

The Modern Copywriter: What Employers Expect From Copywriters in 2026

An Analysis of 230 UK and European Copywriting Job Adverts



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Executive Summary

This report analyses 230 English-language copywriting job adverts published across the UK and selected European markets during the first half of 2026. It examines how employers define copywriting roles.

Using The BNC Analysis Framework™, the research combines structured quantitative coding with qualitative narrative analysis to identify recurring patterns across industries, seniority levels and role types.

The report focuses on the expectations employers communicate when recruiting copywriters. It explores how responsibilities are framed, which capabilities are most frequently requested and how the language used in job adverts describes the role.

Employers consistently described copywriters as contributing beyond writing alone. Responsibilities combined writing with project ownership, cross-functional collaboration and commercial accountability. Strategy, AI and storytelling featured prominently throughout the adverts, alongside a broad range of complementary marketing and business skills.

The findings provide a practical benchmark for copywriters, hiring managers and organisations who want to understand what employers currently value. They also establish a baseline against which future editions of this research can be compared.

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Key Findings

The Role of the Copywriter Extends Beyond Writing

Across 230 job adverts, writing was consistently presented as one part of a broader set of responsibilities. Strategy, collaboration, optimisation and commercial awareness appeared alongside writing responsibilities, reflecting a multidisciplinary role. Storytelling was explicitly referenced in around 41% of adverts, highlighting its prominence alongside AI.

Strategy is Embedded Across Responsibilities

More than half (59.1%) of job adverts explicitly referenced strategy, making it one of the most frequently observed patterns in the dataset. Employers commonly associated copywriting with messaging, positioning, customer journeys and content planning, indicating that strategic responsibilities formed part of many copywriting roles.

AI is Presented as a Practical Workplace Tool

AI was referenced in 57.8% of job adverts. Employers primarily described AI as a practical tool for supporting research, ideation, drafting and optimisation. Relatively few roles required specialist AI expertise, with most references positioning AI alongside broader copywriting responsibilities.

Copywriters are Described Through Ownership and Accountability

Across industries and seniority levels, employers consistently used language associated with ownership, accountability and influence. Responsibility verbs such as *own*, *lead*, *shape*, *optimise* and *influence* appeared repeatedly throughout the dataset, describing copywriters as responsible for projects and business outcomes.

Responsibilities Vary According to Seniority

Although writing was mentioned explicitly across all seniority levels, the responsibilities described in the adverts varied according to the level of the role. Junior positions primarily focused on content production within established frameworks, whereas senior and leadership roles placed greater emphasis on strategic contribution, stakeholder influence, mentoring and commercial accountability.



Foreword

LinkedIn posts, YouTube videos and social media discussions offer no shortage of opinions about where the copywriting industry is heading.

In my experience, many of these conversations repeat the same ideas, with relatively few exploring employer expectations in a structured or evidence-based way.

So, rather than asking copywriters what they think employers want, I decided to examine what employers were actually asking for. Job adverts provide one of the clearest public records of employer expectations.

Many online conversations still frame AI as the defining issue facing copywriters, but the job adverts tell a different story. Employers rarely present AI as an alternative to traditional copywriting. Instead, they describe it as one capability among many, alongside strategy, storytelling, collaboration, commercial awareness and, above all, strong writing.

My hope is that this report contributes something useful to the conversation. It offers a structured benchmark that helps copywriters, employers and marketing leaders understand how employers currently define the profession.

Like any research, this report provides a snapshot rather than a definitive picture of the profession. Employer expectations will continue to evolve, and I plan to build on this research through a series of future studies that track those changes over time.

Jamie Thomson, Brand New Copy.

Methodology

Purpose of the Research

This report analyses how organisations define, describe and position copywriting roles through publicly advertised job descriptions. It examines the expectations employers communicate when recruiting copywriters.

