



Cooper Fitch  
**SALARY  
GUIDE  
2019**

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**DIGITAL  
UAE**



## UAE SALARY GUIDE

Welcome to the Cooper Fitch Salary Guide for United Arab Emirates in 2019. Our guide provides salary expectation ranges for mid-level to senior professionals and hiring across the Emirates and insights on the employment market, key drivers for change and expected patterns in 2019. This is based on observations made in 2018 with both job seekers and clients in the region by our subject matter experts. Cooper Fitch is based in the United Arab Emirates since 1997 specialising in recruitment, executive search and HR advisory services.

Cooper Fitch estimates the GDP growth for the Emirates will be approximately 4 per cent in 2019. However, there is a consensus that it could be as high as 5-6%. With oil prices at an average of \$71 per barrel in 2018, we are optimistic that oil prices will remain steady in 2019. However, we are not expecting any significant increase in salary ranges in 2019.

We predict an improvement in the employment market in 2019. In the previous years, the market saw a significant restructuring in organisations, particularly in the banking sector which affected employment rates and adversely influenced salary levels. We see more job stability in 2019 albeit there are more planned mergers, particularly with some Abu Dhabi based banks.

With the continual drive to the Emirates' Vision 2021, we see the need for improvements in economic reforms. At the moment, oil contributes to around 35% of the UAE government revenues. As 2021 approaches, we see the Emirates focusing on human capital to support its diversification and generate better revenue. Also, as part of its vision, the introduction of VAT in 2018 has brought diversity to the country's economic revenue streams and also encouraged transparency for businesses.

The biggest challenge faced by organisations in 2018 is the retention of their top performing teams and individuals. Jobs seekers have faced bigger challenges in the past as salaries have decreased; there has been a significant increase in the number of candidates available in the market. In the unfortunate event where someone loses their job, the period required to find a new vocation has become longer.

The previous years' reduction in oil prices has caused companies to lose confidence in the market which in some cases has made them hesitant about making key hires. We have also noticed a reduction in the retail and luxury retail sectors in 2018. There is a lack of consumer confidence, but we expect improvements in both markets in 2019.

We hope you find the insights presented interesting and useful and we welcome any feedback. If you would like specific data on your market, please feel to contact me directly.



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# DIGITAL

### The UAE now outranks the UK for connected devices.

The Emirates currently outranks the UK in percentage terms for connected devices, which along with other factors such as the presence of big brands such as Amazon, Facebook and Google. Backed by government initiatives to encourage much greater use of online, the UAE has undergone a digital revolution in a short space of time. According to figures by BMI Research, the e-commerce market in the UAE in 2015 saw sales reaching \$5 billion.

### Demand for in-house creative specialists.

The demand for developers and programmers that look at implementing UX/UI, web technologies and mobile applications is on the rise, with a need for experienced talent. Programming languages which prioritise scalabilities such as Python and PHP are advancing quickly, and the talent that have expertise with these languages are in high demand for employers. Media and advertising spend from agency sides are declining due to clients transitioning specific creative personnel in-house while this transformation of creative positions has significantly reduced the number of opportunities for traditional copywriters who may need to adjust to the digitisation movement.

***“Programming languages which prioritise scalabilities such as Python and PHP are advancing quickly, and the talent that can work with these languages are on demand in the market.”***

### Hiring is shifting away from traditional practices into the digital space.

UAE is vastly multicultural; it is easy to attract expatriate talent with international experience. The main change in hiring trends has come from the e-commerce space which is continuing to gather momentum. Small startup companies have been receiving external investment, which in turn has led to increased hiring across all areas including operations, technology and finance. As agency spending has decreased, competition has increased amongst leading agencies leading to more movement at senior levels and the creation of new divisions across the digital landscape.

### Banking across the GCC is behind the digital transformation curve.

Large consultancy firms are looking for leaders who can manage teams on-shore and offshore; they are also moving into the creative space giving more competition to traditional digital and creative agencies. The banking sectors in the GCC are behind the digital transformation curve. They are still to adapt to new technologies to ease the operational processes, and some are still lacking more complex, integrated banking modules, which are the norm across Europe and the US.

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### DIGITAL

ROLE	MIN	MAX	
ADVERTISING / PR AGENCY	Account Planner	11,000	13,000
	Account Executive	11,000	14,000
	Digital Media Analyst	11,000	13,000
	Media Planner	11,000	13,000
	Media Buyer	13,000	15,000
	Senior Account Executive	14,000	16,000
	Digital Account manager	17,000	19,000
	Account Manager	17,000	21,000
	Digital Media Account Manager	17,000	19,000
	Senior Account Manager	21,000	26,000
	Head of Planning	24,000	26,000
	Account Director	26,000	33,000
	Senior Account Director	33,000	39,000
	Group Account Director	37,000	43,000
	Business Director	41,000	46,000
	Managing Director	46,000	61,000
CEO	60,000	-	
CREATIVE AGENCY	Copywriter	15,000	19,000
	Graphic Designer	16,000	19,000
	Digital Designer	16,000	19,000
	Senior copywriter	19,000	23,000
	UX/UI Designer	19,000	23,000
	Senior Graphic Designer	19,000	24,000
	Art Director	19,000	24,000
	CX (UX, XD, SX,) Consultant	21,000	26,000
	Senior UX/UI Design Manager	21,000	26,000
	Senior Art Director	24,000	29,000

The salary ranges provided are in AED and represent a monthly salary inclusive of basic and any allowances. Salaries provided are exclusive of any bonus, guaranteed or otherwise.

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ROLE		MIN	MAX
CREATIVE	CX (UX, XD, SX,) Managing Consultant	36,000	39,000
	Associate Creative Director	26,000	34,000
AGENCY	Creative Director	36,000	46,000
	Executive Creative Director	46,000	61,000
	General Manager	61,000+	-
CLIENT	Digital Marketing Executive	14,000	18,000
	Senior Digital Marketing Executive	18,000	23,000
	Digital Marketing Manager	23,000	33,000
	Senior Digital Marketing Manager	33,000	43,000
	Digital Marketing Director	43,000	63,000
	Head of digital	51,000+	-
	Chief Digital Director	56,000	66,000
	Chief Digital Officer	100,000+	-
EVENTS EXHIBITIONS & CONFERENCES	Conference Producer	16,000	19,000
	Exhibition Sales Manager	16,000	19,000
	Event Manager	16,000	26,000
	Sponsorship Sales Manager	17,000	19,000
	Operations Manager	19,000	21,000
	Senior Exhibition Sales Manager	21,000	26,000
	Project Manager	21,000	26,000
	Event Director	29,000	36,000
	Group Event Director	36,000	46,000

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# UNDERSTANDING THIS GUIDE

### **METHODOLOGY**

The salary information provided in this guide has been compiled by dedicated researchers across Cooper Fitch's subject matter experts, from our Research team to our Managing Partner group. Our experts are in regular contact with both employers and job seekers across our specialist sectors in the Emirates.

### **SALARY DATA**

The salary ranges in this guide are indications of the market rate for mid-level to senior positions for hiring and new career opportunities in 2019. This salary data is based on placements made in 2018 and our teams' specialist knowledge. The information presented in this document should be used as a general guide only with intent to provide an approximate framework to gauge what a typical professional is likely to earn in the region. All salary data provided is exclusive of any bonus payments, guaranteed or otherwise.

### **FURTHER INFORMATION**

Cooper Fitch provide in-depth compensation and benefits analysis, for more information please contact [tmurphy@cooperfitch.ae](mailto:tmurphy@cooperfitch.ae).