



PRESENTATION
GUILD

The Presentation Guild

2021 State of the Industry and Salary Survey Report

May 2021

Introduction

Founded in 2015, the Presentation Guild is a nonprofit association with the core objective of advocating for presentation professionals. One of our first initiatives as an organization was the creation of the Guild's **State of the Presentation Industry and Salary Survey**. This benchmark empowers our community members to feel confident in their value as presentationists and the value of presentation work overall. This year we're publishing our third edition of the report.

In late 2020, we fielded a 26-question, opt-in survey designed to track the compensation, education, and work life of presentation professionals. We received **214 responses** representing **26 countries**. Although respondents were self-selected, through these surveys we are starting to see relative consistency across our demographic attributes and employer situations.

For this report, we asked about the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on our workload and pay. Many of us were not significantly impacted by the pandemic—good news for our industry.

To all who completed the survey, thank you for contributing your experience so that our industry can continue to prosper.

A special thank you to our volunteers who made this report possible:

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Key findings

What is a presentationist?

We define a presentationist as anyone who creates, supports, or delivers presentations.

Who are we?

As in the previous surveys, we slightly skew female (55%) and half belong to the Gen X cohort (41–56 age group).

What do we do?

Sixty-four percent of presentationists are focused on presentation design/creation. Only 37% of us have “presentation” in our title. Both of these numbers are higher than our previous survey.

Who do we work for?

Thirty-nine percent of presentationists are employed by a company/organization versus 36% who are self-employed. An additional 16% fall under both.

What benefits do we have?

Most of us have medical coverage (87%) and retirement benefits (84%). Fewer have working perks like an expense account (45%), travel stipend (51%), and liability insurance (52%).

Where do we work?

Forty-two percent of presentationists primarily worked from home before the pandemic. This number skyrocketed to 89% during COVID.

How do we receive our work?

Our clients are our biggest supporters being a major source of work and referrals.

How much do we work?

Our median hours worked is close to a standard work week. Forty percent of us are spending over 75% of our time with presentations.

What is our education?

Most of us have a college degree (86%) and actively seek out presentation training (95%).

How much do we earn?

Our median 2020 income was \$78K USD, skewing higher than the last survey. Our median hourly rate is \$75 USD.

How did COVID-19 impact us?

Most of us felt COVID did not have a significant impact on our workload (44%) or salary (50%).

What presentation software do we use?

PowerPoint is our primary software, although Google Slides is seeing a rise in users.

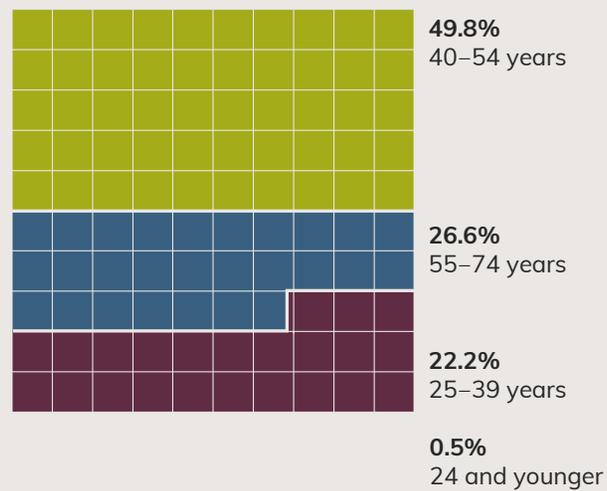
What other tools do we use?

Email, Office 365, Zoom, DropBox, and OneDrive are the services with the greatest adoption.

Demographics

Today's presentationists are most likely to be Gen X (40–54) women with a median 18 years of experience working with presentations. These findings align closely with the results of the previous survey.

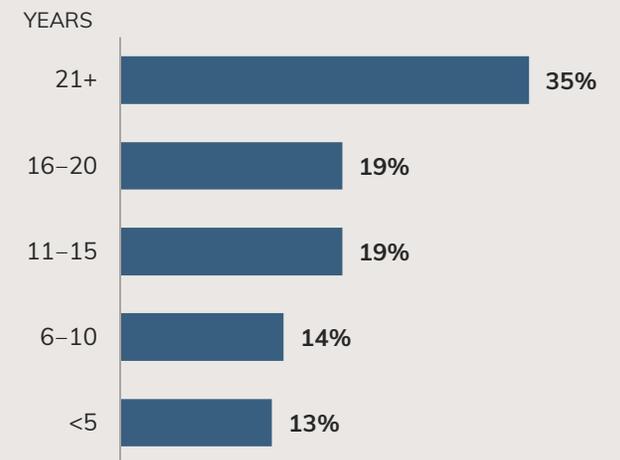
What is your age?



With which gender do you most identify?



