

ASBPE 2000-2001 Salary Survey



**American Society of
Business Publication Editors**

**Report to ASBPE members
and survey participants**

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July 2001**

To determine the salary levels, working conditions, and general job attitudes of business editors in the United States, the **American Society of Business Publication Editors** periodically conducts surveys of its members and other editorial staff of business publications.

ASBPE national board members developed the survey in the spring of 2001 and sent it, in two separate mailings, to a total of 1,800 business press editors. A total of 280 usable responses were received for an overall response rate of 15.6%. Publishers, sales personnel, and freelance writers were not included in the sample. ASBPE members represented 41% of respondents.

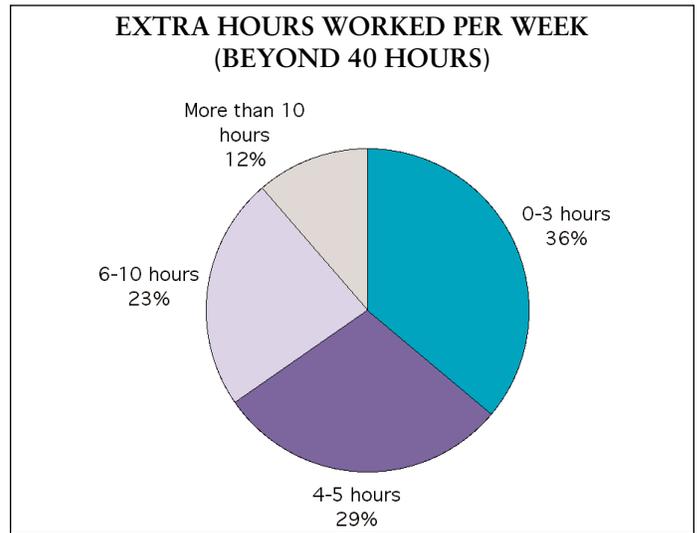
In order to report representative figures* where salary levels are examined, we've aggregated responses into editorial leadership (editor-in-chief, editor, editor/publisher, editorial director), senior editorial staff (executive editor, senior editor, managing editor), and other editorial staff (features editor, production editor, associate editor, news editor, web editor, technical editor, copy editor, assistant editor, editorial assistant, and other titles).

JOB RESPONSIBILITIES

Job responsibilities do not vary significantly among survey respondents. A significant majority (67%) are only responsible for one magazine, and almost all (87%) oversee fairly small editorial staffs of zero to 5 people.

Not surprisingly, over half of respondents reported that they spend 26% or more of their time editing. Writing and research occupy other major blocks of time, as does responding to phone calls and e-mail.

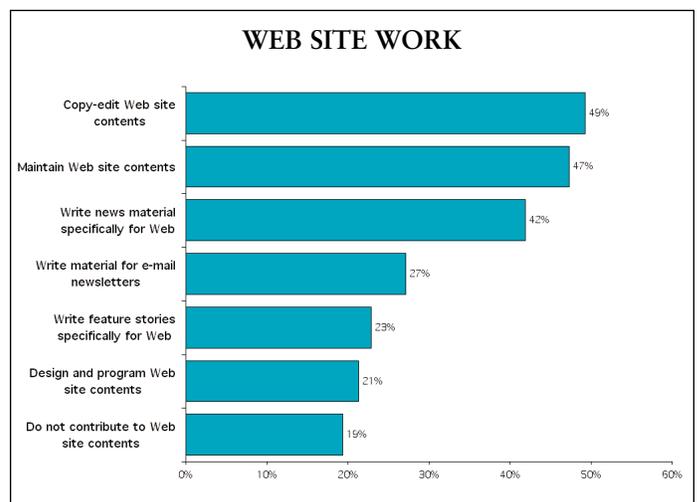
While the popular media reports that work life continues to eat away at most Americans' leisure time, most members of the business press (65%) continue to work a modest 45 hours per week or less. Only a small percentage (12%) burn the midnight oil, clocking 50 hours or more per week.



