



# Marketing Compensation Study

Clarity and insight into what marketing leaders  
earn, and why it matters in 2025

Presented by  
**Ready Set Exec**

# Table of Contents

03

**INTRODUCTION**

04

**BEYOND SALARY**

05

**INDUSTRY INSIGHTS**

07

**TRENDS**

08

**THE NUMBERS**



# Why compensation transparency matters

Marketing has never been more critical to business growth — and never more scrutinized. As organizations face global competition, AI-driven customer acquisition, and tightening budgets, marketing leaders are expected to deliver measurable impact with precision. This has reshaped how companies structure compensation, especially at the executive level.

The goal of this study is to provide clarity and context. Salaries alone don't tell the full story — bonuses, equity packages, and long-term incentives often double or triple total earnings. Geography, industry, and company stage add further complexity.

Whether you are:

- An executive candidate preparing for negotiations, or
- A hiring leader building competitive offers to secure top talent,

this report will help you navigate the evolving compensation landscape with confidence.







## ● BEYOND SALARY

# Compensation Beyond Base Salary

At the director level and above, base salary is only part of the package. In 2025, most marketing executives see total on-target earnings (OTE) made up of several components:

### **Annual Bonus**

- Typically 20–30% of salary, with 50% at the high end.
- Calculated based on company performance (EBITDA, revenue growth) and individual/team KPIs (SQLs, MQLs, CAC, conversion rates).

### **Long-Term Incentive Plans (LTIPs)**

- Increasingly important in growth-stage companies where base salaries may lag market rates.
- Include equity shares (RSUs, PSUs, SARs), phantom shares, or profit-sharing agreements.
- For high-growth startups, equity can outweigh salary over time — but comes with risk.

### **Additional Perks**

- Healthcare, parental leave, wellness stipends, professional development allowances are becoming standard.
- Relocation, housing, or vehicle allowances remain common for roles in non-metro regions.
- Flexibility (remote/hybrid options) is increasingly a top “perk” that influences executive decisions as much as cash.





## ● INDUSTRY INSIGHTS

# Where Marketing Pay Peaks

Compensation varies significantly by sector, largely tied to the percentage of revenue spent on marketing.

### **Technology**

- Historically among the highest-paying sectors, though recent market corrections have cooled wages.
- Typical spend: ~15% of revenue.
- High demand for growth marketers and CMOs with SaaS or AI expertise.

What this means for candidates: Be prepared to negotiate equity-heavy packages in startups, while enterprise firms still offer premium base salaries for proven leaders.

### **Pharmaceuticals & Biotechnology**

- Marketing spend: ~10% of revenue.
- Strong pay due to regulatory complexity and the need for precise communication with both HCPs and consumers.
- Roles emphasize compliance, data-driven campaigns, and patient education.

What this means for candidates: Deep knowledge of healthcare regulations can command significant premiums.

### **Financial Services**

- Marketing spend: ~11% of revenue.
- Teams are central to customer acquisition, retention, and digital transformation.
- Compensation skews higher in firms investing heavily in fintech and digital-first strategies.

What this means for candidates: Expect compensation tied tightly to customer acquisition metrics and ROI.





## ● INDUSTRY INSIGHTS



### **Consumer Packaged Goods (CPG)**

- Spend: 10–20% of revenue, among the highest across industries.
- Heavy reliance on brand loyalty and omnichannel retail strategies.
- Senior roles often combine brand building with data analytics to track consumer shifts.

What this means for candidates: P&L ownership experience is a key differentiator in CPG marketing leadership roles.

### **Media & Entertainment**

- Spend: ~10% of revenue, though often higher in subscription-based models.
- Competitive pay due to content saturation and the battle for audience attention.
- Roles demand audience growth, digital monetization, and influencer/creator partnerships.

What this means for candidates: Experience scaling engagement in crowded digital ecosystems translates directly into compensation premiums.

### **Luxury Goods**

- Spend: 7–17% of revenue.
- Salaries tied to maintaining brand prestige and exclusivity.
- Compensation often includes perks like international travel and luxury allowances.

What this means for candidates: Storytelling ability and cultural fluency are as valuable as digital expertise in this space.



## ● TRENDS

# Trends to Watch in 2025

**AI-driven marketing roles** are commanding new premiums (e.g., growth marketers with AI fluency, technical SEO for generative search).

**Pay-for-performance models** are expanding — especially bonuses tied to CAC/LTV efficiency.

**Equity remains king in startups**, but more executives are negotiating downside protection (e.g., guaranteed cash bonuses).

**Flexibility as compensation:** Hybrid/remote expectations are now part of the negotiation, often traded against cash.

## The Ready Set Exec Edge

Compensation is not one-size-fits-all. At Ready Set Exec, we help executives prepare for negotiations with data, strategy, and confidence. Our role is to:

- Provide up-to-date market intelligence across industries and geographies.
- Guide executives in evaluating total compensation packages, not just base salary.
- Support hiring leaders in designing competitive, sustainable offers that attract and retain top talent.

Whether you're negotiating your next role or building a team, our mission is to make compensation transparent, strategic, and fair.





# Marketing Roles - The numbers

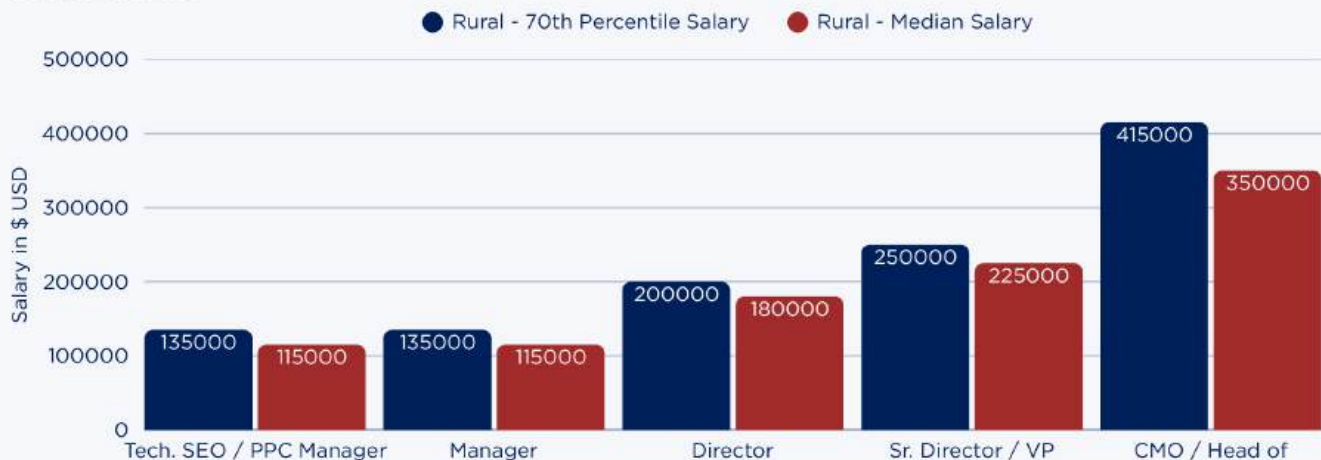
## Premium Locales (NYC/LA)



## Large Cities



## Rural Areas





## ● ABOUT US

# About Ready Set Exec

We're not recruiters. We're growth enablers.

Ready Set Exec helps scaling organizations find senior leaders who drive real results. From C-Suite to high-impact departmental roles, we deliver not just candidates, but **confidence**. Founded by Patrick Shea and John Pezoulas, we've built teams, scaled companies, and helped over 10,000 people find roles they thrive in.

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