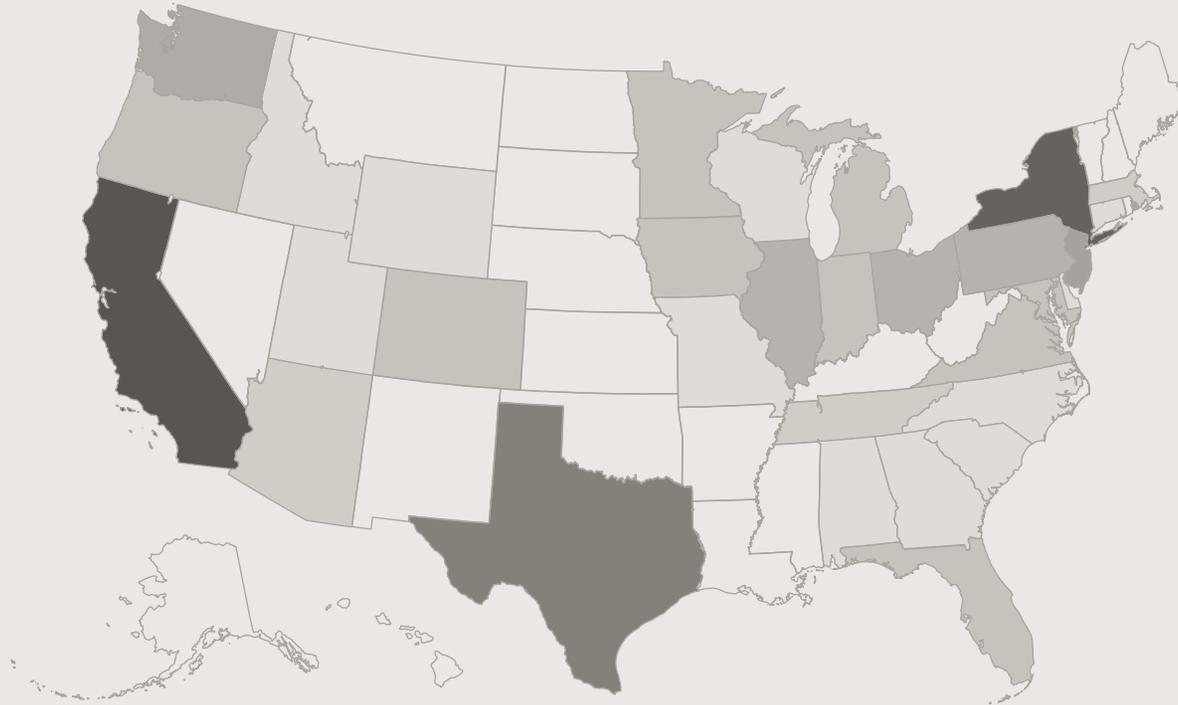
How many years' experience do you have working with presentations?



Demographics

Once again, we solicited responses from a global audience for the Guild's **State of the Presentation Industry and Salary Survey**. Sixty-five percent of respondents live in the United States.

Where is your work location?



Note: Darker values represent a denser survey respondent population.

Demographics

The majority of us from outside the US are from the United Kingdom, Canada, and India.

Where is your work location?



Note: Darker values represent a denser survey respondent population.

Job title

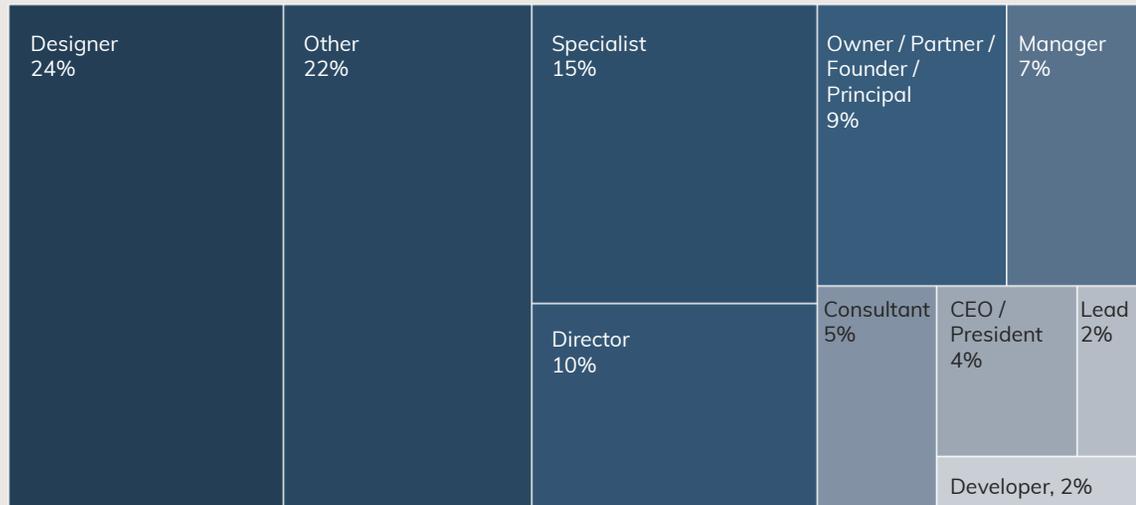
For this report, we did a deeper analysis of the similarity and differences of our job titles.

The most common titles are Designer (24%), Specialist, (15%), and Director (10%). Additionally, 16% of us have an executive-level title. Only 8% had a unique descriptor. These variances in titles highlight the diversity of the presentation community. Although presentation work is often aligned with design work, only a quarter of respondents were labeled designers.

Over a third of respondent's titles (37%) use the descriptor "presentation." This result represents a 36% growth over our last report. Other common descriptors are "managing" (11%) and "graphic" (8%).

What is your job title?

