

Drapers Salary Survey 2012

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Salary Survey

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Welcome to the first *Drapers Salary Survey*. We've listened to the feedback from many readers who wanted us to provide benchmarks for pay in the sector and spent the past three months in research mode.

Working with recruitment consultancy Fashion & Retail Personnel, we have analysed salaries offered for hundreds of individual jobs placed in the past year across more than 50 job roles.

The results shown on the following pages have been broken down into salaries for inside and outside London, as there are significant regional differences for some roles. These are base figures, and don't include discretionary bonus payments or the value of the benefits that come with many positions, especially the more senior ones.

They also represent a mean average, and so you should not automatically be concerned if you are earning or paying someone a salary that is higher or lower than those shown. In particular, for the ecommerce and marketing roles, the wide range of salaries for the different roles advertised in the past year mean we have shown the range as well as the average.

This benchmarking exercise is useful, as it shows the salary jumps those in the industry should expect between job roles, and also highlights where there are particular shortages of suitable candidates with the right skills and experience, which is then pushing up salaries.



We hope you find the research as to what's happening in the sector as enlightening as we have.
Joanna Perry, special projects editor, Drapers



I am delighted that Fashion & Retail Personnel has been able to work on this project with *Drapers*. We wanted to create something that would be valuable to the whole industry, employers and employees alike.

The ethos of our business is to be as open and honest with our clients and candidates as possible, and sharing our insight with *Drapers* in order to create this piece of research is just one way of demonstrating this.

However, while everyone is interested in the figures it's also very important to remember that we work in a people business. The numbers can tell you so much, as can a candidate's CV, but we know that only meeting them in person can really decide their suitability for a role and their true worth.

So while it is clear that salaries are not quickly rising at the moment, candidates that have worked on their skills and experience – and properly researched what's needed to make the jump to the next rung on the career ladder – are still worth a premium. At the same time, employers need to be open-minded about the background of new recruits, especially for roles that are harder to fill, and be prepared to develop the staff they take on.

We live and breathe recruitment, and so we are very happy to have been involved in a piece of work with *Drapers* that shows how the fashion retail industry can provide exciting career paths.

Shelley Pinto, managing director, Fashion & Retail Personnel

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19% OF RETAIL HEAD OFFICE STAFF HAVE BEEN PROMOTED IN THE PAST YEAR



OF FASHION BRAND STAFF SAID THEY'VE TAKEN ON ADDITIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES WITHOUT BEING PROMOTED IN THE PAST YEAR



OF FASHION BRAND STAFF SAID A ROLE WITH BETTER CAREER PROGRESSION WOULD MOST CONVINCE THEM TO CHANGE JOBS

The *state* of pay

Pay may be static for many, but the dynamics of the jobs market mean both employers and employees are raising the stakes in other ways

Words by JOANNA PERRY

The results of *Drapers' Salary Survey* indicate what you can expect to pay for, or expect to earn in, one of the job roles we have covered.

It is clear there are a lot of job seekers for all kinds of roles, and so employers should have their pick. This is the reason cited for many job functions for why wages are static.

But that's not the whole story. Many people won't have moved job in the past year, or be looking to move employer in the next 12 months.

So we've run short polls among *Drapers'* readers to gather some additional insight about what's happened in their career in the past 12 months, and to see how optimistic they are about their job prospects for the next year.

The results are split into three areas – store staff (for both indies and multiples), retail head office staff, and staff within fashion brands. Although only a snapshot of the industry, the results are fairly compelling.

STORE STAFF WERE LEAST likely to have had a pay rise in the last year – 47% had not had one – but across all three polls the results show many have faced an income freeze, with 41% of retail head office staff and 36% of fashion brand staff saying the same.

A further 30% of store staff said the pay rise they received was 5% or less and only 24% achieved a pay rise of more than 5%. As promotions and churn between employers is fairly high for those in stores then it is likely that

those who are achieving these rises are doing so by changing role – whether it be an internal or external move.

For retail head office staff, pay rises have been similarly thin on the ground. In addition to the 41% who have had no rise, 27% have had an increase of less than 2%. 28% have had a rise of 5% or more, but bear in mind that 48% have either been promoted or moved employer in that time and these rises seem less impressive.

Staff from fashion brands have done relatively better. With only 36% having had no pay increase, and an additional 14% receiving a less than 2% rise. Meanwhile, 35% have seen at least a 5% increase in their salary. The same percentage have moved employer or been promoted in that time.

64%

OF FASHION BRAND
STAFF ARE IN THE SAME
JOB AS A YEAR AGO

81%

OF STORE STAFF
DEFINITELY OR MIGHT
LOOK FOR ANOTHER JOB
IN THE NEXT YEAR

35%

OF STORE STAFF MOVED EMPLOYER
IN THE PAST YEAR

57%

OF RETAIL HEAD OFFICE
STAFF DON'T EXPECT
TO BE PROMOTED IN
THE NEXT YEAR

41%

OF RETAIL HEAD OFFICE STAFF SAID A PAY RISE
WOULD MOST CONVINCING THEM TO CHANGE JOBS

THE POLLS SHOW STAFF are working harder and employers are giving them more responsibility. Among fashion brand staff, 79% have taken on extra responsibilities without being promoted in the past 12 months. Only 21% have moved employer, which shows there are a lot of people in the same job with the same employer who are doing more or stepping up.

This is partly down to the difficult trading environment, but it also demonstrates that employees are willing to add to their workload to gain more experience and bolster their attractiveness in a competitive jobs market.

The story is the same for both store staff and head office retail staff, with 71% and 68% respectively having taken on more responsibility without moving job in the past year.

We asked the participants in our polls whether they expected to be promoted in the next 12 months. Again, those working for fashion brands gave the most positive answers: 14% said they will definitely be promoted and a further 50% might be promoted.

They are also open to moving employer to further their career: 21% are already looking for another job; 29% will begin to look for another job within the next 12 months; and 36% might look for another job in that timeframe.

Retail head office staff are less sure about opportunities to progress with their current employer. Only 10% said they would definitely be promoted, and 33% might be. They are also more cautious about changing employer, with 18% looking for a new job, and a further 18%

definitely looking within 12 months, while 41% might look for a new job and 23% won't look.

Stores is the area of fashion retail with the most churn, and the results of our poll among these staff backs this up. Store staff are the least sure of definitely being promoted, but the most likely to be looking for another job.

While only 6% will definitely be promoted, 41% believe they might be and 38% are looking for another job. A further 12% will definitely be looking within the year, 31% might look for another job and only 19% definitely won't look.

So, with a reasonable proportion of staff across all three areas either actively looking for a new role or open to new opportunities in the near future, we asked them what would be the primary reason that they would move role. The results chime with the trends we have seen for staff being willing to take on more responsibility, and also for some roles the motivation is about more than salary and pay rise potential.

HALF OF THOSE WORKING for fashion brands said moving to a role with better career progression would be their primary motivation. And an additional 14% said a new challenge. Only 36% said a pay rise would be most important.

The fact they are ambitious and keen to move their career forward shows why so many have been prepared to take on more responsibility without a promotion to improve their future prospects. As they are most likely to have received a pay rise in their last year, they may be less

focused on moving role to gain a pay increase.

Store staff are almost as likely to favour a job change to enable better career progression – 47% cited this as their main reason. A further 12% said a new challenge would be their number one reason for moving job, and 12% said moving to a higher-profile fashion retailer. Only 24% said a pay rise.

WITH SOME RETAILERS STRUGGLING and the high-profile business failures of the past year, it is not surprising store staff are interested in a career with a retailer that is secure and can offer progression rather than a simple pay rise.

Retail head office staff were more motivated by a salary increase – 41% said it would be their main reason for moving job. The same proportion had not received a pay rise in the past year, which may indicate why they are more motivated by pay.

