



Content Matters 2023

Salary Report

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Introduction

As we learned from our *Content Matters 2023 Report*, the value of content is clear. Content budgets and teams continue to grow during economic uncertainty, and leadership is starting to understand the connection between content and revenue.

But ultimately, an organization's ability to harness content's potential is only as good as the people executing that content. What is the first way to attract and retain top talent?

Salary.

During this unique economic environment—layoffs coupled with a tight labor market—we wanted to learn how salaries have been affected. We looked at salary data through multiple lenses to discern the state of pay in the content industry.

Read on to see who's up, who's down, and how you stack up against your industry peers.

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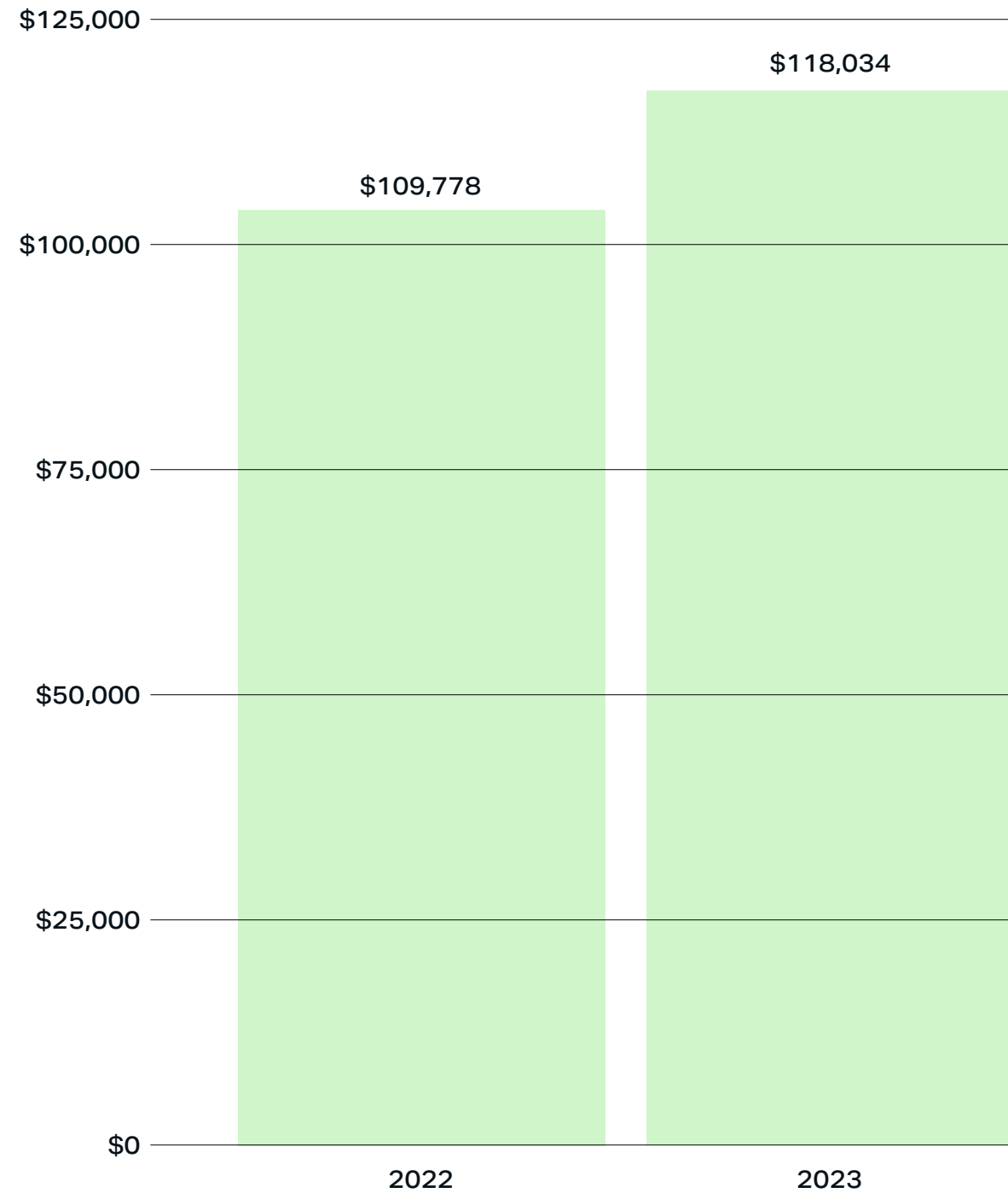
Salary highlights

On average, content marketing salaries increased from 2022 to 2023, but the changes vary across roles, industries, and organization size.

