



PRESS RELEASE

MFA CENSUS REVEALS POPULATION BOUNCEBACK, STRONG DEMAND FOR TALENT

20 January 2022: The MFA Industry Census has revealed media agency employee numbers have bounced back from Covid-19 job losses with a massive 19.1% increase in the industry population, and higher-than-normal vacancy levels.

Completed by all MFA member agencies in September 2021, the Census shows Australian media agencies currently employ 4,412 people – more than ever before – compared to 3,703 people in 2020 and 3,902 in 2019. Even with this growth of 19.1%, the industry is experiencing a vacancy rate of 12% – double the normal levels of around 6% vacancy.

Vacancies are being driven by demand for Implementation, Client Service, Performance and Programmatic roles, reflecting the increasing importance of automation and data in our industry. Over the past five years, the number of roles in Analytics has seen the steepest increase, while 54% of vacant roles are Manager and Executive level with 2-5 years' experience. If all roles were filled, the media agency population would be close to 5,000 people.

Not surprisingly, industry churn in the 12 months to 30 September 2021 increased to 34% – from 23.3% in 2020, when many people chose to remain in their existing roles in the face of Covid-19 uncertainty.

The number of women leaders dropped marginally by one percentage point, with 43% of all management roles held by women. This continues to be higher than the

Australian workforce average of women holding 32.5% of key management positions, as recorded by the Federal Government's Workplace Gender Equality Agency ([WGEA](#)). Similarly, the pay gap between men and women's average annual salary remained 3%, significantly better than the [Australian average](#) of 14.2%.

Following a pause in 2020 on hiring entry-level staff, the Census recorded an increase in the number of media agency employees with less than five years' experience, now making up 45% of the industry. 27% have six to 10 years' experience, and 15% have 11 to 15 years' experience.

Overall, 61% of the industry is made up of women, with an average age of 32.3 years old (up from 31.9 in 2020). The average industry experience is now 8.2 years, down from 8.7 years the year prior, while agency tenure is 3.6 years (versus 3.8 year the year prior).

View an infographic of the Census data on the [MFA website](#).

Linda Wong, Director People at the MFA, said: "The initial contraction in the media agency population in response to the Covid-19 pandemic is well behind us, with the biggest growth in population ever recorded by the MFA Census in 20-plus years of measurement.

"The pressing challenge for the industry now is the lack of talent to fill positions, compounded by the global talent shortage. In 2022, I expect our industry's focus to remain on recruitment and retention, and ensuring all new recruits are supported to thrive and grow."

MFA CEO Sophie Madden added: "Completed by every single MFA member agency, the annual Census provides an important and accurate snapshot of the health of media agencies, and we're happy to see the industry tracking well after two particularly challenging years. The Census reinforces the severity of the global talent shortage, but I am confident we can work together to address this pressing issue through training and development and supporting our people, and improved ways of working."

The Media Communications Agency Industry Census is free to MFA members.

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ABOUT THE MFA

Established in 1997, the MFA is the peak body representing media communication agencies to government, industry, media owners and the general public. The MFA membership represents over 90% of all media agency placed media billings in Australia.

<https://www.mediafederation.org.au/>