TRANSITIONS

GAMASUTRA SALARY SURVEY 2014 **The game industry is inherently prone to change, volatility, and disruption. But in 2013, we began to see the chaos of prior years settle down just enough to allow game makers to familiarize themselves with the current reality. Whereas 2012 showed us an industry in flux, 2013 was a year of identifying and dealing with transition. These transitions affected the way game developers make a living.**

How so? Most obviously, we can no longer consider the democratization of game development an emerging trend -- lower-barrier game development is now a fact of life. While this created the opportunity for many people to make and release games, it also invited a flood of games onto app stores and digital PC storefronts, making it difficult for anyone to actually find -- let alone pay you for -- the game you made.

In triple-A game development, 2013 was a year in which salaried employees adjusted to a release slate made up of even fewer games than the year prior, and competed over fewer jobs, as large publishers came to terms with the transition, often resorting to layoffs.

And we also transitioned to a new generation of game consoles, the initial success of which left companies scrambling to serve a market that has proved meaningful even through all of the industry's fluctuations and changes.

So here are some of the top-line statistics: In 2013, **salaried game developers in the U.S. earned an annual salary of $83,060 on average**, which is down slightly compared to last year's $84,337.

Fourteen percent of our respondents said they were laid off during the course of the year, which is 2 percent higher than 2012. But **60 percent said their salary increased between 2012 and 2013**, versus 32 percent who said their pay stayed the same, and 9 percent who said it decreased.

Despite the fact that making video games is hard, **general sentiment surrounding a career in game development is positive**, with 45 percent saying they agree that the game industry is "still a great place to work in" (flat year-on-year), with 19 percent "strongly agreeing" (down from 24 percent). The remaining respondents were in strong disagreement to neutral with that statement (only 3.1 percent said they "strongly disagree," flat from the previous year).

Forty percent said they were satisfied with their current career path, with 18 percent "extremely satisfied," 29 percent "somewhat satisfied," and 13 percent "unsatisfied."

In the write-in answers to the open question, "Do you have anything to say about the game industry in 2013?", answers indicated that game developers are well-aware of the challenges that the industry poses, which include: **long work hours, job instability, shifting business models, the fact that good games are hard to make, and cultural issues such as sexism**.

But underneath most of these worries, there is an undercurrent of enthusiasm that revolves not around salary, but around loving games, and creating games. That's why people stick with this industry.

Of course, enthusiasm doesn't put food on the table. Here's how game developers earned their living, and how much they made, in 2013.
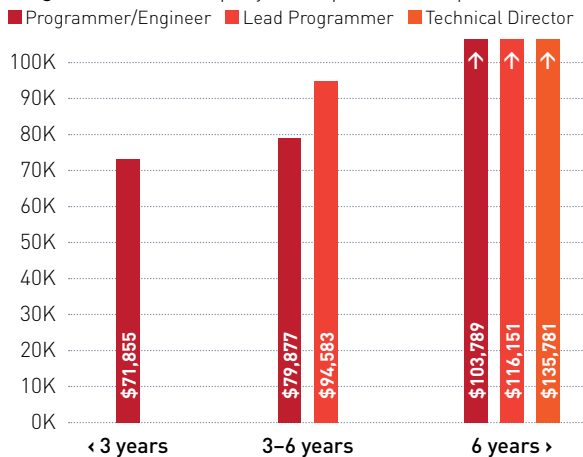
PROGRAMMERS AND ENGINEERS

$93,251
{avg. salary}

Programmers continue to be among the highest-paid in the game industry. The average U.S. programmer's salary in 2013 was $93,251, compared to $92,151 in 2012. That salary is bested by business and legal, and this year, audio (the latter has a much lower sample than programming, and more easily skewed by high-paid outliers).

Average pay for U.S. programmers with less than three years experience was $70,637 in 2013, compared to $74,008 in 2012. Average salary in the 3-6 year experience range was virtually flat at $83,695 from $83,243, and the 6 years-plus category went up, to $113,177 from $111,281.

Canadian programmers averaged $81,660 vs. $70,712 in 2012, while European programmers made $47,312, compared to $43,914 in the prior year.

Out of all job categories, the programming and engineering discipline is the most heavily skewed towards men, who make up 95 percent of total programming respondents.

Programmer salaries per years experience and position

- Programmer/Engineer
- Lead Programmer
- Technical Director

Experience	Programmer/Engineer	Lead Programmer	Technical Director
‹ 3 years	$71,855		
3–6 years	$79,877	$94,583	
6 years ›	$103,789	$116,151	$135,781

ALL PROGRAMMERS AND ENGINEERS

Years experience in the industry

- 23% ‹ 3 yrs $70,637
- 42% 6 yrs › $113,177
- 35% 3–6 yrs $83,695

% receiving additional income	77%
Average additional income	$16,534
Type of additional compensation received	
Annual bonus	46%
Project/title bonus	17%
Royalties	5%
Stock options/equity	31%
Profit sharing	14%
Pension/Employer contribution to 401K	37%
Percent receiving benefits	94%
Type of benefits received	
Medical	93%
Dental	89%
Vision	78%