Here's a snapshot:

- Executives took a pay hit
- There was a surge in employees crossing into six-figure salaries
- Media and publishing salaries are trending downward
- Salaries are beginning to recover from the effects of the pandemic
- Larger organizations pay bigger salaries
- Organizations that use content analytics average higher salaries than those that don't

Average salary, by year



What's the deal?

In 2023, global events are driving salary discrepancies as much as any industry trends. While a number of economic factors have sparked multiple rounds of layoffs (especially in the tech sector), other socio-economic factors have benefitted employees.

In particular, the tight labor market and post-pandemic normalization likely boosted salaries.

Note: All dollar figures in this report are in USD.

Salaries by role

Overall, content team compensation is on the rise, but unevenly across roles.

- Upper management fared poorly.**
 The average C-level salary (CMO and other C-level) fell from \$157,042 to \$118,253.
- Mid-management fared well.**
 Content marketing managers saw an increase of 34%, from \$88,728 to \$119,123.
- Individual contributors fared best.**
 Non-management roles saw the largest increase: 41%.
- Content analysts are earning more.**
 Proving the importance of data, analyst roles saw an increase of 37%.
- The future of content is lucrative.**
 12% more respondents are earning over \$100,000.

Salaries by role, 2022-2023

Role	Year	Salary	% change in salary, 2022-2023
Analyst	2023	\$102,973	37%
	2022	\$74,981	
CMO	2023	\$117,287	-19%
	2022	\$144,615	
Developer	2023	\$104,745	11%
	2022	\$94,010	
Director/VP of Content Marketing	2023	\$128,613	10%
	2022	\$141,004	
Director/VP of Marketing	2023	\$136,327	-6%
	2022	\$144,583	
Editor	2023	\$98,035	27%
	2022	\$77,014	
Individual Contributor	2023	\$92,948	41%
	2022	\$65,739	
Manager of Content Marketing	2023	\$119,123	34%
	2022	\$88,728	
Manager of Marketing	2023	\$111,829	22%
	2022	\$91,748	
Other C-Level	2023	\$119,220	-30%
	2022	\$169,470	

Good news for most content roles

There was a swell in respondents crossing the six-figure boundary. One explanation? The extremely tight labor market made companies desperate to keep qualified teams, encouraging raises and promotions.

Over the past few years, the hiring market has been tough and companies likely responded by promoting managers and individual contributors. After all, it's cheaper to give raises than it is to hire and train new employees.

As a result, we see more people making over \$100,000 this year than last.

Salaries by industry

The change in content-focused salaries varied widely by industry.

- Media/Publishing salaries decreased from 2022 to 2023.
- Energy/Telecom sector salaries rose significantly.
- Tech salaries saw a small increase, likely because of pervasive layoffs and stagnation in those sectors.
- Education/Arts and Hospitality both increased, likely because they're rebounding from the pandemic hangover.

Industry	Year	Salary	% change in salary, 2022-2023
Agency/research Consulting	2023	\$105,466	5%
	2022	\$100,453	
Consumer Electronics	2023	\$117,205	47%
	2022	\$80,000	
CPG	2023	\$126,749	-5%
	2022	\$133,615	
Educations/Arts	2023	\$109,813	18%
	2022	\$93,480	
Energy/Telecom	2023	\$125,045	155%
	2022	\$49,058	
Financial Services	2023	\$126,668	19%
	2022	\$106,865	
Healthcare	2023	\$121,939	-8%
	2022	\$133,152	
Hospitality/Food/Travel	2023	\$108,824	26%
	2022	\$86,280	
Media/Publishing	2023	\$115,668	-9%
	2022	\$127,127	
Retail/Ecommerce	2023	\$125,662	14%
	2022	\$110,191	
Technology	2023	\$126,814	13%
	2022	\$111,843	

A mixed economic bag

Success (or failure) of media companies reflects the overall advertising ecosystem. When advertisers spend fewer dollars, media companies and their employees feel it first.