The objective is to identify recurring patterns in role expectations, complementary skills, language and recurring industry patterns. These findings provide a benchmark for understanding how the copywriting profession is currently being defined across the UK and selected European markets.

The analysis focuses on identifying observable patterns within employer communication rather than evaluating recruitment approaches.

Dataset Overview

- 230 copywriting job adverts across UK and Europe
- 3 separate 30-day sampling periods from January-June 2026
- Two-phase analysis using The BNC Analysis Framework
- 5 job platforms used

Scope of the Dataset

The research is based on 230 English-language copywriting job adverts collected across three separate 30-day sampling periods between January and June 2026.

To improve the breadth of the dataset and reduce the influence of short-term recruitment activity, adverts were collected during three distinct sampling windows. This approach captures a broader cross-section of recruitment activity while maintaining a manageable and consistent methodology.

Only adverts where the word "copywriter" was used explicitly within the advertised job title were included. This includes variations such as Junior Copywriter, Senior Copywriter, UX Copywriter and Brand Copywriter. Closely related roles such as Content Manager, Content Strategist, Marketing Executive and Social Media Manager were excluded.

The dataset covers vacancies advertised within the United Kingdom, Germany, the Netherlands, Ireland and France. Only English-language adverts were included, allowing consistent comparison across organisations.

The BNC Analysis Framework™

All reports in the Brand New Copy research series use The BNC Analysis Framework™, a structured research methodology developed to analyse professional communication at scale.

The framework combines quantitative coding with qualitative narrative analysis, allowing both measurable trends and recurring language patterns to be examined within large datasets. The analytical framework was designed and finalised before data collection and coding began.

Two-Phase Analysis

The research followed a structured two-phase analytical process.

In the first phase, each advert was manually reviewed and coded using twelve predefined analytical variables: country; source; role title; role type; seniority; industry; working model; salary transparency; strategy references; AI references; storytelling references; salary information. This phase produced the quantitative dataset used throughout the report.

The second phase examined the language used throughout the adverts to identify recurring qualitative patterns that extend beyond structured coding.

Areas analysed included: role framing; responsibility models; strategic expectations; AI framing; complementary skills; specialist copywriting disciplines; seniority patterns; responsibility verbs; emerging role titles; cross-cutting themes.

Each batch of adverts was analysed independently before findings were aggregated across the complete dataset. This two-stage process reduced the influence of individual adverts or sectors and allowed recurring themes to emerge consistently across the research.

Data Processing

Job adverts were collected from five recruitment platforms; LinkedIn, Indeed, Totaljobs, Campaign Jobs and Creativepool.

Each advert was manually reviewed before being coded using structured extraction criteria defined within The BNC Analysis Framework™. Duplicate adverts appearing across multiple recruitment platforms were identified and removed to avoid duplication within the dataset.

Salary analysis was conducted separately from the broader dataset. Although 103 adverts disclosed some form of remuneration, only permanent full-time roles advertising an annual salary were included within salary calculations. Hourly rates, day rates, monthly salaries and non-salary monetary figures were excluded to maintain consistency when comparing advertised salaries.

Interpretation of Findings

The findings presented throughout this report describe observable patterns within publicly available copywriting job adverts.