Gender stats

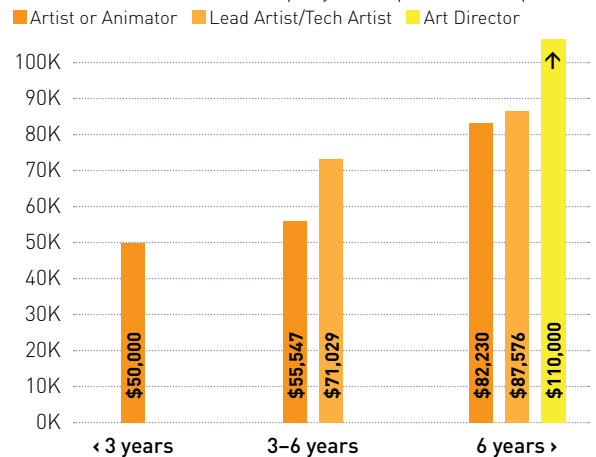| Gender	% Represented	Average Salary
Men	95%	$93,977
Women	5%	$79,318
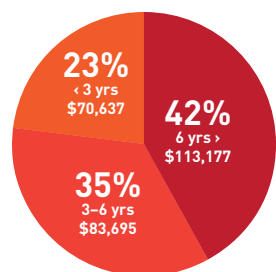
ARTISTS AND ANIMATORS

$74,349
{avg. salary}

Visual artists are the people who make video games appealing to our eyeballs. On average, game artists in the U.S. made $74,349 in 2013, down from $75,009 in the prior year.

Salaries for U.S. visual artists with under three years experience dropped to $50,463 from 2012's $55,682. Visual artists with 3-6 years experience saw an average salary of $59,942, down from $64,619. While less-experienced visual artists' average salaries dropped, professionals with over six years experience saw a boost in average salaries to $86,743, up from last year's $76,653.

In Canada, visual artists made an average of $62,663 in 2013, down slightly from $63,227 in the year prior. Europe-based visual artists averaged $41,280 vs. $40,776 year-over-year.

From a gender perspective, visual arts are heavily skewed toward men, who make up 91 percent of respondents. There's also a significant gender wage gap, which amounts to over $20,000.

Artist and Animator salaries per years experience and position

- Artist or Animator
- Lead Artist/Tech Artist
- Art Director

Experience	Artist or Animator	Lead Artist/Tech Artist	Art Director
‹ 3 years	$50,000		
3–6 years	$55,547	$71,029	
6 years ›	$82,230	$87,576	$110,000

ALL ARTISTS AND ANIMATORS

Years experience in the industry

- 10% ‹ 3 yrs $50,463
- 33% 3–6 yrs $59,942
- 57% 6 yrs › $86,743

% receiving additional income	76%
Average additional income	$15,192
Type of additional compensation received	
Annual bonus	35%
Project/title bonus	25%
Royalties	8%
Stock options/equity	23%
Profit sharing	13%
Pension/Employer contribution to 401K	37%
Percent receiving benefits	97%
Type of benefits received	
Medical	94%
Dental	91%
Vision	80%

Gender stats

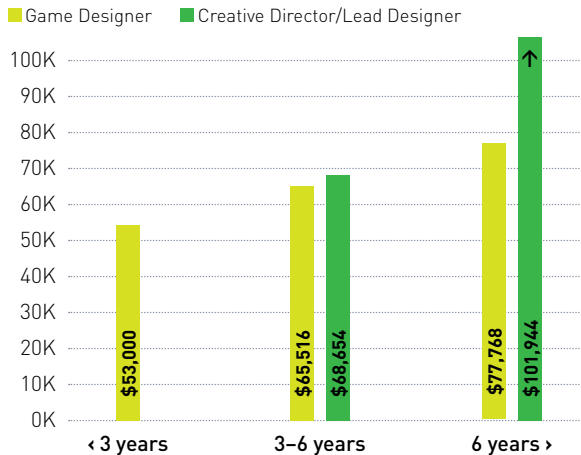| Gender	% Represented	Average Salary
Men	91%	$76,054
Women	9%	$55,909
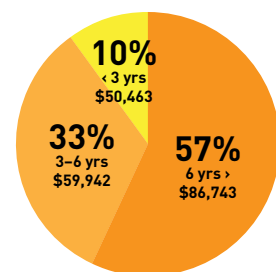
GAME DESIGNERS

$73,864
{avg. salary}

Game designers hold perhaps the most romanticized career path in all of video game development. But 2013 showed that their pay only outranked one discipline: quality assurance.

On average, a salaried U.S.-based game designer made $73,864 in 2013, down from $75,065 in 2012. For designers with less than three years experience, the average salary in 2013 was $50,625, down from $55,313 the year prior. Designers in the 3-6 year range made $65,385 on average, up from $63,639, while designers with over six years of experience averaged $86,563, down from $92,583 in 2012.

Canada-based designers made $60,435, up from $56,576 in the prior year, and European designers averaged $39,626, down from $43,600 year-over-year.

