and filmmakers while also casually wiping out existing business models en masse.

This goes beyond just turning pdfs into podcasts. Books will become TV series. TV series into games. Games will become sprawling, AI-generated worlds that morph in real-time based on what you want to do. Narrative isn't just something you consume — it's something you step inside. World models are coming, and they won't just generate stories; they'll generate realities. What happens when content doesn't just exist for you, but reshapes around you? Virtual insanity.

And it's not just fluid at the point of consumption anymore — it's fluid at the point of creation. You no longer need to direct every detail. You just set the tone, and the system gets the vibe. The style holds. The mood continues. We're not prompting now, we're conversing. You speak the world into existence — and in doing so, dismantle the old one. This is vibe coding: intent as interface, conversation as a symphony of creative destruction.

The the medium is the message — and the message can be anything. Text, image, sound, sensation. Not fixed, but responsive. Not broadcast, but shaped. Human-machine interaction is reaching the point of full-blown contact: an exchange not just of information, but of intention. You don't just use the system — you steer it. You don't just influence the output — you become part of it. The boundary is gone. Algorithmic nirvana — where creation feels less like execution, and more like communion.

But of course, there's a catch. The internet will drown in content. Soon, it won't be worth the pixels it's displayed on. Deepfakes, AI-generated junk, and SEO sludge will turn it into a wasteland where even the most determined truth-seekers will need a machete to cut through the nonsense. And as content fractures into a million algorithmically tailored shards, culture itself becomes atomised — no shared narratives, no common ground, just an endless stream of micro-realities, each calibrated for maximum engagement.

Meanwhile the internet — once designed for human attention — will quietly be redesigned for agents. A post-human web, buzzing with synthetic traffic, where machines speak to machines in languages we no longer read. But amidst the noise, ideas still matter. The signal still cuts through the static. Slop will always be slop — but clarity still resonates. It's not just about making content — it's about saying something worth hearing. And now, we have an unprecedented set of tools to do exactly that.

Content is fluid. The difference is knowing whether directing the the current or caught in it without a paddle. You didn't need to read this. But you did. And now it's in your head.

“Burnout isn’t industry wide, it’s discipline-specific.”

Creatives account for nearly half (45.5%) of all burnout claims. That’s more than Strategy, Client Services, or Product Design combined.



REDSOFA

Ghost Nation

Let's talk about ghosting

JEMIMA
JORDAN

SENIOR CREATIVE
CONSULTANT REDSOFA
EX OGILVY AND DDB

Dare we talk about ghosting?

LinkedIn used to be a polite, predictable space. A few 'I got a new job' posts, a handful of likes, a heart emoji. But now? The energy is different. People are mad. People are frustrated. People feel unseen.

Why? Because, among other things, they're being ghosted.

Ghosting — once just a dating headache — is now everywhere. On LinkedIn. In emails. Across every stage of job-seeking. So why is ghosting everywhere? Let's be real — the hiring process is broken.

In 2023, layoffs soared, applications flooded in, and suddenly more people were chasing fewer jobs. But instead of more transparency candidates got radio silence. No response. No feedback. Just... nothing. The reality is, the job market has shifted. With fewer opportunities and a flood of applications, even the most talented people are being left without a response. And it's not just happening to a few unlucky candidates — 92% of job seekers have been ghosted during the hiring process, according to People Management.

With fewer opportunities available and a surge in applications, even the most talented candidates are sometimes left without a response. And it's not a reflection of their ability or potential — it's a symptom of a system stretched too thin.

I ran a poll recently, and out of 800 people, 98% said they'd been ghosted. The message is clear: if you don't get the job, you're not even worth a rejection.

When talent is ignored, it's not just frustrating, it's a sign of an industry that's failing the people who keep it alive. What's even sadder is that ghosting isn't just a one-way street. It's now part of hiring culture on both sides.

A recent survey found that 75% of workers admitted to ignoring a prospective employer in the past year. Even more striking — 93% of Gen Z job seekers said they've ghosted an interview. And it doesn't stop there. 87% of candidates have accepted a job, signed the contract... and then never shown up.

Hiring is broken. The system is stretched. And now, ghosting has become the norm. So why don't we stop ghosting? Because we're all overwhelmed. We love talent. And talent deserves better. No one should feel invisible after putting themselves out there — whether that's applying for a job, showing up for an interview, or reaching out to a hiring manager.

We can't fix the hiring system overnight. But we can choose to be better. A quick response. A simple "no thanks." A little more transparency. It won't solve everything, but it's a start.

**Because if we
all hate being
ghosted, maybe
it's time we all
stopped doing it.**



Cancel Culture Is Cancelling Culture

Belonging is in Our Hearts,
Not Just Business.

MAXINE
PENNEY

Culture is the rhythm of our lives — the way we connect, express, and exist in the world. It's the music we listen to, the spaces we create, and the stories we tell.

For years, I searched for belonging in corporate and creative industries, but these institutions weren't designed for people like me. As a Black woman with ADHD (intersectionality), I was constantly navigating systems that didn't consider my experiences. So, I built my own. I created my own spaces, my own community, and my own culture — because culture isn't just about tradition, it's about who gets to feel seen, heard, and valued.

That's why Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) matters — not as a corporate policy or a passing trend, but as a way of life. Yet, today we're watching DEI initiatives being dismantled — especially in the U.S. — as if the need for equity, belonging, and visibility was ever up for debate.

Too often, DEI is reduced to race, gender, or sexual identity. But it's also about social class, disabilities, age, loneliness — everything that shapes the way we move through the world. When we strip DEI away, we don't just lose workplace initiatives — we erase real people, real experiences, and real struggles. Cancel culture, at its core, is about accountability. But when it's used to silence important conversations, it becomes a tool for exclusion. If we're not careful, we risk letting "cancel culture" erase the very cultures that make us who we are. So, how can we make a difference? You don't have to be an activist to create change — you just have to be intentional.

Look at who surrounds you. Do all your friends look like you? Think like you? Come from the same background? If so, maybe it's time to expand your world. Pay attention to language. Words shape reality. The language we use can include or exclude, empower or diminish. Stay open to learning and unlearning. Create spaces where everyone belongs — in work, in friendships, in everyday life.

Representation isn't just about boardrooms. It's about making sure people feel safe, valued, and heard in every space they enter. No matter what gets cancelled, I refuse to let culture — or our shared humanity — be one of them.

CULTURE CONSULTANT
EX MONKS AND NIKE

“Remote isn’t a perk – it’s the baseline for freelance life.”

76.2% of freelancers work fully remote.
Only 13.6% of entry-level respondents have fully-remote roles.



The widely misunderstood story of Gen Z experts.

REDSOFA

ISABELLE
ROGAT

MANAGING DIRECTOR
ODALIN, EX SCHOLZ
+ FRIENDS, THJNK

“Rejuvenate our brand”, “Reach a younger target audience”, “Grow in Gen Z” These words can be found in many brand briefings. And hey, looking at demographic changes in our societies and the fact that most of the zeitgeist is born into rather young, urban communities — this makes total sense.

As a response, some companies and agencies have recognised the need to take a closer look at these groups — their behaviours, their beliefs, and their internal divisions, which raise the question of whether they even constitute a single target group at all. And when you look at the public (or even inter-company) perception of these roles, there is one big misunderstanding to uncover.

