



PRESS RELEASE

MFA CENSUS REVEALS DECLINE IN TALENT CHURN & CONTINUED GROWTH IN MEDIA AGENCY POPULATION

13 February 2024: The media agency industry has successfully reduced industry churn as the number of professionals employed in agencies continues to grow, according to the annual MFA Industry Census released today.

Delivering a robust health check of the industry, the annual Census reveals that as at September 2023 staff numbers in media agencies are up 2% year-on-year, with MFA agency members employing **4,778 people**, compared to 4,685 people in 2022 and 4,412 people in 2021.

A dramatic reduction in staff turnover saw regrettable loss drop to 26.0% (versus 32.6% the year prior), while the number of people leaving the industry dropped to 13.1% from 17.3% a year ago.

This brings media agencies significantly closer to the MFA's goal of reducing the number of people leaving the industry each year to 11% by 2025, as part of re-building pride in the industry through the launch in 2022 of the industry purpose *We Are The Changers*.

The vacancy rate in agencies has dropped to 7.2% (versus 8.5% the year prior) but remains higher than the normal level of circa 6% vacancy. If all vacant roles in media agencies were filled, the industry population would reach 5,120 people. The most in-demand roles continue to be in Implementation, Client Service and Performance.

While Sydney remains the biggest market by far, with 56% of all roles, Brisbane's share of the population grew 10% to 8.1% of all roles. Melbourne's population recorded a more modest increase, to now represent 28.3% (versus 27.0% the year prior).

The proportion of women leaders has risen to 47% of all management roles held by women (up from 46%). On the equal pay front, the Census shows that women are paid 3% less than men in the same roles, a reflection of the higher concentration of men in some specialist functions and in-demand roles.

Additional data collected from a DE&I survey in partnership with Mediai also found that 29.58% of media agency employees speak a language other than English at home, while 5.68% are living with a diagnosed disability or special need. Culturally, 52% identify as Australian, with European and Asian backgrounds being the second and third most common, and 9.4% of industry employees belong to the LGBTQ+ community.

Agency employee tenure has improved slightly, with employees staying with their employers for an average of 2.8 years (up from 2.5 years).

Other noteworthy employee profile statistics:

- 62% of employees are female (unchanged from 2022)
- On average 32.7 years old (32.1 years in 2022)
- 7.8 years' industry experience (7.0 years in 2022)

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

Linda Wong, Director People at the MFA, said: “The MFA Census reflects an industry in great health, with all key metrics showing signs of continued improvement. Over the past five years, we’ve seen a 25% growth in population, which is a remarkable result against the backdrop of economic uncertainty, offshoring and the rise of AI affecting all industries. Also worth mentioning is a notable increase in Analytics and Creative Services roles, showcasing the industry’s adaptability to evolving client needs.”

MFA CEO Sophie Madden added: “Showing sustained industry growth and positive movement across so many important metrics, the MFA Census provides proof that agency and industry initiatives are having the desired effect of instilling pride in our people, tackling vacancy rates, and reducing industry churn. Notably, the growing number of ‘boomerang’ recruits – individuals returning to the industry – reflects a promising trend. I believe we’re on the right path for more positive change ahead.”

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About the MFA

The Media Federation of Australia (MFA) is the peak body representing media communication companies. The MFA is a non-for-profit organisation established in 1997 with a current membership base that represents over 90% of all media billings placed by media agencies in Australia. The MFA’s vision is to encourage operational excellence in the field of media communication connections and to define and develop best practice standards to support its members and the role they play in servicing their clients.