Other companies will likely face this reduction in ad spend by leaning into content strategy that harnesses organic channels to deliver business outcomes—hinted in our [*Content Matters 2023 Report*](#).

Salaries by geography

High salaries aren't just for big cities and U.S. coasts anymore.*

- Salary differences among geographies became far less pronounced in 2023.
- The likelihood of having a non-coastal, \$200,000+ job improved noticeably.
- For those already making six figures in the U.S. Midwest and South, salaries grew by 28% and 14%, respectively.

Average salary by U.S. region, 2022-2023			
US Region	Year	Average salary	% difference from average nationwide salary
Nationwide	2023	\$118,033	N/A
	2022	\$109,778	N/A
Midwest	2023	\$116,279	-1%
	2022	\$90,995	-17%
Northeast	2023	\$117,321	-1%
	2022	\$118,394	8%
South	2023	\$116,493	-1%
	2022	\$101,959	-7%
West	2023	\$122,256	4%
	2022	\$118,809	8%

Work from anywhere?

Post-pandemic effects on remote work continued in the U.S., furthering the migration trend from big, coastal cities to smaller communities in southern states. These professionals are now benefiting from the tight labor market and remote work options.

How big will the return-to-office trend be? With no end in sight for higher interest rates and continuing layoffs, companies may keep remote workers in place to weather the current storm.

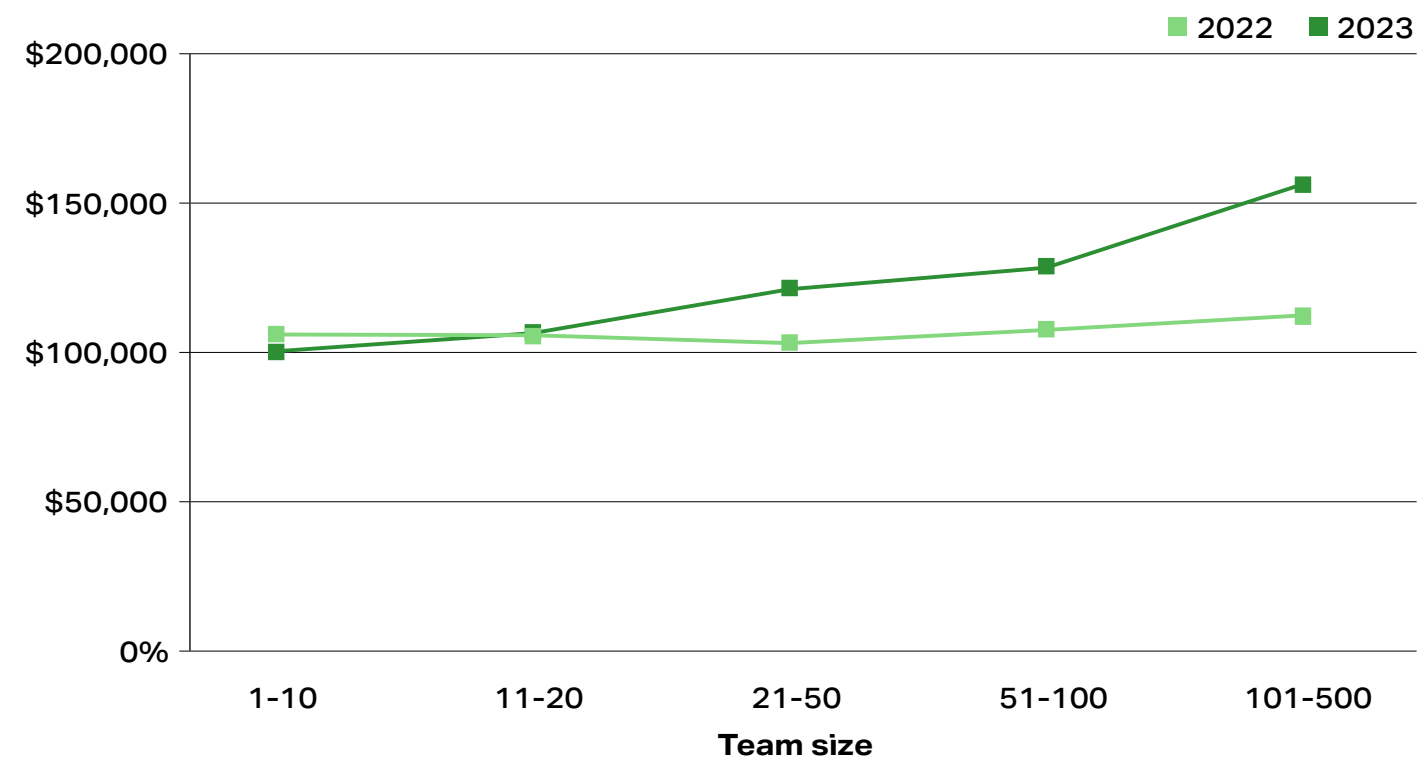
*There was insignificant data to evaluate non-U.S. based salary changes.