Gender balance shifted 2 percent year-over-year in favor of women, who made up 13 percent of all game designers polled. As for the gender wage gap, men were paid about $4,500 more on average in the U.S.
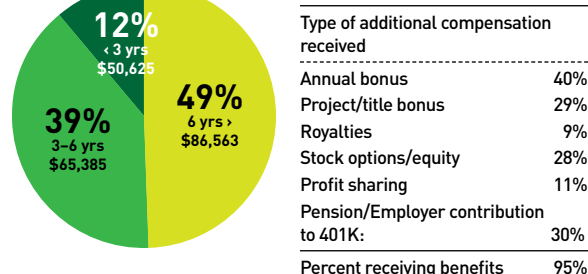
Game Designer salaries per years experience and position

■ Game Designer ■ Creative Director/Lead Designer

	‹ 3 years	3–6 years	6 years ›
Game Designer	$53,000	$65,516	$77,768
Creative Director/Lead Designer		$68,654	$101,944

ALL GAME DESIGNERS

Years experience in the industry

- 12% ‹ 3 yrs $50,625
- 39% 3–6 yrs $65,385
- 49% 6 yrs › $86,563

% receiving additional income	77%
Average additional income	$13,860

Type of additional compensation received

Annual bonus	40%
Project/title bonus	29%
Royalties	9%
Stock options/equity	28%
Profit sharing	11%
Pension/Employer contribution to 401K:	30%
Percent receiving benefits	95%

Type of benefits received

Medical	95%
Dental	93%
Vision	85%

Gender stats

Gender	% Represented	Average Salary
Men	87%	$74,448
Women	13%	$70,000

PRODUCERS

$82,286
{avg. salary}

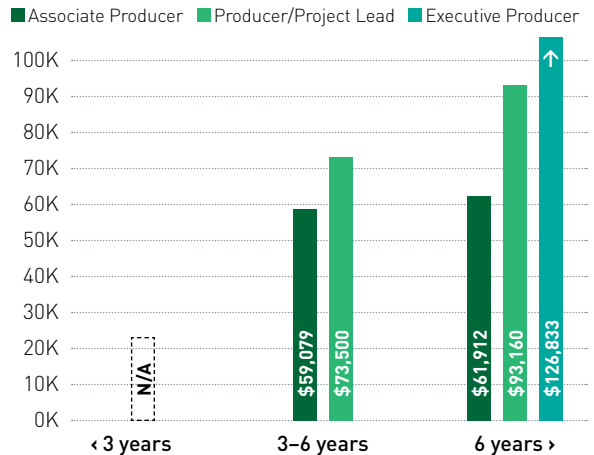A good producer is essential in keeping a project focused and on track.

Producers in the U.S. averaged an annual salary of $82,286 in 2013, down from $84,127 in 2012. Per years of experience, producer salaries were down across the board. Those with under three years of experience averaged $50,192, compared to $63,472 in 2012, a $13,000 drop.

Producers with 3-6 years experience averaged salaries of $70,833 in 2013, down from $77,077. Those with more than six years experience made $92,853 on average, down from $95,976 in 2012.

In Canada, producers averaged $68,000 annually, down from $76,875. Europe-based producers made $56,274 on average vs. $54,167 the prior year.

The producer discipline had the highest percentage of women, who made up 22 percent of all salaried U.S.-based producers who responded to the survey. They were still paid $8,400 less on average, however.
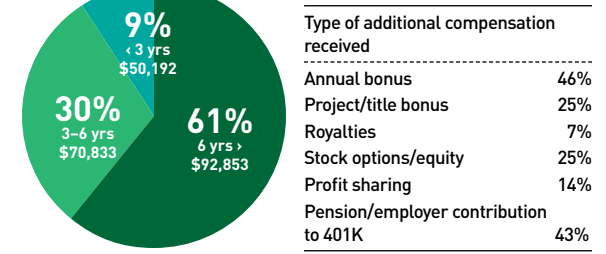
Producer salaries per years experience and position

■ Associate Producer ■ Producer/Project Lead ■ Executive Producer

	‹ 3 years	3–6 years	6 years ›
Associate Producer	N/A	$59,079	$61,912
Producer/Project Lead		$73,500	$93,160
Executive Producer			$126,833

ALL PRODUCERS

Years experience in the industry

- 9% ‹ 3 yrs $50,192
- 30% 3–6 yrs $70,833
- 61% 6 yrs › $92,853

% receiving additional income	83%
Average additional income	$12,798

Type of additional compensation received

Annual bonus	46%
Project/title bonus	25%
Royalties	7%
Stock options/equity	25%
Profit sharing	14%
Pension/employer contribution to 401K	43%
Percent receiving benefits:	95%

Type of benefits received

Medical	94%
Dental	91%
Vision	86%

Gender stats

Gender	% Represented	Average Salary
Men	78%	$84,151
Women	22%	$75,726

## AUDIO PROFESSIONALS

$95,682
{avg. salary}

A good audio person can turn a good game into a great one. There are actually relatively few salaried audio professionals, as a lot of these jobs are contracted. That means we didn't have many respondents for this category — even less than last year.

