

2016 MARKETING HIRING TRENDS: THE SPREAD OF STRATEGIC DIGITAL MARKETING ACROSS BUSINESS FUNCTIONS





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THE MOVE TOWARD COMPLETE DIGITAL INTEGRATION

Digital marketing is becoming an essential part of the majority of marketing roles – no longer a job in and of itself.

Thought leaders in the marketing world have been telling organizations to “innovate or die” for years, a concept that goes far beyond simply creating unique products and services. Purchase decisions have become more complex, while access to information has become more convenient. Consumers expect access to content in formats that are convenient and immediate. To adapt to these realities (and many others) of the digital marketplace, organizations must embrace new ways of doing – and thinking about – business.

According to Jeff Dodds, executive vice president and CEO of Tele2 Netherlands and former chief marketing officer of Virgin Media, the days of “traditional” marketers and “digital” marketers are on the way out.

“To talk about digital as some kind of a separate entity is to not understand it,” said Dodds. “There is too much talk about digital roles: digital job title and digital strategies. Digital is not something that needs a job title. This perpetuates a myth that it is a singular, siloed thing.”

In fact, digital is – or should be – part of every marketing job in today’s market, and the silos of digital and traditional marketing are the first of many to come down.

To keep up with the move toward integrated digital marketing, companies must build cross-functional and multi-disciplinary marketing teams within their organizations that allow them to reach their target audiences with the right products, in the right places, and with the right messages.

In order to guide hiring managers and measure the importance of digital marketing skills, McKinley Marketing Partners surveyed 186 professionals who work in a marketing function and/or have influence in selecting candidates for marketing positions about their current and future hiring needs.

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GUIDE TO 2016 MARKETING TRENDS

- 2016 Marketing Trends: Methodology
- 2015 Hiring Trends: A Look Back
- 2016 Key Finding: Moderate Hiring Growth
- 2016 Key Finding: Digital Skills in High Demand
- 2016 Key Finding: SEO for Executives
- 2016 Key Finding: Soft Skills on the Rise
- Summary: The Future of Marketing Employment
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2016 MARKETING HIRING TRENDS: METHODOLOGY

McKinley Marketing Partners partnered with a national market research agency to conduct research on hiring trends.

To qualify for the survey, respondents had to have influence in making hiring decisions for marketing positions. The survey was available to respondents from January 6 to January 13, 2016. Upon completion of data collection, the results were analyzed for accuracy and suspect data was eliminated from the data set. Of those surveyed, 186 professionals who work in a marketing function and/or have influence in selecting candidates for marketing positions were included in the final analysis.

While job titles and roles varied by company and industry (see Figure 1), there was a relatively equal representation of experience level among respondents, who included executives (including c-level executives, presidents, and vice presidents), directors, managers, and others.

The majority of companies surveyed had more than 500 employees; however, 26 percent of respondents were employed by businesses with fewer than 100 employees and 19 percent worked for companies with 100 to 499 employees (see Figure 2).

The largest group of respondents (18 percent) works in technology and telecommunication, followed by 15 percent in the financial services industry, 12 percent in retail, and 10 percent in nonprofit and educational fields. Less than 10 percent of respondents came from the areas of media (7 percent), pharmaceuticals and healthcare (6 percent), automotive or manufacturing (5 percent), and energy/utilities (5 percent). Another 22 percent of respondents work for organizations in other industries, including food and beverage and media/publishing (see Figure 3).

