



**CREATIVE  
NICHEINC**

**TALENT  
FORECAST**

**THIRD EDITION**

**01**  
Opening

**02**  
Hot Jobs

**04**  
Leadership

**06**  
Employee  
Experience

**08**  
Rise of the  
Contractor

**12**  
AI

# Table of Contents

# Ask most agency and marketing executives about one of the pressing questions on their minds and they'll probably deliver the same answer: What talent will we need to remain competitive in the coming years and how do we retain them?

It's a good question, and one we'll be answering in detail in our Third Edition of the Talent Forecast, our report on hot talent in demand for the coming year.

Last year was a year of tremendous change — politically, socially, environmentally — and the modern workplace was forced to abruptly adapt to the shifting times. This left many leadership teams at a branding

crossroads, and most had to prioritize the implementation of a transformative corporate vision to stay relevant. Many companies began giving C-Suite hiring preferences to younger and “cooler” personnel to fit within their new vision (usually, to their detriment), and shifted the criteria of their talent searches to prioritize characteristics like charisma and boldness.

---

Yet, just like the preceding year, we predict the next 12 months will shift the entire talent landscape, which is why we're so excited to present our Third Edition of the Talent Forecast. Combining data and insider analysis collected throughout our 17 years in business while serving over 700 companies, we've predicted the top trends in talent for the coming year. The goal of this Forecast is to provide you with the knowledge to fiercely compete in today's evolving pool of professionals.

We do this by helping you understand what creative professionals expect

from their future employers in order to help drive your brand forward, as well as attract and retain valuable people. We'll then walk through the changing wishlist of today's talent (hint: think career-building and purpose-driven projects) and outline the keys to successfully create an enviable workplace environment. This Forecast will also explain the resurgence of EX (we'll get into this later), teach you how to navigate the tricky waters of the freelance economy, and provide insights on the technological renaissance of Blockchain and AI.



# Hot jobs

## DATA & INSIGHTS

### Data Analyst

W/W/W

Translating data from a myriad of sources into meaningful and usable information, Data Analysts interpret the meaning behind business numbers. This is extremely important when considering what is feasible for any business, as strategically leveraging data helps drive smarter and more efficient marketing campaigns.

\$ \$70-90K

### Business Analyst

W/W/W

With a primary goal of aiding business integration, Business Analysts are responsible for researching and analyzing organizational information and digging into the business needs of stakeholders. As organizations are increasingly undergoing massive digital transformations, it is becoming extremely important to invest in these roles so the road to a company's digital future is strategically mapped out and managed.

\$ \$80-110K

### Data Scientist

W/W/W

A step up from Analyst, Data Scientists are part mathematician, part scientist and part transcriber. To boil it down completely, they spend their days solving complex problems for businesses with data-driven solutions. With the majority of businesses requiring more data-driven initiatives than ever before, this an extremely in-demand role.

\$ \$120-160K



W/W/W = What they do/Why they are hot/Why You Need It

## STRATEGY



### Brand Strategist

W/W/W

When launching a new brand, product or service, Brand Strategists look at how to elevate and plan the marketing around the new launch. It is their responsibility to set an effective brand strategy from the get go, which is extremely important for brands to cut through the clutter and edge out competition. Because organizations rarely launch new brands, this role is becoming more contract based with 3-month terms becoming standard.

\$ \$80-150K

### Employer Brand Strategist

W/W/W

Responsible for ensuring how a company's brand is perceived in the marketplace, Employer Brand Strategists have their hand in marketing, talent, HR and strategy. Because there is such a huge demand for talent, potential new hires have access to tools that unveil the inner workings of a brand's internal and external perception (social media

and Glassdoor are great examples). Companies need this role to attract and retain top talent.

\$ \$90-140K

### Social Media Strategist

W/W/W

Social Media Strategists are in charge of mapping out a high-level and comprehensive plan for a brand's social media platforms. This includes determining the frequency of posts, content strategy, ad spend and researching the data points that support a brand's strategy. Because a well thought out plan can cut through the clutter and target the right demographic, these high-level social media roles are becoming essential in 2019.

\$ \$60-90K

### Content Strategist

W/W/W

Responsible for building out an overarching content and social media plan for a brand, Content Strategists work with large data points to determine

everything from brand voice to where branded content should be disseminated. Because content still reigns supreme, this role is becoming essential to keep a brand's content effective, targeted and relevant in a saturated market

\$ \$80-110K

### UX Researcher

W/W/W

While this role has always existed, User Experience (UX) Researchers are on the upswing. This is most likely because these roles are beginning to focus on conducting qualitative and quantitative research (interviews, online statistics, etc.) and critically looking at end-to-end customer touch points. This is crucial to the overall health of an organization as the more positive customer touch points a product has, the better it is going to be received by the target demographic.