However, full-time audio professionals in the U.S. averaged $95,682, up from $81,543 (again, there was a smaller pool of respondents, so the results are more easily skewed).

Audio professionals with 3-6 years experience averaged $60,227, down from $68,167, while those with over six years experience earned $118,750 on average, up from $98,846. Unfortunately, we didn't gather enough responses for entry-level salaried audio professionals. We also didn't have enough respondents to accurately determine Canadian and European averages.

Of all U.S. salaried audio professionals polled, 91 percent were men. This discipline saw the highest average additional income on top of salary, at more than $32,000.

Audio Professional salaries per years experience and position
■ Sound/Audio Director

	‹ 3 years	3–6 years	6 years ›
	N/A	N/A	$109,500
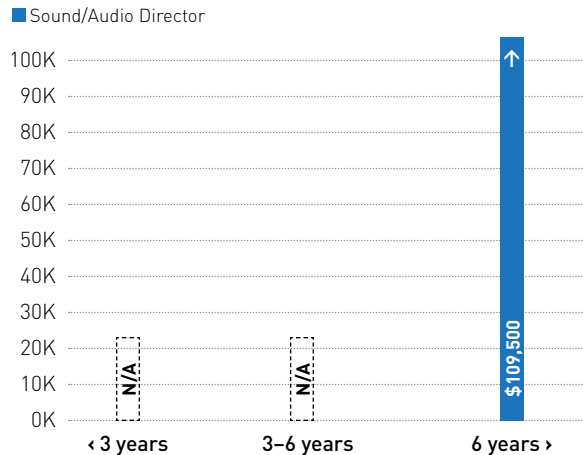
ALL AUDIO DEVELOPERS

Years experience in the industry

6%
‹ 3 yrs
$60,000*

33%
3–6 yrs
$60,227

61%
6 yrs ›
$118,750

% receiving additional income	84%
Average additional income	$32,135

Type of additional compensation received

Annual bonus	41%
Project/title bonus	22%
Royalties	19%
Stock options/equity	13%
Profit sharing	31%
Pension/Employer contribution to 401K	41%
Percent receiving benefits	94%

Type of benefits received

Medical	94%
Dental	91%
401K/Retirement	82%

Gender stats

Gender	% Represented	Average Salary
Men	91%	$98,500
Women	9%	$67,500

QA TESTERS

$54,833
{avg. salary}

Quality assurance plays a vital role in players' experience with a game, but it is perennially the lowest-paid job category in the game industry. The average salary for a QA professional was $54,833 in 2013, which is actually up from $48,611 in 2012 (but still lower than all other disciplines).

QA professionals with 3-6 years experience averaged $48,426, up from $44,167 in the year prior. Those with over six years experience made $62,885 on average, down from $65,000. We weren't able to garner enough responses for full-time entry-level QA.

QA staff in Canada averaged $36,500, vs. $41,731 in the year prior. Europe-based QA staff made $31,346 on average, compared to $31,000 in 2012.

Men made up 88 percent of all salaried U.S.-based QA staff polled. This discipline was the only one in which women were paid more than their male counterparts, by more than $2,200.

QA Tester salaries per years experience and position
■ Tester ■ QA Lead

	‹ 3 years	3–6 years	6 years ›
Tester	N/A	$38,833	
QA Lead		$60,417	$65,500
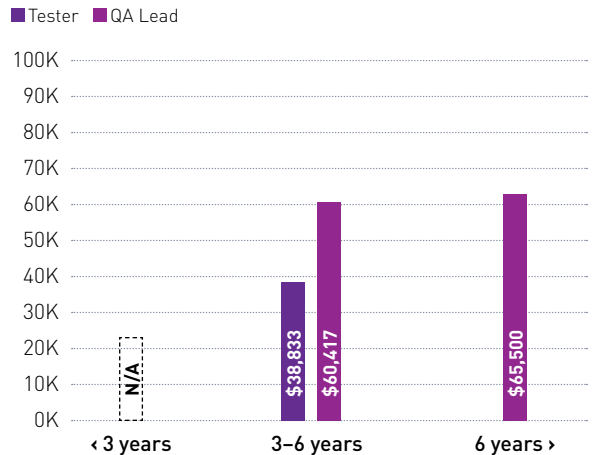
ALL QA TESTERS

Years experience in the industry

12%
‹ 3 yrs
$49,643*

43%
6 yrs ›
$62,885

45%
3–6 yrs
$48,426

% receiving additional income	72%
Average additional income	$7,904

Type of additional compensation received

Annual bonus	43%
Project/title bonus	14%
Royalties	5%
Stock options/equity	26%
Profit sharing	10%
Pension/employer contribution to 401K plan	35%
Percent receiving benefits:	90%