FIGURE 1
ROLES OF RESPONDENTS

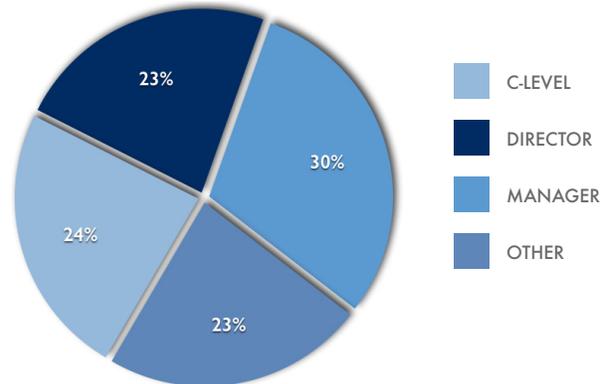


FIGURE 2
NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES

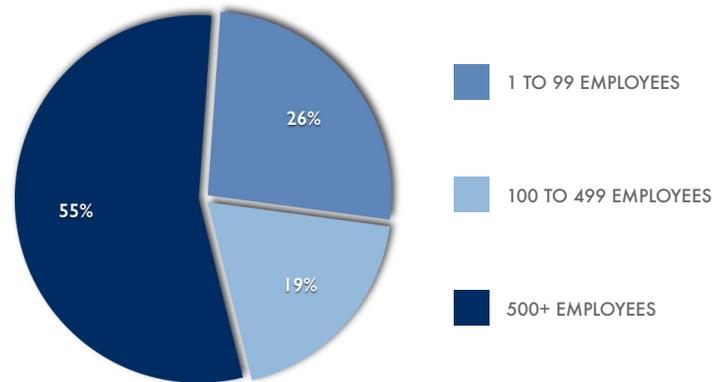
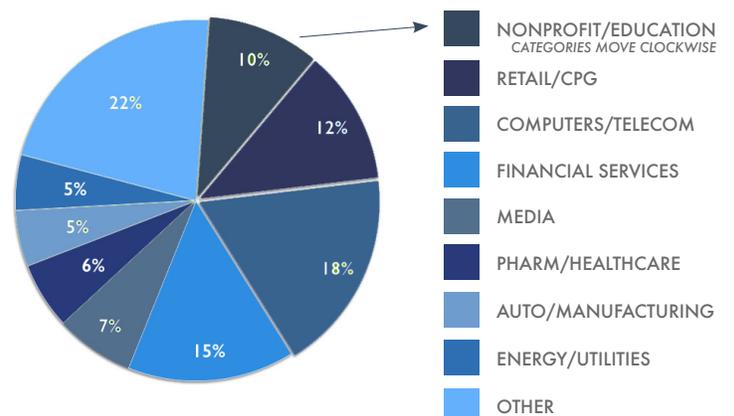


FIGURE 3
INDUSTRY OF RESPONDENTS





2015 MARKETING HIRING TRENDS: A LOOK BACK

Digital marketers and strategists were highest in demand in 2015, while SEO/SEM professionals and project managers were hired least often.

In 2015, companies hired an average of 4.7 marketing professionals over the course of the year, with permanent hires (5.2 per year) having the edge over contract and/or interim workers (4.1 per year).