So where better to do that than here? In this piece about the state of our creative industry: Individual experience vs. consumer insights.

Having held a position like that myself as a Gen Z expert — and speaking on stages about it fairly often — I’ve observed that much of the debate around the relevance of these roles stems from the belief that we’re simply being “paid for being young.”

That when examining a script, a product launch, or a piece of social media creative, the mere age of the person becomes a shortcut around customer research: If ABC likes it, and she’s XYZ years old, then it’s “approved by the young.”

It’s this rather unstatistical thinking that fuels the debate — not the idea that we don’t need these roles.

Let’s shape this role in a way that empowers the young person not just to be the voice of a generation, but to investigate it — to guide quantitative research, explore youth culture firsthand, and return with insights that go beyond instinct. Not a stand-in for a whole demographic, but a bridge to understanding it better.



Make Frens and Kill Things

DANIEL
MASCARENHAS

CREATIVE ADVISOR FOR THE
EUROPEAN COMMISSION,
VP AT HYPE, EX AKQA

How to be Creative in Crypto

Being a Creative Director in crypto is nothing like being one in traditional advertising. If you're expecting "longish" timelines, big productions, and deep brand-building exercises, you're in the wrong industry.

Crypto is fast, brutal, and constantly shifting — if you don't move at the speed of the market, you're already behind. Like AI somehow.

And just as AI is redefining what's possible, creatives should be actively pushing its boundaries, experimenting with how it can shape new narratives, generate assets at scale, and create hyper-relevant, real-time content that resonates with ever-evolving communities.

"We need a big brand book and a deep 2 year+ strategy." Nope. By the time you finish it, the market has already moved on. Crypto isn't built on traditional brand equity — it's built on narratives that shift almost week-to-week. What matters is agility: rolling out visuals, memes, and campaigns fast, testing what sticks, and iterating.

"We should do a big multi-channel campaign." Wrong, Frens... Crypto lives in a few high-impact channels — Twitter, Telegram, Discord, and niche news sites. Forget TV ads or billboards [if you are not Coinbase]. The best crypto campaigns don't look like marketing; they look like organic movements.

"We need high-polish, agency-level production." Sometimes, sure. But speed is more important than perfection. A lo-fi meme that captures a trend today will perform better than a high-budget ad that lands next week. Trends move at warp speed, and if you can't capitalise on them, someone else will.

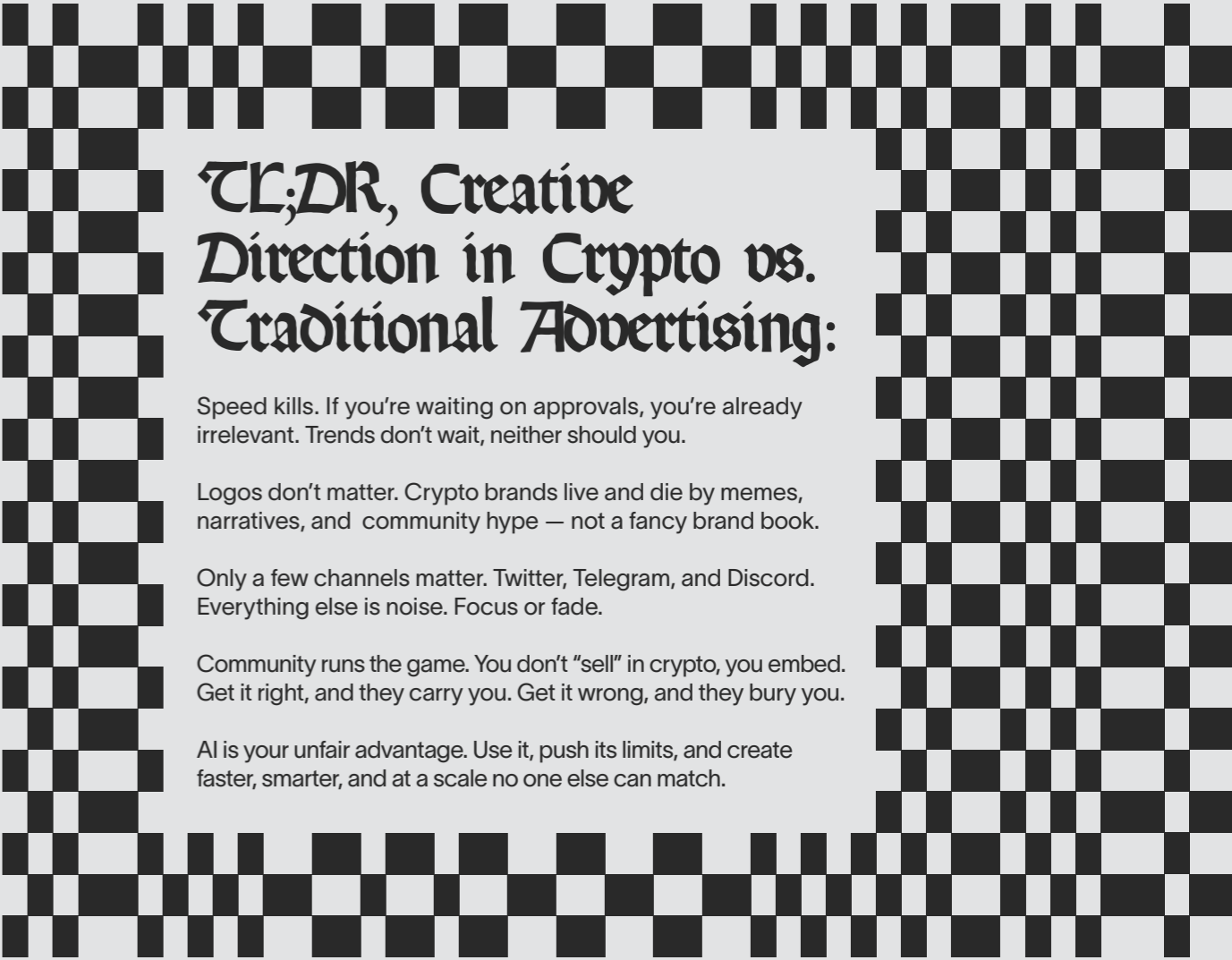
"Let's make a perfect, long-term visual identity." Why? Crypto brands evolve in real-time. You're not designing for a static, 15-year future — you're designing something that lives and adapts [fast].

"Our messaging should be clear and structured." Crypto thrives on vibes, inside jokes, and controlled chaos. The best messaging is ambiguous enough to create intrigue, yet memeable enough to spread organically. If your campaign needs a BIG explainer video, you already lost. Community is the brand. You're not marketing to an audience, you're embedding within it.

The best crypto campaigns don't look like ads; they look like something the community itself created. Execution is fast, and there are no rules. Big agency structures? Approval layers? Kill them. The best ideas win, and the best ideas come in the moment.

You're playing with fire. One wrong move, and the entire community turns on you. Traditional advertising protects brands from backlash — crypto exposes them. You either navigate that chaos, or you get buried in it.

The creatives who thrive in crypto aren't just reacting fast; they're using AI to move even faster [Whether it's for rapid prototyping, meme generation, or automated content deployment] AI is no longer an option — it's a necessity. The most forward-thinking-creatives aren't just using AI, they're testing its limits, bending it to create the kind of storytelling that would have been impossible just a year ago...