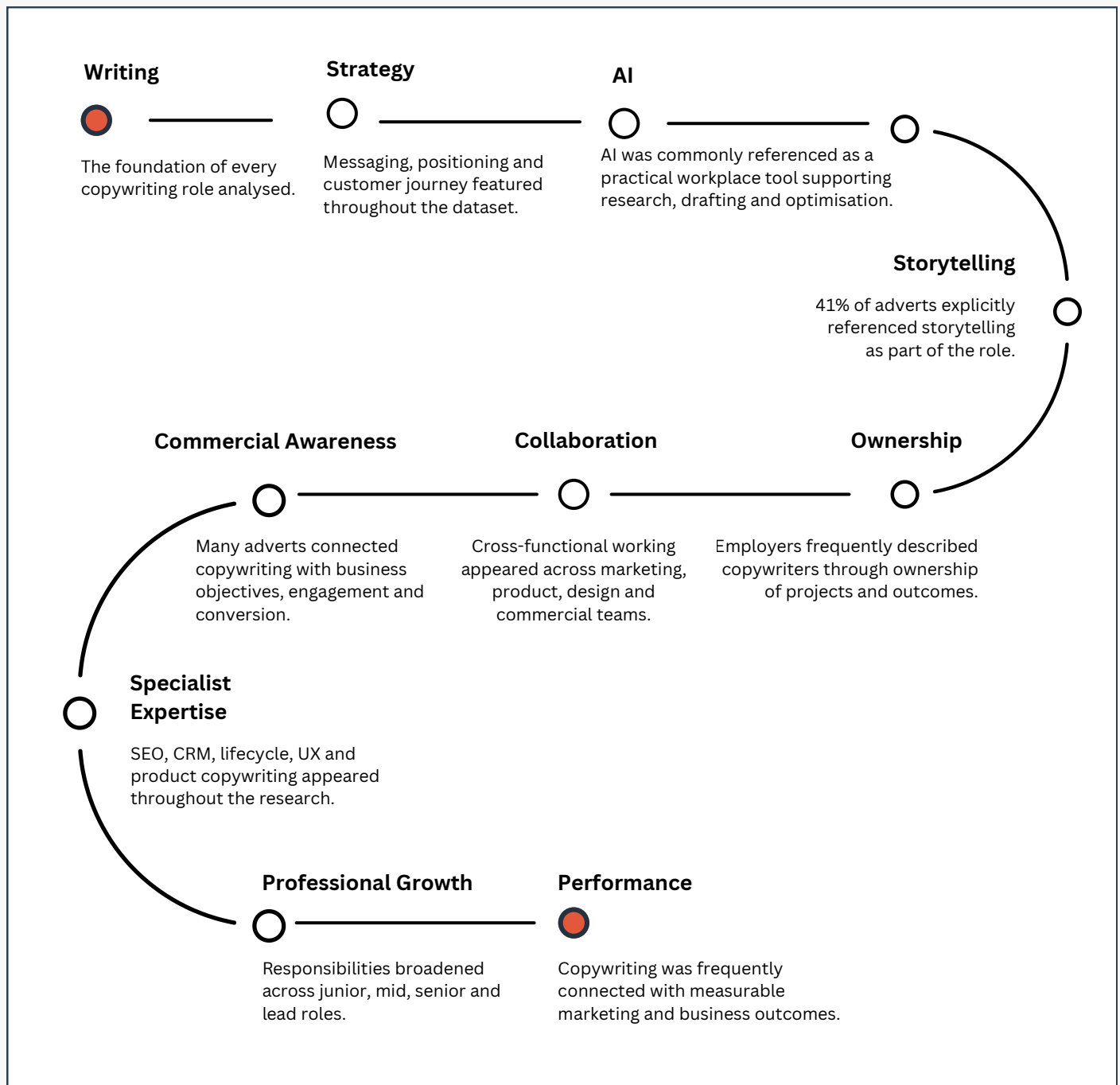
They should be interpreted as evidence of how organisations communicate their expectations, not as indicators of recruitment success, labour market performance or hiring quality. Different employers naturally recruit according to their own business objectives, organisational structures and commercial priorities.

The purpose of the research is to identify recurring signals that describe how employers currently define the modern copywriter.

Limitations

This research analyses publicly available job advertisements, not internal job descriptions, recruitment processes or hiring outcomes. Similarly, the report reflects only information explicitly communicated within published job adverts. Internal recruitment criteria, interview processes and employer expectations that were not publicly disclosed could not be considered.