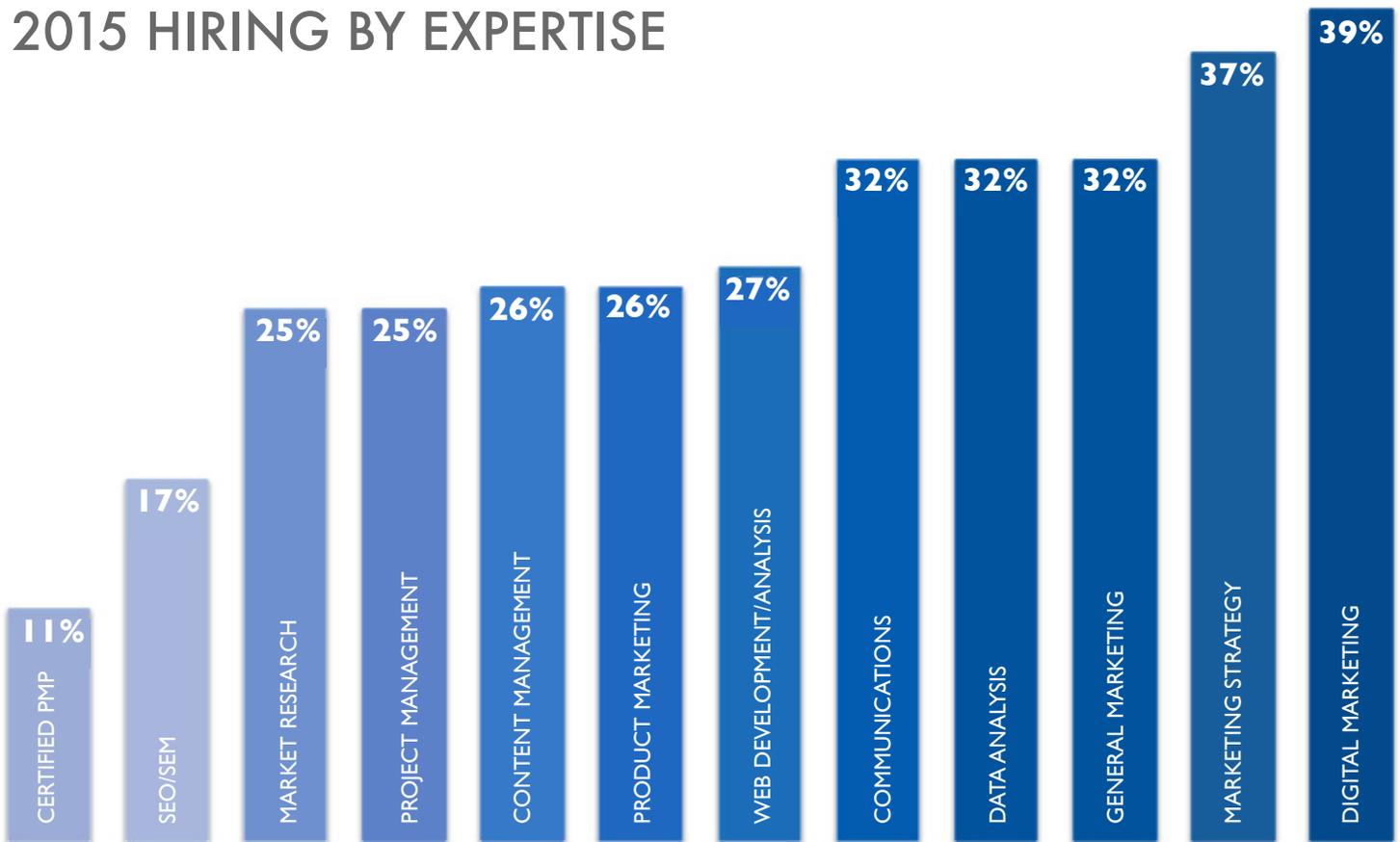
Throughout 2015, the trend toward digital marketing continued upward, with digital marketers and marketing strategists topping the list of hiring areas at rates of 39 percent and 37 percent, respectively. General marketing positions, data analysts, and communications were close behind, each with 32 percent of filled positions in 2015.

Project management, which was third highest in demand in 2014, was tied for third *least* hired position in 2015 with only 25 of respondents reporting hiring in that area (see Figure 4).

The demand for SEO/SEM experts and certified project management professionals continued to drop, at least in part due to an outsourcing trend for these and other digital marketing roles, which are often available as automated solutions by agencies at better price points with less in-house work required.

FIGURE 4

2015 HIRING BY EXPERTISE



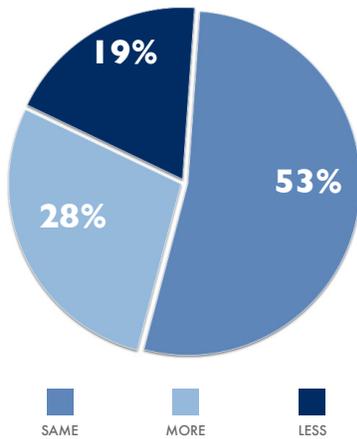
HIRING MANAGERS COULD CHOOSE MULTIPLE OPTIONS FOR PURPOSES OF THIS SURVEY, DIGITAL MARKETING WAS TREATED AS ITS OWN SKILL SET



KEY FINDING: MODERATE HIRING GROWTH

Hiring of marketing professionals will increase slightly in 2016.