Salaries by marketing team size

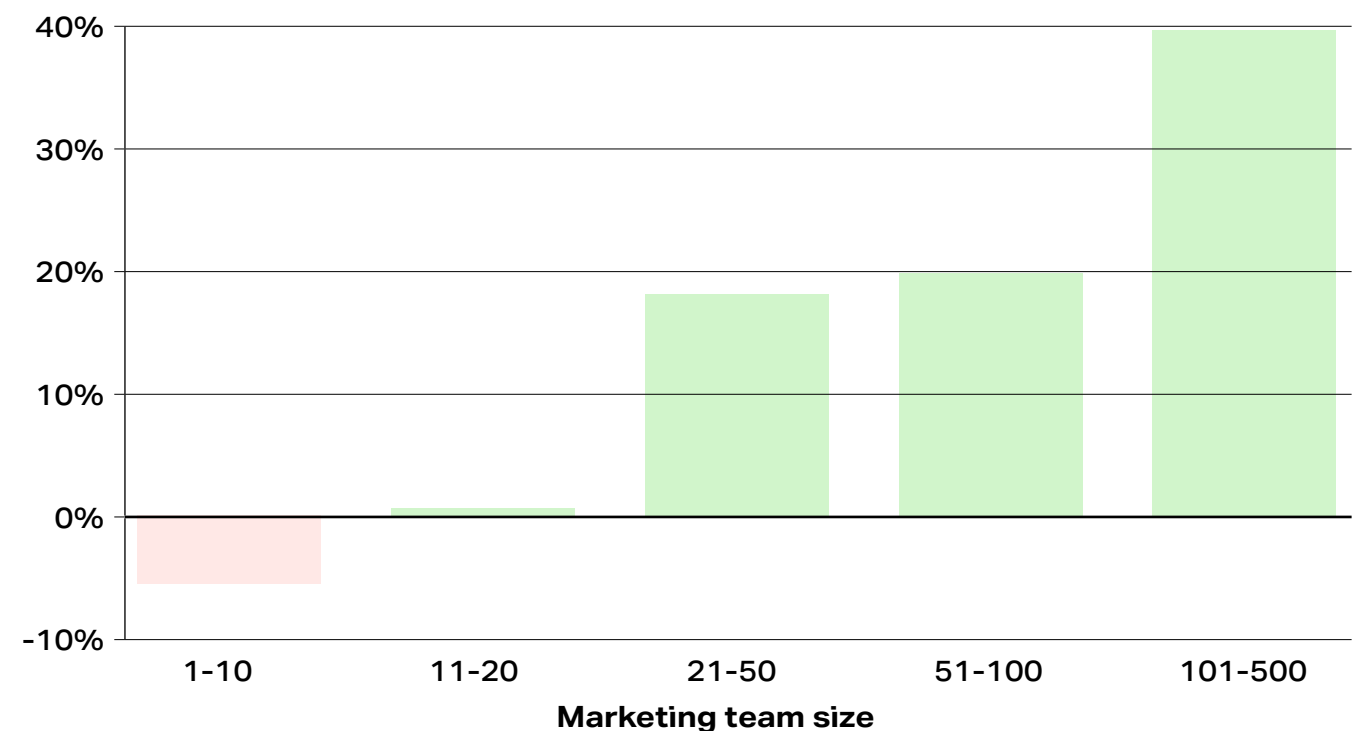
Moving to a larger marketing team may yield a salary bump.

