




DALTON HANDLEY

2023/24 Salary guide and market trends:

Business development, marketing
and communications



Drawing on over 30 years' combined recruitment and client-side business development experience, and strong networks across the professional services sector, we compile and analyse comprehensive year-on-year (YoY) data to bring you the most accurate, current and informative salary ranges across professional services roles nationally.

Our 2023/24 salary guide delves deeper into salaries and provides commentary on key market trends and insights from the past year. We've looked at useful data points across top-tier, mid-tier and global firms, including a comparison of the big eight (Big 8) law firms with the rest.

This guide covers business development (BD), marketing and communications professionals' salaries across legal, accounting, consulting and engineering in Australia. For reference, 'Big 8' refers to Allens, Ashurst, Clayton Utz, Corrs Chambers Westgarth, Gilbert + Tobin, Herbert Smith Freehills (HSF), King & Wood Mallesons (KWM) and MinterEllison. 'Big 4' refers to Deloitte, EY, KPMG and PwC.

Key observations and drivers of change

1

Salary bandings within some firms have increased up to 30% over the past two years, with the highest increases being at Advisor, Manager and Senior Manager-levels. For example:

- In 2021, Advisors in some firms were paid \$80k where this level could now be earning \$120k.
- Managers can now be earning up to \$200k.
- Senior Managers were previously earning \$180k in some firms where now this level can earn up to \$250k.

There are some key reasons for these significant increases:

- COVID: Professional services firms remained busy and profitable. Confidence grew as did revenue, while costs, such as client entertainment, staff amenities and travel, were significantly reduced. This, combined with the fear of the Great Resignation, drove salary increases, bonus payments and promotions.
- Many firms created talent stickiness through the above financial retention efforts, creating the tightest talent market we have seen for decades. Further, working from home provided autonomy while removing the negative aspects of being in the office (e.g. politics, excessive meetings and commuting). Job seeker activity has steadily increased alongside the return to working in the office.
- Firm FY27 strategies are in progress and some firms are growing BD teams significantly to align with ambitious growth targets. The value of BD is increasingly being recognised, resulting in increased headcount YoY and salary increases, particularly in the \$160k-\$240k range. New roles include dedicated client experts, pursuit and bid professionals, and sophisticated practice and sector group BD Managers.
- We have seen significant growth in senior roles (including new headcount at Senior Manager, Head-of and Director-level) to reflect firms' needs and the contribution of their people. Many of these individuals have been promoted from within and reflect the key growth areas of the firm.
- Migration to Australia slowed significantly during COVID. Although migration restrictions are easing, the rate of movement remains slow and many firms are still reluctant to sponsor BD professionals. Firms that are open to sponsorship unlock a vast talent pool of experienced BD professionals at a lower price point than the Australian market.
- We have seen some redundancies across the Big 4, however this is common during times of economic uncertainty. Demand for good BD and pursuit talent across legal and engineering has remained consistently high.

2

The number of Senior Manager and Head-of level roles in the professional services market has increased over the past three years through new headcount and internal promotions. There are two key reasons for this growth:

- BD functions are naturally becoming more sophisticated; client and partner BD saviness has increased, fee earners and BD professionals continue to be more commercial, partner and client expectations are higher and BD professionals are frequently pushing the envelope on strategic growth initiatives. This has led to a suite of new strategic roles being created to align with firm's strategic growth areas.
- Experienced Managers have been operating at Senior Manager-level for some time due to high-performance cultures across the industry. Key individuals are now formally being recognised for their past and future contributions, with retention being a key driver.

Many of these roles head up major practice groups, service lines and/or sectors, and are usually filled through promotions from within teams. We've also seen an increase in Head-of level roles managing client insights and client listening. New role examples include Head of Strategic Opportunities, Head of NewLaw, Head of Client Insights, Strategy and Growth Lead, Head of Client Experience and a Director of Client Growth. All roles are new to the market.

3

Coordinator-level roles are returning. Over time, Coordinators have been promoted, but not replaced. To ensure junior support is available, firms are now creating new headcount at the Coordinator-level where they are targeting switched-on individuals with the right attitude who can be trained up quickly. These candidates can come from any industry and are able to achieve an average salary of \$90k.