FIGURE 5
2016 PROJECTED HIRING



More than half of hiring managers plan to hire the same number of marketing professionals in 2016 (see Figure 5). Some of those can be assumed to be replacing employees who leave their positions, but some can also be assumed to be starting positions that did not exist previously.

And while 28 percent of hiring managers plan to hire more marketing professionals in 2016, another 19 percent plan to hire fewer than in previous years. This will allow hiring levels to remain relatively stable from 2015 to 2016 with a small potential for slight to moderate growth in the job market.

Even moderate growth is a strong indication of the fact that the marketing field continues to become increasingly important in the business world. This is perhaps due to the increased focus on data analytics which makes a straightforward argument quantifying results and proving an ROI for the expense.

KEY FINDING: DIGITAL SKILLS IN HIGH DEMAND

Professionals with digital skills, analysts, and those with the ability to effectively extract information from data will continue to be in highest demand.

In 2015, 90 percent of all client requirements requested of McKinley Marketing Partners required digital marketing experience and/or analytic skills. Half of the client requirements requested in 2015 required some aspect of digital marketing experience and 40 percent required some aspect of strategic thinking or analytic skills. In fact, a total of 28 percent actually required both digital *and* strategic marketing experience – and those numbers are already on the rise in 2016.

Digital marketing skills, once thought to be important only to those working in a creative or integrally digital positions – like web development, social media, or digital advertising are becoming important across all disciplines. Most notably, positions related to strategy, product marketing, and research require digital marketing skills, as do many industries as a whole, including advertising, banking and finance, telecommunications, healthcare, retail, and service/hospitality.

While mid-size companies (those with 100 to 499 employees) place the most emphasis on digital marketing skills, large companies (those with more than 500 employees) are not far behind.

Positions that require digital marketing expertise will be in highest demand in 2016 (see Figure 6 on page 5) as organizations continue to blend traditional marketing strategies with digital marketing. As explained by former Virgin Media CMO Jeff Dodds, the days of “traditional” marketers and “digital” marketers are on the way out.

In addition, the use of big data to analyze traditional strategic methods and inform marketing decisions is growing. With today’s access to large quantities of consumer and campaign data, the need to quantify the success of marketing campaigns requires employers to hire people who are adept at both analytical and strategic thinking and planning.

“ In 2015, 90% of all job postings sent to McKinley Marketing Partners required digital marketing experience and/or analytic skills. ”



KEY FINDING: DIGITAL SKILLS IN HIGH DEMAND [CONTINUED]

Marketing teams of all sizes are looking to add people who, regardless of their specialty or geographic location, possess problem solving skills, an analytical mindset, and the ability to communicate ideas both in-person and in the virtual space. Evidence also shows a significant rise in the acceptability of hiring remote workers if it means finding a candidate who possesses these skills (see Figure 7).

Finally, due to the outsourcing of certain digital marketing job functions, demand for search engine optimization and marketing (SEO/SEM) professionals and project managers will decline in 2016, but there is a continuing need for senior-level and executive-level managers in these fields. Oversight and development of SEO/SEM strategy are still primarily managed in-house.