Type of benefits received

Medical	88%
Dental	86%
401K/Retirement	83%

Gender stats

Gender	% Represented	Average Salary
Men	88%	$54,576
Women*	12%	$56,786

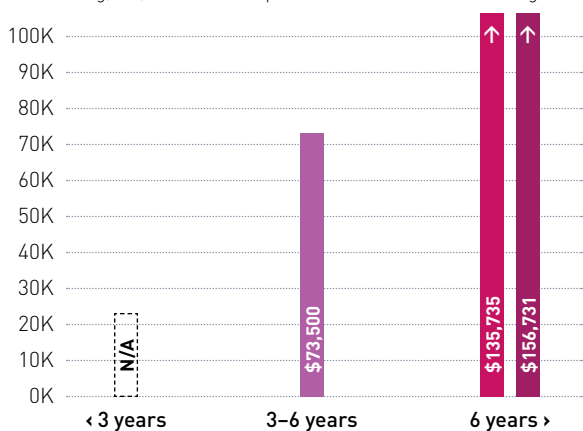# BUSINESS AND MANAGEMENT

$101,572
{avg. salary}

This category includes the people whose job it is to keep a company organized and, in the best scenarios, financially healthy. This includes people who are executives, executive managers, community managers, legal staff, human resources, IT, content acquisition and licensing, and general administration staff.

This is typically the highest-paid discipline, and 2013 followed tradition. The average salary for business professionals in the game industry is $101,572, down slightly from $103,934 in 2012.

Business professionals with less than three years experience made $69,853 on average in 2013, compared to $67,348 in 2012. Those with 3-6 years experience averaged $81,042, down from $85,081 from a year prior, while businesspeople with over six years experience made $120,000 on average, down from $128,819 in 2012.
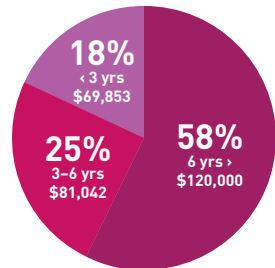
Canada's game industry businesspeople averaged $81,250 in 2013, up from $78,750. Europe-based business staff made $57,500, down significantly from last year's average of $72,652.

Business/Management salaries per years experience and position

■ Marketing, PR, sales ■ CEO/president ■ VP/executive manager

Experience	‹ 3 years	3–6 years	6 years ›
Marketing, PR, sales	N/A	$73,500	
CEO/president			$135,735
VP/executive manager			$156,731

ALL BUSINESS AND MANAGEMENT PEOPLES

Years experience in the industry

- 18% ‹ 3 yrs $69,853
- 25% 3–6 yrs $81,042
- 58% 6 yrs › $120,000

Gender stats

Gender	% Represented	Average Salary
Men	79%	$104,513
Women	21%	$90,250

% receiving additional income:	80%
Average additional income:	$27,246

Type of additional compensation received

Annual bonus	49%
Project title/bonus	10%
Royalties	5%
Stock options/equity	33%
Profit sharing	20%
Pension/employer contribution to 401K:	25%
Percent receiving benefits:	91%

Type of benefits received

Medical	91%
Dental	80%
401K/Retirement	71%

{AVERAGE SALARY} BY U.S. REGION

(across all levels of experience and disciplines)

West	$89,559
Midwest	$70,857
South	$74,838
East	$76,677
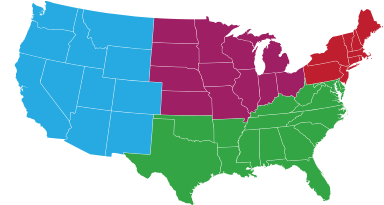
{TOP 10 STATES} WITH HIGHEST AVERAGE SALARIES

(across all levels of experience, excluding states with low sample size)

		AVERAGE SALARY	PERCENT WHO OWN HOMES	AVG. SALARY OF HOMEOWNERS
1	California	$91,602	29%	$112,301
2	Washington	$90,217	41%	$105,669
3	North Carolina	$88,214	48%	$98,000
4	New York	$82,738	17%	$108,214
5	Nevada	$79,286	36%	$106,000
6	Texas	$79,098	55%	$90,858
7	Maryland	$78,851	32%	$84,583
8	Illinois	$77,500	46%	$88,409
9	Massachusetts	$73,500	38%	$88,289
10	Georgia	$73,354	34%	$99,642

{AVERAGE SALARY} BY U.S. REGION BY DISCIPLINE

	EAST	MIDWEST	SOUTH	WEST
Programming	$84,460	$76,538	$81,882	$99,851
Art and Animating	$72,236	$68,928	$64,705	$79,948
Game Design	$72,717	$64,318	$64,939	$77,906
Production	$78,571	$69,500	$84,464	$83,478
Audio	$58,500	$75,000	$67,500	$112,500
QA	$52,500	$60,833	$41,388	$58,310
Business/Mgmt.	$96,000	$66,785	$95,700	$109,681

{AVERAGE SALARY} FOR HOMEOWNERS VS. NON-HOMEOWNERS BY U.S. REGION

	EAST	MIDWEST	SOUTH	WEST
Homeowners	$89,100	$85,166	$89,896	$106,609
Non-Homeowners	$68,636	$57,631	$60,540	$79,315

{AVERAGE SALARIES} U.S., CANADA, AND EUROPE

(across all levels of experience, by discipline, given in USD)

	U.S.	CANADA*	EUROPE**
Programmer	$93,251	$81,660	$47,312
Art and Animation	$74,349	$62,663	$41,280
Game Design	$73,864	$60,434	$39,626
Production	$82,286	$68,000	$56,273
Audio	$95,682	$83,928	$66,666
QA	$54,833	$36,500	$27,500
Business	$101,572	$81,250	$57,500

*Most Canadian respondents were from Quebec (42%), British Columbia (28%), Ontario (20%), and Alberta (5%).
**Most European respondents were from the United Kingdom (21%), Germany (11%), France (9%), Spain (8%), and Sweden (6%).