TL;DR, Creative Direction in Crypto vs. Traditional Advertising:

Speed kills. If you're waiting on approvals, you're already irrelevant. Trends don't wait, neither should you.

Logos don't matter. Crypto brands live and die by memes, narratives, and community hype — not a fancy brand book.

Only a few channels matter. Twitter, Telegram, and Discord. Everything else is noise. Focus or fade.

Community runs the game. You don't "sell" in crypto, you embed. Get it right, and they carry you. Get it wrong, and they bury you.

AI is your unfair advantage. Use it, push its limits, and create faster, smarter, and at a scale no one else can match.

Crypto marketing is different. In general, it pays better than traditional advertising — if you know how to play the game. Budgets move fast, but so do expectations. There's no room for bloated teams or slow creative processes; the industry rewards a specific breed of creative — ones who thrive in ambiguity, adapt on the fly, and know how to craft narratives that make anons care. If that's you, there's no better place to be.

It's Not Just a Business

CAT
HOW

FOUNDER AND
EXECUTIVE CREATIVE
DIRECTOR AT HOW&HOW

Why Great Companies Serve Their Teams, Not the Other Way Around

"It's Not Just Business.. I think the biggest thing to remember when you run a company – as a founder or indeed anyone holding a managerial position of any sort – is that you work for your team. It's not the other way around. At How&How our leadership team are always asking ourselves, "How can we make our team's lives easier, happier and more smoothly enabled?" This can manifest in all sorts of ways.

For example, making sure that we keep team morale high by only employing and retaining the best people – this could mean making difficult decisions on letting people go if we feel situations could be impacting this. We also ask people what they would like more of – is it more holidays, more flexibility of working from home, more 1-2-1s and career support and advice, more salary transparency – and then do our damndest to make those things happen.

Communication and transparency is key. Treating the team as equals, from the top down, makes sure that responsibility and a commitment to each other is then manifested from the bottom up as well. I'm open to hearing feedback and changing company policy due to a suggestion from an intern; as much as I am from a director. Subsequently, when we're in a position to raise salaries, like we did collectively across the team last Christmas, we also do this equally across the board.

Find Freedom.

From employee to entrepreneur.

ERIKA LAURO

FREELANCE PRINCIPAL
PRODUCT DESIGNER AT IKEA
EX ZALANDO AND BABBEL

Four years ago, I chose to leave traditional employment and experiment with launching my own business and working as a freelance design talent in tech. Since then, I had the pleasure of working for great companies across Europe and the US, from small startups to established organisations. It has been a fascinating journey demonstrating to myself that independence can be both viable and highly profitable.

The professional landscape has been undergoing a major transformation for a few years now. The design and technology sectors are experiencing widespread layoffs and instability, exposing the inefficiencies of traditional corporate management. Full-time employment's rigid structures and conditions no longer serve many professionals, who are increasingly seeking alternative career paths.

In 2023 alone, nearly 100,000 jobs were eliminated in tech. Industry giants like Google, Meta, Microsoft, and Amazon collectively cut over 50,000 positions and it hasn't stopped. This wave of layoffs has forced professionals to reconsider their career trajectories and challenge the traditional concept of work security.

Found a Business.



While some seek new employment facing incredible competition, a growing number are leveraging their skills independently, launching startups, consulting, and embracing freelancing, especially in younger generations.

Freelancing is not just about flexibility and working on your terms; it is a strategic career move. Skilled professionals are capitalising on their expertise by engaging with a global employer base rather than being tied to a single organisation and expanding their network drastically. This shift is fostering an entrepreneurial mindset and creating a more dynamic and educated workforce.

Why are
People
Job Hunting?

21% are
looking to grow
or progress.

Over 1 in 3 departures are either
value, burnout, or leadership related.

Tinker,

Soldier,

Tailor,

AI.

PETER
WILLERT

Staying Relevant
in the AI Age.

SOFTWARE ENGINEERING
EXECUTIVE EX EYEEM

The job market for software engineers in Europe has been tough over the last 18 months. Companies are increasingly looking for highly specific profiles while simultaneously expecting candidates to be AI experts. This raises an important question: What should engineers focus on to stay relevant?

In my time as Software Engineer I often found myself deeply involved in product work for months, only to experience FOMO when a new trend emerged — but there simply wasn’t enough headspace to jump on it. The good news? Software trends come and go. Most libraries and technologies eventually get replaced or become obsolete. Remember CoffeeScript? Exactly.

I got into software engineering out of curiosity — wanting to understand how things work. I started by tinkering with HTML and CSS, which opened up the world of frontend development. Over time, that curiosity led me closer to backend development, DevOps (whatever that means these days), etc. and said curiosity finally brought me to managing people and companies behind it all.

Now, with AI and ML dominating job boards and industry conversations, how can you stay relevant without getting overwhelmed? The reality is that most engineers won’t need to train or fine-tune models in their next role — unless they want to, of course. But AI isn’t going away, rumor has it, we’ll see a plateau in quality of models and they will turn into a technology that will be around like the internet or mobile phones are today. So how should you approach it? I have two suggestions.

Put your tinkerer hat on.

Set aside time each week to explore, not to learn everything, not to attend four-hour Harvard lectures on neural networks, but to explore and to start somewhere.

Watch a tutorial on RAG (Retrieval-Augmented Generation — I don’t know yet. Will explore that this week), set up Ollama locally and experiment with it, or — if you’re feeling adventurous — see if your favourite programming language has an interesting ML thing you could try out. Treat ML as another tool in your engineering toolkit, just like a new framework or database.

Learn to wield
ML-powered
development
tools.

A lot of engineering leaders are talking about how tools like Cursor and Copilot are supercharging their teams. These tools take away some of the friction around syntax and allow engineers to move faster, especially in proof-of-concept work.

They make it easier to be productive, let’s say, in Python even if you come from a Java or PHP background. You already know the engineering principles, the guiding rails, — let the “Copilots” help you be more productive.

I strongly believe that following these two suggestions will set you up to stay relevant, productive, and a valuable team member in this ever evolving landscape.

Why Enforced RTO
Misses the Mark

JAN-OLIVER
SELL

MANAGING
DIRECTOR
AT COINBASE

Let’s face it — full and enforced return to office is the preserve of micromanagers. We’re seeing the pendulum swinging back post-COVID away from remote working, with companies like Amazon, JP Morgan Chase, and Nike implementing policies requiring at least four days in-office weekly. But this misguided attempt to regain “control” over uninspired workers will only serve to drive them away.

During my time as MD for Coinbase, Germany, our remote-first policy allowed us to hire people from all around Germany, rather than limiting ourselves to the immediate surroundings of an office space. This approach enabled us to meet ambitious recruitment timelines and build a strong operational team — something that would have been much more difficult with a rigid in-office requirement. According to several recent studies, the working model (RTO, hybrid or fully remote) itself is far less important than the work environment and practices organisations create. A McKinsey study from February 2025, found that despite the surge in RTO policies — with in-person workers doubling to 68% in 2024 — key metrics like intention to leave (39%) remain troublingly high, comparable to pandemic-era peaks.