FIGURE 7
RESPONDENTS WILLING TO HIRE REMOTE WORKERS

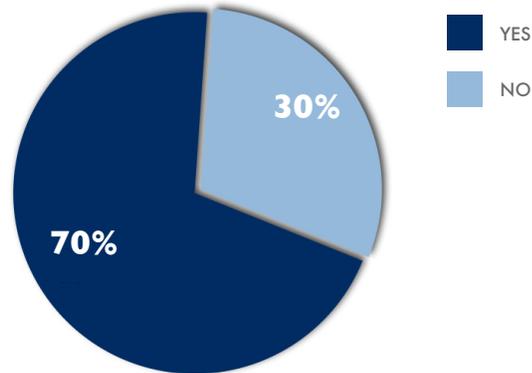
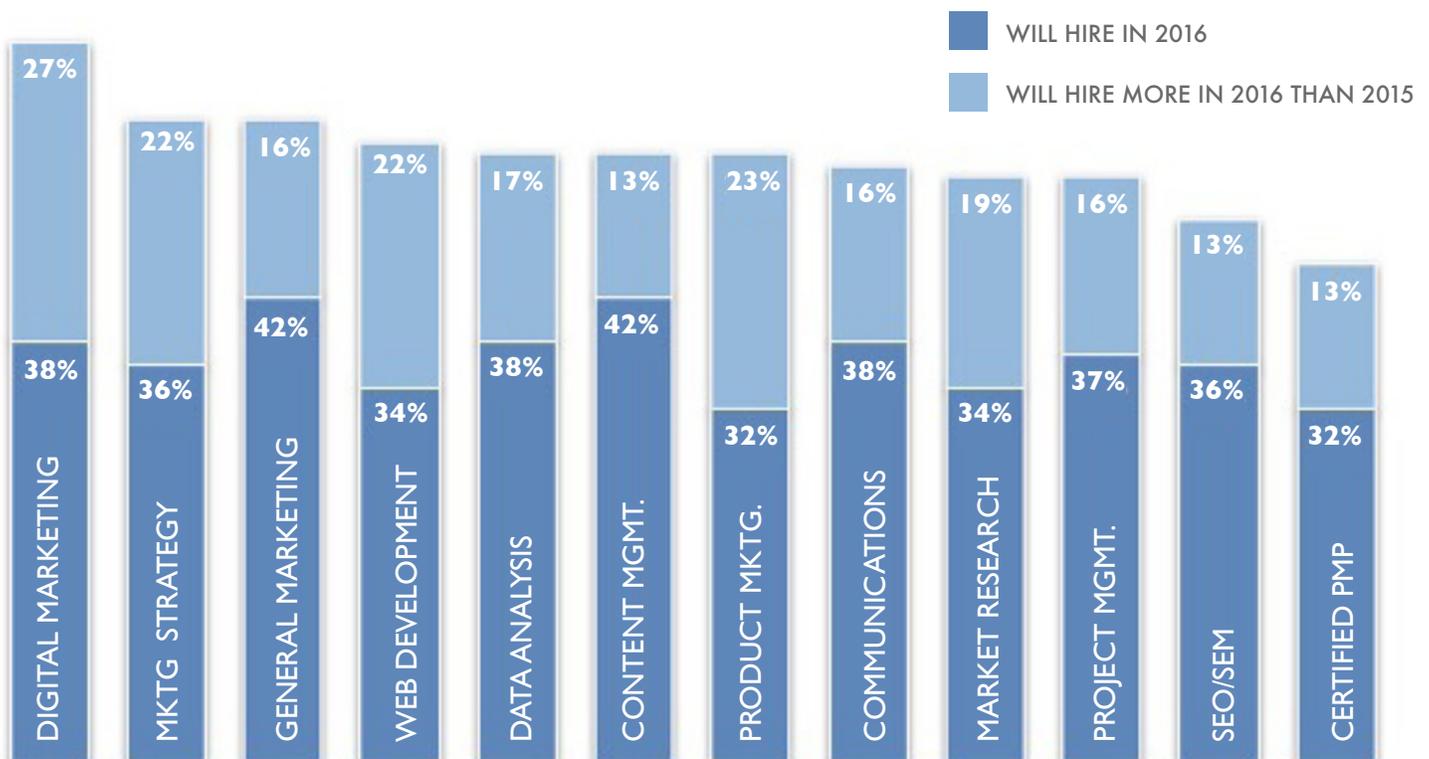