4

The status of Client Experience (CX) is growing within professional services firms. While CX has always been part of marketing and communications teams, CX is becoming a specialist function and covers the entire client lifecycle, from awareness and consideration right through to advocacy. Experienced individuals are being promoted into newly-created Head-of CX roles across legal, accounting and property. These are typically standalone roles or a Head-of with one direct report.

5

There have been significant leadership changes across the professional services industry over the past two years, including at Ashurst, Clayton Utz, Clyde & Co, Colin Biggers & Paisley, DLA Piper, EY, Gadens, Gilbert + Tobin, Griffith Hack, Herbert Smith Freehills, Holman Fenwick Willan, IPH Limited, King & Wood Mallesons, KPMG, Maddocks, Norton Rose Fulbright, Pinsent Masons, Spruson & Ferguson and Wotton + Kearney. Managing Partners have been instrumentally involved in these recruitment processes, highlighting the growing importance of BD for firm growth.

6

There are a growing number of candidates looking to boomerang back into law or move into law for the first time. Considered somewhat recession-proof, law firms offer nice working environments that are sophisticated, well resourced, specialised, entrepreneurial and flexible. Not to mention that salaries within law firms are typically the highest across professional services.

2023/24 in numbers

The tables below provide an indicative guide to current salary bands for business development, marketing and communications roles across legal and other areas of professional services in Australia.

Legal – permanent roles

Level	Min salary	Max salary	Avg salary	Avg 2022	% Change YoY avg salary
Coordinator	70	110	89	76	17.2%
Advisor, Consultant, Specialist or Executive	90	140	114	98	16.2%
Senior Advisor or Junior Manager	100	160	129	119	8.1%
Manager- Marketing, Communications or Digital	130	180	160	145	10.7%
Manager- BD	140	200	164	143	14.5%
Senior Manager	165	265	210	198	5.8%
Head-of	200	400	256	239	6.9%
Director or Chief Marketing Officer (CMO)	230	600	385	361	6.7%

Table notes

- All figures are '000 and are in AUD.
- Salary figures represent the total annual salary package (base and superannuation) and exclude bonuses and other financial rewards.
- Figures and average salary data are based on our salary research and specialised industry knowledge.
- Role titles and levels differ across every firm.



Titles and promotions

Firms have been proactive in creating new roles, new titles and offering promotions to retain key talent at Manager-level and above.