- On average, salaries grew 29% for those on teams of more than 100 people.
- Teams between 11 and 20 saw no salary growth.
- Smaller teams under 10 saw salary decreases.

Average salary by marketing team size



Salary change based on marketing team size, from 2022-2023



It's all about resources

Teams at larger, better-budgeted organizations will typically have greater access to robust technology and resources like content analytics platforms, which can help content marketers understand content performance and demonstrate ROI.

This investment can help those content creators draw a direct line to their value, leaving them better positioned to earn a salary that matches output and affected business outcomes.

Salaries by company size

Average salary by company size, 2022-2023

Company size	Year	Salary	% change in salary, 2022-2023
0-50	2023	\$97,228	-7%
	2022	\$103,986	
51-200	2023	\$110,261	0.6%
	2022	\$109,625	
201-400	2023	\$122,819	23.7%
	2022	\$99,294	
401-1000	2023	\$130,959	16.4%
	2022	\$112,488	
1,001-10,000	2023	\$149,861	17.6%
	2022	\$127,434	
10,001+	2023	\$146,219	2.8%
	2022	\$142,244	

The middle of the pack is a good place to be.

- For companies of 201-400, employees saw salary growth of almost 24%.
- For larger companies, the increase was smaller: 16.4% for 401-1,000 employees, 17.6% for 1,001-10,000 employees.
- Only employees at the smallest firms took a hit, averaging a 6.5% decrease in salary.

Sometimes average is good

There is a likely correlation between company size and marketing team size. More resources allow for more robust, accountable organizations. At smaller companies, marketing budgets have been cut as organizations tighten belts and get back to product fundamentals.

For employees affected by layoffs, their eagerness to rejoin the workforce has potentially forced them to accept the same—or reduced—salary at smaller companies.

