

Industry insight - Marketing, advertising, and PR

In a nutshell

The marketing, advertising, and public relations (PR) industry covers a range of functions from the technical elements of market research to the more creative product/brand development, promotion, media relations, reputation management, public affairs, direct marketing and sponsorship. Digital roles (creative, design and production) are increasing significantly.

Marketing budgets, particularly social-media budgets, are increasing again as the global recession eases, and opportunities are available for graduates with exceptional communication skills, organisational skills and creative flair.

What kind of work can I do?

Marketing

Marketing can be defined as the intermediary function between product development and sales. It is the marketing professional's job to create, manage and enhance brands.

Many roles are in-house and deal exclusively with one organisation's marketing - usually incorporating advertising and sometimes PR. The work includes:

- promotion/sales planning;
- branding;
- media relations;
- product development;
- sponsorship;
- digital marketing;
- direct marketing;
- market research.

See [getin2marketing](#) for more information on the types of marketing.

Advertising

Advertising is a creative and fast-paced industry that uses paid-for space in various media outlets to motivate people to buy products and services or change their attitudes. Advertising involves developing and implementing the company's advertising strategy.

Professionals are often employed in agencies. These agencies can either be specialist, e.g. media buying or digital/online, or full-service agencies. The work often includes:

- creating and managing integrated advertising campaigns;
- client and supplier liaison;
- planning, research and evaluation;
- new business development;
- digital roles - creative, design and production.

PR

Public relations is growing in importance as a marketing tool and is now considered a critical component of the marketing mix. Opportunities exist in-house or in consultancies/agencies. Some consultancies specialise in one sector, e.g. healthcare, IT, consumer. Work activities include:

- the management of reputation, with the objective of earning understanding and support;
- interacting with the media;
- writing and editing;
- planning, research and evaluation;
- event management.

Public affairs and lobbying also form part of the PR industry. The work includes persuading policymakers and/or conveying particular viewpoints to influential people such as MPs.

What's it like working in this industry

- This industry is fast, exciting, innovative, highly creative and varied but can also be stressful when having to meet tight deadlines under pressure.
- Salaries vary considerably, depending on the specialism, level of experience and geographical location.
- For junior roles, salaries tend to be higher in the professional services, financial and business sectors compared with those in the not-for-profit/public sector or small, independent companies.
- Senior positions within agencies can command a high salary.
- Working hours can be long and irregular, with some in-house PR roles attracting an 'out-of-hours' supplement.
- Networking and socialising with clients in order to build and maintain relationships is important in agency roles.
- While there is almost an equal split between males and females in the industry as a whole, females currently account for only 22.4% of those in an agency management role ([Institute of Practitioners in Advertising \(IPA\), Agency Census 2010](#)).
- Around half of employees are aged 30 or under (IPA, Agency Census 2010).

- In advertising, the workforce is predominantly from a white background (90%). This is an issue the IPA is trying to address and is slowly making progress on (IPA, Agency Census 2010).

How big is this industry?

- There are 18,843 people employed at 268 IPA member agencies, with 161 of these based in London.
- The [Chartered Institute of Public Relations \(CIPR\)](#) estimates that there are approximately 50,000 people working in PR roles.
- The [Chartered Institute of Marketing \(CIM\)](#) estimates that the total number of professionals working in marketing in the UK is 500,000.

Where can I work?

- Many large advertising, direct marketing and full-service agencies and PR consultancies are based in and around London, as are many in-house marketing and PR roles.
- However, opportunities exist throughout the whole of the UK, particularly in larger cities such as Birmingham, Bristol, Edinburgh, Leeds and Manchester.
- Few opportunities exist in rural areas.
- Large agencies and PR consultancies are increasingly international in scope. Many are part of a larger media and communications group whose parent company may be based in another country. See [opportunities abroad](#) for further information about worldwide opportunities.

Job roles

The following profiles are examples of key jobs that exist in the marketing, advertising and PR industry. To find the job roles that best match your skills and interests, login to [what jobs would suit me?](#)

- [Advertising account executive](#)
- [Advertising account planner](#)
- [Advertising art director](#)
- [Advertising copywriter](#)
- [Event organiser](#)
- [Market researcher](#)
- [Marketing executive](#)
- [Media buyer](#)
- [Media planner](#)
- [Public affairs consultant](#)
- [Public relations account executive](#)
- [Public relations officer](#)
- [Sales promotion account executive](#)

For even more career ideas, take a look at [types of jobs](#).

Entry and progression

How do I find a job?

