



HONG KONG TECHNOLOGY SALARY SURVEY 2019

ROBERT WALTERS

TECHNOLOGY RECRUITMENT OUTLOOK

MARKET OUTLOOK

Aiming to build Hong Kong into a world-class 'smart' city, the government announced the Hong Kong Smart City Blueprint in late 2017, presenting a range of strategies to promote innovation and technology in the following five years. Technology has undoubtedly been the biggest driver of jobs growth across every industry sector in 2018 and the demand for digital and technology skill sets continued apace in Hong Kong, showing no sign of slowing in 2019.

SKILLS IN DEMAND

Within the financial services industry, the rapid progress of fintech and digitalisation drives demand for talent specialised in cyber security, data analysis and blockchain to a record high. Beyond financial services, professionals experienced in e-commerce, artificial intelligence (AI), digital marketing, blockchain, web development and machine learning are sought after in a range of sectors including technology, sales and marketing, supply chain and logistics.

There is also strong demand for professionals with the technical expertise to help companies implement digitalisation projects. Skill sets in highest demand include cloud computing, big data, DevOps, e-commerce, analytics, cyber security and fintech. We also expect a steady uptake in contracting positions with senior professionals and technical specialists hired to run projects.

ATTRACTING SKILLED TALENT

Professionals who thrive on change stand to gain the most in 2019, as organisations continue to embrace new ways of working, led by digital-first strategies. At the same time, digital technologies have already dramatically impacted the culture around work and the evolution of smart workplaces.

Salary growth will be stable across most industries with an average increase of 10-20% for job movers. Technology-related salaries are the exception, however, with professionals possessing niche or scarce skills such as AI, big data and machine learning able to command premium pay rises of 30% or more when moving roles.

“EMPLOYERS SHOULD CONSIDER ADOPTING NEW DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES AND PLATFORMS TO CREATE POSITIVE EMPLOYEE EXPERIENCES, HELPING TO ATTRACT AND RETAIN EMPLOYEES, IN PARTICULAR MILLENNIALS.”

TOP SKILLS IN DEMAND



Digital Transformation



E-commerce



Fintech



Artificial Intelligence



MARKET TRENDS & INSIGHTS BY INDUSTRY

FINANCIAL SERVICES

Continuing from the trend in the second half of 2018, virtual banking and fintech will continue to be the hiring focus in 2019. The Hong Kong Monetary Authority is going to issue the first virtual banking license to a number of institutions in Hong Kong in the first or second quarter of 2019, and we expect certain virtual banks will be in operation after that and thus driving a high demand for talent in that space.

Significant investment is being channelled into digital transformation, cyber security, data analysis, blockchain technology and machine learning, with many financial institutions rolling out large scale digitalisation projects in front, mid and back offices.

Candidates with PhD qualification and specialist skills such as big data and machine learning are highly sought after in investment banks and hedge funds; while in the retail banking and insurance sectors, candidates with UX, UI and

digital transformation experience are in high demand and these professionals can command a salary premium.

Employers are competing over a finite pool of candidates experienced in these specialist areas to make sure that they have the talent they need and deploying them as best as they can within the organisations. Hiring managers are expected to continue to look overseas due to the lack of fintech talent in Hong Kong. We expect 15-20% pay rise on average for job movers this year, but in specific areas such as AI and blockchain, we expect a 25% increment.

SALARY INCREMENTS



25%

for fintech job movers with niche skills

EMERGING TECHNOLOGY

Demand is high for specialists in infrastructure and cyber security as companies need to review security policy and respond to the growing threat of cybercrime. Candidates with technical qualifications such as CEH and CCSP are in high demand.

At the same time candidates with a PhD in computer science and solid experience in data modelling, big data and machine learning are highly sought after as companies and consultancy firms wish to leverage the insights available from these emerging technologies to improve their digital presence and advise clients respectively.

Many industries, from supply chain and insurance to property, have embraced blockchain to trace assets and commodities back to their origins. On the software engineering side, we continue to see demand for tech talent experienced in C++ and Python to accommodate the growth in blockchain.

With e-commerce expected to remain a growth area, retail companies are actively recruiting e-commerce project

managers; candidates with experience working with Chinese e-commerce companies such as Tmall and Alibaba will be sought after. Meanwhile, developers with a background in Java, C# and PHP web development; as well as data analysts specialised in SQL, Python, R and advanced Excel skills will continue to be in high demand.

Hiring managers have struggled with skills shortages as increasing specialisation within the industry has forced them to look for highly specific candidate profiles. We noticed companies, in particular start-ups, seeking to hire non-local candidates under the Immigration Arrangements for Nonlocal Graduates (IANG) scheme in niche areas due to the scarcity of such talent in Hong Kong.



