



2024
eDiscovery
Jobs Report



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LETTER FROM TRU'S CEO

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If 2021 and 2022 were dubbed “The Great Resignation,” then 2023 and 2024 should be called “The Great Recalibration:” recalibration of work-from-home vs. in-office permissions; recalibration of the speed of the interview process; recalibration of salary expectations; recalibration of work culture and employment preferences; and recalibration of what “the new normal” is when approaching the job market.

After three years of post-pandemic recovery, TRU is proud to publish our findings on the recalibrated behavior of hiring managers and job seekers in the eDiscovery industry. TRU's guidance within this EDiscovery Jobs Report is a product of rigorously tracking variables that identify standardizations and define emerging trends and patterns to predict the future state of the eDiscovery job market. This report highlights the most essential findings from TRU's analysis of the last several years and provides key insights into what hiring managers and job seekers can expect for the next several years.

Not since the Industrial Revolution has the American workforce experienced an operational shift as momentous as the post-COVID adoption of remote work. TRU can now definitively say that the new normal is three or fewer days per week in an office, as this arrangement constituted more than 90% of the jobs TRU filled in 2023. A company's remote vs. in-office posture affects its ability to attract and retain eDiscovery talent. This report will give expert guidance on adjusting expectations of the timeline, cost, and likely volume of interested job seekers based on in-office requirements for new hires.

Speed of hire is also a critical variable for hiring managers to understand. It provides predictable timetables for a new hire's impact on profit and loss and signals how long until an eDiscovery job seeker is likely to entertain other offers. Understanding speed of hire metrics allows hiring managers to calibrate their search timeline to compete with other employers. This report will concretely analyze the shifting speed of hire for executives, mid-market professionals, sales professionals, and contract resources, and what the “new normal” is for the time it takes to hire within each of these categories.

This report will also provide salary bands by position across the U.S. for the most frequently hired eDiscovery roles. This is not a salary survey; these ranges are based on actual offers extended and accepted in 2023. Salaries in eDiscovery are a moving target — but so, too, is the caliber of talent that the market more aggressively seeks year after year. Right now, hiring managers want less experienced talent with less aggressive compensation expectations, and that demand will lead to more job opportunities and increased compensation for early career eDiscovery professionals with fewer than five years' experience in 2024.



“Not since the Industrial Revolution has the American workforce experienced an operational shift as momentous as the post-COVID adoption of remote work.”

This report will guide job seekers at all levels of experience toward maximizing earning potential in 2024 and help hiring managers budget for the cost of entry- to executive-level talent acquisition.

2023 also normalized the viability of the eDiscovery gig economy. Just under half of all accepted offers in the project manager, data analyst, and eDiscovery consultant or attorney categories were contract or contract-to-hire last year. Expect more of the same in 2024. The unpredictability of litigation, the peaks and valleys of talent augmentation needs, the fear of hiring the wrong fit, the intensifying pressure for either greater profitability or elevated service delivery, the growing need for follow-the-sun coverage, and the lack of voluminous vertical career mobility for senior mid-market eDiscovery professionals have together created the perfect ecosystem for contract staffing solutions to be preferred, often by both employees and employers.

Both job seekers and hiring authorities in eDiscovery were cautious in 2023. However, the trends of the fourth quarter signal that more talent is needed and being sought by law firms, vendors, and some corporations with an increased sense of urgency. TRU anticipates 2024's eDiscovery job market to have far more movement and opportunity — and at an increased tempo — than it had in the last 12 months. This report will empower job seekers to approach their career informed and inspired while also giving hiring managers and financial stakeholders the market intelligence necessary to budget for and compete to win top talent in eDiscovery.

A handwritten signature in white ink, appearing to read 'Jared Coseglia'.

