

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**NOTE:** This news release is a summary extract of content from the 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter 2026 editions of Foote Partners' *IT Skills Demand and Pay Trends Report* and *IT Skills and Certification Pay Volatility Index*, two market intelligence trend reports updated every 3 months from data contributed by HR departments at 5,112 U.S. and Canadian employers. They contain IT jobs, skills, and certifications data trends published in the firm's *IT Skills and Certifications Pay Index™* and deep-dive benchmark analysis from Foote Partners' research group.

**HEADLINES FROM OUR 2<sup>nd</sup> QUARTER 2026 IT SKILLS AND CERTIFICATIONS RESEARCH UPDATE:**

- Q1 2026 saw a sharp surge in cash pay premiums for 663 IT certifications—the [strongest quarterly jump in ten years](#). Meanwhile the average market value for 746 [noncertified IT skills in Q1](#) did just the opposite, [posting its fourth consecutive quarterly decline and biggest quarterly loss since 2002](#).
- Still, [134 noncertified IT skills are earning workers median bonuses equivalent to between 15% and 24% of base pay on average](#), and [44 IT certifications are averaging a much lower 10% to 15% cash bonuses](#)
- [Is pay volatility a factor? It's been spiking](#). Findings from our *IT Skills and Certifications Pay Volatility Index* show 417 (of 1,409, or about 30%) skills and certifications changed market value in 1Q 2026, [the highest pay volatility since later in 2024](#).
- As AI has shifted from experimental to operational, our AI cash pay premiums coverage has ballooned to 136 certified and noncertified AI related skills from 57 two years ago. [Twenty-six AI related certifications are significantly outperforming their 110 noncertified AI skill counterparts](#): pay premiums have risen nearly 4% in the past year compared to a 4% decline for noncertified AI skills. [But noncertified AI skills still earn dramatically higher bonuses than AI certifications](#)—averaging the equivalent of 14% of base salary compared to 8.5% for AI certifications.

April 28, 2026 – Vero Beach, FL. Extra pay awarded by employers to talented tech professionals for **663 IT certifications**—also known as cash pay premiums increased substantially overall in the first quarter of 2026. This is according to Foote Partners' long-running **IT Skills and Certifications Pay Index™** (ITSCPI) of cash pay premiums for 1,409 certified and non-certified IT skills. For **746 non-certified IT skills**, the story was opposite: a 2.2% decline in Q1 2026 following overall declines in the last two quarters of 2025.

A key to these performance trends is understanding recent pay volatility trend findings. There's an important difference here between certified and noncertified IT skills: while the market value of non-certified IT skills is fundamentally determined by employers setting the market price while consuming them, supply/demand and pay for IT certifications are largely vendor-driven and influenced by promotional marketing. Therefore, it is important to keep both factors in mind when analyzing the pay performance of skills and certifications in the marketplace.

Until recently, according to Foote Partners' latest **IT Skills and Certifications Pay Volatility Index**, cash pay premiums for certifications have been significantly less volatile than non-certified IT skills over the past year. This has recently changed, with IT certifications spiking to a level not seen since late 2024: nearly 26% changing market value in Q1 2026 compared to only 18% the prior calendar quarter. By contrast, pay volatility for noncertified IT skills declined by three points compared to the prior quarter, and the lowest since 4Q 2024. (see Fig. 1 & 2)

Moreover, for the past four years, the gap in average cash pay premium between noncertified and certified IT skills has remained the widest in nearly two decades—with noncertified IT skills earning bonus pay equal to a nearly 3% of base salary equivalent more than IT certifications. But more recently this gap has slight narrowed as noncertified skills have suddenly averaged market value losses for the past four consecutive calendar quarters. This and other findings come from quarterly compensation data updates provided by 5,112 private and public-sector employers in 83 U.S. and Canadian cities who regularly share their IT compensation data with us about their 500,891 technology professionals.



Fig. 1

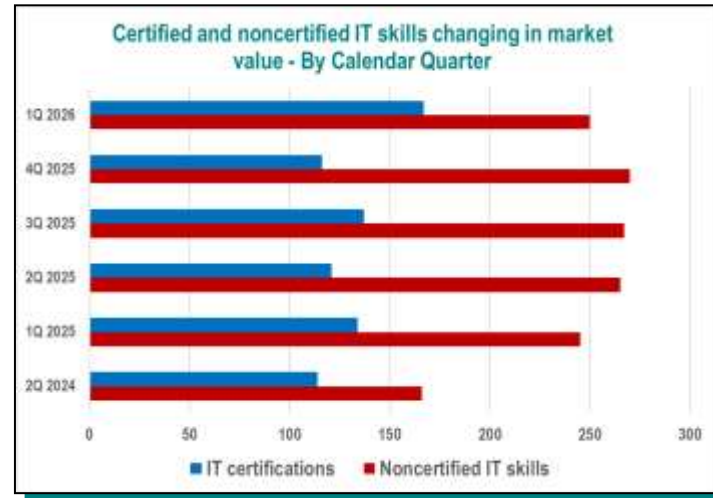
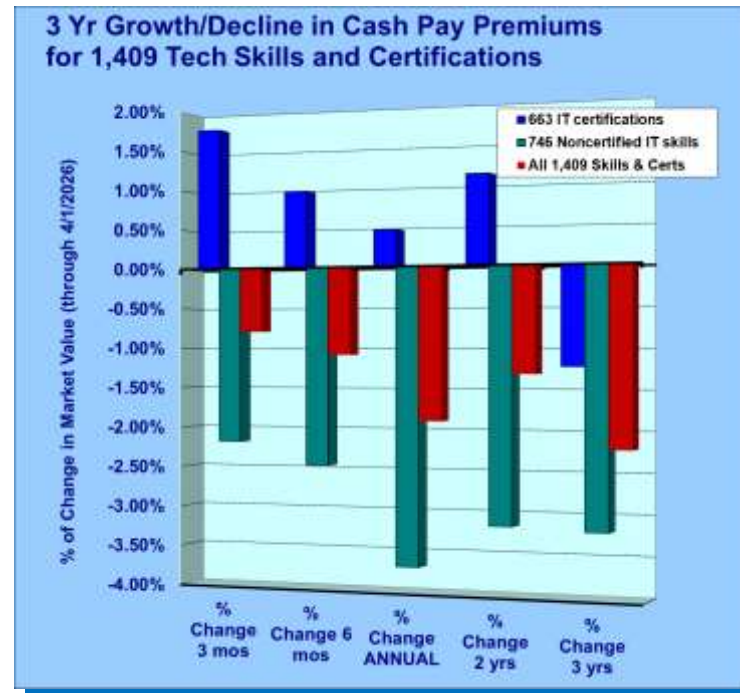


Fig. 2 Source: Foote Partners [IT Skills & Certifications Pay Index™](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter 2026 data

“Our data is showing this new resilience in IT certifications being driven primarily by infrastructure and security certifications, and by certifications in architecture and process areas. The emergence of AI is forcing a huge changes in systems, networks, and especially in cybersecurity disciplines and vendors are aggressively marketing their tools and solutions,” explains David Foote, chief analyst and research officer of Foote Partners. “Right now there are [134 AI-related skills and certifications with average cash pay premium bonuses ranging from an equivalent of 3% to 23% of base salary](#). We are anticipating a surge in AI-related certifications in the next few years and vendors will be spending a lot of money marketing their products in what is an increasingly competitive marketplace for AI technologies.”

“With AI having shifted from experimental to operational, paying IT talent is becoming a new ballgame” notes Foote. “Employers are thinking about jobs more as *tasks*, not titles: tasks that can be done entirely by an AI agent/robot, tasks that will be done *with* a human working with an AI agent/robot, and finally, tasks that are uniquely human. Skills and certifications are mapped directly onto each of these three task categories, with new skills and skill combinations required by each task. And those are constantly changing. The upheaval we’ve been seeing in bonuses for noncertified IT skills is evidence that employers are reassessing which skills they believe are the most critical going forward.”

**Pay Performance, 3/12/24/24/36 months  
 Certified vs. Noncertified Tech Skills**  
 (116,563 professionals, data through 4/1/2026)



Source: Foote Partners, *IT Skills and Certifications Pay Index™* 1Q2023 – 1Q2026 datasets)

## HIGHEST PAYING IT CERTIFICATIONS AND NON-CERTIFIED IT SKILLS – Through April 1, 2026

These IT certifications and non-certified IT skills are at the top the list of highest paying cash premiums based on data shared by 5,112 US and Canadian employers from January 1, 2026 to April 1, 2026.

With the average cash pay premium for 746 non-certified IT skills being the equivalent of 9.3% of base salary, employers are paying premiums ranging from 20% to 24% on average for these non-certified IT skills. Listed in alphabetical order.

- ✓ AI Agents
- ✓ AI Engineering
- ✓ AI Productivity
- ✓ Apache Ignite
- ✓ Artificial Intelligence for IT Operations (AIOps)
- ✓ Artificial Intelligence Model Optimization
- ✓ COBIT
- ✓ Cryptography (encryption, VPN, SSL/TLS, Hybrids)
- ✓ Data Architecture
- ✓ Data Strategy
- ✓ DataOps
- ✓ Ethereum
- ✓ Event-Driven Architecture
- ✓ Flink
- ✓ IT Governance
- ✓ Large Language Model Optimization(LLMOps)
- ✓ Machine Learning
- ✓ MLOps
- ✓ Network Architecture
- ✓ Predictive Analytics and Modeling
- ✓ Risk analytics/assessment
- ✓ Scaled Agile Framework (SAFe)
- ✓ Security architecture and models
- ✓ Smart Contracts
- ✓ Threat Detection/Modelling/Management

With the average cash pay premium for 663 IT certifications being the equivalent of 6.5% of base salary, employers are paying cash pay premiums ranging from 11% to 18% on average for these IT certifications, listed in alphabetical order.

- ✓ Artificial Intelligence Engineer (AIE - all tracks)
- ✓ Certificate of Cloud Security Knowledge (CCSK)
- ✓ Certified Artificial Intelligence Scientist (CAIS)
- ✓ Certified in Risk and Information Systems Control (CRISC)
- ✓ Certified in the Governance of Enterprise IT (CGEIT)
- ✓ Certified Information Systems Auditor (CISA)
- ✓ Certified Information Systems Security Professional (CISSP)
- ✓ Certified ScrumMaster - Advanced
- ✓ Certified Secure Software Lifecycle Professional (CSSLP)
- ✓ Certified Software Quality Manager (CSQM)
- ✓ Check Point Certified Security Master (CCSM)
- ✓ GIAC Experienced Cyber Security Specialist(GX-CS)
- ✓ GIAC Security Expert (GSE)
- ✓ GIAC Security Professional(GSP)
- ✓ GIAC Strategic Planning, Policy, and Leadership (GSTRT)
- ✓ Google Certified Professional Cloud Architect
- ✓ Microsoft Certified Azure Cybersecurity Architect Expert
- ✓ MIT CSAIL Professional Certificate in AI and Machine Learning
- ✓ MIT Professional Certificate in Machine Learning & AI
- ✓ Offensive Security Certified Professional (OSCP)
- ✓ Offensive Security Experienced Penetration Tester (OSEP)
- ✓ Offensive Security Exploitation Expert (OSEE)
- ✓ PMI Portfolio Management Professional (PfMP)
- ✓ PMI Program Management Professional (PgMP)
- ✓ TOGAF 9 Certified
- ✓ Zachman Certified - Enterprise Architect

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### ***How to interpret gains and losses in IT skills and certifications pay premiums***

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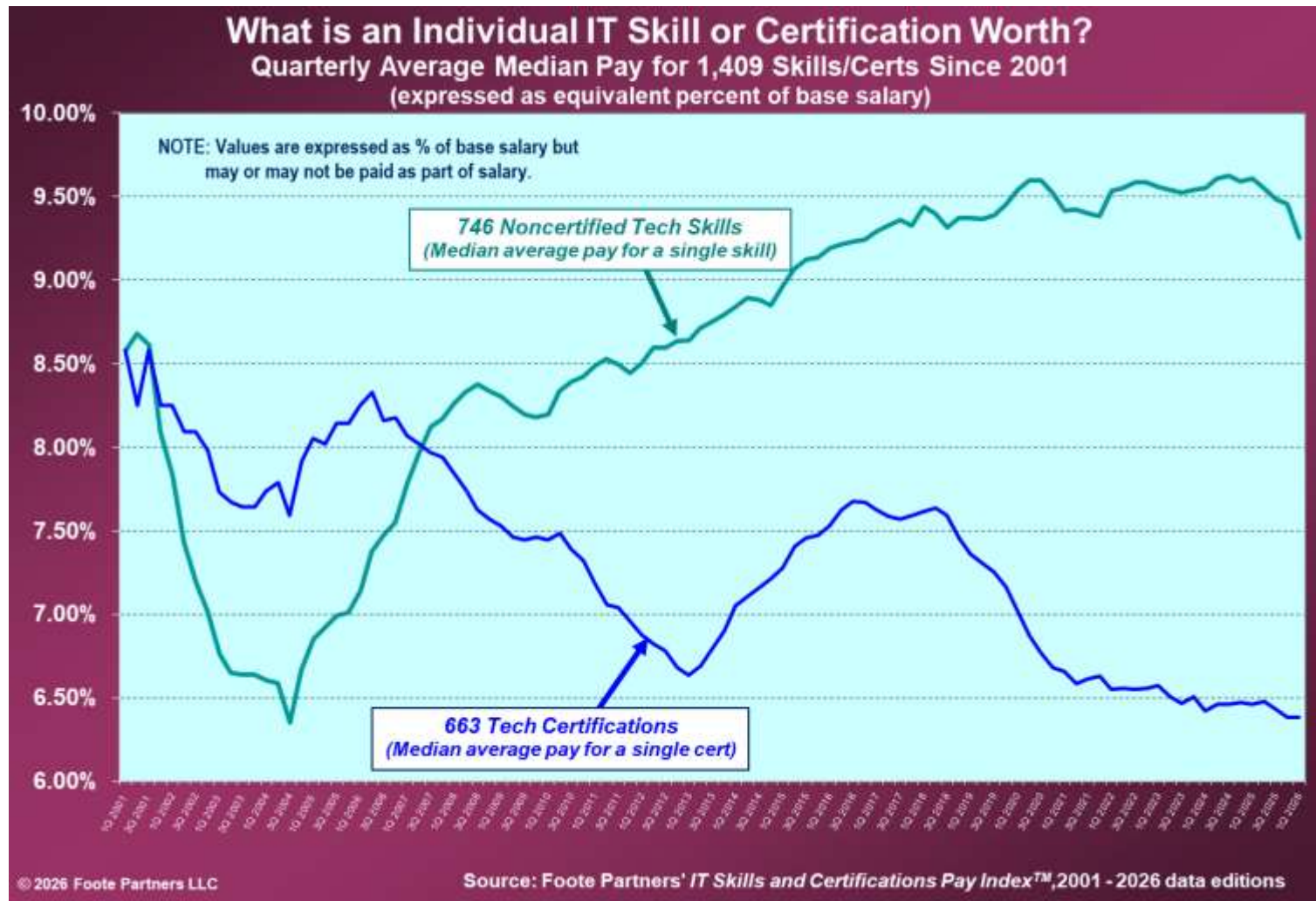
Quarterly gains and losses in premium pay reflect a widening or narrowing, respectively, in the gap between supply and demand for skills and certifications. This may occur for any number of reasons. For example, a quarterly decline in pay for a skill may signal that the market supply of talent for that skill is catching up to demand—not necessarily that demand is starting to wane. IT professionals are often attracted to a skill or certification if they perceive that it has rising value in the marketplace and therefore can help them to achieve higher pay, greater job security, a promotion, or more flexibility in their career choices. As they pursue greater competency in that skill or as more workers attain certification, supply increases and market pricing (which is elastic to the laws of supply and demand) will be driven downward unless demand is rising at the same proportional rate. Conversely, if demand rises and supply is not increasing to match that level of demand, pay premiums for specific skills and certifications will increase.

