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Q4 2026 research update

IT Skills Demand and Pay Trends Report

- **IT Skills & Certifications HOT LIST Forecast**
- **IT Skills & Certifications Pay Volatility Index™**

Findings* from the latest quarterly edition of ***IT Skills & Certifications Pay Index™***

October 2026

*** U.S, and Canadian data trends, analysis and forecasts from quantitative and empirical research involving from 5,137 U.S. and Canadian employers and their 503,375 tech professionals**

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A message from our Co-founder and Chief Research Officer

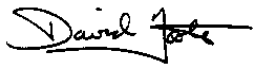
As forecast analysts, our firm has regularly monitored a tumultuous economy and the impact of a group of exceptionally high-momentum emerging technologies for more than 25 years. We collect information and conduct rigorous interviews with decisionmakers within our network of 5,137 research partners, representing 38 industries. It's important to consider all credible sources because the present and future tech labor market has, and will continue to be defined, in part by all of these variables in this U.S. election year.

However, it is essential to recall that even before the current economic and technological shifts, the employment market for tech professionals had been undergoing a long transition. Beyond weaknesses in specific employment sectors, a bigger dilemma has long faced tech leaders: how to implement new staffing models that capitalize on investments in AI operations, digital infrastructure, cybersecurity, and rapidly evolving technologies. These models put a premium on skills sourcing strategies using a variety of labor channels—FTEs, PTEs, contingent, temporary, contract, alliances, partnerships—that can optimize a workforce mix for keeping systems and networks running smoothly while also enabling business strategies that have thrust the tech workforce into becoming a driver of revenues.

Not helping is the chaos that continues to surround tech job titles and misalignment: lack of standardization in titles from one company to another, and often within companies themselves. Setting the right pay levels for workers who share the same job titles but differ in core skills and experience is no small problem, as salary surveys are often title-driven and mismatches are common. Plus, the pace of change in tech jobs and limited HR resources have forced employers into work-around solutions, many which are no longer working. The stakes are high: employers that can't measure their workers' value in a competitive marketplace will keep losing their best people and struggling to hire suitable replacements.

Foote Partners revolutionized the industry by solving these and other thorny compensation problems with the release of our first ***IT Professional Salary Survey*** in 1997 and ***IT Skills and Certifications Pay Index™*** in 1999 and subsequently launching our ***Tech People Architecture/Agile Compensation*** practice. Our specialized methodology has continued to collect and validate compensation data for workers who require differentiated pay for specific IT and tech skills.

We are pleased to offer you this updated analysis of data trends and empirical research, based on continuous tracking of 1,420 IT skills, pay, and demand at more than 5,137 private and public-sector US and Canadian employers, encompassing 503,375 total IT professionals.



David Foote, Co-founder, Chief Analyst & Research Officer

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(To obtain the skills and certifications pay data used in producing this trends report, please visit www.footepartners.com)

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Q4 2026 Trends Analysis and Summary of New Data

IT Skills and Certifications Pay Index™

The industry's only comprehensive survey of cash pay premiums for individual certified and non-certified IT and business skills

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SKILLS PAY AND DEMAND TRENDS OVERVIEW – Quarterly Update

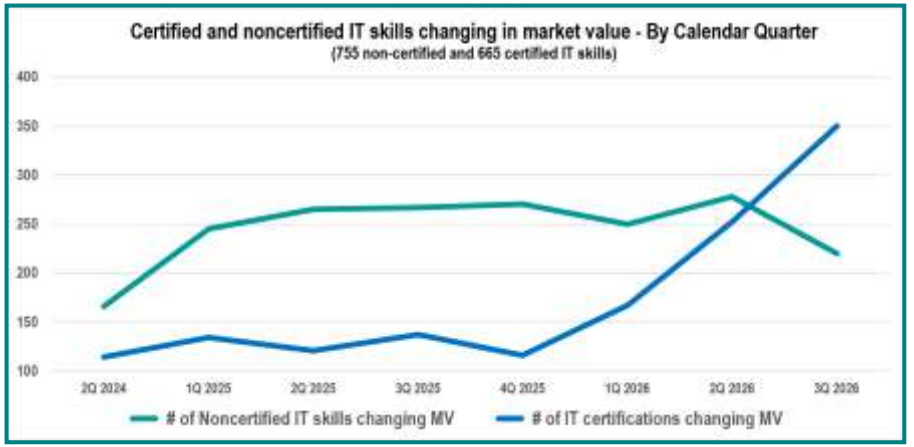
HEADLINES FROM OUR NEW QUARTERLY SKILLS DEMAND RESEARCH UPDATE

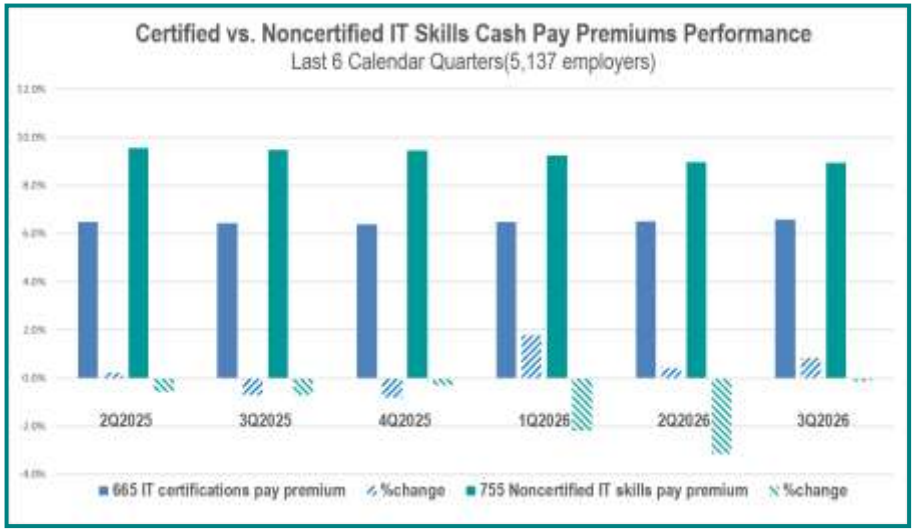
- A continued decline in average cash pay premiums for noncertified IT skills---six consecutive quarterly losses --- while the average market value for IT certifications increased for the third straight quarter.
- 3Q 2026 recorded the highest pay volatility in IT skills and certification for a single calendar quarter in 17 years (since 4Q 2009). Moreover, the pay gap between certified and noncertified IT skills is the narrowest it has been since late 2019
- 40.2% of skills and certifications (570 of 1,417) recorded changes in cash pay premiumsin the 3rd Quarter, a continuation of record volatility that appeared in the prior quarter when 37.6% (530 of 1,417) changed in market value.
- The greatest gains in IT certification pay premiums between July 1 and October 1 were Web Development/E-commerce, Networking & Communications, and System Administration & Engineering categories
- Among 207 AI and AI-adjacent skills reported by Foote Partners are one-half of the highest-paying noncertified IT skills premium bonuses, earning 20% to 24% base salary equivalency. Among highest-paying IT certifications, more than half are security certifications, earning the equivalent of 12% to 15% of base salary.

Extra pay awarded by employers to talented tech professionals for **665 IT certifications**---also known as cash pay premiums---increased nearly 1% overall in the 3rd Quarter of 2026 and 2.3% in the past year. This is according to Foote Partners' long-running ***IT Skills and Certifications Pay Index™*** (ITSCPI) of cash pay premiums for 1,420 certified and non-certified IT skills at 5,137 employers in the U.S. and Canada. For **755 non-certified IT skills,** the story was opposite: a 0.2% decline in the 3rd Quarter of 2026 and a much larger 5.6% drop in the last twelve months.

A key to these performance trends is understanding recent pay volatility findings. According to Foote Partners' latest ***IT Skills and Certifications Pay Volatility Index***, **the highest overall pay volatility in 17 years for a single calendar quarter was recorded this past quarter:** 40.2% of skills and certifications (570 of 1,417) recorded a change in cash pay in the 3rd Quarter, a continuation of record volatility that appeared in the prior quarter when 37.6% (530 of 1,417) changed in market value. (see Fig. 1 & 2)

There's an important difference between certified and noncertified IT skills: the market value of noncertified IT skills is fundamentally determined by employers organically setting the market price as they consume them, while supply/demand and pay for IT certifications are more vendor-driven and influenced by promotional marketing. In the most recent quarter, 52.6%(350 of 665) certifications changed in market value versus 29.3(220 of 752) if noncertified IT skills.





Figs. 1 & 2 Source: 3Q 2026 data edition - *IT Skills and Certifications Pay Index–Foote Partners*

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SKILLS PAY AND DEMAND TRENDS OVERVIEW – Quarterly Update

How AI is Changing the Labor Landscape

For much of 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 averaging nearly 3% base pay equivalent more than IT certifications. But more recently this gap has slightly narrowed as IT noncertified skills have declined in overall market value for six consecutive calendar quarters while IT certifications have increased for the third straight quarter in the third quarter of 2026. (Fig. 2).

"Our data is showing this new resilience in IT certifications being driven primarily by infrastructure and security certifications. The emergence of AI is forcing changes in systems, networks, and security, and in how organizations manage the new risk landscape. Vendors are aggressively marketing their tools and solutions," explains David Foote, chief analyst and research officer of Foote Partners. "Right now, there are 207 AI and AI-adjacent skills and certifications in our survey, up from 137 at the end of 2025. And 60% of them are earning above-average cash pay premium bonuses ranging from 10% to 24% base salary equivalent. AI-related skills and certifications will continue to surge in the future as vendors aggressively market their AI solutions in what will be an increasingly predatory marketplace for AI products and services."

Notes Foote, "These pay trends are clearly being driven by AI deployment shifting from experimental to operational at many organizations and hiring and paying IT talent is being adjusted accordingly. We are in a period of upheaval, with employers defining jobs more as collections of tasks: some that can be done entirely by an AI agent or robot, some by a human working with an AI agent, and finally, some that are uniquely human. These tasks will continue to change dramatically in 2027 and beyond. Skills and certifications will be mapped directly onto each of these three task buckets with new skills and skill combinations required for each task".

"In more than twenty five years of collecting and analyzing supply/demand and pay trend data for IT skills and certifications, we have rarely seen this kind of labor market behavior. "With the shift from AI models to production-ready, cost-effective products or services, organizations now need more people who understand how to architect, govern, secure, and operationalize highly interconnected technology ecosystems. Managing IT talent has never been more uncertain and unpredictable for enterprises large and small", continues Foote. "The bottom line is that the evolving relationship between professional skills and certifications, practical experience, AI literacy, and cross-disciplinary expertise is profoundly influencing how IT professionals are being hired, trained, and rewarded. As employers define jobs more as collections of tasks that can be done by machines or humans, or machines and humans, we will continue to see a constant flux of new combinations of skills and certifications mapped directly onto each of these evolving tasks."

Labor Economics Breakthroughs

Explains Foote, "The next big breakthrough in modern labor economics and compensation will be measuring the economic value of individual tasks. When we are able to quantify the value of the individual components that make up jobs rather than just valuing entire jobs, the cash pay premiums can be linked not only to certifications and technologies, but also to the specific high value tasks those skills enable. This is an intriguing new direction for skills-based compensation models unlike anything in the twenty five years we've been collecting, analyzing, and forecasting IT skills and certifications pay data."

Pay Performance, 3/6/12/24/36 months
Certified vs. Non-certified Tech Skills

(117,146 professionals, data through 10/1/2026)

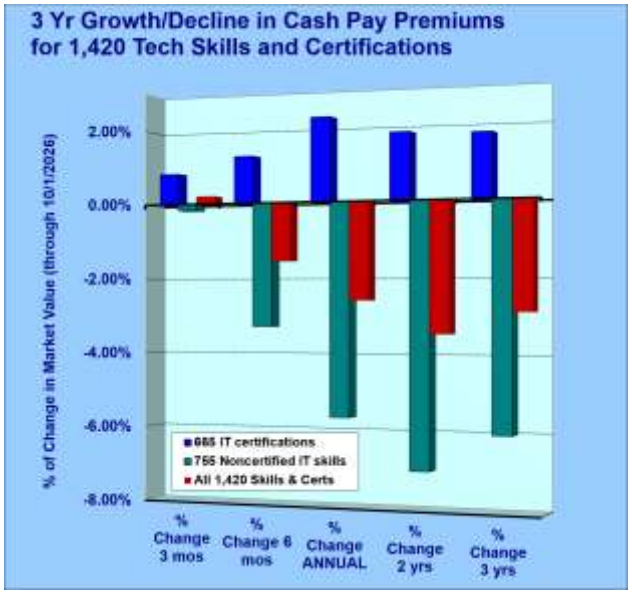

Fig. 3

Source: Foote Partners, *IT Skills and Certifications Pay Index™* 3Q2023 – 3Q2026 datasets)

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SUMMARY: IT Non-Certified and Certified Skills —Through October 1, 2026

Tech Skills and Certifications Pay Performance: By Category

NON-CERTIFIED TECH SKILLS. 220 of 752 **non-certified tech skills** changed cash market value from July 1, 2026 to October 1, 2026. The average **c**ash pay premium decreased by 0.2% in 3rd Quarter 2026, compared to the 3.1% average decrease in 2Q 2026, following quarterly increases in six of the seven prior calendar quarters.

TECH CERTIFICATIONS. 350 of 665 **IT certifications** changed cash market value from July 1, 2026 to October 1, 2026 compared to only 252 of 663 certifications in the prior quarter. The average **c**ash pay premium increased by 0.9% in 3rd Quarter 2026, compared to the 0.5% increase in 2Q 2026.

Non-certified Tech Skills - % Growth/Decline
6 months & 12 months

(755 skills, data through 10/1/2026)

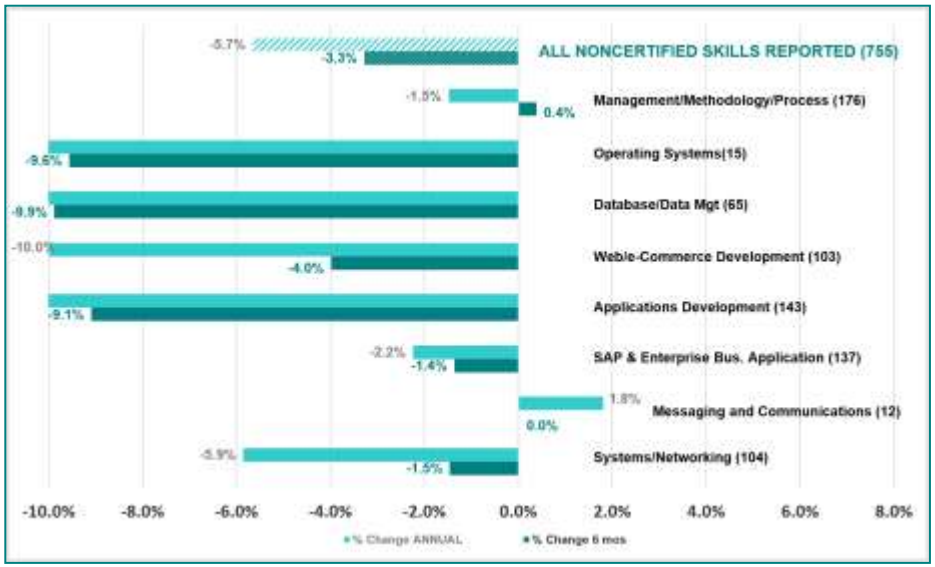

Fig. 4

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

(665 certifications, data through 10/1/2026)

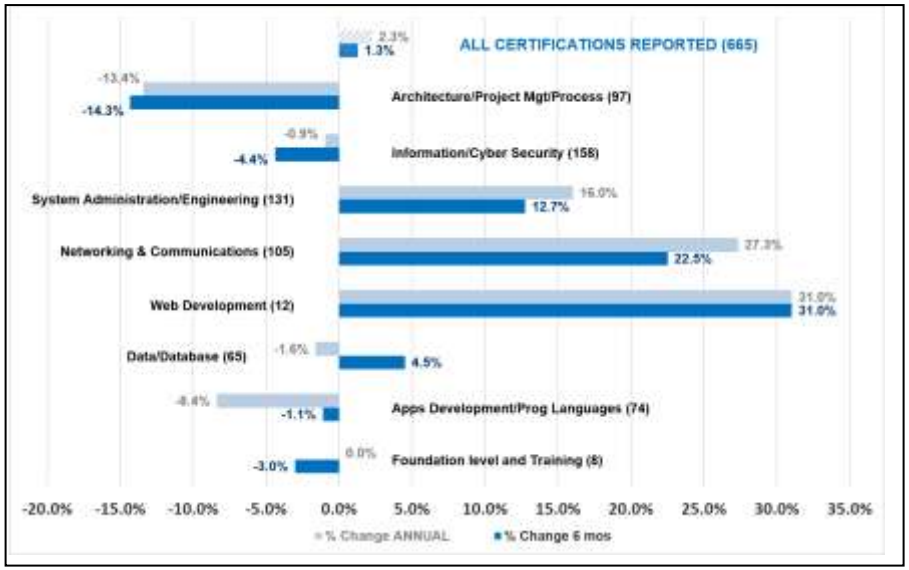

Fig. 5

Source: Foote Partners *IT Skills & Certifications Pay Index™*, 3rd quarter 2026 data edition

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HIGHEST PAYING NON-CERTIFIED IT SKILLS – Through October 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 **5,137** US and Canadian employers from July 1, 2026 to October 1, 2026.

* * *

With the average cash pay premium for 755 non-certified IT skills being the equivalent of **9.0%** 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
Artificial Intelligence
Artificial Intelligence Engineering
Artificial Intelligence for IT Operations (AIOps)
Artificial Intelligence Model Optimization
Azure Machine Learning
Capacity Planning/Management
COBIT
Cyber Threat Intelligence/Analysis
Data Architecture
Data Design
Data Engineering
Data Science
Data Strategy
DataOps
DevSecOps
Event-Driven Architecture
FinOps
Flink
Hugging Face Transformers
Identity access management
Large Language Model Optimization(LLMOps)
Large Language Model/LLM tuning
Machine Learning
MLflow
MLOps
Natural language processing
Network Architecture
Neural Networks
NIST/NIST 800
ONNX (Open Neural Network Exchange)
Predictive Analytics and Modeling
Prescriptive Analytics
PyTorch
Retrieval Augmented Generation (RAG)
Risk analytics/assessment
Scaled Agile Framework (SAFe)
Security architecture and models
Site Reliability Engineering
Splunk
Threat and Vulnerability Scanning/Assessment/Management
Threat Detection/Modelling/Management
Zachman Framework

HIGHEST PAYING IT CERTIFICATIONS – Through October 1, 2026

With the average cash pay premium for 665 IT certifications being the equivalent of **6.5%** of base salary, employers are paying median cash pay premiums ranging from **12% to 15%** for these IT certifications. Listed in alphabetical order.

Certified in the Governance of Enterprise IT (CGEIT)
Cisco Certified Design Expert (CCDE)
Cisco Certified DevNet Expert (aka CCIE Automation)
Cisco Certified Internetwork Expert (CCIE, all variations)
Fortinet Certified Expert in Cybersecurity (FCX)
GIAC Experienced Penetration Tester (GX-PN)
GIAC Exploit Researcher and Advanced Penetration Tester (GXPN)
GIAC Security Expert (GSE)
GIAC Security Professional(GSP)
Juniper Networks Certified Specialist (JNCIS - all specializations)
Offensive Security Certified Expert
Offensive Security Exploit Developer (OSED)
Offensive Security Exploitation Expert (OSEE)
Okta Certified Technical Architect
Oracle Database 19c Certified Master
Red Hat Certified Architect - all tracks (RHCA)
Salesforce Certified Systems Architect
Salesforce Certified Technical Architect
VMware Certified Distinguished Expert (VCDX)

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4Q 2026 IT Skills & Certification HOT LIST FORECAST

Skills and certifications earning above-average cash pay premiums and still growing in market value

- **Non-certified IT Skills (**page 9)
- **IT Certifications** (page 26)

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HOT LIST: IT Non-Certified Skills

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

The following non-certified tech skills meet two prerequisites:

- They **earned workers' cash pay premiums well above the average of all 755 skills reported in our IT Skills and Certifications Pay Index™ in the** quarter ending October 1, 2026.
- They ***recorded gains in cash market value in the six months*** ending October 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	DevSecOps	Natural language processing
AI Engineering	FinOps	Neural Networks
AI Productivity	Flink	NIST/NIST 800
Artificial Intelligence	Hugging Face Transformers	ONNX
Artificial Intelligence Model Optimization	Hybrid/human-interpretable reasoning in LLMs	Predictive Analytics and Modeling
Azure Machine Learning	Identity access management	Prompt Engineering
Capacity Planning/Management	Large Language Model Optimization	Program Management
Convolutional Neural Network	Large Language Model/LLM Tuning	PyTorch
Cyber Threat Intelligence	MLFlow	Retrieval Augmented Generation (RAG
Data Architecture	MLOps	Threat Detection/Modelling/Mgt
Data Engineering		Threat and Vulnerability Scanning/ Assessment/Management
Data Science		

1. AI Engineering

Average Pay Premium: 24 percent of base salary equivalent
Market Value Increase: 4.3 percent (in the six months through October 1, 2026)

AI Engineering is one of the hottest technical skill categories in the IT labor market in 2026 with a positive outlook through 2028. Its importance comes from organizations moving beyond AI experimentation toward building, deploying, securing, and maintaining AI-enabled applications and systems that deliver measurable business results. Unlike data science, which often emphasizes statistical analysis and model development, AI Engineering focuses primarily on turning artificial intelligence technologies into functioning, production-ready business solutions.

The most commercially relevant competencies include:

- *Generative AI and LLM application development*: Integrating foundation models into business applications using APIs, orchestration frameworks, and software development tools.
- *Agentic AI engineering*: Developing AI agents capable of using tools, accessing business systems, executing workflows, and operating within defined safeguards.
- *Retrieval-augmented generation (RAG):* Connecting AI models to enterprise data sources to produce more accurate, contextually relevant responses.
- *MLOps and LLMOps:* Deploying, monitoring, updating, and maintaining AI systems reliably in production.
- *AI evaluation and security:* Testing model performance, reliability, accuracy, access controls, and resistance to attacks.
- *AI infrastructure engineering:* Building and optimizing the computing, cloud, networking, and data infrastructure required to operate AI systems at scale.

Here's what is driving demand for AI engineering:

- *The move from pilots to production***.** Companies are past demos and are now deploying AI at scale. That takes engineering skill: reliability, evaluation, security and cost control. Demand is also no longer confined to AI startups. Banks, hospitals, consulting firms, and Fortune 500 "AI transformation" teams are all hiring agent engineers with real budgets.
- *The agentic wave.* Agents need a rare mix of skills. Agentic engineering requires a combination of skills — tool use, orchestration, state management, and evaluation design — that very few practitioners have assembled in a production context.

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HOT LIST: IT Non-Certified Skills, cont'd.

- *Competitive pressure and capital*. Heavy AI investment, plus boards worried about being out-innovated, keeps budgets flowing toward AI headcount even while overall hiring is flat.
- *Demand is spreading beyond tech*. Financial services, healthcare, manufacturing, professional services and IT services firms are all hiring. Global capability centers (offshore engineering hubs that large companies run themselves) are a major source of demand in India.

The IT professionals most likely to receive premiums for this skill include: Agentic AI engineers; Generative AI and LLM engineers; LLM fine-tuning specialists; AI architects; LLMOps engineers and AI systems designers; AI security, governance and safety specialists; Senior individual contributors.

2. AI Agents
AI Productivity
Flink

Average Pay Premium: 23 percent of base salary equivalent
Market Value Increase: 4.5 percent (in the six months through October 1, 2026)

AI Agent skills encompass the design, development, orchestration, deployment, and governance of AI systems that can autonomously plan, reason, use software tools, retrieve information, coordinate with other agents, and complete complex business tasks with limited human intervention. Unlike traditional AI or machine learning skills that focus on building predictive models, AI Agent skills emphasize creating intelligent software "workers" capable of carrying out multi-step workflows across enterprise applications, APIs, databases, and business processes while operating within defined guardrails. These skills typically include expertise with large language models (LLMs), agent frameworks, prompt engineering, retrieval-augmented generation (RAG), tool integration, memory management, orchestration, AI security, governance, and evaluation. As organizations increasingly move from AI experimentation to enterprise-scale automation, AI Agent skills have become some of the fastest-growing and most strategically valuable technical capabilities.

Typical candidates include AI engineers, machine learning engineers, software developers, solution architects, data scientists, cloud engineers, DevOps and automation specialists, and technical consultants responsible for integrating AI into enterprise applications and operations.

In 2026, AI Agent skills rank among the hottest IT skills commanding above-average cash pay premiums because they directly address one of the highest-priority initiatives in enterprise technology: deploying autonomous AI systems that improve productivity, reduce operating costs, accelerate software development, enhance customer service, and augment knowledge workers. Organizations are investing heavily in AI agents because they offer measurable business outcomes rather than simply analytical insights. This strong return on investment, combined with an acute shortage of experienced professionals capable of deploying production-grade agentic AI systems securely and at scale, has produced intense competition for talent. These market dynamics help explain why Foote Partners' July IT Skills and Certifications Pay Index shows AI Agent skills on a strong six-month upward trajectory, with cash pay premiums continuing to appreciate as demand significantly outpaces the available supply of experienced practitioners.

AI Agent skills have emerged as one of the hottest IT skills in 2026 because they represent the next major evolution of enterprise AI. Organizations are moving rapidly beyond standalone chatbots and copilots toward intelligent agents capable of automating increasingly complex business functions across software development, cybersecurity, customer service, finance, healthcare, research, manufacturing, and virtually every other industry. The skills are best viewed as a **broad-market capability** rather than a niche specialization because they are applicable across nearly every enterprise and technology platform, regardless of the underlying AI model or vendor. As organizations deploy AI agents at scale, they also require professionals who understand orchestration frameworks, retrieval-augmented generation (RAG), tool integration, security, governance, observability, and responsible AI, significantly expanding demand for these capabilities.

Foote Partners' strong six-month growth trajectory and above-average cash pay premiums for AI Agent skills reflect one of the fastest-growing talent shortages in enterprise IT. Demand is being driven by massive corporate investment in AI transformation, while the supply of professionals with proven experience building production-grade AI agents remains relatively limited. Because these skills combine software engineering, cloud architecture, machine learning, automation, cybersecurity, and business process design, they deliver immediate business value and are transferable across industries and technology platforms. This combination of broad applicability, strategic business impact, and scarce real-world expertise has propelled AI Agent skills into the upper tier of the Foote Partners IT Skills and Certifications Pay Index, where they continue to command above-average cash pay premiums and show strong momentum in market value.

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HOT LIST: IT Non-Certified Skills, cont'd

AI Productivity, often called "AI fluency," refers to the ability to use artificial intelligence tools to improve work efficiency, output quality, decision-making, and business performance. Unlike AI Engineering, which focuses on building AI systems, AI Productivity emphasizes using existing AI technologies to perform work faster and more effectively. Key skills include generative AI tools, prompt engineering, AI-assisted software development, workflow automation, AI-powered research and analysis, and integrating AI assistants into everyday business processes.

AI Productivity is a hot, rapidly expanding skill in 2026, although its compensation value is less established than AI Engineering. Organizations increasingly expect employees to use AI tools to improve productivity. However, AI proficiency is rapidly becoming a baseline workplace expectation rather than a scarce technical specialization. This distinction is important: demand for AI Productivity skills is growing faster than evidence that employers pay separately for them.

What's driving demand? Five developments are particularly important:

- *Pressure to improve productivity:* Employers want to increase output, reduce operating costs, and automate repetitive tasks.
- *Rapid adoption of AI assistants:* Microsoft Copilot, ChatGPT, GitHub Copilot, and similar tools are becoming integrated into daily workflows.
- *AI-enabled software development:* Developers are using AI to accelerate coding, testing, debugging, and documentation.
- *Leaner teams and workforce transformation:* Employers expect fewer people to do more, so AI-fluent workers are favored in hiring and when deciding who stays. Organizations are training existing employees to use AI rather than hiring specialists for every AI-related task as some reports identify less than 10% of marketing, creative and tech professionals rate their AI skills as expert level.
- *Integration work.* Demand for enterprise integration skills increased substantially between 2025 and 2026, reflecting companies moving from individual tools to AI built into entire workflows.

IT professionals most likely to earn cash pay premiums for this skills include:

- *Software developers* who work well with AI coding agents. They can show faster delivery without lower quality.
- *IT operations and automation staff*. Operations
- *Enterprise integration specialists* who connect AI tools to company systems, APIs and data
- *Product managers, data professionals and senior IT staff* who combine domain depth with hands-on AI use

Apache Flink is a distributed engine built for true real-time stream processing, meaning it processes events one-by-one as they occur rather than in batches. In practice, "Flink skills" signal that someone understands how to build low-latency, stateful data pipelines—often integrating tools like Kafka, cloud data platforms, and machine learning systems. It is not a universal skill like SQL or cloud platforms, and it doesn't have the broad adoption footprint of Spark. But where it is used, it tends to be mission-critical and high-value, which drives disproportionate compensation impact. It's a signal of advanced data system maturity and in compensation terms, the market pays accordingly. Flink behaves like a scarcity-driven specialization rather than a baseline skill. The cash pay premium comes less from the tool itself and more from what it implies: the ability to build and operate real-time distributed systems.

What differentiates Flink from more common tools like Apache Spark is its strength in event-time processing, fault tolerance, and exactly-once guarantees. Those capabilities matter most in environments where milliseconds and accuracy directly impact outcomes, such as fraud detection or real-time personalization. Demand for Flink is tied to a broader shift toward event-driven and real-time architectures. Companies increasingly want to act on data instantly rather than hours later, especially as AI systems require continuously updated data streams. This has created a strong pull for engineers who can design streaming systems rather than just batch pipelines.

Roles that benefit most from Flink skills: data engineering roles, particularly those focused on streaming or platform engineering. From there, the value extends into machine learning engineering—where real-time feature pipelines are becoming more common—and into backend or distributed systems engineering roles that rely on event-driven architectures.

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HOT LIST: IT Non-Certified Skills, cont'd.

5. Azure Machine Learning
Cyber Threat Intelligence/Analysis
Average Pay Premium: 22 percent of base salary equivalent
Market Value Increase: 15.8 percent (in the six months through October 1, 2026)

Azure Machine Learning (Azure ML) is Microsoft's cloud platform for building, training, deploying and managing custom machine learning models. It covers data science notebooks, AutoML, GPU training, MLOps pipelines, a model registry, monitoring and responsible-AI tooling. Microsoft now does its generative AI and agent work in Microsoft Foundry, and Azure Machine Learning is now positioned within Microsoft's broader Foundry stack alongside Foundry Models, Foundry Agent Service, Foundry IQ, Foundry Tools, and Foundry Control Plane. Within that stack, Azure ML is where custom models get built.

The demand comes mostly from Microsoft-centric enterprises: banks, insurers, healthcare systems, retailers, manufacturers and federal and state governments. They already run on Azure and want custom models for fraud, risk, forecasting and quality control, with their data kept inside their Azure environment. Regulated industries also value Azure ML's governance and model-monitoring features. More and more, employers want Azure ML alongside Foundry and Azure OpenAI.

The strongest premiums are most likely to go to experienced professionals---Machine Learning Engineers, MLOps Engineers, and AI Architects---who combine Azure Machine Learning with Python, MLflow, CI/CD, cloud architecture, and production MLOps.

Cyber Threat Intelligence (CTI) is the discipline of collecting, analyzing and sharing information about cyber adversaries: who they are, what they want, how they operate and what they are likely to do next. The goal is to help organizations prevent, detect and respond to attacks. CTI works at three levels: strategic intelligence for executives and risk decisions, operational intelligence about specific campaigns and threat actors, and tactical intelligence such as indicators and attacker techniques that feed security tools. Core CTI skills include:

- Analytic frameworks such as MITRE ATT&CK and the Diamond Model
- Malware and infrastructure analysis
- Open-source and dark-web intelligence gathering
- Threat-actor tracking and attribution
- Managing threat intelligence platforms and feeds
- Writing clear intelligence reports for decision-makers

CTI skills are very much in demand, especially in mature security organizations. As cyberattacks become more targeted and business-disruptive, companies want to move from reactive alerting to anticipatory defense. CTI supports that shift by helping organizations understand *who* might attack them and *how*, before incidents escalate. Demand is strongest in large enterprises, government, finance, critical infrastructure, and security vendors. CTI skills often appear in roles like Threat Intelligence Analyst, Detection Engineer, SOC Lead, and Security Strategist—frequently paired with SIEM, IR, or detection engineering experience.

The strongest compensation opportunities are among Senior Cyber Threat Intelligence Analysts, Threat Hunters, Threat Intelligence Engineers, Incident Response Specialists, and Cybersecurity Architects who can integrate intelligence with enterprise security operations.

7. Large Language Model Optimization(LLMOps)
Predictive Analytics and Modeling
Average Pay Premium: 22 percent of base salary equivalent
Market Value Increase: 10 percent (in the six months through October 1, 2026)

Large Language Model Optimization is the discipline of running LLM-powered systems in production. It includes deploying and serving models, managing prompts and model versions, building evaluation and testing pipelines, monitoring quality and hallucinations, setting guardrails, routing between model providers, and controlling inference cost and latency. The work differs from classic MLOps: in LLMOps, inference cost, prompt versions, and quality scores sit at the center. At the deep technical end, it overlaps with inference optimization: quantization, KV-cache tuning, speculative decoding and GPU serving stacks such as LLM and TensorRT. Demand is strongest for experienced engineers who can manage production AI systems rather than simply developing prototypes.

The biggest driver is cost. Once LLMs move from pilots to production, the inference bill becomes a major line item, and organizations without centralized LLMOps governance reportedly overspend on inference by 500–1,000%. Reliability and quality are next: companies that launched LLM features found they needed evaluation, monitoring and

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HOT LIST: IT Non-Certified Skills, cont'd.

guardrails to keep them working. In other words, companies that put LLMs into production discover, often the hard way, that they needed dedicated operational tooling. A third driver is the shift toward running open models on companies' own infrastructure: many enterprises are bringing inference in-house for cost, latency, and data residency reasons. That creates demand for people who can serve models efficiently on GPUs. Finally, the rise of AI agents is extending LLMOps into "AgentOps," because agents multiply the number of model calls and the ways they can fail.

In coming years, routine LLMOps work is likely to become commoditized as managed platforms (Bedrock, Microsoft Foundry, Vertex AI and observability vendors) automate deployment, prompt versioning and basic monitoring. The lasting premiums should go to three groups. First, *inference optimization engineers* with deep GPU and serving-stack skills, because they directly cut the cost of every model call. Second, *evaluation and AI quality engineers*, because companies can't scale AI without trusted measurement. Third, *LLMOps and AgentOps architects* who design enterprise-wide serving, routing, governance and cost controls across many models and agents. Standing still in a mid-level "deploy and monitor" role is the path most exposed to automation. The money is moving toward system architecture or low-level inference performance.

Predictive analytics is a branch of advanced analytics that uses statistical techniques, machine learning, and data mining to analyze current and historical data to make predictions about future events. ***Predictive modeling*** is the process of creating, testing, and validating models that can predict outcomes based on data inputs. These models are built using various algorithms and techniques, such as regression analysis, decision trees, neural networks, and time series analysis. Predictive analytics and modeling are used to identify patterns, trends, and relationships in data, enabling organizations to make informed decisions and forecast future trends.

The demand for predictive analytics and modeling skills is driven by several key factors. The exponential growth of data generated by digital interactions, IoT devices, and online transactions has created a need for advanced analytics to extract actionable insights from this vast amount of information. Organizations recognize the value of leveraging data to gain a competitive edge, improve operational efficiency, and enhance customer experiences. Predictive analytics helps businesses anticipate market trends, customer behaviors, and potential risks, enabling them to make proactive decisions.

In industries like finance, healthcare, retail, manufacturing, and marketing, predictive analytics plays a crucial role in optimizing processes and strategies. For example, in finance, predictive models are used for credit scoring, fraud detection, and investment forecasting. In healthcare, they help in predicting patient outcomes, managing resources, and personalizing treatment plans. Retailers use predictive analytics for demand forecasting, inventory management, and personalized marketing. Manufacturing firms apply predictive models to predict equipment failures and optimize supply chains.

The rise of artificial intelligence and machine learning has further fueled the demand for predictive analytics and modeling skills. These technologies enhance the accuracy and efficiency of predictive models, making them more powerful and scalable. As organizations strive to become more data-driven, the need for professionals who can build, interpret, and implement predictive models continues to grow.

Additionally, the increasing availability of sophisticated analytics tools and platforms has made predictive analytics more accessible to businesses of all sizes. Companies are looking for skilled individuals who can effectively use these tools to drive strategic initiatives and achieve business goals.

In the job market, roles such as data scientists, data analysts, business analysts, and machine learning engineers with expertise in predictive analytics and modeling are highly sought after. These professionals are valued for their ability to transform data into predictive insights that drive decision-making and innovation. Competitive salaries and numerous job opportunities reflect the high demand for these skills.

9. ONNX (Open Neural Network Exchange)

Average Pay Premium: 21 percent of base salary equivalent
Market Value Increase: 16.7 percent (in the six months through October 1, 2026)

ONNX (Open Neural Network Exchange) is an open standard that enables machine learning models to operate across different software frameworks and hardware platforms. It allows AI engineers to convert, deploy, and optimize models developed using technologies such as NVIDIA TensorRT, Intel OpenVINO, Windows ML and Qualcomm's toolchains, improving portability, inference performance, and operational efficiency.

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HOT LIST: IT Non-Certified Skills, cont'd.

The principal driver is the growing need to deploy AI models efficiently across different computing environments while minimizing processing costs, latency, and dependence on particular software frameworks. As organizations expand their use of AI in manufacturing, healthcare, automotive technology, robotics, and enterprise applications, they increasingly need engineers who can optimize model performance across CPUs, GPUs, and specialized AI processors. Demand is also benefiting from the expansion of edge AI, where models must operate directly on devices rather than relying entirely on cloud infrastructure. ONNX Runtime and related optimization technologies can help organizations achieve faster inference, lower resource consumption, and greater deployment flexibility.

The strongest compensation opportunities are among AI Inference Engineers, Machine Learning Engineers, Edge AI Engineers, Computer Vision Engineers, and AI Platform Engineers who use ONNX alongside Python, C++, PyTorch, CUDA, and TensorRT. These professionals are particularly valuable when they can demonstrate measurable improvements in model performance, inference speed, hardware utilization, and deployment costs.

10. FinOps

Average Pay Premium: 21 percent of base salary equivalent
Market Value Increase: 10.5 percent (in the six months through October 1, 2026)

FinOps (or Financial Operations) is the discipline of managing and optimizing cloud spending by bringing engineering, finance, and business teams together around shared visibility into cloud costs. Practitioners work with frameworks like FOCUS (FinOps Open Cost and Usage Specification) to track spend across AWS, Azure, and GCP, forecast and allocate cloud costs to the right teams, and increasingly govern the unpredictable cost curves of AI workloads — GPU consumption, training versus inference spend, and per-request cost of agentic systems.

Several factors elevate demand and cash pay premiums for FinOps skills. Enterprise cloud spending crossed $600 billion globally in 2026, with generative AI workloads pushing costs so unpredictably that a $2,000/month feature can balloon to $20,000/month overnight if nobody is watching, which has made FinOps one of the most actively recruited cloud disciplines. Demand has sharply outpaced supply: fewer than 30,000 people worldwide hold the foundational FinOps Certified Practitioner 9FOCP) credential as of mid-2026, against estimated open-role demand of over 80,000. This is driving pay premiums for noncertified FinOps skills. Moreover, the AI angle is a major accelerant: generative AI workloads now drive roughly 18% of total cloud spend, up from just 4% in 2023, and familiarity with the FOCUS framework plus cloud billing/cost-tool experience across AWS, Azure, and GCP are now core expectations for the role.

The benefit of hiring FinOps skills is direct financial accountability: FinOps practitioners can answer a CFO's "who owns this bill?" question with real data, translating GPU-hours and token spend into unit economics leadership can act on — a capability boards are actively demanding as AI costs spiral. Typical candidates qualifying for skills pay premium bonuses are cloud engineers, platform/DevOps engineers, and cloud financial analysts who sit at the unusual intersection of engineering fluency and financial literacy. FinOps certifications are increasingly listed as preferred or required for roles like FinOps Analyst, Cloud Financial Analyst, Cloud Economist, and FinOps Engineer, and are also valued for cloud architect and platform engineering roles where cost awareness is now a job requirement.

11. Artificial Intelligence Model Optimization
Data Architecture
MLOps
Threat Detection/Modelling/Management

Average Pay Premium: 21 percent of base salary equivalent
Market Value Increase: 5 percent (in the six months through October 1, 2026)

Artificial Intelligence model optimization skills encompass the techniques, tools, and methodologies used to improve the accuracy, efficiency, scalability, cost-effectiveness, and reliability of AI and machine learning models throughout their lifecycle. These skills include model tuning, hyperparameter optimization, fine-tuning foundation models, model compression, quantization, pruning, inference optimization, GPU acceleration, prompt optimization, retrieval-augmented generation (RAG) optimization, performance benchmarking, model evaluation, and deployment optimization across cloud and edge environments. Professionals with these skills ensure that AI models deliver high-quality results while minimizing computational costs, latency, energy consumption, and infrastructure requirements. As organizations move from AI experimentation to large-scale production deployments, model optimization has become a critical capability for achieving enterprise-grade performance and controlling operational costs.

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HOT LIST: IT Non-Certified Skills, cont'd.

These skills entered the Foote Partners' Hot List for certifications about the time that organizations began shifting to turning working AI models into production-ready, cost-effective products or services, that is, moving from experimenting with AI to running it at scale. With this shift, organizations now need more people who understand how to architect, govern, secure, and operationalize highly interconnected technology ecosystems, which is precisely what model optimization work requires — it sits at the technical core of making AI systems actually reliable and affordable to run, not just impressive in a demo. Even modest improvements in model efficiency can translate into millions of dollars in annual savings for organizations operating AI at scale, making these skills highly valuable. This combination of measurable financial impact and a limited supply of experienced practitioners help explain why Artificial Intelligence Model Optimization skills are enjoying a strong six-month growth trajectory, with cash pay premiums continuing to appreciate as enterprise AI adoption accelerates.

Typical candidates rewarded with cash pay premiums for Artificial Intelligence Model Optimization skills include AI/ML engineers, machine learning engineers, data scientists, AI research engineers, software engineers specializing in AI infrastructure, MLOps engineers, platform engineers, GPU and high-performance computing specialists, and AI solution architects. While demand is expanding rapidly across industries, Artificial Intelligence Model Optimization remains a relatively niche technical specialty because it requires deep expertise in machine learning algorithms, mathematics, distributed computing, cloud infrastructure, and AI production environments.

Data architecture is the design of how an organization's data is collected, stored, modeled, integrated, governed and made available to analytics and AI systems. Data architects determine how information moves between applications, databases, cloud platforms, analytics environments, and increasingly, artificial intelligence systems. In 2026 the core skills include:

- Data modeling: conceptual, logical and dimensional
- Cloud data platform design: Snowflake, Databricks, BigQuery, Microsoft Fabric
- Lakehouse and open table formats such as Delta and Iceberg
- Data integration and streaming
- Master data and metadata management
- Data governance, lineage and access control
- Microsoft Azure, AWS, SQL, and modern data engineering platforms

Data architecture has gone from back-office infrastructure work to a prerequisite for AI. Companies are finding that their AI pilots stall on fragmented, poorly governed data, and the platforms they built a few years ago weren't designed for AI workloads. GenAI deployment has raced ahead of data readiness, and the architectures most organizations built in 2020–2023 are not equipped for AI-native workloads. Platform consolidation is a second driver, as companies move legacy warehouses and data lakes onto cloud lakehouse platforms. Governance and regulation are a third. A fourth driver is the shift toward domain-owned data products, which requires architects to redesign how data is organized and shared across business units.

The largest cash pay premiums today go to architects who combine classic data architecture with modern cloud and AI skills. That means enterprise data architects leading AI-readiness programs, lakehouse and cloud data platform architects with deep Databricks, Snowflake or Fabric experience, and architects who specialize in data governance, security and privacy for regulated industries such as financial services, healthcare and government. Also Senior Data Engineers, Data Governance/MDM Architects, Database Architects and Data Modelers.

Future premiums will likely be earned by AI data architects designing data for RAG, vector and graph stores, semantic layers and agent access. They build the metadata, lineage and quality controls that make enterprise data trustworthy for AI, and they manage the cost and performance of large lakehouse platforms. Governance-focused architects should also gain as AI regulation and data-privacy rules tighten. Architects who only do routine data modeling, warehouse schema design and pipeline configuration---which are increasingly automated by AI-assisted tools---will see their premium shrink. Those who can connect data design to business outcomes and AI strategy will see premiums growth.

MLOps (Machine Learning Operations) is the discipline of taking machine learning models from experimentation into reliable, monitored, continuously updated production systems — covering model versioning, automated retraining pipelines, deployment infrastructure, performance monitoring, and drift detection. It's the operational backbone that keeps ML systems working accurately over time as data changes, borrowing heavily from DevOps principles (CI/CD, infrastructure-as-code, automated testing) but applied specifically to the unique challenges models present: data drift, gradual performance degradation, and the need to retrain and redeploy safely and repeatedly rather than ship code once and move on.

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HOT LIST: IT Non-Certified Skills, cont'd.

This skill is more in-demand in 2026 for reasons similar to why DevSecOps and AI agent skills are hot: the gap between "we built a model that works" and "we run a model that keeps working reliably in production" has become one of the most expensive, embarrassing failure points in enterprise AI. A model that performs beautifully in a demo but silently degrades once real-world data shifts underneath it isn't just disappointing — it can make bad decisions at scale before anyone notices. As organizations move from experimenting with AI to depending on it for real business decisions (credit approvals, fraud detection, personalization, and now agentic workflows), the operational discipline that prevents that kind of silent failure has become non-negotiable rather than a nice-to-have, which is pushing pay for genuinely skilled MLOps practitioners well above general software engineering roles.

The core benefit is durability and trust: MLOps is what turns a one-time data science win into an ongoing, governable business capability rather than a fragile science project. It gives organizations the ability to detect when a model's performance is slipping, retrain it safely without breaking production, and prove — to a regulator, an auditor, or their own leadership — that the AI systems they depend on are being actively monitored and maintained. As AI systems take on more autonomous, consequential decision-making (the same shift driving demand for AI agents and interpretable reasoning skills), that operational safety net becomes a direct risk-management function, not just an engineering nicety.

Typical candidates are ML engineers, AI engineers, data scientists, MLOps engineers, platform engineers, cloud architects, and data engineers responsible for operationalizing AI at enterprise scale. Also DevOps engineers who've specialized into the ML-specific side of production infrastructure — a role that's increasingly its own distinct career path rather than a side responsibility tacked onto a data scientist's job. This is a niche but rapidly institutionalizing skill: narrower than general software DevOps because it requires ML-specific knowledge (model behavior, drift detection, retraining triggers, feature versioning), but broader in scope than a single tool like MLflow because it spans the entire operational lifecycle of a model. That combination — genuine technical depth that's still comparatively rare, meeting nearly universal enterprise need as organizations scale up AI deployment — is a classic setup for a durable, above-average pay premium: a hard-to-fake operational skill riding a wave of demand that isn't going away as AI becomes more embedded in core business processes rather than less.

Threat Detection, Modeling, and Management sit at the core of modern cybersecurity operations. Together, they represent the ability to anticipate, identify, and respond to threats across an organization's systems and data.

- *Threat detection* focuses on identifying malicious activity in real time using telemetry, logs, and behavioral signals.
- *Threat modeling* is more proactive—mapping how systems could be attacked and where vulnerabilities exist.
- *Threat management* ties it together, prioritizing risks and coordinating response and mitigation.

These skills are best understood as foundational but increasingly strategic cybersecurity capabilities. They are not new, but their importance has grown significantly due to changes in the threat landscape, regulatory expectations, and the rise of AI-driven attacks. Unlike niche technical skills, these capabilities have **broad applicability across industries**, which supports consistent demand. At the same time, true expertise—especially the ability to connect technical signals to business risk—is relatively scarce, which sustains compensation premiums.

In practice, these skills often involve frameworks like MITRE ATT&CK for mapping adversary behavior and structured approaches such as STRIDE for identifying risks in system design. They also intersect heavily with security platforms such as SIEM and XDR tools. What distinguishes these skills is that they combine technical depth with analytical judgment—understanding both how systems work and how attackers think.

Demand for Threat Detection, Modeling, and Management skills is not new, but it has intensified and shifted upward in the value chain. First, the threat landscape has become more complex and continuous. Organizations are no longer defending against occasional attacks; they are operating in an environment of persistent, automated, and often AI-assisted threats. That increases the need for continuous detection and response capabilities. Second, regulatory pressure has increased significantly. Governments and regulators are requiring organizations to demonstrate not just security controls, but active threat monitoring and risk management processes. This elevates threat management from an operational function to a governance and compliance requirement. Third, there is a growing recognition that prevention

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HOT LIST: iT Non-Certified Skills, cont'd.

alone is insufficient. Even well-defended organizations assume breach scenarios, which increases investment in detection and response (often referred to as SecOps).

Also, AI is reshaping both sides of the equation. Attackers are using AI to scale attacks, while defenders are using AI to improve detection. This raises the bar for human expertise, especially in interpreting signals, reducing false positives, and making decisions under uncertainty.

Roles that benefit most from Threat Detection, Modeling, and Management skills. The strongest impact is in security operations (SOC) and threat intelligence roles, where detection and response are core responsibilities. It is also highly relevant for security architects and application security professionals, particularly those performing threat modeling during system design. At higher levels, these skills are critical for CISO organizations, risk leaders, and security program managers, where the focus shifts from individual incidents to enterprise-wide risk posture. More technical roles such as developers or infrastructure engineers benefit less directly, unless they are involved in secure system design or DevSecOps practices.

In today's market, these skills occupy a high-demand, high-stability category. They may not generate the same hype as AI or emerging technologies, but they deliver enduring value and strong compensation leverage, particularly as organizations shift toward continuous, intelligence-driven security operations. They consistently command solid, durable premiums, though not always as visibly as emerging tech skills. The key driver is not the tools or frameworks themselves, but the ability to translate threat intelligence into actionable defense and business risk decisions.

15. MLflow
Retrieval Augmented Generation (RAG)

Average Pay Premium: 20 percent of base salary equivalent
Market Value Increase: 25 percent (in the six months through October 1, 2026)

MLflow is an open-source platform for managing the machine learning lifecycle — experiment tracking, model versioning and registry, packaging models for reproducible deployment, and monitoring models in production. As a skill, it's part of the operational "last mile" of machine learning: not building a model from scratch, but tracking experiments rigorously, comparing model versions, and getting a trained model reliably into production and kept there. It's one of the most widely adopted tools in that space precisely because it's open-source and cloud-agnostic, working across AWS, Azure, GCP, and on-prem environments alike, which has made it something close to a default standard for MLOps teams. Professionals with MLflow expertise help organizations move AI models from experimentation into reliable, production-scale environments while improving collaboration, reproducibility, and regulatory compliance.