FIGURE 6
2016 PROJECTED HIRING BY EXPERTISE



FOR PURPOSES OF THIS SURVEY, DIGITAL MARKETING WAS TREATED AS ITS OWN SKILL SET



KEY FINDING: SEO FOR EXECs; DIGITAL FOR ENTRY LEVEL

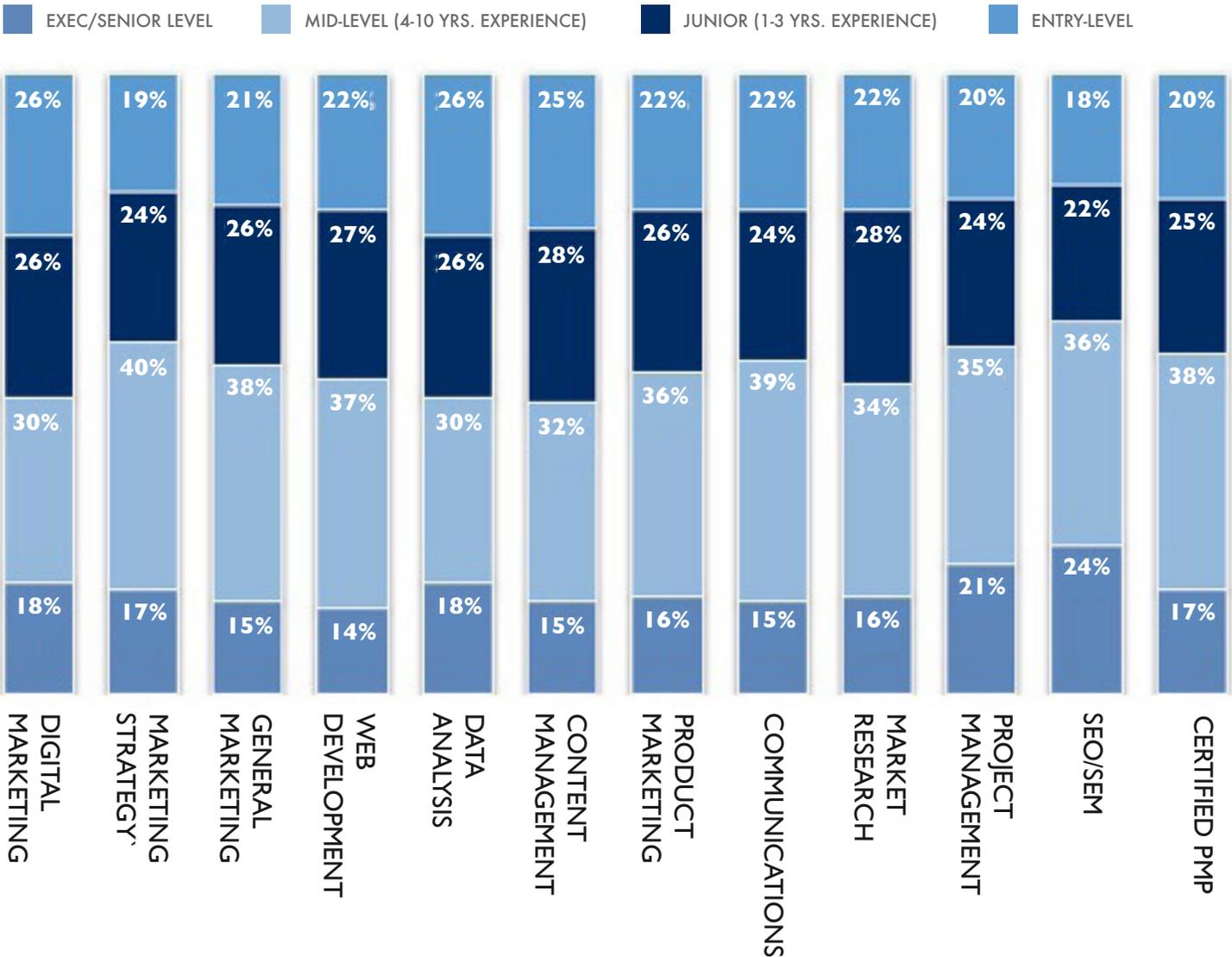
Despite an overall decline in SEO/SEM and project management hiring, the need for senior and executive-level professionals in the field is decreasing at a much slower rate. For more junior and entry-level job searchers, digital marketing positions are most abundant.