Jared Coseglia
Founder & CEO
TRU Staffing Partners

THREE DAYS OR FEWER IN-OFFICE IS THE NEW NORM

Requiring three days or fewer in an office from your eDiscovery staff is the new normal. The more fully remote an opportunity, the faster the search, and the more candidates will be available at the employer's desired salary level. The more in-office an opportunity, the longer the search, and the higher the potential cost for talent acquisition. Figure 1 shows the instant shift in 2020 and subsequent adoption of hiring employees in a hybrid capacity by requiring three days or fewer in an office. In 2015, 94% of jobs filled by TRU required four or more days in an office, but by 2023, 92% of offers accepted required only three or fewer in-office days per week.

The shift to three days or fewer as the new normal has had a dramatic impact on how hiring managers must approach talent acquisition and retention. With regard to retention, any increase in in-office requirements for existing employees, whether from fully remote to two days, from two days to three days, or from three days to five days, will lead to employee attrition.

TRU interviews thousands of ESI job seekers each year and ranks the top five reasons they come looking for new employment. The top motivator in 2022 and 2023 was wanting to primarily work remotely from home — typically triggered by increased in-office requirements at their current employer or the desire to work even more remotely than their current employment arrangement. In 2022, 89% of jobs filled by TRU were remote or hybrid. But 69% of that 89% were fully remote. In 2023, 92% of jobs filled were remote or hybrid (a slight increase), but only 38% of that 92% were fully remote.

REMOTE/HYBRID VS IN-OFFICE

based on offer accepted

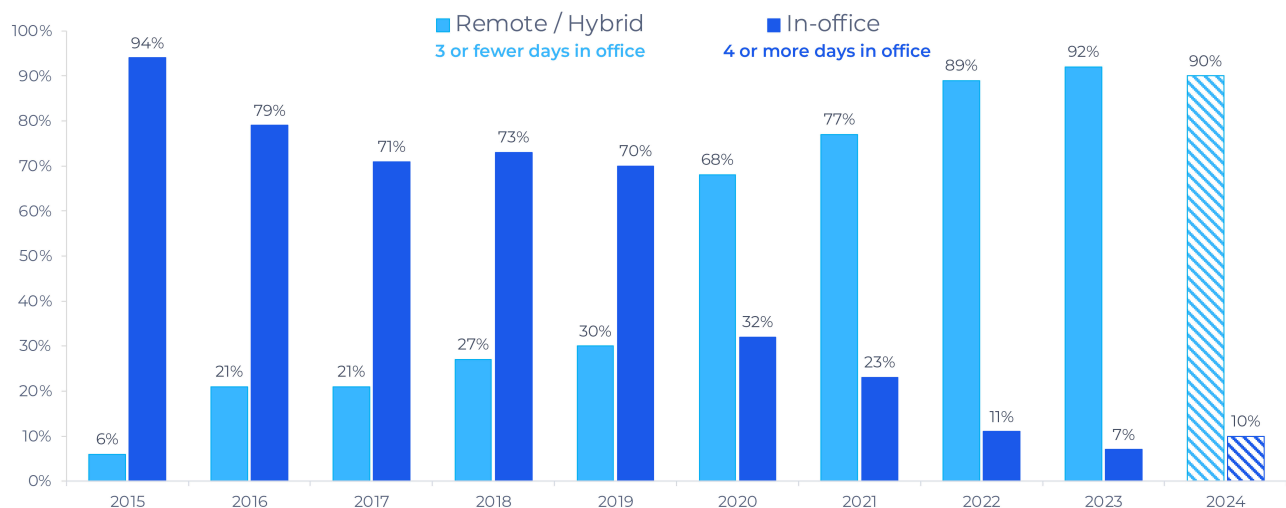


Fig. 1

TOP 5 MOTIVATIONS FOR ESI JOB SEEKERS

2022

1. Remote/hybrid work
2. Mentorship/new leader
3. \$\$\$\$\$\$
4. Upskilling
5. Diversity, equity, & inclusion

2023

1. Remote/hybrid work
2. \$\$\$\$\$\$
3. Unemployed
4. More challenge/opportunity
5. Burnout

By 2023, job seekers who desired fully remote positions increased while the number of fully remote openings decreased. Employers with jobs that were fully remote had a much larger candidate pool from which to choose. This realignment increased competition among job seekers, but decreased competition for employers with fully-remote opportunities, increased their speed of hire, and decreased the cost of talent acquisition for fully remote positions.