The benefit MLflow-specific skill provides is reproducibility and governance at scale: as organizations run more models in production simultaneously (and now more AI agents and LLM-based systems too), being able to track exactly which model version, which parameters, and which training data produced a given result becomes a genuine operational and compliance necessity, not a nice-to-have. That's directly aligned with the broader driver for 2026's strongest-performing skills — employers wanting people who can operationalize and govern complex AI systems, not just build them once and walk away.

And who are those people qualifying for cash pay premium bonuses? Typically AI/ML engineers, MLOps engineers, data engineers, platform engineers, AI solution architects, cloud architects, DevOps engineers and data scientists who've moved from pure model-building into the operational side of the ML lifecycle — often the same population picking up AIOps and LLMOps skills more broadly.

MLflow itself is a niche, tool-specific skill — narrower than "MLOps" or "machine learning" as a discipline — but it rides inside a genuinely broad and currently strong wave of enterprise demand for anyone who can operationalize AI reliably. That's the same pattern we've seen repeatedly in our Hot Lists: a specific, tool-level skill's fortunes are tied less to its own individual demand curve and more to the broader operational-AI category.

Retrieval-Augmented Generation (RAG) is the technique of connecting a large language model to an external knowledge base — company documents, databases, live data feeds — so it retrieves relevant, current information at query time and grounds its response in that retrieved content, rather than relying solely on what was baked into the model during training. As a skill, it covers building the retrieval pipeline (vector databases, embedding models, chunking strategies, semantic search) and integrating it cleanly with the generation step so outputs stay accurate, current, and traceable back to a source — which is exactly what makes RAG the standard architecture for enterprise AI applications that can't tolerate hallucinated or outdated answers.

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HOT LIST: IT Non-Certified Skills, cont'd.

After years of experimental AI deployment, in 2026. AI is embedded in customer-facing support, internal knowledge systems, legal and compliance workflows, and decision support tied to real business outcomes. In those contexts, a model confidently inventing a policy, a price, or a fact is a liability, not a quirk. RAG is the most proven, widely adopted architectural answer to that problem — it grounds outputs in retrievable source documents rather than the model's frozen training data — which makes it less an optional enhancement and more a baseline requirement for any serious enterprise AI deployment.

Building a RAG system that actually performs well in production — good chunking strategy, embedding model selection, retrieval relevance tuning, handling ambiguous queries, managing latency — is meaningfully harder than a basic tutorial implementation suggests. Plenty of engineers can wire together a naive RAG pipeline; comparatively few can make one perform reliably at enterprise scale with messy real-world data. That gap between "can build a demo" and "can build something production-grade" is exactly the kind of scarcity that sustains elevated pay for a skill even after it's become mainstream knowledge in principle.

Typical candidates possessing RAG skills that might be rewarded with a skills pay premium include AI/ML engineers, machine learning engineers, data scientists, MLOps engineers, AI solution architects, software engineers, cloud architects, search engineers, and enterprise architects responsible for AI-enabled knowledge systems. Also backend and data engineers who've picked up vector database and embedding-pipeline expertise, and increasingly "AI engineers" as a distinct job title that's emerged specifically around building these retrieval-plus-generation systems rather than training models from scratch.

17. Threat and Vulnerability Scanning/Assessment/Management

Average Pay Premium: 20 percent of base salary equivalent
Market Value Increase: 17.6 percent (in the six months through October 1, 2026)

Threat and vulnerability management (TVM) is the ongoing work of finding, assessing, prioritizing and fixing security weaknesses before attackers exploit them. It covers:

- Running scanners such as Tenable, Qualys, Rapid7, and CrowdStrike Spotlight across servers, endpoints, cloud, containers and applications
- Assessing which findings matter, using CVSS scores, exploit intelligence and business context
- Coordinating patching and fixes with IT and development teams
- Confirming that the fixes actually worked

TVM was already a staple security skill, but 2026 has turned it into a crisis-driven priority. Vulnerability volume is exploding: disclosures in the CVE database (the industry's catalog of known vulnerabilities) are on track for record highs and AI is a major cause: around 66,000 common vulnerabilities and exposures (CVEs) are projected to be disclosed in 2026. AI-driven discovery tools, including Claude Mythos and OpenAI's GPT-5.4-Cyber, helped push CVE submissions up significantly in 2026 compared to 2025. At the same time, attackers are exploiting flaws much faster. Check Point estimates the mean time from disclosure to confirmed exploitation fell from 2.3 years in 2018 to roughly 10 hours in 2026.

The principal driver is a widening gap between how fast vulnerabilities appear and how fast teams can handle them. Expanding cloud environments, remote access, interconnected applications, and increasingly complex enterprise infrastructures have substantially increased the number of potential vulnerabilities that organizations must manage. The traditional approach of scanning periodically and patching by severity score no longer keeps pace. Another important development is the shift from periodic scanning toward continuous threat exposure management, where organizations combine vulnerability data with threat intelligence, asset criticality, exploitability, and business risk to prioritize remediation. Other drivers add to the pressure: AI-written code introducing new flaws, sprawling cloud and SaaS environments, software supply-chain risk, and federal and industry rules that require timely remediation, especially for government contractors and regulated industries.

The strongest compensation opportunities are among Vulnerability Management Engineers, Security Engineers, Security Architects, Cloud Security Engineers, and Threat Exposure Management Specialists who can translate vulnerability intelligence into measurable reductions in enterprise cyber risk.

18. Natural language processing
PyTorch

Average Pay Premium: 20 percent of base salary equivalent
Market Value Increase: 11.1 percent (in the six months through October 1, 2026)

Natural language processing (NLP) is the branch of AI that enables computers to understand, interpret, generate, search, classify, summarize, translate, and extract information from human language, both text and speech. Before 2023, NLP meant specialized techniques such as tokenization, named-entity recognition, sentiment analysis, topic modeling and custom models built with tools like spaCy and BERT. Today, large

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HOT LIST: IT Non-Certified Skills, cont'd.

language models (LLMs) dominate the field. The rise of LLMs has split it into two tracks: one track builds applications with LLMs: RAG systems, agents, fine-tuning and prompt optimization; the other is a smaller, more specialized track built on deep language and model expertise.

NLP skills are in strong demand, but traditional NLP techniques alone are less differentiated than they were several years ago because pretrained language models and commercial AI services now automate many previously specialized tasks. The job title "NLP Engineer" is fading into AI engineer and LLM engineer roles. Most companies no longer separate "NLP" and "LLM" as neatly as they used to. This has created a paradox: AI adoption creates some NLP demand (chatbots, document AI, search), but LLMs are simultaneously absorbing traditional NLP tasks.

What's driving demand

LLMs have greatly expanded what companies can do with language, and enterprises are racing to put those capabilities into production. The strongest US hiring areas include enterprise AI assistants, customer support automation, legal and compliance AI, and healthcare documentation. The scarce skill is making LLM systems reliable in real business settings. Demand is actually growing because companies need experts who can operationalize LLMs safely and cost-effectively in production systems. Retrieval is especially valuable. RAG architecture (vector databases, embedding models, retrieval strategies, chunking and reranking) is described as the single most in-demand NLP skill in 2026. Regulated industries such as legal, healthcare, financial services and government also need domain-specific language systems that general-purpose chatbots can't deliver on their own.

The strongest cash pay premium opportunities are among NLP Engineers, Machine Learning Engineers, AI Engineers, AI Research Scientists, and Senior Data Scientists who combine language processing expertise with deep learning, LLM development, model fine-tuning, and production AI deployment.

We expect demand for NLP expertise to remain strong, particularly as organizations expand generative AI, conversational applications, enterprise search, and autonomous AI agents. The strongest opportunities should involve LLM development and optimization, domain-specific language models, multilingual AI, RAG, and advanced model evaluation.

PyTorch is the open-source deep learning framework, originally from Meta and now run by the PyTorch Foundation under the Linux Foundation, that most modern AI is built on. Engineers use it to define, train, fine-tune, and deploy neural networks. That covers everything from computer vision and speech models to the large language models behind today's generative AI. The ecosystem around it includes Hugging Face Transformers, PyTorch Lightning, distributed-training libraries (FSDP, DeepSpeed), torch.compile for speed, and export paths to ONNX and inference engines. Most LLMs are trained in PyTorch.

Unlike some emerging AI technologies, PyTorch has a substantial installed base, broad developer adoption, and direct relevance to both AI research and commercial AI engineering. Its value is particularly strong when combined with Python, transformer architectures, Hugging Face, GPU computing, and production machine learning expertise. Employers place the greatest value on professionals who can use it to solve complex modeling, training, and deployment problems.

The principal driver for this skill is the expansion of generative AI and deep learning, particularly the development, fine-tuning, and optimization of large language models. PyTorch has become a widely adopted framework for these activities, making it especially important to organizations building proprietary AI models or adapting existing models for specialized business applications. PyTorch is also the default for computer vision in autonomous vehicles, robotics, medical imaging, defense and manufacturing. Its research dominance creates a pipeline effect too: new techniques appear in PyTorch first, so companies that want to adopt cutting-edge methods hire PyTorch engineers. Finally, performance engineering has become a priority as GPU costs soar. Companies need engineers who can make PyTorch training and inference faster and cheaper.

The strongest cash pay premium opportunities are among Machine Learning Engineers, Deep Learning Engineers, AI Research Scientists, Generative AI Engineers, and AI/ML Platform Engineers who use PyTorch to develop, train, optimize, and deploy sophisticated models. Senior Data Scientists and Computer Vision Engineers may also benefit, particularly when their responsibilities involve custom neural network development rather than routine analytics.

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HOT LIST: IT Non-Certified Skills, cont'd.

20. Capacity Planning/Management
Data Engineering
DevSecOps
Large Language Model/LLM tuning
Average Pay Premium: 20 percent of base salary equivalent
Market Value Increase: 5.3 percent (in the six months through October 1, 2026)

Capacity planning and capacity management skills focus on making sure IT systems have the right amount of compute, storage, network, and application capacity—at the right time and cost. The goal is to prevent outages and performance issues *without* overpaying for unused resources. In practice, this means forecasting demand, analyzing usage trends, setting thresholds and alerts, modeling growth scenarios, and coordinating with infrastructure, cloud, and application teams. In traditional ITSM, capacity management is a core discipline within **AXELOS ITIL**, but today it's just as relevant in cloud, DevOps, and FinOps environments.

AI has significantly elevated the value of this skill. Modern platforms now use machine learning to analyze historical usage, seasonality, and real-time telemetry **to predict demand, detect anomalies, and recommend scaling actions automatically.** This is often grouped under AIOps. Instead of static spreadsheets and manual forecasts, AI-driven capacity planning enables:

- Predictive forecasting (what will break *before* it breaks)
- Smarter auto-scaling decisions
- Early detection of abnormal growth patterns
- Tighter alignment between performance and cost (FinOps)

That means capacity professionals are no longer just "planning for servers"—they are interpreting AI-driven insights and making business-impact decisions.

Capacity planning and capacity management skills are highly valued wherever uptime, performance, and cost control matter. Demand is strongest in cloud-heavy organizations, SaaS providers, financial services, healthcare, telecom, and enterprises running large, business-critical platforms. You'll see it embedded in roles like SRE, Cloud Engineer, Infrastructure Architect, IT Operations Manager, and FinOps Analyst—often as a required competency rather than a standalone job title.

Cloud has *increased*, not eliminated, the need for capacity planning. As cloud costs explode and systems become more dynamic, organizations need people who understand both the AI models producing forecasts and the real-world systems those forecasts affect. Executives now care deeply about performance *and* cost, which puts capacity planning back in focus. Professionals who can translate metrics into business impact are especially valuable.

Capacity planning and management is a durable, operations-critical skill. It won't trend on social media, but organizations rely on it to stay fast, stable, and cost-efficient. For tech professionals, it's a career amplifier—especially when paired with cloud, SRE, or FinOps expertise.

Data engineering is the discipline of building and running the pipelines and platforms that move, clean, transform and store data so analysts, applications and AI systems can use it. The core work is ingestion and integration (ETL/ELT), batch and real-time streaming pipelines, data warehouses and lakehouses, orchestration, data quality, and cost management on cloud platforms. Key competencies include SQL, Python, ETL/ELT pipelines, Apache Spark, Databricks, Snowflake, data warehousing, cloud data platforms, streaming technologies such as Kafka, and workflow orchestration using tools such as Apache Airflow. Its importance is increasing as organizations modernize data infrastructure and discover that successful AI deployment depends heavily on the availability, quality, and accessibility of enterprise data.

AI is the main demand driver, because AI is only as good as the data feeding it. Companies are rebuilding their data stacks to support AI, and Data engineers are increasingly asked to build retrieval pipelines, vector stores, or embedding-generation jobs to support an internal AI product. Other drivers include cloud migration and platform consolidation onto Snowflake, Databricks and similar lakehouses, real-time analytics needs, rising cloud data costs that someone has to control, and governance and compliance demands such as data lineage and quality documentation.

What's driving U.S. demand? The strongest driver is the growing need for AI-ready data infrastructure. Organizations investing in generative AI, machine learning, and advanced analytics require dependable pipelines that can integrate large volumes of structured and unstructured information. Data Engineering is essential to making enterprise data accessible, accurate, secure, and usable by AI systems. Cloud modernization is another major driver, as

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HOT LIST: IT Non-Certified Skills, cont'd.

businesses migrate legacy data warehouses and databases to platforms such as Snowflake, Databricks, AWS, and Azure. Real-time analytics, regulatory compliance, and data governance are also increasing the need for sophisticated data integration and management capabilities.

The strongest opportunities for cash pay premiums are among Senior Data Engineers, Cloud Data Engineers, Data Platform Engineers, Data Architects, and AI Data Infrastructure Engineers who can design scalable data pipelines and integrate enterprise data with modern analytics and AI platforms. Going forward, we expect demand for Data Engineering to remain strong as organizations expand AI deployments, modernize cloud data platforms, and develop increasingly sophisticated analytics capabilities. The greatest compensation opportunities should involve AI-ready data pipelines, real-time data engineering, lakehouse architectures, cloud data integration, and automated data quality management.

DevSecOps stands for Development, Security, and Operations. It's an approach that integrates security directly into the DevOps process, ensuring that security isn't an afterthought but is built into every stage of the software development lifecycle. Instead of waiting until the end of development to test for vulnerabilities, DevSecOps emphasizes "shifting security left" — embedding security practices during coding, building, testing, and deploying. It enables teams to deliver software quickly and securely by automating security checks in CI/CD pipelines and fostering collaboration between developers, security teams, and operations.

To succeed in DevSecOps, professionals combine technical expertise with security knowledge:

- Automation and CI/CD knowledge: Using tools like Jenkins, GitLab CI, and Azure DevOps to embed security testing in pipelines.
- Cloud and container security: Understanding secure configurations in AWS/Azure/GCP and managing vulnerabilities in Docker and Kubernetes.
- Security tools and practices: Familiarity with static code analysis (SAST), dynamic testing (DAST), dependency scanning, and infrastructure-as-code security.
- Policy and compliance knowledge: Applying standards like OWASP, GDPR, and SOC2 in automated workflows.
- Collaboration: Working across teams to foster a security-first culture without slowing down software delivery.

Why is DevSecOps in high demand? Because software development cycles are faster than ever with cloud-native architectures and continuous deployment, but this speed often leaves gaps for cyberattacks. High-profile breaches and stricter regulations (like GDPR and CCPA) have made security a top priority. DevSecOps professionals are needed to help companies secure complex, dynamic environments, reduce costly vulnerabilities early, and achieve compliance without slowing innovation. As organizations shift more systems to the cloud and rely heavily on automation, they need experts to bake security into every part of their workflow.

Typical candidates skills premiums are DevOps engineers added security depth to their automation skill set — with build-side roles carrying pipeline ownership commanding a real premium over audit-side, GRC-adjacent DevSecOps work, because the build-side seat is scarcer and the senior talent pool hasn't refilled for several years. DevSecOps sits toward the broad end of the spectrum in terms of where demand comes from — virtually every organization shipping software now needs it, unlike a narrow platform-specific skill — but the qualified talent pool remains comparatively niche and thin, which is the classic combination (broad-based need, scarce genuine supply) that's driven a large part of our Hot Lists.

Large Language Model/LLM tuning, usually called fine-tuning or post-training, is the work of adapting a pre-trained large language model to perform better on a specific task, domain, style or set of behaviors. It differs from prompting and RAG, which steer a model without changing it, because tuning actually updates the model's weights. The core techniques are supervised fine-tuning and instruction tuning; parameter-efficient methods such as LoRA and QLoRA; preference and alignment tuning such as RLHF, DPO and GRPO; and the evaluation frameworks needed to prove the tuned model is actually better. The standard toolkit is PyTorch plus Hugging Face libraries. Hugging Face's TRL library has become the industry standard for supervised fine-tuning, RLHF, and DPO.

Fine-tuning ranks among the most valuable specialized AI skills in enterprise AI for 2026. A real shortage of true expertise also exists. One job-description analysis notes that RLHF pipeline experience — specifically end-to-end reward model training and preference optimization — remains rare relative to demand. However fine-tuning is a specialty, not a mass-market role. Most enterprises try prompting and RAG first and fine-tune only when those approaches fall short, so demand is concentrated at AI labs, model companies, domain-specific AI vendors and larger enterprises with high-volume or specialized use cases.

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HOT LIST: IT Non-Certified Skills, cont'd.

Several forces drive demand for LLM tuning. Open-weight models such as Llama, Mistral, Qwen and Gemma have made it practical for companies to build their own tuned models rather than rely only on closed APIs. Cost is another factor: a smaller fine-tuned model can often match a large general-purpose model on a narrow task at a fraction of the inference cost. Domain accuracy matters as well: legal, medical, financial, coding and customer-service applications need models that speak the domain's language and follow its rules. Data privacy and control push regulated companies toward models they can host and tune themselves. And the rise of AI agents and reasoning models has made preference and reinforcement tuning (DPO, GRPO and similar methods) central to getting models to behave reliably.

The strongest cash pay premium bonus opportunities are among LLM Engineers, Machine Learning Engineers, AI Research Scientists, Generative AI Engineers, and AI Model Optimization Engineers who can adapt, evaluate, and optimize language models for production applications.

24. Hugging Face Transformers

Average Pay Premium: 19 percent of base salary equivalent
Market Value Increase: 46.2 percent (in the six months through October 1, 2026)

Hugging Face Transformers refers to the ecosystem of tools, libraries, and practices built around Hugging Face's Transformers library, which is the de-facto standard way engineers and data scientists use, fine-tune, deploy, and operate modern AI foundation models. At its core, this skill means knowing how to work with transformer-based models—the architecture behind today's most important AI systems. These include large language models (LLMs), vision transformers, speech models, and multimodal systems. Hugging Face provides a unified interface to thousands of pre-trained models such as BERT-style encoders, GPT-style decoders, instruction-tuned LLMs, vision models, and speech-to-text models, all accessible with a few lines of Python.

From a practical standpoint, Hugging Face Transformers skills usually include loading and running pre-trained models, fine-tuning them on custom data, optimizing inference, managing tokenizers, handling embeddings, and integrating models into applications via APIs or pipelines. In production contexts, this often extends to model versioning, deployment via containers or cloud services, and integration with vector databases, RAG pipelines, and MLOps tooling.

Why is demand for these skills rising in 2026? Because they sit exactly at the center of the AI boom. Most real-world AI applications today do not train models from scratch; they adapt foundation models. Hugging Face is one of the primary ways companies do that. The library has effectively become the "Linux of AI models". Enterprises, startups, and research teams all rely on it because it abstracts away enormous complexity while still allowing deep customization. If an organization is building chatbots, copilots, document intelligence, semantic search, summarization, recommendation engines, or multimodal AI, Hugging Face is very often in the stack. Another reason demand is exploding is speed to value. Teams can move from idea to working AI feature in days instead of months. That makes engineers who know Hugging Face immediately productive, which hiring managers love. It also aligns perfectly with current enterprise priorities: fast AI pilots, rapid iteration, and measurable business impact.

Unlike many older ML skills, Hugging Face knowledge is directly transferable across industries. Finance, healthcare, legal tech, marketing, cybersecurity, HR analytics, and customer support all use the same underlying transformer workflows. A model fine-tuned for sentiment analysis today can become a classification or extraction model tomorrow with minimal changes. It also bridges roles. Data scientists, ML engineers, backend engineers, and even advanced analytics professionals all touch Hugging Face in different ways. That makes it a rare skill that shows up in multiple job families, which naturally drives demand. Finally, it aligns with adjacent hot skills: RAG, vector databases, AI agents, LLMOps, and AI governance. If someone knows Hugging Face well, employers assume they can plug models into modern AI architectures without reinventing the wheel.

25. Neural Networks

Average Pay Premium: 19 percent of base salary equivalent
Market Value Increase: 35.7 percent (in the six months through October 1, 2026)

Neural network skills involve the ability to design, train, and deploy deep learning models that mimic the structure of the human brain to solve complex problems. These models power key AI technologies, including image and speech recognition, natural language processing, and generative AI. Professionals in this area are skilled in:

- Building and optimizing architectures like CNNs, RNNs, and transformers
- Using frameworks such as TensorFlow, PyTorch, and Keras

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HOT LIST: IT Non-Certified Skills, cont'd.

- Handling large-scale data, model tuning, and performance evaluation
- Applying neural networks to real-world tasks in computer vision, NLP, and robotics

Why are these skills in more demand in 2026? They are foundational to nearly all advanced AI systems. The explosive growth of generative AI, autonomous systems, and personalized recommendation engines means companies need experts who can build and optimize complex deep learning models. Neural networks are also being used across industries—from healthcare diagnostics and fintech fraud detection to real-time language translation and creative AI applications. As organizations seek to differentiate through AI, neural network engineers are key in delivering intelligent, data-driven solutions. Because developing these models requires both deep mathematical understanding and engineering precision, the talent pool remains limited. This scarcity, combined with the high value neural networks bring to product innovation and automation, means companies offer premium salaries, bonuses, and equity to attract top talent.

26. NIST/NIST 800

Average Pay Premium: 19 percent of base salary equivalent
Market Value Increase: 11.8 percent (in the six months through October 1, 2026)

The ***NIST/NIST 800-series*** skills refer to hands-on expertise applying the National Institute of Standards and Technology's Special Publications — most centrally NIST SP 800-53 (the catalog of security and privacy controls), 800-37 (the Risk Management Framework, or RMF, that governs how those controls get selected and applied), 800-30 (risk assessment), and 800-171 (protecting controlled unclassified information at contractors). NIST 800-53 compliance is mandatory for all U.S. federal agencies, organizations operating systems on the government's behalf, and contractors handling federal data, and the RMF ties system categorization, control selection, assessment, and formal authorization together into a structured lifecycle that security and compliance professionals must be able to navigate in practice, not just in theory.

Organizations are now prioritizing people who can architect, govern, secure, and operationalize complex technology ecosystems, which is why certifications and skills tied to governance, architecture, and cybersecurity are outperforming the rest of the market — and NIST framework expertise is arguably the most concrete, auditable expression of governance skill that exists in federal and federally-adjacent.

The core benefit is that NIST 800-series expertise is not optional in the environments that need it — it's a legal and contractual requirement for federal systems and federal contractors under FISMA, and it maps directly into FedRAMP and CMMC compliance for anyone doing business with the government or handling federal data. That gives it a demand floor other "hot" skills don't have: budgets for RMF compliance don't get cut the way discretionary AI experimentation budgets can, because failing an authorization assessment can mean losing the ability to operate a federal system at all. Combined with the current environment — employers paying up specifically for governance and risk-assessment capability — NIST framework fluency sits in a genuinely favored category right now.

27. Artificial Intelligence
Data Science
Identity access management

Average Pay Premium: 19 percent of base salary equivalent
Market Value Increase: 5.6 percent (in the six months through October 1, 2026)

Artificial Intelligence skills are a catch-all, wide-spectrum category that some employers have chosen to use to reward employees with cash pay premiums. Employers increasingly want some AI capability in almost every role, but they pay very different amounts depending on the tier. This generally includes the following groupings spanning software engineering, data science, cloud infrastructure, cybersecurity, and enterprise technology development:

- *AI fluency:* using tools like ChatGPT, Claude and Copilot to work faster and better
- *Applied AI and AI engineering:* building LLM applications, RAG systems and AI agents
- *Core machine learning:* model development with tools like PyTorch, plus fine-tuning and MLOps/LLMOps
- *Specialized infrastructure and research:* inference optimization, GPU systems and frontier model training
- *AI governance, security and risk:* making AI safe, compliant and trustworthy

Driving demand is companies moving from AI pilots to production deployments, and that requires people who can build, integrate, secure and govern AI systems. Competitive pressure and heavy capital investment keep budgets flowing toward AI talent. The agentic wave adds new needs: agents call tools, act on systems and need their own identities and

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HOT LIST: IT Non-Certified Skills, cont'd.

guardrails. AI also creates ripple-effect demand in adjacent fields. Data engineering, data architecture, identity management and vulnerability management have all become more urgent because of AI.
The largest cash premiums are concentrated in a few groups:

- *AI engineers and agentic AI engineers* who build production LLM applications and agents
- *LLM fine-tuning, post-training and alignment specialists*
- *LLMOps and inference optimization engineers,* especially those with GPU, serving-stack and cost-optimization depth
- *Data engineers and data architects* who make enterprise data AI-ready
- *AI security and governance specialists,* including identity for AI agents
- *Domain experts with AI skills* in regulated industries such as finance, healthcare, legal and defense

The strongest cash pay premiums opportunities are among AI Engineers, Machine Learning Engineers, AI Research Scientists, Generative AI Engineers, AI Solutions Architects, and senior Software Engineers who combine AI expertise with advanced software development, cloud infrastructure, and production deployment capabilities.

Data science is an interdisciplinary field focused on analyzing and interpreting large amounts of data to uncover patterns, make predictions, and support decision-making. It combines elements of mathematics, statistics, computer science, and domain expertise. At its core, data science answers questions like "What happened?" (descriptive analytics), "Why did it happen?" (diagnostic analytics), "What will happen?" (predictive analytics), and "How can we make it happen?" (prescriptive analytics).

Examples of data science in action include: Predicting customer churn for a subscription service; recommending products on Amazon; detecting credit card fraud in real time.

A data scientist blends technical expertise, analytical thinking, and business acumen:

- *Programming and Tools*: Proficiency in Python or R for analysis and machine learning; SQL for working with databases; and tools like Jupyter notebooks for workflows.
- *Math and Statistics*: Understanding probability, statistical testing, regression, and algorithms for building models.
- *Machine Learning*: Designing and training models for prediction and classification using frameworks like Scikit-learn, TensorFlow, or PyTorch.
- *Data Engineering Basics*: Handling big data with tools like Spark or Hadoop, and preparing raw data for analysis (data wrangling).
- *Visualization and Communication*: Create dashboards and visuals (with Tableau, Power BI, or Matplotlib) to present findings clearly to decision-makers.

Soft skills like problem-solving and storytelling with data are also equally critical for explaining insights to non-technical stakeholders.

This combination of factors has made data scientists(or data science skills) some of the most sought-after and well-paid professionals worldwide. The demand for data science has exploded for several reasons:

- *Massive data growth:* Businesses generate vast amounts of data from apps, sensors, and customer interactions, but raw data is useless without people to understand it.
- *AI and automation:* Companies need data science to power AI systems like chatbots, recommendation engines, and predictive maintenance.
- *Competitive advantage:* Organizations in retail, healthcare, finance, and tech are racing to gain insights faster than competitors.
- *Shortage of talent:* There aren't enough professionals with the mix of technical, analytical, and business skills that data science requires, driving up demand and salaries.

Identity and Access Management (IAM) encompasses the cybersecurity technologies and practices used to control who can access an organization's systems, applications, networks, and data. It includes authentication, authorization, single sign-on (SSO), multifactor authentication (MFA), privileged access management (PAM), identity governance and administration (IGA), and automated identity provisioning. Identity is also the foundation of zero-trust security, the approach of verifying every user and device on every request instead of trusting anything inside the network. Important technologies include Microsoft Entra ID, Okta, SailPoint, CyberArk, Ping Identity, and cloud IAM services from AWS and Google Cloud.

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HOT LIST: IT Non-Certified Skills, cont'd.

Demand is strong and growing. The biggest new driver is AI agents and other "non-human identities": service accounts, API keys, tokens, bots and now autonomous agents, and their number is exploding. Research from Rubrik Zero Labs indicates that AI agents and non-human identities now outnumber human users by 82 to 1 in enterprise environments. Most organizations aren't ready. A January 2026 Cloud Security Alliance and Oasis Security survey found that 92% are not confident that their legacy IAM solutions can effectively manage AI and non-human identity risks, and 78% of organizations have no documented policy for creating or removing AI identities. On top of that, identity is now the most common way attackers break in, through stolen credentials, phishing and MFA bypass. Zero-trust programs, cloud migration, platform consolidation, and compliance and audit requirements in finance, healthcare and government add to the pressure.

The strongest opportunities for earning cash pay premiums are among IAM Architects, Identity Security Engineers, Privileged Access Management Specialists, Identity Governance Engineers, and Cloud Security Architects who can design and manage complex identity environments. The biggest premiums go to the scarcest skills. These are in particular critical shortage: cloud IAM architecture (AWS, Azure, GCP) and identity security and ITDR expertise; PAM engineering with CyberArk, Delinea or BeyondTrust; IGA platform engineering with SailPoint or Saviynt; CIAM and developer-focused identity work using OAuth and OIDC; non-human identity and secrets management; and cleared IAM engineers on federal and defense programs.

30. Prompt Engineering

Average Pay Premium: 18 percent of base salary equivalent
Market Value Increase: 80 percent (in the six months through October 1, 2026)

Prompt engineering is the skill of designing and refining prompts to effectively interact with AI language models, like ChatGPT or other large language models (LLMs), to produce high-quality, reliable, and relevant outputs. It involves a deep understanding of how these models interpret inputs, manage context, and generate text, code, or even images. Prompt engineers craft queries, instructions, and templates that:

- Guide AI behavior for specific use cases (e.g., customer service, coding, research)
- Optimize results through clarity, structure, and constraints
- Chain multiple prompts together to create workflows or tools (aka prompt chaining)
- Use techniques like few-shot, zero-shot, and role-based prompting to increase accuracy

In 2026, as generative AI has become deeply embedded in workflows, software products, and enterprise tools, the ability to harness AI effectively is a high-value skill. Prompt engineers bridge the gap between what users want and what AI delivers—making them crucial in unlocking the full potential of LLMs. Key drivers of demand:

- *AI Integration Across Industries:* From healthcare to law, marketing to finance, organizations rely on LLMs for tasks like summarization, automation, content generation, and customer support. Prompt engineers tailor AI output to meet domain-specific requirements.
- *Productization of AI:* Companies are embedding LLMs into apps, platforms, and services. Prompt engineers are needed to fine-tune prompts that ensure consistency, safety, and performance in production environments.
- *Efficiency and ROI:* Well-engineered prompts can drastically improve accuracy and reduce compute costs. Businesses are willing to pay a premium for experts who can optimize AI interactions and deliver better outputs with fewer tokens.
- *AI Literacy Gap:* Most users lack a comprehensive understanding of how to achieve optimal results with AI. Prompt engineers step in as translators between human needs and machine outputs, making them vital in both tech and non-tech teams.
- *Few Tools, High Impact:* Unlike traditional coding, prompt engineering requires low-code or no-code tools, but deep understanding. This makes it accessible yet powerful—meaning those who master it early are highly valued.

31. Program Management

Average Pay Premium: 18 percent of base salary equivalent
Market Value Increase: 20 percent (in the six months through October 1, 2026)

Program management skills refer to the ability to oversee and coordinate a group of related projects aligned with strategic business objectives. Unlike project management, which focuses on delivering specific outcomes, program management is broader—centering on long-term value delivery, cross-functional collaboration, stakeholder alignment, and organizational transformation. Skilled program managers must be adept at managing complexity, balancing competing priorities, and guiding multiple teams toward a shared vision. They understand risk management, budgeting, resource planning, change control, and benefits realization. More importantly, they act as strategic leaders who connect the dots between business goals and technical execution.

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HOT LIST: IT Non-Certified Skills, cont'd.

In 2026, demand for program management skills is expected to continue rising. As companies navigate digital transformation, AI adoption, cybersecurity modernization, and regulatory compliance, the need for coordinated, multi-project leadership is greater than ever. Organizations are no longer focused solely on "getting projects done"—they're now focused on achieving strategic agility and sustainable growth. That requires strong program managers.

The shift to hybrid work and distributed teams has also made visibility, alignment, and governance more difficult. Program managers who can lead across virtual boundaries while maintaining clarity and momentum are especially valuable. Another factor is the increasing complexity of large-scale initiatives, particularly in industries such as technology, healthcare, finance, and government. These efforts require professionals who can navigate ambiguity, influence at the executive level, and continually adapt plans in dynamic environments.

Because effective program management directly impacts business outcomes—and because not every project manager can operate at this strategic level—qualified program managers are earning higher salaries, performance bonuses, cash pay premiums, and fast-tracked leadership roles. In short, as organizations undertake more ambitious and interconnected initiatives, program management has become a mission-critical role, and the market is responding accordingly.

32. Convolutional Neural Network Hybrid/human-interpretable reasoning in LLMs

Average Pay Premium: 18 percent of base salary equivalent
Market Value Increase: 5.9 percent (in the six months through October 1, 2026)

Convolutional neural networks (CNNs) are deep learning models built to process images, video, and other grid-like data. They learn visual features such as edges, textures and shapes, and they have been the workhorse of computer vision for over a decade. Standard CNN models include ResNet, EfficientNet, U-Net and the YOLO family of object detectors. CNN skills include:

- Designing and training CNN models, often by fine-tuning pre-trained ones (transfer learning)
- Image classification, object detection and segmentation
- Data augmentation and labeling strategy
- Compressing models (quantization and pruning) so they run fast on cameras, robots, phones and embedded devices

In practice, CNN skills are hired as computer vision skills, and computer vision is in solid demand. Although the fields demand has been shifting, CNNs still dominate production systems, ruling production due to efficiency, interpretability, mature tooling. Most real work today means adapting existing models, not designing new ones, so CNN expertise is essential but no longer sufficient on its own. Employers want engineers who know CNNs and transformers and can pick the right one.

The demand principal driver is the growing use of computer vision in industrial automation, robotics, medical diagnostics, autonomous vehicles, defense systems, and intelligent surveillance. CNNs remain particularly useful for image recognition, defect detection, object identification, and applications requiring efficient visual processing. Demand is also benefiting from advances in edge AI, where models must operate on cameras, sensors, mobile devices, and embedded processors with limited computing resources.

The strongest cash pay premium opportunities are among Computer Vision Engineers, Deep Learning Engineers, Machine Learning Engineers, AI Research Scientists, and Edge AI Engineers who can design, train, and optimize CNN-based models for commercial applications.

Hybrid or human-interpretable reasoning in LLMs refers to techniques that make AI systems more transparent, controllable, and aligned with human logic. This includes combining large language models with structured methods such as rules, symbolic reasoning, retrieval systems, and evaluation frameworks. In practical terms, these skills show up as the ability to design systems that don't just produce answers, but can explain, justify, and reliably reproduce their reasoning. That often involves approaches like Retrieval-Augmented Generation, structured prompting, tool use, and evaluation pipelines that validate outputs against known criteria.

Hybrid and human-interpretable reasoning skills represent one of the most important shifts in the AI talent market. They move the focus from "what AI can do" to "what AI can be trusted to do." This has placed them in a high-growth, high-value category that is still maturing. Demand is being driven by real deployment challenges—reliability, governance, and regulatory pressure—rather than hype alone. What distinguishes this skill set from general AI development is the focus on trust, interpretability, and control, rather than raw model capability.

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HOT LIST: IT Non-Certified Skills, cont'd.

Demand for these skills is increasing because organizations are moving from AI experimentation to AI deployment in high-stakes environments. When AI systems influence decisions in finance, healthcare, law, or enterprise operations, it is no longer sufficient for them to be "usually correct." They must be auditable and explainable. This creates a strong need for hybrid reasoning approaches. Pure LLM outputs are often too opaque or inconsistent for regulated or mission-critical use cases. By contrast, systems that combine LLMs with structured reasoning or external data sources are easier to validate and govern.

There is also a clear regulatory and governance push. Standards like ISO/IEC 42001 emphasize accountability, traceability, and control over AI systems. Hybrid reasoning techniques are one of the most practical ways to meet those requirements.

Despite strong momentum, this is still an emerging specialization. Many companies are early in their AI journey and are focused on basic use cases like chat interfaces or productivity tools, where deep interpretability is not yet required. In addition, tooling is evolving quickly, and some interpretability features are being built directly into platforms, which may reduce the need for custom solutions over time.

There is also a skills gap for hybrid or human-interpretable reasoning in LLMs skills. This area requires a combination of machine learning, software engineering, and systems thinking, which limits the immediate supply of talent. Hybrid reasoning skills are currently commanding strong and rising premiums, especially in environments where trust and reliability matter and professionals who can design and implement interpretable, production-grade AI systems. At the higher end—particularly for those leading AI system architecture, governance, or evaluation frameworks—the cash pay premium is much higher in AI-first companies or regulated industries. At that level, the value comes from the ability to make AI systems deployable in real-world, high-risk contexts, not just functional.

Roles that benefit most from these skills. The strongest impact is in AI engineering and applied machine learning roles, where building reliable LLM-based systems is central. It is also highly relevant for AI platform engineers and MLOps professionals, who are responsible for evaluation, monitoring, and governance. There is growing importance for AI architects and technical leads, particularly those designing enterprise AI systems that must meet compliance and reliability standards. Product-oriented roles can also benefit when they are responsible for delivering trustworthy AI features.

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HOT LIST: IT Certifications

- **IT CERTIFICATIONS EARNING HIGH PAY---AND STILL GROWING IN VALUE**

As a group, the 665 IT certifications tracked in our *IT Skills and Certifications Pay Index™* have increased in average market value for two consecutive quarters, **achieving the highest six-month gain in cash pay premiums since 2015.** 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 October 1, 2026.
- They recorded substantial gains in cash market value in the six months ending October 1, 2026.

None of the following IT certifications earns less than the equivalent of 11 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 10 percent to 80 percent range in cash market value in the six months ending October 1st. They are reported in descending order of market value gain (including ties). Here is an alphabetical list.
:

Certified Cloud Security Professional
Certified in the Governance of Enterprise IT
Cisco Certified Design Expert
Cisco Certified DevNet Expert (aka CCIE Automation)
Cisco Certified Internetwork Expert
Fortinet Certified Expert in Cybersecurity
GIAC Defensible Security Architect
GIAC Experienced Penetration Tester
GIAC Exploit Researcher and Advanced Penetration Tester
GIAC Experienced Forensic Analyst(
GIAC Experienced Incident Handler
GIAC Experienced Intrusion Analyst
GIAC Security Expert
InfoSys Security Engineering Professional
InfoSys Security Architecture Professional
OffSec Certified Expert 3
Offensive Security Exploit Developer
Offensive Security Exploitation Expert
Okta Certified Technical Architect
Oracle Database 19c Certified Master
Red Hat Certified Architect - all tracks
Salesforce Certified Application Architect
Salesforce Certified Systems Architect
Salesforce Certified Technical Architect
VMware Certified Distinguished Expert

1. Salesforce Certified Technical Architect

Average Pay Premium: 15 percent of base salary equivalent
Market Value Increase: 50 percent (in the six months through October 1, 2026

The ***Salesforce Certified Technical Architect (CTA)*** is the top technical credential in the Salesforce ecosystem. It sits at the end of a stacked path: the CTA adds a review board presentation on top of the written exams, and candidates must first earn the Salesforce Application Architect and System Architect credentials. Each of those is built from several "Designer" exams. The board itself has historically cost several thousand dollars per attempt. Preparation is long: candidates often spend months or years studying documentation, presenting at mock boards, and closing their gaps. The board tests whether a candidate can design and defend an enterprise-scale, multi-cloud solution in front of senior peers, so it is closer to a professional defense than a knowledge test.

Why Is it hot in 2026? The main driver is scarcity combined with growing demand. Technical Architects make up only about 1% of global Salesforce talent supply, and demand for the role has grown 27% in 2026 while supply grew 4%, the widest gap of any role in the ecosystem. The live board gives employers unusually trustworthy proof of hands-on design ability, which matters when firms are layering Data Cloud and Agentforce onto existing multi-org environments.

Typical candidates have 10+ years of experience and are senior solution, application, or system architects at consulting firms, systems integrators, or large enterprises. Also Enterprise or Platform Architects at large Salesforce customers in banking, insurance, healthcare, and the public sector. These organizations run multi-org, high-volume, heavily integrated environments where design mistakes are expensive.

Candidates pursue this credential because it is the clearest signal of authority in a very large platform ecosystem. The CTA is clearly niche: it is vendor-specific, expensive, and held by a tiny population. That niche scarcity helps explain a strong premium and sharp moves.

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HOT LIST: IT Certifications, cont'd.

2. Offensive Security Exploitation Expert (OSEE)

Average Pay Premium: 15 percent of base salary equivalent
Market Value Increase: 36.4 percent (in the six months through October 1, 2026

The ***Offensive Security Exploitation Expert (OSEE)*** is one of the most advanced offensive cybersecurity certifications available, validating expert-level skills in exploit development, vulnerability research, reverse engineering, and advanced penetration testing. Candidates are typically experienced penetration testers, red team operators, exploit developers, malware researchers, security consultants, and security researchers who identify and exploit sophisticated software vulnerabilities in enterprise environments.

In 2026, the OSEE has become is a high-value niche certification rather than a broad-market credential. It is intended for a relatively small group of elite offensive security professionals working in cybersecurity consulting, government, defense, critical infrastructure, and technology organizations where advanced exploit development and vulnerability research are mission-critical. Its rigorous, hands-on examination and highly specialized technical content significantly limit the number of professionals who earn the certification.

Foote Partners' strong six-month growth trajectory and above-average cash pay premium for the OSEE reflect increasing demand for elite offensive security expertise as organizations strengthen cyber resilience against increasingly sophisticated threats. The combination of exceptional technical difficulty, a very limited supply of qualified professionals, and the critical role these experts play in identifying high-impact vulnerabilities has propelled the OSEE into the upper tier of niche certifications commanding above-average cash pay premiums.

3. GIAC Security Expert(GSE)

Average Pay Premium: 15 percent of base salary equivalent
Market Value Increase: 15.4 percent (in the six months through October 1, 2026

The GIAC Security Expert (GSE) is GIAC's top credential designed to show that the holder has both offensive and defensive skills, plus hands-on practical ability. Its value is real, but it recently changed from a grueling hands-on exam into a portfolio of other GIAC certifications, and that shift affects how employers read it. Demand is strong in a narrow slice of the market. For most of its history, starting around 2003, earning the GSE meant passing a famously hard multi-day hands-on lab exam. GIAC has since moved it to a portfolio model. You now earn it by completing any six Practitioner certifications and any four Applied Knowledge certifications.

There is no separate exam; it is awarded on merit. Each certification exam is long. Practitioner exams run 2–5 hours, and Applied Knowledge exams run 4 hours. There's also a halfway credential, the GIAC Security Professional (GSP), which requires three Practitioner and two Applied Knowledge certifications.

Who benefits most from the GSE?

- **Senior incident responders, DFIR specialists, and threat hunters.** GIAC's forensics and IR certifications (GCIH, GCFA, GREM, and others) are the most respected in this area, and these people often already hold several of them.
- **Penetration testers and red teamers** who combine offensive certifications (GPEN, GXPN, GWAPT) with defensive ones. The GSE fits naturally since it calls for both.
- **Security engineers and architects at large enterprises, federal agencies, and defense contractors**, where GIAC certifications satisfy DoD workforce requirements and are widely recognized.
- **Principal or staff security engineers and SOC/IR team leads** who want a credential that shows technical breadth rather than management knowledge.
- **Consultants, instructors, and conference speakers.** It strengthens credibility with clients and peers, and SANS instructors in particular often hold it.
- **Professionals already well into GIAC certifications.** If you hold five or more, the marginal cost to finish is lower and the renewal consolidation is a real convenience.

4. Cisco Certified Design Expert (CCDE)

Average Pay Premium: 14 percent of base salary equivalent
Market Value Increase: 75.0 percent (in the six months through October 1, 2026

The ***Cisco Certified Design Expert (CCDE)*** is one of Cisco's highest-level certifications, validating expert-level skills in designing large-scale, complex enterprise and service provider network architectures. Unlike certifications that emphasize implementation and troubleshooting, the CCDE focuses on network architecture, business requirements analysis, technology selection, scalability, resiliency, security, and long-term infrastructure strategy. Typical candidates are senior network architects, principal network engineers, infrastructure consultants, and enterprise architects responsible for designing mission-critical networking environments.

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HOT LIST: IT Certifications, cont'd.

The CCDE is intended for experienced networking professionals designing complex global networks for large enterprises, telecommunications providers, cloud service providers, government agencies, and systems integrators. Its demanding certification process, extensive experience requirements, and relatively small population of certificants has earned it respect in the networking credentials segments.

The CCDE's position on Foote Partners' Hot List midway through 2026 reflects increasing demand for experts who can design secure, resilient, and scalable network architectures supporting cloud computing, hybrid work, Zero Trust security, AI infrastructure, and software-defined networking. The certification's combination of exceptional technical depth, limited talent supply, and strategic business value will continue to propel it into the upper tier of niche certifications commanding above-average cash pay premiums.

5. Offsec Certified Expert 3

Average Pay Premium: 14 percent of base salary equivalent
Market Value Increase: 40 percent (in the six months through October 1, 2026

The OffSec Certified Expert 3, awarded by OffSec. is an active, advanced offensive cybersecurity certification that demonstrates expertise across penetration testing, web application exploitation, and exploit development. It is relevant to a relatively small group of experienced security professionals rather than the broader cybersecurity workforce.

OSCE³ is a combined designation earned by obtaining three separate certifications. Together, these certifications demonstrate broader offensive-security capabilities than any one of the three credentials individually.

- OSEP (OffSec Experienced Penetration Tester) covers advanced penetration testing, including operating in defended enterprise environments, bypassing security controls, and conducting complex attacks.
- OSWE (OffSec Web Expert) focuses on advanced web application security testing, source-code analysis, vulnerability discovery, and exploitation.
- OSED (OffSec Exploit Developer) covers exploit development, including reverse engineering and techniques for overcoming software security mitigations.

An important distinction is that OSCE³ is awarded for completing the three constituent certifications; it does not require a separate OSCE³ examination. The underlying skills are relevant to organizations conducting sophisticated penetration testing, adversary simulation, and vulnerability research. These include cybersecurity consulting firms, financial institutions, technology companies, and organizations maintaining internal red teams.

Which job roles benefit most? The strongest beneficiaries are Senior Penetration Testers, Red Team Operators, Red Team Leads, and Senior Offensive Security Consultants. These professionals are more likely to use several of the competencies represented by OSCE³ in their work. Security Researchers and Vulnerability Researchers may also benefit, although OSED or OSEE may be more directly applicable when their work concentrates on exploit development. For Application Security Engineers, OSWE may be more relevant than the combined OSCE³ designation. Similarly, an enterprise red-team operator focused on lateral movement and evasion may derive most of the practical value from OSEP.

6. Certified in the Governance of Enterprise IT (CGEIT)

Average Pay Premium: 14 percent of base salary equivalent
Market Value Increase: 16.7 percent (in the six months through October 1, 2026

The ***Certified in the Governance of Enterprise IT (CGEIT)*** certification, offered by ISACA, is a globally recognized credential for professionals who oversee and direct enterprise IT governance. It validates the ability to align IT with organizational goals, manage risk, ensure compliance, and create frameworks that maximize business value from technology investments. Unlike technical certifications that focus on specific systems or tools, CGEIT demonstrates a leadership-level understanding of governance principles, strategic management, benefits realization, and resource optimization within IT.

For IT professionals, CGEIT-related skills include designing and implementing IT governance frameworks, assessing and mitigating enterprise risks, and ensuring compliance with regulatory requirements and industry standards. It also requires expertise in performance measurement, IT portfolio management, strategic alignment between business and technology, and the ability to communicate governance issues to executive leadership and boards of directors. Strong analytical, communication, and policy-development skills are essential, as CGEIT-certified professionals often play a critical role in shaping IT strategy and ensuring enterprise-wide accountability.

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HOT LIST: IT Certifications, cont'd.

These skills are in demand right now because organizations are increasingly under pressure to prove that their IT systems are not only secure but also delivering measurable business value. The rise of digital transformation initiatives, stricter regulatory environments, and heightened cyber risks has elevated IT governance from a back-office function to a board-level concern. Industries such as finance, healthcare, government, and energy—where compliance and risk oversight are especially critical—are actively seeking professionals who can guide IT governance programs with authority and credibility.

The CGEIT is targeted toward senior professionals—CIOs, CISOs, IT directors, and governance or risk managers—who operate at the intersection of business and technology. Demand is therefore strongest in enterprises with mature governance structures or those subject to heavy regulatory scrutiny. For smaller organizations or highly technical roles, CGEIT may not be as directly relevant.

7. Cisco Certified Internetwork Expert (CCIE, all variations)

Average Pay Premium: 13 percent of base salary equivalent
Market Value Increase: 80 percent (in the six months through October 1, 2026

The **Cisco Certified Internetwork Expert (CCIE)** is Cisco's top-tier networking credential, widely regarded as its most prestigious and difficult to earn. It typically requires years of experience and deep technical knowledge, and its tracks cover enterprise infrastructure, wireless, data center, security, and collaboration. Candidates earn it through a hands-on lab exam in which they must build and troubleshoot real network configurations under time pressure, validating applied expertise rather than memorized knowledge. The CCIE gives employers verified proof of expert-level, hands-on network design and troubleshooting ability, which matters because outages and misconfigurations ripple through everything running on the network. We believe interest in this certification is driven by broader growth in infrastructure, security, and architecture credentials, the category CCIE falls under.

This certification addresses complex network design, deployment, troubleshooting, and optimization. Depending on the specialization, it can involve enterprise routing and switching, data-center infrastructure, security, service-provider networking, wireless technologies, or network automation. CCIE is particularly relevant to professionals responsible for network environments where availability, security, scalability, and performance are critical. It is also relevant to network architecture and engineering, which have remained essential functions in large organizations. Companies still need professionals who can design and troubleshoot complex networks, integrate security controls, support data-center infrastructure, and maintain reliable connectivity.