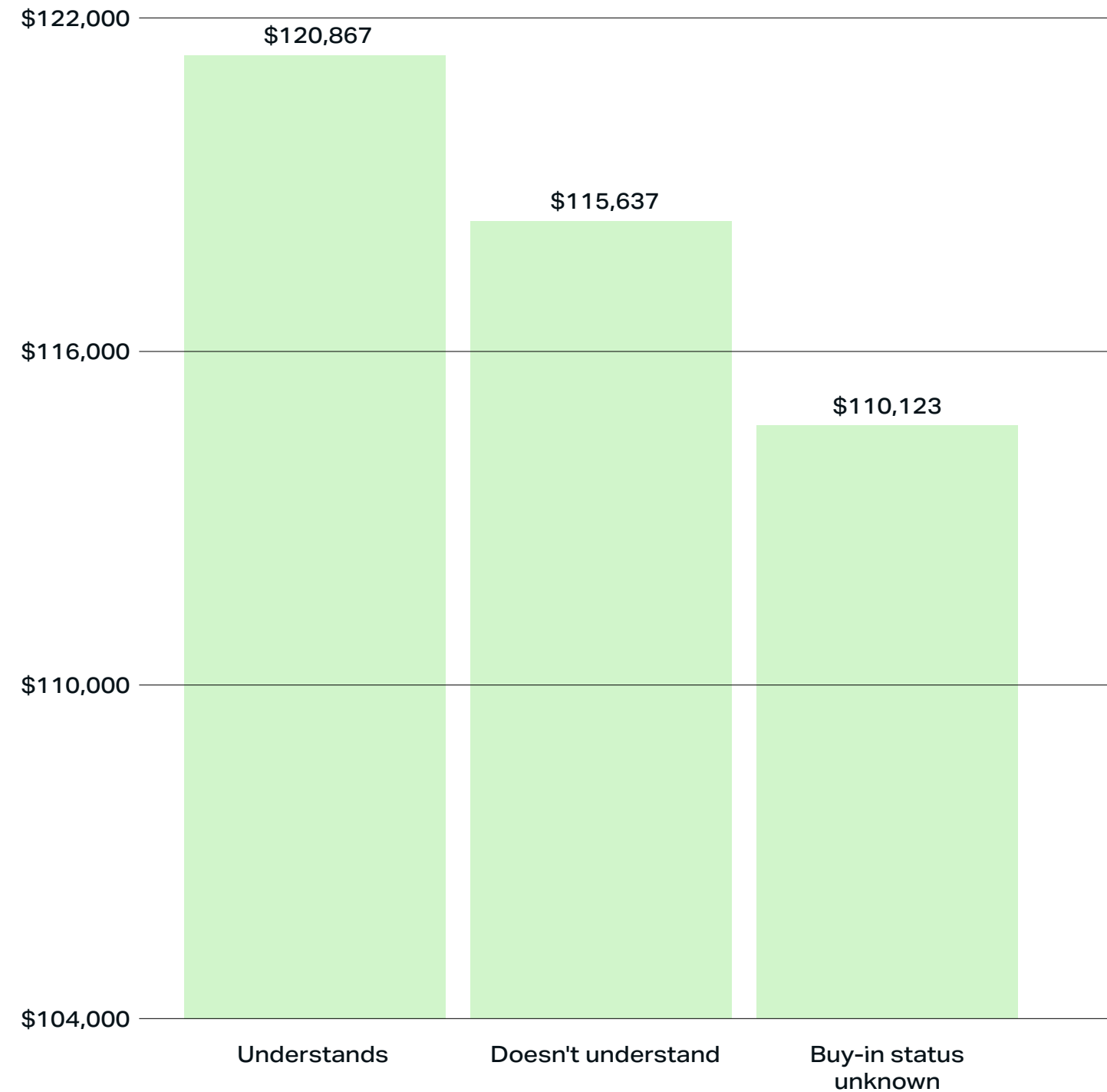
The connection between: Salaries and leadership buy-in

At organizations where leadership understands the value of content marketing, employees can expect to earn roughly \$5,000 more than at those where leadership doesn't.

What pays the least? Uncertainty.

Employees at organizations where their leadership buy-in is unknown earn roughly \$10,000 less than their peers at companies where content marketing is understood.

Salaries in 2023 based on leadership understanding the value of content marketing



Prove your value, get rewarded

Leadership's fluency in content marketing clearly benefits employees. Such leaders are looking at the analytics and ROI of the content engine.

In fact, as we learned from our *Content Matters 2023 Report*, nine in 10 teams with leadership buy-in have revenue goals tied to content.

So, if there is demonstrable ROI, those teams will unlock more budget, a portion of which goes to salaries.

Beyond operational efficiency, top talent will flock to organizations where their skills are appreciated and fully utilized.

The connection between: Salaries and content output

Less is more.

Employees at organizations that planned to increase their content output in 2022 saw higher salaries, averaging \$113,000.

The opposite is true for 2023. Those who planned on creating less content reported higher salaries, averaging roughly \$120,000.

Average salary by amount of content produced

Change in content output	Year	Salary	% change in salary, 2022-2023
More	2023	\$105,946	-7%
	2022	\$113,542	
No change	2023	\$101,237	5%
	2022	\$96,379	
Less	2023	\$119,961	33%
	2022	\$89,940	

Quality > quantity

As we learned in our *Content Matters 2023 Report*, 18% of companies are creating less content in 2023 (compared to just 9% in 2022), possibly focusing on higher-quality content.