Conversely, employers who held firm to four to five days in an office received very few qualified candidates in Q1 and Q2 of 2023. Interested candidates had clear expectations of salary increases directly related to the cost and personal time lost associated with commuting more frequently. TRU tracked that experienced eDiscovery job seekers expected on average a 25% increase in their current base compensation to consider leaving a fully remote position for a hybrid role, and unless unemployed, would not consider a fully in-office position.

By the third quarter of 2023, employers began to downshift in-office requirements from five days to three days, from three days to two days, and some to being fully remote to increase the chances of successfully filling empty headcount. These policy shifts mid-year led to increased compromise from eDiscovery job seekers and an acceleration in the volume of positions vacated and accepted. TRU found that decreasing in-office requirements for new hires from three to two days a week increased the available talent pool by 50% or more in 2023.

TRU projects 90% of offers extended and accepted will be in hybrid or fully remote positions with three days or fewer required in an office in 2024. Ten percent of jobs will require four to five days physically in a location. One of the reasons so many more positions will be filled hybrid is because in-office positions can take up to five times longer to fill, thus fewer get filled over time. For every in-office position TRU filled in 2023, 11 more were filled hybrid. (See Figure 1)

25%

Average increase in base compensation required for a job seeker to leave a fully remote job

90

Additional days needed to fill jobs with a 4-5 day in-office requirement

50%

Increase in available talent by shifting from 3 to 2 days required in-office per week

DIRECT HIRE OR CONTRACT HIRE? BOTH!

One of the recurring ways companies circumvent in-office requirements for direct hire employees is by hiring eDiscovery contractors who are often not held to the same in-office standards. In 2023, there were almost as many job seekers in eDiscovery who took contract roles as there were professionals that accepted direct hire roles.

Forty-three percent of offers accepted in eDiscovery in 2023 were contract or contract-to-hire. This is the highest annual use of ESI contract resources since COVID, with 56% of jobs in 2020 being contract. Contract talent augmentation dropped in 2021 to 34%, with direct hires constituting 66%, as a rebounding US economy created budget and buy in for hiring managers to scale up with full-time employees in an almost 2:1 ratio. Additionally, those “Great Resignation” years forced employers to hire and pay more attention to attrition. Fears of a recession in late 2022 reversed that trend. Since then, utilization of contract talent in eDiscovery has been steadily increasing.

The increased use of contractors over the past three years is the result of growing demand for and supply of contract talent. Job seekers turned to contracting for a variety of reasons, including unemployment, continued industry consolidation, employee dissatisfaction with remote policies, a desire for more control over their career, and to make more money. Hiring managers quickly turned to contractors when direct-hire headcount approval was frozen or insufficiently budgeted to attract the necessary caliber of talent.

The eDiscovery job market’s ability to pivot quickly between direct vs. contract resources indicates a healthy equilibrium between available opportunity and available talent. Figure 2 suggests that that pivot now occurs every 24–36 months. TRU anticipates that 2024 will provide an almost equal amount of direct hire and contract opportunities.