Typical candidates are senior network engineers and architects with 5 to 10+ years of experience, often already holding the CCNP, who are aiming for architect, principal engineer, or consulting roles. For a Senior Network Engineer, CCIE can demonstrate expertise beyond routine network administration and support progression into more complex engineering responsibilities. For a Network Architect, it provides evidence of practical implementation and troubleshooting knowledge that complements architectural design experience. Principal Network Engineers and Technical Consulting Architects may derive particularly meaningful value from CCIE when responsible for large network transformations, complex troubleshooting engagements, or technical leadership across multiple customer environments. The certification can also benefit Data Center Network Architects, Network Security Architects, Service Provider Network Engineers, and Network Automation Architects, depending on the specialization earned.

CCIE is a hybrid case: it is vendor-specific, but Cisco's installed base is so large that demand is broad, while the expert-level holder population is small. That scarcity supports a durable premium but doesn't guarantee a strong six-month trajectory. It is a long-established credential with a decades-long supply of holders, in a field where newer cloud, security, and AI credentials are also drawing employer attention.

8. VMware Certified Distinguished Expert (VCDX)
Oracle Database 19c Certified Master

Average Pay Premium: 13 percent of base salary equivalent
Market Value Increase: 44.4 percent (in the six months through October 1, 2026

The **VMware Certified Distinguished Expert (VCDX)** is the top credential in the VMware (Broadcom) ecosystem. It was long known as the VMware Certified Design Expert, and in September 2026 the program was renamed and broadened beyond design-only roles to welcome a wider range of elite VMware professionals, including architect, administrators, and support specialists. It now centers on VMware Cloud Foundation, the private cloud platform. It is earned through a rigorous process rather than a standard exam, with candidates submitting a detailed design for review and, if accepted, defend it live before a panel of experts. It works more like a professional defense than a test.

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HOT LIST: IT Certifications, cont'd.

The VCDX offers rare, hard-to-fake proof of architecture leadership, because it requires defending a real design before experts. Fewer than 400 people hold it worldwide, so the scarcity is extreme. The relaunch around VMware Cloud Foundation and private cloud also positions it for organizations repatriating or modernizing private cloud estates. The benefit depends on the employer, though. It is strongest at large enterprises with entrenched VMware environments and weaker elsewhere.

Who benefits most from having this credential?

- **Private cloud and infrastructure architects** at large enterprises that are staying on VCF, such as banks, government agencies, telecoms, and healthcare systems with large VMware estates.
- **Architects at Broadcom partners and VMware cloud service providers.** Firms that have consolidated around VCF need credentialed experts to win and deliver large engagements.
- **Broadcom/VMware employees** in professional services, solutions architecture, and technical account management.
- **Senior VCF administrators and support engineers.** The new Administrator and Support tracks will give them a top-tier credential for the first time, once those tracks launch.
- **Independent consultants** brought in to design VCF 9 deployments, plan migrations or upgrades, and rescue troubled projects.
- **Platform engineers running Kubernetes on VCF (VKS).** This is the newer, more future-facing part of the VMware stack.

The **Oracle Database 19c Certified Master (OCM)** is the top rung of Oracle's database credentials, above the Associate and Professional levels. Oracle describes the Master tier as recognizing the highest level of demonstrated skill, validated through rigorous performance-based exams rather than multiple-choice tests. For 19c, candidates must complete hands-on tasks on live database systems, such as installing, configuring, tuning, securing, backing up, recovering, and troubleshooting a production-style environment. It is highly respected among database professionals. However, the classic DBA role is shrinking as databases move to cloud and autonomous services, so this credential is valued mainly within a narrow set of employers, and that is what supports its position on this specialized list of highest paying certifications that have shown strong growth.

This certifications still matters for these reasons:

- **Oracle Database still runs critical systems** at banks, insurers, telecoms, governments, airlines, and ERP-heavy enterprises (Oracle E-Business Suite and many SAP installations). When those databases fail, companies pay well for real experts.
- **19c is the version still deployed in production.** It is Oracle's long-term support release, and most enterprise Oracle environments still run it, even as Oracle promotes its newer AI-branded releases (23ai, now branded 26ai). That gives the 19c OCM unusually practical relevance.
- **It proves hands-on skill.** In a field crowded with multiple-choice credentials and cheat sheets, a two-day practical exam involving RAC and Data Guard shows real ability. Hiring managers who know what it involves treat it seriously.
- **Oracle's cloud strategy keeps the skills relevant.** Oracle Cloud Infrastructure and Oracle Database running inside Azure, AWS, and Google Cloud keep Oracle in large-scale migrations, and those projects need people who understand the database at a deep level.
- **It's especially valued in parts of Asia.** In China, India, and the Middle East, the OCM is heavily marketed and widely recognized; some Chinese training firms publicize when their students pass.

Typical candidates are senior Oracle DBAs and database architects with many years of experience at banks, telecoms, government agencies, and large enterprises with deep Oracle estates. Others are consultants and managed-services engineers who want the strongest possible proof of Oracle depth. It is clearly niche: vendor-specific, version-specific, expensive, and held by a very small population. That niche scarcity supports a premium, but the same narrowness means the credential's value tracks one product version's lifecycle. Newer Oracle releases and the shift toward cloud and AI database credentials make strong growth for the 19c Master unlikely to continue from scarcity alone.

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HOT LIST: IT Certifications, cont'd.

10. Red Hat Certified Architect - all tracks (RHCA)

Average Pay Premium: 12 percent of base salary equivalent
Market Value Increase: 36.4 percent (in the six months through October 1, 2026

The **Red Hat Certified Architect (RHCA)** is the top credential in Red Hat's certification program, often described as its pinnacle or "black belt." It sits at the end of a tiered path: the RHCSA is the entry point, the RHCE adds automation skill, and specialist credentials follow. The RHCA is earned by stacking several advanced specialist exams, with concentrations such as infrastructure and cloud. Red Hat's exams are performance-based, so candidates complete live tasks on real systems rather than answering multiple-choice questions. That makes the RHCA a signal of broad, proven expertise across Linux, automation, containers, and enterprise platform operations, not just one product.

In May 2026, Red Hat replaced its single certification ladder with five specialized tracks, each with its own RHCA: Enterprise Linux, Ansible, OpenShift, Cloud-Native Applications, and AI. To earn the RHCA in a track, you pass five exams within that track: one Level 2, one Level 3, and three Level 4 specialist exams. Every Red Hat exam is 100% hands-on; you complete real tasks on live systems, with no multiple-choice questions, which is a big part of the brand's credibility.

The RHCA gives employers rare, hard-to-fake proof of hands-on expertise across the Red Hat stack. That matters at large enterprises, financial institutions, and government agencies, where downtime and misconfiguration are costly and where Red Hat platforms are deeply embedded. The performance-based, multi-exam path is expensive and time-consuming, which keeps the holder population small and supports pay at the senior end. Because it spans multiple areas, it also moves holders toward architect, principal engineer, and consulting roles rather than keeping them in administration. Stimulating demand in 2026 is that enterprises keep running critical workloads on Red Hat Enterprise Linux, Ansible, and OpenShift, and automation is shrinking the value of routine administration while raising the value of people who can design and govern—that is, architect---platforms.

Who benefits most from having this credential?

- **Senior Linux engineers and infrastructure architects** at large enterprises running RHEL at scale, such as banks, telecoms, government, and defense (Enterprise Linux track).
- **OpenShift platform engineers and Kubernetes architects,** especially those leading migrations off VMware (OpenShift track).
- **Automation architects and DevOps leads** standardizing on Ansible Automation Platform (Ansible track).
- **Platform engineers building AI and GPU infrastructure** on RHEL AI and OpenShift AI. This is the newest and most forward-looking track.
- **Red Hat employees and partners,** including consultants, solution architects, technical account managers, and instructors. Red Hat's own services organization values the RHCA most.
- **Consultants at IBM and Red Hat partners and integrators,** where certified headcount helps win deals and partner status.
- **Engineers in the U.S. federal and defense sectors,** where Red Hat is pervasive and certifications count toward workforce requirements.

11. Fortinet Certified Expert in Cybersecurity (FCX)
Offensive Security Exploit Developer (OSED)
Salesforce Certified Systems Architect (SCSA)

Average Pay Premium: 12 percent of base salary equivalent
Market Value Increase: 33.3 percent (in the six months through October 1, 2026

The **Fortinet Certified Expert (FCX)** in Cybersecurity, formerly called NSE 8, is the top level of Fortinet's certification program and requires passing a demanding hands-on practical exam. It's respected, and because Fortinet's products are so widely deployed, it has a larger market than most single-vendor security credentials. Its value, though, is limited to environments that run Fortinet. The FCX recognizes expert ability to design, configure, and troubleshoot network security using Fortinet products in complex networks. Fortinet organized its training into levels NSE 1 through 8 before rebranding to role-based designations (FCF, FCA, FCP, FCSS, and FCX), so many people still call this credential "NSE 8." The practical tests whether a candidate can design, deploy, and troubleshoot complex multi-product Fortinet security environments under real conditions, with the FCX validating mastery across firewalls, secure networking, security operations, and SASE rather than a single product.

FortiGate is one of the most widely deployed firewalls in the world and is especially strong in mid-sized companies, branch and SD-WAN networks, operational technology (OT) and industrial networks, education, and the public sector. That creates a large ecosystem of partners and customers that need senior Fortinet engineers. Further stimulating demand: Fortinet's partner program rewards resellers and managed security providers that employ highly certified engineers, and FCX holders are the headline names.

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HOT LIST: IT Certifications, cont'd.

Typical candidates are principal security architects, senior consultants at Fortinet partners, and security engineering leaders with five or more years on the platform. They pursue it to win partner status, differentiate themselves, and move into principal or director roles. It is about as niche as a credential gets: vendor-specific, expensive, and held by a tiny population.

Who benefits most from having this credential?

- **Senior network security engineers and architects** at organizations that standardize on Fortinet, especially in mid-sized enterprises, retail and branch-heavy companies, healthcare, education, and government.
- **Engineers at Fortinet partners, resellers, and managed security service providers.** This is the biggest payoff, since FCX holders win deals, lead complex deployments, and handle escalations.
- **SD-WAN and SASE architects** designing large, multi-site Fortinet networks.
- **OT and industrial security engineers** in utilities, manufacturing, and energy, where Fortinet has a strong presence.
- **Fortinet employees** such as systems engineers, consulting systems engineers, technical assistance center (TAC) escalation engineers, and professional services consultants.
- **Independent consultants and trainers** working in the Fortinet ecosystem.
- **Professionals in the Middle East, Latin America, and Asia-Pacific,** where Fortinet's market share is especially high and vendor certifications weigh heavily in hiring.

Offensive Security Exploit Developer (OSED) is an advanced technical cybersecurity certification focused on exploit development, vulnerability analysis, and the exploitation of software vulnerabilities. It is offered by OffSec, the organization behind OSCP and several other offensive security certifications. This is a technically demanding certification valued in specialized offensive security positions, particularly vulnerability research, exploit development, and advanced penetration testing. It validates the ability to analyze vulnerable Windows applications, understand how software vulnerabilities can be exploited, and develop working exploits. The OSED's principal technical areas include reverse engineering, stack-based buffer overflows, custom shellcode development, return-oriented programming, and techniques for bypassing security mitigations such as Data Execution Prevention (DEP) and Address Space Layout Randomization (ASLR).

Most penetration testing positions focus on identifying vulnerabilities, testing systems and applications, exploiting common weaknesses, and reporting security risks. They do not routinely require the development of new exploits. The OSED addresses a more specialized technical function: understanding software vulnerabilities deeply enough to create custom exploits. This capability is relevant to vulnerability research teams, specialized offensive security consultancies, security product developers, and some advanced red teams.

The strongest beneficiaries are Exploit Developers, Vulnerability Researchers, Security Research Engineers, and Advanced Red Team Operators. *For Exploit Developers,* OSED provides practical evidence of the ability to analyze vulnerable binaries and construct working exploits. These skills are directly relevant to their responsibilities. *Vulnerability Researchers* may benefit because exploit development helps establish whether a discovered software weakness can be exploited and what its security implications are. *Security Research Engineers* working for cybersecurity vendors can apply similar skills when analyzing software vulnerabilities, researching attack techniques, and evaluating security products. *Advanced Red Team Operators* may benefit when their assignments require custom exploitation capabilities beyond standard penetration testing tools. OSED can also be useful for *Malware Reverse Engineers*, although malware analysis requires additional competencies that OSED does not comprehensively validate. For general *Penetration Testers, Security Analysts, and Security Engineers*, the credential has more limited relevance. Certifications such as OSCP or OSEP generally align more closely with broader penetration testing responsibilities.

The ***Salesforce Certified System Architect*** certification is an advanced credential that validates the ability to design, implement, and govern enterprise-scale Salesforce environments. It requires candidates to first earn multiple prerequisite certifications and demonstrate extensive hands-on experience concentrating on the platform's technical foundation, including identity and access management, security, integration architecture, governance, and enterprise scalability. The SCSA represents the highest level of Salesforce architectural expertise short of the elite Salesforce Certified Technical Architect (CTA) designation.

Typical candidates are senior Salesforce solution architects, enterprise architects, technical leads, integration architects, and consulting professionals responsible for designing and governing complex Salesforce implementations. These professionals are commonly employed by Fortune 500 companies, large healthcare organizations, financial institutions,

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HOT LIST: IT Certifications, cont'd.

manufacturers, and global consulting firms where Salesforce serves as a strategic platform for customer relationship management, digital transformation, workflow automation, analytics, and AI-enabled business processes. Their role extends beyond configuring Salesforce to architecting secure, resilient, and integrated enterprise solutions that connect Salesforce with ERP, finance, HR, and other mission-critical systems.

This is a high-value niche certifications, concentrated among organizations that have made Salesforce a strategic enterprise platform rather than across the broader IT labor market. Foote Partners' strong six-month growth trajectory and above-average cash pay premium reflects a niche market dynamic; its compensation value is driven less by widespread adoption than by the scarcity of experienced Salesforce architects and the growing strategic importance of enterprise CRM modernization, AI integration, customer data platforms, and cloud-based business transformation. As organizations continue investing in more sophisticated Salesforce ecosystems, professionals capable of designing secure, scalable, and future-ready enterprise architectures are commanding increasingly strong cash pay premiums despite the certifications' specialized, niche focus.

But also, Salesforce continues to expand its role as a foundation for customer engagement, digital workflows, and AI-powered business applications, increasing demand for architects who can design scalable, secure, and highly integrated environments. Because the SCSA requires substantial experience and a significant investment in prerequisite credentials, the supply of qualified professionals will likely remain relatively limited, making them particularly valuable for organizations undertaking large-scale Salesforce initiatives.

14. Cisco Certified DevNet Expert(aka CCIE Automation)
GIAC Experienced Penetration Tester (GX-PT)
GIAC Exploit Researcher and Advanced Penetration Tester (GXPN)
Okta Certified Technical Architect

Average Pay Premium: 12 percent of base salary equivalent
Market Value Increase: 20 percent (in the six months through October 1, 2026

The **Cisco Certified DevNet Expert** was Cisco's top credential for network automation and software-driven infrastructure. Earning it took a written exam and an eight-hour, closed-book, hands-on lab that required candidates to plan, design, develop, test, deploy, and maintain automation solutions in software-defined network environments.

In February 2026 Cisco renamed it **CCIE Automation** but has kept the same exam + lab requirement to earn it. What the lab tests: Writing code against the programming interfaces of Cisco Catalyst Center, Nexus/ACI, and Meraki. You also need to handle infrastructure as code with Terraform, including managing state and writing reusable modules, along with Ansible, Python, CI/CD pipelines, containers, and model-driven configuration and telemetry (NETCONF, RESTCONF, YANG, gNMI).

Why is this certification valuable in 2026? The credential gives employers hard-to-fake proof that someone can build working automation, not just configure devices. That matters as organizations replace manual network changes with code, APIs, and pipelines using Python, Ansible, and Cisco's platforms. Moving it under the CCIE brand adds the recognition of Cisco's most established expert program, and Cisco has said automation and programmability are now built into every CCIE track, which makes the skill relevant beyond one specialty. Moreover, consider the following:

- **Network automation is one of the strongest trends in networking.** Cisco renamed and repositioned the track precisely because automation has become part of everyday network work. Employers want engineers who manage networks as code rather than typing commands by hand.
- **It combines two scarce skill sets.** Few engineers have both deep networking expertise and real software engineering ability. CCIE Automation certifies both at an expert level, and that pairing is hard to hire for.
- **It counters the CCIE's main weakness.** Traditional CCIE demand is slipping as networks shift to the cloud and automation. This track covers exactly that shift.
- **It's very rare.** The expert level launched in 2022, so it has far fewer holders than other CCIE tracks.
- **AI networking and data center buildouts** depend on heavily automated fabrics, which increases demand for these skills.

Who benefits most from having this credential?

- **Senior network automation engineers and NetDevOps leads** at large enterprises, service providers, and financial institutions running large Cisco networks.
- **Network architects who want to stay relevant** as manual configuration work disappears. CCIE Enterprise and Data Center holders often add this as a second CCIE.

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HOT LIST: IT Certifications, cont'd.

- **Engineers at Cisco partners, integrators, and managed-service providers** delivering automation projects with SD-WAN, Catalyst Center, ACI, and Meraki. Partner programs count CCIEs, and this track helps win automation work.
- **Data center and AI network engineers** automating ACI and Nexus fabrics.
- **Platform engineers and site reliability engineers (SREs) who manage networks,** connecting networking teams with DevOps teams.
- **Cisco employees** such as technical solutions architects, Customer Experience (CX) automation consultants, and DevNet/Automation advocates.
- **Consultants** building automation frameworks and CI/CD pipelines for network teams.

The **GIAC Experienced Penetration Tester** and the **GIAC Exploit Researcher and Advanced Penetration Tester** are both advanced offensive cybersecurity certifications, but they validate different technical competencies and serve somewhat different employment markets. In short, the GX-PT tests how broadly and quickly someone can run a real penetration test, while the GXPN tests how deeply they can research and build exploits.

GX-PT is a hands-on certification that assesses the capabilities of experienced penetration testers. It emphasizes realistic enterprise attack scenarios rather than primarily testing theoretical knowledge. Its technical scope includes reconnaissance, vulnerability exploitation, privilege escalation, Active Directory attacks, lateral movement, and command-and-control techniques. These competencies are relevant to professionals conducting enterprise penetration tests, internal network assessments, and authorized adversary simulations.

GXPN is an established advanced penetration-testing certification associated with SANS SEC660: Advanced Penetration Testing, Exploit Writing, and Ethical Hacking. It validates knowledge of memory exploitation, fuzzing, shellcode, source-code analysis, network attacks, cryptographic weaknesses, and techniques for bypassing security protections on Windows and Linux systems. Unlike GX-PT's entirely hands-on examination, GXPN combines a broader range of advanced exploitation knowledge with practical assessment.

Both are earned by exams requiring solving realistic technical problems under time pressure rather than recalling facts. The GX-PT requires passing a challenging hands-on exams which positions holders as technical leaders for red and purple team exercises. The GXPN signals exploit research ability, which is scarcer than general penetration testing and supports roles in vulnerability research and advanced offensive security. SANS/GIAC credentials also carry strong recognition in government and defense hiring.

Typical candidates are experienced penetration testers, GPEN holders moving up, red team and purple team operators, and security researchers at consulting firms, defense contractors, and government agencies. Both credentials are niche, though in different ways. The GX-PT is aimed at a broader group of working penetration testers but is newer and still building employer recognition, while the GXPN is narrower, more specialized, and better established.

The ***Okta Certified Technical Architect (OCTA)*** is Okta's highest-level credential and validates the ability to architect, design, and defend enterprise-scale identity and access management (IAM) solutions. Unlike many vendor certifications, candidates must first earn multiple prerequisite Okta certifications, demonstrate substantial real-world implementation experience, and complete a rigorous architecture assessment focused on solving complex business and security requirements. The certification emphasizes enterprise identity architecture, Zero Trust security, multi-factor authentication (MFA), lifecycle management, federation, API security, and scalable workforce identity design rather than day-to-day administration.

This is a high-value niche certification rather than a broad-market certification; its value is concentrated within organizations that have standardized on Okta or are undertaking large-scale identity modernization projects. While the overall population of professionals needing this credential is relatively small compared with cloud or cybersecurity certifications, those organizations depend on identity as the foundation of security, compliance, and digital transformation. As enterprises expand Zero Trust architectures, adopt AI-enabled applications, and manage growing numbers of human, machine, and application identities, experienced identity architects have become increasingly difficult to recruit, creating a supply-and-demand imbalance that favors certified experts.

Typical candidates are senior IAM architects, identity consultants, security architects, enterprise architects, and lead implementation specialists working for large enterprises or global consulting firms such as Accenture, Deloitte, IBM Consulting, NTT DATA, and PwC, as well as Fortune 500 organizations with complex identity environments.

Because the certification requires both deep product expertise and extensive architectural experience, this limits the number of practitioners who qualify for it. This is consistent with its strong six-month market value growth trajectory and above-average cash pay premium in our ITSCPI. The certification's value is driven less by widespread adoption than by the scarcity of qualified practitioners and the high business impact of enterprise identity projects.

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HOT LIST: IT Certifications, cont'd.

Organizations are willing to pay a premium for professionals who can successfully design and govern mission-critical identity infrastructures that underpin cloud transformation, cybersecurity resilience, regulatory compliance, and AI-enabled business initiatives. As a result, the certification commands compensation levels that exceed those of many broader-market credentials despite serving a comparatively specialized segment of the IT labor market.

18. GIAC Defensible Security Architect (GDSA)
InfoSys Security Engineering Professional (ISSEP/CISSP)
Salesforce Certified Application Architect
Average Pay Premium: 11 percent of base salary equivalent
Market Value Increase: 22.2 percent (in the six months through October 1, 2026

The ***GIAC Defensible Security Architect (GDSA)*** certification validates advanced cybersecurity expertise. The GDSA focuses on designing secure enterprise architectures using defense-in-depth, Zero Trust principles, threat modeling, and risk-based security controls. Typical candidates include senior security architects, penetration testers, red team members, security consultants, and cybersecurity engineers responsible for securing or testing complex enterprise environments.

Both certifications are high-value niche credentials rather than broad-market certifications. They are intended for experienced cybersecurity professionals who have progressed well beyond foundational security certifications and work in organizations with mature cybersecurity programs. The GDSA is most valuable for professionals responsible for enterprise security architecture and cyber resilience, while the GXPN is sought by organizations that require advanced offensive security capabilities, including financial institutions, defense contractors, technology companies, government agencies, and cybersecurity consulting firms. Rigorous technical content and demanding exams limit the number of professionals who earn these certifications, contributing to a relatively scarce talent pool.

Foote Partners' strong six-month growth trajectory and above-average cash pay premiums for both certifications reflect increasing enterprise demand for advanced cybersecurity expertise amid a rapidly evolving threat landscape. As organizations strengthen Zero Trust architecture, cloud security, threat detection, and proactive vulnerability management, experienced security architects and advanced penetration testers have become increasingly difficult to recruit. The specialized expertise validated by the GDSA and GXPN, combined with their limited supply and direct impact on enterprise cyber resilience, has propelled both certifications into the upper tier of niche credentials commanding above-average cash pay premiums.

The ***Information Systems Security Engineering Professional (ISSEP)*** is an advanced concentration built upon the Certified Information Systems Security Professional certification. It is not a standalone credential; candidates must first earn the CISSP before pursuing the ISSEP. It extends the broad knowledge base of the CISSP into a distinct area of expertise: ISSEP emphasizes integrating security throughout the systems engineering lifecycle, particularly for complex and mission-critical systems.. Typical candidates are experienced CISSP-certified systems engineers, CISOs, consultants, and government or defense professionals seeking to demonstrate deep expertise in specific discipline.

In 2026, the ISSEP remains a high-value niche certification rather than a broad-market credential. While the CISSP remains one of the industry's premier broad-market cybersecurity certifications, this specialized extension targets a much smaller group of experienced professionals whose responsibilities extend beyond operational security into engineering leadership. Demand is strongest within large enterprises, consulting firms, government agencies, defense contractors, financial institutions, healthcare organizations, and critical infrastructure operators where sophisticated security design and systems engineering is essential. The rapid expansion of cloud computing, Zero Trust architecture, AI-enabled systems, and increasingly stringent regulatory requirements has further increased demand for professionals who can engineer secure enterprise environments.

Foote Partners' strong six-month growth trajectory and above-average cash pay premiums for the ISSEP reflects the combination of its advanced specialization and the relatively limited number of CISSP professionals who pursue this concentration. Employers increasingly recognize that broad cybersecurity knowledge alone is insufficient for securing complex digital enterprises and are placing greater value on specialists who can engineer security into critical systems programs. This scarcity of highly experienced professionals, combined with sustained investment in cybersecurity transformation and AI governance, has propelled this CISSP concentration into the upper tier of niche certifications earning above-average cash pay premiums.

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HOT LIST: IT Certifications, cont'd.

The ***Salesforce Certified Application Architect*** certification is an advanced credential that validates the ability to design, implement, and govern enterprise-scale Salesforce environments. It requires candidates to first earn multiple prerequisite certifications and demonstrate extensive hands-on experience but emphasizes architectural discipline. The *Application Architect* focuses on designing scalable business applications, including data architecture, automation, application design, and user experience. It represents the highest level of Salesforce architectural expertise, short of the elite Salesforce Certified Technical Architect (CTA) designation.

Typical candidates are senior Salesforce solution architects, enterprise architects, technical leads, integration architects, and consulting professionals responsible for designing and governing complex Salesforce implementations. These professionals are commonly employed by Fortune 500 companies, large healthcare organizations, financial institutions, manufacturers, and global consulting firms where Salesforce serves as a strategic platform for customer relationship management, digital transformation, workflow automation, analytics, and AI-enabled business processes. Their role extends beyond configuring Salesforce to architecting secure, resilient, and integrated enterprise solutions that connect Salesforce with ERP, finance, HR, and other mission-critical systems.

This is a high-value niche certification, concentrated among organizations that have made Salesforce a strategic enterprise platform rather than across the broader IT labor market. Foote Partners' strong six-month growth trajectory and above-average cash pay premium reflects a niche market dynamic; their compensation value is driven less by widespread adoption than by the scarcity of experienced Salesforce architects and the growing strategic importance of enterprise CRM modernization, AI integration, customer data platforms, and cloud-based business transformation. As organizations invest in more sophisticated Salesforce ecosystems, professionals who can design secure, scalable, future-ready enterprise architectures command increasingly strong cash pay premiums despite the certifications' specialized, niche focus.

But also, Salesforce continues to expand its role as a foundation for customer engagement, digital workflows, and AI-powered business applications, increasing demand for architects who can design scalable, secure, and highly integrated environments. Because these certifications require substantial experience and a significant investment in prerequisite credentials, the supply of qualified professionals will likely remain relatively limited, making them particularly valuable for organizations undertaking large-scale Salesforce initiatives.

21. Certified Cloud Security Professional (ISC2-CCSP)
GIAC Experienced Forensic Analyst(GX-FA)
GIAC Experienced Incident Handler(GX-IH)
GIAC Experienced Intrusion Analyst (GX-IA)
InfoSys Security Architecture Professional (ISSAP/CISSP)
Average Pay Premium: 11 percent of base salary equivalent
Market Value Increase: 10 percent (in the six months through October 1, 2026

The ***Certified Cloud Security Professional(CCSP)*** is ISC2's advanced, vendor-neutral cloud security credential, developed jointly with the Cloud Security Alliance. It's built around six domains covering cloud architecture, data security, platform and infrastructure security, application security, operations, and legal/compliance/risk — essentially the full lifecycle of securing workloads across AWS, Azure, Google Cloud, and multi-cloud environments rather than teaching any one vendor's console.

CCSP's benefit is breadth and architectural credibility rather than raw hands-on proof. It signals that a candidate can design and govern security across an entire cloud environment — identity, data protection, incident response, contracts and compliance — not just operate a single tool or platform. That's valuable because cloud security roles increasingly sit above individual platform certifications (AWS/Azure/GCP security specialties) in seniority; CCSP is frequently paired with CISSP or a platform credential to round out a profile for cloud security architect or principal engineer roles. Employers use it as a governance-level signal in an area — cloud — where misconfigurations and access failures are now among the most common breach causes, which keeps demand, and therefore the premium, elevated.

CCSP candidates are typically mid-to-senior security professionals — cloud security architects, cloud engineers, cybersecurity consultants, security architects, cloud administrators, governance/risk specialists, and security managers responsible for protecting cloud-based infrastructure and applications. It targets those who already have a security background and are formalizing cloud-specific expertise, often as a companion credential to CISSP. Compared to OSEP, CCSP sits closer to the broad end of the spectrum: cloud security touches nearly every organization now, the exam format is accessible to a wider pool of experienced security generalists, and ISC2 markets it aggressively as part of a large certification family (CC, SSCP, CGRC, CISSP, CCSP). That relative breadth contributes to its trajectory with a strong, steady 11% premium reflecting broad, sustained enterprise demand for cloud governance skills.

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HOT LIST: IT Certifications, cont'd.

The **GIAC Experienced Forensic Analyst**, **GIAC Experienced Incident Handler**, and **GIAC Experienced Intrusion Analyst** are advanced cybersecurity certifications focused on three related but distinct defensive security disciplines. Their underlying skills matter to organizations facing cyberattacks, ransomware, unauthorized access, and sophisticated security incidents. However, employers generally emphasize practical experience in digital forensics, incident response, and threat detection, so certificants with this experience are more likely to earn higher pay premiums.

The GX-FA is an advanced digital forensics certification designed to assess a practitioner's ability to investigate sophisticated cybersecurity incidents using evidence collected from enterprise systems. Its technical focus includes identifying signs of compromise, examining forensic artifacts, reconstructing attacker activity, and determining what occurred during a security incident. The certification emphasizes practical forensic investigation rather than simply testing knowledge of forensic tools.
GX-FA is closely associated with the skills covered by GIAC Certified Forensic Analyst (GCFA), but places greater emphasis on demonstrating those skills in practical scenarios. Organizations need forensic investigators to analyze ransomware attacks, investigate unauthorized access, reconstruct security incidents, and determine the extent of compromises. These capabilities are particularly important in large enterprises, financial institutions, government agencies, cybersecurity consulting firms, and incident response service providers.

The GX-IH validates advanced practical incident response capabilities, including understanding attacker techniques, investigating compromised systems, analyzing malicious activity, and performing technically demanding response tasks.
The certification covers Windows and Linux incident investigations, vulnerability analysis, network reconnaissance, exploitation techniques, and identifying how attackers move through compromised environments. GX-IH is associated with the competencies covered by GIAC Certified Incident Handler (GCIH) but uses a more intensive practical assessment. An important distinction is that GX-IH assesses the technical execution of incident response rather than primarily evaluating incident management policies, executive communications, or organizational crisis leadership. Among the three certifications being evaluated, GX-IH has the strongest potential connection to a relatively broad cybersecurity employment market because incident response is a function performed across many industries.

GX-IA is an advanced intrusion detection and network traffic analysis certification that validates the ability to examine network communications, identify suspicious activity, interpret packet captures, analyze intrusion detection evidence, and investigate complex attack patterns. The technical scope includes network protocols, application traffic, network forensics, intrusion detection systems, Wireshark, Scapy, and related analytical techniques. GX-IA is closely related to GIAC Certified Intrusion Analyst (GCIA), but emphasizes advanced practical analysis. It is important to distinguish GX-IA from broader threat intelligence or security operations certifications. Its primary emphasis is technical intrusion analysis, especially using network evidence.
Organizations require professionals capable of identifying malicious network behavior, investigating suspicious traffic, and distinguishing legitimate activity from attacks. These skills are important in security operations centers, managed detection and response services, network security teams, and threat hunting functions.

Typical candidates are experienced SOC analysts, incident responders, forensic examiners, threat hunters, and network defenders who already hold a GCFA, GCIH, or GCIA and want to prove advanced, hands-on mastery. They pursue the credentials to move into senior analyst, team lead, and DFIR consulting roles, and to build toward GSE.

The ***Information Systems Security Architecture Professional* (ISSAP/CISSP)** is an ISC2 concentration, not a standalone certification; a candidate must already hold the CISSP. It focuses on designing security architecture: governance and risk, architecture modeling, identity and access architecture, infrastructure and application security design, and security operations.
ISSAP is most relevant to senior security architects, enterprise security architects, and technical security leaders responsible for integrating cybersecurity controls into complex business and technology environments.

This certification validates the ability to design, evaluate, and integrate security architectures th business objectives, risk tolerance, and regulatory requirements. It is not primarily a hands-on p administration, or security operations certification. Instead, it focuses on the architectural decisi technologies, controls, and processes fit together across an enterprise. The current examinatio Governance, Risk, and Compliance(21% weight); Security Architecture Modeling(22%); Infrastr Architecture(32%); Identity and Access Management(25%).

The ISSAP lets a CISSP holder prove architecture-level expertise, which is the step between security practitioner and principal architect or CISO. It is vendor-neutral, so it travels across employers, platforms, and cloud environments. That portability, plus ISC2's name recognition,

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HOT LIST: IT Certifications, cont'd.

gives it greater relevance in organizations with mature security architecture functions. Its recognition within U.S. federal cybersecurity workforce frameworks may also benefit candidates pursuing certain government and defense-related positions. ISC2 identifies ISSAP as approved under DoD 8140.

The strongest beneficiaries are Enterprise Security Architects, Principal Security Architects, Chief Security Architects, and Senior Cybersecurity Architects.

- *Enterprise Security Architects* are responsible for ensuring that security technologies and policies operate as an integrated architecture. ISSAP directly addresses their responsibilities in infrastructure security, identity architecture, risk management, and architectural modeling.
- *Principal and Chief Security Architects* may benefit because they establish enterprise-wide security standards, evaluate architectural alternatives, and advise senior technology and business leaders. ISSAP can also be useful for
- *Cloud Security Architects*, particularly those designing security across multiple cloud and on-premises environments. However, CCSP and cloud-provider security certifications may be more directly relevant to some cloud-focused positions.
- *Senior Identity and Access Management Architects* may benefit from ISSAP's IAM architecture content, although specialized identity certifications and practical IAM platform experience remain important.

The credential has less direct relevance to SOC Analysts, Penetration Testers, Incident Responders, and Security Engineers whose responsibilities are primarily operational rather than architectural.

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HOT LIST: IT Certifications, cont'd.

"HOT LIST" IT CERTIFICATIONS THAT HAVE PEAKED IN MARKET VALUE

The following have appeared recently on our certifications ***Hot List*** of certifications earning well-above-average cash pay premiums and still growing in market value. Our research indicates that their growth vectors have plateaued and, in most cases, have shown recent declines in market value that will likely continue.

- Certificate of Cloud Security Knowledge (CCSK)
- Certified in Risk and Information Systems Control (CRISC)
- Certified Kubernetes Security Specialist (CKS)
- GIAC Defensible Security Architect (GDSA)
- GIAC Security Professional(GSP)
- Microsoft Certified Azure Cybersecurity Architect Expert
- Salesforce Certified Systems Architect

Why do skills and certifications lose value?

Certifications decline in market value for several 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 25+ years Foote Partners has been tracking and reporting cash pay premiums in the ***IT Skills and Certifications Pay Index***.

* * *

LOSING GROUND: Listed to the right are certifications in alphabetical order that have lost between **33% and 67%** of their cash pay premium market value in the 24-month period ending October 1, 2026. Some on this list are recently retired or on schedule to be.

IT CERTIFICATIONS THAT HAVE LOST THE MOST MARKET VALUE

Artificial Intelligence Engineer (AIE) - ARTiBA
BTA Certified Blockchain Security Professional
Certificate in Information Security Management Principles
Certification of Capability in Business Analysis
Certified IP Telecom Network Specialist
Certified Business Process Associate
Certified Cloud Technology Professional
Certified Compliance & Ethics Professional
Certified in Convergent Network Technologies
Certified in Emerging Technology
Certified Information Systems Risk Manager/Mile2
Certified Scrum Product Owner
Certified Scrum Product Owner - Advanced
Certified ScrumMaster
Certified ScrumMaster - Advanced
Certified Software Quality Analyst
Certified Software Quality Manager
Certified Telecommunications Network Specialist
Certified Tester Foundation Level (CTFL) v4.0
Certified Tester Foundation Level Agile Tester
CompTIA Cloud Essentials
CompTIA Project+
EC-Council Certified Encryption Specialist v2
EC-Council Certified SOC Analyst
EC-Council Web Application Hacking and Security Testing
GIAC Certified Project Manager
GIAC Certified Windows Security Administrator
GIAC Python Coder
GIAC Systems and Network Auditor
HDI Customer Service Representative
Help Desk Team Lead/RCCSP
Hitachi Vantara Qualified Professional - VSP 360 Storage Administration
IBM Certified Solution Advisor - DevOps V2
ITIL 4 Foundation Certification
ITIL Intermediate Certification
Microsoft Certified Azure Fundamentals
Microsoft Office Specialist
Mile2 Certified Cloud Security Officer(C)CSO)
Okta Certified Professional
Oracle Certified Associate - Java SE Programmer
Oracle Certified Associate - WebLogic Server 12c Administrator
Oracle Certified Expert - Java SE Developer (all)
Oracle Certified Professional - Fusion Middleware 11g/12c Forms Developer
Oracle Certified Professional WebLogic Server 12c Administrator
Oracle PL/SQL Developer Associate
Pegasystems Certified Pega Business Architect
Pegasystems Certified System Architect
PMI Certified Associate in Project Management
Prince2 Foundation
Qualified/ Information Security Professional Q/ISP
Red Hat Certified Specialist in Business Process Design
RSA ID Plus Certified Administrator
SAFe Certification
SAS Certified Specialist Base Programming/SAS 9.4
SAS® Certified Specialist: Visual Business Analytics
ServiceNow Certified Systems Administrator (CSA)
Six Sigma Yellow Belt
SonicWall Network Security Administrator
Splunk Core Certified User
Teradata SQL for Business Users
Virtualization Council Master Infrastructure Architect
Zachman Certified - Enterprise Architect

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IT Skills & Certifications Pay Data Trend Charts

IT Skills and Certifications Pay Index™

(Data collected through October 1, 2026

- 23-year trending: IT skills and certifications market value performance
- IT skills and certifications market value trend detail

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

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 the 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

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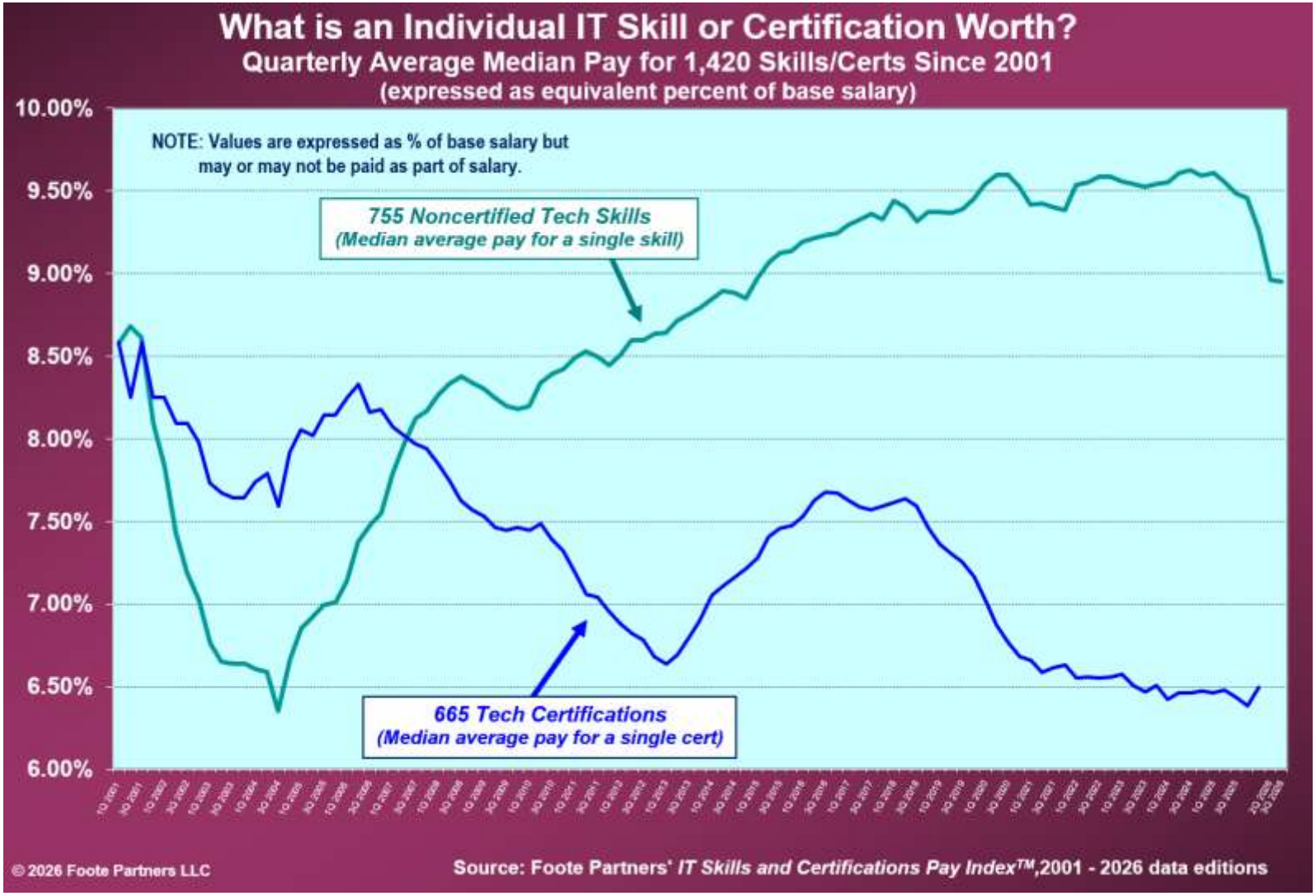
MULTI-YEAR PAY PREMIUM TRENDS: Certified versus Noncertified IT Skills

Average median cash pay premium bonuses for a single certified or noncertified IT skill. **N = 117,146 IT professional receiving pay premiums**



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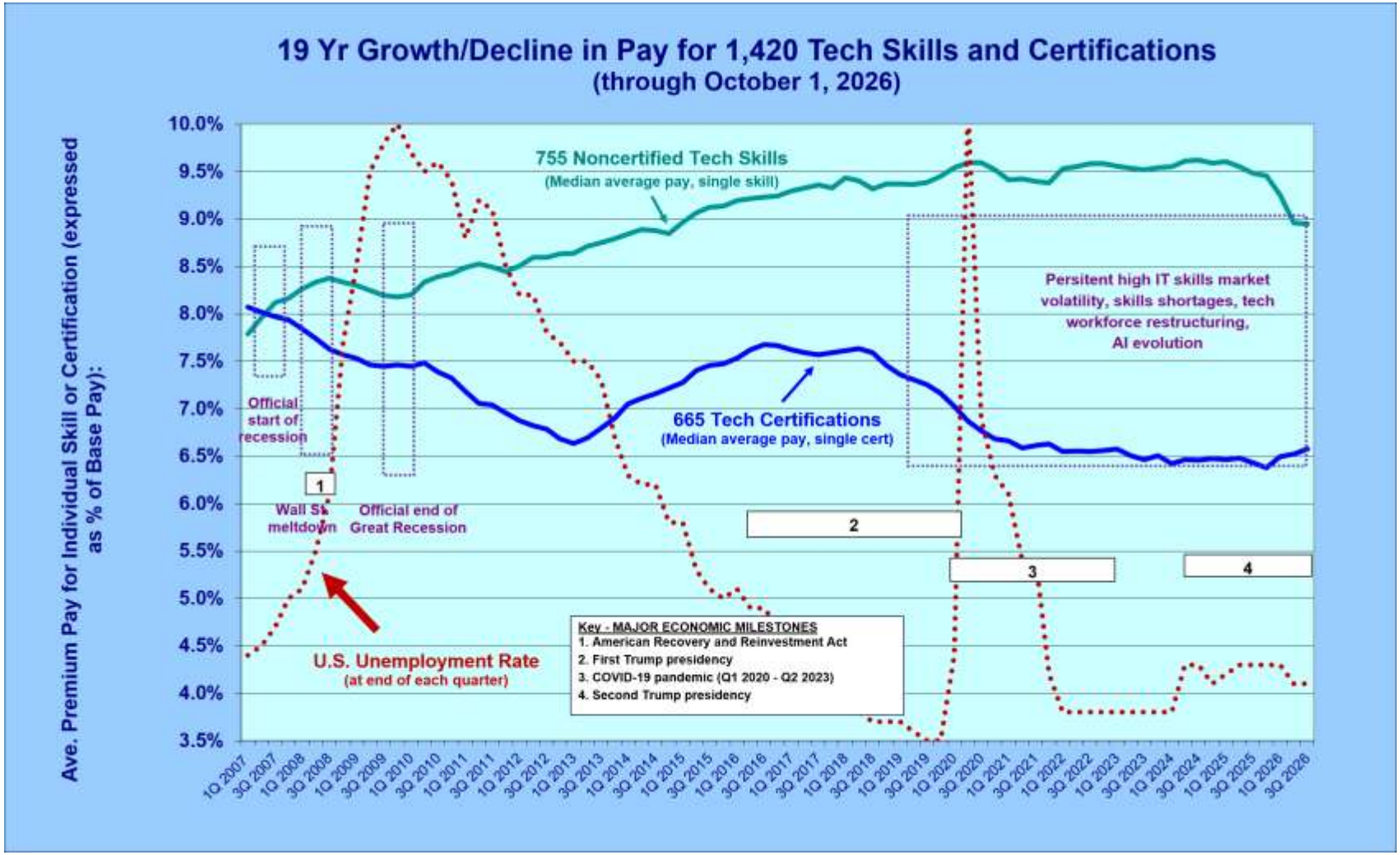
Premium Pay for IT Certifications and Non-Certified Skills Has Been Disrupted by the New Labor Landscape

(Average Median Pay for a Single Certified vs. Noncertified IT Skill, Last 20 years – 117,731 IT professionals



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

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665 IT Certifications: Pay and Demand Trend Detail

(Data collected through October 1, 2026)

- List of IT certifications reported
- Pay premium performance
- Notable market value gains and losses
- Highest paying IT certifications

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AccessData Certified Examiner (ACE)
Adobe/Magento 2 Certified Developer-Associate
Adobe/Magento 2 Certified Developer-Professional
Arcitura Certified Cloud Security Specialist
Artificial Intelligence Engineer (AIE) - ARTiBA
Avaya Certified Implementation Specialist(ACIS)
Avaya Solutions Administrator Certificate (ASAC)
Avaya Solutions Developer Certificate (ASDC)
Avaya Certified Support Specialist(ACSS)
Avaya Services 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 Cloud Ops Engineer - Associate
AXELOS ITIL 4 certifications
BICSI Data Center Design Consultant
BICSI Technician and Registered Communications Distribution Designer
BTA Certified Blockchain Security Professional (CBSP)
Certificate in Information Security Management Principles
Certificate of Cloud Auditing Knowledge (CCAK)
Certificate of Cloud Security Knowledge (CCSK)
Certification of Capability in Business Analysis (CCBA)
Certified Analytics Professional - Expert (CAP-Expert)
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 (CBCP)
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 & Ethics Professional
Certified Computer Examiner (CCE)
Certified Computing Professional (CCP-ISC2)
Certified Data Center Management Professional
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(ISC2)
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 Kubernetes Security Specialist (CKS)
Certified Penetration Testing Engineer (CPTE)
Certified Protection Professional
Certified Scrum Developer
Certified Scrum Product Owner
Certified Scrum Product Owner - Advanced
Certified Scrum Professional - Product Owner
Certified Scrum Professional - ScrumMaster
Certified Scrum Agile Leader
Certified Scrum Trainer
Certified ScrumMaster
Certified ScrumMaster - Advanced
Certified Secure Software Lifecycle Professional (CSSLP)
Certified Software Quality Analyst (CSQA)
Certified Software Quality Manager (CSQM)
Certified Telecommunications Network Specialist (CTNS)
Certified Tester Advanced Level Test Analyst (CTAL-TA)
Certified Tester Foundation Level (CTFL) v4.0
Certified Tester Foundation Level Agile Tester (CTFL-AT)
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 Expert
Cisco Certified DevNet Professional
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 - Automation (CCNA Automation)
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 - Enterprise/Design
Cisco Certified Network Professional - Enterprise/Routing and Services
Cisco Certified Network Professional - Enterprise/Wireless Network
Cisco Certified Network Professional - Security
Cisco Certified Network Professional - Service Provider
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 (CCNP-all)
Cisco Certified Systems Instructor (CCSI)
Cisco Data Center Unified Computing Design Specialist
Cisco Data Center Unified Fabric Support Specialist
Citrix Certified Associate - App Delivery and Security (CCA-AppDS)
Citrix Certified Associate – Virtualization (CCA-V)
Citrix Certified Expert - Virtualization
Citrix Certified Instructor (CCI)
Citrix Certified Professional – App Delivery and Security (CCP-AppDS)
Citrix Certified Professional - Virtualization (CCP-V)
CIW Advanced HTML5 and CSS3 Specialist
CIW Certified Database Design Specialist
CIW Web and Mobile Design Professional
CIW Web Development Professional
CIW Web Foundations Associate
CIW Web Security Professional
Cloudera Administrator Cloud
Cloudera Certified Associate Data Analyst
Cloudera Certified Professional Data Engineer
CompTIA A+
CompTIA Advanced Security Practitioner
CompTIA Cloud Essentials
CompTIA Cloud+
CompTIA DataAI/DataX
CompTIA Linux+
CompTIA Network+
CompTIA CloudNetX
CompTIA Penetration Tester
CompTIA Project+
CompTIA Security+
CompTIA SecurityX (was CASP)
CompTIA Server+
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 Technician (CWTS)
Cyber Security Forensic Analyst
Dell Cloud Services Infrastructure Design
Dell Cloud Architect Cloud Services - Expert (DCE - CA)
Dell AI Server & Infrastructure Design
Dell Data Science Associate (DCA-DS)
Dell Data Science Specialist - Advanced Analytics (DCS-DA)
Dell Information Storage and Management Foundations
Dell PowerScale Design /Deploy/Maintenance
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 (