In a well-run organisation, fully remote or hybrid models don’t lead to any loss of productivity. The data backs this up: a 2023 Stanford study found remote workers showed a 13% performance increase, with 9% attributed to fewer breaks and sick days, and 4% from quieter working

environments. Meanwhile, Gitlab’s 2023 Remote Work Report documented that 62% of remote workers reported increased productivity, compared with in-office. Of course, there are a couple of caveats we need to acknowledge. Obviously there are roles that simply require physical presence; and for teams with less experience at work or less experience working together, the in-person contact is invaluable to help a team bond and connect and understand ways of working.

But as long as we’re dealing with knowledge workers, in particular in the tech world, more agile forms of leadership lead to better results. It’s about building teams by engaging people and providing them with the systems and space to co-create. Essentially, it should be management’s role to form the right team, and then manage the system to remove obstacles to that team doing their best work.

The McKinsey report highlights five core practices that truly drive performance: collaboration, connectivity, innovation, mentorship, and skill development. Roughly half of employees across all working models rate these practices as ineffective in their organisations — a problem that mere physical presence fails to address.

With that in mind, enforced return to office is like forcing team members to write an email at the end of every week summarising their achievements. It’s a blunt tool for managers who have not learned how to motivate and work with a team. A good manager should have a clear idea of whether value is being created in the team or not and by whom, without needing to look over someone’s shoulder to see what they are achieving.

The data shows that there is often a disconnect between leadership perception and employee experience. While 90% of leaders view connectivity as functioning well, only

67% of employees agree. This suggests many RTO mandates reflect a failure to engage with real organisational challenges.

The evidence is clear: enforced return-to-office policies often represent a blunt instrument used by leaders who haven’t developed more sophisticated management approaches. Truly effective organisations focus less on where work happens and more on creating environments that enable peak performance through engagement, system design, and purposeful collaboration — wherever their teams may be.

pendulum swing

REDSOFA

L&D: Live or Die

CHARMILLA
KASPER

GLOBAL L&D PARTNER
EX SOUNDCLLOUD, BCG DV
AND NATIVE INSTRUMENTS

From a support to a strategic powerhouse

L&D in my world was always about learning opportunities, upskilling, and when on-the-job learning wasn't possible, finding external expertise to help employees level up. It was about meeting business demands while making sure people kept growing. Then, I leapt into a new industry where data demystifies the complex; and suddenly, like spring in Berlin, it dawned on me that L&D is not just a business partner, we are a strategic powerhouse.

L&D is being reshaped by AI, the changing workplace, and political shifts driving massive organisational change. It's no longer just about training; it's about strategy. AI isn't just another tool; it is transforming how we anticipate and close skill gaps. With no-code predictive analytics, we can help leaders make smarter, more human decisions. Organisations using predictive analytics are 30% more likely to have effective reskilling programs, according to McKinsey.

We might not have a crystal ball, but the right data prevents blindsides and bad calls, giving you the chance to move from "Sorry, we got it wrong" to "Yep, we saw that coming". So, what kind of data makes L&D truly powerful? We need insights into workforce capabilities, skill gaps, and future business needs. Data that shows where people are today and where they need to be in the future. Tracking learning impact, engagement, and skill alignment with evolving roles ensures L&D is a driver of business growth, not just a support function. The good news? 68% of workers already see disruption coming and are willing to reskill.

This isn't about leaving non-technical folks behind or robots taking over jobs; it's about recognising that internal knowledge is power and using AI as an enabler, not a replacement. Investing in people who already know the business makes sense. When we provide employees with the right tools and access to learning, they don't just keep up — they help drive the business forward. At the same time, onboarding should be transparent, setting new hires up for success from day one, making those first steps less intimidating and more empowering.

And let's be real — AI won't replace what makes us human. According to LinkedIn's 2024 Workplace Learning Report, 68% of L&D pros rank soft skills as a top priority, a trend that's only growing. Critical thinking, problem-solving, and emotional intelligence? That's our edge. AI may take care of repetitive tasks, but human insight will shape the future. As remote work becomes the norm, our ability to communicate and build relationships is more crucial than ever. AI isn't sidelining creativity; it's creating new ways to foster and apply it. L&D leaders, don't wait for change, take the reins. The time to act is now — start the conversations, dig into the data, and ensure people in your organisation don't just keep up, they thrive.

Lead or

GRANT
OORLOFF

AI in Project Management

Project management has always been part science and part art — a balancing act of strategy, people, and processes. But with AI reshaping the field, is it making project management better, or is it sidelining the very people who keep projects moving forward?

AI is changing how work gets done. Gone are the days of manual spreadsheets and endless status updates. AI-powered tools now handle scheduling, resource allocation, and risk assessments in real time, reducing inefficiencies and human error. This allows project managers to focus on what really matters: leading teams, solving complex challenges, and keeping projects on track.

DIRECTOR OF CLIENT
PARTNERSHIPS AT
MOTTO® NYC
EX R/GA AND CLEM BBDO

But another shift is happening — the leveling of individual brilliance. Some project managers have long been valued for their ability to retain vast amounts of information, recall critical details, and navigate complexity with ease. With AI's ability to process data instantly and offer insights, those once-rare skills are becoming common. This raises a key question: If AI removes one of the defining traits of standout project managers, does the role become more strategic, or does it become redundant for some?

While AI enhances efficiency, it also enables project managers to operate at a higher level. AI tools can analyse patterns, flag risks, and suggest better workflows — preventing problems before they arise. For example, instead of learning through trial and error that a client causes frequent delays, AI can flag it early, allowing teams to adjust proactively.

Project managers are already integrating AI in meaningful ways. Tools like Otter.ai provide full transcripts of meetings, allowing managers to stay engaged rather than scrambling to take notes. AI-powered writing assistants refine messaging for high-stakes conversations, saving time and ensuring clarity. This efficiency shift enables project managers to focus on strategy rather than admin work.

But AI isn't a cure-all. Project management isn't just about data — it's about people. No algorithm can replace emotional intelligence, read the room in a tense stakeholder meeting, or rally a team under pressure.

AI can analyse past performance, but it can't inspire, persuade, or navigate the complexities of human relationships. Then there's trust. AI-driven decisions are only as good as the data behind them, and data isn't always perfect. Biases exist, context gets overlooked, and over-reliance on AI can lead to poor decision-making. Smart teams will use AI for insight — not as a substitute for human judgment.

“AI can analyze past performance, but it can't inspire, persuade, or navigate the complexities of human relationships.”



be

So, does AI threaten project managers? Not in the way some fear. AI isn't replacing PMs — it's transforming the role. Instead of being bogged down in busywork, project managers now have the opportunity to focus on leadership, innovation, and big-picture thinking. However, in leveling the playing field, AI might displace those who once relied on their deep knowledge and memory to stand out.

Ultimately, AI is a tool — its impact depends on how it's used. The best project managers will integrate AI thoughtfully, leveraging its strengths while keeping human expertise at the core. Those who adapt will thrive in this new era, ensuring that project management remains as much about people as it is about process.

Led

The Speed of Change

TABITHA
SWANSON

CREATIVE TECHNOLOGIST
AND DESIGNER, EX HIGHSNOBIETY,
VOGUE AND NIKE



I don't know if anyone else feels this way, but I've been feeling overwhelmed by the constant need to learn new skills and pivot. From graphic design to AR, digital fashion, 3D, avatars, VR, AI — the list goes on. It feels like every few months, I'm learning a new program just to stay relevant in the industry, not to mention managing social media on top of that. I'm sure many can relate, but it's part of a bigger conversation about the hyperspeed of everything. Over the years, I've learned so many tools — not just to stay current, but out of genuine curiosity.