CONTRACT VS DIRECT HIRE FOR ESI

based on offers accepted

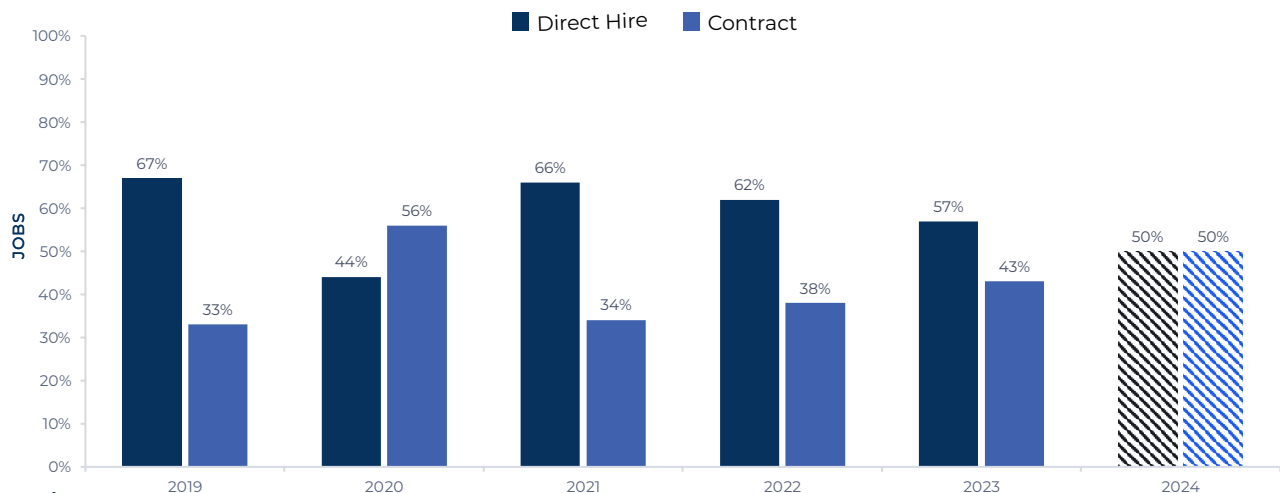


Fig. 2

“TRU contractors often generate the same income in nine months working hourly that they would command in a full-time direct-hire position over the course of a year.”

TRU's guidance to eDiscovery job seekers who feel they've hit the ceiling of growth is to consider the diverse, complex, and financially rewarding opportunities of career-shifting to a lifestyle contract consultant. This is most applicable to subject matter experts, project managers, non-partner tracked ESI attorneys, and deeply technical Relativity professionals. On average, TRU contractors generate the same income in nine months working hourly as they would command in a full-time direct-hire position annually.

TRU's guidance for hiring managers is to consider integrating contract talent into their litigation support department, corporate legal operations, or client service group as a constant part of the organization's service delivery roadmap. The best way to mitigate rapid swings in the economy and the job market, as well as business fluctuations, is to smartly configure when and how to use eDiscovery contract talent. Some talent should be utilized, then released; other contractors may be individuals that the employer wants to convert into a direct hire.

Actively interviewing and engaging a rotating roster of contractors has given TRU's customers a competitive advantage acquiring talent in a contract-to-hire capacity. Over 25% of TRU contractors who started assignments in 2023 were offered conversions within the year into direct hires. Ninety-five percent of those contractors accepted the conversion in 2023.

TOP 5 MOST DESIRED CONTRACTOR SKILLS

1. Relativity Administrator Skills*
2. RelativityOne Processing*
3. Project/Case Management
4. TAR/CAR/Analytics/A.I.
5. ESI Attorney

** The technical skills in highest demand are still within the Relativity ecosystem. To learn more, check out TRU's report, "Relativity Skills' Impact on the eDiscovery Job Market: A Five-Year Analysis."*

DID YOU KNOW... TRU CONTRACTORS GET BENEFITS!

- Health and vision insurance plan
- 401K with immediate eligibility and 4% fully vested matching after 12 months of employment
- Flexible spending account
- Voluntary supplementary benefits
- W-2 employment tax advantages