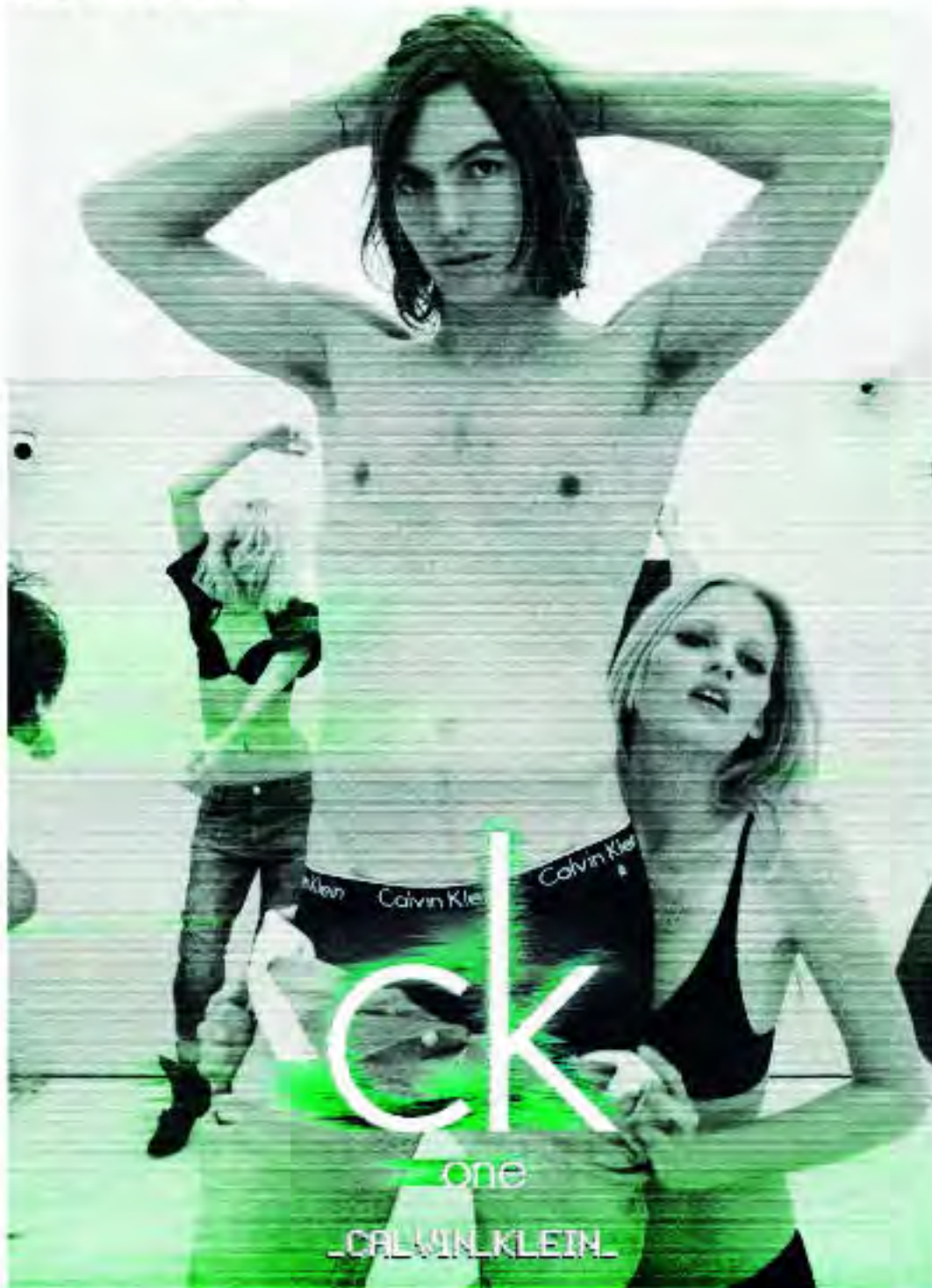
However, significant numbers of these staff had a primary motivation other than pay: 36% said a role with better career progression; 9% said a new challenge; and 5% said moving to a higher-profile fashion retailer.

There are many motivated and engaged people working in the industry who understand that during challenging economic times climbing the career ladder is about more than pay.

However, the results from head office staff show there is only so long that you can go without increasing your staff's salary – especially when large numbers are taking on more responsibility in their roles – before they will look for opportunities with other employers. 🌈

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Selection *process*

While it's a popular career path for those wanting to break into the fashion industry, retailers will pay more for those with specialist buying skills

Words by JAMES KNOWLES

Drapers / JUNE 16 2012 — 8

The lure of being able to spend the working day attending buying appointments and trade shows, and sifting through beautiful product means that fashion buying remains one of the most consistently over-subscribed career paths among graduates.

“There are humongous amounts of candidates that want to get into this industry in a buying capacity, especially at entry level,” says Julie Man, recruitment consultant, buying and merchandising at Fashion & Retail Personnel. “Employers are being very particular at the moment, and candidates need to be able to tick all of the boxes – not just being

able to do the job, but also being the right fit for the team,” she says.

Despite the initial competition, the financial rewards are there for those who make the grade, according to *Drapers'* research into average buying salaries. London-based candidates can expect to earn a starting salary of £20,835 once they have got their foot in the door as a buyers' admin assistant, and can expect this to leap to £56,109 by the time they reach senior buyer level. While the highest salaries are reserved for London, those outside of the capital can still earn up to £76,285 by the time they reach buying director level.

Larger brands and retailers, where they tend to promote from within, often pay the highest salaries. “We have robust succession plans in place for buying and merchandising, which we will also review before making the decision to look externally,” says Maureen Jones, HR business partner at Debenhams.

Despite the popularity of buying roles, Jones says specialist roles can still be hard to fill. “Footwear and lingerie buying roles can prove a challenge to recruit for, as there will be a limited pool of candidates that have this specialist skillset,” she says.

In order to climb through the ranks, Man insists that a gap-free CV demonstrating taste level, via like-for-like experience, is essential. “If your experience is buying for supermarkets, where margins are tight, and where fabrics and trims are not as nice, then you may not be suitable for someone like Burberry,” she says. 🌈

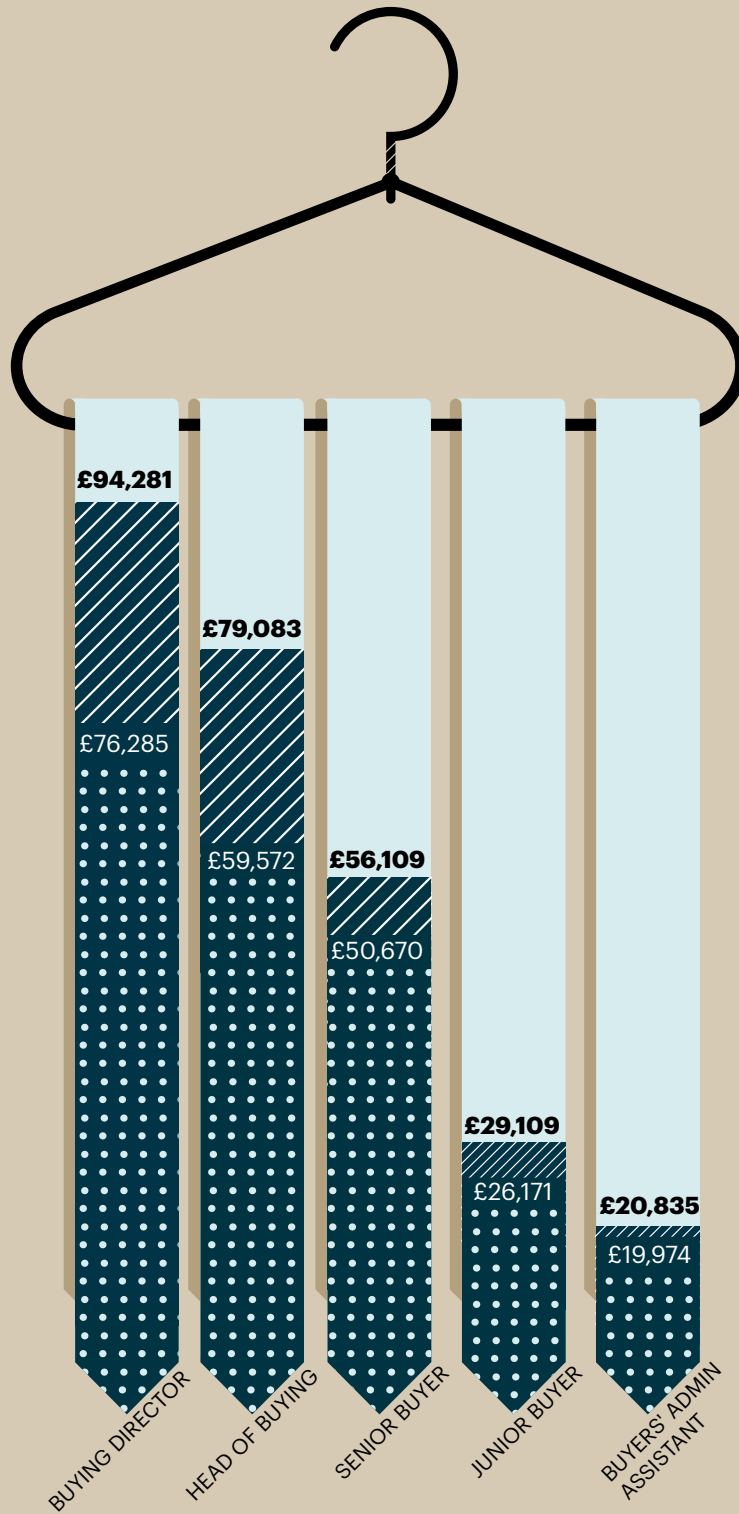
Case study

Anees Abbasi



– Senior buyer, Debenhams



Anees Abbasi worked in buying and brand management roles for companies such as Stirling Cooper, A-wear and Elle, before becoming senior buyer for the H! by Henry Holland and Butterfly by Matthew Williamson ranges.	at school I had a Saturday job in a local branded casualwear boutique. I loved working there and I enjoyed selling the clothing and advising customers. However, I knew I really wanted to be involved in selecting the product to go into store.”	as well as negotiating with suppliers to deliver the best quality product at the right price for the customer. “The challenge is to deliver a range that remains true to the designers' vision and brand DNA while still being commercially viable for Debenhams,” she says, adding that she aspires to progress to a senior management	role within fashion buying. And her advice to jobseekers wanting to follow in her footsteps? “Research the company you want to work for, as each brand has a different customer profile. Work hard and learn from your peers. The most useful experience can be gained from working in a small team where you really are close to the product.”
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BUYING

-  Salary in London
-  Salary outside London

The numbers game

Home-grown merchandising talent is in hot demand with overseas retailers, and UK businesses are being encouraged to offer competitive packages in order to attract and retain staff

Words by JAMES KNOWLES

Drapers / JUNE 16 2012 — 10

The UK's strong reputation for its merchandisers means home-grown talent is in demand with international fashion businesses, while the expansion of domestic online and

bricks-and-mortar retailers overseas is yielding new opportunities in this field.

"International retailers are crying out for good UK buyers and merchandisers," says Julie Man, recruitment consultant, buying and merchandising at Fashion & Retail Personnel. "At the moment we're coming across quite a lot of international roles. We may be in a recession in the UK, but ecommerce and international is growing really well. So those are two areas that are massively expanding, but it can be difficult to find candidates with experience across both of those areas," she says.

Progression and recruitment decisions are based on the kind of volume, turnover and in-season 'open-to-buys' budget that candidates have previously overseen. "It's about the kind of volume you've managed and traded. In order to gain a position at large retailers like River Island and Arcadia, merchandisers need to have managed similar budgets before," says Man.