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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
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 (GCIA)
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(GIME)
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 Operations Certified (GSOC)
GIAC Security Operations Manager (GSOM)
GIAC Security Professional(GSP)
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 Team Lead/RCCSP
Hitachi Vantara Qualified Professional - VSP 360 Storage Administration
HP Accredited Solutions Expert (ASE - all)
HP Accredited Technical Professional (ATP - all)
HP ASE - Storage Integrator Solutions
HP ATP - Edge-to-Cloud Architect
HP ATP - Storage Solutions
HP Master Accredited Solutions Expert (MASE - all)
HP Master ASE – Edge-to-Cloud Architect
HP Master ASE - Storage Architect
Huawei Certified ICT Associate (all)
Huawei Certified ICT Professional (all)
Huawei Certified ICT 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 Professional Certificate
IBM Certified Administrator - Cognos Analytics
IBM Certified Application Developer - Cloud
IBM Certified Application Developer (all)
IBM Certified Data Architect - Big Data
IBM Certified Data Engineer - Big Data
IBM Certified Data Scientist - Professional
IBM Certified 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 - 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 Administraton: WebSphere Application Server Network Deployment
IBM Certified Systems Administrator (all)
Information Systems Security Architecture Professional (ISSAP/CISSP)
Information Systems Security Engineering Professional (ISSEP/CISSP)
InfoSys Security Management Professional (ISSMP/CISSP)
ITIL Expert Certification
ITIL 4 Foundation Certification
ITIL Intermediate Certification
ITIL 4 Master Certification
Juniper Networks Certified Internet Associate
Juniper Networks Certified Internet Expert
Juniper Networks Certified Internet Professional
Juniper Networks Certified Internet Specialist
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 AI Cloud Developer 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 Dynamics 365 Associate(all business apps)
Microsoft Certified Enterprise Azure Data Analyst Associate
Microsoft Certified Trainer (MCT)
Microsoft Office Specialist
Microsoft Certified Power BI Data Analyst Associate
Microsoft Certified Solutions Associate: Web Applications
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 - Data Protection Specialist
NetApp Certified Implementation Engineer - MetroCluster Specialist
NetApp Certified Implementation Engineer - SAN ONTAP/E-Series Specialist
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)
Open Text NETIQ Identity Manager Administrator
Offensive Security Certified Expert
Offensive Security Certified Professional (OSCP)
Offensive Security Defense Analyst (OSDA)
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

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Oracle Business Intelligence Foundation Suite 11G Certified Implementation Specialist
Oracle AI Database 26ai Administration Associate
Oracle Certified Associate - Java SE Programmer
Oracle MySQL Heatwave Implementation Certified Associate
Oracle Certified Associate - WebLogic Server 12c Administrator
Oracle Certified Expert - Java SE Developer (all)
Oracle Database 19c Certified Master
Oracle Certified Master - Java SE Developer
Oracle AI Database 26ai Administration Professional
Oracle Certified Professional - Fusion Middleware 11g/12c Forms Developer
Oracle Certified Professional - Java SE Developer
Oracle Certified Professional - Java SE Developer
Oracle Certified Professional - MySQL 8.0 Database Administrator
Oracle Certified Professional WebLogic Server 12c Administrator
Oracle Java EE7 Application Developer
Oracle Cloud Applications Implementation Professional
Oracle Cloud Applications Integration Professional
Oracle Cloud Infrastructure Architect Professional
Oracle Cloud Infrastructure Generative/Enterprise 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 Certified Professional - Linux 8 System Administrator
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
Pivotal/VMware Tanzu /Spring Certified Professional
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
Red Hat Certified Architect (RHCA)
Red Hat Certified Architect: Enterprise Applications
Red Hat Certified Architect: Infrastructure
Red Hat Certified Engineer (RHCE)
Red Hat Certified Specialist in Enterprise Application Development
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 Systems Administrator (RHCSA)
RSA ID Plus Certified Administrator
SAFe Certification
Salesforce B2C Commerce Cloud Developer
Salesforce Certified Platform Administrator
Salesforce Certified Advanced Administrator
Salesforce Certified Application Architect
Salesforce Certified Platform Data Architect
Salesforce Certified Hyperautomation Specialist
Salesforce Certified Platform Integration Architecture Designer
Salesforce Certified Platform Developer I
Salesforce Certified Platform Developer II
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
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
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)
Six Sigma Black Belt
Six Sigma Green Belt
Six Sigma Master Black Belt
Six Sigma Yellow Belt
SNIA Certified Information Architect (SCIA)
SNIA Certified Storage Professional
SolarWinds Certified Professional (SCP)
SonicWall Network Security Administrator
Splunk Core Certified User
SUSE Certified Administrator in SUSE Linux Enterprise Server 16
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
TOGAF 9 Certified
Virtualization Council Master Infrastructure Architect
VCAP-VCF Automation/Architect
VCP – VMware Cloud Foundation Administrator
VMware Certified Advanced Professional - Cloud Foundation Administrator
VMware Certified Advanced Professional - Cloud Foundation Automation
VMware Certified Advanced Professional – VMware Cloud Foundation Architect (VCAP-VCF Architect)
VMware Certified Advanced Professional – Vmware Cloud Foundation Networking
VMware Certified Advanced Professional (all)
VMware Certified Design Expert 6 - Data Center Virtualization
VMware Certified Distinguished Expert
VMware Certified Professional – Data Center Virtualization
VMware Certified Professional - Security
VMware Certified Professional - VMware Cloud Foundation Administrator
VMware Certified VMware Cloud Foundation Expert
VMware/Omnissa Certified Administrator – Workspace ONE
VMware/Omnissa Certified Design Engineer – Workspace ONE
VMware/Omnissa Certified Engineer - Workspace ONE
Zachman Certified - Enterprise Architect

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4 YEAR IT CERTIFICATIONS PAY TRENDS

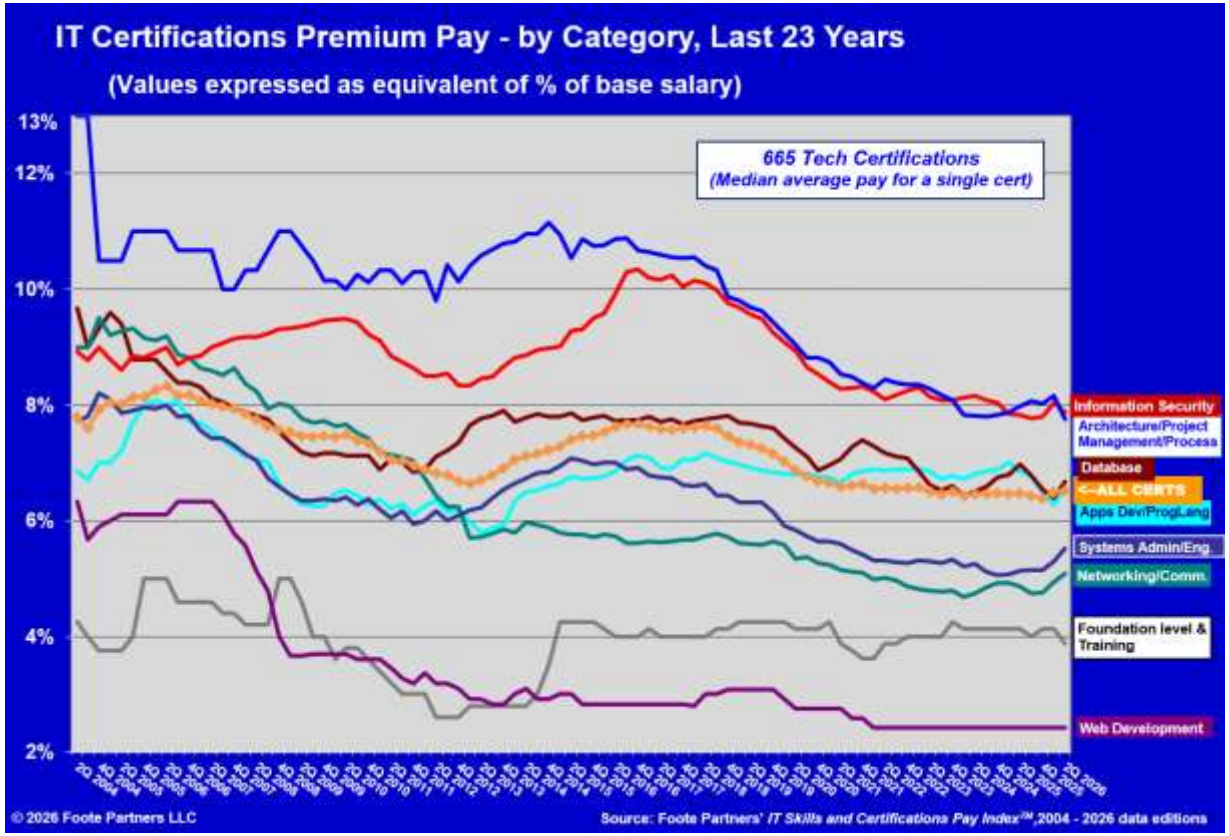
(Through 10/1/2026 – 117,731 IT Professionals)

IT CERTIFICATIONS CATEGORIES	# of certs surveyed	Average Pay - Single Cert (expressed as Equivalent % of base salary) 3Q 2024	3Q 2025	3Q 2026	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	5	4.1%	4.0%	4.0%	3.2%	-3.0%	0.0%	-3.0%	0.0%	3.2%
Apps Development/Prog. Languages	75	6.9%	6.8%	6.2%	-6.1%	-1.1%	-8.4%	-9.6%	-7.7%	-10.0%
Data/Database	68	6.6%	6.8%	6.7%	0.0%	4.5%	-1.6%	1.5%	2.2%	-6.1%
Web Development	12	2.4%	2.4%	3.2%	31.0%	31.0%	31.0%	31.0%	31.0%	31.0%
Networking & Communications	109	4.8%	4.7%	6.0%	18.9%	22.5%	27.3%	24.7%	26.6%	21.6%
System Administration/Engineering	134	5.1%	5.1%	6.0%	8.1%	12.7%	16.0%	16.7%	13.3%	12.9%
Information/Cyber Security	162	8.1%	7.8%	7.7%	-2.3%	-4.4%	-0.9%	-4.8%	-4.9%	-5.9%
Architecture/Project Management/Process	100	7.8%	8.1%	7.0%	-9.9%	-14.3%	-13.4%	-10.4%	-14.5%	-16.7%
ALL CERTIFICATIONS REPORTED	665	6.5%	6.4%	6.6%	0.84%	1.28%	2.25%	1.80%	1.73%	0.38%

20-YEAR IT CERTIFICATIONS PAY TRENDS - BY CATEGORY

(Through 10/1/2026 – 117,731 IT Professionals)

% Change in Average Median Pay for a Single IT Certification



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CERTIFICATION PAY TREND HIGHLIGHTS: Market Value Gainers & Highest Paying – 3rd Quarter 2026 datasets

These tech certifications ***gained 10% or more in market value in the three months ending October 1, 2026*** vs. the prior quarter (seen below, grouped by segment). ***Listed in alphabetical order within each group***. Highest paying skills listed on right **in alphabetical order.**

IT CERTIFICATION Gainers

Systems Administration certifications

AWS Certified Cloud Ops Engineer - Associate
Certified Data Center Management Professional (CDCMP)
Citrix Certified Associate - App Delivery and Security (CCA-AppDS)
Citrix Certified Associate - Virtualization
Citrix Certified Professional – App Delivery and Security (CCP-AppDS)
Citrix Certified Professional-Virtualization (CCP-V)
Cloudera Administrator Cloud
CompTIA Linux+
HP Accredited Technical Professional (ATP - all)
HP ASE - Storage Integrator Solutions
HP ATP - Storage Solutions
HP Master Accredited Solutions Expert (MASE - all)
HP Master ASE – Edge-to-Cloud Architect
HP Master ASE - Storage Architect
IBM Certified Administrator - WebSphere Application Server Network Deployment
IBM Certified Professional Architect – Cloud v6
IBM Certified Systems Administrator (all)
Linux Professional Institute certification (LPIC-Level 3)
Microsoft Certified Azure Administrator
Microsoft Certified Azure Administrator Associate
Microsoft Certified Azure Solutions Architect
Microsoft Certified Azure Solutions Architect Expert
NetApp Certified Implementation Engineer - Data Protection Specialist
Omnissa Certified Engineer - Workspace ONE(OCE-W)
Open Text NETIQ Identity Manager Administrator
Oracle Certified Professional - Linux 8 System Administrator
Oracle Cloud Infrastructure Generative/Enterprise AI Professional
Red Hat Certified Architect - all tracks (RHCA)
Red Hat Certified Specialist in Cloud Infrastructure
ServiceNow Certified Application Developer (CAD)
SUSE Enterprise Architect (SEA)
SUSE Enterprise Engineer (SCE)
VMware Certified Advanced Professional - Cloud Foundation Administrator
VMware Certified Distinguished Expert (VCDX

Networking/Communications certifications

Avaya Certified Implementation Specialist(ACIS)
Avaya Services Technical Associate(ASTA)
Avaya Technical Support Specialist(ACSS)
AWS Certified Advanced Network - Specialty
AWS Certified Solutions Architect - Professional (Cloud)
BICSI Technician and Registered Communications Distribution Designer
Cisco Certified Design Associate)
Cisco Certified Design Expert (CCDE)
Cisco Certified DevNet Associate
Cisco Certified DevNet Expert
Cisco Certified DevNet Professional
Cisco Certified Internetwork Expert (CCIE, all variations)
Cisco Certified Network Associate - Automation (CCNA Automation)
Cisco Certified Network Associate (CCNA Routing and Switching)
Cisco Certified Network Associate (was CCNA Collaboration)
Cisco Certified Network Associate (was CCNA Wireless)
Cisco Certified Network Professional - Collaboration
Cisco Certified Network Professional - Data Center
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 - Service Provider
Cisco Certified Network Professional (CCNP-all)
CompTIA CloudNetX
CWNP/Certified Wireless Analysis Professional (CWAP)
CWNP/Certified Wireless Design Professional (CWDP)
CWNP/Certified Wireless Network Administrator (CWNA)
CWNP/Certified Wireless Network Expert (CWNE)
CWNP/Certified Wireless Network Trainer (CWNT)
CWNP/Certified Wireless Technician (CWTS)
Dell AI Server & Infrastructure Design
Dell Cloud Services/ Infrastructure Design
Dell PowerEdge Operate
Dell PowerScale Design /Deploy/Maintenance
Huawei Certified ICT Associate (all)
Huawei Certified ICT Expert (all)
Huawei Certified ICT Professional (all)
Juniper Networks Certified Associate (JNCIA - all specializations)
Juniper Networks Certified Professional (JNCIP - all specializations)
Juniper Networks Certified Specialist (JNCIS - all specializations)
NetScout/nGenius Certified Analyst (nCA)
NetScout/nGenius Certified Associate (nCA)
NetScout/nGenius Certified Expert (nCE)
NetScout/nGenius Certified Specialist (nCS)
SNIA Certified Information Architect (SCIA)
SNIA Certified Storage Professional (SCSP)
SolarWinds Certified Professional (SCP)
VMware Certified Advanced Professional – Vmware Cloud Foundation Networking
VMware Certified Professional - Vmware Cloud Foundation Administrator
VMware Certified Vmware Cloud Foundation Expert

Architecture, Project Management, and Process Certifications

AWS Certified Cloud Practitioner
Certified Business Process Leader (CBPL)
Certified IT Architect (IASA-CITA, all levels)
Certified Scrum Trainer
Dell Cloud Architect Cloud Services - Expert (DCE - CA)
HDI Desktop Support Manager
HDI Desktop Support Technician
HDI Support Center Analyst
Microsoft Certified: Azure AI Engineer Associate
Microsoft Certified: Azure DevOps Engineer Expert
Prince2 Practitioner
Salesforce Certified Platform Integration Architecture Designer
Salesforce Certified Technical Architect
Six Sigma Master Black Belt

Source: Foote Partners *IT Skills & Certifications Pay Index™*, 3Q 2026 data edition

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CERTIFICATION PAY TREND HIGHLIGHTS: Market Value Gainers & Highest Paying – 3rd Quarter 2026 datasets

These tech certifications ***gained 10% or more in market value in the three months ending October 1, 2026*** vs. the prior quarter (seen below, grouped by segment). ***Listed in alphabetical order within each group***. Highest paying skills listed on right **in alphabetical order.**

IT CERTIFICATION Gainers

Info/Cyber Security certifications
Certified Compliance & Ethics Professional
Certified Computer Examiner (CCE)
Certified Data Privacy Solutions Engineer(CDPSE-ISACA)
Certified Fraud Examiner
Certified Information Privacy Technologist- all countries
Certified Protection Professional
CompTIA PenTest (CPT+)
CompTIA Security+
CompTIA SecurityX (was CASP)
CyberSecurity Forensic Analyst (CSFA)
EC-Council Certified Chief Information Security Officer (CCISO)
EC-Council Certified Penetration Testing Professional (CPENT)
EC-Council Web Application Hacking and Security Testing (WAHS)
Fortinet Certified Expert in Cybersecurity (FCX)
GIAC Assessing and Auditing Wireless Networks
GIAC Cloud Architecture & Design (GCAD)
GIAC Cloud Forensic Responder (GCFR)
GIAC Cloud Security Essentials (GCLD)
GIAC Cloud Threat Detection (GCTD)
GIAC Continuous Monitoring Certification (GMON)
GIAC Critical Infrastructure Protection Certification (GCIP)
GIAC Experienced Cyber Security Specialist(GX-CS)
GIAC Experienced Incident Handler(GX-IH)
GIAC Experienced Intrusion Analyst (GX-IA)
GIAC Global Industrial Cyber Security Professional (GICSP)
GIAC Information Security Professional (GISP)
GIAC Mobile Device Security Analyst (GMOB)
GIAC Network Forensic Analyst (GNFA)
GIAC Public Cloud Security (GPCS)
GIAC Reverse Engineering Malware (GREM)
GIAC Security Essentials (GSEC)
GIAC Security Expert (GSE)
GIAC Security Operations Certified (GSOC)
GIAC Security Operations Manager (GSOM)
GIAC Strategic Planning, Policy, and Leadership (GSTRT)
GIAC Web Application Penetration Tester (GWAPT)
Offensive Security Certified Expert
Offensive Security Exploit Developer (OSED)
Offensive Security Exploitation Expert (OSEE)
Offensive Security Web Expert (OSWE

Data/Database certifications
AWS Certified Data Analytics – Specialty
CompTIA DataAI/DataX
Dell Data Science Associate (DCA-DS)
Dell Data Science Specialist - Advanced Analytics (DCS-DA)
IBM Certified Data Architect - Big Data
IBM Certified DB2 11.1 for Linux, UNIX and Windows
Microsoft Certified Azure Data Engineer Associate
Microsoft Certified Azure Data Scientist Associate
Microsoft Certified Enterprise Azure Data Analyst Associate
Oracle AI Database 26ai Administration Associate
Oracle AI Database 26ai Administration Professional
Oracle Autonomous Database Cloud 2025 Certified Professional
Oracle Database 19c Certified Master
Tableau Desktop Certified Professional
Tableau Server Certified Professional
Teradata Vantage Administration
Teradata Vantage Analytics
Teradata Vantage Architecture

Web Development certifications
CIW Advanced HTML5 and CSS3 Specialist
CIW Certified Database Design Specialist
CIW Web and Mobile Design Professional
CIW Web Development Professional
Oracle Java EE7 Application Developer

Application Development/Programming Languages certifications
Adobe/Magento 2 Certified Developer-Associate
Adobe/Magento 2 Certified Developer-Professional
AWS Certified DevOps Engineer - Professional
IBM Certified Administrator - Cognos Analytics
IBM Certified Developer - Cognos Analytics
Microsoft Certified Dynamics 365 Associate(all business apps)
Microsoft Certified: Azure AI Cloud Developer Associate
Oracle Cloud Applications Implementation Professional
Oracle Cloud Applications Integration Professional
Oracle Cloud Platform Application Integration Certified Professional
Red Hat Certified Architect(all tracks)
TIBCO Certified Professional

Training and General/Foundation level
CompTIA A+
Microsoft Certified Trainer (MCT)

Source: Foote Partners *IT Skills & Certifications Pay Index™*, 3Q 2026 data edition

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CERTIFICATION PAY TREND HIGHLIGHTS: Market Value Gainers & Highest Paying – 3rd Quarter 2026 datasets

These IT certifications ***declined 10% or more in market value in the three months ending October 1, 2026*** vs. prior quarter (seen below grouped by segment).
Listed in alphabetical order within each group.

IT CERTIFICATIONS Losers

Networking and Communications
Avaya Solutions Administrator Certificate (ASAC)
Avaya Solutions Developer Certificate (ASDC)
Certified IP Telecom Network Specialist (CIPTS)
Certified in Convergent Network Technologies (CCNT)
Certified Telecommunications Network Specialist (CTNS)
Cisco Certified Network Associate - Data Center
Google Cloud Certified - Professional Cloud Network Engineer

Systems Administration certifications
Certified Cloud Technology Professional
Certified Kubernetes Security Specialist (CKS)
Google Cloud Certified - Associate Cloud Engineer
Hitachi Vantara Qualified Professional - VSP 360 Storage Administration
Linux Foundation Certified System Administrator
Microsoft Certified Azure Fundamentals
Red Hat Certified Engineer(RHCE)
Red Hat Certified Systems Administrator (RHCSA)
ServiceNow Certified Systems Administrator (CSA)
VCP – VMware Cloud Foundation Administrator

Info/Cyber Security certifications
AccessData Certified Examiner (ACE)
Arcitura Certified Cloud Security Specialist
BTA Certified Blockchain Security Professional (CBSP)
Certificate of Cloud Auditing Knowledge (CCAK)
Certificate of Cloud Security Knowledge (CCSK)
Certified Business Continuity Manager/ISO 22301 (CBCM)
Certified Business Continuity Professional (CBCP)
Certified in Emerging Technology(CET-ISACA)
Certified in Governance, Risk and Compliance (CGRC)
Certified Information Privacy Manager- all countries
Certified Information Systems Auditor (CISA)
Check Point Certified Security Administrator (CCSA)
Cisco Certified CyberOps Associate
Cisco Certified Cybersecurity Professional
Cisco Certified Network Associate (Network Security)
EC-Council Certified Application Security Engineer (CASE)
EC-Council Certified Encryption Specialist v2(ECES)
EC-Council Certified Incident Handler V2 (ECIH)
EC-Council Certified Security Analyst(ECSA)
EC-Council Certified SOC Analyst (CSA)
EC-Council Certified Threat Intelligence Analyst(CTIA)
EC-Council Disaster Recovery Professional (EDRP)
Fortinet Network Security Expert (NSE - all levels)
Fortinet Network Security Professional
GIAC Certified Enterprise Defender (GCED)
GIAC Certified Forensics Analyst (GCFA)
GIAC Certified Incident Handler (GCIH)
GIAC Certified Intrusion Analyst (GCIA)
GIAC Certified Windows Security Administrator (GCWN)
GIAC Cloud Penetration Tester (GCPN)
GIAC Cloud Security Automation (GCSA)
GIAC Cyber Threat Intelligence (GCTI)
GIAC Defending Advanced Threats (GDAT)
GIAC Security Professional(GSP)
GIAC Systems and Network Auditor (GSNA)
Google Cloud Certified - Professional Cloud Security Engineer
IAPP Certified Information Privacy Professional
Mile2 Certified Cloud Security Officer(C)CSO)
Offensive Security Certified Professional (OSCP)
Okta Certified Administrator
Okta Certified Consultant
Okta Certified Developer
Okta Certified Professional
Qualified/ Information Security Professional Q/ISP
RSA ID Plus Certified Administrator
Salesforce Certified Platform Identity and Access Management Architect
SonicWall Network Security Administrator
VMware Certified Professional - Private Cloud Security Administrator

Application Development/Programming Languages
Google Cloud Certified - Professional Cloud Developer
IBM Certified Application Developer - Cloud
IBM Certified Application Developer (all)
IBM Certified Professional SRE - Cloud v1
IBM Certified Solution Advisor - DevOps V2
IBM Certified Solution Designer (all)
Oracle Certified Associate - Java SE Programmer
Oracle Certified Associate - WebLogic Server 12c Administrator
Oracle Certified Expert - Java SE Developer (all)
Oracle Certified Professional - Fusion Middleware 11g/12c Forms Developer
Oracle Certified Professional - Java SE Developer
Oracle Certified Professional WebLogic Server 12c Administrator
Oracle Database PL/SQL Developer Certified Professional
Oracle PL/SQL Developer Associate
Pegasystems Certified Data Scientist
Pegasystems Certified Decisioning Consultant
Pegasystems Certified Lead System Architect
Pegasystems Certified Pega Business Architect
Pegasystems Certified Robotics System Architect
Pegasystems Certified Senior Systems Architect
Pegasystems Certified System Architect
Pivotal/Vmware Tanzu/Spring Certified Professional
Salesforce B2C Commerce Cloud Developer
Salesforce Certified Application Architect
Salesforce Certified Hyperautomation Specialist
Salesforce Certified Platform Developer I
Salesforce Certified User Experience Designer
SAS Certified Professional: Advanced Programming/SAS 9.4

Training and General/Foundation level
Citrix Certified Instructor (CCI)

Source: Foote Partners *IT Skills & Certifications Pay Index™*, 3Q 2026 data edition

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IT CERTIFICATION PAY TREND HIGHLIGHTS: Market Value Decliners – 3rd Quarter 2026 datasets

These IT certifications ***declined 10% or more in market value in the three months ending October 1, 2026*** vs. prior quarter (seen below grouped by segment).
Listed in alphabetical order within each group.

IT CERTIFICATIONS Losers

Architecture, Project Management, and Process Certifications

Artificial Intelligence Engineer (AIE) - ARTiBA
AXELOS ITIL 4 certifications
Certification of Capability in Business Analysis (CCBA)
Certified Artificial Intelligence Practitioner (CAIP)
Certified Artificial Intelligence Scientist (CAIS)
Certified Business Analysis Professional (CBAP)
Certified Cloud Architect
Certified Enterprise Coach (Scrum/Agile)
Certified in Governance, Risk and Compliance (ISC(2))
Certified Scrum Agile Leader
Certified Scrum Developer
Certified Scrum Product Owner
Certified Scrum Product Owner - Advanced
Certified Scrum Professional - Product Owner
Certified Scrum Professional - ScrumMaster
Certified ScrumMaster
Certified Software Quality Analyst (CSQA)
Certified Tester Foundation Level Agile Tester (CTFL-AT)
CompTIA Cloud Essentials
Fundamentals of Google AI for Web-Based Machine Learning
Google Cloud Certified - Professional Cloud Architect
Google Cloud Certified - Professional Cloud DevOps Engineer
HDI Support Center Director
HDI Support Center Team Lead
Help Desk Team Lead/RCCSP
IBM AI Engineering Professional Certificate
IBM Applied AI Professional Certificate
ITIL 4 Foundation Certification
MIT CSAIL Professional Certificate in AI and Machine Learning
MIT Professional Certificate in Machine Learning & AI
NetApp Certified Hybrid Cloud Architect
Open Group Certified Architect (Open CA)
Open Group Certified Technical Specialist (Open CTS)
PMI Agile Certified Practitioner (PMI-ACP)
PMI Certified Associate in Project Management (CAPM)
PMI Construction Professional
PMI Professional in Business Analysis (PMI-PBA)
PMI Project Management Professional(PMP)
PMI Risk Management Professional (PMI-RMP)
Prince2 Foundation
Professional in Project Management (GAQM)
SAFe Certification
Salesforce Certified Platform Data Architect
SAS Certified Specialist: Natural Language Processing and Computer Vision
Six Sigma Black Belt
Six Sigma Green Belt
Six Sigma Yellow Belt
Virtualization Council Master Infrastructure Architect
Zachman Certified - Enterprise Architect

Data/Database certifications

Cloudera Certified Associate Data Analyst
Google Cloud Certified - Professional Data Engineer
IBM Certified Data Engineer - Big Data
IBM Certified Data Scientist - Professional
IBM Certified Professional Developer - Cloud v4
IBM Certified Specialist - AI Enterprise Workflow V1
MongoDB Certified DBA
Qlik Sense Business Analyst
SAS Certified Data Integration Developer for SAS 9
SAS Certified Predictive Modeler - SAS Enterprise Miner
SAS Certified Statistical Business Analyst - SAS 9
SAS Certified Advanced Analytics Professional Using SAS 9
SAS Certified Data Quality Steward
SAS Certified Professional: AI and Machine Learning
SAS Certified Professional: Data Curation for SAS Data Scientists
Splunk Core Certified User
Teradata SQL for Business Users

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MARKET VALUE INCREASES: IT Certifications (data surveyed through October 1, 2026)

3-Month Premium Pay Gain Trends

(Certifications value growth July 1, 2026 to October 1, 2026)

(surveyed through October 1, 2026) RISING PAY: IT CERTIFICATIONS	3 mos. Market value % change - last 3 mos	6 mos. Market value % change - last 6 mos	ANNUAL Market value % change - last 12 mos
Cisco Certified Internetwork Expert (CCIE, all variations)	80.0%	80.0%	80.0%
Juniper Networks Certified Professional (JNCIP - all specializations)	80.0%	80.0%	80.0%
Dell AI Server & Infrastructure Design	80.0%	80.0%	80.0%
Microsoft Certified Azure Data Scientist Associate	75.0%	75.0%	-12.5%
AWS Certified Cloud Practitioner	75.0%	75.0%	16.7%
Dell PowerScale Design /Deploy/Maintenance	75.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Dell Cloud Services/ Infrastructure Design	75.0%	75.0%	75.0%
VMware Certified Vmware Cloud Foundation Expert	71.4%	100.0%	100.0%
CWNP/Certified Wireless Network Administrator (CWNA)	66.7%	0.0%	25.0%
Microsoft Certified Azure Administrator Associate	66.7%	25.0%	25.0%
Open Text NETIQ Identity Manager Administrator	66.7%	66.7%	66.7%
AWS Certified Advanced Network - Specialty	60.0%	60.0%	60.0%
Cisco Certified Network Professional (CCNP-all)	60.0%	60.0%	60.0%
NetApp Certified Implementation Engineer - Data Protection Specialist	60.0%	60.0%	60.0%
VMware Certified Advanced Professional – Vmware Cloud Foundation Networkir	60.0%	60.0%	60.0%
Cisco Certified Network Professional - Service Provider	60.0%	60.0%	60.0%
Microsoft Certified Azure Solutions Architect	60.0%	60.0%	60.0%
CompTIA CloudNetX	60.0%	na	na
CompTIA DataAI/DataX	60.0%	na	na
Certified Compliance & Ethics Professional	50.0%	-33.3%	-33.3%
EC-Council Web Appication Hacking and Security Testing (WAHS)	50.0%	-25.0%	-33.3%
CWNP/Certified Wireless Technician (CWTS)	50.0%	-25.0%	-25.0%
NetScout/nGenius Certified Associate (nCA)	50.0%	-25.0%	-25.0%
GIAC Security Operations Certified (GSOC)	50.0%	-14.3%	-14.3%
Oracle Certified Professional - Linux 8 System Administrator	50.0%	-14.3%	-14.3%
Cloudera Administrator Cloud	50.0%	0.0%	0.0%
GIAC Information Security Professional (GISP)	50.0%	20.0%	0.0%
GIAC Security Essentials (GSEC)	50.0%	20.0%	0.0%
Microsoft Certified Enterprise Azure Data Analyst Associate	50.0%	50.0%	20.0%
CompTIA A+	50.0%	0.0%	50.0%
Juniper Networks Certified Specialist (JNCIS - all specializations)	50.0%	50.0%	50.0%
HP Master ASE – Edge-to-Cloud Architect	50.0%	50.0%	50.0%
Certified Scrum Trainer	50.0%	50.0%	50.0%
CIW Advanced HTML5 and CSS3 Specialist	50.0%	50.0%	50.0%
CWNP/Certified Wireless Analysis Professional (CWAP)	50.0%	50.0%	50.0%
Huawei Certified ICT Expert (all)	50.0%	50.0%	50.0%
IBM Certified Administrator - WebSphere Application Server Network Deploymer	50.0%	50.0%	50.0%
Omnissa Certified Engineer - Workspace ONE(OCE-W)	50.0%	50.0%	50.0%
Oracle AI Database 26ai Administration Professional	50.0%	50.0%	50.0%
TIBCO Certified Professional	50.0%	50.0%	50.0%
HP Master Accredited Solutions Expert (MASE - all)	50.0%	50.0%	80.0%
Salesforce Certified Technical Architect	50.0%	50.0%	66.7%
Oracle Database 19c Certified Master	44.4%	44.4%	44.4%

(surveyed through October 1, 2026) RISING PAY: IT CERTIFICATIONS	3 mos. Market value % change - last 3 mos	6 mos. Market value % change - last 6 mos	ANNUAL Market value % change - last 12 mos
HP Master ASE - Storage Architect	44.4%	44.4%	44.4%
VMware Certified Distinguished Expert (VCDX)	44.4%	44.4%	75.0%
AWS Certified DevOps Engineer - Professional	42.9%	66.7%	11.1%
AWS Certified Solutions Architect - Professional (Cloud)	42.9%	42.9%	42.9%
Certified Computer Examiner (CCE)	40.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Red Hat Certified Specialist in Cloud Infrastructure	40.0%	0.0%	0.0%
CompTIA Security+	40.0%	75.0%	0.0%
GIAC Public Cloud Security (GPCS)	40.0%	-12.5%	16.7%
Adobe/Magento 2 Certified Developer-Professional	40.0%	40.0%	16.7%
Tableau Server Certified Professional	40.0%	40.0%	16.7%
AWS Certified Cloud Ops Engineer - Associate	40.0%	40.0%	40.0%
Cisco Certified Network Professional - Enterprise/Wireless Networks	40.0%	40.0%	40.0%
Huawei Certified ICT Professional (all)	40.0%	40.0%	40.0%
OffSec Certified Expert 3	40.0%	40.0%	40.0%
Certified IT Architect (IASA-CITA, all levels)	33.3%	0.0%	0.0%
HDI Desktop Support Technician	33.3%	0.0%	0.0%
Huawei Certified ICT Associate (all)	33.3%	0.0%	0.0%
HDI Support Center Analyst	33.3%	33.3%	0.0%
Microsoft Certified Azure Solutions Architect Expert	33.3%	14.3%	14.3%
Linux Professional Institute certification (LPIC-Level 3)	33.3%	33.3%	14.3%
SNIA Certified Information Architect (SCIA)	33.3%	33.3%	33.3%
Juniper Networks Certified Associate (JNCIA - all specializations)	33.3%	0.0%	33.3%
GIAC Critical Infrastructure Protection Certification (GCIP)	33.3%	14.3%	33.3%
Certified Protection Professional	33.3%	33.3%	33.3%
Citrix Certified Associate - Virtualization	33.3%	33.3%	33.3%
CompTIA Linux+	33.3%	33.3%	33.3%
Dell PowerEdge Operate	33.3%	33.3%	33.3%
HP Accredited Technical Professional (ATP - all)	33.3%	33.3%	33.3%
HP ATP - Storage Solutions	33.3%	33.3%	33.3%
Microsoft Certified Trainer (MCT)	33.3%	33.3%	33.3%
NetScout/nGenius Certified Analyst (nCA)	33.3%	33.3%	33.3%
SUSE Enterprise Architect (SEA)	33.3%	60.0%	33.3%
Cisco Certified Network Professional - Enterprise/Design	33.3%	33.3%	60.0%
Offensive Security Exploit Developer (OSED)	33.3%	33.3%	33.3%
Fortinet Certified Expert in Cybersecurity (FCX)	33.3%	33.3%	50.0%
GIAC Strategic Planning, Policy, and Leadership (GSTRT)	28.6%	-30.8%	-25.0%
Oracle Cloud Platform Application Integration Certified Professional	28.6%	28.6%	-10.0%
Certified Business Process Leader (CBPL)	28.6%	0.0%	0.0%
Certified Information Privacy Technologist- all countries	28.6%	0.0%	0.0%
GIAC Cloud Forensic Responder (GCFR)	28.6%	12.5%	12.5%
Dell Cloud Architect Cloud Services - Expert (DCE - CA)	28.6%	28.6%	28.6%
Cisco Certified Network Professional - Data Center	28.6%	50.0%	50.0%

Pay data supporting these charts available in the *IT Skills and Certifications Pay Index™* – 3Q 2026 data edition

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MARKET VALUE INCREASES: IT Certifications (data surveyed through October 1, 2026)

3-Month Premium Pay Gain Trends – cont'd.

(Certifications value growth – July 1, 2026 to October 1, 2026)

(surveyed through October 1, 2026) RISING PAY: IT CERTIFICATIONS	3 mos. Market value % change - last 3 mos	6 mos. Market value % change - last 6 mos	ANNUAL Market value % change - last 12 mos
Oracle Cloud Infrastructure Generative/Enterprise AI Professional	28.6%	12.5%	na
Cisco Certified Design Expert (CCDE)	27.3%	75.0%	75.0%
Avaya Certified Implementation Specialist(ACIS)	25.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Microsoft Certified Azure Administrator	25.0%	0.0%	0.0%
NetScout/nGenius Certified Specialist (nCS)	25.0%	0.0%	0.0%
IBM Certified Administrator - Cognos Analytics	25.0%	25.0%	0.0%
IBM Certified Developer - Cognos Analytics	25.0%	25.0%	0.0%
Avaya Services Technical Associate(ASTA)	25.0%	-16.7%	25.0%
GIAC Reverse Engineering Malware (GREM)	25.0%	0.0%	25.0%
CompTIA SecurityX (was CASP)	25.0%	25.0%	25.0%
Oracle Java EE7 Application Developer	25.0%	25.0%	25.0%
SolarWinds Certified Professional (SCP)	25.0%	25.0%	25.0%
Offensive Security Exploitation Expert (OSEE)	25.0%	36.4%	25.0%
Cisco Certified Design Associate)	25.0%	25.0%	66.7%
Citrix Certified Associate - App Delivery and Security (CCA-AppDS)	25.0%	25.0%	66.7%
Dell Data Science Associate (DCA-DS)	25.0%	66.7%	100.0%
GIAC Experienced Cyber Security Specialist(GX-CS)	22.2%	0.0%	22.2%
CWNP/Certified Wireless Network Expert (CWNE)	22.0%	22.0%	40.0%
Adobe/Magento 2 Certified Developer-Associate	20.0%	20.0%	10.0%
Cisco Certified Network Professional - Collaboration	20.0%	20.0%	20.0%
GIAC Continuous Monitoring Certification (GMON)	20.0%	0.0%	-14.3%
Teradata Vantage Administration	20.0%	0.0%	-14.3%
Microsoft Certified Azure Data Engineer Associate	20.0%	20.0%	-14.3%
Oracle AI Database 26ai Administration Associate	20.0%	20.0%	-14.3%
SUSE Enterprise Engineer (SCE)	20.0%	20.0%	0.0%
Teradata Vantage Analytics	20.0%	50.0%	0.0%
Cisco Certified DevNet Associate	20.0%	20.0%	20.0%
GIAC Assessing and Auditing Wireless Networks	20.0%	20.0%	20.0%
GIAC Mobile Device Security Analyst (GMOB)	20.0%	20.0%	20.0%
IBM Certified DB2 11.1 for Linux, UNIX and Windows	20.0%	20.0%	20.0%
IBM Certified Systems Administrator (all)	20.0%	20.0%	20.0%
Red Hat Certified Architect - all tracks (RHCA)	20.0%	36.4%	36.4%
Cisco Certified Network Associate - Automation (CCNA Automation)	20.0%	20.0%	50.0%
CWNP/Certified Wireless Design Professional (CWDP)	20.0%	50.0%	50.0%
NetScout/nGenius Certified Expert (nCE)	20.0%	50.0%	50.0%
Cisco Certified DevNet Expert (aka CCIE Automation)	20.0%	20.0%	71.4%
Avaya Technical Support Specialist(ACSS)	16.7%	16.7%	16.7%
Tableau Desktop Certified Professional	16.7%	16.7%	16.7%
Cisco Certified Network Associate (was CCNA Wireless)	16.7%	16.7%	16.7%
HP ASE - Storage Integrator Solutions	16.7%	16.7%	16.7%
CompTIA PenTest (CPT+)	16.7%	16.7%	-12.5%
Certified Fraud Examiner	16.7%	0.0%	0.0%

(surveyed through October 1, 2026) RISING PAY: IT CERTIFICATIONS	3 mos. Market value % change - last 3 mos	6 mos. Market value % change - last 6 mos	ANNUAL Market value % change - last 12 mos
Dell Data Science Specialist - Advanced Analytics (DCS-DA)	16.7%	16.7%	16.7%
GIAC Cloud Security Essentials (GCLD)	16.7%	16.7%	16.7%
HDI Desktop Support Manager	16.7%	16.7%	16.7%
Microsoft Certified: Azure AI Cloud Developer Associate	16.7%	16.7%	16.7%
Citrix Certified Professional – App Delivery and Security (CCP-AppDS)	16.7%	40.0%	40.0%
Citrix Certified Professional-Virtualization (CCP-V)	16.7%	40.0%	40.0%
ServiceNow Certified Application Developer (CAD)	16.7%	40.0%	40.0%
Teradata Vantage Architecture	16.7%	75.0%	40.0%
GIAC Security Expert (GSE)	15.4%	15.4%	15.4%
CyberSecurity Forensic Analyst (CSFA)	14.3%	-20.0%	-20.0%
GIAC Security Operations Manager (GSOM)	14.3%	-11.1%	-11.1%
IBM Certified Data Architect - Big Data	14.3%	-20.0%	0.0%
GIAC Network Forensic Analyst (GNFA)	14.3%	-11.1%	0.0%
Certified Data Center Management Professional (CDCMP)	14.3%	14.3%	14.3%
Microsoft Certified: Azure DevOps Engineer Expert	14.3%	33.3%	14.3%
GIAC Web Application Penetration Tester (GWAPT)	14.3%	0.0%	33.3%
IBM Certified Professional Architect – Cloud v6	14.3%	14.3%	33.3%
Microsoft Certified: Azure AI Engineer Associate	14.3%	60.0%	33.3%
Cisco Certified Network Professional - Enterprise/Routing and Services	14.3%	60.0%	60.0%
VMware Certified Advanced Professional - Cloud Foundation Administrator	14.3%	14.3%	100.0%
Oracle Autonomous Database Cloud 2025 Certified Professional	14.3%	14.3%	na
Oracle Cloud Applications Implementation Professional	14.3%	33.3%	na
Oracle Cloud Applications Integration Professional	14.3%	na	na
Prince2 Practitioner	12.5%	0.0%	0.0%
Microsoft Certified Dynamics 365 Associate(all business apps)	12.5%	12.5%	12.5%
AWS Certified Data Analytics – Specialty	12.5%	12.5%	12.5%
Salesforce Certified Platform Integration Architecture Designer	12.5%	50.0%	28.6%
BICSI Technician and Registered Communications Distribution Designer	12.5%	12.5%	40.0%
Cisco Certified DevNet Professional	12.5%	12.5%	50.0%
GIAC Global Industrial Cyber Security Professional (GICSP)	12.5%	12.5%	50.0%
GIAC Cloud Architecture & Design (GCAD)	12.5%	-10.0%	na
GIAC Cloud Threat Detection (GCTD)	12.5%	-10.0%	na
EC-Council Certified Chief Information Security Officer (CCISO)	11.1%	0.0%	-9.1%
Offensive Security Web Expert (OSWE)	11.1%	11.1%	0.0%
Six Sigma Master Black Belt	11.1%	11.1%	11.1%
Certified Data Privacy Solutions Engineer(CDPSE-ISACA)	11.1%	0.0%	25.0%
EC-Council Certified Penetration Testing Professional (CPENT)	11.1%	11.1%	25.0%
CWNP/Certified Wireless Network Trainer (CWNT)	11.1%	11.1%	11.1%
GIAC Experienced Forensic Analyst(GX-FA)	10.0%	10.0%	37.5%
GIAC Experienced Incident Handler(GX-IH)	10.0%	10.0%	37.5%
GIAC Experienced Intrusion Analyst (GX-IA)	10.0%	10.0%	37.5%
GIAC Experienced Penetration Tester (GX-PN)	9.1%	20.0%	na

Pay data supporting these charts available in the *IT Skills and Certifications Pay Index™* – 3Q 2026 data edition

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MARKET VALUE INCREASES: IT Certifications (data surveyed through October 1, 2026)

6-Month Premium Pay Gain Trends

(Certifications value growth – April 1, 2026 to October 1, 2026)

(surveyed through October 1, 2026) RISING PAY: IT CERTIFICATIONS	3 mos. Market value % change - last 3 mos	6 mos. Market value % change - last 6 mos	ANNUAL Market value % change - last 12 mos
Dell PowerScale Design /Deploy/Maintenance	75.0%	100.0%	100.0%
VMware Certified Vmware Cloud Foundation Expert	71.4%	100.0%	100.0%
Cisco Certified Internetwork Expert (CCIE, all variations)	80.0%	80.0%	80.0%
Juniper Networks Certified Professional (JNCIP - all specializations)	80.0%	80.0%	80.0%
Dell AI Server & Infrastructure Design	80.0%	80.0%	80.0%
Microsoft Certified Azure Data Scientist Associate	75.0%	75.0%	-12.5%
AWS Certified Cloud Practitioner	75.0%	75.0%	16.7%
CompTIA Security+	40.0%	75.0%	0.0%
Teradata Vantage Architecture	16.7%	75.0%	40.0%
EC-Council Certified Ethical Hacker (CEH)	0.0%	75.0%	0.0%
Citrix Certified Associate – Virtualization (CCA-V)	0.0%	75.0%	75.0%
Dell Cloud Services/ Infrastructure Design	75.0%	75.0%	75.0%
Cisco Certified Design Expert (CCDE)	27.3%	75.0%	75.0%
Open Text NETIQ Identity Manager Administrator	66.7%	66.7%	66.7%
AWS Certified DevOps Engineer - Professional	42.9%	66.7%	11.1%
Dell Data Science Associate (DCA-DS)	25.0%	66.7%	100.0%
GIAC Enterprise Vulnerability Assessor (GEVA)	0.0%	66.7%	0.0%
Dell PowerMax (all - Maintenance/Install/Operate)	0.0%	66.7%	66.7%
Dell PowerStore (all - Deploy/Operate)	0.0%	66.7%	66.7%
Pegasystems Certified Decisioning Consultant	-16.7%	66.7%	11.1%
Cisco Certified Network Professional - Service Provider	60.0%	60.0%	60.0%
Microsoft Certified Azure Solutions Architect	60.0%	60.0%	60.0%
AWS Certified Advanced Network - Specialty	60.0%	60.0%	60.0%
Cisco Certified Network Professional (CCNP-all)	60.0%	60.0%	60.0%
NetApp Certified Implementation Engineer - Data Protection Specialist	60.0%	60.0%	60.0%
VMware Certified Advanced Professional – Vmware Cloud Foundation Networkir	60.0%	60.0%	60.0%
SUSE Enterprise Architect (SEA)	33.3%	60.0%	33.3%
Microsoft Certified: Azure AI Engineer Associate	14.3%	60.0%	33.3%
Cisco Certified Network Professional - Enterprise/Routing and Services	14.3%	60.0%	60.0%
Google Cloud Certified - Professional Cloud Network Engineer	-11.1%	60.0%	60.0%
Microsoft Certified Enterprise Azure Data Analyst Associate	50.0%	50.0%	20.0%
Juniper Networks Certified Specialist (JNCIS - all specializations)	50.0%	50.0%	50.0%
HP Master ASE – Edge-to-Cloud Architect	50.0%	50.0%	50.0%
Certified Scrum Trainer	50.0%	50.0%	50.0%
CIW Advanced HTML5 and CSS3 Specialist	50.0%	50.0%	50.0%
CWNP/Certified Wireless Analysis Professional (CWAP)	50.0%	50.0%	50.0%
Huawei Certified ICT Expert (all)	50.0%	50.0%	50.0%
IBM Certified Administrator - WebSphere Application Server Network Deployme	50.0%	50.0%	50.0%
Omnissa Certified Engineer - Workspace ONE(OCE-W)	50.0%	50.0%	50.0%
Oracle AI Database 26ai Administration Professional	50.0%	50.0%	50.0%
TIBCO Certified Professional	50.0%	50.0%	50.0%
HP Master Accredited Solutions Expert (MASE - all)	50.0%	50.0%	80.0%
Salesforce Certified Technical Architect	50.0%	50.0%	66.7%
Cisco Certified Network Professional - Data Center	28.6%	50.0%	50.0%
Teradata Vantage Analytics	20.0%	50.0%	0.0%
CWNP/Certified Wireless Design Professional (CWDP)	20.0%	50.0%	50.0%

(surveyed through October 1, 2026) RISING PAY: IT CERTIFICATIONS	3 mos. Market value % change - last 3 mos	6 mos. Market value % change - last 6 mos	ANNUAL Market value % change - last 12 mos
NetScout/nGenius Certified Expert (nCE)	20.0%	50.0%	50.0%
Salesforce Certified Platform Integration Architecture Designer	12.5%	50.0%	28.6%
Teradata Vantage Master 2.0	0.0%	50.0%	12.5%
VMware Certified Advanced Professional -VCF Automation/Architect	0.0%	50.0%	50.0%
Google Cloud Certified - Professional Cloud DevOps Engineer	-10.0%	50.0%	12.5%
Certified in Governance, Risk and Compliance (CGRC)	-10.0%	50.0%	50.0%
Oracle Database 19c Certified Master	44.4%	44.4%	44.4%
VMware Certified Distinguished Expert (VCDX)	44.4%	44.4%	75.0%
HP Master ASE - Storage Architect	44.4%	44.4%	44.4%
AWS Certified Solutions Architect - Professional (Cloud)	42.9%	42.9%	42.9%
Google Cloud Certified - Professional Data Engineer	-28.6%	42.9%	42.9%
Adobe/Magento 2 Certified Developer-Professional	40.0%	40.0%	16.7%
Tableau Server Certified Professional	40.0%	40.0%	16.7%
AWS Certified Cloud Ops Engineer - Associate	40.0%	40.0%	40.0%
Cisco Certified Network Professional - Enterprise/Wireless Networks	40.0%	40.0%	40.0%
Huawei Certified ICT Professional (all)	40.0%	40.0%	40.0%
OffSec Certified Expert 3	40.0%	40.0%	40.0%
Citrix Certified Professional – App Delivery and Security (CCP-AppDS)	16.7%	40.0%	40.0%
Citrix Certified Professional-Virtualization (CCP-V)	16.7%	40.0%	40.0%
ServiceNow Certified Application Developer (CAD)	16.7%	40.0%	40.0%
Oracle Certified Master - Java SE Developer	0.0%	40.0%	-22.2%
GIAC iOS and MacOS Examiner(GIME)	0.0%	40.0%	40.0%
Red Hat Certified Architect - all tracks (RHCA)	20.0%	36.4%	36.4%
Offensive Security Exploitation Expert (OSEE)	25.0%	36.4%	25.0%
HDI Support Center Analyst	33.3%	33.3%	0.0%
Linux Professional Institute certification (LPIC-Level 3)	33.3%	33.3%	14.3%
Certified Protection Professional	33.3%	33.3%	33.3%
Citrix Certified Associate - Virtualization	33.3%	33.3%	33.3%
CompTIA Linux+	33.3%	33.3%	33.3%
Dell PowerEdge Operate	33.3%	33.3%	33.3%
HP Accredited Technical Professional (ATP - all)	33.3%	33.3%	33.3%
HP ATP - Storage Solutions	33.3%	33.3%	33.3%
Microsoft Certified Trainer (MCT)	33.3%	33.3%	33.3%
NetScout/nGenius Certified Analyst (nCA)	33.3%	33.3%	33.3%
Cisco Certified Network Professional - Enterprise/Design	33.3%	33.3%	60.0%
Microsoft Certified: Azure DevOps Engineer Expert	14.3%	33.3%	14.3%
Oracle Cloud Applications Implementation Professional	14.3%	33.3%	na
HP ATP - Edge-to-Cloud Architect	0.0%	33.3%	33.3%
Omnissa Certified Administrator – Workspace ONE (OCA-W)	0.0%	33.3%	33.3%
VMware Certified Advanced Professional - Cloud Foundation Automation	0.0%	33.3%	33.3%
Red Hat Certified Engineer(RHCE)	-11.1%	33.3%	14.3%
Offensive Security Exploit Developer (OSED)	33.3%	33.3%	33.3%
Fortinet Certified Expert in Cybersecurity (FCX)	33.3%	33.3%	50.0%
Salesforce Certified Systems Architect	-7.7%	33.3%	71.4%
SNIA Certified Information Architect (SCIA)	33.3%	33.3%	33.3%
Oracle Cloud Platform Application Integration Certified Professional	28.6%	28.6%	-10.0%

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MARKET VALUE INCREASES: IT Certifications (data surveyed through October 1, 2026)

6-Month Premium Pay Gain Trends – cont'd.