Now, higher-salaried employees believe they can create more results with less content, given the right tactics and tools to create, measure, and optimize content more efficiently.

By analyzing content performance, marketers can streamline their output and make better content decisions for efficiently hitting their KPIs.

The connection between: Salaries and budget outlook

While 58% of all respondents believe budgets will increase in 2023, the sentiment varies depending on salary.

In 2022, there was a fairly even split across pay bands between those who thought their budgets would increase vs. those who didn't.

That changed in 2023. The salary of the average employee pessimistic about their budget was \$10,000 higher than the average salary of optimists.

Budget outlook by salary

Change in budget	Year	Salary	% change in salary, 2022-2023
Increase	2023	\$105,676	-9%
	2022	\$115,697	
No change	2023	\$107,991	-3%
	2022	\$111,224	
Less	2023	\$116,666	5%
	2022	\$111,694	

The budget bias

It's possible that higher earners have more insight into their company's financial outlook and operations.

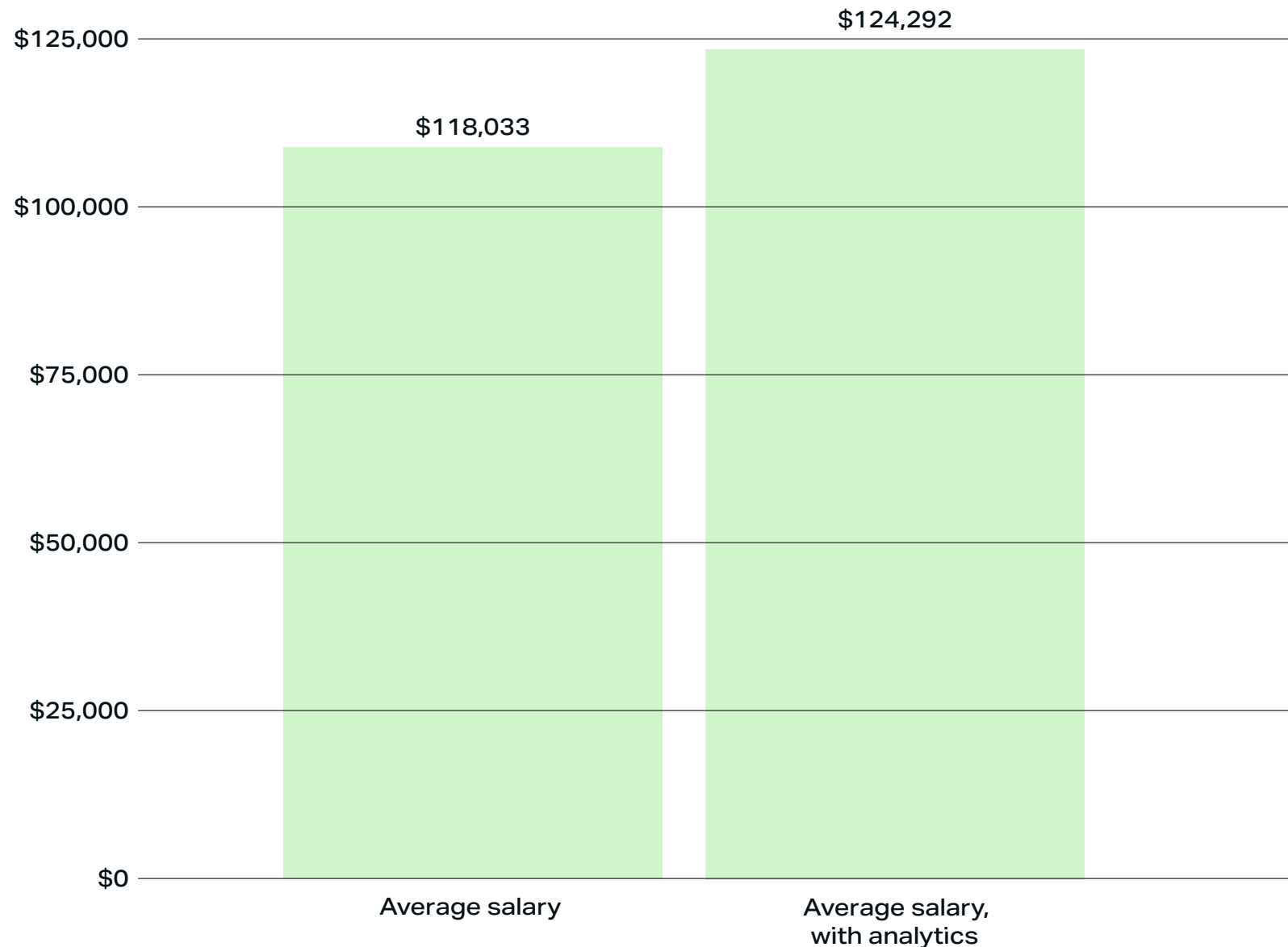
When budgets trend lower, it's likely there will be a premium placed on measurement to prove efficacy. In short, cash-strapped organizations will no longer throw money into paid advertising to meet their awareness and acquisition goals.