Drapers' research into average salaries shows that unlike buying, salaries outside of London are on an even keel with those in the capital. Average London salaries for an allocator start at £19,620, £18,086 outside, and reach £100,688 and £104,271 at

Case study

Andrew Lay

— Senior merchandiser, House of Fraser



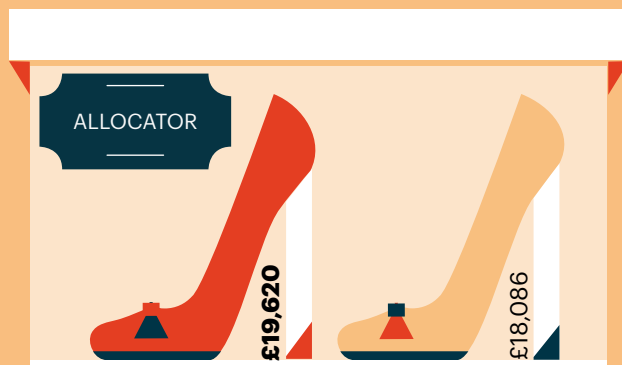
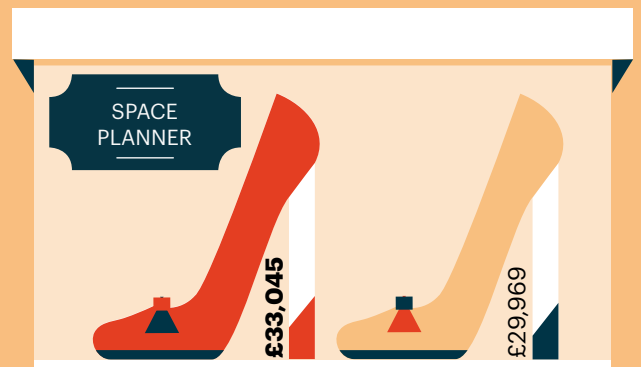
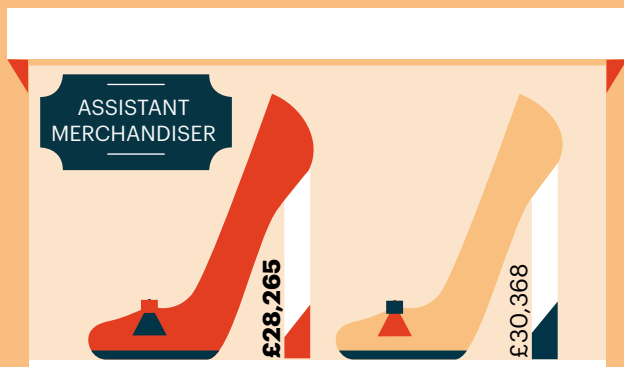
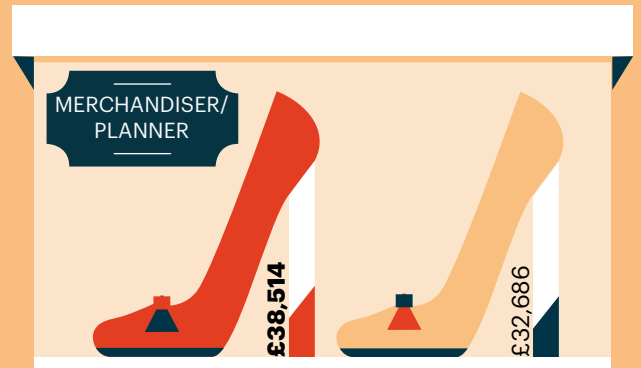
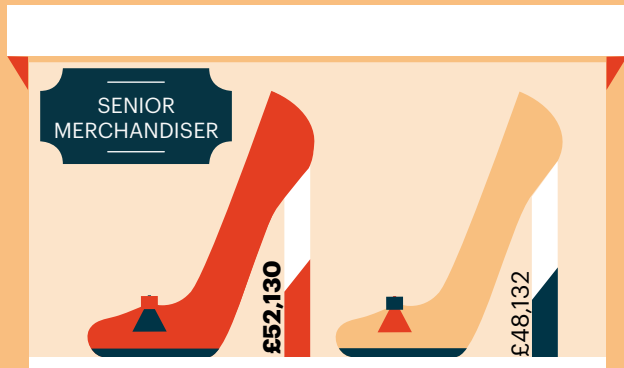
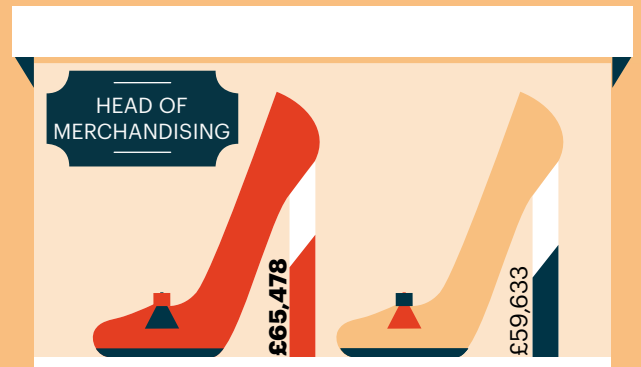
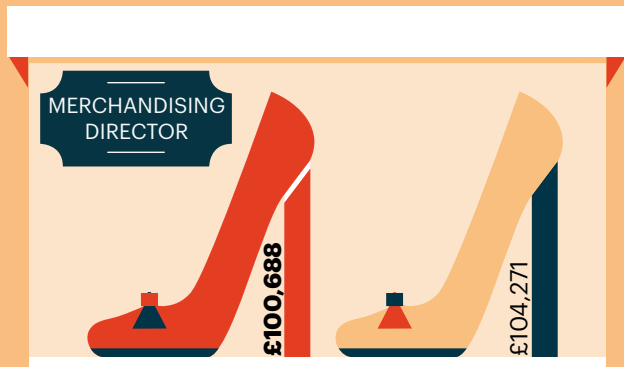
Beginning his career as an allocator at River Island, Andrew Lay worked his way up to menswear merchandiser for Ralph Lauren, before landing a senior role. He chose to work in merchandising as it is strategic and commercial: "On the surface it looks like you're just moving numbers around, but	at the heart of it you're actually quantifying experience and the patterns of consumer behaviour – whether that be how people have reacted to another style, to the position of the style in the store, or to its price – and how much money you can make from that. "Each day is different and you	have to be good at multitasking." Lay continues: "A merchandiser provides the framework for the range to slot into – looking at what you're going to sell, where, and for how much and then if sales don't go to plan, encourages them back on track by taking decisions such as markdowns and	promotions, spending more on styles that are working and cancelling out of ones that aren't." Lay says the key to a successful merchandising career is always think about the customer and the market: "Standing out is about having a very commercial outlook and understanding how people shop."
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merchandising director level, for inside and outside of London respectively.



Andrey Savin, Fashion Retail MA graduate from the London College of Fashion says finding the right role to apply for has been a challenge, but that the average salaries shown in *Drapers'* research are encouraging. "I have an analytical mind and love working with numbers, but there doesn't seem to be that many entry-level roles

around at the moment. It's good to see that in the end the financial rewards will be there, whether I work in or out of London," he says.

However, the pool of candidates looking for entry-level roles is lower than in design or buying. "Merchandising roles can be harder to fill, as there aren't so many people enamoured by the numbers and analytical side of things," concludes Man. 🌈



MERCHANDISING

-  Salary in London
-  Salary outside London

Eyeing up the competition

With many candidates gunning for senior visual merchandising roles, retailers can afford to be exacting about their requirements

Words by SUZANNE BEARNE

Drapers / JUNE 16 2012 - 12

Viewed as one of the most glamorous functions of the fashion business, roles in visual merchandising are in high demand. This creates what Diane Wilkinson, division manager for retail at Fashion & Retail Personnel, describes as a “candidate-rich” scenario for any potential recruiter.

One senior recruiter for a premium retailer says: “We get so many CVs that when it comes to heads of visual merchandising we are quite brutal. They’ve got to have international experience, experience of managing a team and have worked with a comparable brand.”

Accessories and handbag retailer Radley receives a “steady flow of speculative applications” for visual merchandising roles through its website, according to its recruitment manager Leanne Murphy. She adds: “We are in a fortunate position that we have a lot of professionals interested in joining us.”

With roles so competitive, it is no surprise that salaries are lower than in other sectors. Junior visual merchandisers based outside of London earn an average of £16,188 and a head of visual merchandising in London is paid on average £44,441, so it is a career path that is followed for passion rather than earning potential. That said, those in this sector can receive benefits such as a good staff discount, a company car, mobile and laptop.

Most companies recruit for the senior roles externally and promote from within for the more junior levels. Donna Ida, owner of the eponymous women’s denim indie, says both

her visual merchandising staff were recruited and promoted internally: “By promoting within you retain the staff, incentivise them and stimulate them all at the same time.”

Head of visual merchandising Jo Pratten started at Donna Ida as assistant manager at its Westfield London store in 2008. “She would constantly be tweaking the rails and was good at executing the window ideas I had,” explains Ida.

Displaying such talent meant that within two years Pratten was appointed to her current role.

However, Ann Summers people services manager Julie Rickford says the retailer finds it tough to attract staff due to its head office location: “A huge disadvantage for us is we can miss out on talent who cannot commute to us in Whyteleafe [in Surrey] or those who enjoy the buzz and atmosphere of working in London.”