(Certifications value growth – April 1, 2026 to October 1, 2026)

(surveyed through October 1, 2026) RISING PAY: IT CERTIFICATIONS	3 mos. Market value % change - last 3 mos	6 mos. Market value % change - last 6 mos	ANNUAL Market value % change - last 12 mos
Dell Cloud Architect Cloud Services - Expert (DCE - CA)	28.6%	28.6%	28.6%
VMware Certified Advanced Professional – VMware Cloud Foundation Architect	0.0%	28.6%	80.0%
Microsoft Certified Azure Administrator Associate	66.7%	25.0%	25.0%
IBM Certified Administrator - Cognos Analytics	25.0%	25.0%	0.0%
IBM Certified Developer - Cognos Analytics	25.0%	25.0%	0.0%
CompTIA SecurityX (was CASP)	25.0%	25.0%	25.0%
Oracle Java EE7 Application Developer	25.0%	25.0%	25.0%
SolarWinds Certified Professional (SCP)	25.0%	25.0%	25.0%
Cisco Certified Design Associate)	25.0%	25.0%	66.7%
Citrix Certified Associate - App Delivery and Security (CCA-AppDS)	25.0%	25.0%	66.7%
Cisco Certified Network Associate (was CCNA Cloud)	0.0%	25.0%	0.0%
Google Cloud Certified - Professional Machine Learning Engineer	0.0%	25.0%	11.1%
Oracle Cloud Infrastructure Architect Professional	0.0%	25.0%	25.0%
Red Hat Certified Architect: Cloud "dismissed"	0.0%	25.0%	25.0%
SNIA Certified Storage Engineer (SCSE) "retired"	0.0%	25.0%	25.0%
Google Cloud Certified - Associate Cloud Engineer	-28.6%	25.0%	0.0%
InfoSys Security Engineering Professional (ISSEP/CISSP)	0.0%	22.2%	0.0%
GIAC Defensible Security Architect (GDSA)	-8.3%	22.2%	37.5%
Salesforce Certified Application Architect	-15.4%	22.2%	37.5%
CWNP/Certified Wireless Network Expert (CWNE)	22.0%	22.0%	40.0%
Adobe/Magento 2 Certified Developer-Associate	20.0%	20.0%	10.0%
Cisco Certified Network Professional - Collaboration	20.0%	20.0%	20.0%
GIAC Information Security Professional (GISP)	50.0%	20.0%	0.0%
GIAC Security Essentials (GSEC)	50.0%	20.0%	0.0%
Microsoft Certified Azure Data Engineer Associate	20.0%	20.0%	-14.3%
Oracle AI Database 26ai Administration Associate	20.0%	20.0%	-14.3%
SUSE Enterprise Engineer (SCE)	20.0%	20.0%	0.0%
Cisco Certified DevNet Associate	20.0%	20.0%	20.0%
GIAC Assessing and Auditing Wireless Networks	20.0%	20.0%	20.0%
GIAC Mobile Device Security Analyst (GMOB)	20.0%	20.0%	20.0%
IBM Certified DB2 11.1 for Linux, UNIX and Windows	20.0%	20.0%	20.0%
IBM Certified Systems Administrator (all)	20.0%	20.0%	20.0%
Cisco Certified Network Associate - Automation (CCNA Automation)	20.0%	20.0%	50.0%
Cisco Certified DevNet Expert (aka CCIE Automation)	20.0%	20.0%	71.4%
GIAC Experienced Penetration Tester (GX-PN)	9.1%	20.0%	na
AWS Certified Developer - Associate	0.0%	20.0%	20.0%
AWS Certified Solutions Architect - Associate (Cloud)	0.0%	20.0%	20.0%
GIAC Exploit Researcher and Advanced Penetration Tester (GXPN)	0.0%	20.0%	50.0%
Okta Certified Technical Architect	0.0%	20.0%	na
Salesforce B2C Commerce Cloud Developer	-33.3%	20.0%	20.0%
Avaya Technical Support Specialist(ACSS)	16.7%	16.7%	16.7%
Tableau Desktop Certified Professional	16.7%	16.7%	16.7%
Cisco Certified Network Associate (was CCNA Wireless)	16.7%	16.7%	16.7%
HP ASE - Storage Integrator Solutions	16.7%	16.7%	16.7%
CompTIA PenTest (CPT+)	16.7%	16.7%	-12.5%
Dell Data Science Specialist - Advanced Analytics (DCS-DA)	16.7%	16.7%	16.7%

(surveyed through October 1, 2026) RISING PAY: IT CERTIFICATIONS	3 mos. Market value % change - last 3 mos	6 mos. Market value % change - last 6 mos	ANNUAL Market value % change - last 12 mos
GIAC Cloud Security Essentials (GCLD)	16.7%	16.7%	16.7%
HDI Desktop Support Manager	16.7%	16.7%	16.7%
Microsoft Certified: Azure AI Cloud Developer Associate	16.7%	16.7%	16.7%
CompTIA Cybersecurity Analyst+ (CySA+)	0.0%	16.7%	0.0%
Teradata Vantage Data Engineering Certified	0.0%	16.7%	0.0%
Citrix Certified Expert - Networking "retired"	0.0%	16.7%	16.7%
GIAC Certified Web Application Defender	0.0%	16.7%	16.7%
Certified in the Governance of Enterprise IT (CGEIT)	0.0%	16.7%	27.3%
Red Hat Certified Specialist in Linux Performance Tuning	0.0%	16.7%	40.0%
Salesforce Certified Hyperautomation Specialist	-12.5%	16.7%	0.0%
GIAC Security Expert (GSE)	15.4%	15.4%	15.4%
Microsoft Certified Azure Solutions Architect Expert	33.3%	14.3%	14.3%
GIAC Critical Infrastructure Protection Certification (GCIP)	33.3%	14.3%	33.3%
Certified Data Center Management Professional (CDCMP)	14.3%	14.3%	14.3%
IBM Certified Professional Architect – Cloud v6	14.3%	14.3%	33.3%
VMware Certified Advanced Professional - Cloud Foundation Administrator	14.3%	14.3%	100.0%
Oracle Autonomous Database Cloud 2025 Certified Professional	14.3%	14.3%	na
ServiceNow Certified Implementation Specialist (CIS)	0.0%	14.3%	33.3%
VMware Certified Advanced Professional (all)	0.0%	14.3%	60.0%
Certified Scrum Professional - Product Owner	-11.1%	14.3%	14.3%
SAS Certified Advanced Analytics Professional Using SAS 9	-20.0%	14.3%	0.0%
GIAC Cloud Forensic Responder (GCFR)	28.6%	12.5%	12.5%
Oracle Cloud Infrastructure Generative/Enterprise AI Professional	28.6%	12.5%	na
Microsoft Certified Dynamics 365 Associate(all business apps)	12.5%	12.5%	12.5%
AWS Certified Data Analytics – Specialty	12.5%	12.5%	12.5%
BICSI Technician and Registered Communications Distribution Designer	12.5%	12.5%	40.0%
Cisco Certified DevNet Professional	12.5%	12.5%	50.0%
GIAC Global Industrial Cyber Security Professional (GICSP)	12.5%	12.5%	50.0%
ITIL 4 Master	0.0%	12.5%	0.0%
Teradata Vantage Data Science Master	0.0%	12.5%	0.0%
GIAC Defending Advanced Threats (GDAT)	-10.0%	12.5%	12.5%
GIAC Cloud Penetration Tester (GCPN)	-10.0%	12.5%	28.6%
GIAC Cyber Threat Intelligence (GCTI)	-18.2%	12.5%	12.5%
Offensive Security Web Expert (OSWE)	11.1%	11.1%	0.0%
Six Sigma Master Black Belt	11.1%	11.1%	11.1%
EC-Council Certified Penetration Testing Professional (CPENT)	11.1%	11.1%	25.0%
EC-Council Certified Offensive AI Security Professional(COASP)	0.0%	11.1%	na
IAPP Certified Information Privacy Manager	-9.1%	11.1%	11.1%
Certified Kubernetes Security Specialist (CKS)	-16.7%	11.1%	11.1%
CWNP/Certified Wireless Network Trainer (CWNT)	11.1%	11.1%	11.1%
GIAC Experienced Forensic Analyst(GX-FA)	10.0%	10.0%	37.5%
GIAC Experienced Incident Handler(GX-IH)	10.0%	10.0%	37.5%
GIAC Experienced Intrusion Analyst (GX-IA)	10.0%	10.0%	37.5%
Certified Cloud Security Professional (ISC2-CCSP)	0.0%	10.0%	22.2%
InfoSys Security Architecture Professional (ISSAP/CISSP)	0.0%	10.0%	22.2%
SAS Certified Data Scientist	0.0%	10.0%	22.2%

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MARKET VALUE INCREASES: IT Certifications (data surveyed through October 1, 2026)

12-Month Premium Pay Gain Trends

(Certifications value growth – October 1, 2026 to October 1, 2026)

(surveyed through October 1, 2026) RISING PAY: IT CERTIFICATIONS	3 mos. Market value % change - last 3 mos	6 mos. Market value % change - last 6 mos	ANNUAL Market value % change - last 12 mos
Dell PowerScale Design /Deploy/Maintenance	75.0%	100.0%	100.0%
VMware Certified Vmware Cloud Foundation Expert	71.4%	100.0%	100.0%
Dell Data Science Associate (DCA-DS)	25.0%	66.7%	100.0%
VMware Certified Advanced Professional - Cloud Foundation Administrator	14.3%	14.3%	100.0%
Cisco Certified Internetwork Expert (CCIE, all variations)	80.0%	80.0%	80.0%
Juniper Networks Certified Professional (JNCIP - all specializations)	80.0%	80.0%	80.0%
Dell AI Server & Infrastructure Design	80.0%	80.0%	80.0%
HP Master Accredited Solutions Expert (MASE - all)	50.0%	50.0%	80.0%
VMware Certified Advanced Professional – VMware Cloud Foundation Architect	0.0%	28.6%	80.0%
Citrix Certified Associate – Virtualization (CCA-V)	0.0%	75.0%	75.0%
Dell Cloud Services/ Infrastructure Design	75.0%	75.0%	75.0%
Cisco Certified Design Expert (CCDE)	27.3%	75.0%	75.0%
VMware Certified Distinguished Expert (VCDX)	44.4%	44.4%	75.0%
Salesforce Certified Systems Architect	-7.7%	33.3%	71.4%
Cisco Certified DevNet Expert (aka CCIE Automation)	20.0%	20.0%	71.4%
Open Text NETIQ Identity Manager Administrator	66.7%	66.7%	66.7%
Dell PowerMax (all - Maintenance/Install/Operate)	0.0%	66.7%	66.7%
Dell PowerStore (all - Deploy/Operate)	0.0%	66.7%	66.7%
Salesforce Certified Technical Architect	50.0%	50.0%	66.7%
Cisco Certified Design Associate)	25.0%	25.0%	66.7%
Citrix Certified Associate - App Delivery and Security (CCA-AppDS)	25.0%	25.0%	66.7%
Cisco Certified Network Associate - Data Center	-16.7%	0.0%	66.7%
Cisco Certified Network Professional - Service Provider	60.0%	60.0%	60.0%
Microsoft Certified Azure Solutions Architect	60.0%	60.0%	60.0%
AWS Certified Advanced Network - Specialty	60.0%	60.0%	60.0%
Cisco Certified Network Professional (CCNP-all)	60.0%	60.0%	60.0%
NetApp Certified Implementation Engineer - Data Protection Specialist	60.0%	60.0%	60.0%
VMware Certified Advanced Professional – Vmware Cloud Foundation Networkir	60.0%	60.0%	60.0%
Cisco Certified Network Professional - Enterprise/Routing and Services	14.3%	60.0%	60.0%
Google Cloud Certified - Professional Cloud Network Engineer	-11.1%	60.0%	60.0%
Cisco Certified Network Professional - Enterprise/Design	33.3%	33.3%	60.0%
VMware Certified Advanced Professional (all)	0.0%	14.3%	60.0%
VMware Certified Distinguished Expert (VCDX) duplicate	0.0%	-11.1%	60.0%
Juniper Networks Certified Specialist (JNCIS - all specializations)	50.0%	50.0%	50.0%
HP Master ASE – Edge-to-Cloud Architect	50.0%	50.0%	50.0%
Certified Scrum Trainer	50.0%	50.0%	50.0%
CIW Advanced HTML5 and CSS3 Specialist	50.0%	50.0%	50.0%
CWNP/Certified Wireless Analysis Professional (CWAP)	50.0%	50.0%	50.0%
Huawei Certified ICT Expert (all)	50.0%	50.0%	50.0%
IBM Certified Administrator - WebSphere Application Server Network Deploymer	50.0%	50.0%	50.0%
Omnissa Certified Engineer - Workspace ONE(OCE-W)	50.0%	50.0%	50.0%
Oracle AI Database 26ai Administration Professional	50.0%	50.0%	50.0%
TIBCO Certified Professional	50.0%	50.0%	50.0%
Cisco Certified Network Professional - Data Center	28.6%	50.0%	50.0%
CWNP/Certified Wireless Design Professional (CWDP)	20.0%	50.0%	50.0%
NetScout/nGenius Certified Expert (nCE)	20.0%	50.0%	50.0%

(surveyed through October 1, 2026) RISING PAY: IT CERTIFICATIONS	3 mos. Market value % change - last 3 mos	6 mos. Market value % change - last 6 mos	ANNUAL Market value % change - last 12 mos
VMware Certified Advanced Professional -VCF Automation/Architect	0.0%	50.0%	50.0%
Certified in Governance, Risk and Compliance (CGRC)	-10.0%	50.0%	50.0%
Fortinet Certified Expert in Cybersecurity (FCX)	33.3%	33.3%	50.0%
Cisco Certified Network Associate - Automation (CCNA Automation)	20.0%	20.0%	50.0%
GIAC Exploit Researcher and Advanced Penetration Tester (GXPN)	0.0%	20.0%	50.0%
Cisco Certified DevNet Professional	12.5%	12.5%	50.0%
GIAC Global Industrial Cyber Security Professional (GICSP)	12.5%	12.5%	50.0%
CompTIA A+	50.0%	0.0%	50.0%
GIAC Critical Controls Certifications (GCCC)	0.0%	-40.0%	50.0%
Oracle Database 19c Certified Master	44.4%	44.4%	44.4%
HP Master ASE - Storage Architect	44.4%	44.4%	44.4%
AWS Certified Solutions Architect - Professional (Cloud)	42.9%	42.9%	42.9%
Google Cloud Certified - Professional Data Engineer	-28.6%	42.9%	42.9%
Teradata Vantage Architecture	16.7%	75.0%	40.0%
AWS Certified Cloud Ops Engineer - Associate	40.0%	40.0%	40.0%
Cisco Certified Network Professional - Enterprise/Wireless Networks	40.0%	40.0%	40.0%
Huawei Certified ICT Professional (all)	40.0%	40.0%	40.0%
OffSec Certified Expert 3	40.0%	40.0%	40.0%
Citrix Certified Professional – App Delivery and Security (CCP-AppDS)	16.7%	40.0%	40.0%
Citrix Certified Professional-Virtualization (CCP-V)	16.7%	40.0%	40.0%
ServiceNow Certified Application Developer (CAD)	16.7%	40.0%	40.0%
GIAC iOS and MacOS Examiner(GIME)	0.0%	40.0%	40.0%
Red Hat Certified Specialist in Linux Performance Tuning	0.0%	16.7%	40.0%
GIAC Certified Forensics Examiner (GCFE)	0.0%	0.0%	40.0%
VMware Certified Professional – Data Center Virtualization (VCP-DCV)	0.0%	-12.5%	40.0%
CWNP/Certified Wireless Network Expert (CWNE)	22.0%	22.0%	40.0%
BICSI Technician and Registered Communications Distribution Designer	12.5%	12.5%	40.0%
GIAC Defensible Security Architect (GDSA)	-8.3%	22.2%	37.5%
Salesforce Certified Application Architect	-15.4%	22.2%	37.5%
GIAC Experienced Forensic Analyst(GX-FA)	10.0%	10.0%	37.5%
GIAC Experienced Incident Handler(GX-IH)	10.0%	10.0%	37.5%
GIAC Experienced Intrusion Analyst (GX-IA)	10.0%	10.0%	37.5%
Red Hat Certified Architect - all tracks (RHCA)	20.0%	36.4%	36.4%
SUSE Enterprise Architect (SEA)	33.3%	60.0%	33.3%
Microsoft Certified: Azure AI Engineer Associate	14.3%	60.0%	33.3%
Certified Protection Professional	33.3%	33.3%	33.3%
Citrix Certified Associate - Virtualization	33.3%	33.3%	33.3%
CompTIA Linux+	33.3%	33.3%	33.3%
Dell PowerEdge Operate	33.3%	33.3%	33.3%
HP Accredited Technical Professional (ATP - all)	33.3%	33.3%	33.3%
HP ATP - Storage Solutions	33.3%	33.3%	33.3%
Microsoft Certified Trainer (MCT)	33.3%	33.3%	33.3%
NetScout/nGenius Certified Analyst (nCA)	33.3%	33.3%	33.3%
HP ATP - Edge-to-Cloud Architect	0.0%	33.3%	33.3%
Omnissa Certified Administrator – Workspace ONE (OCA-W)	0.0%	33.3%	33.3%
VMware Certified Advanced Professional - Cloud Foundation Automation	0.0%	33.3%	33.3%

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MARKET VALUE INCREASES: IT Certifications (data surveyed through October 1, 2026)

12-Month Premium Pay Gain Trends – cont'd.

(Certifications value growth – October 1, 2026 to October 1, 2026)

(surveyed through October 1, 2026) RISING PAY: IT CERTIFICATIONS	3 mos. Market value % change - last 3 mos	6 mos. Market value % change - last 6 mos	ANNUAL Market value % change - last 12 mos
GIAC Critical Infrastructure Protection Certification (GCIP)	33.3%	14.3%	33.3%
IBM Certified Professional Architect – Cloud v6	14.3%	14.3%	33.3%
ServiceNow Certified Implementation Specialist (CIS)	0.0%	14.3%	33.3%
Juniper Networks Certified Associate (JNCIA - all specializations)	33.3%	0.0%	33.3%
GIAC Web Application Penetration Tester (GWAPT)	14.3%	0.0%	33.3%
Offensive Security Exploit Developer (OSED)	33.3%	33.3%	33.3%
SNIA Certified Information Architect (SCIA)	33.3%	33.3%	33.3%
Salesforce Certified Platform Integration Architecture Designer	12.5%	50.0%	28.6%
Dell Cloud Architect Cloud Services - Expert (DCE - CA)	28.6%	28.6%	28.6%
GIAC Cloud Penetration Tester (GCPN)	-10.0%	12.5%	28.6%
Cisco Certified Cybersecurity Professional	-18.2%	-10.0%	28.6%
Certified in the Governance of Enterprise IT (CGEIT)	0.0%	16.7%	27.3%
Offensive Security Exploitation Expert (OSEE)	25.0%	36.4%	25.0%
Microsoft Certified Azure Administrator Associate	66.7%	25.0%	25.0%
CompTIA SecurityX (was CASP)	25.0%	25.0%	25.0%
Oracle Java EE7 Application Developer	25.0%	25.0%	25.0%
SolarWinds Certified Professional (SCP)	25.0%	25.0%	25.0%
Oracle Cloud Infrastructure Architect Professional	0.0%	25.0%	25.0%
Red Hat Certified Architect: Cloud "dismissed"	0.0%	25.0%	25.0%
SNIA Certified Storage Engineer (SCSE) "retired"	0.0%	25.0%	25.0%
EC-Council Certified Penetration Testing Professional (CPENT)	11.1%	11.1%	25.0%
CWNP/Certified Wireless Network Administrator (CWNA)	66.7%	0.0%	25.0%
GIAC Reverse Engineering Malware (GREM)	25.0%	0.0%	25.0%
Certified Data Privacy Solutions Engineer(CDPSE-ISACA)	11.1%	0.0%	25.0%
Salesforce Platform App Builder	0.0%	0.0%	25.0%
Cisco Certified Network Professional - Security	-9.1%	0.0%	25.0%
Google Cloud Certified - Professional Cloud Security Engineer	-23.1%	0.0%	25.0%
Avaya Services Technical Associate(ASTA)	25.0%	-16.7%	25.0%
Certified Cloud Security Professional (ISC2-CCSP)	0.0%	10.0%	22.2%
InfoSys Security Architecture Professional (ISSAP/CISSP)	0.0%	10.0%	22.2%
SAS Certified Data Scientist	0.0%	10.0%	22.2%
GIAC Experienced Cyber Security Specialist(GX-CS)	22.2%	0.0%	22.2%
Cisco Certified Network Professional - Collaboration	20.0%	20.0%	20.0%
Microsoft Certified Enterprise Azure Data Analyst Associate	50.0%	50.0%	20.0%
Cisco Certified DevNet Associate	20.0%	20.0%	20.0%
GIAC Assessing and Auditing Wireless Networks	20.0%	20.0%	20.0%
GIAC Mobile Device Security Analyst (GMOB)	20.0%	20.0%	20.0%
IBM Certified DB2 11.1 for Linux, UNIX and Windows	20.0%	20.0%	20.0%
IBM Certified Systems Administrator (all)	20.0%	20.0%	20.0%
AWS Certified Developer - Associate	0.0%	20.0%	20.0%
AWS Certified Solutions Architect - Associate (Cloud)	0.0%	20.0%	20.0%
Salesforce B2C Commerce Cloud Developer	-33.3%	20.0%	20.0%
Cisco Certified Network Associate (was CCNA Wireless)	16.7%	16.7%	16.7%
HP ASE - Storage Integrator Solutions	16.7%	16.7%	16.7%
AWS Certified Cloud Practitioner	75.0%	75.0%	16.7%
Adobe/Magento 2 Certified Developer-Professional	40.0%	40.0%	16.7%

(surveyed through October 1, 2026) RISING PAY: IT CERTIFICATIONS	3 mos. Market value % change - last 3 mos	6 mos. Market value % change - last 6 mos	ANNUAL Market value % change - last 12 mos
Tableau Server Certified Professional	40.0%	40.0%	16.7%
Avaya Technical Support Specialist(ACSS)	16.7%	16.7%	16.7%
Tableau Desktop Certified Professional	16.7%	16.7%	16.7%
Dell Data Science Specialist - Advanced Analytics (DCS-DA)	16.7%	16.7%	16.7%
GIAC Cloud Security Essentials (GCLD)	16.7%	16.7%	16.7%
HDI Desktop Support Manager	16.7%	16.7%	16.7%
Microsoft Certified: Azure AI Cloud Developer Associate	16.7%	16.7%	16.7%
Citrix Certified Expert - Networking "retired"	0.0%	16.7%	16.7%
GIAC Certified Web Application Defender	0.0%	16.7%	16.7%
CWNP Certified Wireless Security Professional (CWSP)	0.0%	0.0%	16.7%
GIAC Public Cloud Security (GPCS)	40.0%	-12.5%	16.7%
GIAC Security Expert (GSE)	15.4%	15.4%	15.4%
Linux Professional Institute certification (LPIC-Level 3)	33.3%	33.3%	14.3%
Microsoft Certified: Azure DevOps Engineer Expert	14.3%	33.3%	14.3%
Red Hat Certified Engineer(RHCE)	-11.1%	33.3%	14.3%
Microsoft Certified Azure Solutions Architect Expert	33.3%	14.3%	14.3%
Certified Data Center Management Professional (CDCMP)	14.3%	14.3%	14.3%
Certified Scrum Professional - Product Owner	-11.1%	14.3%	14.3%
GIAC Certified Detection Analyst (GCDA)	0.0%	0.0%	14.3%
GIAC Certified Enterprise Defender (GCED)	-11.1%	0.0%	14.3%
Salesforce Certified Platform Data Architect	-11.1%	0.0%	14.3%
Teradata Vantage Master 2.0	0.0%	50.0%	12.5%
Google Cloud Certified - Professional Cloud DevOps Engineer	-10.0%	50.0%	12.5%
GIAC Cloud Forensic Responder (GCFR)	28.6%	12.5%	12.5%
Microsoft Certified Dynamics 365 Associate(all business apps)	12.5%	12.5%	12.5%
AWS Certified Data Analytics – Specialty	12.5%	12.5%	12.5%
GIAC Defending Advanced Threats (GDAT)	-10.0%	12.5%	12.5%
GIAC Cyber Threat Intelligence (GCTI)	-18.2%	12.5%	12.5%
GIAC Cloud Security Automation (GCSA)	-10.0%	-10.0%	12.5%
MIT Professional Certificate in Machine Learning & AI	-25.0%	-25.0%	12.5%
AWS Certified DevOps Engineer - Professional	42.9%	66.7%	11.1%
Pegasystems Certified Decisioning Consultant	-16.7%	66.7%	11.1%
Google Cloud Certified - Professional Machine Learning Engineer	0.0%	25.0%	11.1%
Six Sigma Master Black Belt	11.1%	11.1%	11.1%
IAPP Certified Information Privacy Manager	-9.1%	11.1%	11.1%
Certified Kubernetes Security Specialist (CKS)	-16.7%	11.1%	11.1%
Certified Information Security Manager (CISM)	-9.1%	0.0%	11.1%
SAS Certified Professional: AI and Machine Learning	-16.7%	0.0%	11.1%
Certified Information Systems Security Professional (CISSP)	-9.1%	-9.1%	11.1%
PMI Program Management Professional (PgMP)	-9.1%	-9.1%	11.1%
Google Cloud Certified - Professional Cloud Architect	-33.3%	-9.1%	11.1%
CWNP/Certified Wireless Network Trainer (CWNT)	11.1%	11.1%	11.1%
Adobe/Magento 2 Certified Developer-Associate	20.0%	20.0%	10.0%
Offensive Security Experienced Penetration Tester (OSEP)	0.0%	0.0%	10.0%
PMI Portfolio Management Professional (PfMP)	0.0%	0.0%	10.0%

Pay data supporting these charts available in the *IT Skills and Certifications Pay Index™* – 3Q 2026 data edition

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MARKET VALUE DECREASES: IT Certifications (data surveyed through October 1, 2026)

3-Month Premium Pay Decline Trends

(Certifications value growth – July 1, 2026 to October 1, 2026)

(surveyed throughOctober 1, 2026) DECLINING PAY: IT CERTIFICATIONS	3 mos. Market value % change - last 3 mos	6 mos. Market value % change - last 6 mos	ANNUAL Market value % change - last 12 mos
Oracle Certified Associate - WebLogic Server 12c Administrator	-50.0%	-60.0%	-66.7%
CompTIA Cloud Essentials	-50.0%	-60.0%	-60.0%
Certified IP Telecom Network Specialist (CIPTS)	-50.0%	-50.0%	-50.0%
Certified Scrum Product Owner	-50.0%	-50.0%	-50.0%
Prince2 Foundation	-50.0%	-50.0%	-50.0%
Splunk Core Certified User	-50.0%	-50.0%	-50.0%
ITIL 4 Foundation Certification	-50.0%	-40.0%	-40.0%
Certified ScrumMaster	-44.4%	-28.6%	-44.4%
VMware Certified Professional – VMware Cloud Foundation Administrator	-44.4%	-28.6%	-16.7%
IBM Applied AI Professional Certificate	-42.9%	-55.6%	-60.0%
Mile2 Certified Cloud Security Officer(C)CSO)	-42.9%	-55.6%	-55.6%
MIT CSAIL Professional Certificate in AI and Machine Learning	-41.7%	-56.3%	-36.4%
IAPP Certified Information Privacy Professional	-41.7%	0.0%	0.0%
Artificial Intelligence Engineer (AIE) - ARTiBA	-40.0%	-57.1%	-45.5%
Oracle Certified Associate - Java SE Programmer	-40.0%	-40.0%	-57.1%
Certified in Convergent Network Technologies (CCNT)	-40.0%	-40.0%	-40.0%
Oracle Certified Professional - Fusion Middleware 11g/12c Forms Developer	-40.0%	-40.0%	-40.0%
Six Sigma Yellow Belt	-40.0%	-40.0%	-40.0%
VMware Certified Professional - Private Cloud Security Administator	-40.0%	-40.0%	-14.3%
Salesforce Certified Platform Developer I	-40.0%	-25.0%	-25.0%
Cisco Certified CyberOps Associate	-40.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Check Point Certified Security Administrator (CCSA)	-37.5%	-37.5%	-28.6%
Certified Artificial Intelligence Scientist (CAIS)	-35.7%	-50.0%	-40.0%
Certified Scrum Product Owner - Advanced	-33.3%	-33.3%	-33.3%
IBM Certified Solution Advisor - DevOps V2	-33.3%	-33.3%	-33.3%
SAS Certified Predictive Modeler - SAS Enterprise Miner	-33.3%	-14.3%	-14.3%
Pegasystems Certified Robotics System Architect	-33.3%	0.0%	-25.0%
Salesforce B2C Commerce Cloud Developer	-33.3%	20.0%	20.0%
Certified Tester Foundation Level Agile Tester (CTFL-AT)	-33.3%	-42.9%	-42.9%
Virtualization Council Master Infrastructure Architect	-33.3%	-42.9%	-42.9%
EC-Council Certified Encryption Specialist v2(ECES)	-33.3%	-33.3%	-50.0%
Certified Cloud Technology Professional	-33.3%	-33.3%	-33.3%
Certified in Emerging Technology(CET-ISACA)	-33.3%	-33.3%	-33.3%
Certified Telecommunications Network Specialist (CTNS)	-33.3%	-33.3%	-33.3%
Help Desk Team Lead/RCCSP	-33.3%	-33.3%	-33.3%
Hitachi Vantara Qualified Professional - VSP 360 Storage Administration	-33.3%	-33.3%	-33.3%
Microsoft Certified Azure Fundamentals	-33.3%	-33.3%	-33.3%
Okta Certified Professional	-33.3%	-33.3%	-33.3%
Qualified/ Information Security Professional Q/ISP	-33.3%	-33.3%	-33.3%
RSA ID Plus Certified Administrator	-33.3%	-33.3%	-33.3%
SonicWall Network Security Administrator	-33.3%	-33.3%	-33.3%
Teradata SQL for Business Users	-33.3%	-33.3%	-33.3%
PMI Certified Associate in Project Management (CAPM)	-33.3%	-20.0%	-42.9%

(surveyed throughOctober 1, 2026) DECLINING PAY: IT CERTIFICATIONS	3 mos. Market value % change - last 3 mos	6 mos. Market value % change - last 6 mos	ANNUAL Market value % change - last 12 mos
Google Cloud Certified - Professional Cloud Architect	-33.3%	-9.1%	11.1%
GIAC Systems and Network Auditor (GSNA)	-33.3%	0.0%	-50.0%
Avaya Solutions Developer Certificate (ASDC)	-33.3%	0.0%	-20.0%
IBM Certified Specialist - AI Enterprise Workflow V1	-30.0%	0.0%	-12.5%
SAFe Certification	-28.6%	-50.0%	-44.4%
Six Sigma Green Belt	-28.6%	-28.6%	-44.4%
Cloudera Certified Associate Data Analyst	-28.6%	-28.6%	-37.5%
IBM Certified Application Developer - Cloud	-28.6%	-28.6%	-28.6%
IBM Certified Application Developer (all)	-28.6%	-28.6%	-28.6%
IBM Certified Solution Designer (all)	-28.6%	-28.6%	-28.6%
Professional in Project Management (GAQM)	-28.6%	-28.6%	-28.6%
Fortinet Network Security Professional	-28.6%	-28.6%	-16.7%
SAS Certified Statistical Business Analyst - SAS 9	-28.6%	0.0%	0.0%
Google Cloud Certified - Associate Cloud Engineer	-28.6%	25.0%	0.0%
Google Cloud Certified - Professional Data Engineer	-28.6%	42.9%	42.9%
Certified Scrum Agile Leader	-25.0%	-40.0%	-25.0%
IBM AI Engineering Professional Certificate	-25.0%	-33.3%	-33.3%
PMI Professional in Business Analysis (PMI-PBA)	-25.0%	-33.3%	-33.3%
Oracle PL/SQL Developer Associate	-25.0%	-25.0%	-50.0%
Arcitura Certified Cloud Security Specialist	-25.0%	-25.0%	-25.0%
EC-Council Certified Application Security Engineer (CASE)	-25.0%	-25.0%	-25.0%
Fundamentals of Google AI for Web-Based Machine Learning	-25.0%	-25.0%	-25.0%
IBM Certified Professional SRE - Cloud v1	-25.0%	-25.0%	-14.3%
Okta Certified Administrator	-25.0%	-25.0%	-14.3%
SAS Certified Professional: Advanced Programming/SAS 9.4	-25.0%	-25.0%	-14.3%
MIT Professional Certificate in Machine Learning & AI	-25.0%	-25.0%	12.5%
Open Group Certified Architect (Open CA)	-25.0%	-10.0%	0.0%
Salesforce Certified User Experience Designer	-25.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Pegasystems Certified Lead System Architect	-23.1%	0.0%	-9.1%
Google Cloud Certified - Professional Cloud Security Engineer	-23.1%	0.0%	25.0%
Certified Artificial Intelligence Practitioner (CAIP)	-22.2%	-22.2%	-22.2%
Certified Business Continuity Professional (CBCP)	-22.2%	-22.2%	-22.2%
EC-Council Certified Incident Handler V2 (ECIH)	-22.2%	-22.2%	0.0%
IBM Certified Data Engineer - Big Data	-22.2%	-22.2%	0.0%
Salesforce Certified Platform Identity and Access Management Architect	-22.2%	-12.5%	-12.5%
Certified Software Quality Analyst (CSQA)	-20.0%	-50.0%	-50.0%
Pegasystems Certified System Architect	-20.0%	-33.3%	-50.0%
ServiceNow Certified Systems Administrator (CSA)	-20.0%	-33.3%	-33.3%
Zachman Certified - Enterprise Architect	-20.0%	-33.3%	-33.3%
Avaya Solutions Administrator Certificate (ASAC)	-20.0%	-20.0%	-33.3%
PMI Project Management Professional(PMP)	-20.0%	-20.0%	-27.3%
Citrix Certified Instructor (CCI)	-20.0%	-20.0%	-20.0%
GIAC Certified Intrusion Analyst (GCIA)	-20.0%	-20.0%	-20.0%

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MARKET VALUE DECREASES: IT Certifications (data surveyed through October 1, 2026)

3-Month Premium Pay Decline Trends – cont'd.

(Certifications value growth – July 1, 2026 to October 1, 2026)

(surveyed throughOctober 1, 2026) DECLINING PAY: IT CERTIFICATIONS	3 mos. Market value % change - last 3 mos	6 mos. Market value % change - last 6 mos	ANNUAL Market value % change - last 12 mos
SAS Certified Specialist: Natural Language Processing and Computer Vision	-20.0%	-20.0%	-11.1%
Okta Certified Consultant	-20.0%	-20.0%	0.0%
PMI Risk Management Professional (PMI-RMP)	-20.0%	-11.1%	-20.0%
GIAC Certified Windows Security Administrator (GCWN)	-20.0%	0.0%	-20.0%
Oracle Certified Professional WebLogic Server 12c Administrator	-20.0%	0.0%	-20.0%
SAS Certified Advanced Analytics Professional Using SAS 9	-20.0%	14.3%	0.0%
GIAC Security Professional(GSP)	-20.0%	0.0%	na
Offensive Security Certified Professional (OSCP)	-18.2%	-18.2%	0.0%
Pegasystems Certified Data Scientist	-18.2%	-10.0%	-10.0%
GIAC Certified Forensics Analyst (GCFA)	-18.2%	-10.0%	0.0%
Cisco Certified Cybersecurity Professional	-18.2%	-10.0%	28.6%
GIAC Cyber Threat Intelligence (GCTI)	-18.2%	12.5%	12.5%
BTA Certified Blockchain Security Professional (CBSP)	-16.7%	-44.4%	-44.4%
EC-Council Disaster Recovery Professional (EDRP)	-16.7%	-28.6%	-28.6%
SAS Certified Data Integration Developer for SAS 9	-16.7%	-28.6%	-28.6%
Red Hat Certified Systems Administrator (RHCSA)	-16.7%	-28.6%	-16.7%
Oracle Certified Expert - Java SE Developer (all)	-16.7%	-16.7%	-44.4%
Oracle Database PL/SQL Developer Certified Professional	-16.7%	-16.7%	-37.5%
HDI Support Center Team Lead	-16.7%	-16.7%	-28.6%
Oracle Certified Professional - Java SE Developer	-16.7%	-16.7%	-28.6%
AccessData Certified Examiner (ACE)	-16.7%	-16.7%	-16.7%
Cisco Certified Network Associate (Network Security)	-16.7%	-16.7%	-16.7%
Qlik Sense Business Analyst	-16.7%	-16.7%	-16.7%
SAS Certified Data Quality Steward	-16.7%	-16.7%	-16.7%
Certified Scrum Developer	-16.7%	-16.7%	0.0%
Certificate of Cloud Security Knowledge (CCSK)	-16.7%	-9.1%	-9.1%
Linux Foundation Certified System Administrator	-16.7%	0.0%	0.0%
SAS Certified Professional: AI and Machine Learning	-16.7%	0.0%	11.1%
Cisco Certified Network Associate - Data Center	-16.7%	0.0%	66.7%
Certified Kubernetes Security Specialist (CKS)	-16.7%	11.1%	11.1%
Pegasystems Certified Decisioning Consultant	-16.7%	66.7%	11.1%
Salesforce Certified Application Architect	-15.4%	22.2%	37.5%
Certification of Capability in Business Analysis (CCBA)	-14.3%	-40.0%	-40.0%
Pegasystems Certified Pega Business Architect	-14.3%	-33.3%	-33.3%
EC-Council Certified SOC Analyst (CSA)	-14.3%	-25.0%	-33.3%
PMI Construction Professional	-14.3%	-25.0%	na
Pivotal/Vmware Tanzu/Spring Certified Professional	-14.3%	-14.3%	-25.0%
AXELOS ITIL 4 certifications	-14.3%	-14.3%	-14.3%
SAS Certified Professional: Data Curation for SAS Data Scientists	-14.3%	-14.3%	-14.3%
IBM Certified Professional Developer - Cloud v4	-14.3%	0.0%	-14.3%
Certificate of Cloud Auditing Knowledge (CCAK)	-12.5%	-22.2%	-22.2%
PMI Agile Certified Practitioner (PMI-ACP)	-12.5%	-22.2%	0.0%
EC-Council Certified Threat Intelligence Analyst(CTIA)	-12.5%	-12.5%	-30.0%

(surveyed throughOctober 1, 2026) DECLINING PAY: IT CERTIFICATIONS	3 mos. Market value % change - last 3 mos	6 mos. Market value % change - last 6 mos	ANNUAL Market value % change - last 12 mos
MongoDB Certified DBA	-12.5%	-12.5%	-22.2%
Certified Cloud Architect	-12.5%	-12.5%	-12.5%
Six Sigma Black Belt	-12.5%	-12.5%	-12.5%
Fortinet Network Security Expert (NSE - all levels)	-12.5%	-12.5%	0.0%
EC-Council Certified Security Analyst(ECSA)	-12.5%	-12.5%	na
NetApp Certified Hybrid Cloud Architect	-12.5%	0.0%	0.0%
Okta Certified Developer	-12.5%	0.0%	0.0%
Salesforce Certified Hyperautomation Specialist	-12.5%	16.7%	0.0%
Certified Business Analysis Professional (CBAP)	-11.1%	-20.0%	0.0%
GIAC Certified Incident Handler (GCIH)	-11.1%	-11.1%	-20.0%
Certified Business Continuity Manager/ISO 22301 (CBCM)	-11.1%	-11.1%	-11.1%
Certified Scrum Professional - ScrumMaster	-11.1%	-11.1%	-11.1%
Google Cloud Certified - Professional Cloud Developer	-11.1%	-11.1%	-11.1%
Pegasystems Certified Senior Systems Architect	-11.1%	0.0%	-20.0%
HDI Support Center Director	-11.1%	0.0%	0.0%
Open Group Certified Technical Specialist (Open CTS)	-11.1%	0.0%	0.0%
GIAC Certified Enterprise Defender (GCED)	-11.1%	0.0%	14.3%
Salesforce Certified Platform Data Architect	-11.1%	0.0%	14.3%
Certified Scrum Professional - Product Owner	-11.1%	14.3%	14.3%
Red Hat Certified Engineer(RHCE)	-11.1%	33.3%	14.3%
Google Cloud Certified - Professional Cloud Network Engineer	-11.1%	60.0%	60.0%
Certified Information Systems Auditor (CISA)	-10.0%	-18.2%	0.0%
Certified Enterprise Coach (Scrum/Agile)	-10.0%	-10.0%	-10.0%
Certified in Governance, Risk and Compliance (ISC(2))	-10.0%	-10.0%	-10.0%
Certified Information Privacy Manager- all countries	-10.0%	-10.0%	-10.0%
GIAC Cloud Security Automation (GCSA)	-10.0%	-10.0%	12.5%
IBM Certified Data Scientist - Professional	-10.0%	-10.0%	na
GIAC Defending Advanced Threats (GDAT)	-10.0%	12.5%	12.5%
GIAC Cloud Penetration Tester (GCPN)	-10.0%	12.5%	28.6%
Google Cloud Certified - Professional Cloud DevOps Engineer	-10.0%	50.0%	12.5%
Certified in Governance, Risk and Compliance (CGRC)	-10.0%	50.0%	50.0%
Certified Secure Software Lifecycle Professional (CSSLP)	-9.1%	-9.1%	-9.1%
Check Point Certified Security Master (CCSM)	-9.1%	-9.1%	-9.1%
Certified in Risk and Information Systems Control (CRISC)	-9.1%	-9.1%	0.0%
Certified Information Systems Security Professional (CISSP)	-9.1%	-9.1%	11.1%
PMI Program Management Professional (PgMP)	-9.1%	-9.1%	11.1%
InfoSys Security Management Professional (ISSMP/CISSP)	-9.1%	0.0%	0.0%
Certified Information Security Manager (CISM)	-9.1%	0.0%	11.1%
Cisco Certified Network Professional - Security	-9.1%	0.0%	25.0%
IAPP Certified Information Privacy Manager	-9.1%	11.1%	11.1%
Microsoft Certified Azure Cybersecurity Architect Expert	-8.3%	-8.3%	na
GIAC Defensible Security Architect (GDSA)	-8.3%	22.2%	37.5%
Salesforce Certified Systems Architect	-7.7%	33.3%	71.4%

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MARKET VALUE DECREASES: IT Certifications (data surveyed through October 1, 2026)

6-Month Premium Pay Decline Trends

(Certifications value growth April 1, 2026 to October 1, 2026)

(surveyed throughOctober 1, 2026) DECLINING PAY: IT CERTIFICATIONS	3 mos. Market value % change - last 3 mos	6 mos. Market value % change - last 6 mos	ANNUAL Market value % change - last 12 mos
Certificate in Information Security Management Principles (CISMP)	0.0%	-62.5%	-62.5%
Oracle Certified Associate - WebLogic Server 12c Administrator	-50.0%	-60.0%	-66.7%
CompTIA Cloud Essentials	-50.0%	-60.0%	-60.0%
Artificial Intelligence Engineer (AIE) - ARTiBA	-40.0%	-57.1%	-45.5%
Pivotal Developer "retired"	0.0%	-57.1%	-57.1%
MIT CSAIL Professional Certificate in AI and Machine Learning	-41.7%	-56.3%	-36.4%
IBM Applied AI Professional Certificate	-42.9%	-55.6%	-60.0%
Mile2 Certified Cloud Security Officer(C)CSO)	-42.9%	-55.6%	-55.6%
Red Hat Certified Specialist in Business Process Design	0.0%	-55.6%	-55.6%
Certified IP Telecom Network Specialist (CIPTS)	-50.0%	-50.0%	-50.0%
Certified Scrum Product Owner	-50.0%	-50.0%	-50.0%
Prince2 Foundation	-50.0%	-50.0%	-50.0%
Splunk Core Certified User	-50.0%	-50.0%	-50.0%
Certified Artificial Intelligence Scientist (CAIS)	-35.7%	-50.0%	-40.0%
SAFe Certification	-28.6%	-50.0%	-44.4%
Certified Software Quality Analyst (CSQA)	-20.0%	-50.0%	-50.0%
Certified Software Quality Manager (CSQM)	0.0%	-45.5%	-45.5%
Certified ScrumMaster - Advanced	0.0%	-45.5%	-40.0%
BTA Certified Blockchain Security Professional (CBSP)	-16.7%	-44.4%	-44.4%
Certified Tester Foundation Level Agile Tester (CTFL-AT)	-33.3%	-42.9%	-42.9%
Virtualization Council Master Infrastructure Architect	-33.3%	-42.9%	-42.9%
CompTIA Project+	0.0%	-42.9%	-42.9%
SAS Certified Specialist Base Programming/SAS 9.4	0.0%	-42.9%	-33.3%
ITIL 4 Foundation Certification	-50.0%	-40.0%	-40.0%
Oracle Certified Associate - Java SE Programmer	-40.0%	-40.0%	-57.1%
Certified in Convergent Network Technologies (CCNT)	-40.0%	-40.0%	-40.0%
Oracle Certified Professional - Fusion Middleware 11g/12c Forms Developer	-40.0%	-40.0%	-40.0%
Six Sigma Yellow Belt	-40.0%	-40.0%	-40.0%
VMware Certified Professional - Private Cloud Security Administator	-40.0%	-40.0%	-14.3%
Certified Scrum Agile Leader	-25.0%	-40.0%	-25.0%
Certification of Capability in Business Analysis (CCBA)	-14.3%	-40.0%	-40.0%
Certified Business Process Associate (CBPA)	0.0%	-40.0%	-40.0%
GIAC Critical Controls Certifications (GCCC)	0.0%	-40.0%	50.0%
Check Point Certified Security Administrator (CCSA)	-37.5%	-37.5%	-28.6%
GIAC Certified Project Manager (GCPM)	0.0%	-37.5%	-37.5%
SAS® Certified Specialist: Visual Business Analytics	0.0%	-37.5%	-37.5%
Certified Scrum Product Owner - Advanced	-33.3%	-33.3%	-33.3%
IBM Certified Solution Advisor - DevOps V2	-33.3%	-33.3%	-33.3%
IBM AI Engineering Professional Certificate	-25.0%	-33.3%	-33.3%
PMI Professional in Business Analysis (PMI-PBA)	-25.0%	-33.3%	-33.3%
Pegasystems Certified Pega Business Architect	-14.3%	-33.3%	-33.3%
Certified Information Systems Risk Manager/Mile2 (CISRM)	0.0%	-33.3%	-33.3%
Certified Compliance & Ethics Professional	50.0%	-33.3%	-33.3%
EC-Council Certified Encryption Specialist v2(ECES)	-33.3%	-33.3%	-50.0%
Certified Cloud Technology Professional	-33.3%	-33.3%	-33.3%
Certified in Emerging Technology(CET-ISACA)	-33.3%	-33.3%	-33.3%

(surveyed throughOctober 1, 2026) DECLINING PAY: IT CERTIFICATIONS	3 mos. Market value % change - last 3 mos	6 mos. Market value % change - last 6 mos	ANNUAL Market value % change - last 12 mos
Certified Telecommunications Network Specialist (CTNS)	-33.3%	-33.3%	-33.3%
Help Desk Team Lead/RCCSP	-33.3%	-33.3%	-33.3%
Hitachi Vantara Qualified Professional - VSP 360 Storage Administration	-33.3%	-33.3%	-33.3%
Microsoft Certified Azure Fundamentals	-33.3%	-33.3%	-33.3%
Okta Certified Professional	-33.3%	-33.3%	-33.3%
Qualified/ Information Security Professional Q/ISP	-33.3%	-33.3%	-33.3%
RSA ID Plus Certified Administrator	-33.3%	-33.3%	-33.3%
SonicWall Network Security Administrator	-33.3%	-33.3%	-33.3%
Teradata SQL for Business Users	-33.3%	-33.3%	-33.3%
Pegasystems Certified System Architect	-20.0%	-33.3%	-50.0%
ServiceNow Certified Systems Administrator (CSA)	-20.0%	-33.3%	-33.3%
Zachman Certified - Enterprise Architect	-20.0%	-33.3%	-33.3%
HDI Customer Service Representative	0.0%	-33.3%	-50.0%
GIAC Python Coder (GPYC)	0.0%	-33.3%	-42.9%
ITIL Intermediate Certification	0.0%	-33.3%	-42.9%
Certified Tester Foundation Level (CTFL) v4.0	0.0%	-33.3%	-33.3%
GIAC Strategic Planning, Policy, and Leadership (GSTRT)	28.6%	-30.8%	-25.0%
Certified ScrumMaster	-44.4%	-28.6%	-44.4%
VMware Certified Professional – VMware Cloud Foundation Administrator	-44.4%	-28.6%	-16.7%
Six Sigma Green Belt	-28.6%	-28.6%	-44.4%
Cloudera Certified Associate Data Analyst	-28.6%	-28.6%	-37.5%
IBM Certified Application Developer - Cloud	-28.6%	-28.6%	-28.6%
IBM Certified Application Developer (all)	-28.6%	-28.6%	-28.6%
IBM Certified Solution Designer (all)	-28.6%	-28.6%	-28.6%
Professional in Project Management (GAQM)	-28.6%	-28.6%	-28.6%
Fortinet Network Security Professional	-28.6%	-28.6%	-16.7%
EC-Council Disaster Recovery Professional (EDRP)	-16.7%	-28.6%	-28.6%
SAS Certified Data Integration Developer for SAS 9	-16.7%	-28.6%	-28.6%
Red Hat Certified Systems Administrator (RHCSA)	-16.7%	-28.6%	-16.7%
SAS Certified Platform Administrator for SAS 9	0.0%	-28.6%	-37.5%
Certified Disaster Recovery Engineer/Mile2 (C/DRE)	0.0%	-28.6%	-28.6%
IBM Certified Solution Architect - Data Warehouse V1	0.0%	-28.6%	-28.6%
Offensive Wireless Security Professional (OSWP)	0.0%	-28.6%	-28.6%
Salesforce Certified Platform Developer I	-40.0%	-25.0%	-25.0%
Oracle PL/SQL Developer Associate	-25.0%	-25.0%	-50.0%
Arcitura Certified Cloud Security Specialist	-25.0%	-25.0%	-25.0%
EC-Council Certified Application Security Engineer (CASE)	-25.0%	-25.0%	-25.0%
Fundamentals of Google AI for Web-Based Machine Learning	-25.0%	-25.0%	-25.0%
IBM Certified Professional SRE - Cloud v1	-25.0%	-25.0%	-14.3%
Okta Certified Administrator	-25.0%	-25.0%	-14.3%
SAS Certified Professional: Advanced Programming/SAS 9.4	-25.0%	-25.0%	-14.3%
MIT Professional Certificate in Machine Learning & AI	-25.0%	-25.0%	12.5%
EC-Council Certified SOC Analyst (CSA)	-14.3%	-25.0%	-33.3%
PMI Construction Professional	-14.3%	-25.0%	na
EC-Council Certified Network Defender	0.0%	-25.0%	-25.0%

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MARKET VALUE DECREASES: IT Certifications(data through October 1, 2026)

6-Month Premium Pay Decline Trends – cont'd.