SALARY INCREMENTS

30+%

for technology job movers with niche/scarc skill sets



SALES & MARKETING

A significant number of fintech start-ups and payment companies are looking for experienced professionals to build their marketing teams in order to raise their brand awareness in Hong Kong. We expect the high demand for talent with a background in technology and experience in digital marketing, brand management and marketing communications to continue into 2019. Such professionals often place greater emphasis on considerations such as stock options and more flexible work styles, rather than competitive compensation.

In the technology sector, company growth triggered investments in marketing talent. Marketers with a combination of social media and established marketing management skills will be highly sought after.

We expect similar trends in 2019, with a focus on hiring technology-savvy professionals. Employers will face significant skills shortages when looking for strong digital candidates, so securing top talent will be challenging. Businesses will need to offer competitive salaries, structured career progression and flexible working hours to attract the highest-calibre professionals.

CONTRACTING

We also noticed that some technology candidates preferred contract over permanent roles in order to broaden their project exposure and to enjoy better pay and job flexibility.

Within the contract market, employers were determined to ramp up their project resources by hiring contractors for quicker onboarding and for easier budget management. The financial services industry are still the key driver of

professional contractor hires for ongoing projects such as digitalisation, systems revamps, fast payment systems and for the launch of new regulations. Mid to senior-level tech professionals are sought to fill project management roles, so as infrastructure specialists such as security architects, network administrators and helpdesk specialists. Developers with DevOps and Agile backgrounds will also be required to support systems implementations.



CONTRACTING

69%

of technology professionals choose contracting for the opportunity to get into a new industry

“WHILE A HIGHER SALARY IS STILL THE MAIN FACTOR IN A CANDIDATE'S ACCEPTANCE OF AN OFFER, WE HAVE ALSO FOUND THAT AN INCREASING NUMBER OF CANDIDATES IN THE TECHNOLOGY SECTOR ARE BEGINNING TO CONSIDER AND PLACE MORE IMPORTANCE ON FACTORS SUCH AS OFFICE CULTURE, STATE-OF-THE-ART TECHNOLOGY AND STOCK OPTIONS.”

FINANCIAL SERVICES

ROLE	PERMANENT SALARY PER ANNUM HKD (\$)					
	1 - 4 YRS' EXP		5 - 8 YRS' EXP		8+ YRS' EXP	
	2018	2019	2018	2019	2018	2019
IT - Application & Development						
Java, C++, .NET Developer	360 - 480k	390 - 540k	600 - 840k	630 - 880k	840k - 1.4m	880k - 1.4m
UI/UX Developer	300 - 420k	350 - 450k	480 - 660k	500 - 700k	660 - 960k	720k - 1.0m
Quantitative Analyst	360 - 520k	400 - 600k	600 - 720k	620 - 750k	840k - 1.3m	840k - 1.5m
Quality Assurance/Testing	240 - 300k	280 - 350k	420 - 480k	420 - 480k	540 - 780k	540 - 780k
Application Support	300 - 420k	300 - 420k	480 - 660k	480 - 600k	660 - 960k	660 - 960k
Product Specialist (Murex, Calypso etc.)	275 - 320k	275 - 320k	480 - 600k	480 - 600k	600 - 780k	600 - 780k
Software Architect	480 - 600k	500 - 660k	660 - 840k	660 - 840k	840k - 1.4m	840k - 1.4m
Big Data Architect	300 - 420k	300 - 420k	480 - 660k	480 - 660k	720k - 1.0m	720k - 1.0m
Scrum Master & Agile Evangelist	360 - 420k	360 - 420k	540 - 720k	540 - 720k	720k - 1.0m	720k - 1.0m
IT - Infrastructure & Cyber Security						
Cloud & Storage	600 - 750k	600 - 750k	750k - 1.0m	750k - 1.0m	1.0 - 1.3m	1.0 - 1.3m
Helpdesk Administrator	300 - 600k	300 - 600k	360 - 480k	360 - 480k	480 - 600k	480 - 840k
Network Engineer	360 - 480k	360 - 480k	600 - 720k	600 - 720k	720 - 960k	720 - 960k
Database Administrator	420 - 800k	420 - 800k	540 - 660k	540 - 660k	660 - 800k	660 - 800k
Cyber Security	360 - 480k	300 - 480k	480 - 840k	480 - 840k	840k - 1.5m	840k - 1.5m
Technology Risk	360 - 480k	300 - 480k	480 - 840k	480 - 840k	840k - 1.5m	840k - 1.5m
IT - Project & Change Management						
Program Manager	480 - 660k	400 - 660k	480 - 850k	480 - 850k	850k - 1.8m	850k - 1.8m
Project Manager	360 - 540k	300 - 540k	560 - 850k	560 - 850k	850k - 1.3m	850k - 1.3m
Change Manager	500 - 560k	500 - 560k	560 - 850k	560 - 850k	850k - 1.5m	850k - 1.5m
PMO	550 - 620k	500 - 620k	610 - 730k	610 - 730k	730k - 1.5m	730k - 1.5m
Business Analyst	300 - 480k	300 - 480k	480 - 730k	480 - 730k	730k - 1.5m	730k - 1.5m
Project Coordinator/Analyst	190 - 360k	100 - 360k	390 - 540k	360 - 540k	550 - 800k	540 - 600k
IT - Digital Transformation						
Digital Product Manager	480 - 660k	500 - 720k	660 - 840k	700k - 1.0m	850k - 1.6m	1.0 - 1.8m
Digital Project Manager	420 - 600k	450 - 660k	660 - 840k	700 - 900k	840k - 1.4m	900k - 1.5m
Customer Experience Manager	360 - 540k	380 - 600k	560 - 850k	600 - 900k	900k - 1.4m	900k - 1.5m
UX/UI Lead	360 - 540k	380 - 600k	560 - 850k	600 - 900k	900k - 1.4m	900k - 1.5m
Digital Transformation Manager	360 - 540k	380 - 600k	560 - 850k	600 - 900k	850k - 1.6m	900k - 1.8m
Lean Consultant	300 - 480k	300 - 480k	480 - 730k	480 - 730k	730k - 1.5m	730k - 1.5m
IT - Business Intelligence						
Business Intelligence Analyst	360 - 480k	370 - 490k	480 - 660k	490 - 670k	600 - 780k	620 - 800k