Title of position



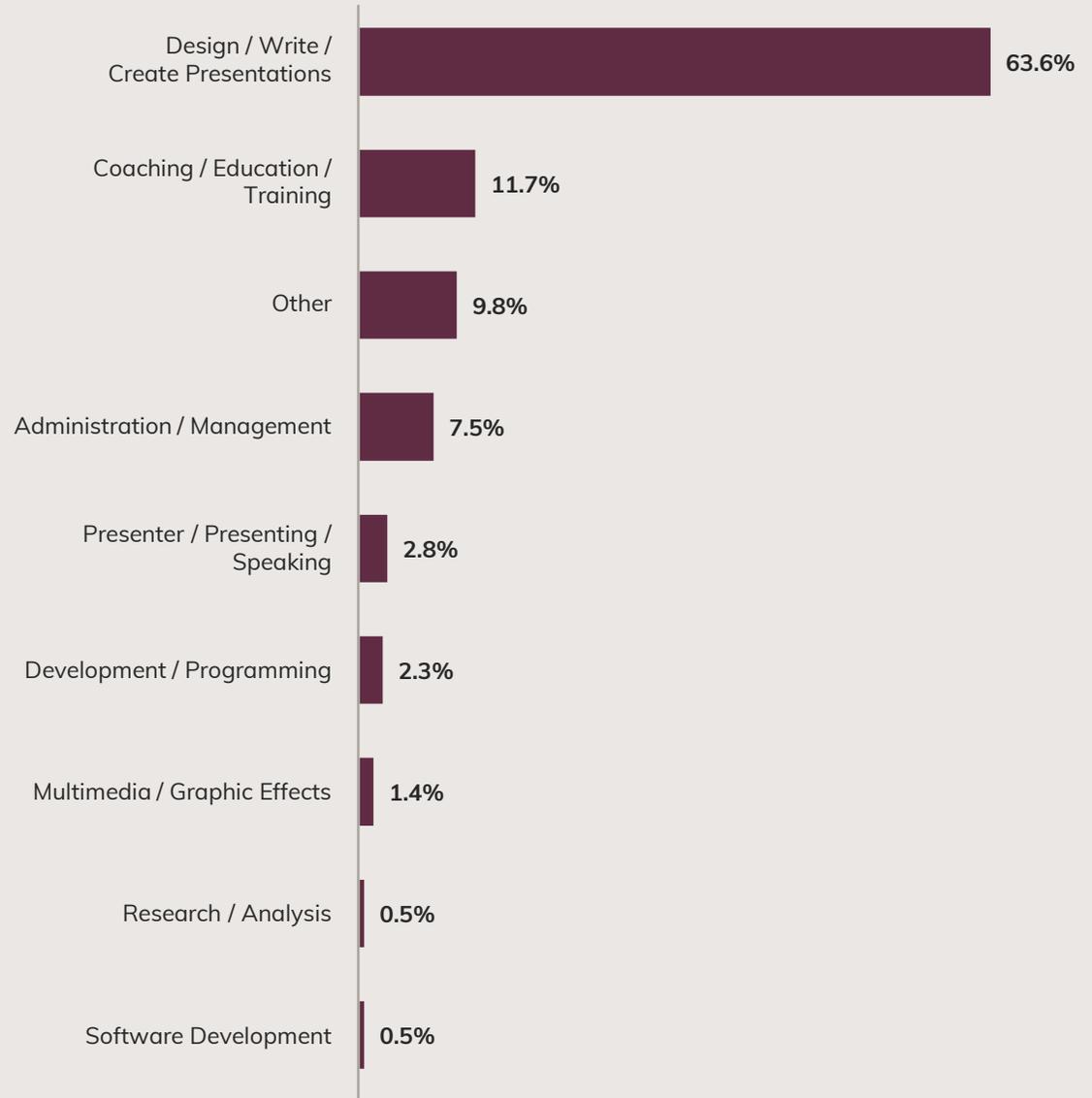
Descriptor of position



Job concentration

Nearly two-thirds of us (64%) create presentations as our primary function, whether through design or writing. The other two areas that continue to be at the top are coaching / education / training (12%) and administration / management (8%).

What is your main area of concentration?