MAGAZINE WEBSITES

Today, when business and professional people need information, they turn to the Internet where they can tap into current industry news or the article archives of most business publications. Only a fraction (7%) of respondents to this year's survey report that their publication does not yet have a website.

Most business publication websites contain re-packaged editorial material, marketing and advertising sales information, and original news or brief stories. Of course fresh material is key to keeping the hit rate growing for any website. With this goal in mind, a fair percentage (42%) of respondents report that they have posted original feature material to their online media outlets.



Ten years ago, few editors could have guessed how much time they'd spend in the electronic realm. Today, a significant amount of editors time is spent copy-editing and simply maintaining their websites' content. Only one out of five have managed to avoid these additional duties.

AVERAGE AND MEDIAN SALARIES		
Classification	Median	Mean
Editorial leadership	\$65,001	\$64,911
Senior editorial staff	\$55,001	\$52,125
Other editorial staff	\$37,501	\$39,428
All	\$55,001	\$56,571

SALARIES

Looking at salary ranges by aggregated job titles, most of those in editorial leadership (57%) positions earned over \$60,000 in 2000.

Approximately 17% of these people earned more than \$90,000 for the year. Just one in five of those in senior editorial positions earned more than \$60,000 last year.

There is a considerable pay range within job title classifications. For example, 11% of editor-in-chief/editors earn \$40,000 or less, while 8% rake in an annual salary of \$100,000 or more. Factors that influence this range include experience, number of positions supervised, and magazine revenues. Salary ranges kick up significantly the higher a publication's circulation.

Calculating averages and medians using the median value of the salary ranges reported by respondents (\$20,000 or less = \$20,000; \$100,000 or more = \$100,000), those in editorial leadership positions earned an average of \$64,900 in 2001. Senior editors earned an average of \$52,100, and other editorial positions an average of \$39,400.

Contrary to the current situation (mid-summer 2001), 2000 was a good year for advertising sales

in many markets. With an average increase of 7.2%, annual raises ran well ahead of inflation. Robust advertising page counts also contributed to a high percentage of respondents receiving salary increases (83%), and year-end bonuses (56%). Of those who received bonuses, almost two-thirds were for a larger amount than in 1999.

JOB LIKES AND DISLIKES

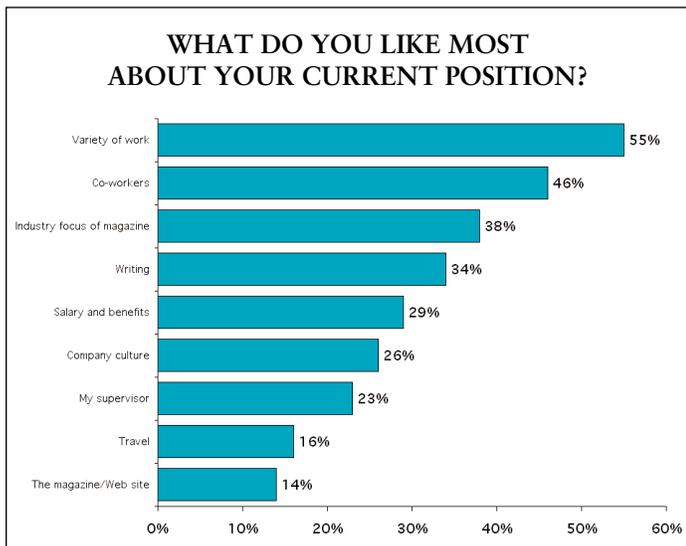
When asked to identify the top three things they like most about their work, business publication editors singled out the variety of their work, their co-workers, and the industries they cover. Only 34% of respondents put writing in their most favored activities.

Few respondents reported that they liked the travel required for their jobs. Travel was actually the number three thing that business editors dislike most, preceded by salary and benefits, and company culture. Speculating a bit, the wide pay disparity between editorial and sales staff, and ongoing recognition at the corporate level of sales over editorial achievements, probably accounts for some of this rancor. But as long as advertisers drive revenues (read forever) this is unlikely to change.