NB: Figures are basic salaries exclusive of benefits & bonuses unless otherwise specified.

TECHNOLOGY - PERMANENT

ROLE	PERMANENT SALARY PER ANNUM HKD (\$)					
	3 - 7 YRS' EXP		8 - 14 YRS' EXP		15+ YRS' EXP	
	2018	2019	2018	2019	2018	2019
Management						
Chief Information Officer					1.5 - 3.0m	1.8 - 3.0m
IT Director			750k - 1.2m	800k - 1.2m	1.2 - 2.0m	1.2 - 2.0m
Program Director			850k - 1.0m	900k - 1.2m	1.2 - 1.5m	1.2 - 2.2m
IT Manager	450 - 550k	450 - 550k	550 - 700k	550 - 750k		
Infrastructure						
Data Centre	240 - 300k	240 - 300k				
Network Pre-sale	450 - 550k	360 - 550k	550 - 850k	550 - 850k		
Help Desk	250 - 360k	240 - 360k				
IT Security Pre-sale	450 - 550k	450 - 550k	550 - 900k	600k - 1.0m		
IT Security Technical Specialist	450 - 650k	336 - 650k	650k - 1.2m	650k - 1.2m	1.0 - 1.5m	1.0 - 1.5m
System Administration	250 - 420k	240 - 420k	550 - 750k	550 - 750k	750 - 850k	750 - 850k
Network Administration	300 - 420k	300 - 420k	600 - 800k	600 - 800k		
Telco Pre-sale	300 - 540k	300 - 540k	650k - 1.2m	650k - 1.2m		
Service Delivery	300 - 540k	360 - 540k	700k - 1.2m	700k - 1.2m	1.0 - 1.2m	1.0 - 1.2m
AWS/Microsoft Azure Expert	550 - 650k	360 - 650k	650k - 1.2m	650k - 1.2m	1.2 - 1.5m	1.2 - 1.5m
Solution Architect	480 - 650k	480 - 650k	700k - 1.3m	700k - 1.3m	980k - 1.3m	1.0 - 1.3m
Projects						
Business Analyst	300 - 450k	300 - 450k	450 - 600k	450 - 600k		
Implementation Consultant	400 - 450k	336 - 450k	550 - 900k	550 - 900k	900k - 1.2m	900k - 1.2m
Project Manager	450 - 540k	300 - 540k	600k - 1.0m	600k - 1.0m	950k - 1.5m	950k - 1.5m
Software						
Developer	240 - 360k	240 - 420k	450 - 650k	450 - 650k	750k - 1.0m	750k - 1.2m
Big Data	350 - 500k	360 - 540k	550 - 800k	550 - 800k	750k - 1.5m	800k - 1.5m

SALES & MARKETING

ROLE	PERMANENT SALARY PER ANNUM HKD (\$)	
	2018	2019
Financial Services		
Digital Director	1.2 - 1.8m	1.4 - 2.0m
Digital Marketing Manager	700k - 1.1m	880k - 1.2m
IT&T		
Digital Marketing Manager	540 - 660k	540 - 660k
Consumer Markets		
E-commerce Manager	480 - 600k	600 - 800k

NB: Figures are basic salaries exclusive of benefits & bonuses unless otherwise specified.