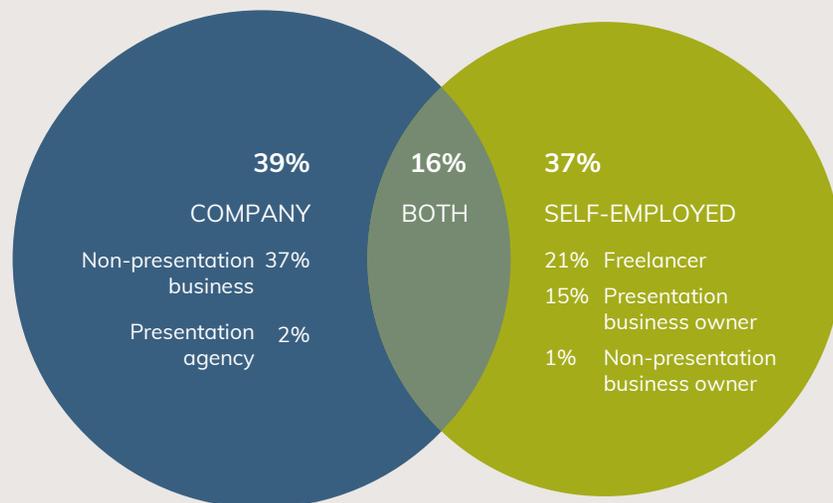


Main employer

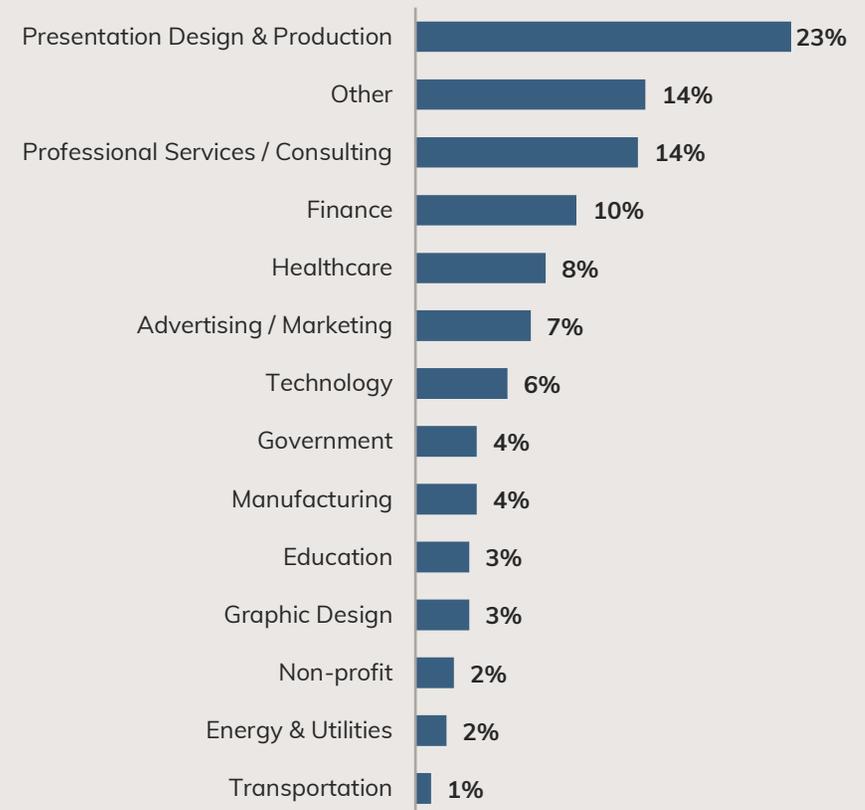
Employment for presentationists is split almost evenly between working for a company (39%) and working for themselves (36%). An additional 16% of us work in both worlds.

The top two industries our employers fall into continue to be presentation design and production (23%) and professional services / consulting (14%). This year, we saw a rise in respondents who work in finance (10%) and healthcare (8%).

Choose the one that best describes your employment.



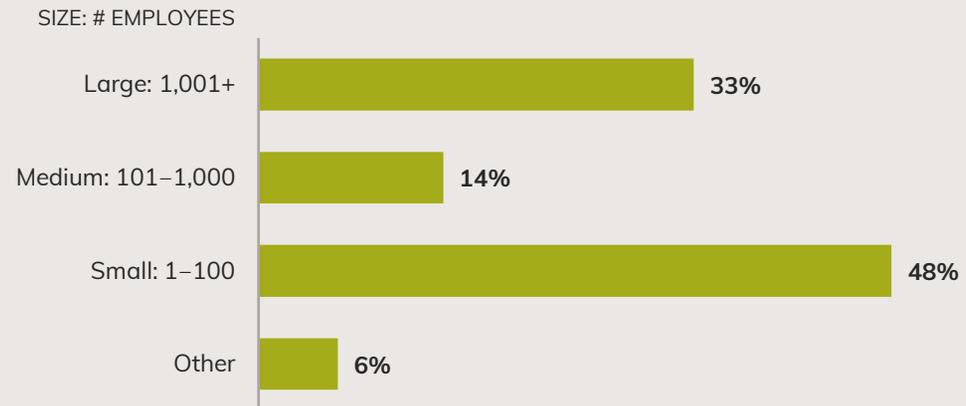
What industry describes the work of your MAIN employer?



Main employer

Nearly half of us (48%) work for a small company, an organization with less than 100 employees. Similar to previous surveys, we tend to work for either small or large organizations

How many employees are employed by your MAIN employer?



Benefits

Benefits are more accessible to those of us who work for a company, but some benefits we can get through other means such as a spouse, a client, or independently.

The most common benefits we receive from companies are telework (71%), paid leave (65%), and work / life (62%).

In contrast, the benefits we are most likely to buy ourselves are development / education (26%), retirement (25%), and life and disability insurance (25%). The benefits we are least likely to have regardless of employer are profit sharing, stocks, and expense accounts.

Wherever you do presentation work, if you are employed part-time or full-time (30+ hours/week), what benefits are offered to you from that organization?