\$ \$80-120K

## MARKETING

## Content Marketing Manager

W/W/W

Once a Content Strategist sets out plan, it's the job of a Content Marketing Manager to implement it including overseeing email marketing campaigns, website content and more. Talent for these roles must be creative and nimble, and be able to turn on a dime if something isn't working.

\$ \$70-100K

## Growth Marketing Manager

W/W/W

With a primary responsibility to create innovative and effective tactics to grow the business, Growth Marketing Managers build out specific plans to increase customer acquisition and drive sales. With sales numbers always in mind, they must analyze conversion funnels, identify areas for improvement and

implement strategies to capitalize on these opportunities.

\$ \$100-150K

## Influencer Relations

W/W/W

With a continuous demand for high-quality content, having a strategic influencer strategy is quickly becoming an essential for many established and up-and-coming brands. Influencer Relations roles use their personal and professional contacts to strategically align with influential individuals to bolster a brand's image and connect to new audiences.

\$ \$80-140K

## Social Media Specialist

W/W/W

Social Media Specialists deal with the day-to-day implementation of specific strategy, often looking at

performance and analytics to ensure the social media strategy is effective. They are also often in direct communication with the customer. With brands taking an even further interest in social media, talent for these roles need to be clever, witty and able to communicate compellingly.

\$ \$50-80K



## CREATIVE &amp; PRODUCTION

## Creative Content Producer

W/W/W

A relatively new title, Creative Content Producers are directly responsible for creating written content and all types of visual assets that go along with content production including video, graphics and photography. With the rise of video nearing its peak, having talented employees fill this role is essential to capturing overstimulated audiences' attention.

\$ \$60-120K

## Content Writers

W/W/W

Content Writers are copywriters that specialize in primarily digital content for websites, social platforms and blogs. Talent for these roles must be able to write both long-form and condensed copy effectively and they must be extremely creative if a brand wants to stand out among competition.

\$ \$80-120K

## Motion Graphics Designer

W/W/W

As video continues to outperform written content, Motion Graphics Designers are becoming an extremely hot job. With the responsibility to design videos and digital graphics that contain motion graphics for web and social, talent for these roles must have a both a creative eye and good technology skills, and they must be very efficient to keep up with the constant push for fresh video content.

\$ \$60-120K



## Video Editors/Producer

W/W/W

From organizing logistics to shooting and editing, Video Producers handle the end-to-end strategy and implementation of video production while Video Editors work mostly in post-production. As more companies have a need and want for engaging video as part of their content strategy, the demand for this role is increasing and more clients are favouring in-house roles over hiring freelance contractors.

\$ \$60-120K

## UX/UI Designer

W/W/W

Responsible for the planning and design of digital properties including websites, UX and UI Designers are an extremely in-demand role. Because having a well thought out and executed website or digital product can truly make all the difference to today's digital savvy customers, the need for UX/UI Designers will continue to grow in the upcoming year.

\$ \$60-120K

## Visual Designer

W/W/W

Combining in-demand technical skills with an innovative and creative eye,

Visual Designers create visual assets for a company and contribute to a brand's overall aesthetic. This hot job requires a strong eye for design and is critical to bolster the all-important visuals of a brand.

\$ \$60-120K

## UX Writer

W/W/W

UX Writers develop copy for the overall user experience, paying due attention to taxonomies and how content is organized. Particularly useful for companies with large websites, these writers conduct research, understand best practices and are responsible for creating entire user experiences.

\$ \$80-120K

## Accessibility Designer

W/W/W

Focusing on making sure a brand's content is accessible to everyone, Accessibility Designers look at a brand from an inequalities and inclusion perspective. From implementing reader software to critically looking at how content looks and performs on different platforms, this in-demand role is trending in 2019.

\$ \$80-120K

PURPOSE-DRIVEN STRATEGIES REIGN SUPREME

# In 2019, it's predicted that more than 50% of CMOs will bring

This means that leadership teams will drive growth by drawing a clear line in the metaphorical sand and prioritize purpose-driven strategies above all else.

Of course, this is especially important when considering in-demand talent, as they are overwhelmingly more likely to choose career paths and employment based on purpose-driven motivations. Businesses must also value and define authenticity in the social arena (which is not an easy task, given the muddling and over-use of the term) to position themselves to win the hearts of today's top talent.