A couple of years ago, I counted the software I used in my weekly design flow — it was around 20, and now it's even more. It's not just about learning these design programs; it's also about constantly "performing" and updating social media platforms like LinkedIn, TikTok, and Instagram, plus keeping my portfolio and website up to date. On top of that, I'm managing client relationships, juggling Discord, Slack, and multiple email logins for various projects.

In all of these spaces, there are notifications that, from time to time, are crucial for work agreements and income. On top of that, there's the usual freelance labour — taxes, admin, and so on. Everything comes at a cost, and time is our most precious resource. I've been having these conversations daily, and everyone I speak to feels the same.

Creatives in my circle are working tirelessly, but when we're constantly learning new technical programs, each with its own learning curve, we have less time to focus on the craft and give design the care it deserves. Over the past six years, there's been so much technological novelty that companies have developed a "FOMO" about missing out on trends and falling behind. As a result, designers — and especially freelancers — also feel the pressure to jump into these new tools just to stay relevant. When I look at movements like NFTs, Crypto, the Metaverse, Digital Fashion, and now AI, they were all marketed as utopias, yet at their core, many have turned out to be pump-and-dump schemes, driven by corporations and financial gain. There were a lot of grifters in these spaces. While many had high hopes, it seems there was a disconnection from reality, and the final outcomes have been disappointing.

I have so many thoughts on AI. I've been using it since 2019 and have had the privilege of being hired by several companies as an AI expert. I've also applied AI in my personal art projects, including an AI film I presented at the Venice Film Festival in 2023, amidst the writer's strike — it felt surreal, like a ghost town. My perspective is one of acceptance — AI is here, whether we like it or not. So, we might as well stay informed and keep learning. Curiosity is my driving force, and I find these advancements fascinating. I feel compelled to explore them further.

But sometimes, I wonder what we're doing all this for. So much of the creative industry is about producing "content." The "dead internet theory" suggests that soon, most of the entities online will be bots — bots creating content for bots, and interacting with bots. It's all controlled by money and programmed to respond in specific ways. It's dizzying.

In my personal life, "simplicity" and "intentionality" have guided me for nearly a decade, and I find myself leaning even further toward their extremes. We're bombarded with stimulation from every direction — not just as creatives keeping up with the industry, but even as users. In response, I've become an uber-minimalist in my personal life, trying to cut through the noise.

In 2021, I started a podcast called SEEK/FIND during lockdown, aiming to give my friends and talented creatives a platform to share their passions. Over time, it's evolved into more of an in-person community event initiative. Now, more than ever, I believe it's vital to come together offline, connect through our experiences, and show the things we're truly passionate about. Recently, we held an AI Film Festival at Soho House Berlin, where local creatives showcased their work and shared insights during a panel discussion. The audience was highly engaged in the post-screening conversation, and I think the break-neck pace at which we're moving has left everyone trying to figure out how to navigate it.

In the grand scheme of things, change is the only constant. Dinosaurs went extinct, and life went on. People have faced wars, sickness, starvation, and more — and life continues. On that scale, these challenges are relatively small. If we need to pivot careers, we will. It's not easy or stress-free, but as designers, we need to remember that we're all in this together. By taking responsibility for our choices, we regain a sense of autonomy. Even with all this change, I still love design and creative problem-solving. The pace of change may be quick, but one way or another, this too shall pass <3.

“In the grand scheme of things, change is the only constant.”

“A quarter of directors are actively job hunting.

That's twice the rate of senior managers.”

92.5% of directors said they're actively looking to leave.

What advice would you give to young designers entering the field amid these technological changes?

I come bearing three things — because three is the magic number.



RAY
HO

VP OF PRODUCT AND
DESIGN AT BACKMARKET
EX GETYOURGUIDE AND
SKYSCANNER

A Trio of Truths

1 Forget the fads, focus your mind on designing beyond the screen

Spatial computing (VR/AR), conversational, voice or gesture-based UIs, blah blah blah... all these (and newer) concepts will come and go, they will rise and fall with hype and experimentation. Considering Moore's law as a principle, this means that during your career there will be exponentially less certainty and stability in the interfaces you design for. The best designers will have an ability to adapt, be curious and experimental in approaching, considering, and connecting a plethora of interfaces.

To ensure that you hone this adaptability - the answer, already under your nose, is to always consider the whole user flow. Whatever you're creating, keep in mind the end to end journey that your user will embark upon whether that be digital or physical. This holistic view of thinking across multiple interfaces and modalities ensures that you are designing beyond the screen and saving yourself from irrelevance.

2 Lean into AI, But don't let it think for you.

No need to say anything here, you might as well just google (or ChatGPT) it...But if you're too lazy to do that (I would be), then here's one tip for you.

As designers, being able to use AI well should be second nature. After all, our work is all about the brief. Briefs are our world — and they're foundational to good prompting. I bet you can tell a good one from a bad one, and I'm sure you subscribe to the adage: you get out what you put in.

So yeah, who else is better positioned to get the most out of AI? People who write the worst briefs or you?

3 Isn't the mainstream web boring nowadays? Where's the spice, the opinion, the uniqueness?

As a designer you have the skill to explore and craft. Use your craft to interrogate trends and marry it with what works for users, don't make your life easier by 'just using the design system'. Rules are there to be broken. Assuming you're a nice person I'm sure you can challenge the establishment in a constructive way.

In the end, you might just find yourself doing more than churning out another vanilla interface but actually creating something truly unique and emotionally charged.

And you know what, since AI is a tool, use it! It makes the cost of creation so much cheaper so use it to go wider and to be braver to trial things that push the norms in your world.

The AI Circus

Where Business, Design, and Technology Converge

I've always been drawn to the magic of the circus — not the outdated symbols of clowns and chaos, but its reinvention. Today's modern circus, like Cirque du Soleil, is a masterclass in transformation. It's where performance is powered by bold innovation, and imagination is engineered to make the impossible feel within reach.

Lately, I've felt that same energy again — only now, it's not under a velvet canopy. It's in the world of AI. Today's AI landscape feels like a modern-day performance: a leap forward, full of wonder. But behind the spectacle lies something deeper — a convergence of business, design, and technology that's reshaping how we work and create. It's not just about what AI can do. It's about what we choose to do with it.

AI is no longer a side act. It's in our tools, our workflows, even our conversations. By 2030, it could drive up to \$15.7 trillion in global economic value. But realising that potential isn't just technical — it's behavioural. It requires rethinking systems, reimagining roles, and redesigning organisations to be more connected, contextual, and human-centered.

What excites me most is the shift from tools that assist us to agents that collaborate with us. We're entering the Agentic Era — a time when intelligent agents don't just execute commands; they learn from us, adapt, and connect teams to accelerate outcomes. Agent memory becomes your creative partner — always present, never forgetting, instantly linking insights to ideas that drive measurable results. I still remember watching a \$2 million ad campaign that took two months to develop, recreated in two days by two people using AI. The quality? Nearly indistinguishable. It wasn't a loss of craft — it was the removal of friction. It let creativity flow as fluidly as a well-rehearsed performance.

