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UK MARKET INTELLIGENCE

AI and the UK Marketing Job Market

How fast UK demand for AI-capable marketers is growing, what the numbers really say, and the roles we expect our clients to be hiring for in 2027.

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1 The numbers in one page

UK hiring is weak overall, but adverts asking for AI are rising quickly. Marketing is one of the clearest examples, and most of that demand is for marketers who use AI, not engineers who build it.

26.2%

Of UK marketing job adverts now mention AI or AI tools

Indeed Hiring Lab, data to end-June 2026

9.4%

Of all UK job adverts mention AI, a record high, up from around 2% in 2023

Indeed Hiring Lab, 3 Aug 2026

34.2%

Average UK wage premium for AI skills, up from 11% in 2024

PwC UK AI Jobs Barometer, 15 Jun 2026

A two-speed marketing market

Overall UK marketing job adverts are running at about half their pre-pandemic level.

Adverts that mention AI are at more than three times that level. On Indeed's index (February 2020 = 100), marketing postings stood at 52 at the end of June 2026, while marketing postings mentioning AI stood at 341. (Indeed Hiring Lab mid-year report, 3 Aug 2026; index values as reported by The Decoder)

Overall UK postings are 32% below their pre-pandemic baseline. Even in this market, marketing roles that need AI are growing.

The growth is in people who use AI, not people who build it

UK specialist AI job adverts rose **61% in a year, from 112,000 to 180,000**, while total vacancies fell 6.6%. The more important figure for marketing: **"AI user" roles**, meaning people applying AI within their own profession, **grew 65.8% to almost 66,000**. Developer roles grew 21.6% to 2,600.

(PwC UK AI Jobs Barometer, 15 Jun 2026) In practice, most AI hiring is about marketers, analysts and other specialists who are good with AI.

Businesses have adopted AI widely, but not yet deeply

About **35% of UK businesses with 10+ employees now use at least one AI technology**, up from around 12% in September 2023. Among businesses with 250+ staff the figure is 49%. But the average adopter uses only 1.6 AI technologies, up from 1.4, which the ONS calls "relatively shallow". (ONS, AI in UK businesses 2023–2026, 20 Jul 2026) Many businesses have bought the tools and do not yet have the people to get full value from them.

WHAT THIS MEANS IF YOU ARE HIRING

AI is now asked for in about one marketing advert in four. Most of it is being **added to existing marketing roles** rather than put into new "AI" job titles. If your job specs do not mention it yet, your competitors' specs probably do, and candidates will compare.

2 The roles in focus for 2027

The 2027 salary guides have just been published, and the list of in-demand roles has changed noticeably from 2026. This replaces the 2026 role focus in our earlier guides.

What changed between 2026 and 2027

Rank	Most in-demand UK marketing roles, 2026	Most in-demand UK marketing roles, 2027
1	Marketing Manager	Growth Marketing Manager
2	Marketing Executive	Digital Strategy & Transformation Lead
3	Product Manager	Marketing Analytics & Insights Manager
4	Brand Manager	Ecommerce & Marketplace Manager
5	Head of Marketing	Marketing Manager

Michael Page 2027 Salary Guides, 16 Sep 2026, with the 2026 equivalents as published by Michael Page.

The skills list changed in the same direction. In 2026 the top skills were content creation and writing, end-to-end campaign management, data analysis and stakeholder management. **For 2027 they are marketing & AI adoption, marketing automation, customer journey management, and customer loyalty, optimisation and personalisation.** (Michael Page, 16 Sep 2026)

Employers have moved from hiring people to produce content to hiring people who can grow revenue and run the systems that do the producing.

Our 2027 focus list

Our view of where client demand will sit in 2027, built from the 2027 salary guides, advert data and what we are seeing in live South West briefs.

Role	2027 direction	What the evidence says
Growth Marketing Manager	Strong growth	Now the most in-demand UK marketing role, replacing the generalist Marketing Manager (Michael Page, 16 Sep 2026)
Marketing Analytics & Insights Manager	Strong growth	Third most in-demand role. Data & analytics has the highest share of AI-mentioning adverts of any UK job family, at 48.8% (Michael Page; Indeed Hiring Lab, 3 Aug 2026)
Marketing Automation Manager / Specialist CRM & Lifecycle Manager	Growth	Expected salary growth of 2.8%, against a 1.9% average across marketing (Robert Half 2027 UK Salary Guide, 22 Sep 2026). Automation, customer journey and loyalty are three of the four top 2027 skills
Ecommerce & Marketplace Manager	Growth	Fourth most in-demand role for 2027, up from outside the top five (Michael Page)
Digital Strategy & Transformation Lead Head of Digital	Growth	Second most in-demand role. Head of Digital pay expected to rise 3.2% (Michael Page; Robert Half 2027)
Social Media Manager	Growth	The highest expected pay growth of any marketing role, at 3.4% (Robert Half 2027)
Head of AI / AI Specialist	Clear growth, mostly outside marketing	Among the fastest-growing UK job titles on LinkedIn's 2026 list. London Head of AI pay up about 11% (LinkedIn Jobs on the Rise 2026; Michael Page, 21 Sep 2026)
GEO / AEO Specialist AI Workflow Designer	Emerging	New titles appearing in briefs, but evidence is mostly from the US and not yet mainstream in UK hiring (AMA State of Marketing Careers, 31 Jul 2026)

What employers are paying for it

There is an AI pay premium, but it goes to marketers who use AI to get results, not to anyone who lists a tool on their CV.