BENEFITS	Employer provides all or part of this benefit	I buy this benefit independently	Other source	I do not receive this benefit
Telework	71%	19%	2%	11%
Medical	58%	20%	9%	14%
Retirement	56%	25%	3%	20%
Life & Disability Insurance	53%	25%	2%	22%
Work / Life	62%	16%	1%	22%
Development / Education	54%	26%	1%	22%
Paid leave	65%	9%	0%	26%
Health & Wellness	49%	21%	3%	29%
Liability Insurance	32%	19%	1%	49%
Travel Stipend	35%	12%	4%	49%
Expense Account	33%	10%	1%	57%
Profit Sharing / Stocks	25%	13%	1%	62%

Work environment

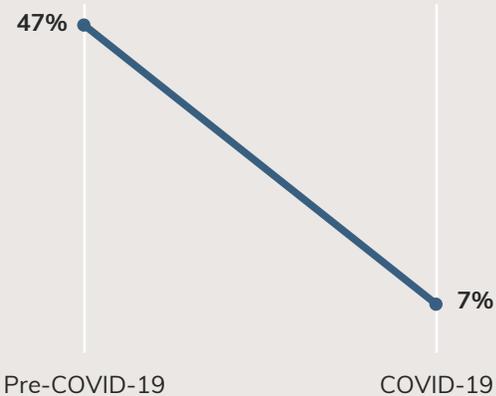
Before COVID, presentationists were slightly more likely (+29%) to work in a company office than any other place. With many of us being wholly or partly self-employed, 82% of us did at least some work in a home office.

The work environment changed with COVID. Now 89% of us do most of our work from a home office. According to a report by Gallup*, this is significantly higher than average. With two-thirds of workers preferring to work remote, the share of work done at a home office will most likely stay high post-pandemic.

*[Gallup: COVID-19 and Remote Work: An Update](#)

What percentage of your time would you estimate you spend in the following environments when you work on presentation-related work?

Business / Company / Organization Office



Like workers in other fields, many presentationists shifted from working in business, company or organization offices to home offices.

(Charts show respondents who indicated they spent 50% or more of their time in each location)

Home Office



Sources of work

As expected, most of our work comes from either our company (47%) or existing clients (27%).

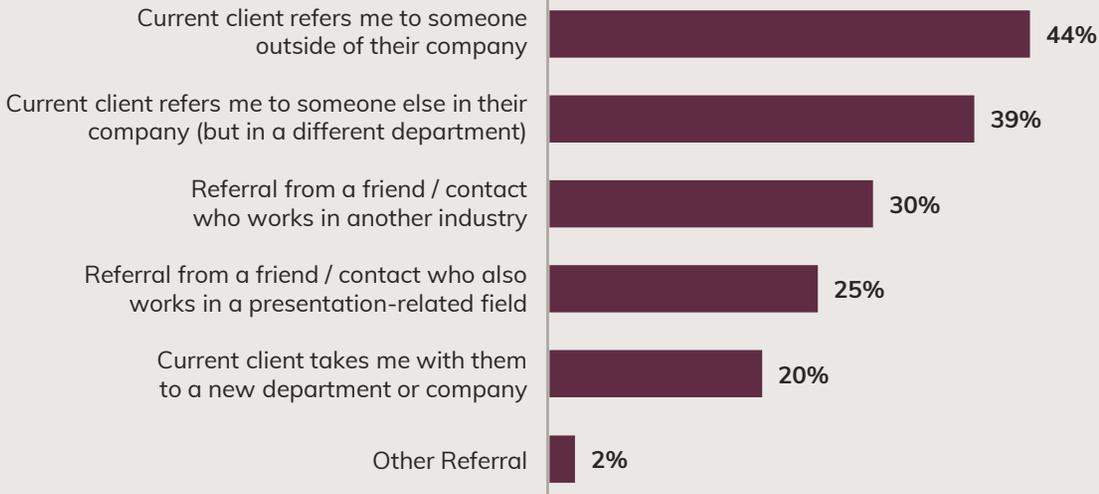
Nearly half of us (48%) find work through referrals / word of mouth, with current clients being our top advocates with both external (44%) and internal (39%) parties.

Not many of us are finding work through social media, and if we do, it is primarily through LinkedIn (14%).

About how much of your work comes from each of these sources?

WORK SOURCES – % OF WORK	100%–76%	75%–51%	50%–26%	25%–1%	N/A
Existing client(s)	16%	11%	16%	15%	42%
My boss or others in my company assign it to me	42%	5%	5%	3%	46%
Referral / Word of mouth	1%	2%	8%	36%	52%
My website / blog / podcast, etc.	1%	0%	1%	16%	81%
Events (meet-up / networking / conference)	0%	0%	1%	13%	85%
LinkedIn	0%	0%	1%	13%	86%
Job board	0%	0%	1%	3%	96%
Other social media	0%	0%	0%	2%	98%

If you get work by referral or word of mouth, how does that usually take place?

