

Salary survey 2007

The fifth salary survey by the UK Chapter of the Usability Professionals' Association reveals an upward trend in line with the growth of the market this year. [Claire Mitchell](#) looks at the results

The UK Usability Professionals Association (UPA) runs a salary survey of user experience (UE) professionals every year. This is the fifth edition of the survey and here we provide an overview of results.

The survey was carried out online over several weeks in October 2007 and was promoted to UK UPA members as well as to members of various UE discussion lists in the UK. There were more than 200 responses, of which 70% were complete and are included in these results. Information was gathered on both full-time salaries and freelance day rates.

Salaries have increased at every job level except those in senior supervisory roles. The general upward trend is in keeping with what the market has seen over the past year, in terms of difficulty recruiting good-quality UE professionals. This year we've also measured two additional categories – director and owner/director – where levels are currently very close to those at senior supervisory level.

In terms of salary by experience, there's a small spike in salary at the 1-3 year mark. This may reflect strong market demand or could be influenced by the fact that many of those who remain in HCJ then enter the market with a considerable amount of business and industry experience under their belt, which requires recognition.

In terms of salary levels by age, those in their late-20s to mid-30s are firing well. This may be because this is an age where those working in the industry since graduation (Bachelor's and Master's) are reaching senior management levels, but also because those retraining or moving from other disciplines are entering the UE workforce with core skills that are rewarded. Again, further analysis of this trend would be valuable.

Freelance daily rates

	2007	2006
Min	140	200
Max	500	700
Median	362	325
Mean	384	340

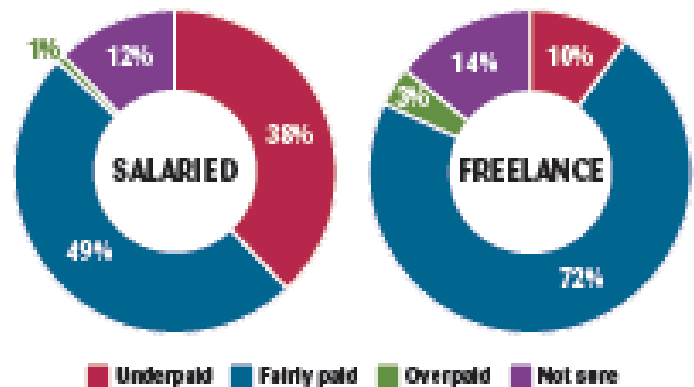
SATISFACTION WITH SALARY

While there have been clear improvements in salary levels, albeit small ones, satisfaction levels with salary tell their own story. A majority of those working full-time with a salary feel that they're fairly compensated, but there's a considerable number who believe that they're underpaid.

FREELANCE RATES

Freelance rates have definitely shown an upturn compared to 2006. In a market where good staff are hard to find, it's no surprise that the freelance market is strong. These rates are also reflected in satisfaction levels among freelancers, which are considerably higher than those on a salary.

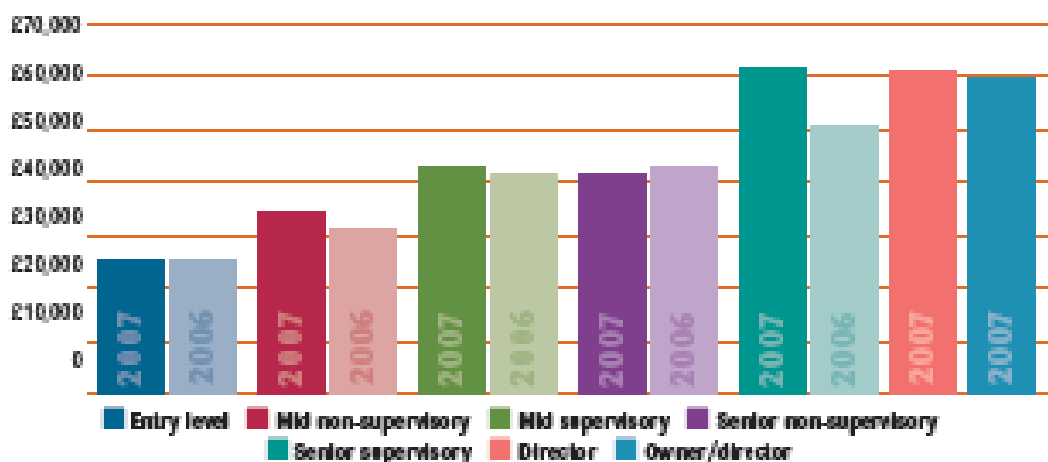
Salary satisfaction levels



Salary according to job level

	Entry level	Mid level non-super	Mid level supervisory	Senior level non-super	Senior level supervisory	Director	Owner/director
Min	£22,000	£23,000	£23,000	£35,000	£22,000	£30,000	£28,800
Max	£28,000	£52,000	£70,000	£400,000	£200,000	£75,000	£104,000
Median	£26,500	£33,000	£40,445	£48,000	£44,500	£64,000	£52,500
Mean	£25,333	£34,249	£42,692	£41,811	£61,563	£60,889	£59,450
Base	12	55	14	28	18	9	4