SPEED OF HIRE

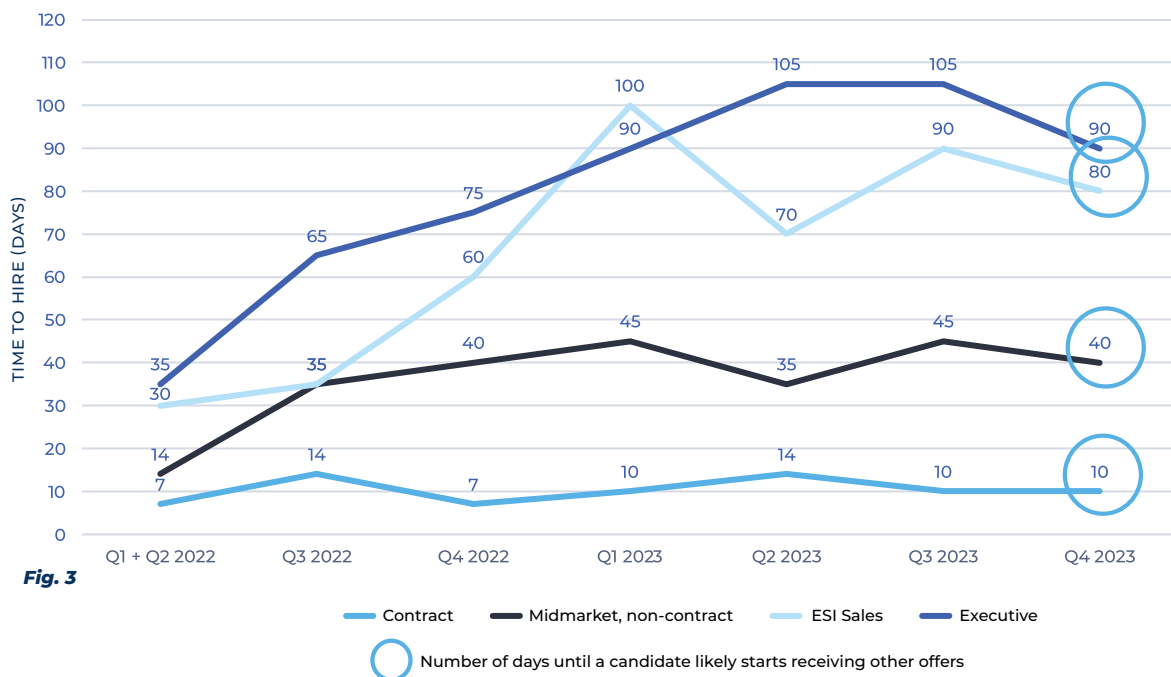
Before the pandemic, in-person interviews for eDiscovery professionals at any level of experience were common, if not required. After the pandemic, the adoption of video interviewing and remote work hyper-accelerated the speed at which organizations acquired eDiscovery talent. For two years in a row, 100% of first-round interviews through TRU have been conducted virtually. Ninety percent of all subsequent interviews have also been virtual. The ability to interview and get access to interviewers — particularly lawyers — faster than what scheduling an in-office interview allows forever changed the speed at which the industry hires.

At the job market's peak competitiveness in early 2022, project managers, analysts, and other mid-market eDiscovery pros were being hired in under 14 business days (see Figure 3). Those same searches prior to the

pandemic could have taken up to 90 days to successfully staff. Executive searches in early 2022 took a record-breaking 35 days on average to fill compared to a six-month search in the years prior to the pandemic. Over the course of 2023, speed of hire for all levels of employees began to slow and normalize. The new normal, however, is significantly faster than pre-pandemic timelines for acquiring talent. Figure 4 shows the speed of hire for ESI professionals in 2022 versus the current speed of hire.

It has taken an average of fewer than two weeks for most organizations to identify and extend an offer to a contract eDiscovery resource for the past two years. Conversely, for mid-market professionals hired in full-time roles, the search process could take four times as long. For executives, the process could be almost 10 times as long.