(Certifications value growth April 1, 2026 to October 1, 2026)

(surveyed throughOctober 1, 2026) DECLINING PAY: IT CERTIFICATIONS	3 mos. Market value % change - last 3 mos	6 mos. Market value % change - last 6 mos	ANNUAL Market value % change - last 12 mos
GIAC Information Security Fundamentals (GISF)	0.0%	-25.0%	-25.0%
HDI Technical Support Professional	0.0%	-25.0%	-25.0%
Offensive Security Web Assessor (OSWA)	0.0%	-25.0%	-25.0%
EC-Council Web Appication Hacking and Security Testing (WAHS)	50.0%	-25.0%	-33.3%
CWNP/Certified Wireless Technician (CWTS)	50.0%	-25.0%	-25.0%
NetScout/nGenius Certified Associate (nCA)	50.0%	-25.0%	-25.0%
Certified Artificial Intelligence Practitioner (CAIP)	-22.2%	-22.2%	-22.2%
Certified Business Continuity Professional (CBCP)	-22.2%	-22.2%	-22.2%
EC-Council Certified Incident Handler V2 (ECIH)	-22.2%	-22.2%	0.0%
IBM Certified Data Engineer - Big Data	-22.2%	-22.2%	0.0%
Certificate of Cloud Auditing Knowledge (CCAK)	-12.5%	-22.2%	-22.2%
PMI Agile Certified Practitioner (PMI-ACP)	-12.5%	-22.2%	0.0%
Certified Ethical AI Professional (CEAP)	0.0%	-22.2%	-22.2%
Certified Penetration Testing Engineer (CPTE)	0.0%	-22.2%	-22.2%
GIAC Penetration Tester (GPEN)	0.0%	-22.2%	-12.5%
PMI Certified Associate in Project Management (CAPM)	-33.3%	-20.0%	-42.9%
Avaya Solutions Administrator Certificate (ASAC)	-20.0%	-20.0%	-33.3%
PMI Project Management Professional(PMP)	-20.0%	-20.0%	-27.3%
Citrix Certified Instructor (CCI)	-20.0%	-20.0%	-20.0%
GIAC Certified Intrusion Analyst (GCIA)	-20.0%	-20.0%	-20.0%
SAS Certified Specialist: Natural Language Processing and Computer Vision	-20.0%	-20.0%	-11.1%
Okta Certified Consultant	-20.0%	-20.0%	0.0%
Certified Business Analysis Professional (CBAP)	-11.1%	-20.0%	0.0%
Certified Cisco Systems Instructor (CCSI)	0.0%	-20.0%	-20.0%
SUSE Certified Administrator in SUSE Linux Enterprise Server 16	0.0%	-20.0%	-20.0%
CyberSecurity Forensic Analyst (CSFA)	14.3%	-20.0%	-20.0%
IBM Certified Data Architect - Big Data	14.3%	-20.0%	0.0%
Offensive Security Certified Professional (OSCP)	-18.2%	-18.2%	0.0%
Certified Information Systems Auditor (CISA)	-10.0%	-18.2%	0.0%
Oracle Certified Expert - Java SE Developer (all)	-16.7%	-16.7%	-44.4%
Oracle Database PL/SQL Developer Certified Professional	-16.7%	-16.7%	-37.5%
HDI Support Center Team Lead	-16.7%	-16.7%	-28.6%
Oracle Certified Professional - Java SE Developer	-16.7%	-16.7%	-28.6%
AccessData Certified Examiner (ACE)	-16.7%	-16.7%	-16.7%
Cisco Certified Network Associate (Network Security)	-16.7%	-16.7%	-16.7%
Qlik Sense Business Analyst	-16.7%	-16.7%	-16.7%
SAS Certified Data Quality Steward	-16.7%	-16.7%	-16.7%
Certified Scrum Developer	-16.7%	-16.7%	0.0%
CompTIA Cloud+	0.0%	-16.7%	-16.7%
MongoDB Certified Associate Developer	0.0%	-16.7%	-16.7%
Avaya Services Technical Associate(ASTA)	25.0%	-16.7%	25.0%
SAS Certified Predictive Modeler - SAS Enterprise Miner	-33.3%	-14.3%	-14.3%
Pivotal/Vmware Tanzu/Spring Certified Professional	-14.3%	-14.3%	-25.0%
AXELOS ITIL 4 certifications	-14.3%	-14.3%	-14.3%
SAS Certified Professional: Data Curation for SAS Data Scientists	-14.3%	-14.3%	-14.3%

(surveyed throughOctober 1, 2026) DECLINING PAY: IT CERTIFICATIONS	3 mos. Market value % change - last 3 mos	6 mos. Market value % change - last 6 mos	ANNUAL Market value % change - last 12 mos
Red Hat Certified Specialist in Enterprise Application Development	0.0%	-14.3%	-25.0%
Oracle E-Business Suite 12 Certified Implementation Specialist	0.0%	-14.3%	-14.3%
GIAC Security Operations Certified (GSOC)	50.0%	-14.3%	-14.3%
Oracle Certified Professional - Linux 8 System Administrator	50.0%	-14.3%	-14.3%
Salesforce Certified Platform Identity and Access Management Architect	-22.2%	-12.5%	-12.5%
EC-Council Certified Threat Intelligence Analyst(CTIA)	-12.5%	-12.5%	-30.0%
MongoDB Certified DBA	-12.5%	-12.5%	-22.2%
Certified Cloud Architect	-12.5%	-12.5%	-12.5%
Six Sigma Black Belt	-12.5%	-12.5%	-12.5%
Fortinet Network Security Expert (NSE - all levels)	-12.5%	-12.5%	0.0%
EC-Council Certified Security Analyst(ECSA)	-12.5%	-12.5%	na
Certified Tester Advanced Level Test Analyst (CTAL-TA)	0.0%	-12.5%	-12.5%
VMware Certified Professional – Data Center Virtualization (VCP-DCV)	0.0%	-12.5%	40.0%
GIAC Public Cloud Security (GPCS)	40.0%	-12.5%	16.7%
PMI Risk Management Professional (PMI-RMP)	-20.0%	-11.1%	-20.0%
GIAC Certified Incident Handler (GCIH)	-11.1%	-11.1%	-20.0%
Certified Business Continuity Manager/ISO 22301 (CBCM)	-11.1%	-11.1%	-11.1%
Certified Scrum Professional - ScrumMaster	-11.1%	-11.1%	-11.1%
Google Cloud Certified - Professional Cloud Developer	-11.1%	-11.1%	-11.1%
Certified Forensic Computer Examiner (CFCE)	0.0%	-11.1%	-11.1%
Check Point Certified Security Expert (CCSE)	0.0%	-11.1%	-11.1%
VMware Certified Distinguished Expert (VCDX) duplicate	0.0%	-11.1%	60.0%
GIAC Security Operations Manager (GSOM)	14.3%	-11.1%	-11.1%
GIAC Network Forensic Analyst (GNFA)	14.3%	-11.1%	0.0%
Open Group Certified Architect (Open CA)	-25.0%	-10.0%	0.0%
Pegasystems Certified Data Scientist	-18.2%	-10.0%	-10.0%
GIAC Certified Forensics Analyst (GCFA)	-18.2%	-10.0%	0.0%
Cisco Certified Cybersecurity Professional	-18.2%	-10.0%	28.6%
Certified Enterprise Coach (Scrum/Agile)	-10.0%	-10.0%	-10.0%
Certified in Governance, Risk and Compliance (ISC(2))	-10.0%	-10.0%	-10.0%
Certified Information Privacy Manager- all countries	-10.0%	-10.0%	-10.0%
GIAC Cloud Security Automation (GCSA)	-10.0%	-10.0%	12.5%
IBM Certified Data Scientist - Professional	-10.0%	-10.0%	na
GIAC Cloud Architecture & Design (GCAD)	12.5%	-10.0%	na
GIAC Cloud Threat Detection (GCTD)	12.5%	-10.0%	na
Google Cloud Certified - Professional Cloud Architect	-33.3%	-9.1%	11.1%
Certificate of Cloud Security Knowledge (CCSK)	-16.7%	-9.1%	-9.1%
Certified Secure Software Lifecycle Professional (CSSLP)	-9.1%	-9.1%	-9.1%
Check Point Certified Security Master (CCSM)	-9.1%	-9.1%	-9.1%
Certified in Risk and Information Systems Control (CRISC)	-9.1%	-9.1%	0.0%
Certified Information Systems Security Professional (CISSP)	-9.1%	-9.1%	11.1%
PMI Program Management Professional (PgMP)	-9.1%	-9.1%	11.1%
Microsoft Certified Azure Cybersecurity Architect Expert	-8.3%	-8.3%	na

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MARKET VALUE DECREASES: IT Certifications(data through October 1, 2026)

12-Month Premium Pay Decline Trends

(Certifications value growth October 1, 2026 to October 1, 2026)

(surveyed throughOctober 1, 2026) DECLINING PAY: IT CERTIFICATIONS	3 mos. Market value % change - last 3 mos	6 mos. Market value % change - last 6 mos	ANNUAL Market value % change - last 12 mos
Oracle Certified Associate - WebLogic Server 12c Administrator	-50.0%	-60.0%	-66.7%
Certificate in Information Security Management Principles (CISMP)	0.0%	-62.5%	-62.5%
CompTIA Cloud Essentials	-50.0%	-60.0%	-60.0%
IBM Applied AI Professional Certificate	-42.9%	-55.6%	-60.0%
Oracle Certified Associate - Java SE Programmer	-40.0%	-40.0%	-57.1%
Pivotal Developer "retired"	0.0%	-57.1%	-57.1%
Mile2 Certified Cloud Security Officer(C)CSO)	-42.9%	-55.6%	-55.6%
Red Hat Certified Specialist in Business Process Design	0.0%	-55.6%	-55.6%
Certified IP Telecom Network Specialist (CIPTS)	-50.0%	-50.0%	-50.0%
Certified Scrum Product Owner	-50.0%	-50.0%	-50.0%
Prince2 Foundation	-50.0%	-50.0%	-50.0%
Splunk Core Certified User	-50.0%	-50.0%	-50.0%
EC-Council Certified Encryption Specialist v2(ECES)	-33.3%	-33.3%	-50.0%
GIAC Systems and Network Auditor (GSNA)	-33.3%	0.0%	-50.0%
Oracle PL/SQL Developer Associate	-25.0%	-25.0%	-50.0%
Certified Software Quality Analyst (CSQA)	-20.0%	-50.0%	-50.0%
Pegasystems Certified System Architect	-20.0%	-33.3%	-50.0%
HDI Customer Service Representative	0.0%	-33.3%	-50.0%
Artificial Intelligence Engineer (AIE) - ARTiBA	-40.0%	-57.1%	-45.5%
Certified Software Quality Manager (CSQM)	0.0%	-45.5%	-45.5%
Certified ScrumMaster	-44.4%	-28.6%	-44.4%
SAFe Certification	-28.6%	-50.0%	-44.4%
Six Sigma Green Belt	-28.6%	-28.6%	-44.4%
BTA Certified Blockchain Security Professional (CBSP)	-16.7%	-44.4%	-44.4%
Oracle Certified Expert - Java SE Developer (all)	-16.7%	-16.7%	-44.4%
Certified Tester Foundation Level Agile Tester (CTFL-AT)	-33.3%	-42.9%	-42.9%
Virtualization Council Master Infrastructure Architect	-33.3%	-42.9%	-42.9%
PMI Certified Associate in Project Management (CAPM)	-33.3%	-20.0%	-42.9%
CompTIA Project+	0.0%	-42.9%	-42.9%
GIAC Python Coder (GPYC)	0.0%	-33.3%	-42.9%
ITIL Intermediate Certification	0.0%	-33.3%	-42.9%
ITIL 4 Foundation Certification	-50.0%	-40.0%	-40.0%
Certified in Convergent Network Technologies (CCNT)	-40.0%	-40.0%	-40.0%
Oracle Certified Professional - Fusion Middleware 11g/12c Forms Developer	-40.0%	-40.0%	-40.0%
Six Sigma Yellow Belt	-40.0%	-40.0%	-40.0%
Certified Artificial Intelligence Scientist (CAIS)	-35.7%	-50.0%	-40.0%
Certification of Capability in Business Analysis (CCBA)	-14.3%	-40.0%	-40.0%
Certified ScrumMaster - Advanced	0.0%	-45.5%	-40.0%
Certified Business Process Associate (CBPA)	0.0%	-40.0%	-40.0%
Cloudera Certified Associate Data Analyst	-28.6%	-28.6%	-37.5%
Oracle Database PL/SQL Developer Certified Professional	-16.7%	-16.7%	-37.5%
GIAC Certified Project Manager (GCPM)	0.0%	-37.5%	-37.5%
SAS® Certified Specialist: Visual Business Analytics	0.0%	-37.5%	-37.5%
SAS Certified Platform Administrator for SAS 9	0.0%	-28.6%	-37.5%
MIT CSAIL Professional Certificate in AI and Machine Learning	-41.7%	-56.3%	-36.4%
Certified Scrum Product Owner - Advanced	-33.3%	-33.3%	-33.3%

(surveyed throughOctober 1, 2026) DECLINING PAY: IT CERTIFICATIONS	3 mos. Market value % change - last 3 mos	6 mos. Market value % change - last 6 mos	ANNUAL Market value % change - last 12 mos
IBM Certified Solution Advisor - DevOps V2	-33.3%	-33.3%	-33.3%
IBM AI Engineering Professional Certificate	-25.0%	-33.3%	-33.3%
PMI Professional in Business Analysis (PMI-PBA)	-25.0%	-33.3%	-33.3%
Pegasystems Certified Pega Business Architect	-14.3%	-33.3%	-33.3%
EC-Council Certified SOC Analyst (CSA)	-14.3%	-25.0%	-33.3%
Certified Information Systems Risk Manager/Mile2 (CISRM)	0.0%	-33.3%	-33.3%
Certified Compliance & Ethics Professional	50.0%	-33.3%	-33.3%
EC-Council Web Appication Hacking and Security Testing (WAHS)	50.0%	-25.0%	-33.3%
Certified Cloud Technology Professional	-33.3%	-33.3%	-33.3%
Certified in Emerging Technology(CET-ISACA)	-33.3%	-33.3%	-33.3%
Certified Telecommunications Network Specialist (CTNS)	-33.3%	-33.3%	-33.3%
Help Desk Team Lead/RCCSP	-33.3%	-33.3%	-33.3%
Hitachi Vantara Qualified Professional - VSP 360 Storage Administration	-33.3%	-33.3%	-33.3%
Microsoft Certified Azure Fundamentals	-33.3%	-33.3%	-33.3%
Okta Certified Professional	-33.3%	-33.3%	-33.3%
Qualified/ Information Security Professional Q/ISP	-33.3%	-33.3%	-33.3%
RSA ID Plus Certified Administrator	-33.3%	-33.3%	-33.3%
SonicWall Network Security Administrator	-33.3%	-33.3%	-33.3%
Teradata SQL for Business Users	-33.3%	-33.3%	-33.3%
ServiceNow Certified Systems Administrator (CSA)	-20.0%	-33.3%	-33.3%
Zachman Certified - Enterprise Architect	-20.0%	-33.3%	-33.3%
Avaya Solutions Administrator Certificate (ASAC)	-20.0%	-20.0%	-33.3%
SAS Certified Specialist Base Programming/SAS 9.4	0.0%	-42.9%	-33.3%
Certified Tester Foundation Level (CTFL) v4.0	0.0%	-33.3%	-33.3%
EC-Council Certified Threat Intelligence Analyst(CTIA)	-12.5%	-12.5%	-30.0%
Check Point Certified Security Administrator (CCSA)	-37.5%	-37.5%	-28.6%
IBM Certified Application Developer - Cloud	-28.6%	-28.6%	-28.6%
IBM Certified Application Developer (all)	-28.6%	-28.6%	-28.6%
IBM Certified Solution Designer (all)	-28.6%	-28.6%	-28.6%
Professional in Project Management (GAQM)	-28.6%	-28.6%	-28.6%
EC-Council Disaster Recovery Professional (EDRP)	-16.7%	-28.6%	-28.6%
SAS Certified Data Integration Developer for SAS 9	-16.7%	-28.6%	-28.6%
HDI Support Center Team Lead	-16.7%	-16.7%	-28.6%
Oracle Certified Professional - Java SE Developer	-16.7%	-16.7%	-28.6%
Certified Disaster Recovery Engineer/Mile2 (C/DRE)	0.0%	-28.6%	-28.6%
IBM Certified Solution Architect - Data Warehouse V1	0.0%	-28.6%	-28.6%
Offensive Wireless Security Professional (OSWP)	0.0%	-28.6%	-28.6%
Oracle Certified Professional - MySQL 8.0 Database Administrator	0.0%	0.0%	-28.6%
PMI Project Management Professional(PMP)	-20.0%	-20.0%	-27.3%
Salesforce Certified Platform Developer I	-40.0%	-25.0%	-25.0%
Pegasystems Certified Robotics System Architect	-33.3%	0.0%	-25.0%
Certified Scrum Agile Leader	-25.0%	-40.0%	-25.0%
Arcitura Certified Cloud Security Specialist	-25.0%	-25.0%	-25.0%
EC-Council Certified Application Security Engineer (CASE)	-25.0%	-25.0%	-25.0%
Fundamentals of Google AI for Web-Based Machine Learning	-25.0%	-25.0%	-25.0%
Pivotal/Vmware Tanzu/Spring Certified Professional	-14.3%	-14.3%	-25.0%

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MARKET VALUE DECREASES: IT Certifications(data through October 1, 2026)

12-Month Premium Pay Decline Trends – cont'd.

(Certifications value growth October 1, 2026 to October 1, 2026)

(surveyed throughOctober 1, 2026) DECLINING PAY: IT CERTIFICATIONS	3 mos. Market value % change - last 3 mos	6 mos. Market value % change - last 6 mos	ANNUAL Market value % change - last 12 mos
EC-Council Certified Network Defender	0.0%	-25.0%	-25.0%
GIAC Information Security Fundamentals (GISF)	0.0%	-25.0%	-25.0%
HDI Technical Support Professional	0.0%	-25.0%	-25.0%
Offensive Security Web Assessor (OSWA)	0.0%	-25.0%	-25.0%
Red Hat Certified Specialist in Enterprise Application Development	0.0%	-14.3%	-25.0%
MongoDB Associate Data Modeler	0.0%	0.0%	-25.0%
GIAC Strategic Planning, Policy, and Leadership (GSTRT)	28.6%	-30.8%	-25.0%
CWNP/Certified Wireless Technician (CWTS)	50.0%	-25.0%	-25.0%
NetScout/nGenius Certified Associate (nCA)	50.0%	-25.0%	-25.0%
Certified Artificial Intelligence Practitioner (CAIP)	-22.2%	-22.2%	-22.2%
Certified Business Continuity Professional (CBCP)	-22.2%	-22.2%	-22.2%
Certificate of Cloud Auditing Knowledge (CCAK)	-12.5%	-22.2%	-22.2%
MongoDB Certified DBA	-12.5%	-12.5%	-22.2%
Certified Ethical AI Professional (CEAP)	0.0%	-22.2%	-22.2%
Certified Penetration Testing Engineer (CPTE)	0.0%	-22.2%	-22.2%
Oracle Certified Master - Java SE Developer	0.0%	40.0%	-22.2%
Avaya Solutions Developer Certificate (ASDC)	-33.3%	0.0%	-20.0%
Citrix Certified Instructor (CCI)	-20.0%	-20.0%	-20.0%
GIAC Certified Intrusion Analyst (GCIA)	-20.0%	-20.0%	-20.0%
PMI Risk Management Professional (PMI-RMP)	-20.0%	-11.1%	-20.0%
GIAC Certified Windows Security Administrator (GCWN)	-20.0%	0.0%	-20.0%
Oracle Certified Professional WebLogic Server 12c Administrator	-20.0%	0.0%	-20.0%
GIAC Certified Incident Handler (GCIH)	-11.1%	-11.1%	-20.0%
Pegasystems Certified Senior Systems Architect	-11.1%	0.0%	-20.0%
Certified Cisco Systems Instructor (CCSI)	0.0%	-20.0%	-20.0%
SUSE Certified Administrator in SUSE Linux Enterprise Server 16	0.0%	-20.0%	-20.0%
Microsoft Certified Power BI Data Analyst Associate	0.0%	0.0%	-20.0%
CyberSecurity Forensic Analyst (CSFA)	14.3%	-20.0%	-20.0%
VMware Certified Professional – VMware Cloud Foundation Administrator	-44.4%	-28.6%	-16.7%
Fortinet Network Security Professional	-28.6%	-28.6%	-16.7%
Red Hat Certified Systems Administrator (RHCSA)	-16.7%	-28.6%	-16.7%
AccessData Certified Examiner (ACE)	-16.7%	-16.7%	-16.7%
Cisco Certified Network Associate (Network Security)	-16.7%	-16.7%	-16.7%
Qlik Sense Business Analyst	-16.7%	-16.7%	-16.7%
SAS Certified Data Quality Steward	-16.7%	-16.7%	-16.7%
CompTIA Cloud+	0.0%	-16.7%	-16.7%
MongoDB Certified Associate Developer	0.0%	-16.7%	-16.7%
CompTIA Mobile App Security+ **retired**	0.0%	0.0%	-16.7%
Linux Foundation Certified Engineer **retired**	0.0%	0.0%	-16.7%
Oracle MySQL Heatwave Implementation Certified Associate	0.0%	0.0%	-16.7%
VMware Certified Professional - Private Cloud Security Administator	-40.0%	-40.0%	-14.3%
SAS Certified Predictive Modeler - SAS Enterprise Miner	-33.3%	-14.3%	-14.3%
IBM Certified Professional SRE - Cloud v1	-25.0%	-25.0%	-14.3%
Okta Certified Administrator	-25.0%	-25.0%	-14.3%

(surveyed throughOctober 1, 2026) DECLINING PAY: IT CERTIFICATIONS	3 mos. Market value % change - last 3 mos	6 mos. Market value % change - last 6 mos	ANNUAL Market value % change - last 12 mos
SAS Certified Professional: Advanced Programming/SAS 9.4	-25.0%	-25.0%	-14.3%
AXELOS ITIL 4 certifications	-14.3%	-14.3%	-14.3%
SAS Certified Professional: Data Curation for SAS Data Scientists	-14.3%	-14.3%	-14.3%
IBM Certified Professional Developer - Cloud v4	-14.3%	0.0%	-14.3%
Oracle E-Business Suite 12 Certified Implementation Specialist	0.0%	-14.3%	-14.3%
MongoDB Associate Database Administrator	0.0%	0.0%	-14.3%
Oracle MySQL 8.0 Database Developer Certified Professional	0.0%	0.0%	-14.3%
GIAC Continuous Monitoring Certification (GMON)	20.0%	0.0%	-14.3%
Teradata Vantage Administration	20.0%	0.0%	-14.3%
Microsoft Certified Azure Data Engineer Associate	20.0%	20.0%	-14.3%
Oracle AI Database 26ai Administration Associate	20.0%	20.0%	-14.3%
GIAC Security Operations Certified (GSOC)	50.0%	-14.3%	-14.3%
Oracle Certified Professional - Linux 8 System Administrator	50.0%	-14.3%	-14.3%
IBM Certified Specialist - AI Enterprise Workflow V1	-30.0%	0.0%	-12.5%
Salesforce Certified Platform Identity and Access Management Architect	-22.2%	-12.5%	-12.5%
Certified Cloud Architect	-12.5%	-12.5%	-12.5%
Six Sigma Black Belt	-12.5%	-12.5%	-12.5%
GIAC Penetration Tester (GPEN)	0.0%	-22.2%	-12.5%
Certified Tester Advanced Level Test Analyst (CTAL-TA)	0.0%	-12.5%	-12.5%
EC-Council Computer Hacking Forensic Investigator (CHFI)	0.0%	0.0%	-12.5%
Offensive Security Defense Analyst (OSDA)	0.0%	0.0%	-12.5%
Qlik Sense Data Architect	0.0%	0.0%	-12.5%
CompTIA PenTest (CPT+)	16.7%	16.7%	-12.5%
Microsoft Certified Azure Data Scientist Associate	75.0%	75.0%	-12.5%
SAS Certified Specialist: Natural Language Processing and Computer Vision	-20.0%	-20.0%	-11.1%
Certified Business Continuity Manager/ISO 22301 (CBCM)	-11.1%	-11.1%	-11.1%
Certified Scrum Professional - ScrumMaster	-11.1%	-11.1%	-11.1%
Google Cloud Certified - Professional Cloud Developer	-11.1%	-11.1%	-11.1%
Certified Forensic Computer Examiner (CFCE)	0.0%	-11.1%	-11.1%
Check Point Certified Security Expert (CCSE)	0.0%	-11.1%	-11.1%
EC-Council Certified Cloud Security Engineer (CCSE)	0.0%	0.0%	-11.1%
GIAC Security Operations Manager (GSOM)	14.3%	-11.1%	-11.1%
Pegasystems Certified Data Scientist	-18.2%	-10.0%	-10.0%
Certified Enterprise Coach (Scrum/Agile)	-10.0%	-10.0%	-10.0%
Certified in Governance, Risk and Compliance (ISC(2))	-10.0%	-10.0%	-10.0%
Certified Information Privacy Manager- all countries	-10.0%	-10.0%	-10.0%
Oracle Cloud Platform Application Integration Certified Professional	28.6%	28.6%	-10.0%
Pegasystems Certified Lead System Architect	-23.1%	0.0%	-9.1%
Certificate of Cloud Security Knowledge (CCSK)	-16.7%	-9.1%	-9.1%
Certified Secure Software Lifecycle Professional (CSSLP)	-9.1%	-9.1%	-9.1%
Check Point Certified Security Master (CCSM)	-9.1%	-9.1%	-9.1%
EC-Council Certified Chief Information Security Officer (CCISO)	11.1%	0.0%	-9.1%

Pay data supporting these charts available in the *IT Skills and Certifications Pay Index™* – 3Q 2026 data edition

SOURCE: Foote Partners *2026 IT Skills & Certifications Pay Index™*

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752 Non-certified IT Skills: Pay and Demand Trend Detail

Non-certified IT skills

(Data collected through October 1, 2026)

- List of IT skills reported
- Pay premium performance
- Notable market value gains and losses
- Highest paying non-certified IT skills

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755 Non-Certified IT Skills Reported

IT Skills and Certifications Pay Trend Charts

IT Skills and Certifications Pay Index™ (data through October 1, 2026)

Apps Develop. Tools & Platforms

- Agile software development
- AI Chatbot
- Amazon Kinesis
- Amazon SageMaker (ML)
- Amazon Web Services
- Anthropic Claude
- 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 Bicep
- 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
- NUnit
- 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/Swift UI
- 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

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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 (Integrated Business Planning)
- 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

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755 Non-Certified IT Skills Reported

IT Skills and Certifications Pay Trend Charts

IT Skills and Certifications Pay Index™ (data through October 1, 2026)

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 Meraki
- 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 design
- Network security management
- NGFW(next-generation firewall)
- Novell Netware
- Offensive security
- 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
- SOAR
- 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 Mgmnt
- Wireless security
- Wireless sensors/RFID
- Wireline Networking/ Telecomm.
- Webtrends analytics
- Zachman Framework
- Zapier

Operating Systems

- AIX
- Fedora CoreOS
- HP-UX
- Linux
- Mac OS X
- Mobile operating systems (iOS, Android)
- OpenStack
- Red Hat Enterprise Linux
- Solaris
- SUSE Linux
- 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 Design
- 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
- Natural language processing
- Network Architecture
- Neural Networks
- NIST/NIST 800
- Object Detection/YOLO
- ONNX (Open Neural Network Exchange)
- OpenCV
- PagerDuty
- Penetration testing

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Management, Methodologies and Process – cont'd.

- 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
- Splunk
- Software Quality Assurance
- Tableau
- Test Automation
- Test Driven Development/Scripting
- Threat Intelligence
- Threat and Vulnerability Scanning/ Assessment/Management
- 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

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

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4 YEAR NONCERTIFIED IT SKILLS PAY TRENDS

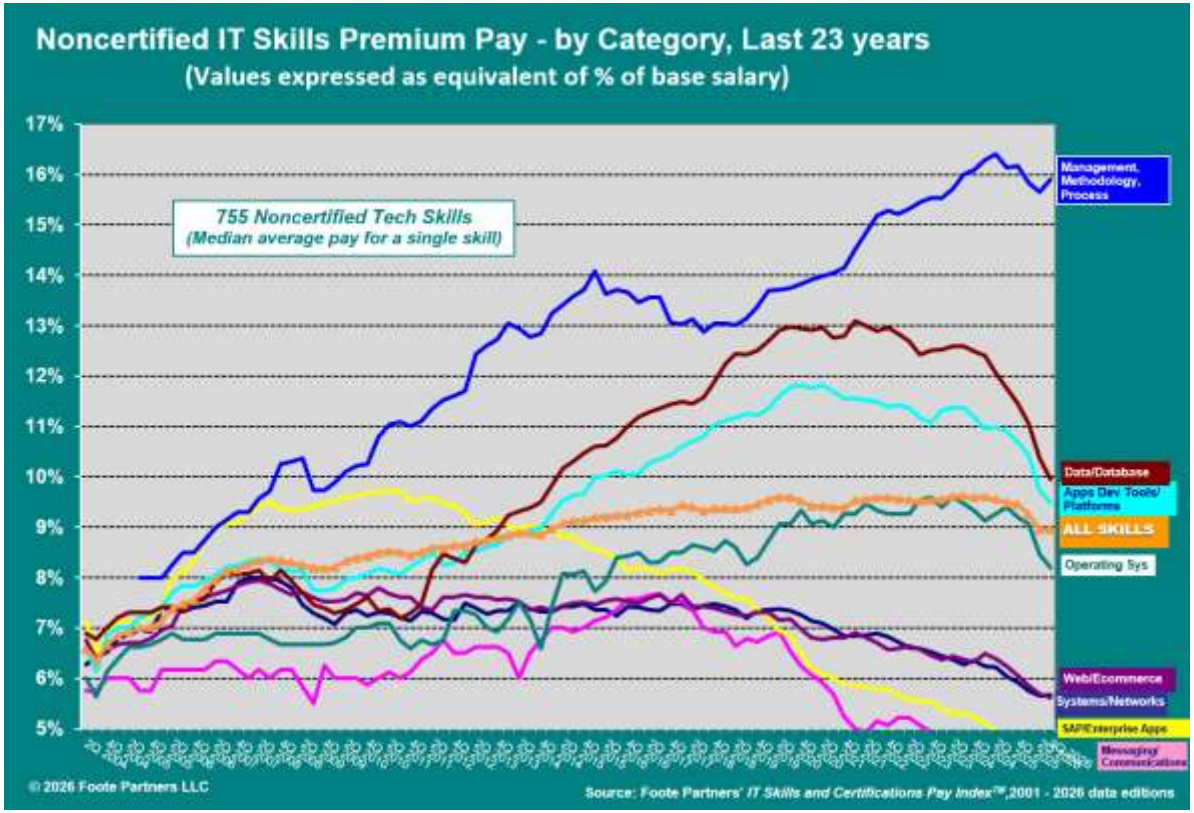
(Through 10/1/2026 – 117,731 IT Professionals)

NONCERTIFIED IT SKILLS CATEGORIES	# of skills surveyed	Average Pay - Single Cert (expressed as Equivalent % of base salary) 3Q 2024	3Q 2025	3Q 2026	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	104	6.3%	6.0%	5.7%	0.5%	-1.5%	-5.9%	-9.4%	-13.8%	-17.6%
Messaging and Communications	12	4.9%	4.0%	4.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.8%	-15.1%	-21.1%	-22.2%
SAP & Enterprise Business Applications	137	5.3%	4.9%	4.7%	-0.1%	-1.4%	-2.2%	-10.8%	-15.0%	-18.8%
Apps Development Tools & Platforms	143	11.4%	11.0%	9.5%	-2.6%	-9.1%	-13.0%	-16.6%	-15.1%	-17.4%
Web/e-Commerce Development	103	6.4%	6.4%	5.6%	-1.0%	-4.0%	-10.0%	-11.8%	-14.4%	-16.1%
Data/Database	65	12.6%	12.1%	10.0%	-4.0%	-9.9%	-15.3%	-21.0%	-19.8%	-22.7%
Operating Systems	15	9.6%	9.3%	8.2%	-3.2%	-9.6%	-12.8%	-13.4%	-14.0%	-12.1%
Management/Methodology/Process	176	15.7%	16.4%	15.9%	1.6%	0.4%	-1.5%	-0.6%	3.0%	4.7%
ALL NONCERTIFIED SKILLS REPORTED	755	9.61%	9.55%	8.95%	-0.15%	-3.28%	-5.65%	-7.00%	-6.02%	-6.62%

22-YEAR NONCERTIFIED IT SKILLS PAY TRENDS - BY CATEGORY

(Through 10/1/2026 – 117,731 IT Professionals)

% Change in Average Median Pay for a Single IT Noncertified Skill



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NON-CERTIFIED TECH SKILLS TREND HIGHLIGHTS: Market Value Gainers – 3rd Quarter 2026 datasets

These non-certified tech skills ***gained 10% or more in market value in the three months ending October 1, 2026*** vs. prior quarter (seen below grouped by segment).
Listed in alphabetical order within each group. Highest paying skills listed on right **in alphabetical order**.

IT SKILLS (non-certified)

Application Development skills
Amazon Kinesis
Apache Camel
Bamboo/BambooHR
CircleCI
Clojure
COBOL
Cognos
Delphi
R language
Sonatype Nexus
Swift/Swift UI
TransacT-SQL/T-SQL

Database Skills
Apache Cassandra
Data Mining
Google Data Studio
Teradata

SAP & Enterprise Business Applications skills
Lawson
Oracle CRM
Oracle SCM (Supply Chain Management)
Remedy ITSM
Salesforce Service Cloud
SAP Forecasting and Replenishment (SAP F&R)
SAP HCM ESS/MSS
SAP Hybris
SAP IBP (Integrated Business Planning)

Web/SOA/E-Commerce skills
Magento/Adobe Commerce
Mobile applications development
Pandas
SailPoint
Scalable Vector Graphics (SVG)

Messaging & Communications skills
Unified communications/messaging

Systems/Networking skills
Ansible
Microsoft SCCM
NGFW(next-generation firewall)
PaaS
Performance management/metrics
Puppet
RedHat OpenShift
Software-Defined Networking
vCenter Server
VMware ESXi Server
VMware NSX

Management, Process & Methodology skills
Agentforce
AI Engineering
Azure Machine Learning
Convolutional Neural Network
Data Acquisition and Control Systems
Hugging Face Transformers
Large Language Model Optimization(LLMOps)
Marketo
Natural Language Processing
Neural Networks
Object Detection/YOLO
ONNX (Open Neural Network Exchange)
Predictive Analytics and Modeling
Prompt Engineering
PyTorch
Retrieval Augmented Generation (RAG)
Threat and Vulnerability Scanning/Assessment/ Management
TOGAF (Enterprise Architecture)
Zapier

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NON-CERTIFIED IT SKILLS TREND HIGHLIGHTS: Market Value Decliners – 3rd Quarter 2026 datasets

These non-certified IT skills ***declined 10% or more in market value in the three months ending October 1, 2026*** vs. prior quarter (seen below grouped by segment).
Listed in alphabetical order within each group.

Applications Development skills
AI Chatbot
Apache Tomcat
AWS CodeDeploy
Behavior-Driven Development
BusinessObjects
ChatGPT
Eclipse
F#
Full Stack Development
Gemini
Go language (Golang)
gRPC
JUnit
MapReduce
Microsoft Azure Stack
Microsoft Copilot
Midjourney
Progress 4GL/Development tools
Tcl

Data/Database
Amazon Athena
Amazon EMR
Apache Hive
Apache Ignite
GIS
Kibana
Microsoft SQL Server Reporting Services (SSRS)
NewSQL
OpenEdge ABL
Oracle DB 10g/11i/12c
Oracle Enterprise Manager

SAP & Enterprise Business App skills
Lawson
Oracle CRM
Oracle SCM (Supply Chain Management)
Remedy ITSM
Salesforce Service Cloud
SAP Forecasting and Replenishment (SAP F&R)
SAP HCM ESS/MSS
SAP Hybris
SAP IBP (Integrated Business Planning)

Systems/Networking skills
Azure Storage
Cisco CUCM
Fortinet
Microsoft Virtual Server
Performance Testing
SAN/Storage Area Networking
Storage virtualization/administration
Vagrant
VoIP/IP telephony

Management, Process & Methodology skills
Azure OpenAI
Data Visualization
Digital Forensics
Dynatrace platform
Hyperautomation
IT Governance
Keras
Salesforce Einstein GPT
Security auditing
Security testing

Web/E-commerce Development
Amazon Cloudwatch
AngularJS
Docker/Docker Swarm
Microsoft .NET (ADO .NET, VB .NET, ASP.NET, etc.)
Microsoft Blazor
Node.js
Oracle WebLogic/Portal
Oracle Workflow
Spring MVC
Spring Security
WebSphere Datapower

Operating Systems skills
VMware vSphere
Windows 10/11

Messaging & Communications skills
Apache Kafka

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MARKET VALUE INCREASES: Non-certified IT Skills (data surveyed through October 1, 2026)

3-Month Premium Pay Gain Trends

(Noncertified skills value growth – April 1, 2026 to July 1, 2026)

(surveyed through October 1, 2026) RISING PAY: Noncertified Skills	3 mos. Market value % change - last 3 mos	6 mos. Market value % change - last 6 mos	ANNUAL Market value % change - last 12 mos
Hugging Face Transformers	90.0%	46.2%	35.7%
Neural Networks	72.7%	35.7%	-13.6%
Oracle SCM (Supply Chain Management)	66.7%	25.0%	25.0%
Prompt Engineering	50.0%	80.0%	-18.2%
SAP Forecasting and Replenishment (SAP F&R)	50.0%	50.0%	50.0%
Pandas	50.0%	50.0%	-45.5%
AI Engineering	50.0%	25.0%	na
Oracle CRM	40.0%	40.0%	-20.0%
CircleCI	40.0%	-14.3%	9.1%
ONNX (Open Neural Network Exchange)	40.0%	16.7%	0.0%
SAP Hybris	33.3%	33.3%	0.0%
Apache Camel	33.3%	-20.0%	0.0%
Agentforce	25.0%	40.0%	40.0%
Lawson	25.0%	25.0%	25.0%
Zapier	25.0%	7.1%	15.4%
Amazon Kinesis	25.0%	-33.3%	25.0%
TOGAF (Enterprise Architecture)	23.1%	6.7%	6.7%
Teradata	22.2%	22.2%	10.0%
R language	22.0%	22.0%	-18.2%
Unified communications/messaging	20.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Salesforce Service Cloud	20.0%	50.0%	20.0%
SAP IBP (Integrated Business Planning)	20.0%	20.0%	0.0%
Swift/Swift UI	20.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Performance management/metrics	20.0%	0.0%	-14.3%
Threat and Vulnerability Scanning/Assessment/Managemen	17.6%	na	na
PyTorch	17.6%	11.1%	11.1%
vCenter Server	16.7%	16.7%	16.7%
SAP HCM ESS/MSS	16.7%	16.7%	0.0%
Magento/Adobe Commerce	16.7%	16.7%	-20.0%
Mobile applications development	16.7%	16.7%	0.0%
Scalable Vector Graphics (SVG)	16.7%	16.7%	16.7%
Puppet	16.7%	16.7%	16.7%
PaaS	16.7%	16.7%	16.7%
NGFW(next-generation firewall)	16.7%	16.7%	0.0%
RedHat OpenShift	16.7%	16.7%	-12.5%
Software-Defined Networking	16.7%	16.7%	-22.2%
Sonatype Nexus	16.7%	0.0%	7.7%
Ansible	16.7%	0.0%	0.0%
Marketo	16.6%	-18.8%	-13.3%
Data Acquisition and Control Systems	15.4%	0.0%	-6.3%
VMware ESXi Server	14.3%	0.0%	-14.3%
VMware NSX	14.3%	14.3%	0.0%
SailPoint	14.3%	14.3%	-11.1%
Data Mining	14.3%	0.0%	0.0%

(surveyed through October 1, 2026) RISING PAY: Noncertified Skills	3 mos. Market value % change - last 3 mos	6 mos. Market value % change - last 6 mos	ANNUAL Market value % change - last 12 mos
Object Detection/YOLO	13.3%	0.0%	0.0%
Clojure	12.5%	28.6%	-18.2%
Convolutional Neural Network	12.5%	5.9%	-18.2%
Retrieval Augmented Generation (RAG)	11.1%	25.0%	na
Natural language processing	11.1%	11.1%	11.1%
Cognos	11.1%	11.1%	-16.7%
COBOL	11.1%	11.1%	-28.6%
TransacT-SQL/T-SQL	11.1%	11.1%	0.0%
Bamboo/BambooHR	11.1%	0.0%	9.1%
Microsoft SCCM	10.0%	10.0%	10.0%
Remedy ITSM	10.0%	0.0%	50.0%
Google Data Studio	10.0%	-25.0%	-14.3%
Azure Machine Learning	10.0%	15.8%	15.8%
Large Language Model Optimization(LLMOps)	10.0%	10.0%	na
Predictive Analytics and Modeling	10.0%	10.0%	15.8%
Delphi	10.0%	10.0%	0.0%
Apache Cassandra	10.0%	10.0%	-21.4%
Microsoft Azure Bicep	9.1%	na	na
Web Analytics	8.3%	8.3%	44.4%
Amazon RedShift	8.3%	8.3%	-7.1%
Business analysis	7.7%	27.3%	-12.5%
Generative AI	7.7%	0.0%	-6.7%
Data Vault	7.1%	25.0%	0.0%
Change Management	7.1%	7.1%	7.1%
Robotic Process Automation	6.7%	77.8%	6.7%
Business analytics	6.7%	33.3%	14.3%
Data Privacy	6.7%	23.1%	-5.9%
Azure Key Vault	6.7%	6.7%	-5.9%
Google TensorFlow	6.7%	-11.1%	-11.1%
Computer Vision	6.3%	6.3%	-22.7%
Data Integration	6.3%	0.0%	-5.6%
Program Management	5.9%	20.0%	5.9%
Bioinformatics	5.9%	-5.3%	38.5%
Artificial Intelligence	5.6%	5.6%	5.6%
Data Science	5.6%	5.6%	0.0%
Identity access management	5.6%	5.6%	0.0%
MLflow	5.3%	25.0%	na
Data Engineering	5.3%	5.3%	5.3%
Large Language Model/LLM tuning	5.3%	5.3%	-13.0%
Data Architecture	5.0%	5.0%	5.0%
Cyber Threat Intelligence/Analysis	4.8%	15.8%	22.2%

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MARKET VALUE INCREASES: Non-certified IT Skills (data surveyed through October 1, 2026)

6-Month Premium Pay Gain Trends

(Noncertified skills value growth – January 1, 2026 to July 1, 2026)

(surveyed through October 1, 2026) RISING PAY: Noncertified Skills	3 mos. Market value % change - last 3 mos	6 mos. Market value % change - last 6 mos	ANNUAL Market value % change - last 12 mos
Prompt Engineering	50.0%	80.0%	-18.2%
Robotic Process Automation	6.7%	77.8%	6.7%
SAP Forecasting and Replenishment (SAP F&R)	50.0%	50.0%	50.0%
Pandas	50.0%	50.0%	-45.5%
Salesforce Service Cloud	20.0%	50.0%	20.0%
Mule/MuleESB	0.0%	50.0%	20.0%
NewSQL	-18.2%	50.0%	50.0%
Hugging Face Transformers	90.0%	46.2%	35.7%
Agentforce	25.0%	40.0%	40.0%
Oracle ERP	0.0%	40.0%	16.7%
Oracle CRM	40.0%	40.0%	-20.0%
Neural Networks	72.7%	35.7%	-13.6%
SAP Hybris	33.3%	33.3%	0.0%
Business analytics	6.7%	33.3%	14.3%
SAP IS-U (Utilities)	0.0%	33.3%	33.3%
SAP CAR (Customer Activity Repository)	0.0%	33.3%	33.3%
SAP Commerce Cloud	0.0%	33.3%	0.0%
Rstudio	0.0%	33.3%	-20.0%
Oracle APEX	0.0%	33.3%	20.0%
Clojure	12.5%	28.6%	-18.2%
Progress 4GL/Development tools	-18.2%	28.6%	50.0%
OpenEdge ABL	-18.2%	28.6%	-30.8%
Business analysis	7.7%	27.3%	-12.5%
Oracle SCM (Supply Chain Management)	66.7%	25.0%	25.0%
AI Engineering	50.0%	25.0%	na
Lawson	25.0%	25.0%	25.0%
Retrieval Augmented Generation (RAG)	11.1%	25.0%	na
Data Vault	7.1%	25.0%	0.0%
MLflow	5.3%	25.0%	na
SAP CX (Customer Experience)	0.0%	25.0%	66.7%
vCloud	0.0%	25.0%	50.0%
SAP HCM (SAP HR)	0.0%	25.0%	50.0%
SAP HR-PY (Payroll)	0.0%	25.0%	25.0%

(surveyed through October 1, 2026) RISING PAY: Noncertified Skills	3 mos. Market value % change - last 3 mos	6 mos. Market value % change - last 6 mos	ANNUAL Market value % change - last 12 mos
SAP TM (Transportation Management)	0.0%	25.0%	25.0%
SAP EHS (Environment, Health & Safety)	0.0%	25.0%	0.0%
VBScript	0.0%	25.0%	0.0%
PeopleSoft (CRM/Financials/HCM)	-40.0%	25.0%	-25.0%
Data Privacy	6.7%	23.1%	-5.9%
Teradata	22.2%	22.2%	10.0%
R language	22.0%	22.0%	-18.2%
TIBCO	0.0%	20.0%	-18.2%
SAP IBP (Integrated Business Planning)	20.0%	20.0%	0.0%
Program Management	5.9%	20.0%	5.9%
AIX	0.0%	20.0%	20.0%
Apache Pulsar	0.0%	20.0%	20.0%
Salesforce Sales Cloud	0.0%	20.0%	20.0%
Microsoft Sharepoint/Sharepoint Server	0.0%	20.0%	0.0%
SAP Security	0.0%	20.0%	0.0%
WSDL (Web Services Description Language)	0.0%	20.0%	0.0%
Digital Analytics	-7.1%	18.2%	30.0%
vCenter Server	16.7%	16.7%	16.7%
SAP HCM ESS/MSS	16.7%	16.7%	0.0%
Magento/Adobe Commerce	16.7%	16.7%	-20.0%
Scalable Vector Graphics (SVG)	16.7%	16.7%	16.7%
Puppet	16.7%	16.7%	16.7%
Sitecore CMS	0.0%	16.7%	16.7%
ONNX (Open Neural Network Exchange)	40.0%	16.7%	0.0%
Mobile applications development	16.7%	16.7%	0.0%
PaaS	16.7%	16.7%	16.7%
NGFW(next-generation firewall)	16.7%	16.7%	0.0%
RedHat OpenShift	16.7%	16.7%	-12.5%
Software-Defined Networking	16.7%	16.7%	-22.2%
Apache Lucene	0.0%	16.7%	16.7%
Apex Code	0.0%	16.7%	0.0%
Citrix NetScaler	0.0%	16.7%	0.0%
Drupal	0.0%	16.7%	-12.5%
Azure Machine Learning	10.0%	15.8%	15.8%

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MARKET VALUE INCREASES: Non-certified IT Skills (data surveyed through October 1, 2026)

6-Month Premium Pay Gain Trends – cont'd.