How Employers Define the Modern Copywriter

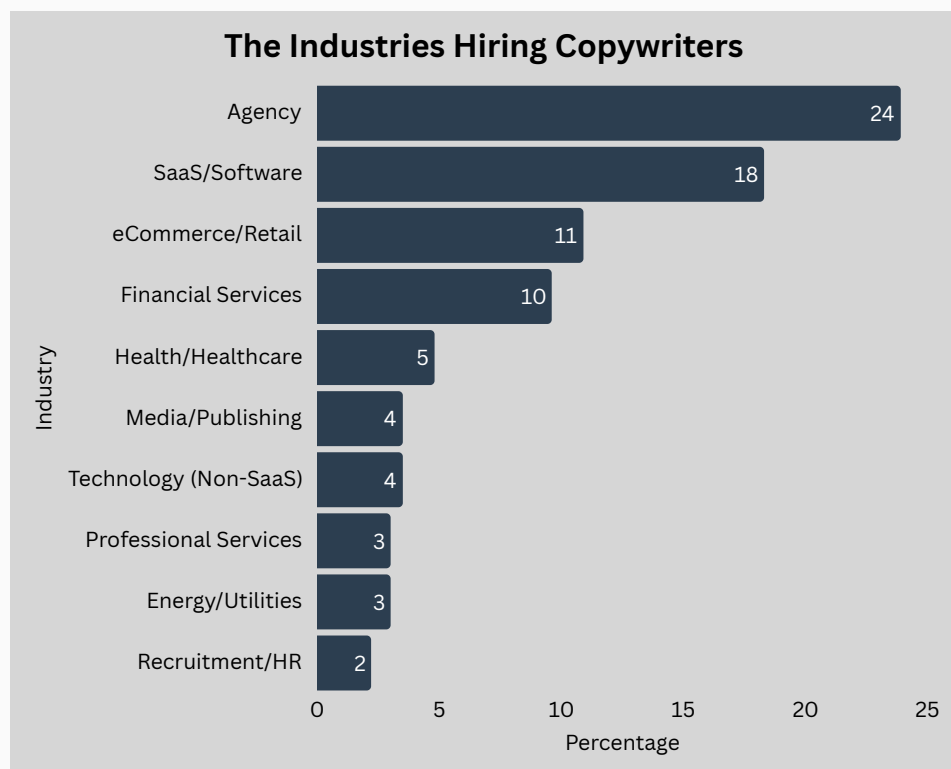


The analysis identified ten recurring themes across 230 job adverts. Together, they illustrate how employers describe modern copywriting roles in 2026.

Where the Copywriting Jobs Are

Agencies represented almost one quarter of all adverts, making them the largest single source of vacancies within the dataset.

Outside agencies, demand was spread across a broad mix of industries. SaaS and software companies represented the largest commercial sector, followed by eCommerce, financial services and healthcare.



Smaller numbers of vacancies were identified within education, manufacturing, property, construction, government, travel, gaming, transport, automotive, sports, FMCG, music and the nonprofit sector, illustrating the breadth of industries represented within the dataset.

How Employers are Hiring

Permanent, full-time employment was the dominant hiring model. Almost three quarters of the vacancies analysed were permanent full-time positions, with considerably smaller numbers of contract, freelance, temporary and part-time opportunities.

Hybrid working was the most common working arrangement. Nearly half of all adverts specified a hybrid model, exceeding both fully remote and fully office-based roles. Hybrid working was the most commonly advertised working arrangement, exceeding both fully remote and fully office-based roles.

The distribution of seniority differed from many other variables within the dataset. More than half of adverts did not explicitly specify a seniority level, indicating that many employers prioritise capability and experience over formal job classifications.

Among those that did, senior-level positions substantially outnumbered junior opportunities, with comparatively few lead or head-level vacancies.

The findings describe how seniority was presented within advertised roles rather than the overall availability of opportunities at different career stages.