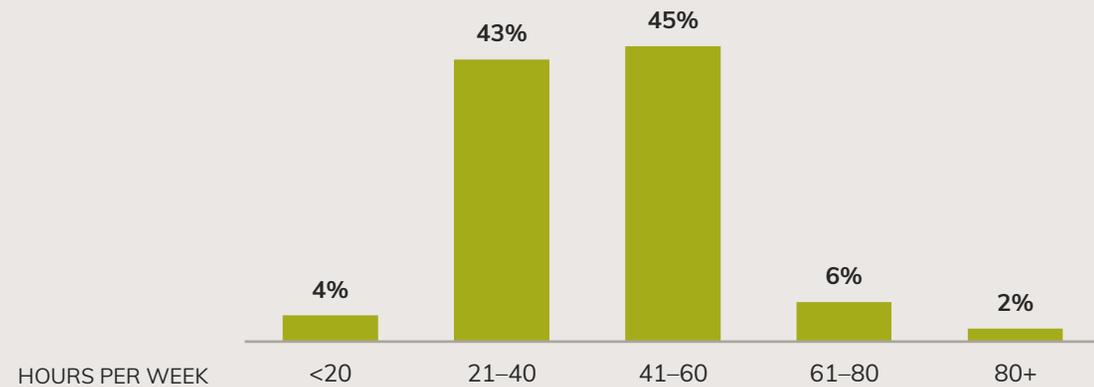


Time spent

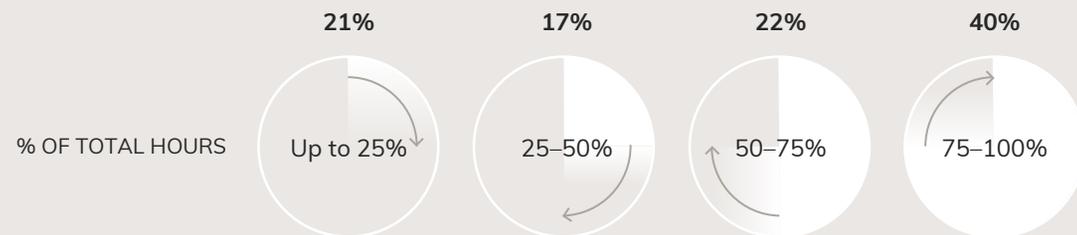
Presentationists are a hard-working group, especially in 2020. The majority of us (88%) work between 20–60 hours a week. Our median work week is 45 hours. In the 2020 industry report, we were 39% more likely to work over 40 hours a week.

Presentation-related work accounts for much of what we do. Almost two-thirds of us spend over 50% of our time on presentations. This is a positive sign that presentation work is being recognized as a stand-alone business need.

Overall, about how many hours do you work in a typical week?



What percentage of your work hours is spent on presentations?



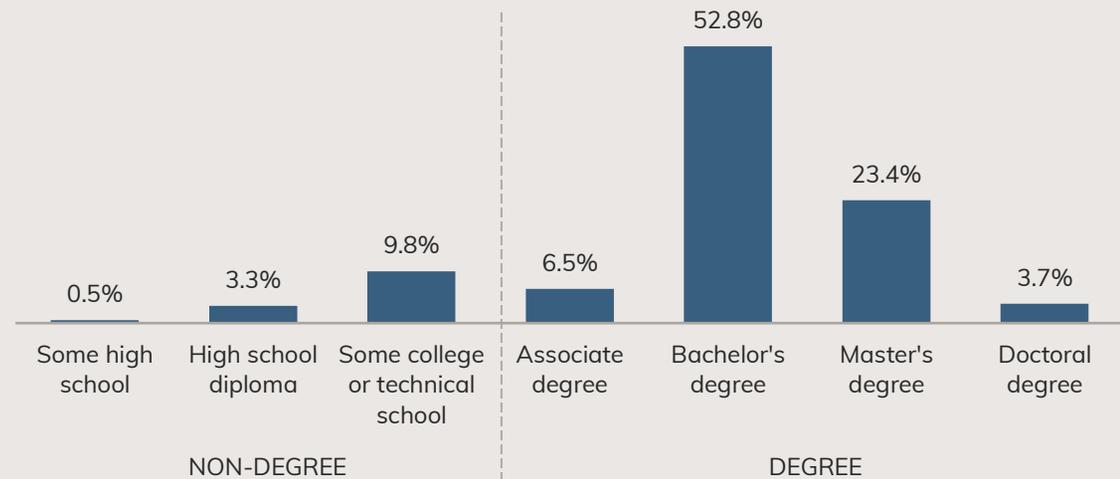
Sources of knowledge

The presentation community is well educated, with 86% of us having a college degree. This number has grown slightly since the first survey (82%).

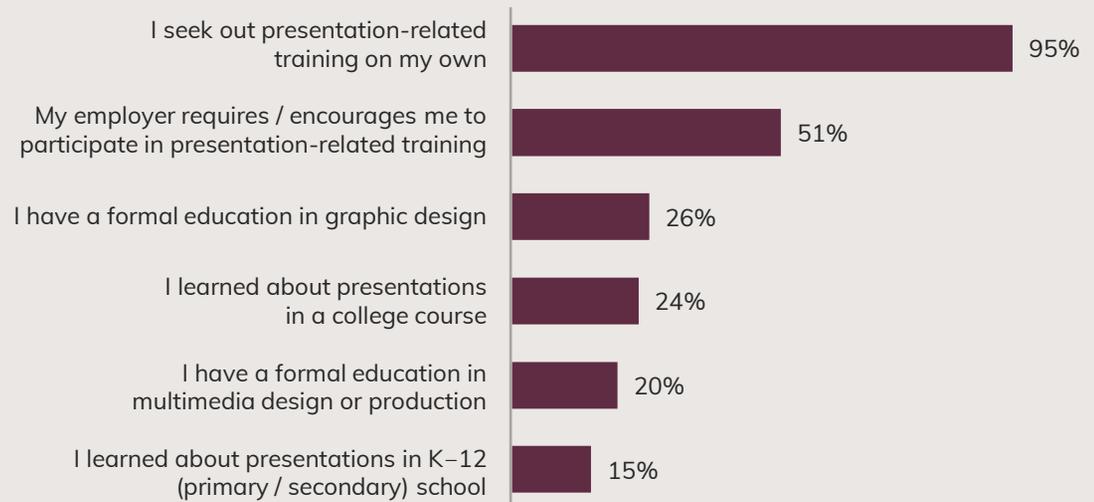
It is important to note that only a quarter of us have formal education in design or production. This suggests many of us had not planned to be presentationists and reaffirms the uniqueness of our industry.