LARGER COMPANIES, HIGHER CIRCULATIONS, HIGHER REVENUES = HIGHER SALARIES

At all responsibility levels, respondents working for companies with more magazines, magazines with larger circulations, and magazines with higher revenues reported higher average salaries.

	Number of magazines		Circulation		Revenues		All
	1 to 10	11 or more	<50,000	>50,000	<\$2.5 million	>\$2.5 million	
Editorial leadership	\$60,059	\$70,477	\$60,886	\$74,908	\$58,594	\$80,001	\$64,911
Senior editorial staff	\$48,489	\$55,059	\$48,232	\$57,735	\$48,672	\$55,715	\$52,125
Other editorial staff	\$38,834	\$40,131	\$36,581	\$42,644	\$36,685	\$44,543	\$39,428



Interestingly, 14% reported that they did not like their magazine/website. On their survey forms, those checking this box frequently highlighted the website portion of this selection, indicating that percentages might have been even higher if these two items had been separated.

WORKPLACE ISSUES

Almost 70% of respondents say that continuing education is important to them. To keep their skills sharp, however, most editors have to look outside their companies. Only 25% reportedly offer the training internally that respondents feel they need. About half of respondents' companies cover the cost external training.

While only one in five business press editors reported some difficulty finding freelance writers, twice as many say they have trouble finding good freelancers. A similar percentage (42%) say they have problems finding good staff writers.

Disturbingly, one in three respondents to this year's survey believe that advertisers impact the editorial content of their books. Further evidence of irresponsible journalistic practices: 20% of business press editors report that their magazine publishes articles without first verifying the facts.

When prioritizing their job responsibilities, editors of business publications believe their

number one purpose is to provide information to help their readers do their jobs better. Well over half of respondents emphasize getting information to their readers quickly, and being a spokesperson for their magazine.

AGE, SEX, AND EDUCATION

As in previous years' surveys, disparity between the salaries of men and women continues to be a fact of life—just as it is in most industries.

Although women represent over half of all respondents this year (a first!), they only account for 41% of editorial leadership positions (editor-in-chief, editor, editor/publisher, editorial director). For women in these positions, salaries are about \$10,000 less than men.

While gender bias has been widely demonstrated in academic studies, experience, education, and tenure also influence salary scales. Again, looking at just the editorial leadership positions, 75% of men in these jobs report 11 or more years of professional journalism experience. Only 52% of women reported similar experience.

	Mean	Median	Percent
Male	\$69,983	\$65,001	58.6%
Female	\$58,577	\$55,001	41.4%
Total	\$64,911	\$65,001	100.0%

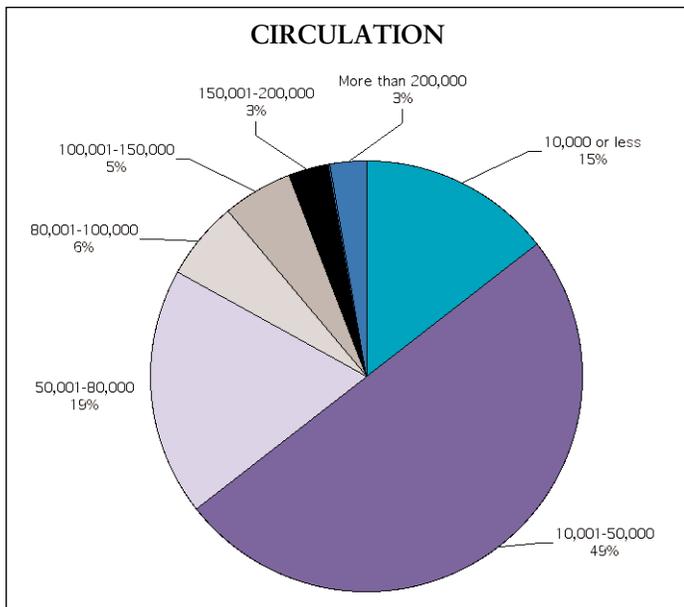
On a general basis, women continue to make dramatic inroads. In this year's survey, the ratio of women to men was 51:49 percent. In 1997 the ratio was 49:51 percent. Five years prior to 1997 it was 43:57 percent; and ten years prior it was 40:60 percent. The average annual salary increase for women last year edged out men by a few percentage points.