Therefore, when interpreting gains and losses in market pay it is important to consider all factors that could be driving supply and demand and market perception. Those factors range from:

- aggressive marketing of certifications by vendors;
- changes in certification programs (e.g., certification extensions or retirement);
- new technology and evolution/maturation of current technologies;
- technology adoption rate;
- product integration strategies,
- economic conditions;
- employment opportunities;
- mergers/acquisitions;
- budget cycles and the timing of skills and talent acquisition by employers;
- changes in labor sourcing plans pursuant to company strategies.

### MULTI-YEAR PAY PREMIUM TRENDS: Certified versus Noncertified IT Skills

Average median cash pay premiums for a single certified or noncertified IT skill. N = 116,563 IT Professional



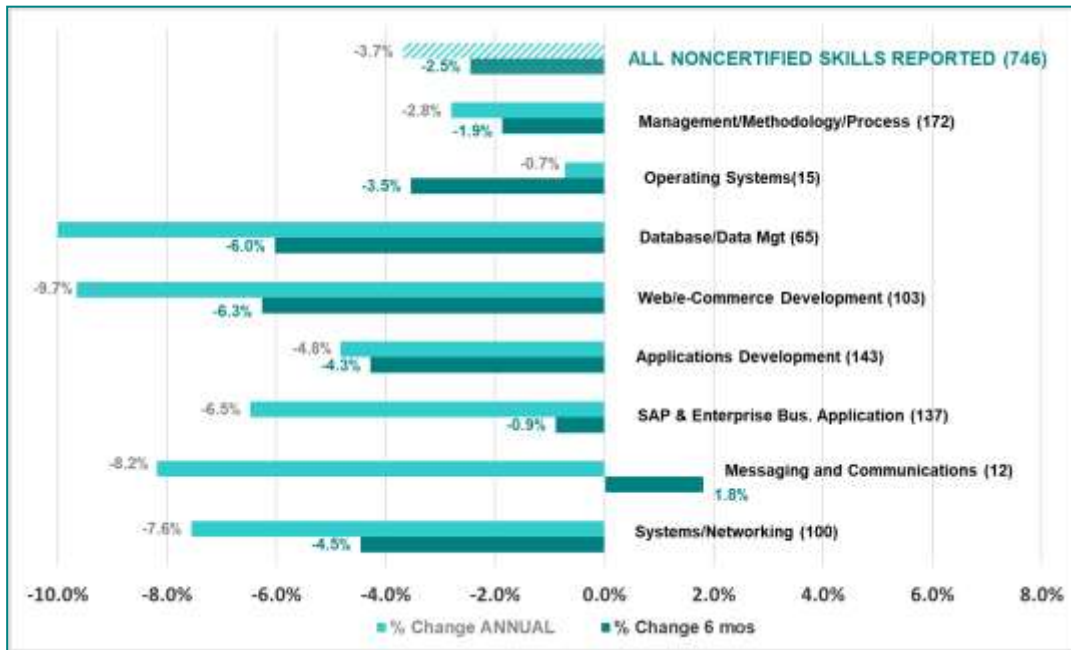
IT NONCERTIFIED SKILLS PAY SUMMARY – Through April 1, 2026

NONCERTIFIED TECH SKILLS PAY PERFORMANCE: By Category

**NON-CERTIFIED TECH SKILLS.** 250 of 744 **non-certified tech skills** changed cash market value from January 1, 2026 to April 1, 2026, less than the 270 of 734 skills in the prior calendar quarter. The average cash pay premium decreased by 2.2%, compared to the 0.3% decrease in 4Q 2025, following quarterly increases in five of the six prior calendar quarters.

Noncertified IT Skills - % Growth/Decline  
 6 months & 12 months

(746 skills, data through 4/1/2026)



Source: Foote Partners [IT Skills & Certifications Pay Index™](#), 1st quarter 2026 data

**NON-CERTIFIED IT SKILLS ANALYSIS – Winners**

**A. NON-CERTIFIED TECH SKILLS EARNING HIGH PAY---AND STILL GROWING IN VALUE**

The average market value for 746 noncertified IT skills [has declined for four consecutive calendar quarters, including 2.2 percent in Q1 2026---the biggest quarterly loss since 2002](#). Still, the average cash pay premium is equivalent to 9.3 percent of base salary, significantly higher than 6.5 percent for IT certifications which showed strong growth in the Q1. Which noncertified IT skills are driving both growth and market value in this recent downward trending marketplace.

The following non-certified tech skills meet two prerequisites:

- They **earned workers cash pay premiums well above the average** of all 746 skills reported in our *IT Skills and Certifications Pay Index™* in quarter ending April 1, 2026.
- They **recorded gains in cash market value in the six months** ending April 1, 2026.

No skill below is earning less than the equivalent of 17 percent of base salary—significant considering the average for all skills reported is 9.5 percent of base—and are listed in descending ranked order of cash pay premium first and market value increase second(including ties). Not surprisingly, the list contains a number of security, artificial intelligence, and data management skills.

Here is the list of noncertified IT skills pay premiums meeting the above criteria (in alphabetical order):

AI Agents	Cyber Threat Intelligence	Predictive Analytics and Modeling
Apache Ignite	E-Discovery	Prompt Flow
Artificial Intelligence for IT Ops	Flink	Risk analytics/assessment
Azure AI/ML Services	Hybrid/human-interpretable reasoning in LLMs	Scaled Agile Framework(SAFe)
Bioinformatics	Information Management	Security Testing
Capacity Planning/Management	IT Audit	Six Sigma/Lean Six Sigma
COBIT	IT Governance	Smart contracts
Continuous Integration	Network Architecture	Threat Detection/Modelling/Management
Cryptography		

Below is the same list, but [in descending ranked order of cash premium first and market value increase second](#) (including ties).

1. **Risk analytics/assessment**  
Average Pay Premium: 24 percent of base salary equivalent  
Market Value Increase: 9.1 percent (in the six months through April 1, 2026)
2. **Smart Contracts**  
Average Pay Premium: 23 percent of base salary equivalent  
Market Value Increase: 9.5 percent (in the six months through April 1, 2026)
3. **Artificial Intelligence for IT Operations (AIOps)**  
Average Pay Premium: 23 percent of base salary equivalent  
Market Value Increase: 4.5 percent (in the six months through April 1, 2026)
4. **Apache Flink**  
Average Pay Premium: 22 percent of base salary equivalent  
Market Value Increase: 15.8 percent (in the six months through April 1, 2026)

## NON-CERTIFIED IT SKILLS ANALYSIS – Winners, cont'd.

5. **AI Agents**  
*Average Pay Premium: 22 percent of base salary equivalent*  
*Market Value Increase: 10 percent (in the three months through April 1, 2026)*
6. **COBIT**  
*Average Pay Premium: 21 percent of base salary equivalent*  
*Market Value Increase: 31.3 percent (in the six months through April 1, 2026)*
7. **Apache Ignite**  
*Average Pay Premium: 21 percent of base salary equivalent*  
*Market Value Increase: 5 percent (in the six months through April 1, 2026)*
8. **Cryptography (encryption, VPN, SSL/TLS, Hybrids)**  
*Average Pay Premium: 20 percent of base salary equivalent*  
*Market Value Increase: 33.3 percent (in the six months through April 1, 2026)*
9. **IT Governance**  
**Network Architecture**  
*Average Pay Premium: 20 percent of base salary equivalent*  
*Market Value Increase: 17.6 percent (in the six months through April 1, 2026)*
11. **Scaled Agile Framework (SAFe)**  
*Average Pay Premium: 20 percent of base salary equivalent*  
*Market Value Increase: 11.1 percent (in the six months through April 1, 2026)*
12. **Predictive Analytics and Modeling**  
**Threat Detection/Modelling/Management**  
*Average Pay Premium: 20 percent of base salary equivalent*  
*Market Value Increase: 5.3 percent (in the six months through April 1, 2026)*
14. **Bioinformatics**  
*Average Pay Premium: 19 percent of base salary equivalent*  
*Market Value Increase: 46.2 percent (in the six months through April 1, 2026)*
15. **Prompt Flow**  
*Average Pay Premium: 19 percent of base salary equivalent*  
*Market Value Increase: 26.7 percent (in the three months through April 1, 2026)*
16. **Capacity Planning/Management**  
*Average Pay Premium: 19 percent of base salary equivalent*  
*Market Value Increase: 11.8 percent (in the six months through April 1, 2026)*
17. **Azure AI/ML services**  
**Continuous Integration**  
**Cyber Threat Intelligence**  
**Security testing**  
*Average Pay Premium: 19 percent of base salary equivalent*  
*Market Value Increase: 5.6 percent (in the six months through April 1, 2026)*

## NON-CERTIFIED IT SKILLS ANALYSIS – Winners, cont'd.

**21. Six Sigma/Lean Six Sigma**

*Average Pay Premium: 18 percent* of base salary equivalent

*Market Value Increase: 12.5 percent* (in the six months through April 1, 2026)

**22. IT Audit**

*Average Pay Premium: 18 percent* of base salary equivalent

*Market Value Increase: 5.9 percent* (in the six months through April 1, 2026)

**23. Hybrid/human-interpretable reasoning in LLMs**

*Average Pay Premium: 17 percent* of base salary equivalent

*Market Value Increase: 41.7 percent* (in the six months through April 1, 2026)

**24. Information Management**

*Average Pay Premium: 17 percent* of base salary equivalent

*Market Value Increase: 21.4 percent* (in the six months through April 1, 2026)

**25. E-Discovery**

*Average Pay Premium: 17 percent* of base salary equivalent

*Market Value Increase: 6.3 percent* (in the six months through April 1, 2026)

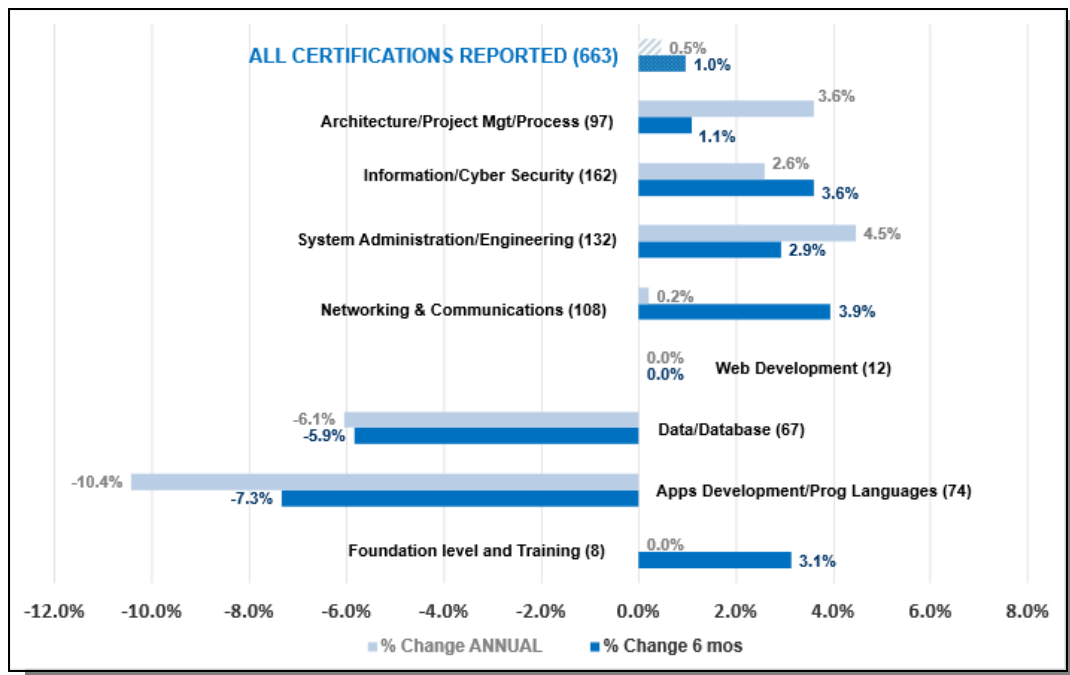
IT CERTIFICATIONS PAY SUMMARY – Through April 1, 2026

A.  CERTIFIED IT SKILLS PAY PERFORMANCE: By Category

**TECH CERTIFICATIONS.**  167 of 650 IT certifications changed cash market value in 1Q 2026,  significantly more  than the 116 of 648 certifications in the prior quarter. The average cash pay premium for all certifications reported increased by 1.8% in this quarter following a 0.8% decrease in the prior quarter.

IT Certifications - % Growth/Decline  
 6 months & 12 months

(650 certifications, data through 4/1/2026)



Source: Foote Partners  [IT Skills & Certifications Pay Index™](#) , 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter 2026 data

## IT CERTIFICATIONS ANALYSIS – Winners

### A. IT CERTIFICATIONS: Paying well above average and still growing most in market value

As a group, the 663 IT certifications tracked in our *IT Skills and Certifications Pay Index™* posted average market value declines in the final two quarters of 2025. But in the 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter 2026 average cash pay premiums **increased unexpectedly by nearly 2 percent**. **Let's examine those certifications that have helped drive up average cash pay premiums in the last six months**. The following IT certifications meet two prerequisites:

- They **earned workers cash pay premiums well above the average of all certifications** in our IT Skills and Certifications Pay Index™ in quarter ending April 1, 2026.
- They recorded growth in cash market value in the six months ending April 1, 2026.

None of the following IT certifications earns less than the equivalent of 10 percent of base salary—significant considering the average for all skills reported is 6.5 percent of base—and every certification listed below grew somewhere in the 8 percent to 43 percent range in cash market value in the six months ending October 1st. **They are listed in descending order of market value gain** (including ties).

Here is the list of IT certifications that meet the above criteria (in alphabetical order):

Artificial Intelligence Engineer (AIE - all tracks)	GIAC Strategic Planning, Policy, and Leadership
Certified Artificial Intelligence Scientist	Google Certified Professional Cloud Architect
Certified in Risk and Information Systems Control	MIT CSAIL Professional Certificate in AI and Machine Learning
Certified in the Governance of Enterprise IT	MIT Professional Certificate in Machine Learning & AI
Certified Information Systems Auditor	Offensive Security Certified Professional
Certified Information Systems Security Professional	Offensive Security Experienced Penetration Tester
Certified ScrumMaster – Advanced	PMI Portfolio Management Professional (PfMP)
GIAC Experienced Cyber Security Specialist	PMI Program Management Professional (PgMP)
GIAC Security Professional	

Below is the same list, but **in descending ranked order of cash premium first and market value increase second** (including ties).