THE INDIE REPORT

This is the fifth year for the indie developer salary report, in which we survey non-salaried game developers. 2013 was a mixed bag overall, with some salaries up, some down year-on-year.

The drop in solo salaries is particularly alarming, while the rise in indie team salaries seems promising -- but be careful in making assumptions about this data. We've found that average indie salaries are prone to big fluctuations over the years. Practice the fundamentals of good game development, and adjust for a market that is noisier than it has ever been. Here are the highlights from the indie survey*:

INDIES BY JOB FUNCTION

- 28% QA
- 24% ART
- 15% DESIGN
- 12% OTHER
- 11% PROGRAMMING
- 9% PRODUCTION
- 1% AUDIO

CONTRACTORS BY JOB FUNCTION

- 21% QA
- 20% ART
- 17% PROGRAMMING
- 16% AUDIO
- 10% OTHER
- 7% DESIGN
- 5% PRODUCTION
- 3% WRITING/SCENARIO
- 1% DEV AT PUBLISHER

1/ SOLO INDIE SALARIES WERE DOWN
49%

Solo indie developers earned an average income of $11,812 in 2013, down 49 percent from 2012's $23,130 average. This drop may be attributed to the fact that most anyone can make and release a game if they want to, from experienced full-time game developers to part-time hobbyists with less experience with the market.

2/ MEMBERS OF AN INDIE TEAM EARNED MORE INCOME
161%

Individual members of an indie team fared better than solos, earning an average of $50,833, up 161% from 2012's $19,487. Of course, more overhead for a team doesn't automatically equate to making more money, but there is something to be said for having more hands (and brains) on a project.

3/ GAME SALES MADE UP MOST INDIES' GAME DEV INCOME
57%
27%

Most indie game developers -- 57 percent -- said they did not have any additional game dev income outside of game sales. Meanwhile, 27 percent said they made additional income through contract work.
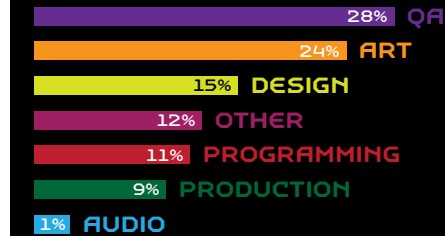
Other sources of income came from promotions (including non-game DLC and other content), sponsorship opportunities, awards or grants, crowdfunding, or other methods. Less than 6 percent of respondents said they made income in any of these other categories.
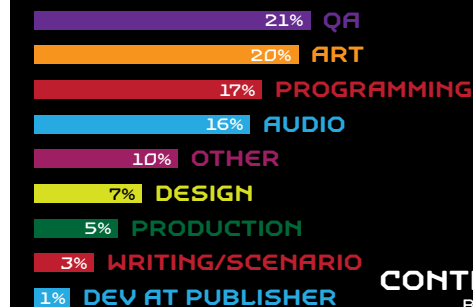
4/ ONLY A FEW INDIES BRAVED THE CROWDFUNDING ROUTE
5%

Crowdfunding is a hot topic, but only 5 percent of indie respondents had collected any income from crowdfunding. Of the very small sample who said they made crowdfunding money (only 17 responses), one collected over $200,000.

5/ LESS THAN ONE IN 10 INDIES MADE SALES ON PAID ALPHAS
8%

A small percentage of respondents -- 8 percent -- said they made money from paid alpha sales. Nearly half of the developers who made money from paid alpha sales said those sales comprised 96-100 percent of their total game sales in 2013.

6/ MOST INDIE GAME DEVS MADE...NOT SO MUCH

Fifty-seven percent of indie game developers (including both solo indies and members of indie teams) made under $500 in game sales. On the other end of the spectrum, 2 percent made over $200,000 in game sales.

*Results only include developers who made more than $10,000 in 2013, and were capped at $200,000, unless otherwise noted.

{AVERAGE SALARIES} BY EDUCATION LEVEL AND DISCIPLINE

(across all levels of experience)

	PROGRAMMING	ART	DESIGN	PRODUCTION	AUDIO	QA	BUSINESS
High school/GED	$97,500	$95,000	$71,500	$67,500	N/A	$53,750	$127,500
Some College	$103,438	$79,250	$80,833	$90,109	$113,750	$54,167	$90,500
Associates Degree	$98,056	$72,000	$78,214	$90,000	$87,500	$52,500	$45,833
Bachelors Degree	$89,422	$71,379	$68,125	$81,397	$80,735	$53,611	$95,872
Some Graduate	$99,500	$83,611	$100,000	$90,500	N/A	$32,500	$157,500
Masters Degree	$97,763	$88,000	$70,692	$75,962	$85,833	$65,000	$106,000
Some Doctoral	$97,500	N/A	$113,750	$87,500	N/A	N/A	$202,500
Doctoral Degree	$102,500	N/A	$122,500	$82,500	N/A	$42,500	$123,750

THE GENDER GAP

The gender pay gap is once again a hot topic in the world of U.S. politics, and in the world of video game development, the issue has reared its head.