Almost all business editors have earned some kind of academic degree, with 96% possessing a bachelor's degree or higher. Journalism and English majors account for two-thirds of those working in the business press.

MAGAZINE AND COMPANY PROFILE

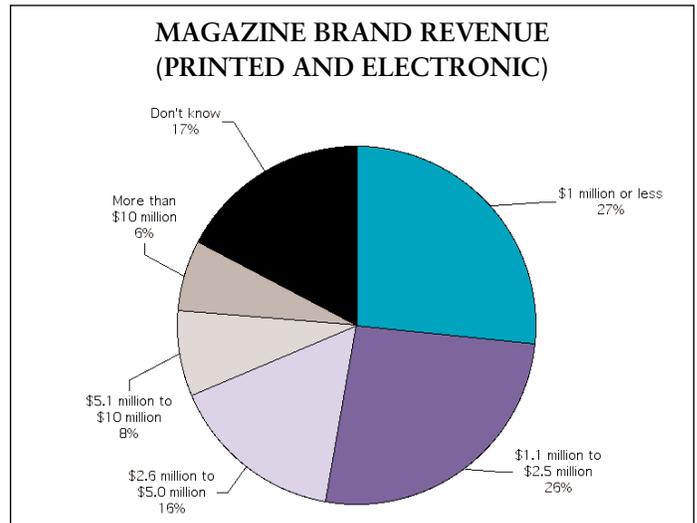
Reflecting perhaps the consolidation within the business press, and the proliferation of more and more vertically focused supplements and quarterlies, 41% of survey respondents work for companies with more than 20 magazines in their portfolio. Still, there is a fair percentage, 17.5%, of single-publication organizations.

Looking at individual publications, over 80% have a circulation of 80,000 or less. Only 3% have a circulation greater than 200,000. A healthy majority (68%) are monthly, but weekly, biweekly, bimonthly and other frequencies are also represented in the survey returns. Most publications (71%) have full-time editorial staff of 5 people or less.



A quarter of respondents reported total magazine brand revenue, including both printed and electronic advertising mediums, of \$1 million or less. Another quarter reported revenues from \$1.1 million to \$2.5 million. A small proportion of respondents (6.4%) reported annual revenues exceeding \$10 million, roughly corresponding to the percentage of 150,000-plus circulation publications.

A surprisingly large number of people responding to this year's survey (17%) don't know their publication's annual revenues. That could be interpreted positively or negatively, depending on



your view of the separation of the editorial and business functions of the press. Tangentially, two out of five respondents don't believe their jobs are secure. Maybe that's because so many do not know the key indicator of their long-term employment potential.

** Examining the breakdown of job titles, this year's respondents are not representative of a cross section of all job classifications within the business press. Over half of respondents have job titles of editor-in-chief, editorial director, or other similar top-level positions. While the general magazine profile and attitudinal questions are representative of the business press as a whole, individual salary levels by specific job titles are not as meaningful. We regret the failure of this year's survey to gather more-detailed salary information and have taken steps to insure that future efforts will be more successful.*

Why become a member of ASBPE?

Here are just a few of the reasons:

1. ASBPE is your voice
2. Annual publications conference
3. Editorial, graphic, web awards competition
4. Newsletter
5. Salary survey
6. The ASBPE website
7. Local chapters
8. Online membership directory
9. Member discounts
10. Job fairs

For details on any of the above, please visit the ASBPE website, located at www.asbpe.org. We look forward to welcoming you as our newest member!