Sign-on bonuses

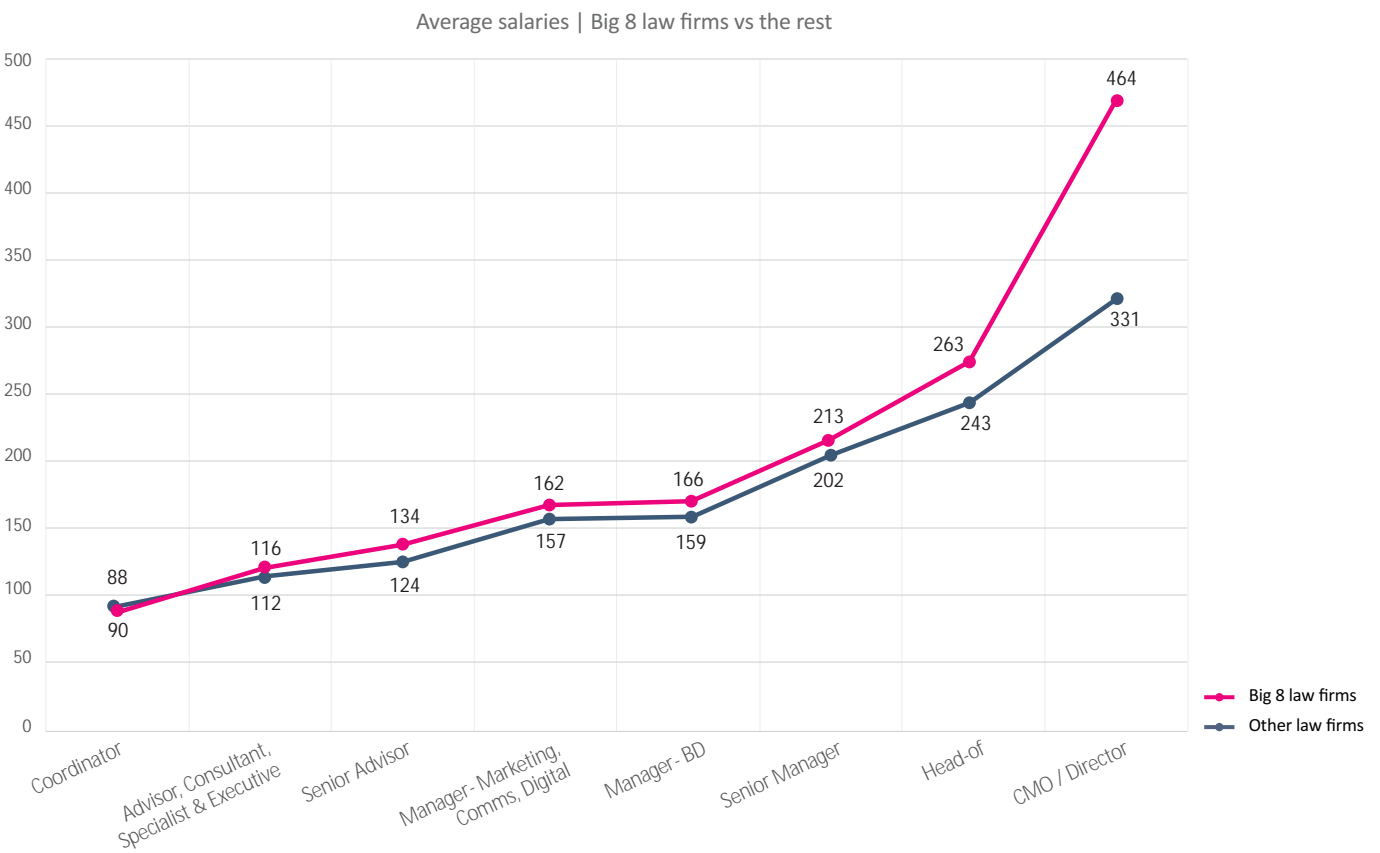
As a way to attract and lock in talent, many firms are offering sign-on bonuses to candidates at all levels. These range from \$5k up to \$40k, depending on the individual and the terms of their employment. An average sign-on bonus for Manager-level and above is \$10k, while higher sign-on bonuses are typically paid to cover a bonus that is being forfeited upon resignation.

Bonuses

Formal bonus structures are being introduced across top-tier, mid-tier and global law firms for the first time. While many law firms are still paying 'discretionary' bonuses, some firms are using formal bonus structures to recognise high performers, especially those who are directly linked to revenue generation. In law, bonuses can be up to 25% in some cases but typically sit between 10-20% of the total salary package.