TECHNOLOGY - CONTRACT

ROLE	CONTRACT SALARY PER MONTH HKD (\$)					
	3 - 7 YRS' EXP		8 - 14 YRS' EXP		15+ YRS' EXP	
	2018	2019	2018	2019	2018	2019
Projects & Transformation Management						
Infrastructure Project Manager	39 - 55k	39 - 55k	55 - 65k	55 - 70k	65 - 90k	70 - 95k
Application Project Manager	48 - 58k	50 - 60k	58 - 70k	60 - 75k	70 - 100k	75 - 110k
Digital Project Manager	50 - 60k	53 - 63k	60 - 70k	63 - 75k	70 - 110k	75 - 110k
Business Analyst	35 - 45k	35 - 48k	45 - 55k	48 - 58k	55 - 70k	58 - 73k
Business Analyst (FO Banking Systems)	40 - 55k	45 - 60k	55 - 80k	60 - 85k	80 - 120k	85 - 130k
Business Analyst (MO-BO Banking Systems)	40 - 50k	43 - 55k	50 - 70k	55 - 75k	70 - 110k	75 - 115k
Business Analyst (Insurance)	40 - 50k	43 - 55k	50 - 60k	55 - 65k	60 - 80k	65 - 85k
Change Management	50 - 60k	50 - 63k	60 - 70k	63 - 75k	70 - 120k	75 - 125k
Transformation Management	60 - 68k	60 - 70k	68 - 78k	70 - 80k	78 - 120k	80 - 125k
PMO/Programme Manager	58 - 68k	58 - 75k	68 - 85k	75 - 95k	85 - 120k	95 - 150k
Technical Consultant	50 - 58k	55 - 60k	58 - 70k	60 - 75k	70 - 90k	75 - 95k
Scrum Master	40 - 50k	50 - 75k				
UAT Specialist	25 - 28k	25 - 28k	28 - 35k	28 - 40k	35 - 45k	40 - 45k
Testing Analyst	25 - 40k	25 - 40k	40 - 45k	40 - 48k	45 - 60k	48 - 65k
Infrastructure & Network						
Middleware Specialist	28 - 42k	28 - 45k	43 - 50k	45 - 70k	50 - 70k	45 - 80k
DBA	25 - 45k	25 - 50k	45 - 78k	50 - 78k	78 - 90k	78 - 90k
Helpdesk/Helpdesk Lead	20 - 45k	20 - 45k	45 - 60k	45 - 60k	60 - 75k	60 - 80k
Network Support Engineer	25 - 50k	25 - 50k	50 - 70k	50 - 75k	70 - 90k	75 - 100k
Windows Systems Administrator	25 - 50k	25 - 50k	50 - 65k	50 - 65k	65 - 80k	65 - 80k
Unix Systems Administrator	25 - 50k	38 - 58k	50 - 75k	58 - 75k	75 - 100k	75 - 100k
Information Security Specialist	30 - 50k	30 - 50k	50 - 75k	50 - 75k	75 - 120k	75 - 100k
Cloud Engineer	20 - 60k	20 - 60k	60 - 80k	60 - 80k	80 - 110k	80 - 110k
Software						
Solution Architect	45 - 55k	45 - 55k	55 - 70k	55 - 80k	70 - 100k	80 - 95k
Data Analytics/Data Scientist	20 - 35k	30 - 60k	35 - 50k	60 - 90k	50 - 60k	90 - 120k
Software Developer	25 - 40k	25 - 45k	40 - 60k	45 - 65k	60 - 80k	65 - 80k
Software Developer (Banking Systems)	25 - 50k	25 - 55k	50 - 75k	55 - 80k	75 - 120k	80 - 140k
Mobile Developer	25 - 35k	25 - 40k	35 - 50k	40 - 60k	50 - 60k	60 - 75k

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CONTACT US

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ABOUT ROBERT WALTERS SALARY SURVEY

Now in its 20th edition, the Robert Walters annual Salary Survey is the most comprehensive review of professional salaries and recruitment trends around the world. Our Salary Survey is based on the analysis of permanent, interim and contract placements made across each of our geographies and recruitment disciplines during 2018, and our predictions for the year ahead.



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