Case study

Lucie Palmer

– Visual merchandising manager, Radley



After studying design at school and university,	before being given the chance to design a bar in New York.	Radley and we’re shaping the brand to attract a younger market as well as keeping things exciting for our loyal followers.	cross functionally, Palmer aspires to become a creative director. Beyond that she aims to be her own boss.
Lucie Palmer landed the role of interior decorator at furniture retailer Ikea, designing room settings.	Last year she joined Radley as visual merchandising manager following six years as international visual merchandiser and store design manager for chocolate manufacturer Godiva.	to pop-ups and store designs to gettings involved with setups for press events.” Keen on building up teams and working	“One day I would like my own visual merchandising and store design company, where my role would be interacting between design teams and brands to create beautiful spaces full of beautiful products,” she concludes.



VISUAL MERCHANDISING

- Salary in London
- Salary outside London

Beginners *luck*

Once you land a design role there is a good career ladder and pay prospects, but getting on the first rung is hard

Words by JAMES KNOWLES

Drapers / JUNE 16 2012 — 14

Those lucky enough to secure a design position will find that average starting salaries are low, at between £16,000 and £17,000 in and outside of London. However, average London salaries rise to £32,533 for designer posts, and the average hits £86,567 at design/creative director level, with peak

average salaries outside of London just behind at £77,651.

The low starting salaries are caused by the mismatch between supply and demand of design jobs. Emma Jones, senior people manager at lifestyle retailer White Stuff, says: "Design roles are always popular and advertising in these areas will always yield a high response, regardless of the position."

Echoing those sentiments, Marie-Anne Labidi, corporate HR development director at lingerie brand Chantelle, says the company experiences similar. "Design roles are the most sought-after positions and unsurprisingly the ones we get the most interest in, making them the most competitive," she says.

The problem facing many design graduates is there simply aren't enough jobs to go around. Charlotte Ayres, senior consultant for design, production, technical and sales at Fashion & Retail Personnel, tells *Drapers* of the 23 positions she currently has on offer, just two are design-related.

Liz Jewitt-Cross, HR and business transformation director at lifestyle brand Joules, says while the standard of candidates coming out of fashion retail-related degree courses at universities and fashion colleges is good, they do require additional training. "The level is generally high. Although, candidates' knowledge is often under developed in processes, systems, and ways of working, and sometimes they perhaps underestimate the effort needed to develop and deliver a range. These are all things that the right experience will help develop though," she says.

Salary levels are being driven by factors including the economy and the pay brackets set by the high street's big players, such as Marks & Spencer and John Lewis, forcing others to review their salary and benefits packages in order to remain competitive, or missing out on the best candidates. "We benchmark across all sectors of the fashion industry and also look at local salaries, as well as London rates and large city salaries and benefits offered by competing organisations," concludes Jewitt-Cross. 🌈

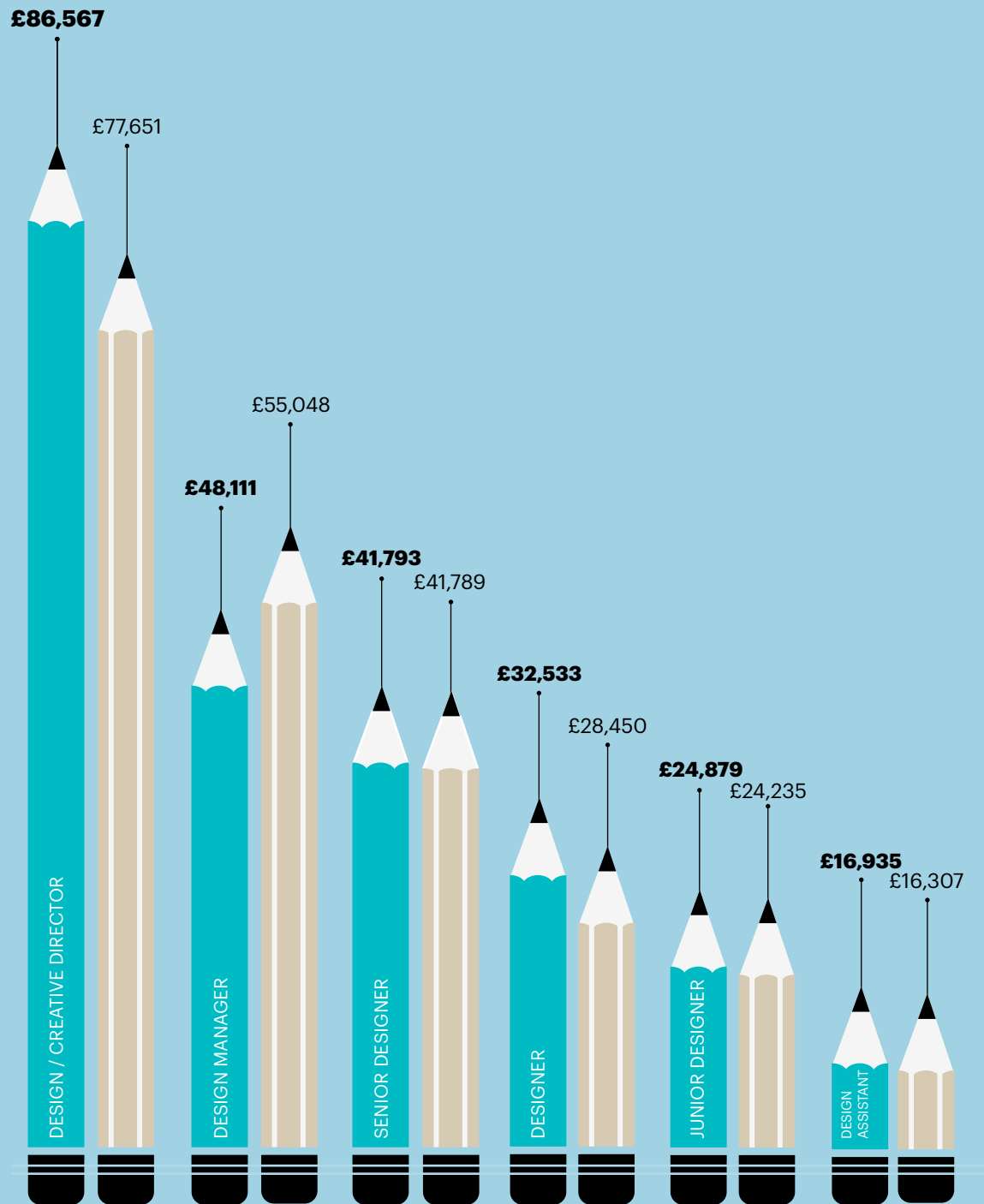
Case study

Abhay Harkauli

— Senior designer, Merc



Beginning his career with a placement as an assistant menswear designer in India, Abhay Harkauli has since worked for Alexander McQueen and Dreamweaver. He then moved to his current position at Merc, where he says he loves "designing a diverse product range as part of a dynamic team at a British heritage brand". Harkauli says: "I am responsible	for the design and development of various categories across the men's and women's ranges. Every season starts with fabric and trend research and identifying themes, key silhouettes and colours with the head of design. "Apart from researching, designing and sketching new ideas, a typical day also involves attending fit sessions, liaising with factories	and attending meetings with our production, sales or marketing teams." He adds: "Being part of the creative process, seeing the conception and realisation of the finished garment from the initial idea or sketch is extremely rewarding. There is nothing that I don't enjoy, but as we work to deadlines it is not always possible to explore every single idea.	Design is a balancing act between innovation and commercial viability and it is this challenge that really appeals to me." And his advice for climbing the design career ladder: "Along with good creative design skills, it is also important to have an excellent understanding of the technical aspects, which comes with gaining as much work experience as possible."
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DESIGN

- Salary in London
- Salary outside London

Short on skills

Poor understanding of different career paths and a lack of quality technical courses means there aren't enough skilled candidates for retailers and brands

Words by JAMES KNOWLES

Drapers / JUNE 16 2012 — 16

Fashion retailers and brands are crying out for candidates with specialist technical skills, but a lack of understanding about the variety of career paths available and the country's well-documented skills gap – the impetus behind Drapers' own Save Our Skills campaign – in this

sector means that prospective employees with the right skillsets can be hard to come by. Charlotte Ayres, senior consultant for design, production, technical and sales at Fashion & Retail Personnel, says: "I have a lot of technical roles available at the moment such as pattern cutters or graders. There's high demand for people that have Gerber or Lectra experience

because they just seem to be a dying breed." Emma Jones, senior people manager at lifestyle retailer White Stuff, agrees: "We tend to get a lower volume of response for technical roles. There appears to be a gap in the market with the sort of experience we look for. Graduates tend to want to go down the product development route and ultimately end up in buying careers. Garment technologists appear to be getting rarer, as if it's a lost trade.

"Overseas suppliers can provide these skills where there has been a gap in the market for British talent. If we saw an increase in the number of British manufacturers, maybe we would see an increase in the number of people with the sort of skills we are looking for."

Ayres reveals of the 23 positions she's recruiting for at the moment, 10 of them are technical. In a bid to plug the gap she's now working more closely with Manchester Metropolitan University, which is known for its technical graduates.

However, despite the demand for candidates with technical skills, salaries are lower than in other areas such as buying and merchandising. Average London salaries differ only slightly from those outside of the capital, and range from £28,061 for garment technologists to £49,825 for technical manager positions.