Because here's the truth: AI doesn't replace imagination. It amplifies it. We're shifting from craft to curation, from execution to orchestration. Prompting is the new brushstroke. Conversation is the new canvas. And creativity? That remains the spark. This isn't just a technical evolution — it's a human one. It demands curiosity, adaptability, and the courage to experiment.

“AI doesn't replace imagination. It amplifies it.”

Yes, there's fear. “Will AI take my job?” I hear it often. But AI doesn't take talent. It takes tasks. It handles the repetitive, the routine — freeing us to focus on high-value thinking and the deeply human work machines can't replicate.

The real challenge is scale: incorporating AI into the foundational core of organisations. Not just in technology, but by re-shaping operating models to unlock its full potential — through reimagined workflows, reduced context-switching, and intelligent systems embedded across the value chain. It means designing experiences that feel natural, intuitive, and human — even as the tech behind them grows more powerful. We're not building for automation. We're designing for augmentation — a future where humans and agents co-create, co-decide, and elevate one another's potential. The stage is set. And whether we're designing, directing, or dreaming — we're not just watching the AI performance unfold. We're centre stage, shaping it.

JONATHAN
NOTT

GLOBAL CHIEF OF
TRANSFORMATION AT WPP.
EX DESIGNIT, MCKINSEY
AND BCG



What You Get Paid

Here's what people actually earn
— role by role, seniority by seniority.
No spin, no theory, just the raw figures.



Creative

Job Title	Salary Bracket (Yearly)	Freelance Bracket (Daily)
Executive Creative Director	140,00 - 250,00 EUR (+ BONUS)	800+ EUR
Group Creative Director	110,000 - 150,000 EUR	700 - 800 EUR
Creative Director	80,000 - 110,000 EUR	700 - 800 EUR
Creative Lead	75,000 - 90,000 EUR	700 EUR
Associate Creative Director	75,000 - 90,000 EUR	700+ EUR
Creative Studio Lead	80,000 - 140,000 EUR	700 EUR
Senior Creative Team	65,000 - 90,000 EUR	700 - 800 EUR
Middleweight Creative Team	55,000 - 70,000 EUR	600 - 700 EUR
Junior Creative Team	42,000 - 55,000 EUR	500 - 600 EUR
Head of Art	70,000 - 100,000 EUR	700 - 800 EUR
Lead Art Director	70,000 - 85,000 EUR	700 - 800 EUR
Senior Art Director	70,000 - 85,000 EUR	700 - 800 EUR
Midweight Art Director	55,000 - 70,000 EUR	600 - 700 EUR
Junior Art Director	42,000 - 55,000 EUR	500 - 600 EUR
Head of Copy	70,000 - 100,000 EUR	700 - 800 EUR
Copy Director	70,000 - 100,000 EUR	700 - 800 EUR
Lead Copywriter	70,000 - 85,000 EUR	700 - 800 EUR
Senior Copywriter (creative)	70,000 - 85,000 EUR	700 - 800 EUR
Midweight Copywriter (creative)	55,000 - 70,000 EUR	600 - 700 EUR
Junior Copywriter (creative)	42,000 - 55,000 EUR	500 - 600 EUR
Senior Social Creative	70,000 - 85,000 EUR	700-800 EUR
Midweight Social Creative	55,000 - 70,000 EUR	600-700 EUR
Lead Social Creative	75,000 - 85,000 EUR	700-800 EUR
Junior Social Creative	42,000 - 55,000 EUR	500 - 600 EUR
Head of Content	80,000 - 110,000 EUR	700 - 800 EUR
Director of Content	80,000 - 110,000 EUR	700 - 800 EUR
Content Creation Lead	70,000 - 85,000 EUR	700 - 800 EUR
Senior Content Creator	55,000 - 75,000 EUR	550 - 700 EUR
Mid Content Creator	45,000 - 55,000 EUR	500 - 600 EUR
Junior Content Creator	35,000 - 50,000 EUR	400 - 600 EUR

Visual & Brand Design

Job Title	Salary Bracket (Yearly)	Freelance Bracket (Daily)
Executive Creative Director Brand Design	120,000 - 190,000 EUR	700+ EUR
Creative Director Brand Design	90,000 - 120,000 EUR	600 - 700 EUR
Associate Creative Director Brand Design	80,000 - 90,000 EUR	500 - 600 EUR
Lead Brand Designer	70,000 - 95,000 EUR	500 - 700 EUR
Senior Brand Designer	55,000 - 80,000 EUR	450 - 600 EUR
Midweight Brand Designer	45,000 - 55,000 EUR	400 - 500 EUR
Junior Brand Designer	30,000 - 45,000 EUR	700+ EUR
Lead Visual Designer	75,000 -95,000 EUR	700+ EUR
Senior Visual Designer	60,000 - 85,000 EUR	500+ EUR
Midweight Visual Designer	40,000 - 55,000k EUR	400+ EUR
Junior Visual Designer	30,000 - 40,000 EUR	-
Lead Motion Designer	80,000 - 100,000 EUR	500+ EUR
Senior Motion Designer	55,000 - 70,000 EUR	500+ EUR
Midweight Motion Designer	40,000 -55,000 EUR	500+ EUR
Junior Motion Designer	25,000 - 40,000 EUR	300 EUR
Lead 3D Designer	70,000 - 85,000 EUR	500+ EUR
Senior 3D Designer	60,000 - 70,000 EUR	500 - 700 EUR
Midweight 3D Designer	45,000 - 55,000 EUR	300 - 400 EUR
Junior 3D Designer	35,00 - 45,000 EUR	-
Lead Spatial / Experiential Designer	65,000 - 85,000 EUR	500 - 700 EUR
Senior Spatial / Experiential Designer	55,000 - 70,000 EUR	500+ EUR
Midweight Spatial / Experiential Designer	40,000 - 55,000 EUR	300 - 400 EUR
Junior Spatial / Experiential Designer	35,000 - 45,000 EUR	-