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Salary Transparency

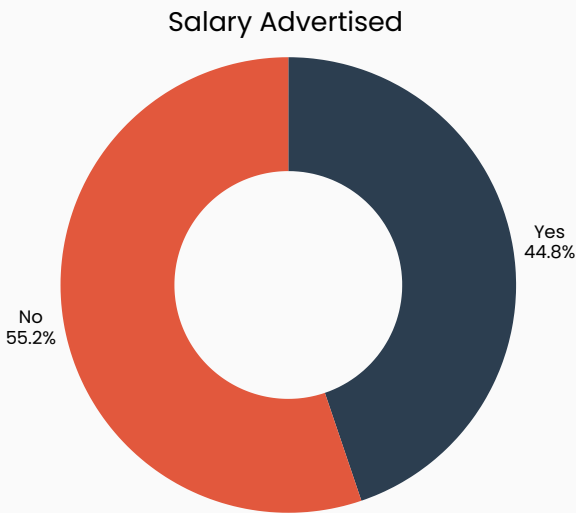
Fewer than half of the adverts analysed disclosed salary information, meaning most applicants would need to progress through the recruitment process before knowing the advertised salary range.

Among permanent full-time roles where an annual salary was disclosed, the average advertised salary was **£36,875**, with a median salary of **£34,500**.

These figures provide a useful indication of advertised market rates, although they should be interpreted cautiously. Salary data was unavailable for the majority of vacancies, and some industries were represented by relatively small samples.

For this reason, the report focuses primarily on overall salary transparency instead of making broad comparisons between industries or seniority levels. For job seekers, it reduces the ability to compare opportunities before applying.

Metric	Figure
Average advertised salary	£36,875
Median advertised salary	£34,500
Lowest advertised salary	£25,000
Highest advertised salary	£58,000
Sample	n = 28 permanent full-time annual salaries



Based on permanent full-time copywriting roles where an annual salary was disclosed. Hourly rates, day rates, monthly salaries and non-salary monetary figures were excluded from the analysis.

Beyond Execution

Writing formed the foundation of every role analysed. Employers consistently sought copywriters who could adapt tone of voice, communicate clearly and produce persuasive content across multiple channels.

Execution and optimisation were frequently paired together throughout the dataset. Many adverts described copywriting as an iterative process in which content was reviewed, refined and improved after publication using performance data, customer feedback or campaign results.

The pattern appeared across agencies, software companies, financial services, retail and eCommerce.

Execution and optimisation frequently appeared together, with many adverts describing copywriting as an iterative process rather than a one-off writing task.

Cross-Functional Collaboration

Cross-functional collaboration emerged as one of the most consistent patterns in the research.

Although most roles were within marketing teams, employers regularly described copywriters working with product managers, designers, CRM specialists, developers, sales teams, legal departments and senior stakeholders.

Copywriting responsibilities extended across product launches, onboarding, lifecycle communications, user experience and internal communications. Collaboration came up consistently across industries, role types and seniority levels.

Cross-functional collaboration appeared consistently across industries and seniority levels.

Ownership and Accountability

Employers consistently described copywriters through project ownership, accountability and broader responsibilities.

Many roles extended beyond writing individual assets to include responsibility for projects from initial brief through delivery, review and optimisation. Ownership frequently included coordinating stakeholders, maintaining messaging consistency and supporting broader business objectives.

Ownership featured more prominently in senior roles, although it was not confined to leadership positions. Mid-level vacancies also regularly included responsibility for managing projects, influencing decisions and improving content performance.

Ownership was closely associated with the scope of responsibility assigned to the role.

Employers frequently described copywriters as owning projects and contributing to broader business outcomes.

The Role of Strategy

Strategy featured in 59.1% of the adverts analysed. Messaging, positioning, campaign planning, customer journeys and content planning were mentioned frequently throughout the dataset, often within the same role.

Employers typically embedded these activities within copywriting responsibilities rather than presenting strategy as a separate discipline.

Many adverts also linked strategic work with understanding audience needs and wider business objectives before producing content. Performance optimisation formed another recurring theme, with employers connecting copywriting to acquisition, engagement, conversion and retention.