Ayres agrees that technical candidates should be paid higher salaries in recognition of the demand. However, she says employers are waking up to the need to offer competitive benefits packages. "It takes time to get those things in place, but I think many are realising that in order to attract and retain staff they are going to want certain benefits," she concludes. 🌈

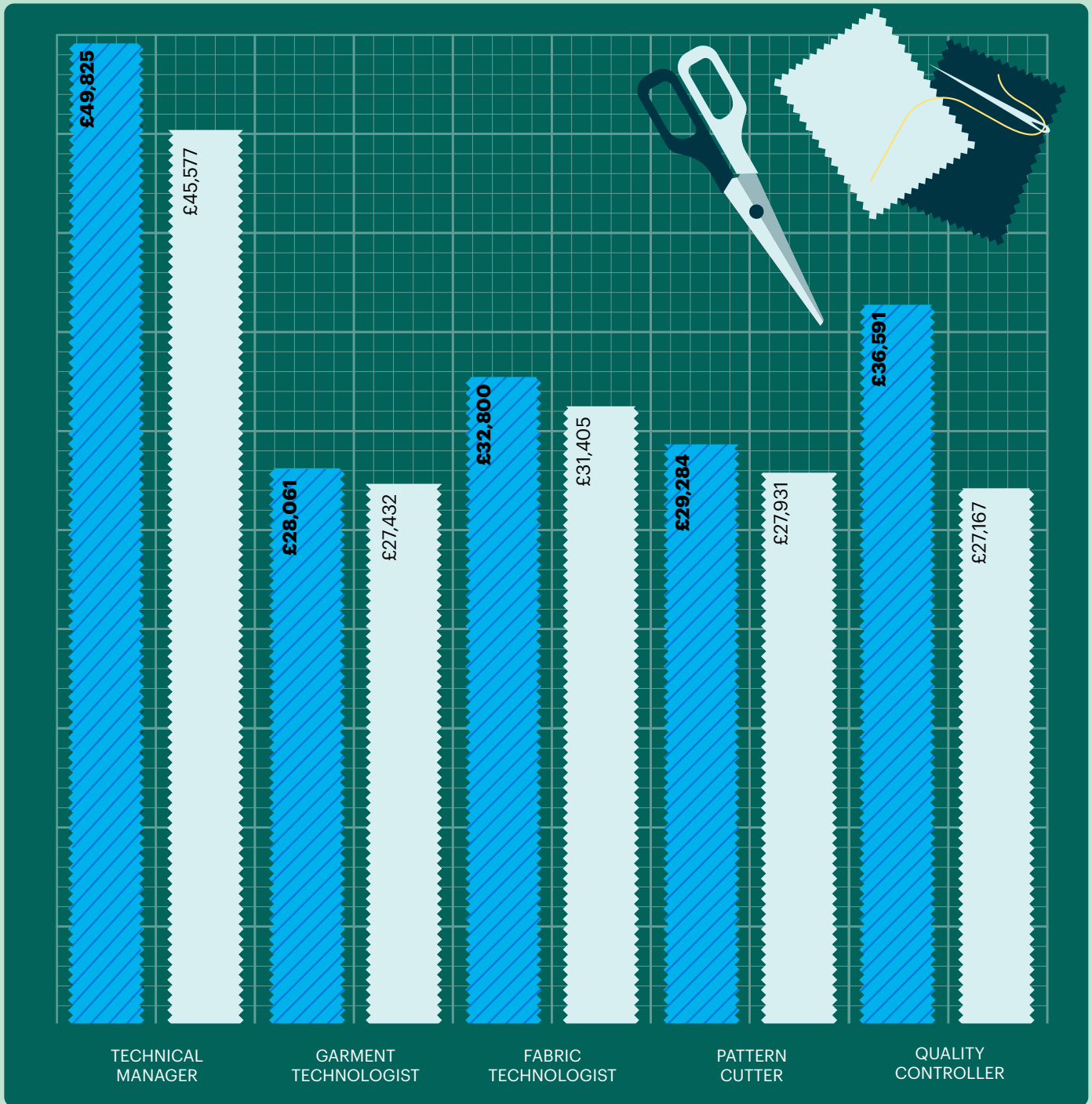
Case study

Elaine Penzer

– Garment technologist, George at Asda



Working as a garment technologist for the ladies formal, Be Seen In and Barbara Hulanicki ranges for George at Asda, Elaine Penzer previously worked for New Look and Next after completing a clothing design and production degree at De Montfort University in Leicester.	a good consistent fit, garment construction is correct and best production technique is followed to maximise quality and customer satisfaction. I communicate with suppliers across the world to make sure they make improvements we ask for, and I sign off size specifications and check production before allowing deliveries to ship." Penzer was drawn to the technical area	of the industry from the start. "My degree covered a broad range of subjects. The technical side just came more naturally to me and my first industry placement gave me a chance to experience this area fully. I never looked back. Fashion always sells style, but people will remain loyal where quality follows." Her latest career move from assistant garment technologist at Next to the role at George at Asda was	a step up. She has enjoyed the challenge of maintaining quality in a fast-paced, high-volume environment, and "opportunities to work with some very inspirational people, like Barbara". Penzer concludes: "I'm constantly developing as there are always new things to learn. In the future I'd like to progress to technical management and use all these experiences to train and develop others."
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TECHNICAL

- Salary in London
- Salary outside London

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Creative *direction*

Working in product development can be a stepping stone to the next level, so staff are happy to compromise on salary for a place at the right company

Words by SUZANNE BEARNE

With more than 20 years in the fashion industry, Simon Poole, owner of men's young fashion brand Luke, says recruiting to fill product development roles at its Birmingham and Oxfordshire offices has always been easy due to his extensive contacts list.

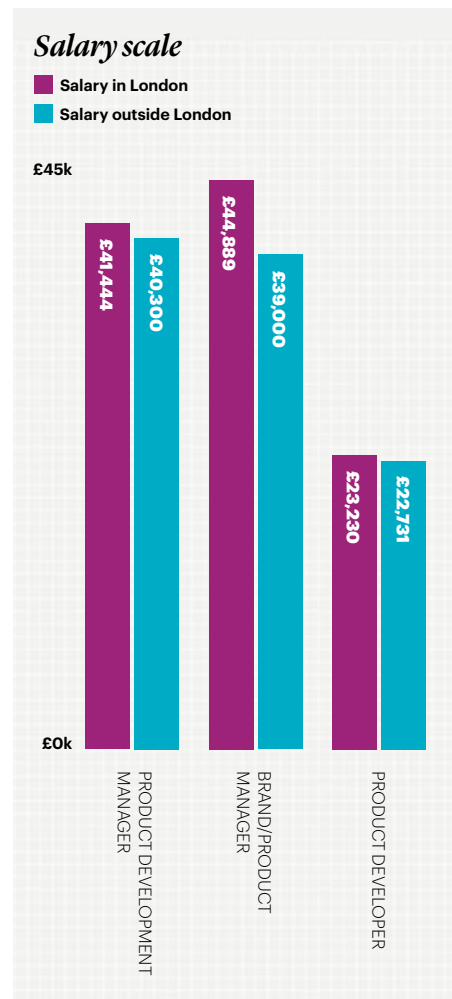
"When you are my age you tend to have networked lots and I am lucky to have kept in contact with some of my old employees who normally point me in the right direction of the talent," he says.

While Poole admits he doesn't lure staff in with any particular benefits, his formula is simple: "We are a good company to work for and a place where people have room to express themselves and take ownership," he says.

It also helps that product development roles are highly sought after due to the creativity potential.

However, according to Charlotte Ayres, senior consultant for design, production, technical and sales at Fashion & Retail Personnel, there are few product development roles around: "Candidates are tending to stay put rather than being last in and first out."

Tough economic conditions mean the higher end of the salary bands are hard to achieve. Our data shows that within London, product development managers earn on average £41,444 a year, brand/product managers £44,889 and product developers



£23,230. When people climb the ladder to the next role, salaries will only increase by about 10%, says Ayres.

According to Poole, employees are happy to be paid a lower salary for working for a premium brand "as the kudos and name on the CV" are more worthwhile than a higher pay packet and can help them reach the next level in their career path.

A recent Kurt Geiger job ad for a product developer at its office in Farringdon, London shows that as well as a "competitive basic salary", benefits include pension and life assurance as well as "enviable discounts".

This is in line with what Ayres' experiences, but she says some big companies might also offer a discretionary bonus and perhaps a car allowance. She says it is unlikely that those working in this sector would be provided with a mobile or laptop. 🌈

'We are a good company where people have room to express themselves and take ownership'

Simon Poole, owner, Luke

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Brand values

Production candidates place a premium on roles working for brands or retailers, rather than suppliers

Words by SUZANNE BEARNE

For three of the production roles analysed – sourcing manager, production manager and production co-ordinator – salaries in London are slightly higher. However, outside of the capital, quality assurance managers earn a higher average salary as there is more demand for the role.

Leanne Murphy, recruitment manager at accessories and handbag retailer Radley, says recruiting for production roles has been straightforward. She believes it is because many sourcing professionals working directly for suppliers want to switch to a brand or retailer.

“These candidates appear to be chasing that affinity with a brand to ensure they

have passion for the product as well as passion for the role,” she says.

However, Murphy admits the company needs to work on building a greater succession plan when it comes to its sourcing team and planning for the future of the department: “There is definitely a renewed focus on training and development within the company,” she says.