Copying your neighbour won't work; brands must find how they relate to talent in a unique and purposeful way if they are going to survive the authenticity storm.

But this won't be a year of lofty and wishy-washy goals that never get accomplished — this will be the year to translate transformational ideas into pragmatic actions. Leaders will have to make hard, practical choices as to which bold, purposeful moves are truly strategic and clearly outline a critical path for each one if they want to be successful.



## Innovation and Digital-First Focused Organizations

Companies are beginning to figure out what it truly means to be a digital-first organization and harnessing the value of a wide range of new, powerful technologies. By prioritizing automating core systems and putting in place a data governance environment, organizations can work faster and smarter than ever before. In addition, we're now seeing brands test AI operationally as well as use various new technologies to make the difference in customer experiences.

A Chief Innovation Officer (CINO) or Chief Technology Innovation Officer (CTIO) is a person in a company who is primarily responsible for managing the process of innovation and change management in an organization, as well as being the person who originates new ideas but also recognizes innovative ideas generated by other people. The CINO also manages technological change. We anticipate more organizations will adopt this function into their C-Suite.



There's no getting around it — when employees like their workplace culture, they stay longer. So when it comes to considering how to attract talent to your organization, having a positive employee experience is essential to avoid rapid-fire turnover.

So why is it continuously a challenge to keep great talent? In 2018, we saw many leadership teams understand the value in building a strong company culture. However, this didn't yield the results they were

hoping for. Perhaps organizations had visions bigger than their budgets, abilities or bandwidth, but this overarching effort didn't actually lead to much traction. We are seeing more organizations work with strategic Employer Brand Consultants to help understand the gaps and opportunities in order to become an employer of choice.

# There's no getting around it — when employees like their workplace culture, they stay longer.

Rather than focusing on changing the broad strokes of their corporate culture, organizations are instead focusing their efforts on improving the overall Employee Experience (EX). This means scrutinizing and optimizing every detail of your employee's day, from investing in ergonomic office chairs to revamping management policies. And this couldn't

come at a better time. With low unemployment and high attrition, employers must fervently consider the overall experience of their employees.

# The Rise of the Contractor



North America's freelance economy is booming. We are placing more and more contractors in several functions ranging from web development and content creation, to roles that were historically full-time such as strategists and fractional Chief Marketing Officers (CMO's).

Reasons for this growth range from project based requirements, headcount or workspace limitations and organizational scalability.

Of course, there are obvious advantages to hiring contractors and freelance professionals in your organization. Not only are they typically very flexible, highly specialized and less of an HR hassle (ie. they can get started immediately), but they are overall more cost effective. This, combined with the anticipation of a soft economy, is the reason we predict more of our clients and organizations will be engaging a higher number of contractors in the future.



# AI firms will begin to employ creative approaches to build and hold onto AI talent in a competitive marketplace.

The past year saw companies of all sorts begin to adopt Artificial Intelligence (AI) technologies in their business practices. We're starting to see what AI can do (and what it can't) as we navigate its current capacity and limitations.

Of course, 2018 also came with its own set of challenges. In particular, three things held this technology back: insufficient information architecture, minimal (and boring) applications, and the fact that the technology was still way too confusing.

In 2019, AI companies will begin to address these problems, as well as better understand escalating security concerns and changing regulations in order to pass on cleaner solutions to their clients. Organizations will continue to adapt new AI technologies and explore cooler and more complicated applications while focusing on understanding and learning the complex technology and application.

Companies will see a big improvement in data governance thanks to AI this year. Firms will also expand RPA (Robotic Process Automation) and proofs-of-concept to broaden the process, product, or experience scope and better understand the impact of AI.

AI firms will begin to employ creative approaches to build and hold onto AI talent in a competitive marketplace.



Thank you for reading our Talent Forecast. We truly hope our predictions will give you a competitive advantage when considering new talent additions in the coming year.

Please don't hesitate to get in touch for more insights on the creative and technology talent pools in your city, and to see our full range of industry hiring solutions for temporary and contract staffing, permanent recruitment, and executive search.

---

**GET IN TOUCH**  
creativeniche.com  
@CreativeNiche

**HEADQUARTERS**  
579 Richmond Street West, Suite 301  
Toronto, ON M5V 1Y6 Canada  
416.360.3893  
Toll-Free 1.855.360.3893  
mandy@creativeniche.com

**OTTAWA**  
162 Metcalfe Street, Suite 300  
Ottawa, ON K2P 1P2 Canada  
613.567.3893  
debra@creativeniche.com