According to our salary survey, men working U.S.-based salaried jobs in the game industry made $85,074 on average in 2013, whereas women made an average of $72,882 (excluding students and educators).

U.S. overall, women make 77 cents on every dollar that men make, according figures from a 2012 Census Bureau survey.

The chart below shows the pay gap in various game industry positions. In 2013, game design had the smallest gap, with women making 94 percent of what men do on average in the U.S. Visual artists had the largest, with women making 74 percent of men on average.

Research beyond the realm of video games has examined possible causes for the gender wage gap. One of the prevailing theories, reported by Pew Research, is that women are more likely to experience career interruption than men, as a higher percentage of women take time off to care for family. Such career interruptions could have an impact on longer-term earnings.

More flexibility in working conditions and hours could hold the key to further closing the wage gap, and perhaps have a greater effect than employee revolt or anti-discrimination laws, experts say.

Harvard University labor professor Claudia Goldin said in a recent paper, "The gender gap in pay would be considerably reduced and might vanish altogether if firms did not have an incentive to disproportionately reward individuals who labored long hours and worked particular hours."

The government this year has made the gender wage gap a sticking point for U.S. politics. In April, President Obama backed directives meant to help close the wage gap by signing legislation that would make it easier for workers to sue companies for disparate pay.

AVERAGE SALARY

MEN	$85,074
WOMEN	$72,882

That means on average, women made 86 cents on every dollar that men made in the U.S. game industry.

While it's still an issue that needs to be fixed, the game industry gender wage gap is smaller than the national average: In the

PENNIES ON THE DOLLAR

AUDIO
$1.00
$0.68

BUSINESS
$1.00
$0.86

DESIGN
$1.00
$0.94

PRODUCTION
$1.00
$0.90

PROGRAMMING
$1.00
$0.84

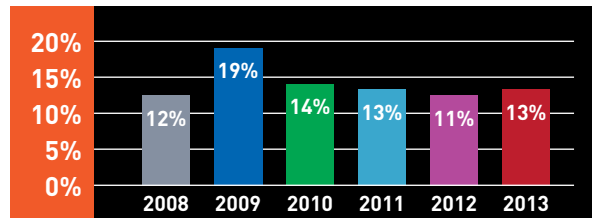**QA**
$1.00
$1.04

ART
$1.00
$0.73

■ MEN ■ WOMEN
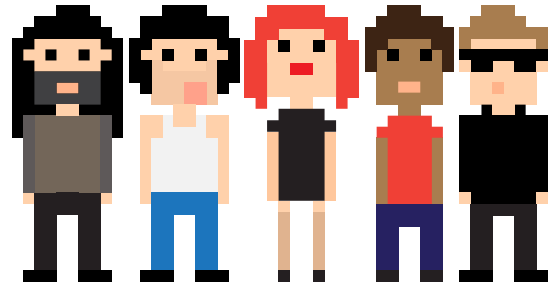
{LAYOFF RATES}

While previous years have seen a downward trend in layoffs, 2013 saw a slight increase.

Fourteen percent of respondents said they were laid off in 2013, up from 12 percent in 2012. Still, layoffs in the game industry are 6 percent lower than 2009, when 20 percent of those polled said they had been laid off that year.


Of developers who were laid off, 59 percent eventually found new employment at a game studio or publisher, flat from 2012. The next-most popular post-layoff move was to primarily go into consulting, with 22 percent choosing that path, up from 16 percent last year.

Sixteen percent moved into indie game development (up 2 percent), while 10 percent said they haven't found new work in the game industry since they were laid off (down 2 percent).
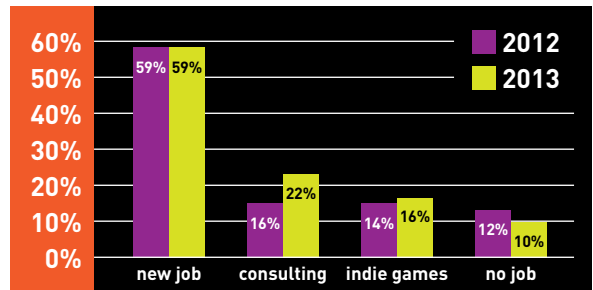
The most popular ways to find a job in 2013 were via referral (28 percent), job postings (18 percent), being recruited directly by the company (12 percent), and sending in a resume (12 percent).
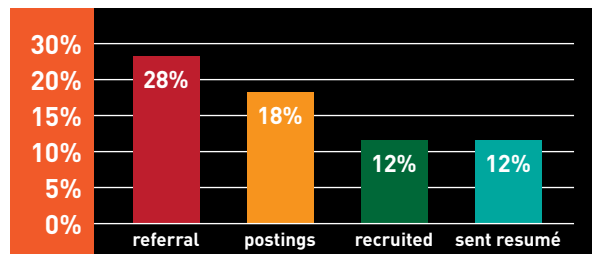
SALARYSURVEYCOMMENTS