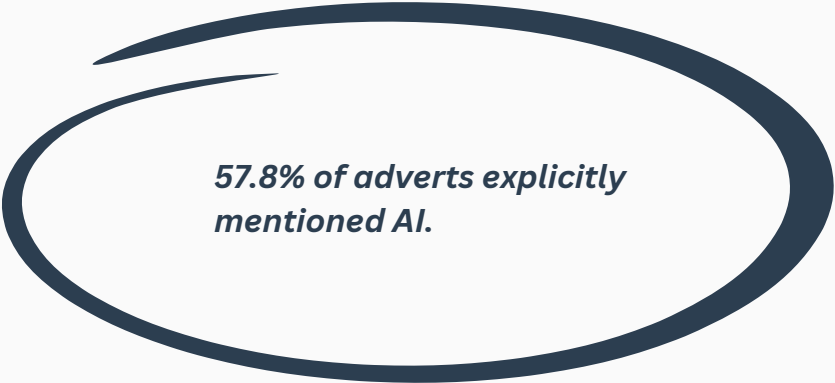


59.1% of adverts explicitly mentioned strategy.

AI in Modern Copywriting

AI appeared in 57.8% of the adverts analysed. Employers most commonly described AI as a practical workplace tool supporting research, ideation, drafting and optimisation. References to AI typically focused on research, ideation, drafting, workflow support and productivity.

Only a relatively small number of roles required advanced AI expertise or AI-specific responsibilities. Instead, employers generally presented AI as one capability within a broader professional skill set.



57.8% of adverts explicitly mentioned AI.

Storytelling as a Core Capability

Storytelling was explicitly referenced in 41% of the adverts analysed. Employers commonly linked storytelling with brand communication, customer engagement and translating complex ideas into compelling narratives.

Alongside strategy and AI, storytelling formed one of the most frequently referenced creative capabilities within the dataset.