While positions available for certified project managers and SEO/SEM professionals are declining overall, the need for upper-level managers remains relatively consistent (see Figure 8). This trend could be driven by the need for strategists, who are often kept in house, while entry-level tasks are being absorbed by other roles or outsourced completely.

However, entry-level marketing jobs are not disappearing; they are simply changing in nature. Junior and entry-level jobs are most frequently available to digital marketers, analysts, and content managers.

FIGURE 8

2016 PROJECTED HIRING BY EXPERIENCE LEVEL





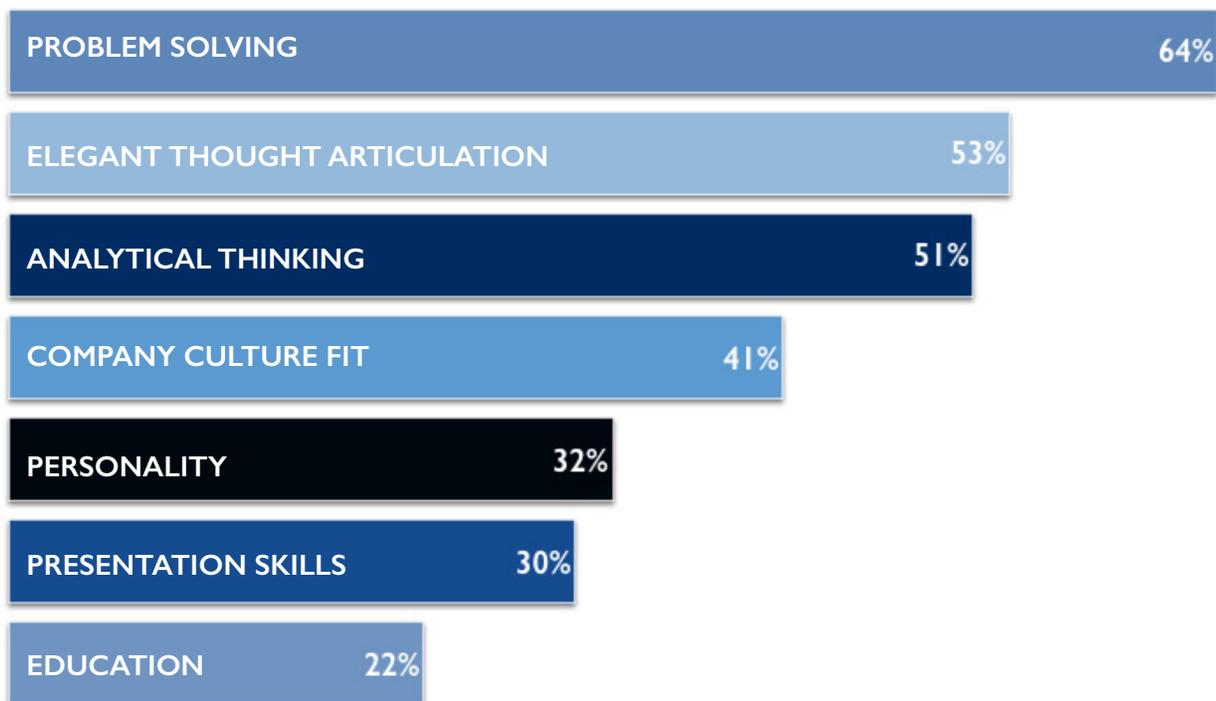
KEY FINDING: SOFT SKILLS ON THE RISE

Candidates who demonstrate a history of effective analytical thinking and clear communication skills have the advantage.

When choosing between two equally qualified applicants with identical marketing skill sets, employers look toward candidates who possess “soft” skills (see Figure 9), such as problem solving (64 percent listed problem solving as a top requirement) and the ability to efficiently and persuasively articulate thoughts (53 percent). Analytical candidates (51 percent), who fit in with the company’s culture (41 percent) are also becoming increasingly critical. An applicant’s personality (32 percent), presentation skills (30 percent), and degree/education (22 percent) are of lesser importance.