Product Experience & Service Design

Job Title	Salary Bracket (Yearly)	Freelance Bracket (Daily)
Head of UX Research	120,000 - 160,000 EUR	-
Principal UX researcher	90,000 - 130,000 EUR	600 - 800 EUR
Lead UX researcher	80,000 - 100,000 EUR	500 - 700 EUR
Senior UX researcher	60,000 - 85,000 EUR	500 - 700 EUR
Midweight UX researcher	45,000 - 60,000 EUR	400 - 500 EUR
Junior UX researcher	40,000 - 45,000 EUR	-
Chief Experience / UX Officer	180,000 + EUR (+BONUS / ESOP)	-
Experience Design Director	90,000 - 120,000 EUR	700+ EUR
Lead UX Designer	80,000 - 110,000 EUR	700+ EUR
Senior UX Designer	60,000 - 85,000 EUR	500 - 700EUR
Midweight UX Designer	45,000 - 60,000 EUR	400 - 500 EUR
Junior UX Designer	40,000 - 45,000 EUR	300 EUR
VP Service Design	180,000+ EUR (+BONUS / ESOP)	-
Director of Service Design	150,000+ EUR (+BONUS / ESOP)	-
Lead Service Designer	85,000 - 120,000 EUR	800+ EUR
Senior Service Designer	65,000 - 85,000 EUR	700+ EUR
Midweight Service Designer	55,000 - 65,000 EUR	500 - 600 EUR
Junior Service Designer	45,000 - 55,000 EUR	-
Principal UI Designer	90,000 - 130,000 EUR	600 - 750 EUR
Lead UI Designer	75,000 - 95,000 EUR	700+ EUR
Senior UI Designer	60,000 - 85,000 EUR	500 - 700 EUR
Midweight UI Designer	45,000 - 60,000 EUR	400 - 500 EUR
Junior UI Designer	40,000 - 45,000 EUR	300 EUR
Chief Design Officer	180,000+ EUR (+BONUS / ESOP)	-
Director of Product Design	120,000 - 200,000 EUR (+BONUS / ESOP)	-
VP Product Design	150,000 + EUR (+BONUS / ESOP)	-
Senior Design Manager	140,000 - 190,000 EUR	-
Design Manager	90,000 - 140,000 EUR	-
Principal Product Designer	100,000 - 160,000 EUR	700 - 900 EUR
Lead Product Designer	90,000 - 110,000 EUR	600 - 750 EUR
Senior Product Designer	60,000 - 95,000 EUR	500 - 700 EUR
Midweight Product Designer	45,000 - 60,000 EUR	300 EUR
Junior Product Designer	40,000 - 45,000 EUR	400 - 450 EUR
Principal Sustainability Designer	90,000 -140,000 EUR	650 - 700 EUR
Principal Product Designer / Design system	90,000 - 140,000 EUR	700+
Lead Product Designer / Design systems	80,000 - 110,000 EUR	500 - 700 EUR
Senior Product Designer / Design systems	60,000 - 95,000 EUR	450 - 600 EUR
Midweight Product Designer / Design systems	50,000 - 60,000 EUR	400 - 450 EUR
Midweight Product Designer / Design systems	40,000 - 45,000 EUR	300 EUR
Lead UX Writer	70,000 - 100,000 EUR	700+ EUR
Senior UX Writer	55,000 - 80,000 EUR	500 - 700 EUR
Midweight UX Writer	45,000 - 55,000 EUR	400 - 450 EUR
Junior UX Writer	40,000 - 45,000 EUR	-

Product Management

Job Title	Salary Bracket (Yearly)	Freelance Bracket (Daily)
Chief Product Officer (CPO)	100,000 - 200,000 EUR	-
Head of Product	100,00 - 130,000 EUR	-
Director Product	75,000 - 110,000 EUR	-
Senior Product Owner	65,000 - 85,000 EUR	800+ EUR
Senior Product Manager / Scrum Master	65,000 - 90,000 EUR	-
Product Owner / Scrum Master	55,000 - 75,000 EUR	800+ EUR
Product Owner	50,000 - 75,000 EUR	-
Senior Product Manager	70,000 - 90,000 EUR	-
Midweight Product Manager	50,000 - 70,000 EUR	-
Junior Product Manager	38,000 - 50,000 EUR	-
Agile Coach	60,000 - 90,000 EUR	-

Tech

Job Title	Salary Bracket (Yearly)	Freelance Bracket (Daily)
CTO	200,000+ EUR	800+ EUR
Head Of Technology	200,000+ EUR	800+ EUR
Engineering Manager	110,000 - 150,000 EUR	700 - 1000 EUR
Lead Tech	95,000 - 110,000 EUR	700 - 900 EUR
Head of Cyber Security	150,000+ EUR	-
Senior IT System Administrator	75,000 - 85,000 EUR	-
Principal Engineer	100,000 - 130,000 EUR	700 - 1000 EUR
Lead Developer	90,000 - 130,000 EUR	500 - 650+ EUR
Tech Lead	95,000 - 110,000 EUR	700 - 900 EUR
Creative Developer	55,000 - 70,000 EUR	450 - 600 EUR
Senior Fullstack Engineer	75,000 - 100,000 EUR	600 - 800 EUR
Senior Frontend Engineer	75,000 - 95,000 EUR	600 - 800 EUR
Senior DevOps Engineer	85,000 - 110,000 EUR	650 - 850 EUR
Senior Data Scientist	100,000 - 120,000 EUR	600 - 800 EUR
Senior Cyber Security Engineers	85,000 - 125,000 EUR	-
Senior Backend Developer	80,000 - 100,000 EUR	600 - 800 EUR
Mobile Developer	70,000 - 90,000 EUR	450 - 600 EUR
Machine Learning Engineer	100,000 - 120,000 EUR	450 - 800 EUR
IT System Administrator	60,000 - 80,000 EUR	-
Full Stack Engineer	70,000 - 85,000 EUR	500 - 650 EUR
DevOps Engineer	70,000 - 90,000 EUR	450 - 600 EUR
Cyber Security Engineers	60,000 - 85,000 EUR	-
Junior Engineers	50,000 - 60,000 EUR	350 - 450 EUR

Social Media

Job Title	Salary Bracket (Yearly)	Freelance Bracket (Daily)
Head of Social	65,000 - 85,000 EUR	600 - 800 EUR
Senior Social Media Manager	48,000 - 65,000 EUR	500 - 600 EUR
Midweight Social Media Manager	40,000 - 50,000 EUR	400 - 500 EUR
Junior Social Media Manager	32,000 - 40,000 EUR	-
Senior PM (Social Media & Influencer Marketing)	48,000 - 60,000 EUR	550 - 700 EUR
PM (Social Media & Influencer Marketing)	38,000 - 48,000 EUR	-
Junior PM (Social Media & Influencer Marketing)	30,000 - 38,000 EUR	-
Head of Influencer Marketing	65,000 - 85,000 EUR	600 - 800 EUR
Teamlead Social Media & Influencer Marketing	65,000 - 80,000 EUR	600 - 800 EUR
Senior Influencer Relations Manager	47,000 - 58,000 EUR	500 - 600 EUR
Midweight Influencer Relations Manager	40,000 - 47,000 EUR	450 - 550 EUR
Community Manager	38,000 - 55,000 EUR	-
Community Executive	32,000 - 40,000 EUR	800 - 1,000 EUR

Strategy

Job Title	Salary Bracket (Yearly)	Freelance Bracket (Daily)
Director Brand Strategy	85,000 - 120,00 EUR	600-850 EUR
Senior Brand Strategist	60,000 - 85,000 EUR	400 - 600 EUR
Midweight Brand Strategist	45,000 - 60,000 EUR	300 - 400 EUR
Junior Brand Strategist	30,000 - 45,000 EUR	300 EUR
Chief Strategy Officer	150,000+ EUR	800+ EUR
Head of Strategy	130,000+ EUR	800+ EUR
Strategy Partner	130,000+ EUR	800+ EUR
Strategy Director	85,000 - 120,000 EUR	600 - 850 EUR
Senior Strategist	60,000 - 85,000 EUR	400 - 600 EUR
Midweight Strategist	45,000 - 60,000 EUR	300 - 400 EUR
Junior Strategist	30,000 - 40,000 EUR	300 EUR
Lead Digital Strategist	75,000 - 90,000 EUR	700 - 900 EUR
Senior Digital Strategist	60,000 - 85,000 EUR	400 - 600 EUR
Midweight Digital Strategist	45,000 - 60,000 EUR	300 - 400 EUR
Junior Digital Strategist	30,000 - 45,000 EUR	300 EUR