The connection between: Salaries and content analytics tools

Companies that use analytics platforms pay substantially higher salaries than those that don't.

And the analytics tool used does matter. For example, compared against the average salary of analytics users, Parse.ly users earn 5.5% more, while Google Analytics users earn only 1.1% more than those who don't measure content performance at all.

Salaries with and without analytics platforms



Salaries by analytics platform usage

Percent higher compared to average 2023 salary

Parse.ly	5.5%
Google Analytics	1.1%

Why analytics usership matters

While organizations using Google Analytics rely on just a few people to pull data, those using Parse.ly are able to make data a team effort.*

When every team member is making data-driven business decisions, you're more likely to see strong content performance.

Parse.ly also offers an easier way to prove content ROI, which we know is directly correlated to leadership buy-in, and therefore, higher budgets and salaries.

By demonstrating the value of their content strategy and making strong decisions at every turn, Parse.ly users are able to validate their worth and demand higher salaries.

[Get a Parse.ly demo](#)

*Based on data from our *Content Matters 2023 Report*

The state of content salaries

The current salary landscape has been equally shaped by a mix of economic and industry trends.

A volatile economic climate with rising interest rates has resulted in layoffs and salary decline or stagnation.

At the same time, industry trends, post-pandemic rebounds, and a competitive labor market have sparked salary growth in some corners.

To recap our key findings for content salaries in 2023:

- Over the past year, average salaries have grown, with the exception of executive-level positions.
- Non-media companies were unaffected by salary reductions connected to the anemic advertising environment.
- Salaries in the United States are leveling out across geographic regions.
- Larger companies and marketing organizations pay higher salaries.
- Firms where leadership understands the value of content marketing see higher salaries.
- Analytics tool usage correlates to higher pay.

What to expect

Top of mind is the impact generative artificial intelligence (AI) will have on the nature of content creation and related professional opportunities. Should content marketers be scared for their livelihoods or excited about the possibilities? At WordPress VIP, we're excited and optimistic.

But one thing is constant: content matters, and being able to measure that content, and prove its value correlates directly to higher salaries.

Methodology

Of the 1,500+ people surveyed for our *Content Matters 2023 Report*, 1,230 reported salary data. These marketing and media professionals ranged in titles, industries, company size, team size, and more.

We pulled in salary data collected for our *Content Matters 2022 Report* to compare salary changes from 2022 to 2023, exploring factors that led to the increases or decreases. We cleaned and weighted the data to properly compare employees across different company sizes, budgets, and geography.

The questionnaire was sent out via email and social media.

About WordPress VIP

Creating better customer experiences is what WordPress VIP is all about. Built on the flexibility and ubiquity of WordPress, our CMS platform empowers more content creators to build more content for more audiences faster. And deliver it across their digital channels of choice.

With built-in content analytics powered by Parse.ly, we make working with data easy for creators and marketers, giving them the insights they need to focus their content strategy and prove ROI. And with our enterprise-grade security and reliability they can be confident that they're building on a solid, scalable foundation.

[Get a demo](#)



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