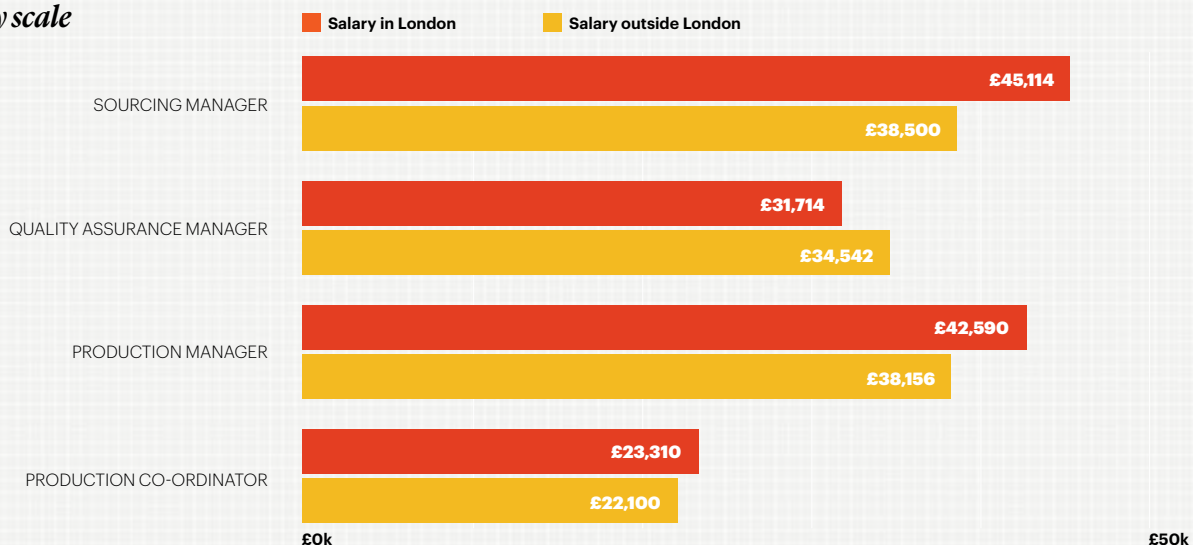
Skillsmart Retail chief executive Anne Seaman argues that as recruiting staff takes time, money and resources it is in retailers’ best interests to support and nurture the talent they have in-house. “Investing in staff through training and qualifications is a proven way to develop staff loyalty, motivate employees and promote internal progression. This continuing

professional development helps reduce retailers’ churn rates and keeps talented, ambitious employees in the company.”

However, when it comes to recruiting for production roles, brands tend to look externally, says Charlotte Ayres, senior consultant for design, production, technical and sales at Fashion & Retail Personnel. “It’s more within buying and merchandising that [staff] tend to progress from within,” she says.

For Murphy, the small team helps bring production staff to Radley: “Everyone gets involved, especially when it comes to directly liaising with and travelling to our suppliers and their factories. This is a major attraction for some of our more junior members of the sourcing team.”

Salary scale



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Recruiters are picky about the experience of wholesale merchandisers, so the best receive an attractive wage

Words by SUZANNE BEARNE

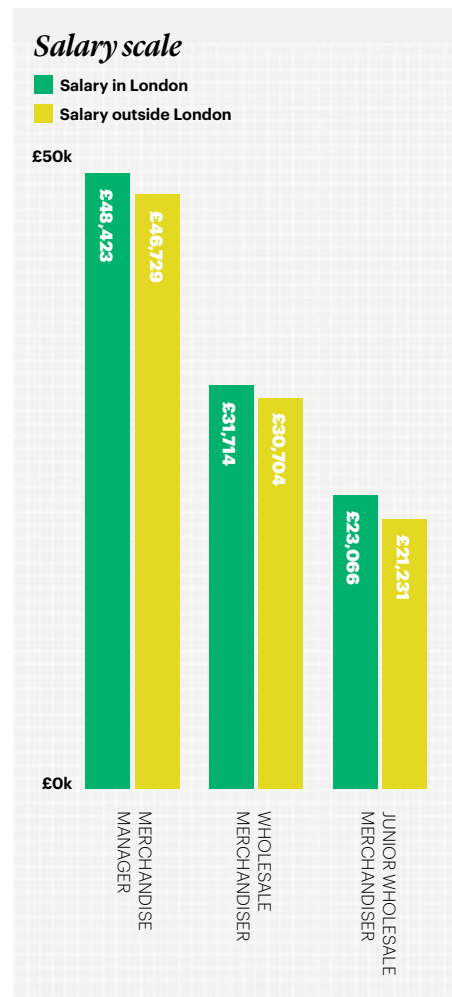
It can be tough to attract wholesale merchandisers, according to Mark Ashton, managing director for brand fashion agent Concept Fashion Agency. He says: “I think merchandising roles at university level are seen as very academic, and students are forever being driven towards the bright lights of design and possibly buying; unaware of the fact that any decent merchandiser is worth more than their weight in gold and potentially earn far more than any buying or design role.”

A junior wholesale merchandiser outside London will earn on average £21,231 a year, rising to an average of £48,423 for a merchandise manager in London.

Jennifer Green, manager of design, production and technical at Fashion & Retail Personnel, also believes recruiting for such roles can be tough because employers can be a little more fussy and narrow minded. “They don’t believe you can make the crossover from working for a supplier to working for a brand or retailer. If I [want to] send over two people to a branded retailer, they won’t see the supplier one. It’s cut throat,” she explains.

When it comes to recruiting for wholesale merchandising staff at premium brand Hugo Boss, the focus is on recruiting from within. Bernd Hake, managing director of Hugo Boss, UK and Ireland, believes the company has developed a reputation of giving internal employees a chance to move up the career ladder.

He argues that the benefits of recruiting internally are that employees already know the



business. “They are familiar with company culture, understand how the business functions, know the processes involved and have an established relationship to our retail partners, the press, and internal colleagues and to our German head office,” he says.

The data we have compiled does tally with the experiences of such brands. Hake adds: “When you add up fixed salary and benefits offered to our employees we are on average in line with your figures.”

However, the right brands will provide generous benefits. In addition to the salary, wholesale merchandising staff at Hugo Boss are included in the company’s global bonus programme, which is based on a combination of individual performance and corporate performance. 🌈

‘Any decent merchandiser will potentially earn far more than any buying or design role’

Mark Ashton, managing director, Concept Fashion Agency

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Bonus *time*

Sales is still financially rewarding, but people in these roles are being made to work harder for their money

Words by SUZANNE BEARNE

Take a look at our recruitment website Drapersjobs.com and sales is likely to be one of the categories with the highest number of jobs.

It is also one of the most well-paid jobs within fashion. A London-based sales director earns an average of £87,230 as a basic salary and their package tends to include a mobile, company car and laptop.

That's before adding commission and bonuses, one of the attractions to working in sales. Oliver Strickland, UK country manager at Swedish lifestyle brand J Lindeberg, says the company usually offers an annual 15% bonus on hitting a sales target.

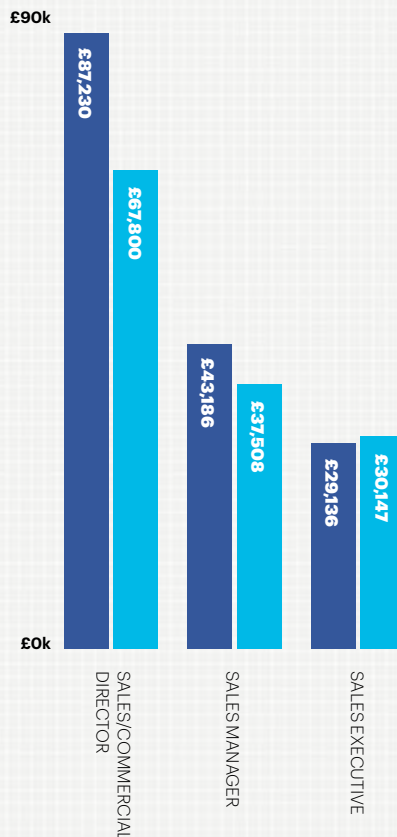
However, dig a little deeper and it's not all rosy. Sales salaries have declined due to the tough economic climate, says Jennifer Green, recruitment manager for design, production, technical and sales at Fashion & Retail Personnel. "It's just frustrating for us, as a company wants someone to bring in all their business but they want to pay a silly amount... and [that doesn't attract] the right candidates. [When times were good] I would have said sales directors commanded a salary of £100,000 basic," she says.

Strickland also believes sales salaries have stagnated during recent years and adds that sales people "are probably being under paid for the amount of work they are doing".

However, due to a higher turnover of staff in sales roles, some companies are working harder to retain talent. One managing director of a distribution agency says: "There is talent out there but a lot of competition as well.

Salary scale

■ Salary in London
■ Salary outside London



We give commission as an incentive but we're also looking at serving sales staff better so providing them with more support and access to the right programmes [for example, stock level management and ordering information]; things to [better] facilitate their job."

When it comes to recruiting sales managers, heads of brands tend to know exactly who they want. "It's quite incestuous in these sales manager roles," says Green.

"Everyone knows everyone so the chance is they will go direct to the contacts and not use recruiters as much."

However, one senior recruiter for a brand believes that product knowledge and personable skills are more important than a strong contacts book.

She says: "For us it's not about aggressive sales. There's no need to open a lot more doors, it's more about relationship management." 🌈

'Sales people are probably being under paid for the amount of work they are doing'

Oliver Strickland, UK country manager, J Lindeberg

Widening *the net*

Ecommerce skills are in short supply, pushing up salaries and causing employers to expand their search for new recruits

Words by LIZ MORRELL

Drapers / JUNE 16 2012 — 26

The growing importance of ecommerce and multichannel in fashion businesses is reflected in the fact that roles in this area – particularly at senior level – are some of the most handsomely rewarded of any retail department.

Unlike for other areas it is not possible to separate the roles for inside and outside London, as the majority of roles at all levels placed in the past year have been within London. A salary range is also given, as well as an average for each job level, as there is a wide range for some of these roles.

The average salary nears £72,000 for an ecommerce or multichannel director, though those in the most desired jobs can command more than £100,000. The rewards extend through the scale of positions down to search engine optimisation managers whose average salaries still beat that of a store manager.

James Roper, chief executive ofetail industry body IMRG, says this is indicative of the importance of the roles, the shortage of experienced candidates, and the fact this area of retail is developing fast with constant innovation and changes in legislation to keep on top of. “Ecommerce is critical to fashion brands now, but the skills are changing all the time,” he says.

The right skills are so in demand that fashion industry experience is not essential in the same way as for other areas of the industry, says Diana Moreno-Gomez, senior consultant for marketing, digital and creative at Fashion & Retail Personnel. She adds that those in senior

roles are in a powerful position: “Finding someone with the technical skills, combined with strategy and team skills, is hard and that’s why someone who has that experience can charge whatever they want.”