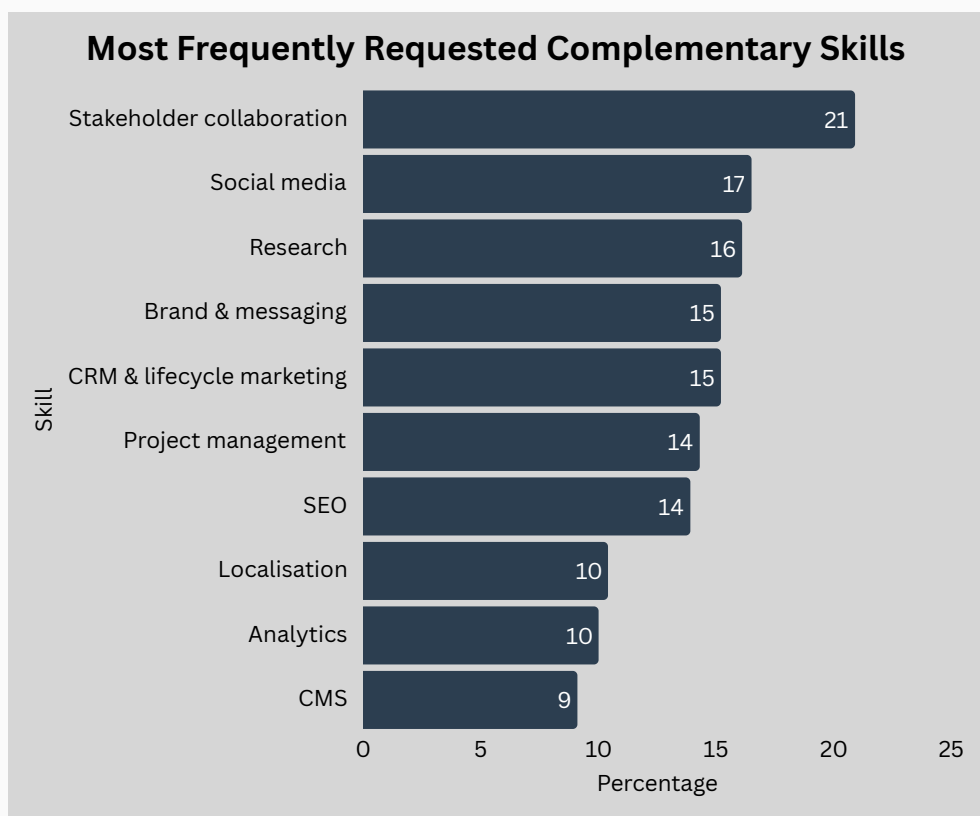


41% of adverts explicitly mentioned storytelling.

Complementary Skills

The chart below shows the complementary capabilities most frequently requested alongside copywriting.

Stakeholder collaboration, social media, research, brand and messaging, CRM, project management and SEO formed the strongest recurring patterns across the dataset.



Beyond the top ten, employers also referenced UX writing and content design (8.7%), conversion rate optimisation (7.4%), creative collaboration with designers (6.1%), eCommerce product content (3.9%), video scripting (3.5%), A/B testing (2.2%) and content planning (2.2%).

Specialist Copywriting Roles

Although generalist copywriting roles were common within the dataset, many employers sought expertise within particular disciplines.

SEO copywriting, CRM and lifecycle marketing, UX writing, product copywriting and localisation appeared throughout the data, illustrating the wide range of environments in which copywriters now work.

The research also identified specialist roles focused on areas such as conversion copywriting, AI evaluation and prompt writing. These represented a relatively small proportion of the dataset but demonstrate the diversity of copywriting roles advertised across different industries.

Although these titles reflect different areas of expertise, they remain rooted in the same core discipline of persuasive communication. The findings suggest employers define copywriting roles by business context and organisational need.

Frequently referenced specialist disciplines included SEO, CRM, lifecycle marketing, UX writing, product copywriting and localisation.

Career Progression and Seniority

The previous sections explored the responsibilities and capabilities employers associate with modern copywriting roles. The dataset also reveals how those expectations vary across different career stages.

Although more than half of the adverts did not specify a formal seniority level, those that did provide a useful picture of how employer expectations differ across advertised seniority levels.

Junior Copywriters

Where junior-level roles were advertised, employers primarily focused on writing capability, attention to detail and a willingness to learn.

These positions typically involved producing content across established formats while working within existing brand guidelines and marketing strategies.

Collaboration with colleagues featured regularly, though responsibility for strategic decision-making or commercial performance was generally limited. Many junior adverts also highlighted curiosity, adaptability and the ability to respond to feedback.

Junior roles primarily focused on developing writing capability within established marketing frameworks.

Mid-Level Copywriters

Mid-level roles represented the broadest range of responsibilities within the dataset.

Employers frequently expected copywriters to manage projects independently, collaborate with stakeholders and contribute to campaign planning alongside content production.

Many adverts also required experience across marketing channels and confidence working within multidisciplinary teams.

Mid-level copywriters were often expected to take ownership of delivery from brief through completion.

Senior Copywriters

Senior roles placed greater emphasis on influence than production volume.

Employers commonly expected senior copywriters to guide messaging, support wider marketing initiatives and contribute to business objectives beyond individual projects.

Many senior positions also included mentoring responsibilities, editorial leadership and greater involvement in strategic planning.

Although writing remained central to the role, employers frequently described senior copywriters as experienced communicators capable of influencing decisions across marketing teams and the wider organisation.



Lead and Head of Copy

Lead and Head of Copy positions represented a relatively small proportion of the data but displayed a distinct change in emphasis.

These roles focused less on day-to-day content production and more on leadership, governance and organisational influence.

Responsibilities frequently included defining messaging standards, managing copy teams, mentoring colleagues and maintaining consistency across products, campaigns or markets.