SALARY

❝ [The industry] needs to consider actually paying employees a wage that competes with other industries, as well as overtime.❞

❝ I've left the games industry due to low pay and long hours.❞

❝ It's harder than ever to make a living, as clients expect to pay less for their games.❞

❝ Pay is still terrible, and based on the attitude of, 'There are plenty of people who want your job.'❞

❝ Pay with larger companies seems to be going up again, finally!❞

❝ We need unions. Employees remain under-represented and underpaid.❞

BALANCE

❝ Work-life balance has never been worse for production teams. It's especially bad for 3D and engine programmers (the actual people that ship the game at the end).❞

❝ It's imperative that companies… [be] flexible if employees need to be there for our families.❞

❝ The future is bright. Work-life balance has improved dramatically; sales are in constant growth; digital distribution and a prolific indie scene democratize development even while AAA budgets continue to grow.❞

❝ The games industry has still a lot of learning to do when it comes to treating employees as creative humans: crunch time destroys the work-life balance and in the end kills creativity.❞

DIVERSITY

❝ The industry needs more diversity…and a worldwide workforce from all backgrounds.❞

❝ Diversity of audiences is still largely not reflected in game content.❞

❝ I've been very pleased with the issues of diversity in games finally being shouted from the mountaintops. #1ReasontoBe really empowered me this year.❞

❝ The games industry is a truly vibrant and diverse place. … That said, there are some very close-minded people. The games industry, and gaming in general, doesn't need that.❞

❝ The industry is definitely becoming more accepting of women, which is awesome and speaks towards a bright future of diverse and interesting games I think.❞

❝ Still way too few women in the biz.❞

AAA

❝ The lowering of barriers… makes me super excited for what new cool things will come out of the industry. It also makes it a little scary for corporate gaming companies, for which I am currently employed.❞

❝ There are seemingly less opportunities in AAA development right now but low-end, indie and mobile seem to be picking up the slack.❞

❝ 2013 seemed like one of the worst years for company closures of traditional, "big box," triple-A studios….We have to

perform like rockstars but are definitely not getting paid for it.❞

❝ Triple-A can kill the passion of people. We have to take care of how we work big projects.❞

❝ Triple-A is not the future for us grunts. We are losing authorship as these games grow larger, and we suffer the most when they fail.❞

❝ Despite knowing how unlikely it is, I would love the focus to shift back to AAA.❞

INDIES

❝ For me, it is hard to earn income as an indie.❞

❝ Being an indie developer has never been more challenging due to the sheer volume of indie developers trying to gain the attention of the same consumer audience.❞

❝ More indie development opportunities are available than ever before!❞

❝ The game industry is a great yet scary place for indies right now. There have never been more opportunities to get involved, but there has also never been more competition.❞

❝ Large studios are not nimble enough for today's industry. That said, it's never been more

difficult for an indie to get recognized. More competition, more requirements, more initial investment. This should be interesting.❞

❝ Indie is king. Down with AAA. lol jk jk.❞

SO HAPPY

❝ It is still an amazing thing to see a product that so many people are excited about come together over the products life time! With so many great games coming out these days, the game industry is a great place to be!❞

❝ The expansion of the games industry into regions such as India, China and Brazil is exciting.❞

❝ Beyond the traditional next-gen console shift, mobile platforms have changed everything, making the games business a whole new world of opportunity. Love it!❞

❝ 2013 brought about changes in our industry, in terms of business and cultural diversity. With these main changes, and subsequent subtle changes, the games industry was, and will continue to be a fantastic industry to work in.❞

❝ I absolutely love the games industry and cannot see myself working for any other industry.❞

{METHODOLOGY}

With the help of research firm Audience Insights, we sent email invitations to Game Developers Conference 2014 attendees, and Gamasutra members in May 2014 inviting them to participate in our annual salary survey.

Although we received well over 4,000 unique responses worldwide, not all who participated in this survey provided sufficient compensation information to be included in the findings. Among participants, 6.5 percent were disqualified as not having derived their income directly from the game industry.

We also excluded cases in which the compensation was given as less than $10,000 USD, and the highest salary range was limited to $200,000 USD to prevent a limited number of outliers from distorting the true central tendency of the computed average salaries in each category. We further excluded records missing key demographic and classification information.

While there were participants from all parts of the world, this report focuses primarily on U.S. compensation, plus additional consolidated figures for respondents from Canada and Europe. The total sample reflected in the data presented for U.S. is 1,246; for Canada 292; and for Europe 573. For other global regions there was insufficient sample size to include in the report.

The sample represented in our salary survey can be projected to the overall game developer community with a margin of error, for the U.S., of plus or minus 2.6 percent at the 95 percent confidence level. The margin of error increases for specific subgroups reported within this community.