Marketing & PR

Job Title	Salary Bracket (Yearly)	Freelance Bracket (Daily)
Chief Marketing Officer (CMO)	110,000 - 180,000 EUR	-
VP Marketing	110,000 - 160,000 EUR	-
Head of Marketing	110,000 - 160,000 EUR	-
Marketing Director	60,000 - 80,000 EUR	-
Senior Marketing Manager	50,000 - 65,000 EUR	-
Marketing Manager	45,000 - 50,000 EUR	-
Junior Marketing Manager	38,000 - 45,000 EUR	-
Marketing Coordinator	35,000 - 38,000 EUR	-
Head of Growth	82,000 - 115,000 EUR	-
Senior Growth Marketing Manager	65,000 - 82,000 EUR	-
Growth Marketing Manager	47,000 - 65,000 EUR	-
Junior Growth Marketing Manager	36,000 - 47,000 EUR	-
Head of Performance Marketing	80,000 - 120,000 EUR	-
Senior Performance Marketing Manager	70,000 - 85,000 EUR	-
Performance Marketing Manager	50,000 - 60,000 EUR	-
Junior Performance Marketing Manager	35,000 - 45,000 EUR	-
Head of Product Marketing	80,000 - 110,000 EUR	-
Senior Product Marketing Manager	66,000 - 85,000 EUR	-
Product Marketing Manager	52,000 - 68,000 EUR	-
Junior Product Marketing Manager	40,000 - 50,000 EUR	-
Head of PR / of Communications	90,000 - 100,000 EUR	-
Director PR / of Communications	80,000 - 120,000 EUR	-
Senior Communications Manager	60,000 - 85,000 EUR	550+ EUR
Mid -Level Communications Manager	50,000 - 65,000 EUR	400+ EUR
Junior Communications Manager	38,000 - 50,000 EUR	-
Senior PR Manager / PR Consultant	60,000 - 80,000 EUR	500+ EUR
PR Manager / PR Consultant	50,000 - 60,000 EUR	-
Junior PR Manager / PR Consultant	35,000 - 45,000k EUR	400+ EUR

Client Services

Job Title	Salary Bracket (Yearly)	Freelance Bracket (Daily)
Senior Account Manager	53,000 - 65,000 EUR	600+ EUR
Midweight Account Manager	47,000 - 55,000 EUR	500+ EUR
Junior Account Manager	35,000 - 47,000 EUR	-
Account Executive	-	-
Senior Account Manager Social Media	53,000 - 65,000 EUR	600+ EUR
Midweight Account Manager Social Media	47,000 - 55,000 EUR	500+ EUR
Junior Account Manager Social Media	35,000 - 47,000 EUR	-
Managing Director	120,000 - 160,000 EUR	-
Business Director	95,000 - 120,000 EUR	-
Director Client Service	90,000 - 140,000 EUR	850+ EUR
Group Account Director	75,000 - 95,000 EUR	700+ EUR
Senior Account Director	70,000 - 85,000 EUR	700+ EUR
Account Director	65,000 - 75,000 EUR	650+ EUR

Operations

Job Title	Salary Bracket (Yearly)	Freelance Bracket (Daily)
Chief Operations Officer	80,000 - 150,000 EUR	-
Head of Operations	68,000 - 90,000 EUR	-
Senior Operations Manager	54,000 - 74,000 EUR	-
Mid Operations Manager	42,000 - 58,000 EUR	-
Junior Operations Manager	-	-
Resource Manager	48,000 - 67,000 EUR	-
Head of Design Ops	90,000 - 110,000 EUR	-
Design Ops Manager	60,000 - 90,000 EUR	-
HR Director	90,000 - 140,000 EUR	-
Lead HR Manager	60,000 - 85,000 EUR	-
Senior HR Manager	60,000 - 75,000 EUR	-
Midweight HR Manager	45,000 - 55,000 EUR	-
Junior HR Manager	33,000 - 45,000 EUR	-
Lead Talent Manager	60,000 - 75,000 EUR	-
Senior Talent Manager	55,000 - 65,000 EUR	-
Mid Talent Manager	45,000 - 55,000 EUR	-
Junior Talent Manager	35,000 - 45,000 EUR	-
Senior Office Manager	46,000 - 60,000 EUR	-
Midweight Office Manager	36,000 - 45,00- EUR	-
Junior Office Manager	30,000 - 36,000 EUR	-
Executive Assistant	48,000 - 65,000 EUR	-

Production & Project Management

Job Title	Salary Bracket (Yearly)	Freelance Bracket (Daily)
Senior Creative Producer	55,000 - 73,000 EUR	600+ EUR
Midweight Creative Producer	45,000 - 60,000 EUR	500+ EUR
Junior Creative Producer	35,000 - 45,000 EUR	-
Senior Integrated Producer	55,000 - 73,000 EUR	600+ EUR
Midweight Integrated Producer	45,000 - 57,000 EUR	500+ EUR
Junior Integrated Producer	35,000 - 45,000 EUR	-
Senior Digital Producer	55,000 - 75,000 EUR	600+ EUR
Midweight Digital Producer	45,000 - 57,000 EUR	550+ EUR
Junior Digital Producer	35,000 - 45,000 EUR	-
Senior Content Producer	55,000 - 62,000 EUR	500+ EUR
Midweight Content Producer	43,000 - 55,000 EUR	400+ EUR
Junior Content Producer	32,000 - 45,000 EUR	-
Head of Production	80,000 - 95,000 EUR	700+ EUR
Senior Creative Project Manager	52,000 - 65,000 EUR	550 - 700 EUR
Midweight Creative Project Manager	45,000 - 55,000 EUR	500 - 600 EUR
Junior Creative Project Manager	35,000 - 44,000 EUR	-
Senior Integrated Project Manager	53,00 - 65,000 EUR	600 - 750 EUR
Midweight Integrated Project Manager	48,000 - 55,000 EUR	500 - 600 EUR
Junior Integrated Project Manager	35,000 - 43,000 EUR	-
Senior Project Manager	53,000 - 65,000 EUR	600 - 700 EUR
Midweight Project Manager	48,000 - 55,000 EUR	450 - 550 EUR
Junior Project Manager	35,000 - 43,000 EUR	-
Senior Digital Project Manager	65,000 - 75,000 EUR	600 - 800 EUR
Midweight Digital Project Manager	50,000 - 60,000 EUR	550 – 650 EUR
Junior Digital Project Manager	40,000 - 50,000 EUR	-
Senior Technical Project Manager	70,000 - 85,000 EUR	750+ EUR
Midweight Technical Project Manager	55,000 - 70,000 EUR	600+ EUR
Junior Technical Project Manager	-	-
Head of Project Management	80,000 - 110,000 EUR	800+ EUR
Head of Delivery	80,000 - 120,000 EUR	800+ EUR
Lead Video Editor	65,000 - 75,000 EUR	-
Senior Video Editor	55,000 - 65,000 EUR	450 - 700 EUR
Midweight Video Editor	40,000 - 55,000 EUR	350 - 450 EUR
Junior Video Editor	30,000 - 40,000 EUR	250 - 350 EUR
Lead Videographer	65,000 - 80.000 EUR	700+ EUR
Senior Videographer	55,000 - 65,000 EUR	450 - 700 EUR
Midweight Videographer	40,000 - 55,000 EUR	350 - 450 EUR
Junior Videographer	30,000 - 40,000 EUR	250 - 350 EUR

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