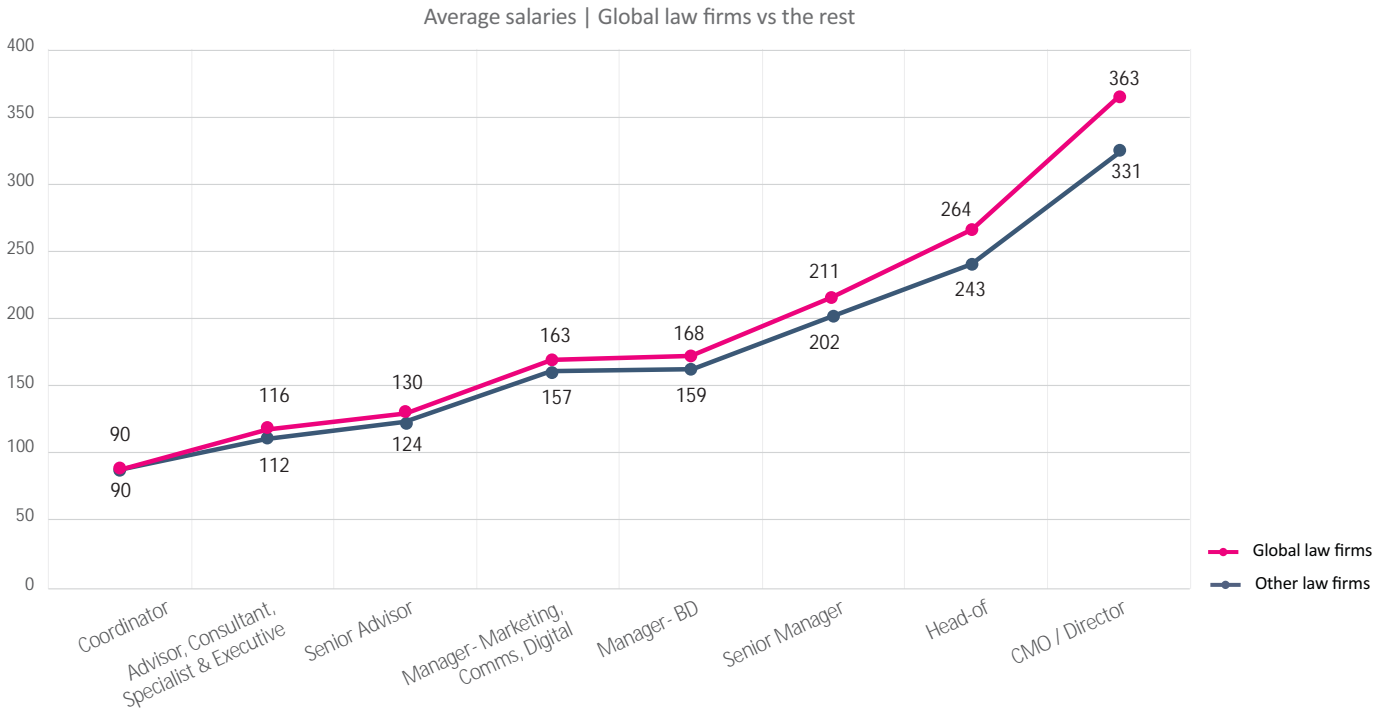
Comparing the Big 8 law firm salaries with the rest

The chart below compares the average business development, marketing and communications salaries between the Big 8 law firms and the rest. While the Big 8 sit higher across the board, we've seen firms with less resources invest heavily to attract top talent.



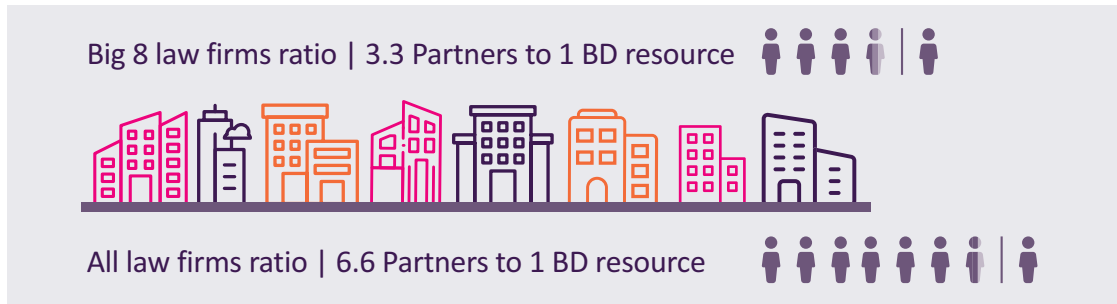
Comparing the global law firms with all other law firms

The chart below compares the average business development, marketing and communications salaries between the global law firms and the rest. The global law firms sit slightly higher across all levels, with the largest jumps being at the Senior Manager-level and above.



Partners to 1 BD resource* in law firms

* includes BD, marketing and communications teams.



Other professional services – permanent roles

Level	Min salary	Max salary	Avg salary	Avg 2020/21	% Change on avg salary
Coordinator	61	120	87	80	8.8%
Advisor, Consultant, Specialist or Executive	70	150	111	95	17%
Manager	105	190	153	136	12.4%
Manager - Marketing, Communications or Digital	130	200	162	141	14.8%
Associate Director or Senior Manager	137	270	187	172	8.6%
Director or Head-of	185	363	255	236	8%
Executive Director	250	700	367	345	6.5%