- [Search job vacancies](#).
- Jobs are advertised in the specialist press, including [Marketing](#), [Marketing Week](#), [PR Week](#) and [Campaign](#), as well as the national press, particularly [The Guardian](#).
- Professional bodies such as the [Chartered Institute of Marketing \(CIM\)](#) (via their magazine, [The Marketer](#)), [Chartered Institute of Public Relations \(CIPR\)](#), [Institute of Practitioners in Advertising \(IPA\)](#) and [The Institute of Direct and Digital Marketing - UR The Brand](#) advertise jobs.
- [Careers services](#) also advertise graduate marketing, advertising and PR vacancies.
- Attending industry events organised by a relevant professional body, e.g. CIPR, IPA and CIM, in order to meet and network with potential employers is a good way to make contacts and find out about opportunities.
- Some organisations, agencies and consultancies offer graduate recruitment schemes.
- Industry-specific directories may be useful for identifying contacts for speculative applications. Examples include [The Marketing Manager's Yearbook](#) and the [Creative Handbook](#).
- Read trade journals and the specialist press to keep informed about the industry. They can also help in identifying organisations to target with speculative applications.
- Recruitment agencies specialising in marketing, advertising and PR exist. However, they generally deal with experienced candidates. Search the [Recruitment and Employment Confederation \(REC\)](#) consultancy finder for a list of member agencies.
- Jobs are generally advertised all year round.
- Find out more about [job application advice](#).

What skills do I need?

Employers generally look for evidence of:

- excellent communication and interpersonal skills;
- social skills (demonstrated, for example, through involvement with student media or university societies);
- teamwork;
- negotiation skills;
- initiative;
- creativity and imagination;

- flexibility;
- ability to cope under pressure and think strategically as the work often involves tight deadlines;
- organisational skills (e.g. organising events such as student balls or sports events).

The increase in digital marketing and social media marketing also means that some roles will require a certain amount of IT knowledge. All these skills can be developed by undertaking [work experience](#).

Your degree subject is not as important as work experience, enthusiasm and dedication.

Advertisers want people with a real passion for advertising and an understanding of what makes a good advertisement. In PR, writing skills are particularly important. It can be helpful if you provide evidence that you are a good writer, e.g. writing for your student magazine or a blog.

Where can I find work experience?

Relevant work experience is crucial and can lead to offers of permanent employment. Some agencies offer formal internships, but the majority of graduates find work experience through speculative applications and networking.

Other sources include:

- the IPA and CIPR websites - include details of agencies that offer work experience placements;
- voluntary organisations - sometimes have opportunities in their marketing/PR departments, which can provide vital experience for those choosing [charities and voluntary work](#) as a career path.

For posts within PR, work experience in newspapers, TV and radio will enhance your understanding of how the media works.

See [getin2marketing](#) for more information on how to improve your employability.

Is postgraduate study useful?

- Although postgraduate study is not essential to getting a job in this industry, a postgraduate qualification will increase your chances, as this area of work is becoming increasingly competitive.
- Further study once working in the industry is generally supported. Some organisations may offer financial support and/or study leave.
- Formal qualifications offered by the CIM, such as the Professional Certificate or Professional Diploma in Marketing, are available. The Chartered Postgraduate Diploma in Marketing is available to those who have already gained a significant level of knowledge and/or experience of marketing.
- [The Institute of Direct and Digital Marketing \(IDM\)](#) offers a variety of formal qualifications.

- The CIPR also offers formal qualifications including the Advanced Certificate or Diploma in Public Relations.
- A range of short industry-specific courses are also available through the CIM, CIPR, IDM, IPA, [Direct Marketing Association](#) (DMA) and [Public Relations Consultants Association](#) (PRCA).

How can my career develop?

- With advertising and direct marketing, a typical path of career development might involve starting as an account executive within an agency, then progressing to an account manager after one to two years, then on to account director after three or four more years.
- With general marketing positions, promotion is often to marketing manager after three to five years, and then to marketing director. Increasingly, further qualifications, such as those offered by the CIM, are desirable for more senior marketing positions.
- The CIPR advises that PR professionals can expect to spend one to two years as a junior account executive, two to three years as an account executive, and the same amount of time as a senior account executive or account manager, before moving to associate and then account director.
- Gaining relevant experience and honing key transferable skills are vital for career progression and can sometimes enable professionals to move between marketing, advertising and PR. Career progression can be aided by moving between in-house departments or working in a marketing agency/consultancy for several different clients.
- Networking within the different industries is a useful way to find out about 'hidden jobs' as smaller agencies in particular do not often have the resource to advertise opportunities widely.