FIGURE 9

SOFT SKILLS LISTED AS A TOP REQUIREMENT



As part of the survey, hiring managers were asked how they assess these intangible soft skills. In response, employers explained that while interviewing, they are most impressed with applicants who:

- 1 ARE HONEST ABOUT THEIR PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE, STRENGTHS, AND WEAKNESSES.
- 2 CAN GIVE CONCRETE EXAMPLES THAT DEMONSTRATE THE SKILLS REQUIRED FOR THE POSITION.
- 3 HAVE SOME BACKGROUND AND KNOWLEDGE OF THE COMPANY’S PRODUCT/SERVICE OFFERINGS AND CULTURE.



SUMMARY: THE FUTURE OF MARKETING EMPLOYMENT

Digital marketing is on the rise, but the marketing professionals of the future must be both experienced marketers and critical thinkers with the ability to analyze data.

As positions within the field of marketing become more specialized, so does the need for marketing professionals who have an understanding of each of those specializations, particularly skills that cross many disciplines, like digital marketing and data analysis. It is not enough to simply be a skilled marketer anymore. Marketing professionals must be qualified to complete the tasks related to their positions, as well as proven strategists and analysts.

The increase in demand for digital marketers demonstrates the increasingly high adoption rate of digital marketing strategies and the return on investment that many organizations are seeing as a result of their varied digital marketing efforts. Because digital marketing is no longer a job title (but instead a bullet in the job description), marketers with roles from social media coordinator to strategic marketing manager must now be experienced in both traditional and digital marketing activities.

Finally, hiring for remote positions is also on the rise – not only because qualified candidates can be difficult to find, but

also because companies more often need to collaborate with vendors around the world. Because of the increasingly virtual and disperse nature of teams today, communication skills – both in-person and virtual – are essential parts of today’s marketing toolkit.

As marketing – digital and otherwise – becomes an integral part of positions both within and outside of the traditional marketing landscape, hiring managers must lead the transition to digital integration and the world of data analytics by hiring the most qualified marketers who possess the proper skills, the experience necessary to perform their job duties, and the critical thinking abilities to be strategists in their own rights.

Today’s marketing teams are required to be cross-functional and multi-disciplinary within their organizations so that companies can reach their target audiences quickly, efficiently, and intelligently. The increasingly virtual and diverse nature of today’s marketing professionals create an environment in which the skills needed to succeed are becoming simultaneously more technical and less objective.

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

As McKinley Marketing Partners' co-founder and first employee, Michelle Boggs now serves as the company's President and CEO. Her leadership, courage, and instinct for optimizing business processes and procedures have driven McKinley's growth and solidified the company's reputation for consistently providing high-quality marketing talent.

Michelle is inspired by her husband, her team at McKinley, and the many talented women business owners she has met over the years. In her spare time, she plays golf and tennis and practices yoga.



ABOUT MCKINLEY

Since 1995, the McKinley team has filled both contract and direct hire positions with marketers whose passion and experience enable them to deliver results quickly. We work with companies and organizations of all sizes and across all industries to place candidates with a variety of skill sets, from traditional/digital marketing to creative, communications, and market research and analysis.

McKinley maintains a qualified bench of fully vetted marketing experts who are ready to fill roles across various industries and functions – from communications to digital marketing to project management – for however long they are needed. Our own marketing expertise, combined with our carefully refined recruiting process, helps us deliver specialized marketing talent quickly.

As the premier recruiting and staffing firm for marketing expertise, our team of marketing and recruiting professionals is deeply invested in understanding the individual strengths, backgrounds, and personalities of each of our candidates. McKinley's recruiting process is more rigorous – and more selective – than the traditional interview. Our unique process enables us to fully discover a candidate's capabilities, personality, and work style, ensuring that they are an optimal match for our clients' skill requirements and company culture.

**CONTACT MCKINLEY MARKETING PARTNERS TO
LEARN MORE ABOUT THIS YEAR'S HIRING TRENDS.**