- 1. Certified Artificial Intelligence Scientist (CAIS)**  
Average Pay Premium: 18 percent of base salary equivalent  
Market Value Increase: 20 percent (in the six months through April 1, 2026)
- 2. MIT CSAIL Professional Certificate in AI and Machine Learning**  
Average Pay Premium: 16 percent of base salary equivalent  
Market Value Increase: 45.5 percent (in the six months through April 1, 2026)
- 3. Artificial Intelligence Engineer (AIE - all tracks)**  
Average Pay Premium: 14 percent of base salary equivalent  
Market Value Increase: 27.3 percent (in the six months through April 1, 2026)
- 4. GIAC Strategic Planning, Policy, and Leadership (GSTRT)**  
Average Pay Premium: 13 percent of base salary equivalent  
Market Value Increase: 8.3 percent (in the six months through April 1, 2026)

## IT CERTIFICATIONS ANALYSIS – Winners, cont'd.

**5. GIAC Security Professional(GSP)**

*Average Pay Premium: 12 percent* of base salary equivalent

*Market Value Increase: 20 percent* (in the three months through April 1, 2026)

**6. MIT Professional Certificate in Machine Learning & AI**

*Average Pay Premium: 12 percent* of base salary equivalent

*Market Value Increase: 50 percent* (in the six months through April 1, 2026)

**7. Certified in the Governance of Enterprise IT (CGEIT)**

*Average Pay Premium: 12 percent* of base salary equivalent

*Market Value Increase: 9.1 percent* (in the six months through April 1, 2026)

**8. Certified Information Systems Auditor (CISA)**

**Certified Information Systems Security Professional (CISSP)**

**GIAC Experienced Cyber Security Specialist(GX-CS)**

**Google Certified Professional Cloud Architect**

**Offensive Security Certified Professional (OSCP)**

**PMI Program Management Professional (PgMP)**

*Average Pay Premium: 11 percent* of base salary equivalent

*Market Value Increase: 22.2 percent* (in the six months through April 1, 2026)

**14. Certified in Risk and Information Systems Control (CRISC)**

**Certified ScrumMaster - Advanced**

**Offensive Security Experienced Penetration Tester (OSEP)**

**PMI Portfolio Management Professional (PfMP)**

*Average Pay Premium: 10 percent* of base salary equivalent

*Market Value Increase: 11.1 percent* (in the six months through April 1, 2026)

## IT CERTIFICATIONS ANALYSIS – Biggest Losers

### IT CERTIFICATIONS THAT HAVE LOST THE MOST MARKET VALUE OVER TIME

**LOSING GROUND:** Listed to the right are certifications in alphabetical order that have **lost between 30% to 55% percent of their cash pay premium market value in the 24-month period ending April 1, 2026.** Some on this list are now retired or scheduled to be.

#### *Why do certifications lose their value?*

Certifications decline in market value for a number of obvious and not so obvious reasons. Pay premiums may diminish as a certification expires, is retired, or is replaced with other certifications as technology evolves. Also, there remains a lingering bias that taking a proctored exam does not confer expertise in a subject on the test taker, especially when the pass rate is 70 percent (or less) correct answers. The certification industry has fought back against this bias by adding laboratory requirements and even peer review panels that decide if the candidate has qualified to receive designation.

But just as often it is their popularity that drives down pay premiums for a certification: as interest in a certification escalates and more people attain the certification, the gap between supply and demand for the certification narrows, driving down its market value as the laws of scarcity would dictate. This has been frequently documented in the case of dozens of certifications over the 20+ years Foote Partners has been tracking and reporting their cash pay premiums in the *IT Skills and Certifications Pay Index*.

Certified Business Process Associate  
Certified Business Process Professional  
Cisco Certified Network Associate (was CCNA Wireless)  
CompTIA Cybersecurity Analyst+  
CompTIA Security+  
CSX CyberSecurity Practitioner  
CWNP/Certified Wireless Analysis Professional  
Dell PowerEdge Professional(EMC)  
EC-Council Certified Encryption Specialist v2  
EC-Council Certified Ethical Hacker  
GIAC Certified Windows Security Administrator  
GIAC Enterprise Vulnerability Assessor  
GIAC Security Essentials  
Google Cloud Associate - Cloud Engineer  
HDI Customer Service Representative  
HP ATP - Hybrid IT Solutions V2  
HP Master ASE – Hybrid IT Solutions Architect V1  
IBM Certified Developer - Cognos Analytics  
Microsoft Certified Azure Data Engineer Associate

Microsoft Certified Azure Data Scientist Associate  
Microsoft Certified Dynamics 365 Associate(all business apps)  
Microsoft Certified Enterprise Azure Data Analyst Associate  
Microsoft Certified Power BI Data Analyst Associate  
Microsoft Certified: Azure AI Engineer Associate  
Microsoft MTA: Windows OS  
Microsoft Office Specialist  
NetApp Certified Storage Associate – Hybrid Cloud  
Oracle Certified Master - Java SE Developer  
Oracle Certified Professional WebLogic Server 12c Administrator  
Oracle PL/SQL Developer Associate  
Pegasystems Certified System Architect  
Tableau Desktop Certified Professional  
Teradata SQL for Business Users  
Teradata Vantage Analytics  
TIBCO Certified Architect  
TIBCO Certified Professional  
VMware Certified Professional - Endpoint & Workload Security  
VMware Certified Technical Associate - Data Center Virtualization

## IT Skills & Certifications Pay Data Trend Charts & Analysis

### IT Skills and Certifications Pay Index™ – 1st Quarter 2026 data edition\*

- Noncertified IT Skills (Page 16)
- IT Certifications (Page 23)

### IT Skills and Certifications Pay Volatility Index™ – 1st Quarter 2026 data edition\*

- Summary (Page 30)
- IT certifications (page 32)
- Non-certified IT skills (page 33)

\*All data collected through April 1, 2026

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## Noncertified IT Skills Data Trend Charts & Analysis

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(Data collected through April 1, 2026)

**Apps Develop. Tools & Platforms**

Agile software development  
AI Chatbot  
Amazon Kinesis  
Amazon SageMaker (ML)  
Amazon Web Services  
Apache Airflow  
Apache Ant  
Apache Camel  
Apache Cloudstack  
Apache Cordova  
Apache Flex  
Apache Hadoop  
Apache Lucene  
Apache Maven  
Apache Pig  
Apache Spark  
Apache Struts/Struts2  
Apache Tomcat  
Apache Zookeeper  
Appium  
Application Security  
Automated Testing  
AWS CDK  
AWS CloudFormation  
AWS CloudFront/CloudFront Functions  
AWS CodeDeploy  
AWS Lambda  
Azure Stack  
Bamboo/BambooHR  
Behavior-Driven Development  
Bitbucket  
Boost C++  
Business Objects  
C  
C#  
C++  
C++ /CLI  
CA PPM (Clarity PPM)  
Cerner Millennium  
ChatGPT  
CircleCI  
Clojure  
Cloudera software  
Cloud Foundry PaaS  
COBOL  
Cognos  
Confluence  
Continuous Delivery  
Cucumber

Datadog  
Delphi  
Drupal  
Eclipse  
Elixir  
Epic Systems applications  
Erlang  
Ethereum  
F#  
Flutter  
Full Stack Development  
Gemini  
Generative AI  
Git/GitHub  
GitLab  
GitOps  
Go language (Golang)  
GoCD  
Gosu/Guidewire  
Gradle  
Groovy/Grails  
gRPC  
Grunt  
Hibernate/NHibernate  
HP ALM (App. Lifecycle Mgt)  
HP Unified Functional Testing  
Integration Testing  
iRise  
Jasmine  
Java  
JBehave  
Jenkins  
JIRA  
JUnit  
Kotlin  
MapReduce  
MATLAB  
Microsoft Azure  
Microsoft Azure Stack  
Microsoft Azure Logic Apps  
Microsoft Copilot  
Microsoft PowerApps  
Microsoft Power Platform  
Microsoft SQL Server Mgt Studio  
Microsoft Team Foundation Server  
Midjourney  
Mokito  
NetWeaver  
Next.js  
NIM  
JUnit  
Objective-C

Objective Caml (Ocaml)  
Octopus Deploy  
OpenShift  
Oracle APEX  
Oracle Apps Developer Framework  
Palantir Foundry  
Platform Engineering  
PL/SQL  
Powerbuilder  
Progress 4GL/Development tools  
R language  
RapidMiner  
Red Hat Fuse  
Rstudio  
Ruby  
Ruby on Rails  
Rust  
Saas  
SAS  
SAS Enterprise Guide  
Scala  
Scrum  
Selenium  
Semaphore CI/CD  
ServiceNow ITSM  
Sonatype Nexus  
SpecFlow  
SPSS  
SQL  
Stable Diffusion  
Swift  
Tcl  
TeamCity  
TestNG  
TransacT-SQL/tSQLt  
Travis CI  
UML (unified modeling language)  
Visual Basic 6.0  
Visual C++  
Vue.js  
VMware Cloud Foundry PaaS  
WebSphereMQ  
Xcode

**Web/e-Commerce Development**

Active Server Pages  
ActiveX  
Adobe Analytics  
Adobe Experience Manager  
Ajax  
Amazon Cloudwatch

AngularJS  
Apache Solr  
Apache Velocity  
Apache web server  
Apache Wicket  
Apex Code  
Backbone.js  
CGI  
Cold Fusion MX  
Content management systems  
CSS/CSS3  
Cypress  
Django  
Docker /Docker Swarm  
Documentum  
Elasticsearch/Elastic Stack  
Ember.js  
Figma  
Front End Development  
GatsbyJS  
Google Analytics  
Google App Engine  
Google Cloud AI (Vertex AI, AutoML)  
Google Cloud Platform  
Gradio  
GraphQL  
HTML5  
JavaBeans/EJB 3.0  
JavaFX  
JavaScript  
Java Server Pages  
JBoss/Wildfly  
Jetty  
Joomla!  
jQuery  
JSON  
Julia  
KnockoutJS  
Laravel PHP  
Magento/Adobe Commerce  
Magnolia  
Microsoft .NET  
Microsoft BizTalk Server  
Microsoft Blazor  
Microsoft Commerce Server  
Microsoft Identity Integration Server  
Microsoft Internet Information Services  
Microsoft Forefront Threat Management Gateway (ISA)

Microsoft Sharepoint/Sharepoint Server  
Microsoft Silverlight  
Microsoft Visual Studio  
Mobile applications development  
Mule/MuleESB  
Node.js  
Oracle Fusion  
Oracle WebLogic/  
Oracle Workflow  
Pandas  
Perl  
PHP (all)  
PySpark  
Python  
React  
Redux  
REST/REST Assured  
RESTful  
SailPoint  
Scalable Vector Graphics (SVG)  
Secure coding/SW development  
Sitecore CMS  
SOAP/SOAP UI  
Social Media/Networks  
Spring Framework  
Spring Boot  
Spring Cloud  
Spring AI  
Spring Integration  
Spring MVC  
Spring Security  
TIBCO  
UDDI  
Umbraco  
VBScript  
Video/graphics editing  
Visual Interdev VoiceXML  
Web collaboration appliances  
Web Content Development  
Web Design  
WebSphere  
WebSphere Datapower  
Wikis  
WSDL  
XAML/XACML  
XHTML MP  
XML (all variants)

## 746 Non-Certified IT Skills Reported

Foote Partners News Release – April 28, 2026

### SAP & Enterprise Business

#### Applications

ABAP (all modules)  
Accelerated SAP (SLM)  
Baan (Infor LN ERP)  
Enterprise Application Integration  
IBM Sterling  
J.D. Edwards/Oracle  
Lawson  
Microsoft Dynamics/Dynamics 365  
NetWeaver  
NetWeaver Portal (SAP EP)  
Oracle BPM  
Oracle CRM  
Oracle E-Business suite  
Oracle Eloqua  
Oracle ERP  
Oracle Financials  
Oracle HFM (Hyperion Fin. Mgt)  
Oracle HRMS  
Oracle NetSuite  
Oracle Payables  
Oracle Payroll  
Oracle Retail  
Oracle SCM  
Oracle SOA Suite  
Pega  
PeopleSoft (CRM/Financials/ HCM)  
Remedy ITSM  
Salesforce  
Salesforce Commerce Cloud  
Salesforce CRM  
Salesforce Sales Cloud  
Salesforce Service Cloud  
SAP AFS  
SAP ALE  
SAP APO  
SAP Ariba  
SAP Auto-ID infrastructure (SAP RF)  
SAP Basis Components  
SAP BI / SAP BW  
SAP BO Data Services  
SAP BODI  
SAP BOXI  
SAP BO Dashboard Design  
SAP BPC  
SAP BSP  
SAP Business One  
SAP AFS

SAP ALE  
SAP APO  
SAP Ariba  
SAP Auto-ID infrastructure  
SAP Basis Components  
SAP BI  
SAP BO Data Services  
SAP BODI  
SAP BOXI  
SAP BO Dashboard Design  
SAP BPC  
SAP BSP  
SAP Business One  
SAP Business Workflow/Webflow  
SAP CA  
SAP CAF  
SAP CAR  
SAP CCM  
SAP CE  
SAP CFM  
SAP CO  
SAP CO-PA  
SAP Commerce Cloud  
SAP CRM  
SAP Crystal Reports  
SAP CS  
SAP Digital Banking  
SAP EBP  
SAP EDI  
SAP EHS  
SAP EPM  
SAP ERP  
SAP ESA  
SAP Exchange Infrastructure (XI)  
SAP FI (Financial Accounting)  
SAP FI – CA  
SAP FI - CO  
SAP FI – FSCM  
SAP FI - Travel Management  
SAP Fiori  
SAP F&R (Forecasting/Replenish)  
SAP FS (Insurance)  
SAP GRC  
SAP GTS  
SAP HANA  
SAP HCM (SAP HR)  
SAP HCM ESS/MSS  
SAP HR-PA  
SAP HR-PY (Payroll)

SAP Hybris/Commerce Cloud  
SAP IBP  
SAP IS-U (Utilities)  
SAP ITS  
SAP MDM  
SAP MDX  
SAP MI  
SAP MII  
SAP MM  
SAP MRO  
SAP MRS  
SAP Netweaver Applications Server  
SAP Netweaver BW (BIW)  
SAP NetWeaver Visual Composer  
SAP NWDI  
SAP NWDS  
SAP Oil & Gas  
SAP PI (NetWeaver Process Integration)  
SAP PLM  
SAP PM  
SAP POSDM  
SAP PP  
SAP PS  
SAP PSCD  
SAP Public Sector Management  
SAP QM  
SAP for Retail  
SAP SAM (Service & Asset Mgt)  
SAP S/4HANA  
SAP SCM  
SAP SD  
SAP SD - GTS  
SAP Security  
SAP SEM  
SAP SM  
SAP Smart Forms  
SAP Solution Manager  
SAP SRM  
SAP TM  
SAP UI5 (UI development toolkit for HTML5)  
SAP Web Application Server  
SAP WEBI  
SAP WM  
SAP WM – EWM  
Siebel/Siebel Analytics

Software AG webMethods  
SuccessFactors  
Web Dynpro  
Workday HCM

#### Data/Database

Alteryx Designer  
Amazon Athena  
Amazon DynamoDB  
Amazon EMR  
Amazon RedShift  
Apache Cassandra  
Apache CouchDB  
Apache Hive  
Apache Iceberg  
Apache Ignite  
Apache Impala  
Apache Spark SQL  
Azure Cosmos DB  
Azure Data Factory  
Azure SQL Data Warehouse  
Alteryx Designer  
Amazon Athena  
Amazon DynamoDB  
Amazon RedShift  
Apache Cassandra  
Apache CouchDB  
Apache Hive  
Apache Spark SQL  
Azure Cosmos DB  
Azure Data Factory  
Azure SQL Data Warehouse  
Azure SQL Database  
Azure Synapse Analytics  
Base SAS  
Big Data  
Blockchain  
Cloudera Impala  
Couchbase Server  
Data mining  
Data Vault  
Database management  
DB2  
dBASE/xBASE  
ETL (Extract, transform, load)  
GIS  
Google BigQuery  
Google Data Studio  
Hbase