(Noncertified skills value growth January 1, 2026 to July 1, 2026)

(surveyed through October 1, 2026) RISING PAY: Noncertified Skills	3 mos. Market value % change - last 3 mos	6 mos. Market value % change - last 6 mos	ANNUAL Market value % change - last 12 mos
Cyber Threat Intelligence/Analysis	4.8%	15.8%	22.2%
Cybersecurity	0.0%	15.4%	0.0%
ForgeRock/Ping Identity	-6.3%	15.4%	-6.3%
VMware NSX	14.3%	14.3%	0.0%
SailPoint	14.3%	14.3%	-11.1%
Adobe Experience Manager	0.0%	14.3%	40.0%
Apache Solr	0.0%	14.3%	33.3%
Kibana	-18.2%	12.5%	-18.2%
NIST/NIST 800	0.0%	11.8%	0.0%
PyTorch	17.6%	11.1%	11.1%
Natural language processing	11.1%	11.1%	11.1%
Cognos	11.1%	11.1%	-16.7%
COBOL	11.1%	11.1%	-28.6%
Oracle Application Server	0.0%	11.1%	11.1%
JIRA	0.0%	11.1%	-9.1%
Elixir	-9.1%	11.1%	40.0%
TransacT-SQL/T-SQL	11.1%	11.1%	0.0%
FinOps	0.0%	10.5%	10.5%
Microsoft SCCM	10.0%	10.0%	10.0%
Large Language Model Optimization(LLMOps)	10.0%	10.0%	na
Predictive Analytics and Modeling	10.0%	10.0%	15.8%
Delphi	10.0%	10.0%	0.0%
Apache Cassandra	10.0%	10.0%	-21.4%
Offensive security	0.0%	10.0%	na
Network design	0.0%	10.0%	15.8%
Cisco Meraki	0.0%	10.0%	0.0%
Flutter	0.0%	10.0%	0.0%
Microsoft Azure Logic Apps	0.0%	9.1%	9.1%
Data Cleansing	0.0%	9.1%	0.0%
Web Analytics	8.3%	8.3%	44.4%

(surveyed through October 1, 2026) RISING PAY: Noncertified Skills	3 mos. Market value % change - last 3 mos	6 mos. Market value % change - last 6 mos	ANNUAL Market value % change - last 12 mos
Amazon RedShift	8.3%	8.3%	-7.1%
ITIL V3/V4	0.0%	8.3%	8.3%
Salesforce Einstein GPT	-22.2%	7.7%	-12.5%
Zapier	25.0%	7.1%	15.4%
Change Management	7.1%	7.1%	7.1%
ERP	0.0%	7.1%	7.1%
Data Analytics	0.0%	7.1%	-6.3%
Project management/governance	-6.3%	7.1%	-11.8%
TOGAF (Enterprise Architecture)	23.1%	6.7%	6.7%
Azure Key Vault	6.7%	6.7%	-5.9%
Computer Vision	6.3%	6.3%	-22.7%
Automated Feature Engineering	0.0%	6.3%	na
Convolutional Neural Network	12.5%	5.9%	-18.2%
Hybrid/human-interpretable reasoning in LLMs	0.0%	5.9%	50.0%
Artificial Intelligence	5.6%	5.6%	5.6%
Data Science	5.6%	5.6%	0.0%
Identity access management	5.6%	5.6%	0.0%
Data Engineering	5.3%	5.3%	5.3%
Large Language Model/LLM tuning	5.3%	5.3%	-13.0%
Capacity Planning/Management	0.0%	5.3%	17.6%
DevSecOps	0.0%	5.3%	0.0%
Data Architecture	5.0%	5.0%	5.0%
Threat Detection/Modelling/Management	0.0%	5.0%	10.5%
Artificial Intelligence Model Optimization	0.0%	5.0%	5.0%
MLOps	-4.5%	5.0%	-8.7%
AI Agents	0.0%	4.5%	na
AI Productivity	0.0%	4.5%	na
Flink	0.0%	4.5%	21.1%

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MARKET VALUE INCREASES: Non-certified IT Skills (data surveyed through October 1, 2026)

12-Month Premium Pay Gain Trends

(Noncertified skills value growth – July 1, 2026 to July 1, 2026)

(surveyed through October 1, 2026) RISING PAY: Noncertified Skills	3 mos. Market value % change - last 3 mos	6 mos. Market value % change - last 6 mos	ANNUAL Market value % change - last 12 mos
Oracle Financials	0.0%	0.0%	80.0%
SAP CX (Customer Experience)	0.0%	25.0%	66.7%
Oracle NetSuite	0.0%	0.0%	66.7%
SAP PLM (Product Lifecycle Management)	0.0%	0.0%	66.7%
SAP Forecasting and Replenishment (SAP F&R)	50.0%	50.0%	50.0%
Remedy ITSM	10.0%	0.0%	50.0%
vCloud	0.0%	25.0%	50.0%
SAP HCM (SAP HR)	0.0%	25.0%	50.0%
Hybrid/human-interpretable reasoning in LLMs	0.0%	5.9%	50.0%
Wireless security	0.0%	0.0%	50.0%
SAP Data Services (SAP BODS)	0.0%	0.0%	50.0%
NewSQL	-18.2%	50.0%	50.0%
Progress 4GL/Development tools	-18.2%	28.6%	50.0%
Web Analytics	8.3%	8.3%	44.4%
Agentforce	25.0%	40.0%	40.0%
Tivoli	0.0%	0.0%	40.0%
Adobe Experience Manager	0.0%	14.3%	40.0%
Elixir	-9.1%	11.1%	40.0%
Bioinformatics	5.9%	-5.3%	38.5%
Amazon Web Services (EC2, ECS, S3, SQS, ELB, et. al.)	0.0%	-8.3%	37.5%
Alteryx Designer	0.0%	0.0%	36.4%
Hugging Face Transformers	90.0%	46.2%	35.7%
SAP IS-U (Utilities)	0.0%	33.3%	33.3%
SAP CAR (Customer Activity Repository)	0.0%	33.3%	33.3%
Apache Solr	0.0%	14.3%	33.3%
DataRobot Enterprise AI Platform	0.0%	0.0%	33.3%
Documentum	0.0%	0.0%	33.3%
Oracle HFM (Hyperion Financial Management)	0.0%	0.0%	33.3%
ImaginateAR	0.0%	0.0%	33.3%
Digital Analytics	-7.1%	18.2%	30.0%

(surveyed through October 1, 2026) RISING PAY: Noncertified Skills	3 mos. Market value % change - last 3 mos	6 mos. Market value % change - last 6 mos	ANNUAL Market value % change - last 12 mos
Apache Tomcat	-13.3%	-7.1%	30.0%
Julia	0.0%	0.0%	28.6%
Oracle SCM (Supply Chain Management)	66.7%	25.0%	25.0%
Lawson	25.0%	25.0%	25.0%
Amazon Kinesis	25.0%	-33.3%	25.0%
SAP HR-PY (Payroll)	0.0%	25.0%	25.0%
SAP TM (Transportation Management)	0.0%	25.0%	25.0%
Azure Synapse Analytics	0.0%	0.0%	25.0%
Amazon SageMaker AI	0.0%	0.0%	25.0%
SAP ERP Operations (multi-skills)	0.0%	0.0%	25.0%
SAP FI - FSCM (Financial Supply Chain Management)	0.0%	0.0%	25.0%
SAP HANA (In-Memory Analytics Appliance)	0.0%	0.0%	25.0%
Enterprise Application Integration (EAI)	0.0%	0.0%	25.0%
COBIT	-4.8%	-4.8%	25.0%
SuccessFactors	-16.7%	-16.7%	25.0%
Cyber Threat Intelligence/Analysis	4.8%	15.8%	22.2%
Flink	0.0%	4.5%	21.1%
Salesforce Service Cloud	20.0%	50.0%	20.0%
Mule/MuleESB	0.0%	50.0%	20.0%
Oracle APEX	0.0%	33.3%	20.0%
AIX	0.0%	20.0%	20.0%
Apache Pulsar	0.0%	20.0%	20.0%
Salesforce Sales Cloud	0.0%	20.0%	20.0%
ActiveMQ	0.0%	0.0%	20.0%
NAS/Network Attached Storage	0.0%	0.0%	20.0%
Apache Spark SQL	-7.7%	-7.7%	20.0%
SAP Oil & Gas	-14.3%	-14.3%	20.0%
Customer Experience/Customer Engagement	0.0%	0.0%	18.2%
Capacity Planning/Management	0.0%	5.3%	17.6%
Network Architecture	0.0%	0.0%	17.6%
Tcl	-14.3%	-14.3%	17.6%

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MARKET VALUE INCREASES: Non-certified IT Skills (data surveyed through October 1, 2026)

12-Month Premium Pay Gain Trends – cont'd

(Non-certified skills value growth – July 1, 2026 to July 1, 2026)

(surveyed through October 1, 2026) RISING PAY: Noncertified Skills	3 mos. Market value % change - last 3 mos	6 mos. Market value % change - last 6 mos	ANNUAL Market value % change - last 12 mos
Scalable Vector Graphics (SVG)	16.7%	16.7%	16.7%
vCenter Server	16.7%	16.7%	16.7%
Puppet	16.7%	16.7%	16.7%
PaaS	16.7%	16.7%	16.7%
Oracle ERP	0.0%	40.0%	16.7%
Sitecore CMS	0.0%	16.7%	16.7%
Apache Lucene	0.0%	16.7%	16.7%
EIGRP	0.0%	0.0%	16.7%
Cisco Prime	0.0%	0.0%	16.7%
HP Quality Center	0.0%	0.0%	16.7%
Azure Machine Learning	10.0%	15.8%	15.8%
Predictive Analytics and Modeling	10.0%	10.0%	15.8%
Network design	0.0%	10.0%	15.8%
Zapier	25.0%	7.1%	15.4%
Business analytics	6.7%	33.3%	14.3%
JBoss /WildFly	0.0%	0.0%	14.3%
SAP LES (Logistics Execution System)	0.0%	0.0%	14.3%
Erlang	0.0%	-11.1%	14.3%
Cryptography (encryption, VPN, SSL/TLS, Hybrids)	-5.6%	-15.0%	13.3%
Mobile operating systems (iOS, Android, etc.)	0.0%	0.0%	12.5%
PyTorch	17.6%	11.1%	11.1%
Natural language processing	11.1%	11.1%	11.1%
Oracle Application Server	0.0%	11.1%	11.1%
Apache Hive	-16.7%	-23.1%	11.1%
FinOps	0.0%	10.5%	10.5%
Threat Detection/Modelling/Management	0.0%	5.0%	10.5%
Microsoft SCCM	10.0%	10.0%	10.0%
Teradata	22.2%	22.2%	10.0%
BigPanda	0.0%	-26.7%	10.0%
Oracle Reports	-8.3%	-8.3%	10.0%

(surveyed through October 1, 2026) RISING PAY: Noncertified Skills	3 mos. Market value % change - last 3 mos	6 mos. Market value % change - last 6 mos	ANNUAL Market value % change - last 12 mos
CircleCI	40.0%	-14.3%	9.1%
Bamboo/BambooHR	11.1%	0.0%	9.1%
Microsoft Azure Logic Apps	0.0%	9.1%	9.1%
Google BigQuery	0.0%	0.0%	9.1%
Integration Testing	0.0%	0.0%	9.1%
Risk analytics/assessment	-4.0%	0.0%	9.1%
ITIL V3/V4	0.0%	8.3%	8.3%
Apache Maven	0.0%	0.0%	8.3%
Azure Data Factory	0.0%	0.0%	8.3%
Redis	0.0%	0.0%	8.3%
Sonatype Nexus	16.7%	0.0%	7.7%
Process Improvement	0.0%	0.0%	7.7%
Razor	0.0%	0.0%	7.7%
Change Management	7.1%	7.1%	7.1%
ERP	0.0%	7.1%	7.1%
Business process mapping/modeling/improvement	0.0%	0.0%	7.1%
Incident Management	-6.3%	0.0%	7.1%
TOGAF (Enterprise Architecture)	23.1%	6.7%	6.7%
Robotic Process Automation	6.7%	77.8%	6.7%
Data Quality	0.0%	0.0%	6.7%
E-Discovery	-5.6%	0.0%	6.3%
Program Management	5.9%	20.0%	5.9%
IT Governance	-14.3%	-10.0%	5.9%
Artificial Intelligence	5.6%	5.6%	5.6%
Scaled Agile Framework (SAFe)	-5.0%	-5.0%	5.6%
Data Engineering	5.3%	5.3%	5.3%
Data Architecture	5.0%	5.0%	5.0%
Artificial Intelligence Model Optimization	0.0%	5.0%	5.0%

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MARKET VALUE DECREASES: Non-certified IT Skills (data surveyed through October 1, 2026)

3-Month Premium Pay Decline Trends

(Non-certified skills value growth – July 1, 2026 to October 1, 2026)

(surveyed through October 1, 2026) DECLINING PAY: Noncertified Skills	3 mos. Market value % change - last 3 mos	6 mos. Market value % change - last 6 mos	ANNUAL Market value % change - last 12 mos
F#	-53.8%	-53.8%	-33.3%
SAP PS (Project Systems)	-50.0%	-50.0%	-50.0%
Eclipse	-41.7%	-41.7%	-41.7%
PeopleSoft (CRM/Financials/HCM)	-40.0%	25.0%	-25.0%
ChatGPT	-33.3%	-38.5%	-27.3%
Apache Ignite	-30.8%	-57.1%	-55.0%
Gemini	-30.8%	-40.0%	-43.8%
WebSphere Datapower	-30.0%	-22.2%	-12.5%
Azure Storage	-28.6%	-28.6%	-16.7%
gRPC	-26.7%	-31.3%	-31.3%
Amazon EMR	-25.0%	-25.0%	-30.8%
VoIP/IP telephony	-25.0%	-25.0%	-25.0%
SAP CRM (Customer Relationship Management)	-25.0%	-25.0%	0.0%
AWS CodeDeploy	-22.2%	-46.2%	-46.2%
Salesforce Einstein GPT	-22.2%	7.7%	-12.5%
IBM Sterling	-20.0%	-33.3%	-33.3%
SAP MM (Materials Management)	-20.0%	-33.3%	-33.3%
Microsoft Virtual Server	-20.0%	-20.0%	-20.0%
SAP WM (Warehouse Management)	-20.0%	-20.0%	-20.0%
Microsoft Azure Stack	-18.2%	-25.0%	-10.0%
Kibana	-18.2%	12.5%	-18.2%
OpenEdge ABL	-18.2%	28.6%	-30.8%
Progress 4GL/Development tools	-18.2%	28.6%	50.0%
NewSQL	-18.2%	50.0%	50.0%
Spring MVC	-16.7%	-28.6%	-16.7%
SAN/Storage Area Networking	-16.7%	-28.6%	0.0%
Apache Hive	-16.7%	-23.1%	11.1%
AngularJS	-16.7%	-16.7%	-28.6%
Vagrant	-16.7%	-16.7%	-28.6%
Behavior-Driven Development	-16.7%	-16.7%	-23.1%
Full Stack Development	-16.7%	-16.7%	-16.7%
Apache Kafka	-16.7%	-16.7%	-16.7%
Cisco CUCM	-16.7%	-16.7%	-16.7%
Microsoft .NET (ADO .NET, VB .NET, ASP.NET, etc.)	-16.7%	-16.7%	-16.7%
Microsoft Blazor	-16.7%	-16.7%	-16.7%

(surveyed through October 1, 2026) DECLINING PAY: Noncertified Skills	3 mos. Market value % change - last 3 mos	6 mos. Market value % change - last 6 mos	ANNUAL Market value % change - last 12 mos
Oracle Payables	-16.7%	-16.7%	-16.7%
Performance Testing	-16.7%	-16.7%	-16.7%
Storage virtualization/administration	-16.7%	-16.7%	-16.7%
Fortinet	-16.7%	-16.7%	0.0%
Oracle Payroll/Receivables	-16.7%	-16.7%	0.0%
SuccessFactors	-16.7%	-16.7%	25.0%
JUnit	-16.7%	0.0%	-16.7%
Security testing	-15.8%	-15.8%	-11.1%
Azure OpenAI	-15.8%	-11.1%	-11.1%
Docker/Docker Swarm	-14.3%	-33.3%	-25.0%
Amazon Athena	-14.3%	-25.0%	-45.5%
Spring Security	-14.3%	-25.0%	-25.0%
Node.js	-14.3%	-14.3%	-25.0%
Amazon Cloudwatch	-14.3%	-14.3%	-14.3%
Windows 10/11	-14.3%	-14.3%	-14.3%
Oracle WebLogic/Portal	-14.3%	-14.3%	-14.3%
Tcl	-14.3%	-14.3%	17.6%
SAP Oil & Gas	-14.3%	-14.3%	20.0%
Keras	-14.3%	-7.7%	-33.3%
IT Governance	-14.3%	-10.0%	5.9%
Go language (Golang)	-13.3%	-18.8%	-23.5%
Digital Forensics	-13.3%	-13.3%	-18.8%
Data Visualization	-13.3%	-13.3%	-13.3%
Apache Tomcat	-13.3%	-7.1%	30.0%
Oracle Workflow	-12.5%	-12.5%	0.0%
Hyperautomation	-12.5%	-6.7%	-6.7%
Midjourney	-11.1%	-38.5%	-38.5%
GIS	-11.1%	-27.3%	-11.1%
Dynatrace platform	-11.1%	-15.8%	-20.0%
MapReduce	-11.1%	-11.1%	-38.5%
AI Chatbot	-11.1%	-11.1%	-27.3%
BusinessObjects	-11.1%	-11.1%	-11.1%
Security auditing	-10.5%	-10.5%	-10.5%
Microsoft Copilot	-10.0%	-18.2%	-10.0%
Oracle DB 10g/11i/12c	-10.0%	-10.0%	-35.7%

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MARKET VALUE DECREASES: Non-certified IT Skills (data surveyed through October 1, 2026)

3-Month Premium Pay Decline Trends – cont'd.

(Non-certified skills value growth – July 1, 2026 to October 1, 2026)

(surveyed through October 1, 2026) DECLINING PAY: Noncertified Skills	3 mos. Market value % change - last 3 mos	6 mos. Market value % change - last 6 mos	ANNUAL Market value % change - last 12 mos
Oracle Enterprise Manager	-10.0%	-10.0%	-10.0%
Microsoft SQL Server Reporting Services (SSRS)	-10.0%	0.0%	-18.2%
VMware vSphere	-10.0%	0.0%	-10.0%
DataOps	-9.5%	-5.0%	-5.0%
Ethereum	-9.1%	-56.5%	-56.5%
Azure SQL Data Warehouse	-9.1%	-28.6%	-23.1%
MongoDB	-9.1%	-23.1%	-23.1%
Confluence	-9.1%	-16.7%	-23.1%
Azure SQL Database	-9.1%	-16.7%	-9.1%
Oracle Business Intelligence Enterprise Edition Plus	-9.1%	-16.7%	0.0%
Digital Marketing	-9.1%	-9.1%	-16.7%
Linux	-9.1%	-9.1%	-16.7%
Unix (all)	-9.1%	-9.1%	-9.1%
Automated Testing	-9.1%	-9.1%	-9.1%
Elixir	-9.1%	11.1%	40.0%
Smart Contracts	-8.3%	-52.2%	-47.6%
Azure Cosmos DB	-8.3%	-21.4%	-26.7%
Quality management/TQM	-8.3%	-21.4%	-21.4%
Amazon Web Services CDK	-8.3%	-21.4%	-15.4%
Ruby	-8.3%	-15.4%	-15.4%
PostgreSQL	-8.3%	-8.3%	-26.7%
NoSQL	-8.3%	-8.3%	-15.4%
Amazon DynamoDB	-8.3%	-8.3%	-15.4%
AWS CloudFormation	-8.3%	-8.3%	-8.3%
Ruby on Rails	-8.3%	-8.3%	0.0%
Oracle Reports	-8.3%	-8.3%	10.0%
H2O.ai	-7.7%	-25.0%	-29.4%
Grails/Groovy	-7.7%	-14.3%	-7.7%
Gosu/Guidewire	-7.7%	-7.7%	-20.0%
GitLab	-7.7%	-7.7%	-14.3%
Big Data	-7.7%	-7.7%	-7.7%
Apache Hadoop	-7.7%	-7.7%	-7.7%
IT Service Management/ITSM	-7.7%	-7.7%	-7.7%
Jenkins	-7.7%	-7.7%	-7.7%
Kotlin	-7.7%	-7.7%	-7.7%

(surveyed through October 1, 2026) DECLINING PAY: Noncertified Skills	3 mos. Market value % change - last 3 mos	6 mos. Market value % change - last 6 mos	ANNUAL Market value % change - last 12 mos
Master data management	-7.7%	-7.7%	-7.7%
Apache Spark SQL	-7.7%	-7.7%	20.0%
Digital Analytics	-7.1%	18.2%	30.0%
Stable Diffusion	-6.7%	-17.6%	-17.6%
Information Management	-6.7%	-17.6%	0.0%
HL7	-6.7%	-6.7%	-17.6%
Microsoft SQL Server Analysis Services	-6.7%	-6.7%	-17.6%
Security management	-6.7%	-6.7%	-17.6%
Apache Spark	-6.7%	-6.7%	-6.7%
Anthropic Claude	-6.7%	-6.7%	na
Data Management	-6.7%	0.0%	-12.5%
Six Sigma/Lean Six Sigma	-6.3%	-16.7%	-6.3%
Incident Management	-6.3%	0.0%	7.1%
Project management/governance	-6.3%	7.1%	-11.8%
ForgeRock/Ping Identity	-6.3%	15.4%	-6.3%
Software development lifecycle management	-5.9%	-5.9%	-5.9%
Cryptography (encryption, VPN, SSL/TLS, Hybrids)	-5.6%	-15.0%	13.3%
Continuous Integration	-5.6%	-10.5%	-5.6%
AWS DevOps	-5.6%	-5.6%	-10.5%
IT Audit	-5.6%	-5.6%	0.0%
Metadata design and development	-5.6%	-5.6%	0.0%
Azure AI Studio	-5.6%	-5.6%	na
E-Discovery	-5.6%	0.0%	6.3%
Microservices	-5.3%	-5.3%	-5.3%
Azure AI/ML services	-5.3%	-5.3%	0.0%
Scaled Agile Framework (SAFe)	-5.0%	-5.0%	5.6%
Data Strategy	-4.8%	-4.8%	-4.8%
COBIT	-4.8%	-4.8%	25.0%
MLOps	-4.5%	5.0%	-8.7%
Risk analytics/assessment	-4.0%	0.0%	9.1%

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MARKET VALUE DECREASES: Non-certified IT Skills (data surveyed through October 1, 2026)

6-Month Premium Pay Decline Trends

(Non-certified skills value growth – July 1, 2026 to October1, 2026)

(surveyed through October 1, 2026) DECLINING PAY: Noncertified Skills	3 mos. Market value % change - last 3 mos	6 mos. Market value % change - last 6 mos	ANNUAL Market value % change - last 12 mos
Apache Flex	0.0%	-57.1%	-57.1%
Apache Ignite	-30.8%	-57.1%	-55.0%
Ethereum	-9.1%	-56.5%	-56.5%
F#	-53.8%	-53.8%	-33.3%
Smart Contracts	-8.3%	-52.2%	-47.6%
SAP PS (Project Systems)	-50.0%	-50.0%	-50.0%
SUSE Linux	0.0%	-50.0%	-50.0%
Sqoop	0.0%	-50.0%	-50.0%
Apache Velocity	0.0%	-50.0%	-50.0%
Spring AI	0.0%	-46.7%	-14.3%
AWS CodeDeploy	-22.2%	-46.2%	-46.2%
Apache Cloudstack	0.0%	-44.4%	-44.4%
Accelerated SAP (Solution Lifecycle Management/SLM)	0.0%	-42.9%	-42.9%
UDDI (Universal Description, Discovery and Integration)	0.0%	-42.9%	-42.9%
Eclipse	-41.7%	-41.7%	-41.7%
HP ALM (Application Lifecycle Management)	0.0%	-41.7%	-30.0%
Gemini	-30.8%	-40.0%	-43.8%
SAP BPC (BusinessObjects Planning and Consolidation)	0.0%	-40.0%	-50.0%
SAP Leonardo	0.0%	-40.0%	-50.0%
Sybase Adaptive Server Enterprise	0.0%	-40.0%	-40.0%
Cloud Foundry PaaS	0.0%	-40.0%	-40.0%
WebSphere	0.0%	-40.0%	-33.3%
ChatGPT	-33.3%	-38.5%	-27.3%
Midjourney	-11.1%	-38.5%	-38.5%
Apache Cordova	0.0%	-37.5%	-44.4%
Riak	0.0%	-37.5%	-37.5%
Web collaboration appliances	0.0%	-37.5%	-37.5%
SAS Enterprise Guide	0.0%	-36.4%	-36.4%
Docker/Docker Swarm	-14.3%	-33.3%	-25.0%
AWS Codebuild	0.0%	-33.3%	-36.8%
HP Unified Functional Testing	0.0%	-33.3%	-33.3%
IBM Sterling	-20.0%	-33.3%	-33.3%
SAP MM (Materials Management)	-20.0%	-33.3%	-33.3%
Microsoft Application Virtualization (App-V)	0.0%	-33.3%	-33.3%
Multiprotocol Label Switching (MPLS)	0.0%	-33.3%	-33.3%
PowerBuilder	0.0%	-33.3%	-33.3%
Apache Pig	0.0%	-33.3%	-33.3%
Apache Wicket	0.0%	-33.3%	-33.3%
J.D. Edwards (Oracle)	0.0%	-33.3%	0.0%
Amazon Kinesis	25.0%	-33.3%	25.0%
gRPC	-26.7%	-31.3%	-31.3%
Objective-C	0.0%	-30.0%	-46.2%

(surveyed through October 1, 2026) DECLINING PAY: Noncertified Skills	3 mos. Market value % change - last 3 mos	6 mos. Market value % change - last 6 mos	ANNUAL Market value % change - last 12 mos
Objective Caml (Ocaml)	0.0%	-30.0%	-36.4%
Game Development/Gamification	0.0%	-30.0%	-30.0%
Quantitative Analysis/Regression Analysis	0.0%	-29.4%	-33.3%
Azure Storage	-28.6%	-28.6%	-16.7%
Spring MVC	-16.7%	-28.6%	-16.7%
SAN/Storage Area Networking	-16.7%	-28.6%	0.0%
Azure SQL Data Warehouse	-9.1%	-28.6%	-23.1%
Fedora CoreOS	0.0%	-28.6%	-44.4%
Oracle Retail	0.0%	-28.6%	-37.5%
GIS	-11.1%	-27.3%	-11.1%
BigPanda	0.0%	-26.7%	10.0%
Prompt Flow	0.0%	-26.3%	na
Amazon EMR	-25.0%	-25.0%	-30.8%
VoIP/IP telephony	-25.0%	-25.0%	-25.0%
SAP CRM (Customer Relationship Management)	-25.0%	-25.0%	0.0%
Microsoft Azure Stack	-18.2%	-25.0%	-10.0%
Amazon Athena	-14.3%	-25.0%	-45.5%
Spring Security	-14.3%	-25.0%	-25.0%
H2O.ai	-7.7%	-25.0%	-29.4%
GatsbyJS	0.0%	-25.0%	-50.0%
Ajax (Asynchronous JavaScript and XML)	0.0%	-25.0%	-50.0%
Backbone.js	0.0%	-25.0%	-40.0%
Requirements Engineering/Analysis	0.0%	-25.0%	-29.4%
Secure coding/software development	0.0%	-25.0%	-25.0%
SAP Crystal Reports	0.0%	-25.0%	-25.0%
SAP Exchange Infrastructure (XI)	0.0%	-25.0%	-25.0%
QlikSense	0.0%	-25.0%	-14.3%
Google Data Studio	10.0%	-25.0%	-14.3%
Apache Hive	-16.7%	-23.1%	11.1%
MongoDB	-9.1%	-23.1%	-23.1%
WebSphere Datapower	-30.0%	-22.2%	-12.5%
PagerDuty	0.0%	-22.2%	na
Azure Cosmos DB	-8.3%	-21.4%	-26.7%
Quality management/TQM	-8.3%	-21.4%	-21.4%
Amazon Web Services CDK	-8.3%	-21.4%	-15.4%
DB2	0.0%	-21.4%	-21.4%
Microsoft Virtual Server	-20.0%	-20.0%	-20.0%
SAP WM (Warehouse Management)	-20.0%	-20.0%	-20.0%
TIBCO Spotfire	0.0%	-20.0%	-55.6%
BERT	0.0%	-20.0%	-46.7%
SAP PSCD (Collection and Disbursement)	0.0%	-20.0%	-33.3%
SAP MII (Manufacturing Integration and Intelligence)	0.0%	-20.0%	-33.3%

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MARKET VALUE DECREASES: Non-certified IT Skills (data surveyed through October 1, 2026)

6-Month Premium Pay Decline Trends – cont'd.

(Non-certified skills value growth – July 1, 2026 to October1, 2026)

(surveyed through October 1, 2026) DECLINING PAY: Noncertified Skills	3 mos. Market value % change - last 3 mos	6 mos. Market value % change - last 6 mos	ANNUAL Market value % change - last 12 mos
RapidMiner	0.0%	-20.0%	-33.3%
HPUX	0.0%	-20.0%	-20.0%
HTTPS	0.0%	-20.0%	-20.0%
TCP/IP	0.0%	-20.0%	-20.0%
Baan (Infor LN ERP)	0.0%	-20.0%	-20.0%
SAP NetWeaver BW (Business Information Warehouse)	0.0%	-20.0%	-20.0%
SAP WM - EWM (Extended Warehouse Management)	0.0%	-20.0%	-20.0%
SAP APO (Advanced Planner & Optimizer)	0.0%	-20.0%	0.0%
Magnolia	0.0%	-20.0%	0.0%
Apache Camel	33.3%	-20.0%	0.0%
Go language (Golang)	-13.3%	-18.8%	-23.5%
Marketo	16.6%	-18.8%	-13.3%
Microsoft Copilot	-10.0%	-18.2%	-10.0%
Security skills (DW/BI, ERP, Web, project assigments)	0.0%	-18.2%	-30.8%
Solaris	0.0%	-18.2%	-10.0%
Stable Diffusion	-6.7%	-17.6%	-17.6%
Information Management	-6.7%	-17.6%	0.0%
Apache Iceberg	0.0%	-17.6%	-30.0%
AngularJS	-16.7%	-16.7%	-28.6%
Vagrant	-16.7%	-16.7%	-28.6%
Behavior-Driven Development	-16.7%	-16.7%	-23.1%
Full Stack Development	-16.7%	-16.7%	-16.7%
Apache Kafka	-16.7%	-16.7%	-16.7%
Cisco CUCM	-16.7%	-16.7%	-16.7%
Microsoft .NET (ADO .NET, VB .NET, ASP.NET, etc.)	-16.7%	-16.7%	-16.7%
Microsoft Blazor	-16.7%	-16.7%	-16.7%
Oracle Payables	-16.7%	-16.7%	-16.7%
Performance Testing	-16.7%	-16.7%	-16.7%
Storage virtualization/administration	-16.7%	-16.7%	-16.7%
Fortinet	-16.7%	-16.7%	0.0%
Oracle Payroll/Receivables	-16.7%	-16.7%	0.0%
SuccessFactors	-16.7%	-16.7%	25.0%
Confluence	-9.1%	-16.7%	-23.1%
Azure SQL Database	-9.1%	-16.7%	-9.1%
Oracle Business Intelligence Enterprise Edition Plus	-9.1%	-16.7%	0.0%
Six Sigma/Lean Six Sigma	-6.3%	-16.7%	-6.3%
Perl	0.0%	-16.7%	-37.5%
CA Endevor	0.0%	-16.7%	-28.6%
Oracle SOA Suite	0.0%	-16.7%	-16.7%
SAP Fiori	0.0%	-16.7%	-16.7%
TestNG	0.0%	-16.7%	0.0%
SAP PP (Production Planning)	0.0%	-16.7%	0.0%

(surveyed through October 1, 2026) DECLINING PAY: Noncertified Skills	3 mos. Market value % change - last 3 mos	6 mos. Market value % change - last 6 mos	ANNUAL Market value % change - last 12 mos
Workday HCM	0.0%	-16.7%	0.0%
Security testing	-15.8%	-15.8%	-11.1%
Dynatrace platform	-11.1%	-15.8%	-20.0%
Ruby	-8.3%	-15.4%	-15.4%
HubSpot	0.0%	-15.4%	-21.4%
Java	0.0%	-15.4%	-15.4%
Cryptography (encryption, VPN, SSL/TLS, Hybrids)	-5.6%	-15.0%	13.3%
Node.js	-14.3%	-14.3%	-25.0%
Amazon Cloudwatch	-14.3%	-14.3%	-14.3%
Windows 10/11	-14.3%	-14.3%	-14.3%
Oracle WebLogic/Portal	-14.3%	-14.3%	-14.3%
Tcl	-14.3%	-14.3%	17.6%
SAP Oil & Gas	-14.3%	-14.3%	20.0%
Grails/Groovy	-7.7%	-14.3%	-7.7%
Microsoft Team Foundation Server	0.0%	-14.3%	-57.1%
Microsoft Exchange Server 2010/2013	0.0%	-14.3%	-25.0%
Performance Optimization	0.0%	-14.3%	-25.0%
Progess Chef	0.0%	-14.3%	-25.0%
Amazon Elastic Kubernetes Service (Amazon EKS)	0.0%	-14.3%	-25.0%
OpenCV	0.0%	-14.3%	-14.3%
Amazon AWS CloudTrail	0.0%	-14.3%	-14.3%
React	0.0%	-14.3%	-14.3%
Security Information and Event Management (SIEM)	0.0%	-14.3%	-14.3%
Web Content Development	0.0%	-14.3%	-14.3%
Mac OS X	0.0%	-14.3%	0.0%
CircleCI	40.0%	-14.3%	9.1%
Digital Forensics	-13.3%	-13.3%	-18.8%
Data Visualization	-13.3%	-13.3%	-13.3%
Apache Airflow	0.0%	-13.3%	-35.0%
Functional Testing	0.0%	-13.3%	0.0%
Oracle Workflow	-12.5%	-12.5%	0.0%
JBehave	0.0%	-12.5%	-12.5%
Google Kubernetes	0.0%	-12.5%	-12.5%
Rust	0.0%	-11.8%	-16.7%
Azure OpenAI	-15.8%	-11.1%	-11.1%
MapReduce	-11.1%	-11.1%	-38.5%
AI Chatbot	-11.1%	-11.1%	-27.3%
BusinessObjects	-11.1%	-11.1%	-11.1%
Power Query	0.0%	-11.1%	-27.3%
Kanban	0.0%	-11.1%	-11.1%
Microsoft SQL Server Management Studio (SSMS)	0.0%	-11.1%	-11.1%
Erlang	0.0%	-11.1%	14.3%

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MARKET VALUE DECREASES: Non-certified IT Skills (data surveyed through October 1, 2026)

6-Month Premium Pay Decline Trends – cont'd.

(Non-certified skills value growth – January 1, 2026 to July 1, 2026)

(surveyed through October 1, 2026) DECLINING PAY: Noncertified Skills	3 mos. Market value % change - last 3 mos	6 mos. Market value % change - last 6 mos	ANNUAL Market value % change - last 12 mos
Google TensorFlow	6.7%	-11.1%	-11.1%
Security auditing	-10.5%	-10.5%	-10.5%
Continuous Integration	-5.6%	-10.5%	-5.6%
IT Governance	-14.3%	-10.0%	5.9%
Oracle DB 10g/11i/12c	-10.0%	-10.0%	-35.7%
Oracle Enterprise Manager	-10.0%	-10.0%	-10.0%
Looker	0.0%	-10.0%	-25.0%
Vue.js	0.0%	-10.0%	-25.0%
SQL	0.0%	-10.0%	-18.2%
Xcode	0.0%	-10.0%	-18.2%
Digital Marketing	-9.1%	-9.1%	-16.7%
Linux	-9.1%	-9.1%	-16.7%
Unix (all)	-9.1%	-9.1%	-9.1%
Automated Testing	-9.1%	-9.1%	-9.1%
SpecFlow	0.0%	-9.1%	-23.1%
Artificial Intelligence for IT Operations (AIOps)	0.0%	-8.7%	-4.5%
PostgreSQL	-8.3%	-8.3%	-26.7%
NoSQL	-8.3%	-8.3%	-15.4%
Amazon DynamoDB	-8.3%	-8.3%	-15.4%
AWS CloudFormation	-8.3%	-8.3%	-8.3%
Ruby on Rails	-8.3%	-8.3%	0.0%
Oracle Reports	-8.3%	-8.3%	10.0%
ETL (Extract, transform, load)	0.0%	-8.3%	-15.4%
Agile software development	0.0%	-8.3%	-8.3%
Datadog	0.0%	-8.3%	-8.3%
Bitbucket	0.0%	-8.3%	0.0%
C++	0.0%	-8.3%	0.0%
UML (unified modeling language)	0.0%	-8.3%	0.0%
Amazon Web Services (EC2, ECS, S3, SQS, ELB, et. al.)	0.0%	-8.3%	37.5%
Keras	-14.3%	-7.7%	-33.3%
Gosu/Guidewire	-7.7%	-7.7%	-20.0%
GitLab	-7.7%	-7.7%	-14.3%
Big Data	-7.7%	-7.7%	-7.7%
Apache Hadoop	-7.7%	-7.7%	-7.7%
IT Service Management/ITSM	-7.7%	-7.7%	-7.7%
Jenkins	-7.7%	-7.7%	-7.7%
Kotlin	-7.7%	-7.7%	-7.7%
Master data management	-7.7%	-7.7%	-7.7%
Apache Spark SQL	-7.7%	-7.7%	20.0%
Application Security	0.0%	-7.7%	-14.3%
AWS CloudFront/CloudFront Functions	0.0%	-7.7%	-7.7%
Java Database Connectivity (JDBC)	0.0%	-7.7%	-7.7%

(surveyed through October 1, 2026) DECLINING PAY: Noncertified Skills	3 mos. Market value % change - last 3 mos	6 mos. Market value % change - last 6 mos	ANNUAL Market value % change - last 12 mos
Semaphore CI/CD	0.0%	-7.7%	-7.7%
Software Quality Assurance	0.0%	-7.7%	na
Apache Tomcat	-13.3%	-7.1%	30.0%
Usability Research/Human Factors Research	0.0%	-7.1%	-18.8%
Scala	0.0%	-7.1%	-13.3%
Hyperautomation	-12.5%	-6.7%	-6.7%
HL7	-6.7%	-6.7%	-17.6%
Microsoft SQL Server Analysis Services	-6.7%	-6.7%	-17.6%
Security management	-6.7%	-6.7%	-17.6%
Apache Spark	-6.7%	-6.7%	-6.7%
Anthropic Claude	-6.7%	-6.7%	na
QA Automation/Quality Assurance	0.0%	-6.7%	-12.5%
Business intelligence	0.0%	-6.7%	-6.7%
Azure DevOps	0.0%	-6.3%	-6.3%
Continuous Improvement	0.0%	-6.3%	0.0%
Software development lifecycle management	-5.9%	-5.9%	-5.9%
Data Migration	0.0%	-5.9%	-5.9%
Waterfall	0.0%	-5.9%	-5.9%
AWS DevOps	-5.6%	-5.6%	-10.5%
IT Audit	-5.6%	-5.6%	0.0%
Metadata design and development	-5.6%	-5.6%	0.0%
Azure AI Studio	-5.6%	-5.6%	na
DevOps	0.0%	-5.6%	-10.5%
Penetration testing	0.0%	-5.6%	-5.6%
Test Driven Development/Scripting	0.0%	-5.6%	-5.6%
Microservices	-5.3%	-5.3%	-5.3%
Azure AI/ML services	-5.3%	-5.3%	0.0%
Bioinformatics	5.9%	-5.3%	38.5%
DataOps	-9.5%	-5.0%	-5.0%
Scaled Agile Framework (SAFe)	-5.0%	-5.0%	5.6%
Data Strategy	-4.8%	-4.8%	-4.8%
COBIT	-4.8%	-4.8%	25.0%

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MARKET VALUE DECREASES: Non-certified IT Skills (data surveyed through October 1, 2026)

12-Month Premium Pay Decline Trends

(Noncertified skills value growth – October 1, 2025 to October 1, 2026)

(surveyed through October 1, 2026) DECLINING PAY: Noncertified Skills	3 mos. Market value % change - last 3 mos	6 mos. Market value % change - last 6 mos	ANNUAL Market value % change - last 12 mos
Apache Struts/Struts2	0.0%	0.0%	-62.5%
Apache Ant	0.0%	0.0%	-61.5%
Travis CI	0.0%	0.0%	-58.3%
Apache Flex	0.0%	-57.1%	-57.1%
Microsoft Team Foundation Server	0.0%	-14.3%	-57.1%
Ethereum	-9.1%	-56.5%	-56.5%
TIBCO Spotfire	0.0%	-20.0%	-55.6%
Apache Ignite	-30.8%	-57.1%	-55.0%
SAP PS (Project Systems)	-50.0%	-50.0%	-50.0%
SUSE Linux	0.0%	-50.0%	-50.0%
Sqoop	0.0%	-50.0%	-50.0%
Apache Velocity	0.0%	-50.0%	-50.0%
SAP BPC (BusinessObjects Planning and Consolidation)	0.0%	-40.0%	-50.0%
SAP Leonardo	0.0%	-40.0%	-50.0%
GatsbyJS	0.0%	-25.0%	-50.0%
Ajax (Asynchronous JavaScript and XML)	0.0%	-25.0%	-50.0%
Apache Zookeeper	0.0%	0.0%	-50.0%
Oracle BPM	0.0%	0.0%	-50.0%
Smart Contracts	-8.3%	-52.2%	-47.6%
BERT	0.0%	-20.0%	-46.7%
AWS CodeDeploy	-22.2%	-46.2%	-46.2%
Objective-C	0.0%	-30.0%	-46.2%
Amazon Athena	-14.3%	-25.0%	-45.5%
Redux	0.0%	0.0%	-45.5%
Pandas	50.0%	50.0%	-45.5%
Apache Cloudstack	0.0%	-44.4%	-44.4%
Apache Cordova	0.0%	-37.5%	-44.4%
Fedora CoreOS	0.0%	-28.6%	-44.4%
Arista	0.0%	0.0%	-44.4%
Gemini	-30.8%	-40.0%	-43.8%
Scikit-Learn	0.0%	0.0%	-43.8%
Accelerated SAP (Solution Lifecycle Management/SLM)	0.0%	-42.9%	-42.9%
UDDI (Universal Description, Discovery and Integration)	0.0%	-42.9%	-42.9%
Eclipse	-41.7%	-41.7%	-41.7%
Sybase Adaptive Server Enterprise	0.0%	-40.0%	-40.0%
Cloud Foundry PaaS	0.0%	-40.0%	-40.0%
Backbone.js	0.0%	-25.0%	-40.0%
Web Design	0.0%	0.0%	-40.0%
SAP PM (Plant Maintenance)	0.0%	0.0%	-40.0%
Midjourney	-11.1%	-38.5%	-38.5%
MapReduce	-11.1%	-11.1%	-38.5%
Riak	0.0%	-37.5%	-37.5%
Web collaboration appliances	0.0%	-37.5%	-37.5%
Oracle Retail	0.0%	-28.6%	-37.5%

(surveyed through October 1, 2026) DECLINING PAY: Noncertified Skills	3 mos. Market value % change - last 3 mos	6 mos. Market value % change - last 6 mos	ANNUAL Market value % change - last 12 mos
Perl	0.0%	-16.7%	-37.5%
AWS Codebuild	0.0%	-33.3%	-36.8%
SAS Enterprise Guide	0.0%	-36.4%	-36.4%
Objective Caml (Ocaml)	0.0%	-30.0%	-36.4%
Oracle DB 10g/11i/12c	-10.0%	-10.0%	-35.7%
Apache Airflow	0.0%	-13.3%	-35.0%
Deep Learning	0.0%	0.0%	-34.8%
F#	-53.8%	-53.8%	-33.3%
Keras	-14.3%	-7.7%	-33.3%
WebSphere	0.0%	-40.0%	-33.3%
HP Unified Functional Testing	0.0%	-33.3%	-33.3%
Quantitative Analysis/Regression Analysis	0.0%	-29.4%	-33.3%
IBM Sterling	-20.0%	-33.3%	-33.3%
SAP MM (Materials Management)	-20.0%	-33.3%	-33.3%
Microsoft Application Virtualization (App-V)	0.0%	-33.3%	-33.3%
Multiprotocol Label Switching (MPLS)	0.0%	-33.3%	-33.3%
PowerBuilder	0.0%	-33.3%	-33.3%
Apache Pig	0.0%	-33.3%	-33.3%
Apache Wicket	0.0%	-33.3%	-33.3%
SAP PSCD (Collection and Disbursement)	0.0%	-20.0%	-33.3%
SAP MII (Manufacturing Integration and Intelligence)	0.0%	-20.0%	-33.3%
RapidMiner	0.0%	-20.0%	-33.3%
gRPC	-26.7%	-31.3%	-31.3%
Amazon EMR	-25.0%	-25.0%	-30.8%
OpenEdge ABL	-18.2%	28.6%	-30.8%
Security skills (DW/BI, ERP, Web, project assigments)	0.0%	-18.2%	-30.8%
HP ALM (Application Lifecycle Management)	0.0%	-41.7%	-30.0%
Game Development/Gamification	0.0%	-30.0%	-30.0%
Apache Iceberg	0.0%	-17.6%	-30.0%
Jetty	0.0%	0.0%	-30.0%
H2O.ai	-7.7%	-25.0%	-29.4%
Requirements Engineering/Analysis	0.0%	-25.0%	-29.4%
AngularJS	-16.7%	-16.7%	-28.6%
Vagrant	-16.7%	-16.7%	-28.6%
CA Endevor	0.0%	-16.7%	-28.6%
Tableau	0.0%	0.0%	-28.6%
Epic Systems applications	0.0%	0.0%	-28.6%
NetWeaver	0.0%	0.0%	-28.6%
Salesforce Commerce Cloud	0.0%	0.0%	-28.6%
COBOL	11.1%	11.1%	-28.6%
ChatGPT	-33.3%	-38.5%	-27.3%
AI Chatbot	-11.1%	-11.1%	-27.3%
Power Query	0.0%	-11.1%	-27.3%
Azure Cosmos DB	-8.3%	-21.4%	-26.7%

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MARKET VALUE DECREASES: Non-certified IT Skills (data surveyed through October 1, 2026)

12-Month Premium Pay Decline Trends– cont'd.

(Noncertified skills value growth – July 1, 2026 to July 1, 2026)

(surveyed through October 1, 2026) DECLINING PAY: Noncertified Skills	3 mos. Market value % change - last 3 mos	6 mos. Market value % change - last 6 mos	ANNUAL Market value % change - last 12 mos
PostgreSQL	-8.3%	-8.3%	-26.7%
PeopleSoft (CRM/Financials/HCM)	-40.0%	25.0%	-25.0%
VoIP/IP telephony	-25.0%	-25.0%	-25.0%
Docker/Docker Swarm	-14.3%	-33.3%	-25.0%
Spring Security	-14.3%	-25.0%	-25.0%
Node.js	-14.3%	-14.3%	-25.0%
Secure coding/software development	0.0%	-25.0%	-25.0%
SAP Crystal Reports	0.0%	-25.0%	-25.0%
SAP Exchange Infrastructure (XI)	0.0%	-25.0%	-25.0%
Microsoft Exchange Server 2010/2013	0.0%	-14.3%	-25.0%
Performance Optimization	0.0%	-14.3%	-25.0%
Progess Chef	0.0%	-14.3%	-25.0%
Amazon Elastic Kubernetes Service (Amazon EKS)	0.0%	-14.3%	-25.0%
Looker	0.0%	-10.0%	-25.0%
Vue.js	0.0%	-10.0%	-25.0%
Flux/Flux.1	0.0%	0.0%	-25.0%
Base SAS	0.0%	0.0%	-25.0%
Grunt	0.0%	0.0%	-25.0%
Siebel/Siebel Analytics	0.0%	0.0%	-25.0%
Go language (Golang)	-13.3%	-18.8%	-23.5%
Behavior-Driven Development	-16.7%	-16.7%	-23.1%
Azure SQL Data Warehouse	-9.1%	-28.6%	-23.1%
MongoDB	-9.1%	-23.1%	-23.1%
Confluence	-9.1%	-16.7%	-23.1%
SpecFlow	0.0%	-9.1%	-23.1%
Computer Vision	6.3%	6.3%	-22.7%
Hbase	0.0%	0.0%	-22.2%
Gradio	0.0%	0.0%	-22.2%
Software-Defined Networking	16.7%	16.7%	-22.2%
Quality management/TQM	-8.3%	-21.4%	-21.4%
DB2	0.0%	-21.4%	-21.4%
HubSpot	0.0%	-15.4%	-21.4%
Hibernate/Nhibernate	0.0%	0.0%	-21.4%
Cloudera software	0.0%	0.0%	-21.4%
Apache Cassandra	10.0%	10.0%	-21.4%
Microsoft Virtual Server	-20.0%	-20.0%	-20.0%
SAP WM (Warehouse Management)	-20.0%	-20.0%	-20.0%
Dynatrace platform	-11.1%	-15.8%	-20.0%
HPUX	0.0%	-20.0%	-20.0%
HTTPS	0.0%	-20.0%	-20.0%
TCP/IP	0.0%	-20.0%	-20.0%
Baan (Infor LN ERP)	0.0%	-20.0%	-20.0%
SAP NetWeaver BW (Business Information Warehouse)	0.0%	-20.0%	-20.0%
SAP WM - EWM (Extended Warehouse Management)	0.0%	-20.0%	-20.0%

(surveyed through October 1, 2026) DECLINING PAY: Noncertified Skills	3 mos. Market value % change - last 3 mos	6 mos. Market value % change - last 6 mos	ANNUAL Market value % change - last 12 mos
iRise	0.0%	0.0%	-20.0%
CGI	0.0%	0.0%	-20.0%
Dynamic Host Configuration Protocol	0.0%	0.0%	-20.0%
SAP PI (NetWeaver Process Integration)	0.0%	0.0%	-20.0%
Microsoft Hyper-V	0.0%	0.0%	-20.0%
SOAP/SOAP UI	0.0%	0.0%	-20.0%
Webtrends analytics	0.0%	0.0%	-20.0%
Citrix Virtual Apps (XenApp)	0.0%	0.0%	-20.0%
HTML5	0.0%	0.0%	-20.0%
Microsoft Dynamics/Dynamics 365	0.0%	0.0%	-20.0%
Rstudio	0.0%	33.3%	-20.0%
Magento/Adobe Commerce	16.7%	16.7%	-20.0%
Oracle CRM	40.0%	40.0%	-20.0%
Gosu/Guidewire	-7.7%	-7.7%	-20.0%
Complex Event Processing/Event Correlation	0.0%	0.0%	-20.0%
Digital Forensics	-13.3%	-13.3%	-18.8%
Usability Research/Human Factors Research	0.0%	-7.1%	-18.8%
GitOps	0.0%	0.0%	-18.8%
Kibana	-18.2%	12.5%	-18.2%
Microsoft SQL Server Reporting Services (SSRS)	-10.0%	0.0%	-18.2%
SQL	0.0%	-10.0%	-18.2%
Xcode	0.0%	-10.0%	-18.2%
Blockchain	0.0%	0.0%	-18.2%
Microsoft SQL Server 2012/2014/2016/2019	0.0%	0.0%	-18.2%
Mockito	0.0%	0.0%	-18.2%
TIBCO	0.0%	20.0%	-18.2%
Convolutional Neural Network	12.5%	5.9%	-18.2%
Clojure	12.5%	28.6%	-18.2%
R language	22.0%	22.0%	-18.2%
Prompt Engineering	50.0%	80.0%	-18.2%
Stable Diffusion	-6.7%	-17.6%	-17.6%
HL7	-6.7%	-6.7%	-17.6%
Microsoft SQL Server Analysis Services	-6.7%	-6.7%	-17.6%
Security management	-6.7%	-6.7%	-17.6%
Informatica	0.0%	0.0%	-17.6%
Azure Storage	-28.6%	-28.6%	-16.7%
Spring MVC	-16.7%	-28.6%	-16.7%
Full Stack Development	-16.7%	-16.7%	-16.7%
Apache Kafka	-16.7%	-16.7%	-16.7%
Cisco CUCM	-16.7%	-16.7%	-16.7%
Microsoft .NET (ADO .NET, VB .NET, ASP.NET, etc.)	-16.7%	-16.7%	-16.7%
Microsoft Blazor	-16.7%	-16.7%	-16.7%
Oracle Payables	-16.7%	-16.7%	-16.7%
Performance Testing	-16.7%	-16.7%	-16.7%

Pay data supporting these charts available in the *IT Skills and Certifications Pay Index™* – 3Q 2026 data edition

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MAKET VALUE DECREASES: Non-certified IT Skills (data surveyed through October 1, 2026)

12-Month Premium Pay Decline Trends– cont'd.