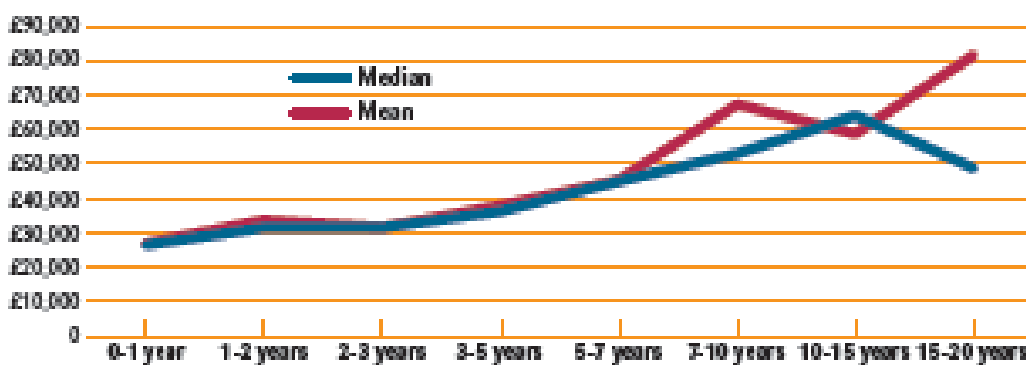
Average salary by job level 2006 vs 2007



Salary according to experience

	0-1 year	1-2 years	2-3 years	3-5 years	5-7 years	7-10 years	10-15 years	15-20 years
Min	£22,500	£23,000	£16,852	£25,671	£22,000	£34,000	£27,000	£23,800
Max	£35,000	£58,000	£50,000	£55,000	£70,000	£400,000	£88,000	£200,000
Median	£26,500	£31,500	£31,500	£36,250	£45,000	£53,000	£64,000	£43,750
Mean	£26,964	£33,737	£31,638	£37,917	£45,333	£67,152	£58,722	£81,575
Base	14	19	17	22	27	27	13	4

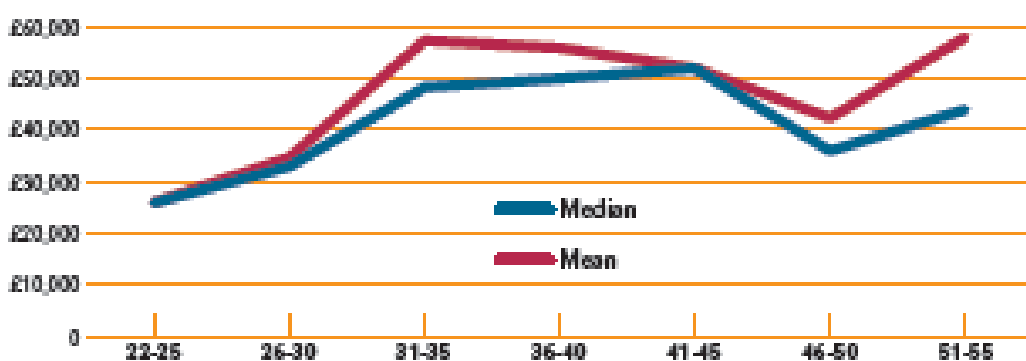
Salary levels by experience Median vs mean



Salary according to age

	22-25	26-30	31-35	36-40	41-45	46-51	51-55
Min	£16,852	£22,000	£27,000	£22,000	£27,000	£28,800	£33,000
Max	£32,000	£60,000	£400,000	£200,000	£70,000	£63,000	£104,000
Median	£26,000	£33,000	£48,317	£50,000	£52,000	£36,000	£44,000
Mean	£26,080	£34,725	£57,333	£55,912	£52,000	£42,383	£57,982
Base	17	40	42	23	8	6	7

Salary levels by age Median vs mean



JOB CONFIDENCE

So how does the UX community perceive the market at the moment? UX professionals are confident about demand for their services, despite a slight drop in confidence since 2006: 79% believe that the coming year will see an increase in demand for UX services, just 2% lower than in 2006. This compares to 69% anticipating an increase in demand for technology services in general, a larger drop of 7% from last year. This shows high levels of confidence and optimism that user experience is increasingly becoming a core service.

Demographic overview

MOST COMMON AGE GROUPS

- 31-35...30%
- 26-30...26%
- 36-40...18%

MOST COMMON EDUCATION LEVELS

- Master's degree...62%
- Bachelor's degree...25%
- PhD...8%

MOST COMMON QUALIFICATIONS

- Human-computer interaction...22%
- Interaction design...10%
- Computer science...9%
- Psychology...8%
- Ergonomics...8%

MOST COMMON COMPANY TYPES

- 32% work in a stability/user experience agency
- 25% in a full-service agency
- 24% in industry
- 13% in media and internet

MOST COMMON JOB TYPES

- User experience consultant...56%
- Information architect...10%
- User researcher...6%

LEVELS OF SENIORITY

- Entry level...7%
- Mid-level, non-supervisory...35%
- Mid-level, supervisory...10%
- Senior-level, non-supervisory...20%
- Senior-level, supervisory...11%
- Director...7%
- Owner/director...6%

LOCATIONS OF WORK WITHIN UK

- London...76%
- South East England...8%
- Scotland...4%
- Midlands...3%
- East Anglia...3%
- North West England...3%
- Southern England...3%
- South West England...1%
- North East England...1%
- Wales...0%
- Northern Ireland...0%
- Republic of Ireland...0%

A complete report of the results can be found on the UK UX website at www.ukux.org.uk