Informatica  
Java Database Connectivity  
Kibana  
Looker  
Master data management  
Microsoft Access  
Microsoft Exchange Server 2010/2013  
Microsoft SQL Server  
2019/2016/2014/2012  
Microsoft SQL Server Integration Services  
Microsoft SQL Server Reporting Services (SSRS)  
MongoDB  
MySQL  
NewSQL  
NoSQL  
OpenEdge ABL  
Oracle Application Server  
Oracle Business Intelligence Enterprise Edition Plus  
Oracle Coherence  
Oracle DB 9i/10g/11i/12c  
Oracle Enterprise Manager  
Oracle Exadata  
Oracle Forms  
Oracle Reports  
PostgreSQL  
Power Query  
Redis  
Riak  
Smart Contracts  
Snowflake/Snowflake Schema  
Sqoop  
Sybase Adaptive Server  
Teradata  
TIBCO Spotfire  
Visual SQL

## 746 Non-Certified IT Skills Reported

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### Systems/Networking

Active Directory  
Amazon AWS CloudTrail  
Amazon Elastic Kubernetes Service  
Ansible  
Apache Flume  
Arista  
ATM  
AWS Fargate  
Azure Active Directory  
Azure AKS  
Azure Sentinel  
Azure Storage  
Business continuity and disaster recovery planning  
CA Endevor  
Chef/Opscode  
Cisco ASA  
Cisco CUCM  
Cisco ICM  
Cisco IPCC  
Cisco ISE/Identity Services Engine  
Cisco Nexus  
Cisco Prime  
Cisco UCCE  
Cisco UCCX  
Citrix Hypervisor (XenServer)  
Citrix NetScaler  
Citrix Virtual Apps (XenApp)  
Cloud architecture  
Cloud security  
DHCP  
EIGRP  
Ethernet  
Fast Ethernet  
Fortinet  
Gigabit Ethernet  
Google Kubernetes  
Grafana  
HP ConvergedSystem  
HP Quality Center  
HTTPS  
IaaS (Infrastructure as a Service)  
Infrastructure architecture  
Infrastructure as code(IaC)  
Intrusion prevention/detection sys  
IPX/SPX  
Juniper  
LAN

Microsoft Application Virtualization  
Microsoft Azure Sentinel  
Microsoft Hyper-V  
Microsoft SCCM  
Microsoft SCVMM  
Microsoft Virtual Server  
Mobile device management  
Mobile security  
Multiprotocol Label Switching  
NAS/Network Attached Storage  
Network access control/Identity mgt systems  
Network security management  
NGFW(next-generation firewall)  
Novell Netware  
PaaS  
Performance Analysis/Tuning  
Performance Management/Metrics  
Performance Optimization  
Performance Testing  
Prometheus  
Puppet  
Rackspace Cloud  
RedHat OpenShift  
Routing (e.g. OSPF, RIP, IGRP)  
Salt  
SAN/Storage Area Networks  
Security skills (project-based)  
Security Information and Event Management  
SMTP  
SNA  
Software-Defined Networking  
SolarWinds Orion  
Storage Virtualization/Admin  
TCP/IP  
Terraform  
Tivoli  
Vagrant  
vCenter Server  
vCloud  
Virtualization (various)  
Virtual security  
VMware ESXi Server  
VMware NSX  
VoIP/IP telephony  
VPN/OpenVPN  
WAN/3G/4G services  
Web Infrastructure  
Web services security

Wireless Network Mgmt  
Wireless security  
Wireless sensors/RFID  
Wireline Networking/ Telecomm.  
WML

### Operating Systems

AIX  
Fedora CoreOS  
HP-UX  
Linux  
Mac OS X  
Mobile operating systems (iOS, Android)  
OpenStack  
Red Hat Enterprise Linux  
Solaris  
SUSE  
Unix (all)  
VMware vSphere  
Windows 10/11  
Windows NT  
Windows Server 2019/2016/2012

### Management, Methodologies and Process

Agentforce  
AI Agents  
AI Engineering  
AI Productivity  
Artificial Intelligence  
Artificial Intelligence for IT Operations  
Artificial Intelligence Model Optimization  
Automated Feature Engineering  
AWS Codebuild  
AWS DevOps  
Azure AI Studio  
Azure AI/ML services  
Azure DevOps  
Azure Key Vault  
Azure Machine Learning  
Azure Monitor  
Azure OpenAI  
Azure Service Fabric  
BERT  
Big Data Analytics

BigPanda  
Bioinformatics  
BMC Helix  
Business Analysis  
Business Analytics  
Business Intelligence  
Business performance mgt  
Business process management/ modeling/improvement  
Caffe  
Capacity Planning/Management  
Change management  
COBIT  
Collaboration software  
Complex Event Processing/Event Correlation  
Computer Vision  
Configuration Management  
Continuous Improvement  
Continuous Integration/Continuous Delivery  
Convolutional Neural Network  
CRM  
Cryptography (encryption, VPN)  
Customer Experience/Customer Engagement  
Cyber Threat Intelligence  
Cybersecurity  
Data Acquisition and Control Systems  
Data Analytics  
Data Architecture  
Data Cleansing  
Data Engineering  
Data Governance  
Data Integration  
Data Management  
Data Migration  
Data Modelling  
Data Privacy  
Data Protection  
Data Quality  
Data Science  
Data Security  
Data Strategy  
Data Transformation  
Data Visualization  
DataOps  
DataRobot Enterprise AI Platform  
Deep Learning  
Deployment Automation

DevOps  
DevSecOps  
Digital Analytics  
Digital Forensics  
Digital Marketing  
Dynatrace platform  
E-Discovery  
E-Procurement  
ERP  
Event-Driven Architecture  
FinOps  
Flink  
Flux/Flux.1  
ForgeRock  
Functional Programming  
Functional Testing  
Game Development/Gamification  
General Data Protection Regulation  
Google TensorFlow  
Governance, Risk management and Compliance  
H2O.ai  
HL7  
HubSpot  
Hugging Face Transformers  
Hybrid/human-interpretable reasoning in LLMs  
Hyperautomation  
Identity access management  
ImaginateAR  
Incident Management  
Information management  
IT Audit  
IT Governance  
IT Service Management/ITSM  
ITIL V3  
Kanban  
Keras  
Large Language Model  
Optimization(LLMOps)  
Large Language Model/LLM tuning  
Lumio AI  
Machine Learning  
Marketo  
Metadata design and development  
Microservices  
Microsoft SQL Server Analysis Services  
Microsoft Visio  
MLFlow  
MLOps  
Model Tuning

**Management, Methodologies and Process – cont'd.**

Natural language processing  
 Network Architecture  
 Neural Networks  
 NIST/NIST 800  
 Object Detection/YOLO  
 ONNX (Open Neural Network Exchange)  
 OpenCV  
 PagerDuty  
 Penetration testing  
 Power BI  
 Predictive Analytics and Modeling  
 Prescriptive Analytics  
 Process Improvement  
 Program Management  
 Project management/governance  
 Prompt Engineering  
 Prompt Flow  
 PyTorch  
 QlikSense  
 Quality Automation/Quality Assurance  
 Quality management/TQM  
 Quantitative Analysis/Regression  
 Razor  
 Requirements Engineering/Analysis  
 Retrieval Augmented Generation  
 Risk analytics/assessment  
 Robotic Process Automation  
 Salesforce Einstein GPT  
 Scaled Agile Framework (SAFe)  
 Scikit-Learn  
 Security architecture and models  
 Security auditing  
 Security management  
 Security testing  
 SEO  
 Site Reliability Engineering  
 Six Sigma/Lean Six Sigma  
 Social media analysis/analytics  
 Software development lifecycle management  
 Software Quality Assurance  
 Splunk

Tableau  
 Test Automation  
 Test Driven Development/Scripting  
 Threat Detection/Modelling/Mgt  
 TIBCO BusinessWorks  
 TOGAF  
 Unit Testing  
 Usability Research/Human Factors Research  
 User Acceptance Testing  
 User Experience/User Interface  
 User-Centered Design  
 Vulnerability Scanning/  
 Assessment/Management  
 Waterfall  
 Web Analytics  
 Webtrends analytics  
 Zachman Framework  
 Zapier

**Messaging & Communications**

ActiveMQ  
 Apache Camel  
 Apache Kafka  
 HCL Domino  
 Java Messaging Service  
 Message-oriented Middleware (Wave, XMPP/Jabber, etc.)  
 Microsoft Exchange  
 Novell Groupwise  
 Oracle Comm Messaging Server  
 RabbitMQ  
 TIBCO Enterprise Message Service  
 TIBCO Rendezvous  
 Unified Communications/  
 Messaging

### 4-YEAR NON-CERTIFIED IT SKILLS PAY TRENDS

(Through 4/1/2026 – 116,563 IT Professionals)

NONCERTIFIED IT SKILLS CATEGORIES	# of skills surveyed	Change in Average Premium Pay by Category					
		% Change 3 mos	% Change 6 mos	% Change ANNUAL	% Change 2 yrs	% Change 3 yrs	% Change 4 yrs
Systems/Networking	100	-2.6%	-4.5%	-7.6%	-10.6%	-14.4%	-15.8%
Messaging and Communications	12	0.0%	1.8%	-8.2%	-18.8%	-23.3%	-20.0%
SAP & Enterprise Business Applications	137	-0.9%	-0.9%	-6.5%	-11.1%	-15.8%	-18.6%
Apps Development Tools & Platforms	143	-2.5%	-4.3%	-4.8%	-7.9%	-8.7%	-9.7%
Web/e-Commerce Development	103	-3.2%	-6.3%	-9.7%	-8.0%	-11.1%	-15.2%
Data/Database	65	-3.5%	-6.0%	-10.9%	-11.8%	-13.9%	-15.7%
Operating Systems	15	-1.4%	-3.5%	-0.7%	-3.5%	-2.2%	-2.2%
Management/Methodology/Process	171	-2.0%	-1.9%	-2.8%	2.0%	4.1%	9.1%
<b>ALL NONCERTIFIED SKILLS REPORTED</b>	<b>746</b>	<b>-2.18%</b>	<b>-2.46%</b>	<b>-3.69%</b>	<b>-3.15%</b>	<b>-3.19%</b>	<b>-2.95%</b>

### 17-YEAR NON-CERTIFIED IT SKILLS PAY TRENDS BY CATEGORY

% Change in Average Median Pay for a Single Non-certified IT Skill)

(Through 4/1/2026 – 116,563 IT Professionals)

(Source: Foote Partners LLC, [2026 IT Skills & Certifications Pay Index™](#))



Pay data supporting these charts available in the [IT Skills and Certifications Pay Index™](#) – 1Q 2026 data edition

**HIGHEST PAYING Non-certified IT Skills (cash pay premiums, all 746 skills surveyed, ranked)**

These **non-certified IT skills** are earning average cash pay premiums equivalent to 16 percent or higher of base salary for the period January 1, 2026 to April 1, 2026). **Shown in alphabetical order by the overall market value rank in descending order, including ties. Green/Red** = increased/decreased in market value this quarter. **Purple** = New this quarter for the first time.

1. Risk analytics/assessment	6.[cont.] <a href="#">Bioinformatics</a> <a href="#">Capacity Planning/Management</a> <a href="#">Continuous Integration</a> <a href="#">Cyber Threat Intelligence</a> <a href="#">Data Engineering</a> <a href="#">DevSecOps</a> <a href="#">Dynatrace platform</a> <a href="#">FinOps</a> <a href="#">Large Language Model/LLM tuning</a> <a href="#">Microservices</a> <a href="#">Prescriptive Analytics</a> <a href="#">Prompt Flow</a> <a href="#">Security auditing</a> <a href="#">Security testing</a> <a href="#">Site Reliability Engineering</a> <a href="#">Splunk</a> <a href="#">Zachman Framework</a>	7.[cont.] <a href="#">IT Audit</a> <a href="#">Kanban</a> <a href="#">Metadata design and development</a> <a href="#">Natural language processing</a> <a href="#">ONNX (Open Neural Network Exchange)</a> <a href="#">PagerDuty</a> <a href="#">Penetration testing</a> <a href="#">PyTorch</a> <a href="#">Six Sigma/Lean Six Sigma</a> <a href="#">Test Driven Development/Scripting</a>	9.[Tie] <a href="#">Amazon Athena</a> <a href="#">Automated Feature Engineering</a> <a href="#">Azure DevOps</a> <a href="#">Azure Monitor</a> <a href="#">Big Data analytics</a> <a href="#">Computer Vision</a> <a href="#">Continuous Improvement</a> <a href="#">Data Quality</a> <a href="#">Data Security</a> <a href="#">DataRobot Enterprise AI Platform</a> <a href="#">Go language (Golang)</a> <a href="#">gRPC</a> <a href="#">H2O.ai</a> <a href="#">Marketo</a> <a href="#">MLflow</a> <a href="#">QlikSense</a> <a href="#">Requirements Engineering/Analysis</a> <a href="#">Retrieval Augmented Generation (RAG)</a> <a href="#">Test automation</a> <a href="#">Unit Testing</a>
2.[Tie] <a href="#">AI Engineering</a> <a href="#">Artificial Intelligence for IT Operations</a> <a href="#">Ethereum</a> <a href="#">Smart Contracts</a>	7.[Tie] <a href="#">Artificial Intelligence</a> <a href="#">AWS Codebuild</a> <a href="#">AWS DevOps</a> <a href="#">Azure AI Studio</a> <a href="#">Azure OpenAI</a> <a href="#">Blockchain</a> <a href="#">Data Governance</a> <a href="#">Data Modelling</a> <a href="#">Data Science</a> <a href="#">DevOps</a> <a href="#">Google TensorFlow</a> <a href="#">Governance, Risk management and Compliance</a> <a href="#">Identity access management</a>	8.[Tie] <a href="#">Apache Iceberg</a> <a href="#">Azure Service Fabric</a> <a href="#">Business performance management</a> <a href="#">Convolutional Neural Network</a> <a href="#">Data Integration</a> <a href="#">Data Migration</a> <a href="#">Data Transformation</a> <a href="#">Deployment Automation</a> <a href="#">E-Discovery</a> <a href="#">Hybrid/human-interpretable reasoning in LLMs</a> <a href="#">Information Management</a> <a href="#">NIST/NIST 800</a> <a href="#">Object Detection/YOLO</a> <a href="#">Quantitative Analysis/Regression Analysis</a> <a href="#">Rust</a> <a href="#">Software development lifecycle mgt.</a> <a href="#">Stable Diffusion</a> <a href="#">Waterfall</a>	
3.[Tie] <a href="#">AI Productivity</a> <a href="#">AI Agents</a> <a href="#">Flink</a>			
4.[Tie] <a href="#">Apache Ignite</a> <a href="#">COBIT</a> <a href="#">Data Strategy</a> <a href="#">Security architecture and models</a>			
5.[Tie] <a href="#">Artificial Intelligence Model Optimization</a> <a href="#">Cryptography )</a> <a href="#">Data Architecture</a> <a href="#">DataOps</a> <a href="#">Event-Driven Architecture</a> <a href="#">IT Governance</a> <a href="#">Large Language Model Optimization</a> <a href="#">Machine Learning</a> <a href="#">MLOps</a> <a href="#">Network Architecture</a> <a href="#">Predictive Analytics and Modeling</a> <a href="#">Scaled Agile Framework (SAFe)</a> <a href="#">Threat Detection/Modelling/Management</a>			
6.[Tie] <a href="#">Azure AI/ML services</a> <a href="#">Azure Machine Learning</a>			