(Noncertified skills value growth – July 1, 2026 to July 1, 2026)

(surveyed through October 1, 2026) DECLINING PAY: Noncertified Skills	3 mos. Market value % change - last 3 mos	6 mos. Market value % change - last 6 mos	ANNUAL Market value % change - last 12 mos
Storage virtualization/administration	-16.7%	-16.7%	-16.7%
JUnit	-16.7%	0.0%	-16.7%
Digital Marketing	-9.1%	-9.1%	-16.7%
Linux	-9.1%	-9.1%	-16.7%
Oracle SOA Suite	0.0%	-16.7%	-16.7%
SAP Fiori	0.0%	-16.7%	-16.7%
Rust	0.0%	-11.8%	-16.7%
Oracle Forms	0.0%	0.0%	-16.7%
Microsoft SCVMM	0.0%	0.0%	-16.7%
Azure Active Directory	0.0%	0.0%	-16.7%
Content management systems	0.0%	0.0%	-16.7%
CSS/CSS3	0.0%	0.0%	-16.7%
Laravel PHP	0.0%	0.0%	-16.7%
Microsoft Visual Studio	0.0%	0.0%	-16.7%
SAP CO (Controlling)	0.0%	0.0%	-16.7%
SAP GTS (Global Trade Services)	0.0%	0.0%	-16.7%
SAP MDG (Master Data Governance)	0.0%	0.0%	-16.7%
SAP SCM (Supply Chain Management)	0.0%	0.0%	-16.7%
SAP SD - GTS (Global Trade Systems)	0.0%	0.0%	-16.7%
SolarWinds Orion	0.0%	0.0%	-16.7%
VPN/OpenVPN	0.0%	0.0%	-16.7%
Cognos	11.1%	11.1%	-16.7%
Amazon Web Services CDK	-8.3%	-21.4%	-15.4%
Ruby	-8.3%	-15.4%	-15.4%
NoSQL	-8.3%	-8.3%	-15.4%
Amazon DynamoDB	-8.3%	-8.3%	-15.4%
Java	0.0%	-15.4%	-15.4%
ETL (Extract, transform, load)	0.0%	-8.3%	-15.4%
CRM	0.0%	0.0%	-15.4%
OpenStack	0.0%	0.0%	-15.4%
Database management	0.0%	0.0%	-15.4%
Amazon Cloudwatch	-14.3%	-14.3%	-14.3%
Windows 10/11	-14.3%	-14.3%	-14.3%
Oracle WebLogic/Portal	-14.3%	-14.3%	-14.3%
GitLab	-7.7%	-7.7%	-14.3%
Spring AI	0.0%	-46.7%	-14.3%
QlikSense	0.0%	-25.0%	-14.3%
OpenCV	0.0%	-14.3%	-14.3%
Amazon AWS CloudTrail	0.0%	-14.3%	-14.3%
React	0.0%	-14.3%	-14.3%
Security Information and Event Management (SIEM)	0.0%	-14.3%	-14.3%
Web Content Development	0.0%	-14.3%	-14.3%
Application Security	0.0%	-7.7%	-14.3%
Couchbase Server	0.0%	0.0%	-14.3%

(surveyed through October 1, 2026) DECLINING PAY: Noncertified Skills	3 mos. Market value % change - last 3 mos	6 mos. Market value % change - last 6 mos	ANNUAL Market value % change - last 12 mos
AWS Fargate	0.0%	0.0%	-14.3%
Rackspace Cloud	0.0%	0.0%	-14.3%
Azure AKS	0.0%	0.0%	-14.3%
Front End Development	0.0%	0.0%	-14.3%
JavaScript	0.0%	0.0%	-14.3%
Jscript	0.0%	0.0%	-14.3%
Microsoft Forefront Threat Management Gateway (formerly I	0.0%	0.0%	-14.3%
Pega	0.0%	0.0%	-14.3%
REST/REST Assured	0.0%	0.0%	-14.3%
SAP UI development toolkit for HTML5 (SAP UI5)	0.0%	0.0%	-14.3%
Spring Cloud	0.0%	0.0%	-14.3%
Virtualization (various)	0.0%	0.0%	-14.3%
Wireless network management (LANs, GSM)	0.0%	0.0%	-14.3%
Web services security	0.0%	0.0%	-14.3%
Google Data Studio	10.0%	-25.0%	-14.3%
VMware ESXi Server	14.3%	0.0%	-14.3%
Performance management/metrics	20.0%	0.0%	-14.3%
Neural Networks	72.7%	35.7%	-13.6%
Data Visualization	-13.3%	-13.3%	-13.3%
Scala	0.0%	-7.1%	-13.3%
Marketo	16.6%	-18.8%	-13.3%
Large Language Model/LLM tuning	5.3%	5.3%	-13.0%
WebSphere Datapower	-30.0%	-22.2%	-12.5%
Salesforce Einstein GPT	-22.2%	7.7%	-12.5%
Data Management	-6.7%	0.0%	-12.5%
JBehave	0.0%	-12.5%	-12.5%
Google Kubernetes	0.0%	-12.5%	-12.5%
QA Automation/Quality Assurance	0.0%	-6.7%	-12.5%
Snowflake/Snowflake Schema	0.0%	0.0%	-12.5%
Django	0.0%	0.0%	-12.5%
Google Cloud Platform	0.0%	0.0%	-12.5%
Infrastructure as code(IaC)	0.0%	0.0%	-12.5%
Intrusion prevention/detection systems	0.0%	0.0%	-12.5%
Python	0.0%	0.0%	-12.5%
Social Media/Networks	0.0%	0.0%	-12.5%
Windows Server 2019/2016/2012	0.0%	0.0%	-12.5%
Network access control/Identity mgt sys.	0.0%	0.0%	-12.5%
Drupal	0.0%	16.7%	-12.5%
Business analysis	7.7%	27.3%	-12.5%
RedHat OpenShift	16.7%	16.7%	-12.5%
Project management/governance	-6.3%	7.1%	-11.8%
Configuration Management	0.0%	0.0%	-11.8%
Security testing	-15.8%	-15.8%	-11.1%
Azure OpenAI	-15.8%	-11.1%	-11.1%

Pay data supporting these charts available in the *IT Skills and Certifications Pay Index™* – 3Q 2026 data edition

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MARKET VALUE DECREASES: Non-certified IT Skills (data surveyed through October 1, 2026)

12-Month Premium Pay Decline Trends– cont'd.

(Noncertified skills value growth – July 1, 2026 to July 1, 2026)

(surveyed through October 1, 2026) DECLINING PAY: Noncertified Skills	3 mos. Market value % change - last 3 mos	6 mos. Market value % change - last 6 mos	ANNUAL Market value % change - last 12 mos
GIS	-11.1%	-27.3%	-11.1%
BusinessObjects	-11.1%	-11.1%	-11.1%
Kanban	0.0%	-11.1%	-11.1%
Microsoft SQL Server Management Studio (SSMS)	0.0%	-11.1%	-11.1%
Virtual security	0.0%	0.0%	-11.1%
Apache Impala	0.0%	0.0%	-11.1%
Google TensorFlow	6.7%	-11.1%	-11.1%
SailPoint	14.3%	14.3%	-11.1%
Security auditing	-10.5%	-10.5%	-10.5%
AWS DevOps	-5.6%	-5.6%	-10.5%
DevOps	0.0%	-5.6%	-10.5%
Deployment Automation	0.0%	0.0%	-10.5%
Microsoft Azure Stack	-18.2%	-25.0%	-10.0%
Microsoft Copilot	-10.0%	-18.2%	-10.0%
Oracle Enterprise Manager	-10.0%	-10.0%	-10.0%
VMware vSphere	-10.0%	0.0%	-10.0%
Solaris	0.0%	-18.2%	-10.0%
Oracle Applications Developer Framework	0.0%	0.0%	-10.0%
SaaS	0.0%	0.0%	-10.0%
MySQL	0.0%	0.0%	-10.0%
Site Reliability Engineering	0.0%	0.0%	-9.5%
Azure SQL Database	-9.1%	-16.7%	-9.1%
Unix (all)	-9.1%	-9.1%	-9.1%
Automated Testing	-9.1%	-9.1%	-9.1%
Microsoft SQL Server Integration Services (SSIS)	0.0%	0.0%	-9.1%
C#	0.0%	0.0%	-9.1%
Git/GitHub	0.0%	0.0%	-9.1%
JIRA	0.0%	11.1%	-9.1%
MLOps	-4.5%	5.0%	-8.7%
AWS CloudFormation	-8.3%	-8.3%	-8.3%
Agile software development	0.0%	-8.3%	-8.3%
Datadog	0.0%	-8.3%	-8.3%
AWS Lambda	0.0%	0.0%	-8.3%
Next.js	0.0%	0.0%	-8.3%
Octopus Deploy	0.0%	0.0%	-8.3%
Red Hat Enterprise Linux	0.0%	0.0%	-8.3%
Jasmine	0.0%	0.0%	-8.3%
Gradle	0.0%	0.0%	-8.3%
Scrum	0.0%	0.0%	-8.3%
Grails/Groovy	-7.7%	-14.3%	-7.7%
Big Data	-7.7%	-7.7%	-7.7%
Apache Hadoop	-7.7%	-7.7%	-7.7%
IT Service Management/ITSM	-7.7%	-7.7%	-7.7%
Jenkins	-7.7%	-7.7%	-7.7%

(surveyed through October 1, 2026) DECLINING PAY: Noncertified Skills	3 mos. Market value % change - last 3 mos	6 mos. Market value % change - last 6 mos	ANNUAL Market value % change - last 12 mos
Kotlin	-7.7%	-7.7%	-7.7%
Master data management	-7.7%	-7.7%	-7.7%
AWS CloudFront/CloudFront Functions	0.0%	-7.7%	-7.7%
Java Database Connectivity (JDBC)	0.0%	-7.7%	-7.7%
Semaphore CI/CD	0.0%	-7.7%	-7.7%
Power BI	0.0%	0.0%	-7.1%
Amazon RedShift	8.3%	8.3%	-7.1%
Hyperautomation	-12.5%	-6.7%	-6.7%
Apache Spark	-6.7%	-6.7%	-6.7%
Business intelligence	0.0%	-6.7%	-6.7%
User Experience/User Interface	0.0%	0.0%	-6.7%
Generative AI	7.7%	0.0%	-6.7%
Six Sigma/Lean Six Sigma	-6.3%	-16.7%	-6.3%
ForgeRock/Ping Identity	-6.3%	15.4%	-6.3%
Azure DevOps	0.0%	-6.3%	-6.3%
General Data Protection Regulation(GDPR) (EU)	0.0%	0.0%	-6.3%
Data Analytics	0.0%	7.1%	-6.3%
Data Acquisition and Control Systems	15.4%	0.0%	-6.3%
Software development lifecycle management	-5.9%	-5.9%	-5.9%
Data Migration	0.0%	-5.9%	-5.9%
Waterfall	0.0%	-5.9%	-5.9%
Data Security	0.0%	0.0%	-5.9%
Azure Key Vault	6.7%	6.7%	-5.9%
Data Privacy	6.7%	23.1%	-5.9%
Continuous Integration	-5.6%	-10.5%	-5.6%
Penetration testing	0.0%	-5.6%	-5.6%
Test Driven Development/Scripting	0.0%	-5.6%	-5.6%
Data Transformation	0.0%	0.0%	-5.6%
Data Integration	6.3%	0.0%	-5.6%
Microservices	-5.3%	-5.3%	-5.3%
Data Governance	0.0%	0.0%	-5.3%
DataOps	-9.5%	-5.0%	-5.0%
Data Strategy	-4.8%	-4.8%	-4.8%
Event-Driven Architecture	0.0%	0.0%	-4.8%
Machine Learning	0.0%	0.0%	-4.8%
Artificial Intelligence for IT Operations (AIOps)	0.0%	-8.7%	-4.5%

Pay data supporting these charts available in the *IT Skills and Certifications Pay Index™* – 3Q 2026 data edition

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2026 IT Skills & Certifications Pay Volatility Index™

(Data collected through October 1, 2026)

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

What is skills and certifications 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).

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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---resoundingly increased from July 1, 2026 to October 1, 2026 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 October 1, 2026)

TOTAL: All Skills and Certifications

- **40.2%** of skills and certifications (570 of 1,417) recorded a change in cash pay in the 3rd Quarter, a continuation of record volatility that appeared in the prior quarter when **37.6%** (530 of 1,409) changed in market value. **This is highest overall pay volatility since 2009 for a single calendar quarter.**
- **263** gained value while **307** declined in value in 3rd Quarter 2026, **dramatically more than 225 and 305, respectively, in the 2nd quarter and 177 and 240 in the 1st Quarter of this year.**

CERTIFIED SKILLS

- **52.6%** of reported certifications(350 of 665) changed value in 3rd Quarter 2026, a more than 14-point increase compared to the **38%** (252 of 663) pay volatility in the prior quarter and 29.9% in the first quarter of the year. **This is the largest quarterly volatility recorded for a single quarter since 2009.**
- **178** certifications gained market value, while 172 declined in value, a significantly different trend from the 132 gains and 120 declines, respectively, in the prior quarter.

NONCERTIFIED SKILLS

- **29.3%** of reported IT skills (220 of 752) changed value in 3rd Quarter 2026, 8 points lower than the **37.3%**(278 of 746) pay volatility in the prior quarter.
- **85** noncertified skills **gained market value**, while 135 **declined in value** in the 3rd Quarter, compared to 93 and 185, 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 1,420 certified and non-certified skills in the last two years has been widely variable, in the 24% to 40% range. This is an important shift trend that we believe signals a move that employers are taking a more short-term view to building their tech workforces for evolving technologies such as AI solutions. Tech leaders right now are demanding more agility, faster reaction times, and more predictable execution to fast-evolving new technologies; 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.

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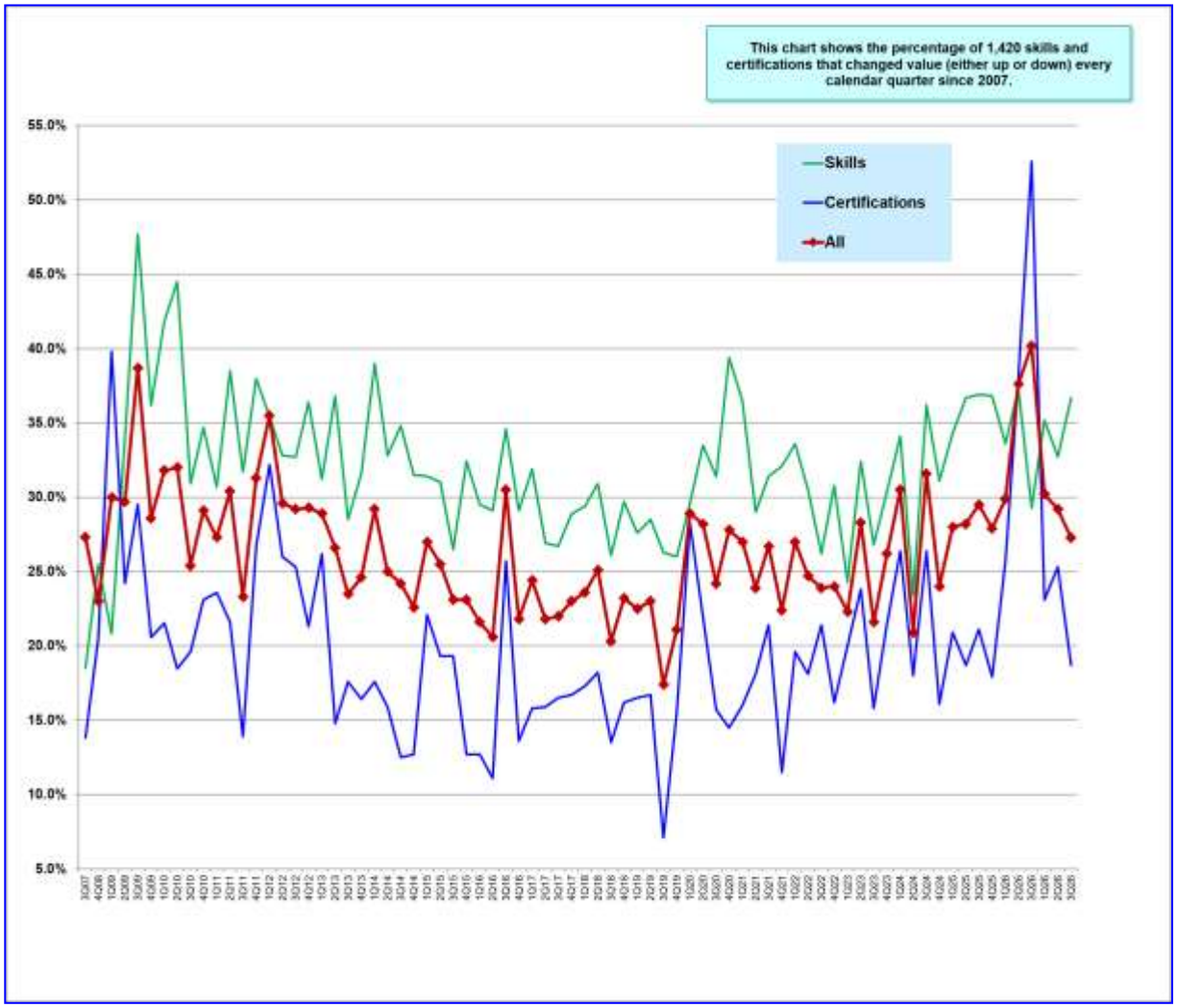
VOLATILITY HIGHLIGHTS - 20 Year Trending

IT Skills and Certifications Volatility Index™ – 1,420 Skills and Certifications



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

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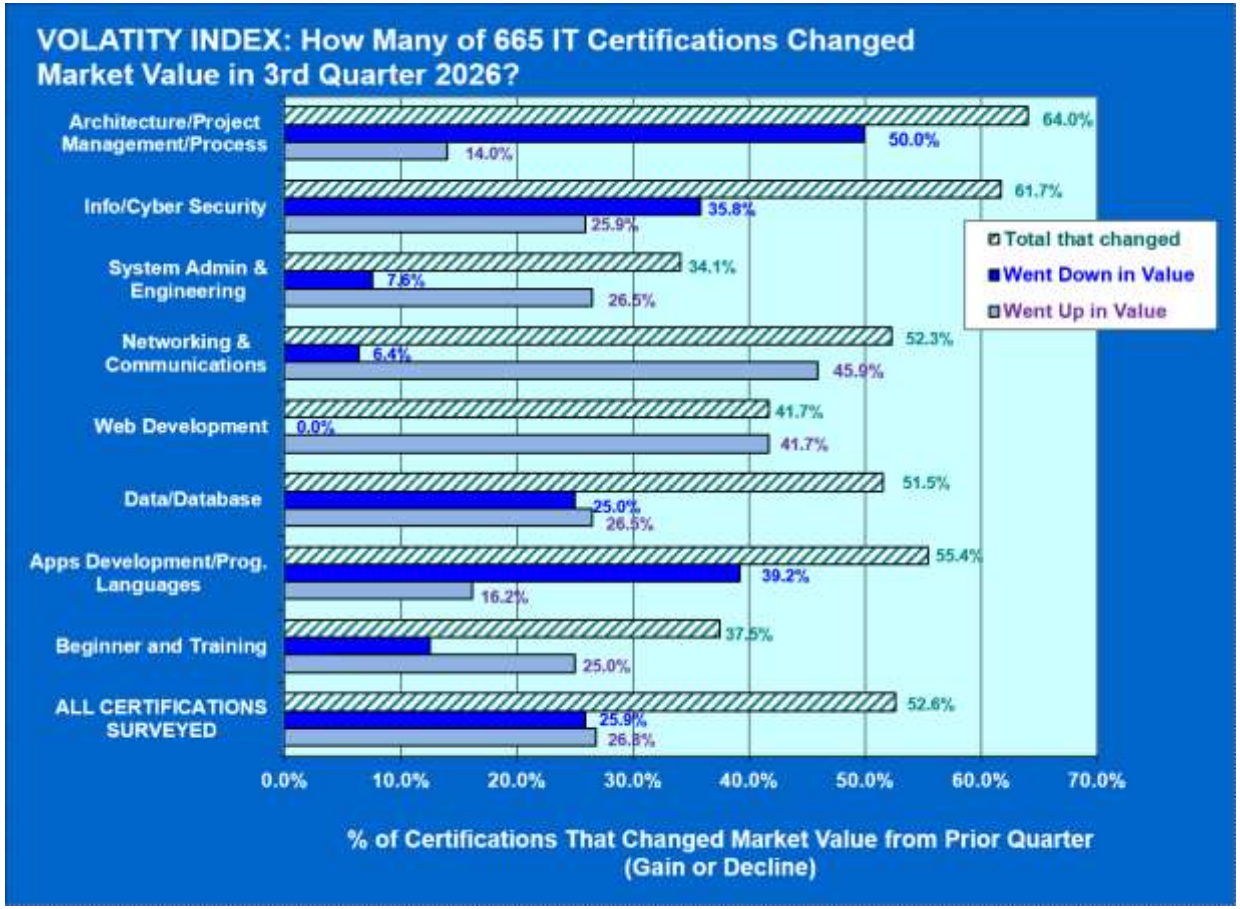
VOLATILITY HIGHLIGHTS IT Certifications – 3rd Quarter 2026 datasets



(Pay data supporting these charts available in the *IT Skills and Certifications Pay Index™* – 3Q 2026 quarterly data edition)

IT Skills and Certifications Pay Volatility Index™
3Q 2026 data edition findings: IT Certifications

IT Certifications Volatility Highlights

Among all 665 certifications reported in the prior quarter, highest quarterly volatility (>15%) occurred in these segments (ranked highest to lowest):

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

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

- Applications Development/Programming Languages
- Architecture/PM/Process
- Info/Cybersecurity
- Data/Database
- Systems Admin & Engineering
- Training & Beginner certifications

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

- Networking & Communication
- Web Development

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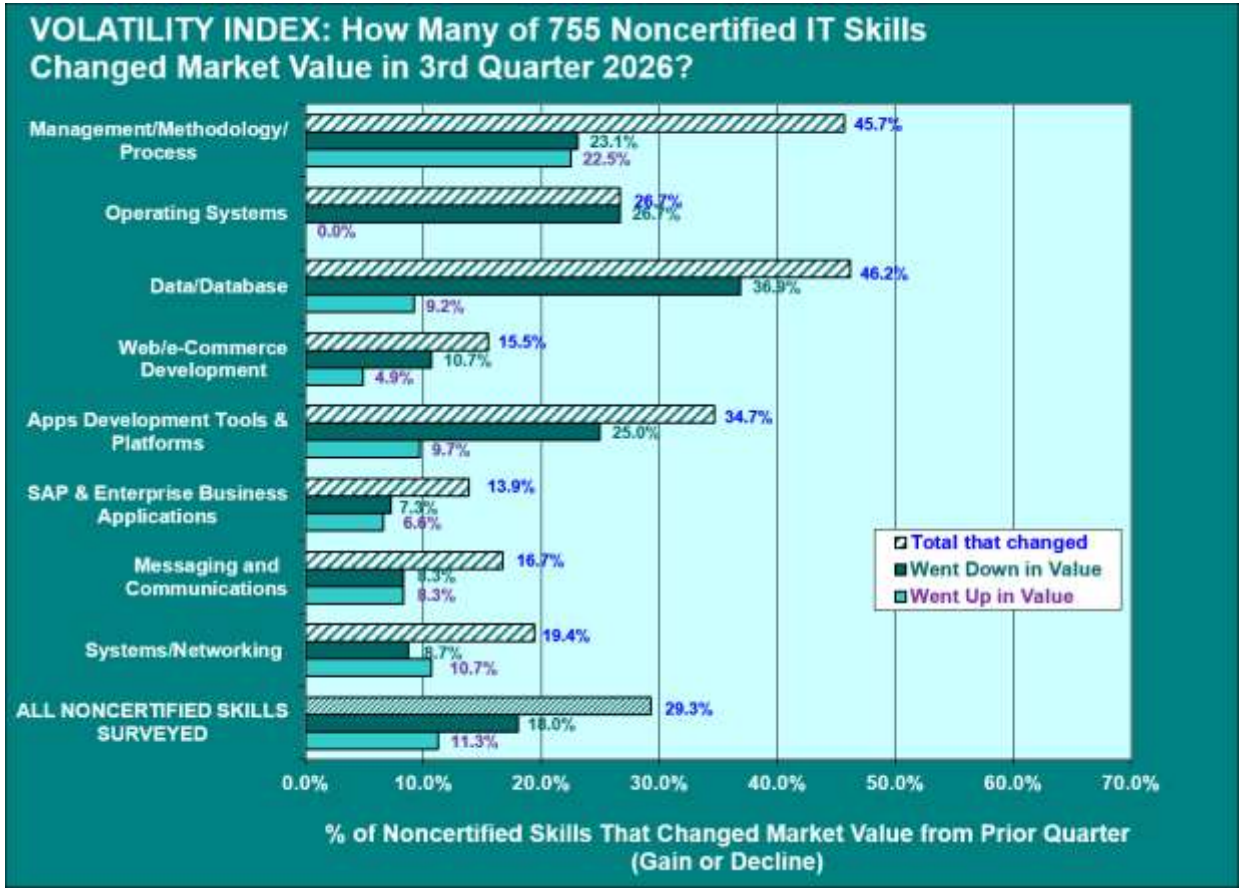
VOLATILITY HIGHLIGHTS Non-certified IT Skills – 3rd Quarter 2026 datasets



IT Skills and Certifications Pay Volatility Index™
2Q 2026 data edition findings: Non-certified IT Skills

Non-certified IT Skill Pay Volatility Highlights

Among all 755 noncertified IT skills reported this quarter, high volatility (≥20%) occurred in all segments (ranked highest to lowest):

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

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

- Data/Database
- Applications Development Tools & Platforms
- Operating Systems

in segments, notable upward volatility (value **gains**) rred most in these (ranked):

- Management/ Methodology/Process

(Pay data supporting these charts available in the *IT Skills and Certifications Pay Index™* – 3Q 2026 quarterly data edition)

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Research Survey Background Information

2026 IT Skills and Certifications Pay Index™

2026 IT Skills & Certifications Volatility Index™

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BACKGROUND What is the *IT Skills and Certifications Pay Index™*?

Determining appropriate compensation benchmarks for IT workers has become more difficult in recent years for three glaringly common and widespread problems: (1) lack of standardization in tech job titling; (2) workers with job titles that match up poorly against actual IT job content; and (3) salary surveys organized by job titles that do not adequately define and differentiate job titles for those who are filling out the survey. As a result, many employers unwittingly fail to understand true market pay levels for their IT workers by using these salary surveys. This contributes to talent retention and salary compression problems.

One solution is to evaluate each job and re-title those workers who are mismatched, taking into account all technical, industry, business, customer, and 'soft' skills necessary to be successful in the job. Then search for salary surveys with comparable jobs. The problem is that continual job evaluation is impractical if not impossible for most employers to do. HR departments are loath to do much beyond periodic, selective job reviews.

An alternative is to leave titles unchanged and differentiate workers with the same title by isolating critical IT skills and paying workers a premium for these skills. Foote Partners' quarterly updated *IT Skills and Certifications Pay Index*™ (market pay for 1,420 individual tech skills) and *IT Professional Salary Survey* are specialized tools with unique properties that have been used by more than 4,600 employers to benchmark their workers' pay and avoid these sticky problems.

IT skills and certifications pay: What is that?

It's common practice today for employers to isolate, recognize and reward experience in their tech workforce for a variety of technical and business skills. Pay for such skills -- both certified and non-certified -- is usually provided in the form of a cash premium that employers are willing to pay workers who possess high-value IT-related skills used on the job, with or without certifications for those skills. Such pay may be applied in the form of a cash bonus or it may be embedded in base salary to adjust for the presence of a dominant vendor or technology; for example, a Cisco Network Engineer, Python Software Engineer, RedHat Linux Systems Administrator, or SAP ABAP Developer specializing in supply chain management for Retail industry software modules.

Skills pay premiums are also the most effective solution to the long-standing problem of job titles that don't accurately match what people actually do on-the-job. It's not uncommon to find specialists with Rust, Go, Scala, AngularJS, Python, SAP, and dozens of other popular applications development skills all lumped together in a multi-level somewhat generic "Programmer" "Developer", or "Software Engineer" job codes. Or architects and engineers with AI/ML/LLM, blockchain, cybersecurity, or DevOps specializations. Some of these skills are worth much more than others in the labor marketplace and would cost an employer more to replace these skills if needed. Benchmarking salaries of these various IT specialists to a single broad job title in a salary survey typically results in salary mismatches.

Wouldn't it just be easier to change the person's job title to reflect the skill specializations? For example, software developers who work exclusively with Python become "Python Developers" and engineers in the Cisco environment world be "Cisco Network Administrators". There is much resistance in doing this with employers who are wary of the complexities of job title proliferation and inability to find exact titles in available salary surveys. Instead, they have learned to simply differentiate workers within common job titles by offering skills premium pay to match their compensation to the job titles they should have. It's a lot less unwieldy than going through a laborious job evaluation process and doubling the number of job titles needing to graded, leveled, and market priced.

This is where our ***IT Skills and Certifications Pay Index™*** comes in handy: it tells you exactly what the bonus or base pay adjustment should be for 1,420 certified and noncertified IT skills, based on current compensation practices at 5,137 US and Canadian employers.

Are there other uses for skills pay? Absolutely: skills pay can be an inducement in recruiting a prospective employee via internal transfer or securing external candidates on the open market as a basis for a sign-on bonus. Skills pay can also be used as a de facto retention bonus. One of the best uses for skills pay is as an incentive to encourage workers to develop their abilities in areas of greatest value to short- and long-term business strategies. Think: blockchain, advanced data analytics, cybersecurity, cloud.

Is a certain level of performance necessary to receive a skill or certification premium? Our research indicates that while some employers may attach a performance basis for skills payout, others do not. The trend is towards companies devising measurable performance hurdles whenever possible.

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How does Foote Partners collect skills and certifications pay data?

Foote Partners' primary research report for skills and professional certifications pay is the **IT Skills and Certifications Pay Index™ (ITSCPI),** which tracks premium pay for 1,420 IT certifications and non-certified skills and is continuously updated and published every three months. Updated data in this edition was collected **through October 1, 2026** including 117,731 validated IT professionals receiving at least one cash pay premium for their skills or certifications.

Employers have been paying for IT skills and certifications for some time but they are notoriously reluctant to create formal programs to do so. That's because they want to pay for skills selectively without feeling obligated to pay all holders of any one skill or certification equally, or even at all. This makes it much more labor intensive and expensive for survey researchers to capture such data. Though many have tried to track skills pay---WillisTowersWatson, Culpepper, and Mercer, to name a few---Foote Partners' ITSCPI, launched in 1999, is the only survey of its kind still in existence and has been the industry's most comprehensive and most accurate index of pay for certified and non-certified skills premiums.

The ITSCPI is a different kind of compensation survey. Our unique data collection methodology lends itself very well to capturing both informal and formal pay practices and does so more economically. Our survey reveals that nearly one-quarter of the 503,375 private and public-sector IT workers in our North American survey receive some form of skills pay. From our HR department and non-HR research partner sources, we receive all formal and informal IT compensation data in various formats, including electronic databases, spreadsheets, and hard copies. We update our data collection weekly and publish the results every 90 days.

With this critical data in hand, Foote Partners dedicates significant time to the delicate and crucial task of validating the data, including direct interviews and intensive interactive surveying. *We do not collect self-reported skills pay data* directly from workers, but instead from their HR and compensation staff, and in some cases, from managers and executives who possess the same data.

We continuously collect and compile skills and certifications data, making the results available to our retainer customers on demand. All other customers may purchase skills and certifications pay in three different ways: choosing clusters of up to 25, 50 or 100 skills/certs; purchasing data of all 1,420 premiums (the *IT Skills and Certifications Pay Index™*); or choosing one or more of our *IT Salary+Skills Pay Survey Reports* which include both salaries and relevant skills pay premiums in fourteen subject areas such as Artificial Intelligence/ML, Big Data, Digital Product Development, Applications Development, SAP, and IT Architecture.

The ITSCPI reports pay in the following classifications, for full-time IT workers only (these premiums do not apply to contractors or consultants):

Skills:

- Systems/Networking
- Operating Systems
- Web/e-Commerce Development
- Messaging and Communications
- Apps Development Tools and Platforms
- SAP and Enterprise Business Applications
- Database
- Project Experience
- Management, Process and Methodology

Certifications:

- Entry-level and Training
- Application Development/ Programming Languages
- Database
- Web Development
- Networking/Communications
- Systems Administration and Engineering
- Info/Cybersecurity
- Architecture/Process/Project Mgmt.

Publishing schedule. We report our survey findings according to the following schedule:

Surveying during these months...	*Produces research available on…*
1st Quarter (January, February, March)	April 7th, 2026
2nd Quarter (April, May, June)	July 10th, 2026
3rd Quarter (July, August, September)	October 6th, 2026
4th Quarter (October, November, December)	January 8th, 2027

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How does Foote Partners collect skills and certifications pay data, cont'd.

Compiling and Reporting the Data. Since 1997, Foote Partners has monitored the compensation, attitudes, and workplace experiences of hundreds of thousands of tech workers globally. Our 2026 research continuously benchmarks 503,375 tech professionals in 5,137 employers located in 87 US and Canadian cities.

Our unique data collection methodology lends itself very well to capturing both informal and formal pay practices and doing it more economically. Foote Partners uses *no aggregated data sources* or compilation of others' surveys, instead collecting our data job-by-job, city-by-city, continuously throughout the year. We do not collect skills pay data from workers themselves, but instead from their managers and HR/compensation staffs. Findings are updated and published quarterly, aided by a constant flow of confidential compensation data from public and private sector HR departments and from tech and business executive research partners. Our validation techniques extend to active interviewing and interaction with tech management and the rank-and-file workforce to perform IT skills identification and reclassification that yields accurate titles matched to the actual job title they should have. Consultations with local labor market experts help us to pinpoint the most influential employers in every target city and analyze local market and economic conditions that are influencing staffing and pay.

2026 Survey Database Demographics. More than 38 private sector industries plus government and educational institutions are surveyed. Demographics of the participating organizations for our latest survey (data collected through **July 1, 2026**) are as follows, measured most appropriately by revenues, assets, total premiums and operating budgets:

- 14% of participating organizations have $10 billion+ in revenues
- 22% of participating organizations have $5 billion+ in revenues
- 40% of participating organizations earn more than $1 billion in annual revenues
- 41% of participating organizations earn less than $1 billion in annual revenues
- 28% of participating organizations have less than $500+ million in sales(12% <US$100 million, 16% at US$100 million to $499.9 million) revenues
- 19% are organizations more appropriately classified by total assets: 2% are US$250 billion or more; 4% are US$50 billion–US$249.9 billion; 5% are US$10 billion–US$49.9 billion; 5% are US$1 billion–US$9.9 billion; 3% are less than US$1 billion

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BACKGROUND What is the *IT Skills and Certification Pay Volatility Index™*?

Volatility in market value for individual IT skills and certifications refers to is defined as the incidence of gains or declines in premium pay earned by tech professionals for specific technical and business skills.

Tech skills pay volatility refers to the incidence of change in market values of individual skills and certifications over a period of time. It is not the amount of change in pay, but simply the fact that it did not stay the same, either declining or increasing in pay over this period.

Why skills volatility matters

Foote Partners keeps a much closer eye on changes in pay premiums for IT skills during recessions and post-recessions than at other times, and for good reason: ***Changes in pay for skills are more accurate indicators of tech market and management trends than salaries and hiring***. They're more dynamic. Decisions about skills demand and pay are more often made 'on-the-fly' and implemented quickly which makes it easier for analysts to check the pulse of the market. Job creation, hiring, and salary movements…those are more deliberate activities that play out over longer periods of time and tell us very little in the short run, to be quite honest.

But not so with skills. Tracking skills pay tells us how the gap between supply and demand is changing. It happens quickly. Monitoring it weekly and monthly reveals insights into workforce changes and clues about executive decision-making that can't be gotten by tracking jobs, not with all the confusion caused by lack of standardization job titles. By that we mean workers who share the same job title but actually have different on-the-job responsibilities that require different skill sets.

But skills are skills. They can be segmented more meaningfully than jobs. There are the broad categories (e.g., security, networking, systems, database, applications development), more narrow areas (e.g., web/e-commerce development, storage area networking, virtualization, architecture, business process, project management, methodology), and within each very specific niches and skill specializations that are either vendor-specific or vendor independent (e.g., SAP, AJAX, Ruby on Rails, Microsoft Sharepoint, collaboration appliances, Oracle database).

Monitoring skills pay volatility matters because it helps us in market trend analysis and our ability as analysts to forecast and predict the future. In forecasting you always have to be careful with benchmark data because it is historical in nature. But the skills market is so much more dynamic than the jobs market and base salary movements, so viewing even the last two or three months of skills pay and demand activity reveals a lot. Add other data such as tech spending activity, resource strategies, and the intelligence gathered from talking to a lot of tech executives and decision makers about what they're doing, and tech market forecasting becomes much easier and far more accurate. Especially the near term.

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Foote Partners Information

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Company Overview

Foote Partners, LLC is an analyst firm and independent benchmark research organization focused on the people (rather than 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 highly integrated business/IT hybrid environment.

Our products are deeply grounded in specialized proprietary data-driven statistical and empirical research, benchmark surveys, and business intelligence collected from 5,137 North American employers with whom we have deep longstanding research partnerships. These partnerships have been developed and built 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 the most meaningful demographic representation for tech professionals in each of 87 local labor markets.

Founded in 1997, we are comprised of former Gartner industry analysts, McKinsey & Company, Mercer and Willis Towers Watson 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 and workforce metrics, solve difficult information technology management and workforce problems, and strengthen their ability to execute complex business solutions.

The firm's IT Insider research series features the industry's most up-to-date and versatile tech salary/bonus and skills and certifications premium pay surveys and in-depth tech organization and workforce trends research. A pioneer in defining and benchmarking pay for 'new breed' roles and jobs in the modern tech workforce, the firm's IT Skills and Certifications Pay Index TM of pay for 1,420 skills and certifications is the industry's oldest(launched in 2000) and most comprehensive survey of cash market value and demand forecasting for individual certified and noncertified IT and related business skills. Our IT Professional Salary Survey has, since 1995, been renowned for its statistical accuracy, daily updating, and for its mission to fill in the gaps in other surveys for defining and pricing the evolving tech workforce.

The foundation of the firm's research is the continuous monitoring of compensation, attitudes, and workplace experiences of 503,375 tech workers in 5,137 North American employers and 200,069 tech workers in 2,085 European employers. Foote Partners' distinction in the marketplace is an innovative compensation data collection and validation methodology designed specifically to alleviate the widespread problem of lack of standardization in IT job titles that plagues most major IT salary surveys still using low-cost passive data collection methods. All surveys and trend reports are updated and published every 90 days.

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, Forbes, Wall Street Journal, New York Times, CIO Magazine, ComputerWorld, and WorldatWork's Journal of Total Rewards and Workspan Magazine; and in appearances on network and cable television, Public Radio, and countless podcasts including The AIX Factor, the AI content series which Foote Partners' co-hosts.

Foote Partners' proprietary survey-based research and business consulting practice areas include:

- IT Professional Salary Survey™ reports
- IT Skills and Certifications Pay Index™
- IT Salary+Skills Pay Survey ™ reports
- IT Insider Workforce Trends Series™ reports
- IT Skills Demand and Pay Trends Report
- IT Skills & Ceretifications Pay Volatility Index
- IT Insider Professional Job Descriptions™

Foote Partners' proprietary survey-based research and business consulting practice areas include:

- Tech People Architecture and Agile Compensation
- IT Workforce Intelligence
- Incentive Plan Design
- IT Management and Organization Services
- IT Executive & Professional Compensation
- Business Intelligence/Analytics
- International HR and Expatriate Administrati
- Outsourcing/Offshoring and Strategic Resource Management
- Organization and Transition Management
- Workforce Performance Management
- Enterprise Project Delivery
- Corporate Strategy and Business Development

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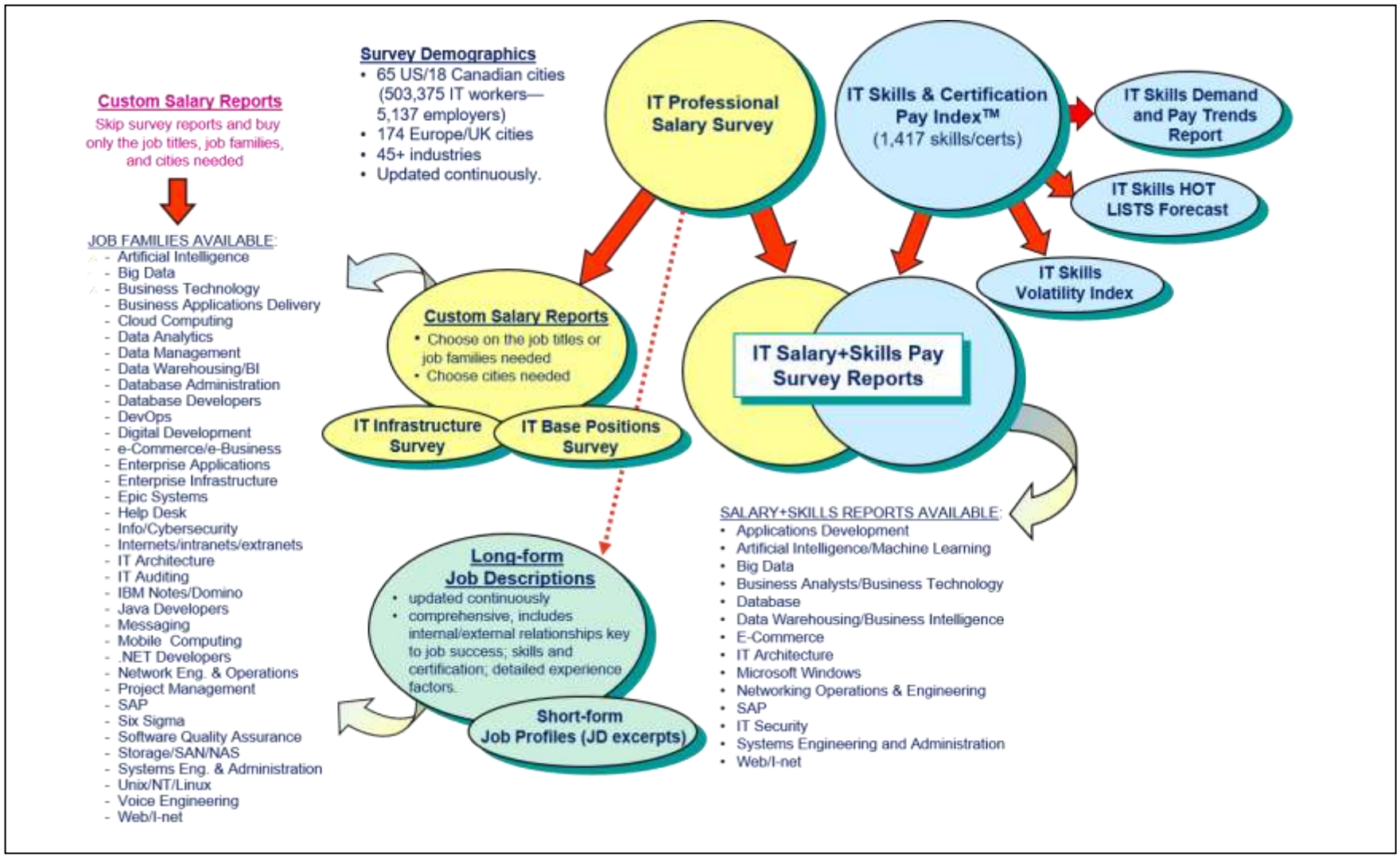
Foote Partners 2026 Tech Compensation Survey Products Map



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Advisory Relationships with Foote Partners

We are a highly valued contributor and partner to employers under retainer and defined-project arrangements, providing market and competitive intelligence and services spanning a variety of business, IT, and Human Resources initiatives.

Agile Compensation and People Architecture

Tech People Architecture and ***Agile Compensation*** are the answers to anticipating and delivering solutions that drive business results amid constantly shifting business strategies, volatile labor markets, and fluid organizational and skill requirements. Rapid organizational and market changes coupled with constant technological evolution can result in the negative trifecta of the *wrong* people in the *wrong* job titles with the *wrong* pay. Solving this all-too-common dilemma for employers requires close cooperation among Compensation, Organizational Development and Business teams.

Traditional architecture principles and practices are applied to human capital management to develop a framework for people and pay that defines and classifies job roles, levels, skills, and competencies across the enterprise and enables accurate matching of people and jobs to the marketplace. A Tech People Architecture framework is flexible enough to enable pay scalability and accommodate change with minimal pressure for regrading jobs. In addition, it reduces the constant pressure to raise pay levels beyond incumbents' skills and competencies.

Tech People Architecture is very similar in principle to traditional IT architecture initiatives but applied to workforce management and IT human capital practices. There are capability road maps, phase-gate blueprints, and performance metrics. Governance issues need attention, and business strategy drives it all. But with people architecture, it's about how key human capital management elements such as job definition, skills acquisition, compensation, professional development, work/life balance and recognition plug into an overall optimized operational model that is different going forward than it has been in the past. The model is tuned to new technologies, constantly changing business strategy, organizational goals, and culture and performance philosophies, and it promotes flexibility and scalability like any disciplined architecture approach.

People architecture addresses a number of tough challenges faced by every employer today:

- Staff retention issues that are more severe than usual
- Persistent tech skills gaps
- Inconsistency in how job titles are used and multiple levels of jobs created without true distinctions in the work performed
- Difficulties finding and hiring specialized multidimensional workers with seemingly endless variations of IT, business, and 'soft' skills, knowledge, and experience
- Salary compression issues: balancing pay for new hires with pay for long-timers
- Short-term thinking: an inability to clearly forecast skills requirements for the next 12-36 months.
- Tech gurus who don't want to be promoted into management roles---so they leave
- Murky career paths and incentive plans that are no longer effective
- Constant, unprecedented struggle to accurately determine pay for IT talent. Difficulty correctly pricing jobs to 'true market'
- Proliferation of independently created jobs that don't align very well to IT organization roles that are themselves ill-defined.
- Outdated and/or inaccurate job descriptions

For employers, people architecture can mean improved individual and team performance and more predictable execution, more consistent availability and quality of skills and workers, higher utilization rates, and optimized resource supply/demand management. For IT professionals, it can mean more tangible career paths, more useful feedback on how they fit into the overall IT and business mission, and less confusion about job options. And we hear stories about better morale.

Foote Partners has successfully introduced People Architecture practices to private and public-sector employers, creating consistency in job classification and compensation across an enterprise and streamlining people management practices.

IT Compensation, Skills and Workforce Management

Our compensation and skills services are typically anchored in two areas: (1) our People Architecture methodology and tools, and (2) our firm's industry-leading proprietary IT salary/skills compensation benchmark surveys and IT workforce management and market trends research database.

Advisory and retainer relationships incorporate our quarterly updates to our long running *IT Professional Salary Survey™, IT Workforce Trends Series™, IT Skills and Certifications Pay Index™, IT Salary+Skills Pay Survey ™* reports, *IT Skills Demand and Pay Trends Report, IT Skills Volatility Index*, and *IT Skills and Certifications HOT LISTS Forecast* are augmented by:

- Regularly scheduled research briefings conducted by Foote Partners senior analysts.
- Ad hoc research and analytical reports.
- On-demand customized briefings in response to client-defined queries; and
- Unlimited on-demand telephone inquiries.

Many of the firm's advisory contracts focus on these topics:

- Independent external views on building and managing IT human capital resources including FTE/PTE; skills sourcing; contractors; consultants; permatemps, mentoring and coaching; skills COE.

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IT Compensation, Skills and Workforce Management – cont'd.

- Independent external views on managing IT skills; jobs; careers models/paths; knowledge transfer (boomer "brain drain"); training and development; performance; internal/external recruiting; retention, etc.
- IT skills pay (current, trending)
- IT skills demand analysis
- IT jobs/roles demand analysis: highest demand, in decline, etc.
- Job evaluation; updating job descriptions; redefining and/or introducing new IT jobs
- Projections: jobs and skills (1, 3, 5 years)
- IT salaries and trending
- Bonus and incentive programs
- Total rewards
- Salary compression
- Global staffing views, especially 'hot spots' (e.g., India, China)
- Retention and professions programs

Business, IT and HR Initiatives. We have a depth of experience advising organizations across many industries and cultures, in a variety of business, IT and HR initiatives and disciplines including:

- Agile Compensation models
- Tech People Architecture framework
- Advanced Analytics/Big Data
- Artificial Intelligence/Machine Learning
- Audit, Control, Governance
- Business Intelligence; Data Warehousing; Data Management
- Business Process Improvement
- Business Transformation Capability Planning and Management
- Business Value Measurement, Analytics and Management
- CIO/IT Executive Management
- Cloud Computing
- Collaboration, Workflow and Productivity
- Cyber Security
- Digital Transformation
- Enterprise Architecture
- Enterprise Project Management
- HR Systems
- IT Human Capital Management
- Managed Services (SaaS, PaaS, IaaS)
- International HR Management, incl. expatriate and specialty HR program development and management IT Executive/Professional Salary, Bonus, and Skills Compensation Leadership Development
- Mobile platform computing
- Organizational Change/Transition Management
- Process Improvement/MOC
- Quality management (ITIL, CMM, Lean Six Sigma)
- SAP/ERP
- Service-oriented architecture
- Six Sigma
- Social Media
- Staffing Augmentation
- Stakeholder Planning and Management
- Succession Planning
- Total Rewards/Workforce Retention
- Virtualization, VDI, virtual appliances
- Web-oriented architecture (WOA)

Market and Competitive Intelligence

Our analysts, consultants, and associates have produced custom market and competitive intelligence research in a variety of technology-related subjects ranging from supply/demand forecasting and analysis to subject matter expertise in every area of managing a technology workforce.

Our market and competitive intelligence consulting typically fall within the following competency areas:

- Market Intelligence and Analysis
- Competitive Benchmarking
- Market Research and Analysis
- Opportunity Analysis
- Market Planning and Strategies
- Product/Service Assessments
- Organizational Assessments
- End User Requirements
- Strategic Planning
- Business Planning
- Risk Assessment
- Product Positioning
- Pricing and Cost Analysis
- Customer Satisfaction
- Cost/Benefit Evaluations
- Due Diligence
- Stakeholder Analysis, Planning and Management

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Notes

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