Jessica Taylor, people director for lifestyle retailer White Stuff, says the newness of the roles causes uncertainty over pay. “It isn’t as established as something like buying and merchandising so it is a little more unknown.” She is part of a HR networking group that is comparing and benchmarking salaries across retail to ensure they are paying the right amount.

Accessories retailer Tie Rack has a new ecommerce team and was surprised at the salaries being commanded. Head of HR Natalie Whitehouse says: “It has been difficult to find someone on a salary that we wanted to pay. It’s

‘There aren’t a lot of experienced people in the market and the good ones are getting hunted by everyone’

Bryony Leleux, head of HR, Moss Bros Group

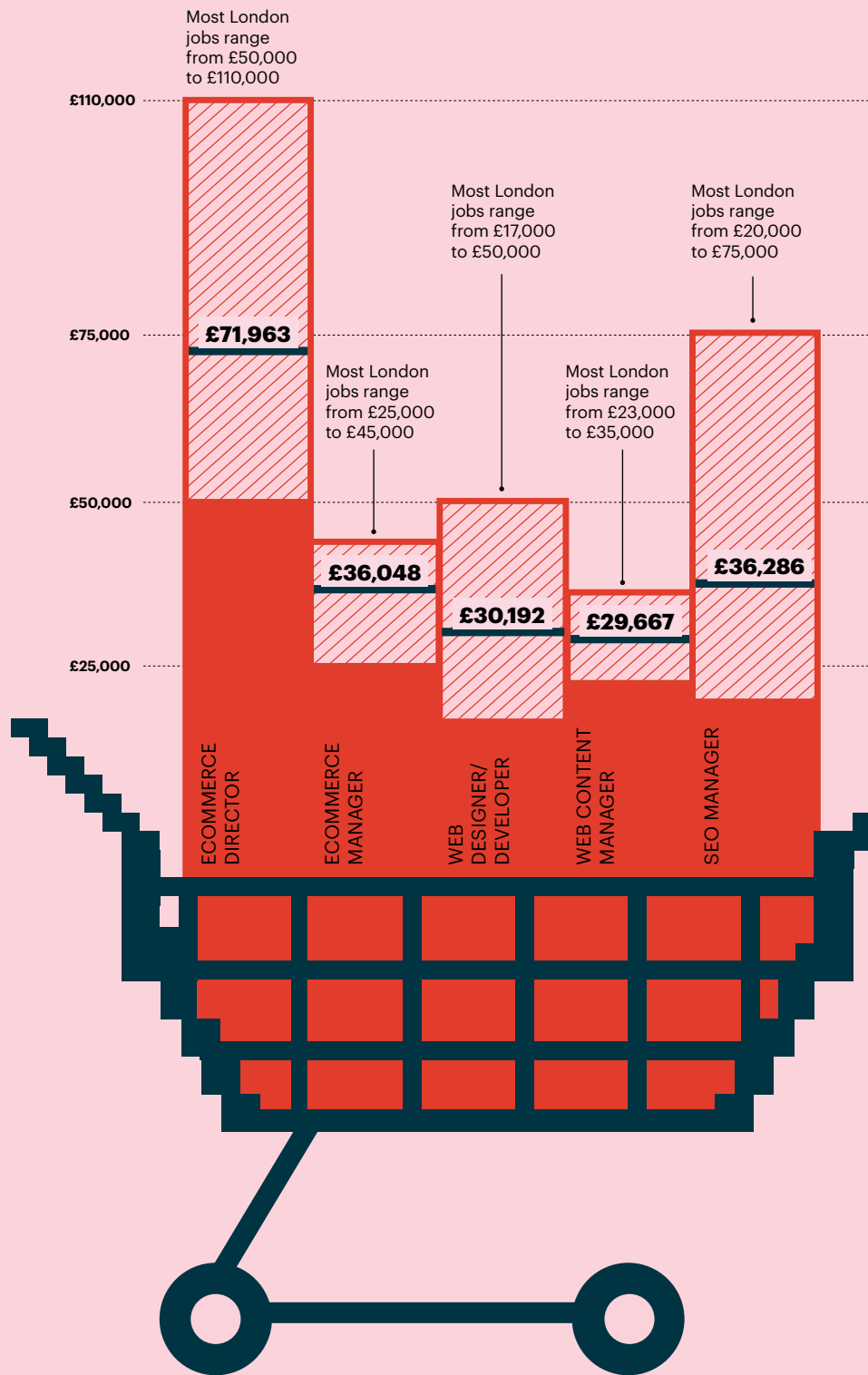
very expensive and accepting that it’s going to cost £60,000 to £65,000 for an ecommerce manager has been a bit of a shock.”

Menswear retailer Moss Bros Group is also building its ecommerce team after appointing an ecommerce director in the past couple of months. Bryony Leleux, head of HR at the retailer, says the salary inflation in the current market is similar to what was seen with the demand for IT staff in the run up to the millennium. “There aren’t a lot of experienced people in the market and the ones that are good are getting hunted by everyone,” she says.



Even lower-level staff, such as web designers, are able to dictate their price by charging freelance rates for their work. Roper says salary inflation is inevitable: “As the market is growing people are willing to pay more money so you do get people on the salary merry-go-round.”

However, Moreno-Gomez says any poaching that is going on is more that of senior managers at the £35,000 to £45,000 level as retailers look to quickly develop talent in this area, rather than ecommerce directors where to poach is largely too expensive. Leleux agrees: “It’s a really small pool but those who are in positions at the senior level aren’t jumping around because the people want to keep them,” she says.

In fact, ecommerce bosses are finding they are able to move up the career ladder when they change job. This year, John Lewis head of online Jonathon Brown, and David Worby, director of Harrods Direct, have both made the step up to chief executive at M and M Direct and My-Wardrobe respectively. 🌈



ECOMMERCE

-  Salary range in London
-  Average salary

Market *imperatives*

It's an attractive area of fashion retail in which to work, but marketing and PR teams still place a premium on those with exceptional skills and experience

Words by LIZ MORRELL

Drapers / JUNE 16 2012 — 28

Marketing and PR is a critical area for fashion retailers, with the teams taking responsibility for creating the voice of their brands.

Relatively well-paid by retail standards, PR and marketing directors are commanding an average salary of more than £66,000 and close to £100,000 at the top end. Meanwhile, PR and marketing managers can earn an average of more than £42,000.

But its high-profile nature means it is an area that attracts a lot of candidates, with pay sometimes less of a priority if it is a particularly sought-after fashion brand or retailer, according to Diana Moreno-Gomez, senior consultant for marketing, digital and creative at Fashion & Retail Personnel. "For them salary is not as important as the role and the product," she says.

Liam Connelly, vice-president, international human resources and corporate social responsibility at Timberland, agrees: "In our experience, the company, its values and ethics are increasingly important in the minds of consumers, employees and candidates," he says.

Sarah Hawkins, a former marketing and PR director for lingerie retailer La Senza, now runs her own marketing and PR consultancy Flapjack. She says marketing and PR within fashion is still one of the best places to be: "There is still a cache, and for variety and pace, marketing and PR is one of the best divisions to work in."

However, Hawkins warns competition for roles can be fierce, so candidates have to ensure they have relevant experience.

Another important dynamic of marketing and PR teams is staff promotion tends to be difficult without those at the top leaving their roles. As there is less chance to move departments, personnel changes are likely to occur by staff either being poached or becoming bored in their roles and leaving. "They are more traditional types of positions and they tend to be smaller teams so there is a lot less flexibility than in e-commerce or multichannel. In PR and marketing everything is pretty much there, so unless people leave there is nowhere for candidates to go," says Moreno-Gomez.

One head of HR said this can cause problems: "We have people that have been in the business a number of years in the marketing and PR department and the downside is how do you

keep people motivated?" She says retailers have to think laterally as to other roles that may be relevant, and so her business has widened staff's responsibility in this sector into online too.