Typical employers

Big players

Marketing

As marketing is a core element of all organisations, marketing opportunities can be found in most large organisations in the private, public and not-for-profit sectors. Entry-level positions and graduate schemes are particularly numerous in:

- the retail sector;
- service-related industries;
- public-sector organisations, such as the NHS, universities and local authorities;
- the manufacturing industry;
- the energy sector;
- the banking and financial sectors;

- the pharmaceutical industry;
- charities and other voluntary sector organisations.

Advertising

The majority of graduate opportunities in advertising are with either specialist, e.g. media buying or digital/online, or full-service agencies. According to the IPA, major advertising agencies include:

- AMV BBDO
- McCann Erickson
- Fallon
- Rainey Kelly Campbell Roalfe/Y&R
- JWT
- WCRS&Co
- M&C Saatchi
- Euro RSCG
- Bartle Bogle Hegarty
- Delany Lund Knox Warren & Partners Ltd

PR

Graduate opportunities exist in both consultancies/agencies and in-house. Generally, each company will only recruit a small number of graduates each year (usually one or two) to work as part of a small team. Many of the major agencies/consultancies are based in major cities, whereas in-house opportunities are more likely to be available regionally. Visit company websites to find out about their recruitment procedures.

According to [PR Week: Top 150 PR Consultancies 2011](#), the top ten PR agencies are:

- Bell Pottinger Group
- Brunswick
- Weber Shandwick
- FD
- Edelman
- Finsbury
- Hill & Knowlton
- Freud Communications
- Engine Group
- MSLGroup

In-house graduate opportunities are also common in, for example, major companies, central and local government.

Small to medium-sized enterprises (SMEs)

SMEs are organisations with less than 250 employees and an annual turnover of no more than £44million. Working for a smaller company can be rewarding because you are more likely to forge a path for yourself within the company, although opportunities to try other departments may be limited.

SMEs are unlikely to use the testing and assessment techniques of larger companies, or follow lengthy recruitment procedures. SMEs are more likely to advertise their vacancies through the local press, university careers service bulletins, local graduate vacancy listings, jobcentres, and word of mouth, rather than rely on their reputation and a presence at graduate recruitment fairs.

Your university careers service should have listings of jobs with small firms. See also the [Department for Business, Innovation and Skills](#).

Graduate-level entry into marketing, advertising or PR roles tends to be through graduate schemes/opportunities in large organisations. Generally, SMEs do not have the budget to employ graduates. Normally a senior manager takes marketing under their sales or operational remit, or they outsource specific projects to agencies.

Self-employment

The opportunity for self-employment, working as an independent marketing or PR consultant, is possible. However, this is more common for experienced marketing and PR professionals. In advertising, opportunities to work as an independent consultant are rare. In all three industries, some experienced professionals go on to form their own agencies/consultancies.

Find out more about [self-employment](#).

Opportunities abroad

What are my chances of getting a job overseas?

The marketing, advertising and PR industry has become increasingly international, and opportunities exist all over the world in developed and developing nations. Huge, multinational marketing groups own many large agencies and PR consultancies. With many brands marketed all over the world, international campaigns are common for major clients.

However, the increasing use of technology, such as email and internet/video-conferencing, means global communication is instant. Consequently, the majority of people employed in marketing, advertising and PR will remain in the UK for most of their career.

The amount of contact you have with overseas clients and the opportunities to work abroad will largely depend on the organisation that employs you. Some

companies provide secondments overseas and, at senior level, the chance to set up a new office abroad.

To work in marketing, advertising and PR in another country, you need to:

- be aware of the culture of the country;
- understand the local markets and media for that country;
- have the necessary language skills.

Will my qualifications be recognised?

Professional marketing, advertising and PR qualifications gained via the relevant professional body, for example [Chartered Institute of Marketing \(CIM\)](#), [Institute of Practitioners in Advertising \(IPA\)](#), [Chartered Institute of Public Relations \(CIPR\)](#) and [Institute of Direct and Digital Marketing \(IDM\)](#), are recognised around the world, which allows qualified professionals a truly global career path.

The following websites include links to international professional bodies that can advise you on desirable qualifications in the relevant industries in their countries:

- [International Advertising Association \(IAA\)](#);
- [International Public Relations Association](#);
- CIM - international offices in 11 countries outside the UK, which can advise on the portability of qualifications.

Where are the opportunities?

Multinational firms are the best way of getting an overseas opportunity at graduate level. Some large, international organisations, for example Saatchi & Saatchi and TBWA, have a network of offices throughout the world. Local companies often prefer to recruit locally as understanding the market gives new recruits a head start.