27%

Of UK marketing & creative hiring managers are paying more for generative AI skills

Robert Half 2027 UK Salary Guide, 22 Sep 2026

38%

Are offering above their planned salary range, 76% of them to secure specialist skills

Robert Half 2027 UK Salary Guide

1.9%

Average expected salary growth across UK marketing & creative roles in 2027

Robert Half 2027 UK Salary Guide

Taken together, these figures are clear. **Average marketing pay is barely moving, but specialist skills are being paid above the range.** PwC puts the average UK AI premium at 34.2%, ranging from **12% in the public sector to 64% in consumer markets.** (PwC, 15 Jun 2026) Michael Page reports that the biggest premiums go to candidates who **combine AI and marketing skills in practice.** (Michael Page, 16 Sep 2026)

The skills gap is costing more than the premium

- **66.5% of UK marketers** spotted an AI skills gap in their own team in the past year. (Marketing Week Career & Salary Survey 2026, n=2,350, 29 May 2026)
- The AI skills gap is estimated to cost the UK advertising and marketing sector **£10.9bn a year** in lost productivity, equivalent to around 150,000 full-time roles. Closing it could add up to **£69.1bn** to the sector by 2030. (Publicis Media UK with Development Economics, 9 Jul 2026)
- Marketing leaders expect the share of marketing work automated by AI to rise from **16% to 36%** between 2026 and 2028. (Gartner, n=402 CMOs, 11 May 2026)

An honest caveat

No credible source publishes a UK headcount forecast for "AI marketing" jobs at job-title level. The figures above are measured advert data, salary-guide survey findings and named forecasts, and we have labelled each one. Anyone quoting a precise number of UK AI marketing jobs for 2027 has estimated it.

AND THE RETENTION RISK

60% of UK marketers are actively looking for a new role, against a 50% national average. (Michael Page, 16 Sep 2026) Your marketers who are most capable with AI are exactly the people other employers are trying to hire.

What we would do about it

Five suggestions for marketing teams planning their 2027 hiring.

1. Write AI into the job, not the job title

Most of the growth is in existing roles that now include AI, not new "AI" job titles. Add a clear line to every marketing spec about which workflows you expect the person to run with AI. That gets you a better field than renaming the role.

2. Hire an AI user, not an AI builder

"AI user" roles grew three times faster than developer roles in the UK last year. For most marketing teams the valuable hire is a growth, CRM or analytics marketer who uses AI to deliver more, not a data scientist.

3. Pay the premium where it earns its keep

Analytics, automation, lifecycle and growth are where the 2027 demand and pay pressure are building. Budget above range for those roles and hold the line on generalist roles, where pay is barely moving.

4. Train the team you already have

Two thirds of teams already have an AI skills gap. Training an existing marketer in their own workflows is almost always cheaper and faster than hiring the same capability, and it is one of the strongest retention tools when 60% of marketers are looking.

5. Test it at interview

Ask candidates to walk you through one piece of work they rebuilt with AI: what they did before, what they changed and what improved. You will quickly see who uses AI properly and who has only added it to their CV.

Hiring for 2027?

We speak to South West marketers about AI every week: who is using it properly, what they expect to be paid, and what makes them move. If you would like to sense-check a job spec, a salary band or a team structure against what we are seeing, we are always happy to talk.

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Sources

Indeed Hiring Lab, 2026 Mid-Year UK Jobs & Hiring Trends Report, 3 Aug 2026 (data to end-June 2026; occupation index values as reported by The Decoder) · PwC UK AI Jobs Barometer 2026, 15 Jun 2026 · ONS, Artificial intelligence in UK businesses 2023 to 2026, 20 Jul 2026 (BICS Wave 159) · Michael Page 2027 Salary Guides, marketing release 16 Sep 2026 and technology release 21 Sep 2026 · Robert Half 2027 UK Marketing & Creative Salary Guide, 22 Sep 2026 · LinkedIn Jobs on the Rise UK 2026 · Marketing Week Career & Salary Survey 2026 (n=2,350), 29 May 2026 · Publicis Media UK / Development Economics / Kingston University, AI skills and the UK marketing economy, 9 Jul 2026 · Gartner, AI and marketing work survey (n=402 CMOs), 11 May 2026 · AMA 2026 State of Marketing Careers Report, 31 Jul 2026 (US-weighted).

Figures are labelled by source and date throughout, and survey findings and forecasts are separated from measured data. Where no credible UK figure exists, we say so.