Almost all of us (95%) are actively seeking out presentation-related training. This is not surprising as opportunities for formal education in presentations are still limited.

What is the highest level of education you have completed?



Presentation-related training



Annual salary and hourly rate

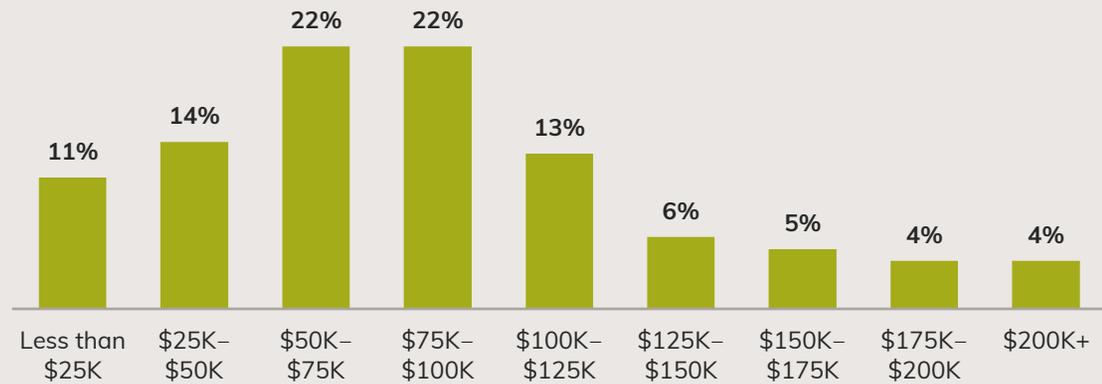
Similar to previous years, a large portion of us (44%) earn \$50,000–\$100,000 USD annually. This is on par with comparable findings from the annual survey by the American Institute of Graphic Arts (AIGA). A high share of us (31%) expected to earn more than \$100,000 USD in 2020.

The median income was \$78,000 USD, with women having a slightly higher median at \$80,000 USD. However, men are 48% more likely to earn \$100K+ USD.

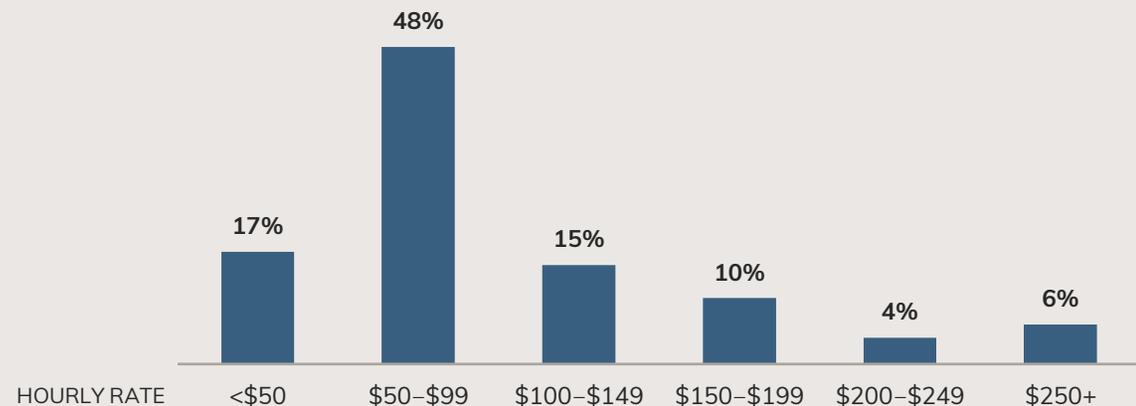
For those of us that charge by rate, most fall in the \$50–\$99 USD per hour range (48%). The median rate was \$75 USD.

Note: All values were converted to USD using the most recent currency exchange rates.

What do you project your annual income (salary) will be for 2020?



If you do presentation-related work and charge a client an hourly rate, how much do you charge per hour on average?



Impact of the COVID-19 pandemic

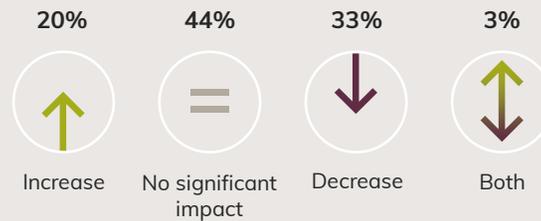
In this year's survey, we asked respondents about the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on their employment status and pay.

Overall, most of us felt no significant impact to employment or pay. Nearly one in four of presentationists actually saw an increase in work/pay in 2020 due to COVID. As the business world shifted from in-person to virtual meetings, polished presentations became more in demand.

Research from IBM* found that one in five job switchers in 2020 did so voluntarily. For some of us, the pandemic opened up new opportunities for employment and increased pay. When comparing 2019 to 2020 salaries, 48% of us saw an increase in salary.