Source: Foote Partners [IT Skills & Certifications Pay Index™](#), 1Q 2026 data edition

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## IT Certification Data Trend Charts & Analysis

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(Data collected through April 1, 2026)

AccessData Certified Examiner (ACE)  
 Arctura Certified Cloud Security Specialist  
 Artificial Intelligence Engineer (AIE – all tracks)  
 Avaya Certified Implementation Specialist(ACIS)  
 Avaya Certified Solutions Administrator(ASAC)  
 Avaya Certified Solutions Developer(ASDC)  
 Avaya Certified Support Specialist(ACSS)  
 Avaya Technical Associate(ASTA)  
 AWS Certified Advanced Network – Specialty  
 AWS Certified Cloud Practitioner  
 AWS Certified Data Analytics – Specialty  
 AWS Certified Developer - Associate  
 AWS Certified DevOps Engineer - Professional  
 AWS Certified Security - Specialty  
 AWS Certified Solutions Architect - Associate (Cloud)  
 AWS Certified Solutions Architect - Professional (Cloud)  
 AWS Certified SysOpsAdministrator-Associate (Cloud)  
 AXELOS ITIL 4 certifications  
 BICSI Data Center Design Consultant  
 BICSI ITS Technician  
 BICSI Technician and Registered Communications  
 Distribution Designer  
 Brocade Certified Network Engineer  
 Brocade Certified Network Professional  
 Brocade Certified Fabric Designer  
 Brocade Certified Fabric Professional (BCFP)  
 BTA Certified Blockchain Security Professional (CBSP)  
 Certificate in Information Security Management Principles  
 Certificate of Cloud Security Knowledge (CCSK)  
 Certificate of Cloud Auditing Knowledge (CCAK)  
 Certification of Capability in Business Analysis (CCBA)  
 Certified Analytics Professional (CAP)  
 Certified Artificial Intelligence Practitioner (CAIP)  
 Certified Artificial Intelligence Scientist (CAIS)  
 Certified Business Analysis Professional (CBAP)  
 Certified Business Continuity Manager/ISO 22301 (CBCM)  
 Certified Business Continuity Professional (BCBP)  
 Certified Business Process Associate (CBPA)  
 Certified Business Process Leader (CBPL)  
 Certified Business Process Professional (CBPP)  
 Certified Cisco Systems Instructor (CCSI)  
 Certified Cloud Architect  
 Certified Cloud Security Professional (CCSP)  
 Certified Cloud Technology Professional  
 Certified Compliance Professional  
 Certified Computer Examiner (CCE)  
 Certified Computing Professional (CCP-ISC2)  
 Certified Data Center Management Professional (CDCMP)  
 Certified Data Privacy Solutions Engineer(CDPSE - ISACA)  
 Certified Data Professional (CDP)

Certified Disaster Recovery Engineer (C/DRE)  
 Certified Enterprise Coach (Scrum/Agile)  
 Certified Ethical AI Professional (CEAP)  
 Certified Forensic Computer Examiner (CFCE)  
 Certified Fraud Examiner  
 Certified Healthcare Information Security and Privacy  
 Practitioner (HCISPP)  
 Certified in Convergent Network Technologies (CCNT)  
 Certified in Emerging Technology(CET-ISACA)  
 Certified in Governance, Risk and Compliance(formerly CAP)  
 Certified in Risk and Information Systems Control (CRISC)  
 Certified in the Governance of Enterprise IT (CGEIT)  
 Certified Information Privacy Manager- all countries  
 Certified Information Privacy Professional - all countries  
 Certified Information Privacy Technologist- all countries  
 Certified Information Security Manager (CISM)  
 Certified Information Systems Auditor (CISA)  
 Certified Information Systems Risk Manager/Mile2  
 Certified Information Systems Security Professional (CISSP)  
 Certified IP Telecom Network Specialist (CIPTS)  
 Certified IT Architect (IASA CITA)  
 Certified Kubernetes Administrator (CKA)  
 Certified Kubernetes Security Specialist (CKS)  
 Certified Manager of Software Quality (CMSQ)  
 Certified Network Professional - Enterprise/ Routing and  
 Services  
 Certified Penetration Testing Engineer (CPTe)  
 Certified Professional Scrum Product Owner  
 Certified Scrum Product Owner - Advanced  
 Certified Scrum Professional - ScrumMaster  
 Certified Protection Professional  
 Certified Scrum Developer  
 Certified Scrum Product Owner  
 Certified Scrum Professional Agile Leadership  
 Certified Scrum Trainer  
 Certified ScrumMaster  
 Certified ScrumMaster - Advanced  
 Certified Secure Software Lifecycle Professional (CSSLP)  
 Certified Software Quality Analyst (CSQA)  
 Certified Telecommunications Network Specialist (CTNS)  
 Certified Tester Foundation Level (CTFL) v4.0  
 Certified Tester Foundation Level Agile Tester (CTFL-AT)  
 Certified Tester Advanced Level Test Analyst (CTAL-TA)  
 Check Point Certified Security Administrator (CCSA)  
 Check Point Certified Security Expert (CCSE)  
 Check Point Certified Security Master (CCSM)  
 Cisco Certified CyberOps Associate  
 Cisco Certified Cybersecurity Professional  
 Cisco Certified Design Expert (CCDE)  
 Cisco Certified DevNet Associate

Cisco Certified DevNet Professional  
 Cisco Certified DevNet Expert  
 Cisco Certified Entry Network Technician (CCENT)  
 Cisco Certified Internetwork Expert (CCIE, all variations)  
 Cisco Certified Network Associate - Data Center  
 Cisco Certified Network Associate (CCNA Routing and  
 Switching)  
 Cisco Certified Network Associate (Network Security)  
 Cisco Certified Network Associate (Networking automation  
 and programmability)  
 Cisco Certified Network Associate (was CCNA Cloud)  
 Cisco Certified Network Associate (was CCNA  
 Collaboration)  
 Cisco Certified Network Associate (was CCNA Wireless)  
 Cisco Certified Network Associate (was Design Associate)  
 Cisco Certified Network Professional - Collaboration  
 Cisco Certified Network Professional - Data Center  
 Cisco Certified Network Professional - Service Provider  
 Cisco Certified Network Professional - Enterprise/Design  
 Cisco Certified Network Professional - Enterprise/ Routing  
 and Services  
 Cisco Certified Network Professional - Enterprise/Wireless  
 Networks  
 Cisco Certified Network Professional (CCNP-all)  
 Cisco Certified Network Professional - Security  
 Cisco Certified Systems Instructor (CCSI)  
 Cisco Data Center Unified Computing Design Specialist  
 Cisco Data Center Unified Fabric Support Specialist  
 Citrix Certified Associate - Networking  
 Citrix Certified Associate - Virtualization  
 Citrix Certified Expert – Networking  
 Citrix Certified Expert - Virtualization  
 Citrix Certified Instructor (CCI - Virtualization, Networking,  
 or Mobility)  
 Citrix Certified Professional - Networking  
 Citrix Certified Professional - Virtualization (CCP-V)  
 Citrix XenServer Certified (CC-XenServer)  
 CIW Advanced HTML5 and CSS3 Specialist  
 CIW Certified Database Design Specialist  
 CIW Web Design Professional  
 CIW Web Development Professional  
 CIW Web Foundations Associate  
 CIW Web Security Professional  
 Cloud U (Rackspace)  
 Cloudera Certified Associate Administrator  
 Cloudera Certified Associate Data Analyst  
 Cloudera Certified Associate Spark and Hadoop  
 Developer  
 Cloudera Certified Professional: Data Engineer  
 CompTIA A+

CompTIA Advanced Security Practitioner  
 CompTIA Certified Technical Trainer  
 CompTIA Cloud Essentials  
 CompTIA Cloud+  
 CompTIA Cybersecurity Analyst+  
 CompTIA Linux+  
 CompTIA Mobile App Security+  
 CompTIA Mobility+  
 CompTIA Network+  
 CompTIA Penetration Tester  
 CompTIA Project+  
 CompTIA Security+  
 CompTIA Server+  
 CompTIA Storage+  
 Convergence Technologies Professional (CTP)  
 CSX CyberSecurity Practitioner (CSXP)  
 CWNP Certified Wireless Security Professional (CWSP)  
 CWNP/Certified Wireless Analysis Professional (CWAP)  
 CWNP/Certified Wireless Design Professional (CWDP)  
 CWNP/Certified Wireless Network Administrator (CWNA)  
 CWNP/Certified Wireless Network Trainer (CWNT)  
 CWNP/Certified Wireless Network Expert (CWNE)  
 CWNP/Certified Wireless Technology Specialist (CWTS)  
 Cyber Security Forensic Analyst  
 Dell Cloud Infrastructure Design Proven Professional  
 Dell Cloud Services Architect - Expert (DCE - CA)  
 Dell Cloud Services Design Proven Professional  
 Dell Data Science Associate (DCA-DS)  
 Dell Data Science Specialist - Advanced Analytics (DCS-  
 DA)  
 Dell Information Storage and Management Foundations  
 Dell Platform Engineer/PowerScale - Specialist (DCS-PE)  
 Dell PowerEdge Association(EMC)  
 Dell PowerEdge Professional(EMC)  
 Dell PowerMax (all - Maintenance/Install/Operate)  
 Dell PowerStore (all - Deploy/Operate)  
 EC-Council Certified Offensive AI Security  
 Professional(COASP)  
 EC-Council Certified Application Security Engineer  
 EC-Council Certified Chief Information Security Officer  
 (CCISCO)  
 EC-Council Certified Cloud Security Engineer (CCSE)  
 EC-Council Certified DevSecOps Engineer (ECDE)  
 EC-Council Certified Encryption Specialist v2 (ECES)  
 EC-Council Certified Ethical Hacker (CEH)  
 EC-Council Certified Incident Handler V2 (ECIH)  
 EC-Council Certified Network Defender  
 EC-Council Certified Network Defense Architect (CNDA)  
 EC-Council Certified Offensive AI Security  
 Professional(OASP)

EC-Council Certified Penetration Testing Professional (CPENT)  
 EC-Council Certified Security Analyst(ECSA)  
 EC-Council Certified SOC Analyst (ECSA)  
 EC-Council Certified Threat Intelligence Analyst(CTIA)  
 EC-Council Computer Hacking Forensic Investigator (CHFI)  
 EC-Council Disaster Recovery Professional (EDRP)  
 EC-Council Web Application Hacking and Security Testing (WAHS)  
 Fortinet Network Security Professional  
 Fortinet Network Security Expert (NSE - all levels)  
 Fortinet Certified Expert in Cybersecurity (FCX)  
 Fundamentals of Google AI for Web-Based Machine Learning  
 GIAC Assessing and Auditing Wireless Networks  
 GIAC Certified Defending Advanced Threats (GDAT)  
 GIAC Certified Detection Analyst (GCDA)  
 GIAC Certified Enterprise Defender (GCED)  
 GIAC Certified Forensics Analyst (GCFA)  
 GIAC Certified Forensics Examiner  
 GIAC Certified Incident Handler (GCIH)  
 GIAC Certified Intrusion Analyst (GCI)  
 GIAC Certified Project Manager (GCPM)  
 GIAC Certified Web Application Defender  
 GIAC Certified Windows Security Administrator (GCWN)  
 GIAC Cloud Architecture & Design  
 GIAC Cloud Forensic Responder (GCFR)  
 GIAC Cloud Penetration Tester (GCPN)  
 GIAC Cloud Security Automation (GCSA)  
 GIAC Cloud Security Essentials (GCLD)  
 GIAC Cloud Threat Detection (GCTD)  
 GIAC Continuous Monitoring Certification (GMON)  
 GIAC Critical Controls Certifications (GCCC)  
 GIAC Critical Infrastructure Protection Certification (GCIP)  
 GIAC Cyber Threat Intelligence (GCTI)  
 GIAC Defending Advanced Threats (GDAT)  
 GIAC Defensible Security Architecture (GDSA)  
 GIAC Enterprise Vulnerability Assessor (GEVA)  
 GIAC Experienced Cybersecurity Specialist(GX-CS)  
 GIAC Experienced Forensic Analyst(GX-FA)  
 GIAC Experienced Incident Handler(GX-IH)  
 GIAC Experienced Intrusion Analyst (GX-IA)  
 GIAC Experienced Penetration Tester (GX-PN)  
 GIAC Exploit Researcher and Advanced Penetration Tester  
 GIAC Global Industrial Cyber Security Professional (GICSP)  
 GIAC Information Security Fundamentals (GISF)  
 GIAC Information Security Professional (GISP)  
 GIAC iOS and MacOS Examiner  
 GIAC Mobile Device Security Analyst (GMOB)

GIAC Network Forensic Analyst (GNFA)  
 GIAC Penetration Tester (GPEN)  
 GIAC Public Cloud Security (GPCS)  
 GIAC Python Coder (GPYC)  
 GIAC Reverse Engineering Malware (GREM)  
 GIAC Security Essentials (GSEC)  
 GIAC Security Expert (GSE)  
 GIAC Security Professional(GSP)  
 GIAC Security Operations Certified (GSOC)  
 GIAC Security Operations Manager (GSOM)  
 GIAC Strategic Planning, Policy, and Leadership (GSTRT)  
 GIAC Systems and Network Auditor (GSNA)  
 GIAC Web Application Penetration Tester (GWAPT)  
 Global Industrial Cyber Security Professional (GICSP)  
 Google Certified Professional Cloud Architect  
 Google Cloud AI Engineer Certification  
 Google Cloud Associate - Cloud Engineer  
 Google Cloud Certified - Professional Data Engineer  
 Google Cloud DevOps Engineer  
 Google Professional Cloud Developer  
 Google Professional Cloud Network Engineer  
 Google Professional Cloud Security Engineer  
 Google Professional Machine Learning Engineer  
 HDI Customer Service Representative  
 HDI Desktop Support Manager  
 HDI Desktop Support Technician  
 HDI Support Center Analyst  
 HDI Support Center Director  
 HDI Support Center Manager  
 HDI Support Center Team Lead  
 HDI Technical Support Professional  
 Help Desk Analyst: Tier 1 Support Specialist/Ed2Go  
 Help Desk Team Lead/RCCSP  
 Hitachi Qualified Professional - Storage Administration  
 HP Accredited Solutions Expert (ASE - all)  
 HP Accredited Technical Professional (ATP - all)  
 HP ASE - Storage Solutions V4  
 HP ATP - Hybrid IT Solutions V2  
 HP ATP - Storage Solutions V1 /V2  
 HP Master Accredited Solutions Expert (MASE - all)  
 HP Master ASE – Hybrid IT Solutions Architect V1  
 HP Master ASE - Storage Solutions Architect V3  
 Huawei Certified Network Associate (all)  
 Huawei Certified Network Professional (all)  
 Huawei Certified Network Expert (all)  
 IAPP Certified Information Privacy Manager  
 IAPP Certified Information Privacy Professional  
 IBM Advanced Systems Administrator (all)  
 IBM AI Engineering Professional Certificate