There are more opportunities for UK graduates in English speaking countries or in countries where they can speak the native language fluently.

Future trends

Digital marketing and new media

There has been a vast expansion in social media and online communication channels over the last two years. These new media channels and consumer devices have emerged due to advances in digital and mobile technology. This has had a big impact on the way the marketing, advertising and PR industries operate, creating a new digital marketing discipline.

Digital marketing uses blogs, mobile phones, social networking and content-sharing sites to promote brands, products and services (see *Revolution*, a quarterly supplement in [Marketing](#) dedicated to the field of digital marketing). As a consequence, it is likely that graduates will need to have a broader range of skills in multimedia and digital media/marketing.

Increase in data-driven marketing

Data can provide a valuable insight into how and when to connect with consumers. For example, someone may be happy to receive marketing information via email but not via text messaging. Being able to source, analyse and act upon this data is becoming increasingly vital to a campaign's success.

Globalisation of marketing

Marketing, advertising and PR companies operate in a global market and campaign design is increasingly viewed in a global context. International campaigns are common for major clients, and graduates will need to have an understanding of different cultural values around the world and how this could impact on a campaign.

Behavioural advertising

The use of behavioural advertising (also known as personalised advertising) is increasing. Advertisers are able to analyse a user's online activity, looking at, for example, the websites they have visited or the searches they have made. They then tailor their adverts accordingly, choosing to display the ones they feel the user will respond to. It is likely that this practice will continue to increase in the future as it enables advertisers to target those they feel will be most responsive to a particular product. This raises a number of issues about, for example, the collecting of personal data and the user's right to privacy.

Personal campaigns

With the digital age unfolding, mass marketing messages are decreasing in importance as more personal, one-to-one campaigns are becoming increasingly successful. These campaigns use cross-media concepts and real-life interaction, such as word-of-mouth campaigns, to complement the high-end technology. Those with creative flair and the ability to think outside the box are likely to become even more sought after by employers.

Jargon buster

- **Brand** - a product or service that has been refined and given a registered name to distinguish it from other products/services.
- **Brief** - the outline of what needs to be done on a project.

- **B2B** - business-to-business (providing products/services between businesses).
- **B2C** - business-to-consumer (as above but products/services are between business and the end consumer).
- **Call to action** - a marketing message that includes a focused and specific appeal to the consumer to take action following the receipt of the message.
- **Copy** - written material for printing, the text of an advertisement, a press release or an article that is being written (before it has been published).
- **Copywriting** - the production of text for marketing materials, such as advertising leaflets, publications and websites.
- **Corporate identity** - the ways in which companies identify and brand themselves. This can be through logos, house style and uniforms.
- **Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)** - makes companies responsible for their use of resources, both environmentally and socially.
- **Crisis management** - used within the PR industry, this term refers to the development of plans that can be effectively implemented when something goes wrong as part of a campaign for an organisation.
- **Digital marketing** - is the promotion of brands, products and services using online, mobile and other interactive channels.
- **Evaluation** - measuring the impact of an advertising/marketing/PR campaign. This process is typically linked with planning and research.
- **Fees** - charges agencies/consultancies make for the time spent working on client accounts. This is often invoiced in regular monthly installments or quarterly in advance.
- **Fundraising/sponsorship** - sourcing of partners/organisations to provide financial support or support 'in kind' for an event or activity where both parties will benefit.
- **In-house** - staff within a company or organisation responsible for marketing or PR functions.
- **Internal communications** - use of communication to promote messages within an organisation in order to achieve corporate objectives.
- **News/press release** - written information that is deemed to be newsworthy. Often sent out to journalists and/or other interested parties.
- **Out to tender** - where companies looking for an agency to work on a brand or project will invite various agencies to indicate their formal interest in the project demonstrating how they will meet requirements and proposed costs.
- **Pitch** - a presentation where an agency outlines a mock campaign for a particular brand or project to an organisation. The best proposal wins the account.
- **Press office** - handles all media enquiries and puts out all company messages to the media on behalf of a particular organisation.
- **Print production** - process of producing printed material such as brochures, posters and leaflets.
- **Publics** - audiences important to the organisation.
- **Social media** - features user-generated content and allows the general public to publish and share information and opinions. Examples of social media include blogs, Facebook, Delicious, YouTube and Flickr.
- **Spokesperson** - the PR person authorised to speak on behalf of an organisation/individual.

- **Stakeholders** - can also be referred to as publics; audiences important to the organisation.
- **Target market** - the audience(s) an organisation has chosen to be the recipient of key messages and communication.

Written by Julie Waddell, Aston University, September 2011

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