Table notes

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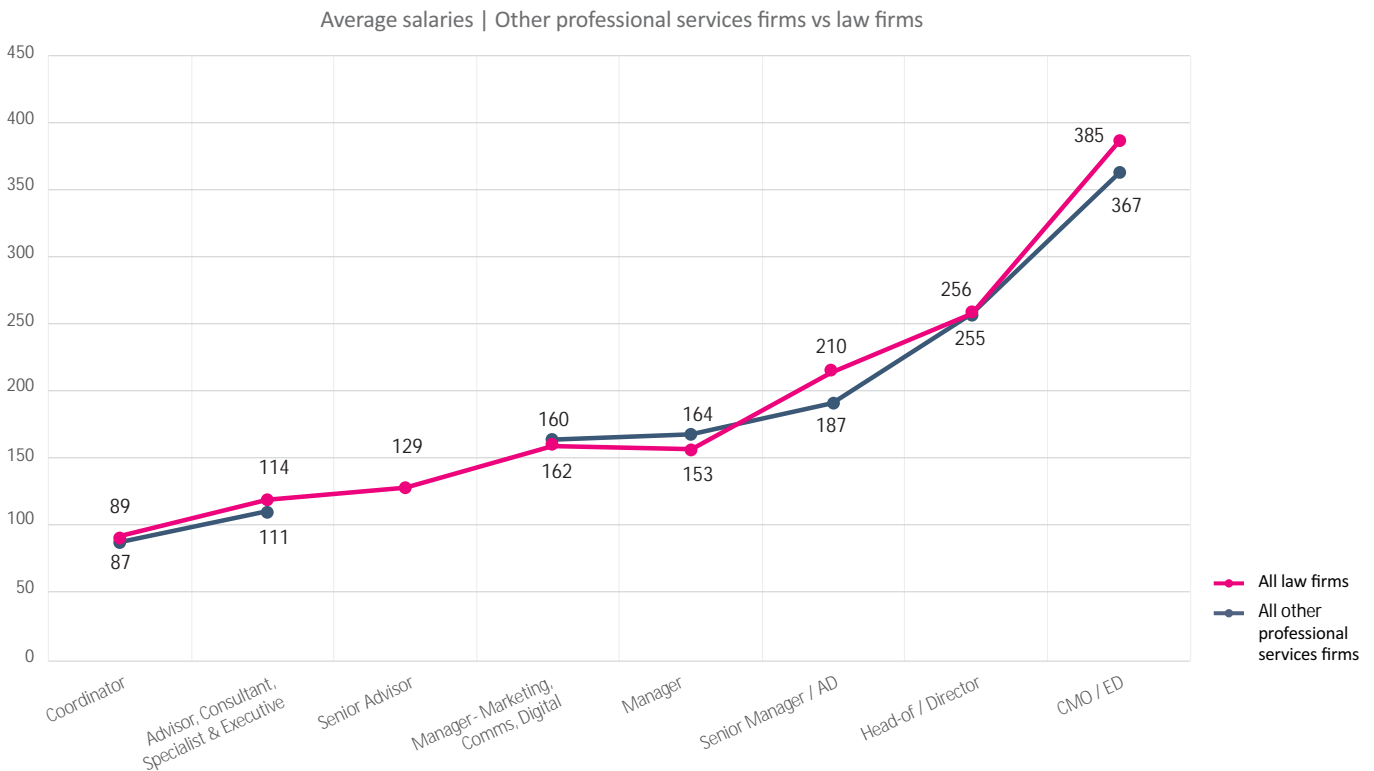


Bonuses

Bonuses in other professional services firms are usually discretionary and sit typically between 5-10%. Individuals at Senior Manager-level and above who are directly linked to revenue can earn up to 20% of their salary as a bonus, however the percentage is usually discretionary.

Comparing the other professional services firms with law firms

The chart below compares the average business development, marketing and communications salaries between other professional services firms and law firms. There are no figures for the Senior Advisor-level in other professional services firms as this level is uncommon outside of law.



Contract and project-based work across all professional services

Level	Min hourly rate	Max hourly rate	Avg daily rate
Executive, Specialist or Manager	75	150	600
Consultant - mid	150	300	1000
Consultant - senior	300	800	3000

If you are a hiring manager or a BD professional looking for salary advice, please contact the Dalton Handley team on australia@daltonhandley.com. All conversations will be treated in the strictest of confidence.

About us

Dalton Handley is a specialist recruitment and advisory firm, dedicated to sourcing business development, client relationship management, pursuits, marketing and communications talent across B2B services industries, with particular strength in professional services.

With over 30 years' combined experience in specialist recruitment and client-side business development roles, the Dalton Handley team provides tailored advice to both professionals and employers.

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