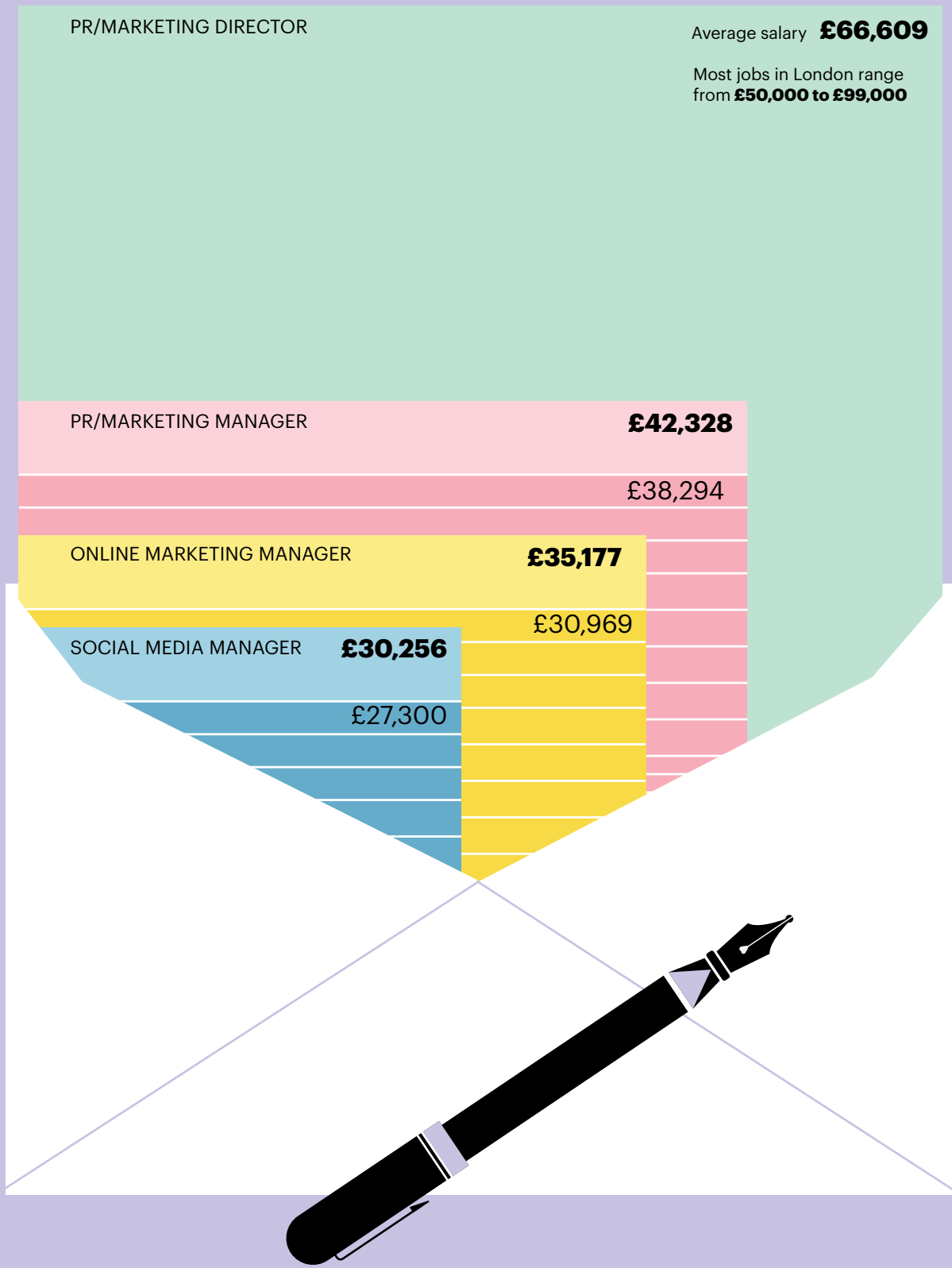
Hawkins says the increasing desire for staff to have traditional and online marketing and PR skills is pushing up prices of the best staff, because there aren't as many marketing candidates with online skills. "Everyone wants staff with online experience, which makes that area very challenging and sometimes you have to pay over the odds for that," she says.

She adds that small teams mean having the best people is key: "There are a lot of people in the market but not a lot of great people."

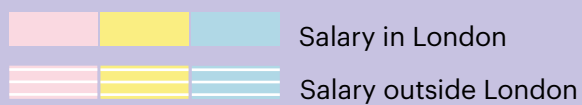
However, stagnation in such roles can be prevented. "If you have a budget and are creative then you can do a lot without having to leave the business. It's about trying to make people's jobs interesting," concludes Hawkins. 🌈

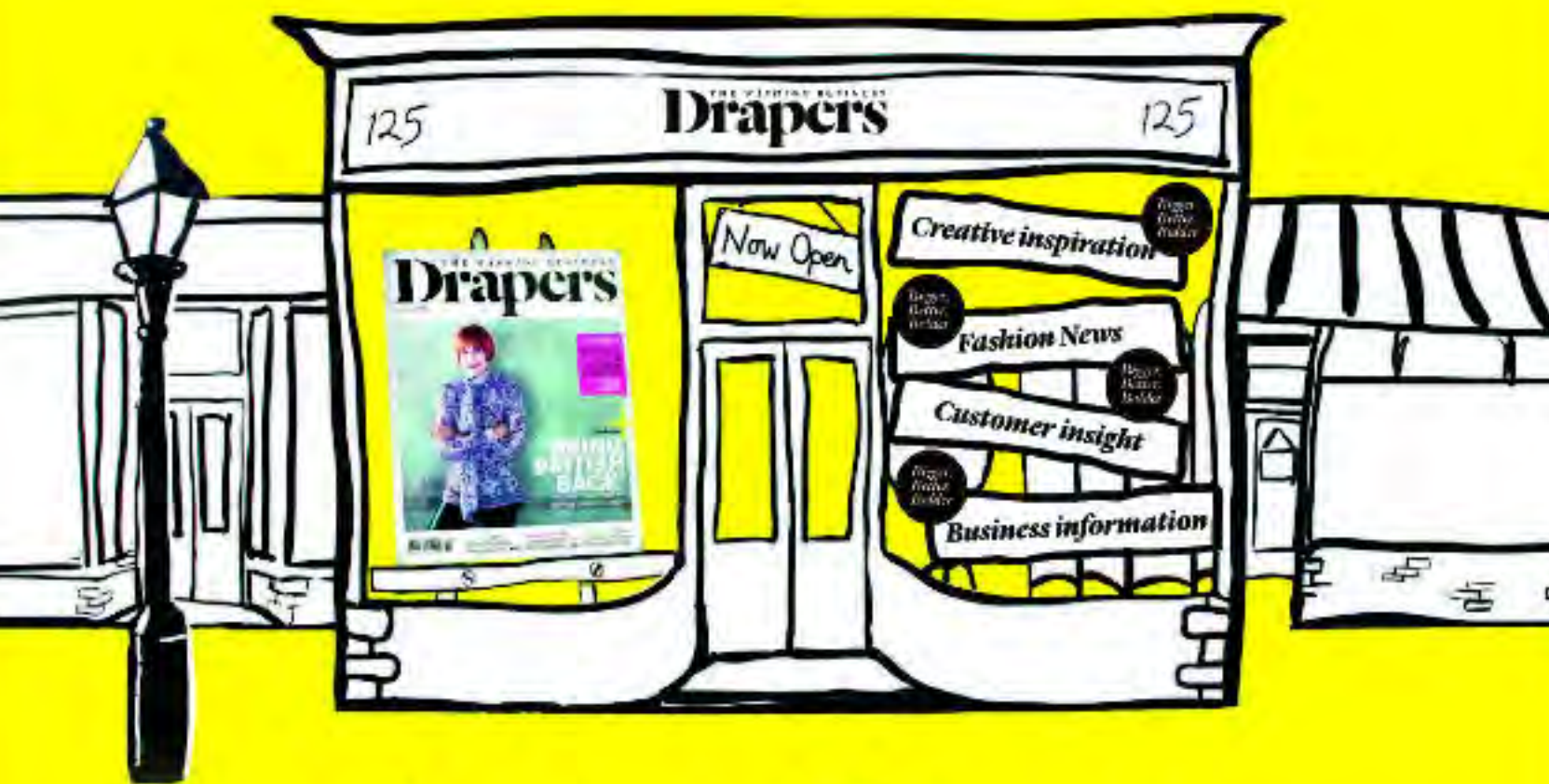
'Everyone wants staff with online experience, which makes that area very challenging and sometimes you have to pay over the odds for that'

Sarah Hawkins, owner, Flapjack



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On *the* front line

Candidates are being picky about who they work for, while employers can be demanding without paying more

Words by LIZ MORRELL



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FIGURES: SKILLSMART RETAIL

Salaries on the front line of retail in stores and out in the field have never matched those senior roles in head office. And they are being held steady by a strong supply of candidates who want the security of working for an established and successful retailer.

The recession has left a rich pool of potential staff, and this is impacting pay because candidates are keener to get into a good, stable company, says Diane Wilkinson, divisional manager for retail operations at Fashion & Retail Personnel. She explains: "Retailers don't have to pay more. We have seen more people move and have the same salary or even drop salary to get into a company they really like."

Store managers boast an average salary of just less than £30,000 outside of London and there is a healthy jump to more than £40,000 for an area manager role. However, the next position - retail operations manager - has a smaller increment of about £3,500 extra.

Retailers can be more demanding with increased expectations from the people they employ, despite not necessarily increasing pay. "Because it's candidate-rich, retailers can be picky. For example, area managers are such a key part of the business that they are upping the ante on what they are looking for," says Wilkinson. "They want someone that is very commercial and can drive the bottom line

rather than just someone who is overseeing the stores," she says.

Bryony Leleux, head of HR at menswear retailer Moss Bros Group, says finding the best staff for these roles is still a challenge. The retailer is investing in a renewed focus on training to better grow talent from within because the needs of its business means it has to largely look outside. "Particularly at store manager level there is still only the same pool of the best people available and people are holding on hard to their best people, so finding good store managers is as hard as ever, if not more so," she says.

Hence, the average salary for a fashion store manager in our survey is slightly higher than the £21,000 to £28,000 range Skillsmart Retail

'We have seen more people move and even drop salary to get into a company they really like'

Diane Wilkinson, divisional manager, Fashion & Retail Personnel

says is the average for a manager role in retail in general.

Jessica Taylor, people director at lifestyle retailer White Stuff, agrees: "There are more candidates out there but we still want to recruit the best people," she says. The retailer is also focusing heavily on progressing staff through its business and it's a policy that is paying off with nearly half (46%) of its vacancies in the retail operations division filled internally so far this year. This includes 38% of deputy managers and 52% of store managers. "That's testament to the fact we do a lot of internal moves and there is a definite path for growth," she says.

Independent retailers, who don't have the advantage of a well-known name, find recruiting retail operation roles can be a harder challenge - especially lower down the pecking order. Deryane Tadd, owner of womenswear indie The Dressing Room in St Albans, says at manager level recruiting can be tough: "It's quite difficult because you are looking for people that are building a career in retail and retail still carries a stigma as a career choice." She finds it's important to employ someone who is a real self-starter for an indie more so than for a multiple retailer, because a smaller team requires people that will make a difference.

But for multiples, they are effectively mini businesses in their own right, and those that thrive in-store can go all the way to the top through the retail operations route. 🌈

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