Commercial accountability also featured more prominently, with employers expecting leaders to support wider business objectives while overseeing creative quality.

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What the Language Reveals

Beyond responsibilities, capabilities and seniority, the language used throughout the job adverts provides another perspective on how employers define copywriting roles.

Across industries, organisations consistently described copywriters using similar terminology. Certain verbs, phrases and job titles emerged throughout the dataset, revealing common expectations that extended beyond individual sectors or organisations.

Ownership is Embedded in Employer Language

One of the clearest linguistic patterns was the emphasis placed on ownership. Employers frequently used verbs such as *own*, *lead*, *deliver*, *manage*, *define*, *shape*, and *influence*.

These verbs consistently emphasised ownership, accountability and influence. They frame copywriters as contributors responsible for guiding projects, supporting marketing initiatives and influencing outcomes.

The pattern appeared across agencies, in-house teams and specialist marketing roles.

Specialist Job Titles Reflect a Diverse Profession

The language used in job titles also illustrates the breadth of modern copywriting roles.

Alongside traditional titles such as Copywriter and Senior Copywriter, employers advertised specialist positions including: UX Copywriter; Product Copywriter; Conversion Copywriter; Lifecycle Copywriter; Content Designer; Narrative Designer; Prompt Writer; and AI Trainer.

Although these roles shared the core discipline of writing, each reflected different organisational priorities and areas of expertise. This suggests employers define copywriting through business context.

Commercial Language Reflects Business Outcomes

Throughout the dataset, employers described copywriting in commercial terms.

References to acquisition, engagement, conversion, retention, growth and revenue were identified across industries, linking copywriting with measurable business outcomes.

Many organisations described writing as one element of broader commercial activity. This language illustrates the close relationship between copywriting, marketing performance and organisational objectives that appeared throughout the research.

Recurring Themes

The language throughout the dataset consistently highlighted three capabilities – strategy, AI, and storytelling. Each appeared across multiple industries, sectors and role types.

Employers frequently described these capabilities alongside one another, suggesting organisations seek copywriters who combine creative communication with strategic thinking and practical use of AI tools.

This pattern reinforces one of the report's central findings: employers described copywriting as a multidisciplinary profession centred on writing and supported by broader strategic, commercial and technical capabilities.

What This Means for Copywriters

This report set out to answer a simple question: What do employers expect from copywriters in 2026?

Across 230 job adverts, a clear picture emerged. Writing is the defining capability across every sector, industry and seniority level. Employers frequently described copywriters as contributing beyond content production alone.

Responsibilities commonly extended into project ownership, collaboration, commercial thinking and strategic contribution, supported by capabilities such as AI, storytelling and a broad range of complementary marketing skills.

Although individual roles varied considerably, employers rarely described copywriting as an isolated writing function. Instead, they presented it as a discipline that combines creative communication with wider organisational responsibilities.

For professional copywriters, these findings provide a practical benchmark of the capabilities and responsibilities employers most frequently request. For hiring managers and organisations, they offer an opportunity to compare individual vacancies against broader recruitment patterns across the market.

This report does not attempt to predict how copywriting will develop in the future. Instead, it provides a structured snapshot of employer expectations during the first half of 2026 and establishes a benchmark against which future editions of this research can be compared.

Ultimately, the findings suggest that employers define the modern copywriter through more than writing alone. They describe professionals who combine clear communication with strategic thinking, collaboration, commercial awareness, storytelling and confident use of AI.



About Brand New Copy

Brand New Copy is a strategic copywriting and messaging consultancy for global brands. The company is led by award-winning copywriter Jamie Thomson, who helps companies define their messaging, strengthen their positioning, and communicate with authority.

The consultancy has produced work for companies like Amazon, Centrica, USAID, Lenovo, the Abu Dhabi National Oil Company, The London School of Economics, EMCOR, and Wood Mackenzie.



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