IBM Applied AI Engineering Professional Certificate  
 IBM Certified Administrator - Cognos Analytics  
 IBM Certified Application Developer - Cloud Solutions v3  
 IBM Certified Application Developer - DB2 9.7 for Linux, Unix and Windows  
 IBM Certified Application Developer (all)  
 IBM Certified Data Architect - Big Data  
 IBM Certified Data Engineer - Big Data  
 IBM Certified Data Scientist - Professional  
 IBM Certified Database Administrator - DB2 11.1 for Linux, UNIX and Windows  
 IBM Certified Developer - Cognos Analytics  
 IBM Certified Professional Developer - Cloud v4  
 IBM Certified Professional SRE - Cloud v1  
 IBM Certified Solution Advisor - Blockchain Platform V2  
 IBM Certified Solution Advisor - DevOps V2  
 IBM Certified Solution Architect – Cloud v4  
 IBM Certified Solution Architect - Data Warehouse V1  
 IBM Certified Solution Designer (all)  
 IBM Certified Specialist - AI Enterprise Workflow V1  
 IBM Certified Systems Administrator: WebSphere Application Server Network Deployment  
 IBM Certified Systems Administrator (all)  
 IBM Cloud Security Engineer Specialty  
 Information Systems Security Architecture Professional (ISSAP/CISSP)  
 Information Systems Security Engineering Professional (ISSEP/CISSP)  
 InfoSys Security Management Professional (ISSMP/CISSP)  
 ITIL Expert Certification  
 ITIL Foundation Certification  
 ITIL Intermediate Certification  
 ITIL Master Certification  
 JBoss Certified Developer (Seam, Persistence, ESB)  
 Juniper Networks Certified Internet Associate  
 Juniper Networks Certified Internet Expert  
 Juniper Networks Certified Internet Professional  
 Juniper Networks Certified Internet Specialist  
 Linux Foundation Certified Engineer  
 Linux Foundation Certified System Administrator  
 Linux Professional Institute certification (LPIC- 2)  
 Linux Professional Institute certification (LPIC- 3)  
 Magento 2 Certified Professional Developer  
 Magento 2 Certified Associate Developer  
 Microsoft Certified Azure Administrator  
 Microsoft Certified Azure Administrator Associate  
 Microsoft Certified Azure AI Engineer Associate  
 Microsoft Certified Azure Cybersecurity Architect Expert

Microsoft Certified Azure Data Engineer Associate  
 Microsoft Certified Azure Data Scientist Associate  
 Microsoft Certified Azure Developer Associate  
 Microsoft Certified Azure DevOps Engineer Associate  
 Microsoft Certified Azure DevOps Engineer Expert  
 Microsoft Certified Azure Enterprise Data Analyst Associate  
 Microsoft Certified Azure Fundamentals  
 Microsoft Certified Azure Security Engineer Associate  
 Microsoft Certified Azure Solutions Architect  
 Microsoft Certified Azure Solutions Architect Expert  
 Microsoft Certified Professional  
 Microsoft Certified Trainer (MCT)  
 Microsoft MTA: Windows OS  
 Microsoft Office Specialist  
 Mile2 Certified Cloud Security Officer(C)/CSO)  
 MIT CSAIL Professional Certificate in AI and Machine Learning  
 MIT Professional Certificate in Machine Learning & AI  
 MongoDB Associate Data Modeler  
 MongoDB Associate Database Administrator  
 MongoDB Certified Associate Developer  
 MongoDB Certified DBA  
 NetApp Certified Data Administrator, ONTAP (NCDA)  
 NetApp Certified Hybrid Cloud Architect  
 NetApp Certified Implementation Engineer (NCIE)  
 NetApp Certified Storage Associates – Hybrid Cloud  
 NetScout/nGenius Certified Analyst (nCA)  
 NetScout/nGenius Certified Associate (nCA)  
 NetScout/nGenius Certified Expert (nCE)  
 NetScout/nGenius Certified Specialist (nCS)  
 Novell Certified Administrator (CNA)  
 Novell Certified Novell Engineer (CNE)  
 Novell Certified Instructor  
 Novell Certified Linux Engineer (Novell CLE)  
 Novell Certified Linux Professional (Novell CPL)  
 Novell Identity Manager Administrator  
 Offensive Security Defense Analyst (OSDA)  
 Offensive Security Certified Expert  
 Offensive Security Certified Professional(OSCP)  
 Offensive Security Defense Analyst (OSDA)  
 Offensive Security Defense Security Expert  
 Offensive Security Experienced Penetration Tester(OSEP)  
 Offensive Security Exploit Developer (OSED)  
 Offensive Security Exploitation Expert (OSEE)  
 Offensive Security Professional (OSCP)  
 Offensive Security Web Assessor (OSWA)  
 Offensive Security Web Expert (OSWE)  
 Offensive Security Wireless Professional (OSWP)  
 Okta Certified Administrator

Okta Certified Consultant  
Okta Certified Developer  
Okta Certified Professional  
Okta Certified Technical Architect  
Open Group Certified Architect (Open CA)  
Open Group Certified IT Specialist (Open CITS)  
Oracle Autonomous Database Cloud Certified Professional  
Oracle Business Intelligence Foundation Suite 11g Certified Implementation Specialist  
Oracle Certified Associate - DBA(OCA)  
Oracle Certified Associate - Java SE 8 Programmer  
Oracle Certified Associate - MySQL Heatwave  
Oracle Certified Associate - WebLogic Server 12c Administrator  
Oracle Certified Expert - Java SE Developer(all)  
Oracle Certified Expert - MySQL 5.1 Cluster Database Administrator  
Oracle Certified Master - DBA (OCM)  
Oracle Certified Master - Java SE Developer  
Oracle Certified Professional 2019 - DBA(OCF)  
Oracle Certified Professional - Fusion Middleware 11g/12c Forms Developer  
Oracle Certified Professional - Java EE Web Component Developer  
Oracle Certified Professional - Java SE 8 Programmer  
Oracle Certified Professional - Java SE Developer  
Oracle Certified Professional - MySQL 8.0 Database Administrator  
Oracle Certified Professional - WebLogic Server 12c Administrator  
Oracle Certified Professional, Java EE Web Component Developer  
Oracle Cloud Applications Implementation Professional  
Oracle Cloud Infrastructure 2022/2023 Certified Architect Professional  
Oracle Cloud Infrastructure Generative AI Professional  
Oracle Cloud Platform Application Integration Certified Professional  
Oracle Database PL/SQL Developer Certified Professional  
Oracle E-Business Suite 12 Certified Implementation Specialist  
Oracle Linux Certified Administrator (OCA)  
Oracle MySQL 8.x Database Developer Certified Professional  
Oracle PL/SQL Developer Associate  
Pegasystems Certified Data Scientist  
Pegasystems Certified Decisioning Consultant  
Pegasystems Certified Lead System Architect  
Pegasystems Certified Senior Systems Architect  
Pegasystems Certified System Architect

Pegasystems Certified Pega Business Architect  
Pegasystems Certified Robotics System Architect  
PHP Certification  
Pivotal Application Architect  
Pivotal Cloud Foundry Operator certification  
Pivotal Developer  
PMI Agile Certified Practitioner (PMI-ACP)  
PMI Certified Associate in Project Management (CAPM)  
PMI Construction Professional  
PMI Portfolio Management Professional (PfMP)  
PMI Professional in Business Analysis (PMI-PBA)  
PMI Program Management Professional (PgMP)  
PMI Project Management Professional (PMP)  
PMI Risk Management Professional (PMI-RMP)  
Prince2 Foundation  
Prince2 Practitioner  
Professional Certified Investigator  
Professional in Project Management (GAQM)  
Qlik Sense Business Analyst  
Qlik Sense Data Architect  
Qualified Information Security Professional Q/ISP  
Rackspace Certified Technician  
Red Hat Certified Architect (RHCA)  
Red Hat Certified Architect: Cloud  
Red Hat Certified Architect: Enterprise Applications  
Red Hat Certified Architect: Infrastructure  
Red Hat Certified Engineer (RHCE)  
Red Hat Certified Enterprise Application Developer  
Red Hat Certified Specialist in Business Process Design  
Red Hat Certified Specialist in Cloud Infrastructure  
Red Hat Certified Specialist in Linux Performance Tuning  
Red Hat Certified Specialist in Messaging Administration  
Red Hat Certified Systems Administrator (RHCSA)  
RSA Certified Administrator (RSA/CA)  
RSA Certified Instructor (RSA/CI)  
SAFe Certification  
Salesforce B2C Commerce Cloud Developer  
Salesforce Certified Administrator  
Salesforce Certified Advanced Administrator  
Salesforce Certified Application Architect  
Salesforce Certified Data Architect  
Salesforce Certified Hyperautomation Specialist  
Salesforce Certified Integration Architecture Designer  
Salesforce Certified Platform Developer  
Salesforce Certified Systems Architect  
Salesforce Certified Technical Architect  
Salesforce Certified User Experience Designer  
Salesforce Identity and Access Management Architect  
Salesforce Platform App Builder

SAS Certified Data Integration Developer for SAS 9  
SAS Certified Data Scientist Using SAS 9  
SAS Certified Platform Administrator for SAS 9  
SAS Certified Predictive Modeler - SAS Enterprise Miner  
SAS Certified Professional: Advanced Programming/SAS 9.4  
SAS Certified Specialist Base Programming/SAS 9.4  
SAS Certified Specialist: Natural Language Processing and Computer Vision  
SAS Certified Statistical Business Analyst - SAS 9  
SAS Certified Advanced Analytics Professional Using SAS 9  
SAS Certified Data Quality Steward for SAS®  
SAS Certified Professional: AI and Machine Learning  
SAS Certified Professional: Data Curation for SAS Data Scientists  
SAS Certified Specialist: Visual Business Analytics  
ServiceNow Certified Application Developer (CAD)  
ServiceNow Certified Implementation Specialist (CIS)  
ServiceNow Certified Systems Administrator (CSA)  
Siebel 8 Consultant Certified Expert  
Six Sigma Black Belt  
Six Sigma Green Belt  
Six Sigma Master Black Belt  
Six Sigma Yellow Belt  
SNIA Certified Storage Architect  
SNIA Certified Storage Networking Expert (SCSN-E)  
SNIA Certified Storage Professional  
SNIA Certified Systems Engineer Sniffer Certified Expert  
SolarWinds Certified Professional (SCP)  
SonicWall Network Security Administrator  
Splunk Core Certified User  
SUSE Certified Administrator  
SUSE Enterprise Engineer (SCE)  
SUSE Enterprise Architect or (SEA)  
Systems Security Certified Practitioner (SSCP)  
Tableau Desktop Certified Professional  
Tableau Server Certified Professional  
Teradata SQL for Business Users  
Teradata Vantage Administration  
Teradata Vantage Analytics  
Teradata Vantage Architecture  
Teradata Vantage Data Engineering Certified  
Teradata  
Vantage Data Science Master  
Teradata Vantage Master 2.0  
Teradata Vantage Cloud Lake Associate Certified  
TIBCO Certified Professional  
TIBCO Certified SOA Architect  
TOGAF 9 Certified

Virtualization Council Master Infrastructure Architect  
VMware Certified Advanced Professional - Digital Workspace  
VMware Certified Advanced Professional 6.5 - Data Center Virtualization Design  
VMware Certified Advanced Professional – Network Virtualization  
VMware Certified Advanced Professional (all)  
VMware Certified Advanced Professional 6 - Data Center Virtualization Deployment  
VMware Certified Advanced Professional 6/7 - Cloud Mgt and Automation Deployment  
VMware Certified Advanced Professional 6/7 - Cloud Mgt and Automation Design  
VMware Certified Design Expert – Network Virtualization  
VMware Certified Design Expert - Cloud Mgt and Automation  
VMware Certified Design Expert (all)  
VMware Certified Design Expert 6 - Data Center Virtualization  
VMware Certified Professional - Endpoint & Workload Security  
VMware Certified Professional – Desktop/Workspace  
VMware Certified Professional - Network Virtualization  
VMware Certified Professional - Security  
VMware Certified Professional 6 - Data Center Virtualization (VCP6-DCV)  
VMware Certified Professional 6.5 - Data Center Virtualization (VCP6.5-DCV)  
VMware Certified Professional 6/6.5  
VMware Certified Professional 6/7 - Cloud Mgt and Automation  
VMware Certified Technical Associate - Data Center Virtualization  
Zachman Certified - Enterprise Architect

### 4-YEAR IT CERTIFICATIONS PAY TRENDS

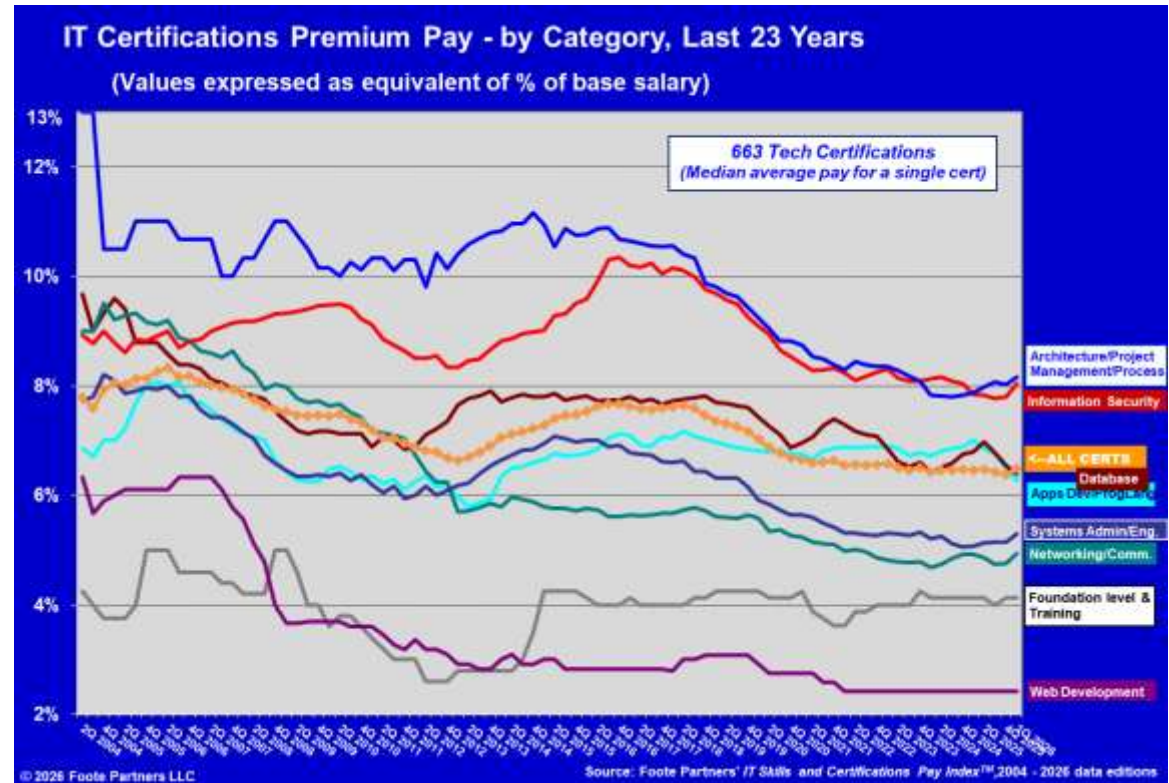
(Through 4/1/2026 – 116,563 IT Professionals)

IT CERTIFICATIONS CATEGORIES	# of certs surveyed	Change in Average Premium Pay by Category					
		% Change 3 mos	% Change 6 mos	% Change ANNUAL	% Change 2 yrs	% Change 3 yrs	% Change 4 yrs
Training and Beginner/Foundation level	8	0.0%	3.1%	0.0%	0.0%	3.1%	13.8%
Apps Development/Prog. Languages	74	-3.2%	-7.3%	-10.4%	-6.7%	-9.2%	-9.0%
Data/Database	67	-2.3%	-5.9%	-6.1%	-0.3%	-6.9%	-12.3%
Web Development	12	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Networking & Communications	108	3.7%	3.9%	0.2%	5.2%	2.6%	-0.9%
System Administration/Engineering	132	2.9%	2.9%	4.5%	1.7%	-0.2%	-0.3%
Information/Cyber Security	162	3.2%	3.6%	2.6%	-1.0%	-3.1%	-2.4%
Architecture/Project Management/Process	100	1.7%	1.1%	3.6%	4.2%	-2.4%	-1.5%
<b>ALL CERTIFICATIONS REPORTED</b>	<b>663</b>	<b>1.77%</b>	<b>0.96%</b>	<b>0.46%</b>	<b>1.12%</b>	<b>-1.22%</b>	<b>-0.89%</b>