**What Employees Expect in 2021: Engaging Talent in the Shadow of COVID*

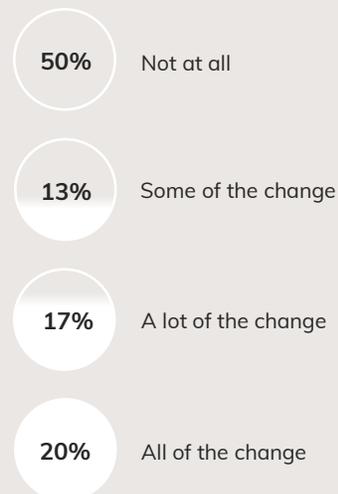
Has the COVID pandemic affected your employment status?



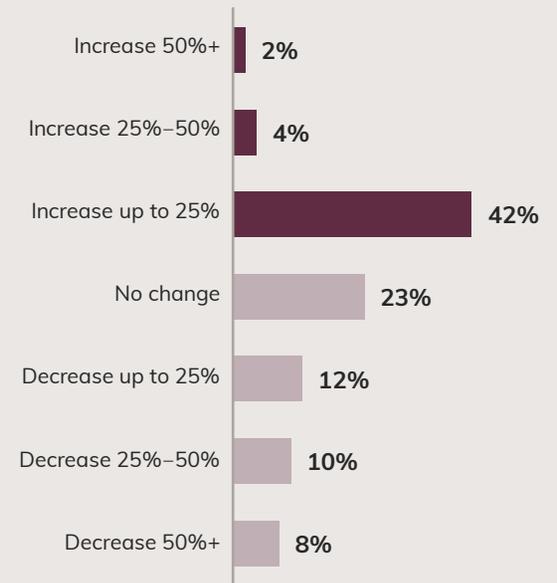
Has the COVID pandemic caused you to change your hourly rate?



To what extent is the COVID pandemic responsible for the change in your salary from 2019 to 2020?



Change in salary from 2019 to 2020



Presentation tools

The survey found that all presentationists, to some extent, interact with PowerPoint. Google Slides has seen an increase in adoption with nearly one in four of us using it at least some of the time.

Although still not widely used, Canva has seen a growth in users since the last survey. When asked what other software we use for presentations, Adobe products was a common response.

To what extent do you use each presentation software?

SOFTWARE USED	Frequently	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
PowerPoint	96%	3%	1%	0%
Google Slides	6%	17%	33%	44%
Keynote	8%	13%	27%	51%
Prezi	0%	6%	25%	68%
Canva	3%	8%	19%	70%
Other Tools	1%	1%	4%	95%

Other tools

A presentationist may use various tools in addition to presentation software for their projects. In our report, a few stood out as popular across functions. (Survey respondents could choose more than one answer for this section.)

Microsoft Office products have wide adoptions in general. OneDrive is the preferred tool for file storage (57%). Microsoft 365 / PowerPoint is the second choice for virtual presenting (65%) and collaboration (57%). Over half (53%) of us are presenting using Microsoft Teams.

Email is the preferred method for file transfer (83%) and collaboration (76%), being used in some capacity by 97% of us.

Dropbox is the second choice for file storage (47%) and transfer (52%). Zoom is the preferred tool for virtual presentations (77%).

Which of these tools do you use and for what purpose?

TOOLS USED	File Storage	File Transfer	Virtual Presenting	Collaboration	Do Not Use
Email	20%	83%	4%	76%	3%
Microsoft 365 / PowerPoint	40%	30%	65%	57%	12%
Zoom	1%	2%	77%	48%	13%
Microsoft Teams	18%	24%	53%	56%	28%
Dropbox	47%	52%	1%	18%	31%
OneDrive	57%	38%	3%	19%	35%
Google Drive / Google Slides	42%	33%	12%	33%	39%
SharePoint	38%	30%	2%	28%	49%
WebEx	0%	1%	38%	18%	56%
GoToMeeting	0%	0%	26%	12%	70%
Box	18%	20%	1%	9%	72%
Google Meet	1%	1%	13%	12%	78%
SlideShare	4%	2%	3%	3%	91%
Prezi / Prezi Video	0%	0%	7%	3%	91%
Other Tools	6%	12%	22%	12%	76%

The survey results reinforced the Presentation Guild's existing goals and guided us to embrace new ones.

The Guild continues to promote the value of presentation skills. We advocate for presentationists to ensure the business community recognizes our profession through standards-based certification programs and industry best practices.

The Guild's membership is almost evenly divided between full-time employees and contract or part-time workers. We are committed to supporting the needs of both groups.

Presentation-related positions within organizations need well-defined job descriptions and consistent titles. The Guild is helping businesses to realize the value of hiring skilled presentationists.

During the global pandemic, traditional full-time positions took on a nomadic nature with more presentationists working outside the standard office. While everyone hopes the current situation will improve worldwide, presenters will want to keep evolving their skills to better conduct remote work, meetings, conferences, and webinars. The Guild will continue to provide training and activities that support learning opportunities focused on virtual workspaces and presenting.

Presentationists cannot count solely on a social media presence to increase their business. The Guild continues to help members and prospective employers find each other through our focused job boards, discussions in our forums and private Slack channel, and networking opportunities.

The use of Google Slides, although still a minor contributor to our overall activity, has increased in the last year and could soon become a valued skill for presentationists. Look forward to the Guild developing more support materials and training for those who create and present from web-based presentations.

The Guild is committed to capturing and analyzing robust data from our community and generating more reports like this one to elevate our industry. Most importantly, we will continue being an advocate for all presentation professionals.