### 17-YEAR IT CERTIFICATIONS PAY TRENDS BY CATEGORY

% Change in Average Median Pay for a Single IT Certification)

(Through 4/1/2026 – 116,563 IT Professionals)



SOURCE: Foote Partners 2026 [IT Skills & Certifications Pay Index™](#)

Pay data supporting these charts available in the [IT Skills and Certifications Pay Index™](#) – 1Q 2026 data edition

## HIGHEST PAYING IT Certifications (cash pay premiums for all 663 certs surveyed, ranked)

These IT certifications are earning average cash pay premiums equivalent to 10 percent or higher of base salary for the period January 1, 2026 to April 1, 2026. **Shown in alphabetical order by overall rank in descending order including ties.** **Green/Red** = increased/decreased in market value this quarter. **Purple** = Made the list this quarter for first time

1. Certified Artificial Intelligence Scientist (CAIS)	6.[Tie] <b>BICSI Data Center Design Consultant</b> Certification of Capability in Business Analysis (CCBA) Certified Scrum Professional Agile Leadership Certified Business Analysis Professional (CBAP) Certified Cloud Security Professional (ISC2-CCSP) Certified Data Privacy Solutions Engineer(CDPSE-ISACA) Certified Enterprise Coach (Scrum/Agile) Certified in Governance, Risk and Compliance (ISC(2)) Certified Information Privacy Manager- all countries Certified Information Security Manager (CISM) Certified Professional Scrum Product Owner Cisco Certified Cybersecurity Professional Cisco Certified DevNet Expert Cisco Certified Network Professional - Security CyberSecurity Forensic Analyst (CSFA) <b>EC-Council Certified Chief Information Security Officer (CCISCO)</b> GIAC Certified Forensics Analyst (GCFA) GIAC Certified Intrusion Analyst (GCIA) <b>GIAC Cloud Architecture &amp; Design</b> GIAC Cloud Security Automation (GCSA) <b>GIAC Cloud Threat Detection (GCTD)</b> GIAC Critical Controls Certifications (GCCC) GIAC Experienced Forensic Analyst(GX-FA) GIAC Experienced Incident Handler(GX-IH) GIAC Experienced Intrusion Analyst (GX-IA) GIAC Experienced Penetration Tester (GX-PN) GIAC Exploit Researcher and Advanced Penetration Tester (GXPN) GIAC Reverse Engineering Malware (GREM) Google Cloud - Professional Cloud Security Engineer IBM Certified Data Architect - Big Data <b>IBM Certified Data Scientist - Professional</b>	6.[cont.] InfoSys Security Architecture Professional (ISSAP/CISSP) InfoSys Security Management Professional (ISSMP/CISSP) Offensive Security Certified Expert Okta Certified Consultant <b>Okta Certified Technical Architect</b> Open Group Certified Architect (Open CA) Pegasystems Certified Data Scientist <b>Pegasystems Certified Lead System Architect</b> PMI Project Management Professional(PMP) SAFe Certification SAS Certified Data Scientist Using SAS 9 <b>SAS Certified Specialist: Natural Language Processing and Computer Vision</b> <b>SAS Certified Professional: AI and Machine Learning</b> VMware Certified Professional - Security
2. MIT CSAIL Professional Certificate in AI and Machine Learning		
3. Artificial Intelligence Engineer (AIE - all tracks)		
4. GIAC Security Expert (GSE)		
5. GIAC Strategic Planning, Policy, and Leadership		
6. [Tie] Certified in the Governance of Enterprise IT (CGEIT) GIAC Security Professional(GSP) <b>Microsoft Certified Azure Cybersecurity Architect Expert</b> MIT Professional Certificate in Machine Learning & AI Zachman Certified - Enterprise Architect		
5.[Tie] Certification of Capability in Business Analysis Certificate of Cloud Security Knowledge Certified in Risk and Information Systems Control Certified Information Systems Auditor Certified Information Systems Security Professional Certified ScrumMaster - Advanced Certified Secure Software Lifecycle Professional Certified Software Quality Manager Check Point Certified Security Master GIAC Experienced Cyber Security Specialist Google Certified Professional Cloud Architect Offensive Security Certified Professional Offensive Security Experienced Penetration Tester Offensive Security Exploitation Expert PMI Portfolio Management Professional PMI Program Management Professional TOGAF 9 Certified		

Source: Foote Partners [IT Skills & Certifications Pay Index™](#), 1Q 2026 data edition

## 2026 IT Skills & Certifications Pay Volatility Index™

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Demand dynamics in benchmarked certified and non-certified IT skills pay

(Data collected through April 1, 2026)

### **What is skills and certifications pay volatility?**

Skills volatility is defined as the incidence of gains or declines in premium pay earned by tech professionals for specific certified and noncertified technical and business skills. Tracking volatility is useful for both analyzing and forecasting demand for skills, for monitoring IT workforce transition, and for understanding IT management decision making. Volatility offers valuable insights that salary movements and hiring behavior do not. Important in this distinction is that skills can be segmented and benchmarked more meaningfully than jobs. Similar to IT positions, there are the broad categories (e.g., security, networking, systems, database, applications development). But also, more narrow areas, for example--web/e-commerce development, storage area networking, virtualization, architecture, business process, project management, methodology. But unlike most jobs, within categories or niche are very specific vendor-specific or vendor independent niches and skill specializations that provide more granular analysis (e.g., SAP, AJAX, Ruby on Rails, Microsoft Sharepoint, collaboration appliances, Oracle database).

## TRENDS Cash Pay Premium Volatility for IT Skills and Certifications

Pay volatility in market value for individual IT skills and certifications—defined as incidence of gains or declines over a period of time in premium pay earned by IT professionals for specific technical and business skills—displayed a **decrease from January 1, 2026 to April 1, 2026** to higher volatility in the prior quarter according to the latest update of Foote Partners' long-running *IT Skills and Certifications Pay Index™* of market values for tech skills. Market value is measured by tracking additional cash compensation paid to workers by their employers for specific certified and non-certified skills they possess.

### Current Quarterly Recap (data collected through April 1, 2026)

#### TOTAL: All Skills and Certifications

- **29.9%** of skills and certifications (417 of 1,394) recorded a change in cash pay in the 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter, two points lower than **27.9%** in the prior quarter, when 386 of 1,382 changed in market value. This is greater pay volatility than the **27.5%** average quarterly pay volatility over the last two years and the **28.4%** average in the past twelve months.
- **177 gained value** while **240 declined** in value in 1st Quarter 2026, significantly more than **138 and 248, respectively, in the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter.**

#### CERTIFIED SKILLS

- **25.7%** of reported certifications (167 of 650) changed value in the 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter 2026, an 8-point increase compared to the **17.9%** (116 of 648) pay volatility in the prior quarter. This is the largest quarterly volatility increase in more than two years, and higher than the 20.6% average volatility in the past years.
- **91 certifications gained** market value, while 76 declined in value, **a significantly different trend from the 45 gains and 71 declines, respectively, in the prior quarter.**

#### NONCERTIFIED SKILLS

- **33.6%** of reported IT skills (250 of 744) changed value in 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter 2026, 3 points fewer than the **36.8%** (270 of 734) pay volatility in the prior quarter.
- **86 noncertified skills gained** market value, while 164 **declined** in value in the 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter, compared to 93 and 177, respectively, in the prior quarter.

Tracking skills volatility is useful in many ways: analyzing and forecasting demand for skills; monitoring IT workforce transition; and understanding IT management decision making. In fact, we believe statistical volatility in IT skills pay offers a more complete story of true labor market conditions than salary movements and hiring behavior, among other common indicators. Important in this distinction is that skills can be segmented and benchmarked more meaningfully than jobs allowing microanalyses.

Similar to jobs, IT skills have broad skills categories that can be tracked (e.g., security, networking, systems, database, applications development). But unlike jobs, skills pay can be pinpointed to hundreds of niches and specializations. Also, unlike most job trends analyses, within skills categories and niches are *vendor-specific* and *vendor independent* skill specializations for more granular tracking, analysis, and forecasting.

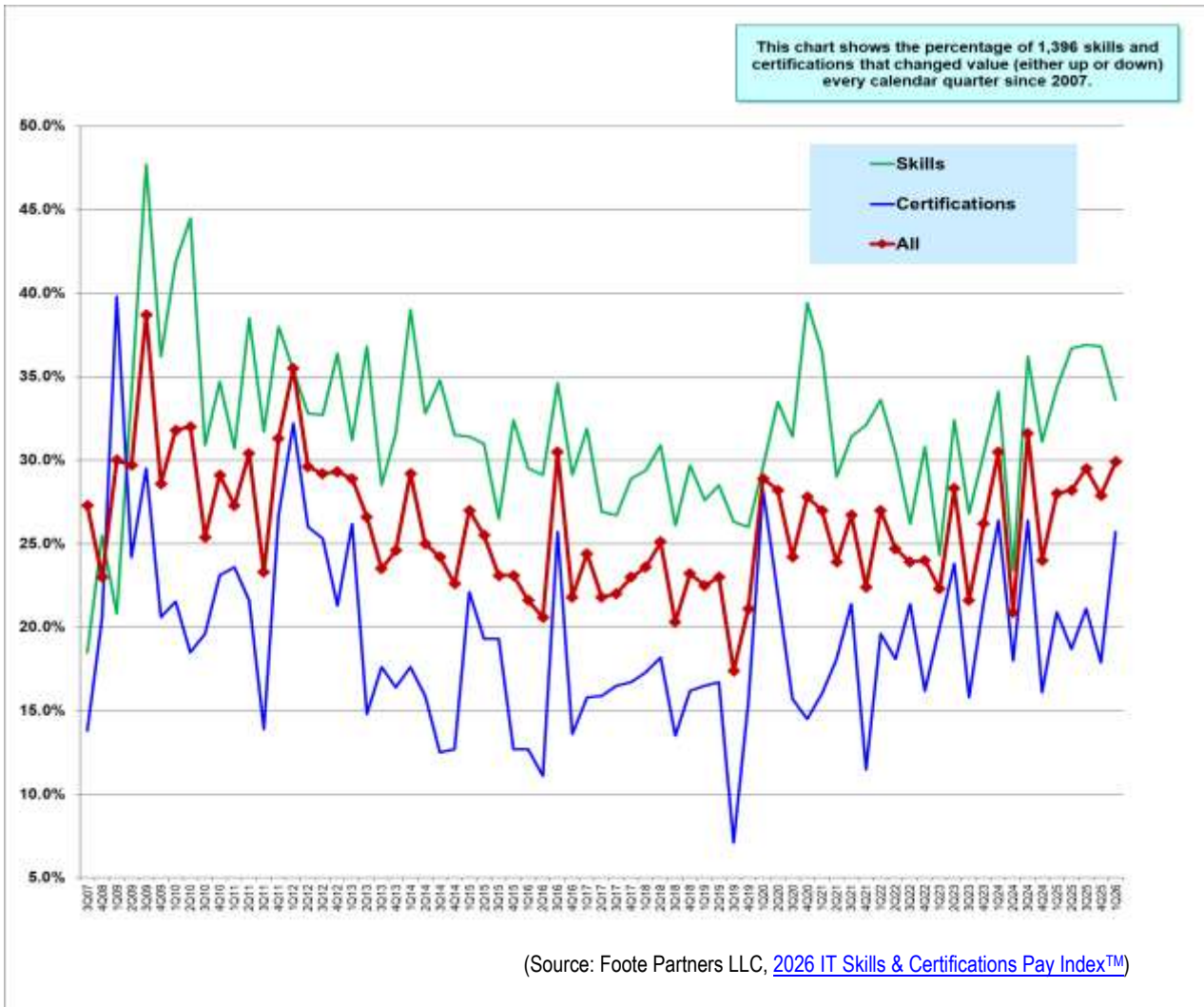
Quarterly volatility for all 1,396 certified and non-certified skills in the last two years has been widely variable, in the 21% to 31% range. This is an important shift trend that we believe signals a move that employers are taking a more long-term view to building their tech workforces for evolving technologies such as AI/Machine Learning and a variety of digital solutions. Tech leaders right now are demanding more agility, faster reaction times, and more predictable execution; this is keeping volatility high as skills markets constantly adjust to meet surges in demand for specific certified and non-certified skills.

They will be able to achieve those capabilities through applying architecture principles and practices to people management.

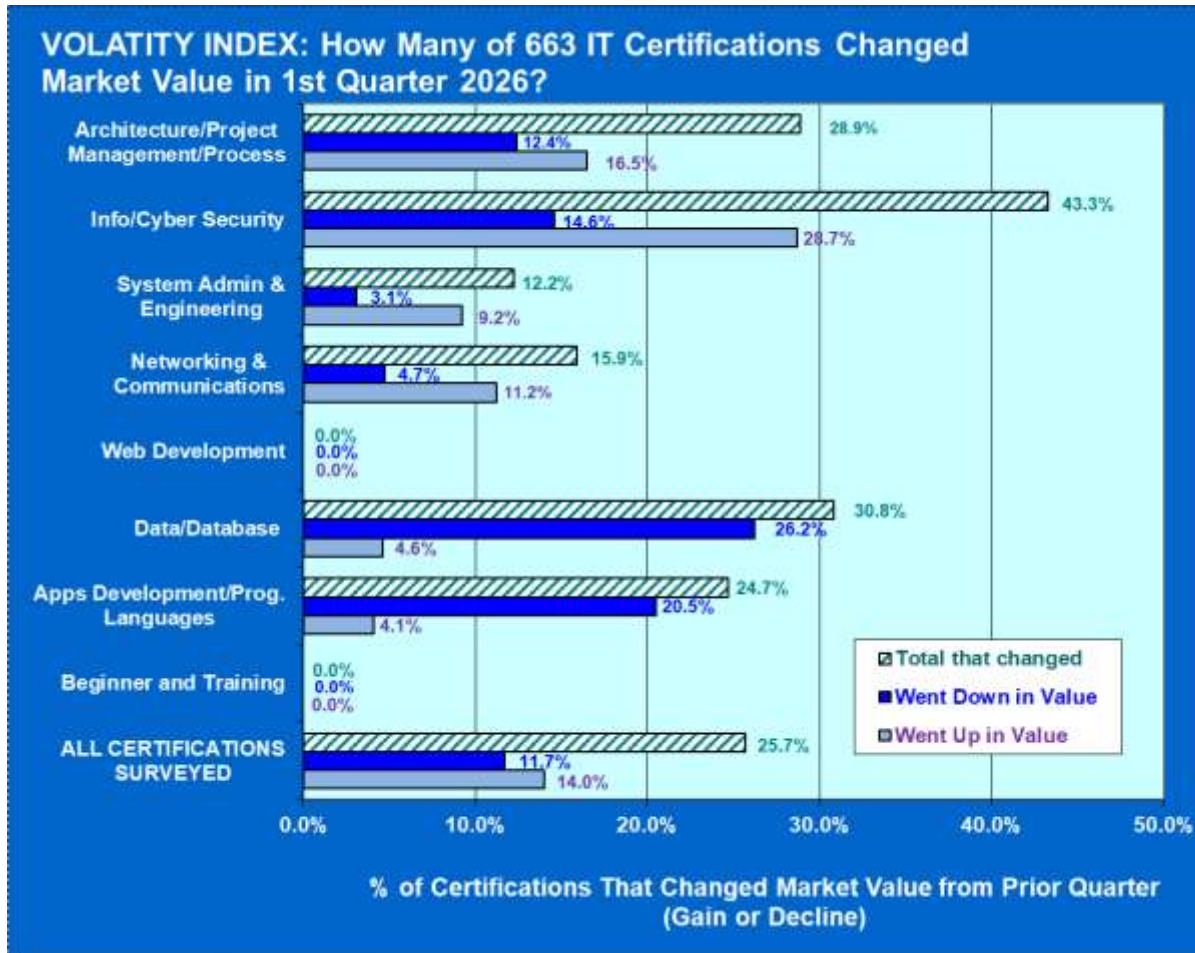
(Source: Foote Partners LLC, [2026 IT Skills & Certifications Pay Index™](#))

### VOLATILITY HIGHLIGHTS - 19 Year Trending

#### IT Skills and Certifications Volatility Index™ – 1,409 Skills and Certifications



**VOLATILITY HIGHLIGHTS** IT Certifications – 1<sup>ST</sup> Quarter 2026 datasets



**IT Skills and Certifications Volatility Index™**  
1Q 2026 data edition findings: Tech Certifications

**Certifications Volatility Highlights**

Among all 663 certifications reported in the prior quarter, the highest quarterly volatility ( $\geq 15\%$ ) occurred in these segments (ranked highest to lowest):

- Info/Cybersecurity
- Data/Database
- Architecture/PM/Process
- Applications Development/Programming Languages
- Networking & Communications

Within segments, notable downward volatility (value declines) occurred most in these (ranked):

- Data/Database
- Applications Development/Programming Languages

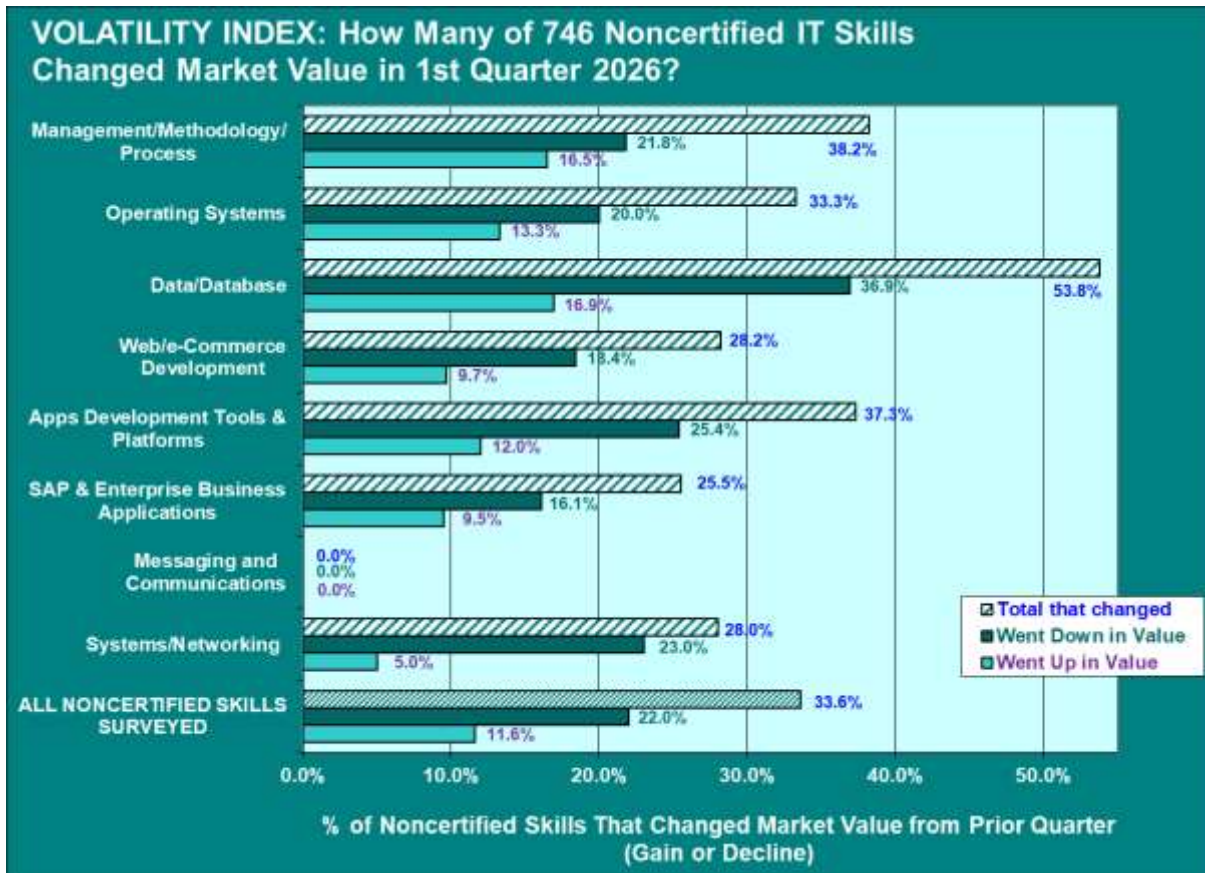
Within segments, notable upward volatility (value gains) occurred most in these:

- Info/Cybersecurity
- Architecture/Project Mgt/Process

(Pay data supporting these charts available in the [IT Skills and Certifications Pay Index™](#) – 1Q 2026 quarterly data edition)

(Source: Foote Partners LLC, [2026 IT Skills & Certifications Pay Index™](#))

**VOLATILITY HIGHLIGHTS** Non-certified IT Skills – 1<sup>ST</sup> Quarter 2026 datasets



(Source: Foote Partners LLC, [2026 IT Skills & Certifications Pay Index™](#))

**IT Skills and Certifications Volatility Index™**  
1Q 2026 data edition findings: Non-certified IT Skills

**Non-certified IT Skill Pay Volatility Highlights**

Among all 746 noncertified IT skills reported this quarter, high volatility ( $\geq 20\%$ ) occurred in all segments (ranked highest to lowest):

- Data/Database
- Management/ Methodology/Process
- Applications Development Tools & Platforms
- Operating Systems
- TIE: Web/Ecommerce Development; Systems/ Networking
- SAP & Enterprise Business Applications

Within segments, notable downward volatility (value declines) occurred most in these (ranked):

- Data/Database
- Applications Development Tools & Platforms
- Systems/ Networking
- Management/ Methodology/Process
- Operating Systems

Within segments, notable upward volatility (value gains) occurred most in these (ranked):

- No categories meet the  $\geq 20\%$  threshold

(Pay data supporting these charts available in the [IT Skills and Certifications Pay Index™](#) – 1Q 2026 quarterly data edition)

## **2026 IT Skills and Certifications Pay Index™ (1<sup>st</sup> Quarter 2026 datasets)**

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- Pay premiums for **1,409 certified and noncertified IT skills**
  - Three data points for each position: 10<sup>th</sup>, 50<sup>th</sup>, 90<sup>th</sup> percentile
- Verified and validated IT skills pay data from **116,568 IT professionals at 5,112 employers** in US and Canada
- Current data collected through April 1, 2026 (updated quarterly)
- Excel format data tables allowing for data loading into third-party data analytics tools from PayScale, MarketPay, PayFactors, CompAnalyst, WillisTowersWatson, Mercer, et. al.
- Certifications Guide containing basic information about surveyed IT certifications (pre-requisites; costs; test content; lab requirements, etc.)

### **Definition of IT skills premium pay**

- Pay that IT workers receive for possessing high-value IT and business skills used on the job
- Given in the form of a bonus, or embedded in base salary to adjust for the presence of a dominant vendor or technology central to job performance (examples: Cisco Network Engineer, Python Software Engineer, Redhat Linux Systems Administrator, or SAP Developer.)
- Often used to adjust either base pay or total pay in situations where job title does not match actual on-the-job duties and responsibilities, and changing the job title is not an attractive option
- May be used as a reward, recruiting inducement, retention tool, or as a guide for creating consulting rate cards

## ABOUT THIS RESEARCH

Foote Partners' primary research survey for tracking IT skills and certifications pay and supply/demand volatility is the industry-leading ***IT Skills and Certifications Pay Index™ (ITSCPI)***, launched in 1999, and the ***IT Skills and Certifications Volatility Index***, both updated every three months for the past 20 years. Data covering 500,801 tech professionals at 5,112 employers in 83 U.S. and Canada cities are reported for IT salaries and skills pay earned for 280 positions and 1,382 certified and noncertified technical and business skills. Verified and validated pay data for 116,568 tech workers has been included in the 1st Quarter 2026 data edition of the ITSCPI, compiled from data collected through April 1, 2026.

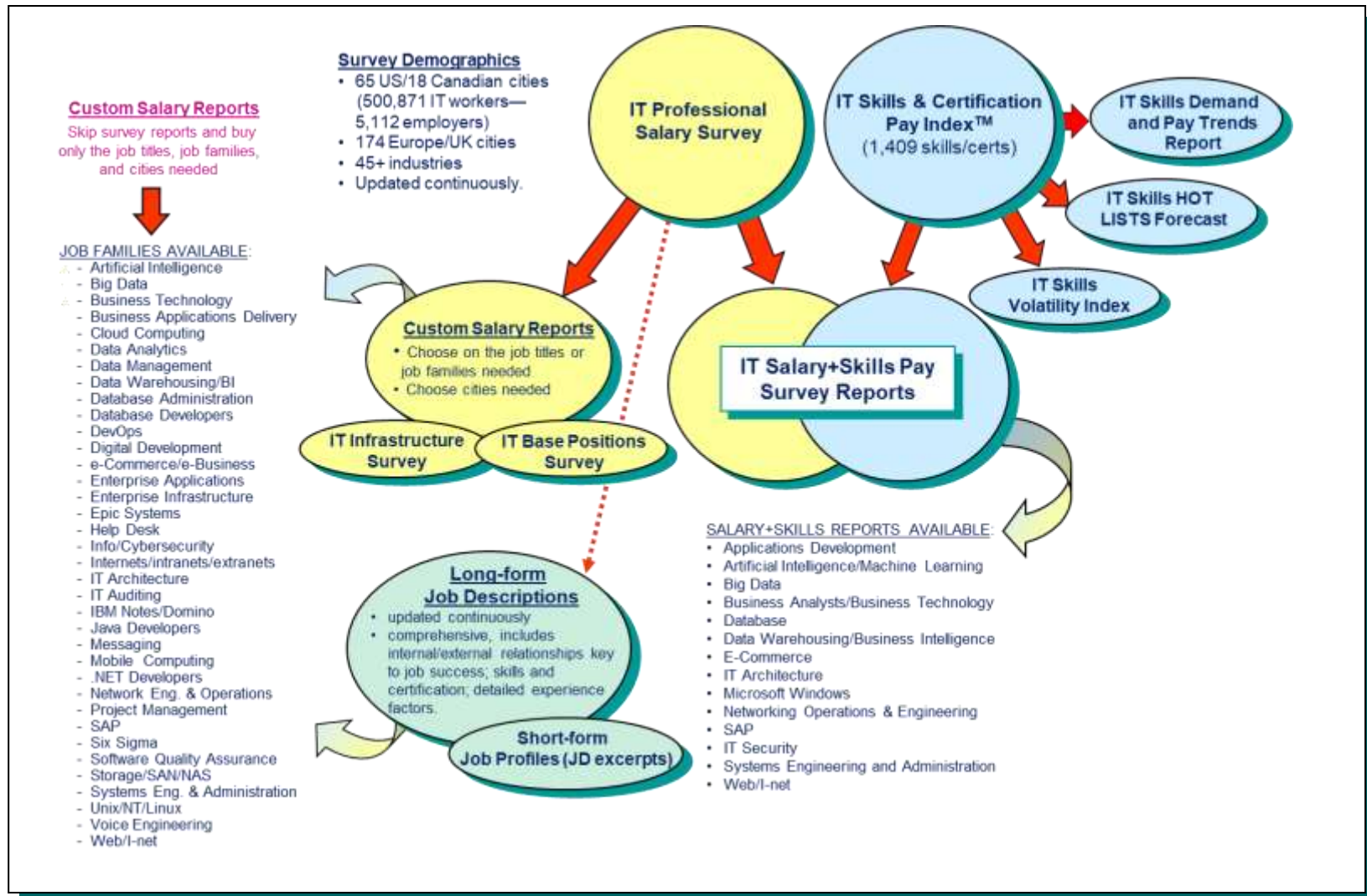
Demographics of the participating organizations for our latest update are as follows, measured most appropriately for the type of business, by revenues, assets, total premiums and operating budgets:

- 18% of participating organizations have \$5 billion+ in sales/\$15+ billion in total assets
- 28% of participating organizations earn more than \$1 billion in annual revenues or more than \$5 billion in total assets
- 46% of participating organizations have \$500+ million in sales/\$1+ billion in total assets/\$500+ million in premiums/\$500+ million operating budget (government, educational, not-for-profit)
- 54% of participating organizations fall in the SMB (small-to-medium sized business) segment, generally defined as organization under \$500 million in sales.
- [Public sector] 5% have operating budgets of \$500 million or more, [nonprofit/educational sectors] 4% with operating budgets \$100 million to less than \$500 million

### TO OBTAIN A COPY OF THE LATEST ***IT SKILLS AND CERTIFICATIONS PAY INDEX™***

Please visit the Foote Partners web site: [IT Skills and Certifications Pay Index™](#)  
 [IT Skills and Certifications Pay Volatility Index](#)

## Foote Partners 2026 IT Compensation Survey Product Map



## **ABOUT FOOTE PARTNERS**

Foote Partners, LLC is a technology analyst firm and independent benchmark research organization focusing on the people (versus vendor) side of managing technology and the IT labor force. A thought leader and trusted advisor to thousands of employers on five continents who purchase our products and services, we provide benchmark data and pragmatic forward-thinking advice and market intelligence targeting the tech workforce in the modern highly integrated business/IT hybrid environment in which all private and public organizations now operate.

Our products are deeply grounded in specialized proprietary data-driven statistical and empirical research, benchmark surveys, and business intelligence collected from 5,112 North American employers with whom we have deep longstanding research partnerships. These partnerships have been created and supported specifically to enable unique market intelligence views and difficult-to-find decision support research on the multiple facets of IT human capital management. As a group, these U.S., Canadian, and European partners were selected to meet strict criteria for what we believe is the most meaningful demographic representation for tech professionals in each local labor markets.

Founded in 1997 and comprised of former Gartner industry analysts, McKinsey & Company, Mercer and WillisTowersWatson senior consultants, and former corporate HR, IT, and business executives, the firm's research division publishes 50+ quarterly-updated benchmarking, analytical research and forecasting products that help employers benchmark their IT compensation, solve difficult information technology management and workforce problems, and strengthen their ability to execute complex business solutions.

Foote Partners tech compensation survey findings and labor market trend analyses are featured regularly in countless business, HR, and IT media sources and periodicals around the globe, including *Bloomberg BusinessWeek*, *Forbes*, *Fortune*, *Wall Street Journal*, *New York Times*, *CIO Magazine*, *ComputerWorld*, and *WorldatWork's Journal* and *Workspan Magazine*; and in appearances on network and cable television, National Public Radio, and countless podcasts and webcasts.

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