SPEED OF HIRE FOR ESI 2022 TO 2023 * from resume sent to verbal offer accepted



PRE-COVID SPEED OF HIRE IN ESI

30 DAYS (NOW 10 DAYS)
CONTRACTORS

3-6 MONTHS (NOW 80 DAYS)
SALES

60-90 DAYS (NOW 40 DAYS)
PMS/ANALYSTS

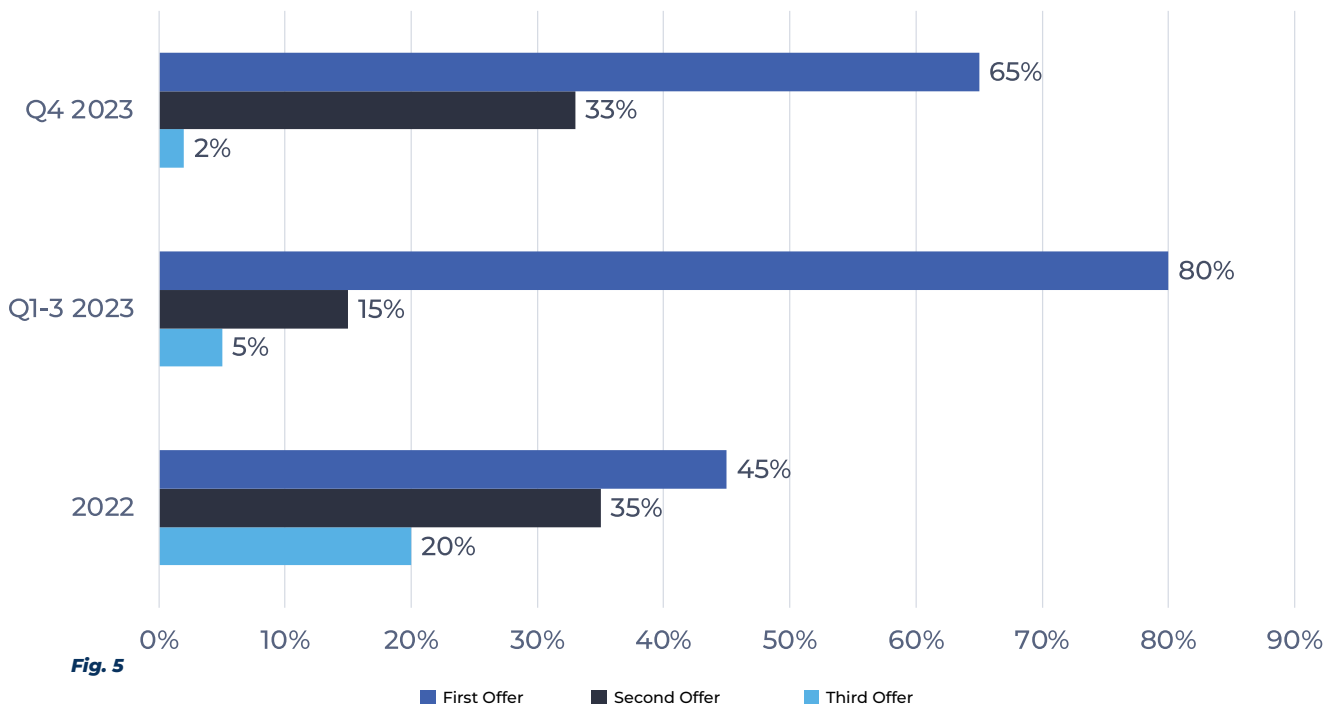
3-6 MONTHS (NOW 90 DAYS)
EXECUTIVES

Fig. 4

Comparing the speed of hire between contract and full-time resources is valuable, but understanding the timeline for each category of professional independently is critical for hiring managers to gauge how long a candidate is likely to be available before entertaining other offers. TRU's speed of hire gives insight into a standardization of interview process timeline to enable hiring managers to calibrate accordingly to stay competitive. Seen circled in light blue in "Speed of Hire" (Figure 3) is what TRU expects as the new normal for the speed of hire of eDiscovery professionals. For mid-market professionals like PMs and analysts, 40 days; for executives, 90 days; for sales professionals, 80 days; for contractors, 10 or fewer days. If a search process is taking longer than these benchmarks, be prepared to possibly lose candidates to other employers.

In 2024, TRU sees speed of hire as a tool to get the best possible odds of a positive candidate acceptance. TRU found that in 2022, only 45% of job seekers accepted the first offer they received. Conversely, 80% of job seekers accepted the first offer received in the first three quarters of 2023 (see Figure 5). Employers should accelerate their interview and search process and attempt to be the first — and perhaps only — offer a job seeker receives in the current climate. First offer acceptance rate dipped to 65% in Q4 2023, which signals that there is increasingly more opportunity available, and that job seekers actively interviewing are beginning to receive multiple offers, including counteroffers from their current employers.

OFFER ACCEPTANCE LIKELIHOOD



ESI SALARY AVERAGES AT POINT OF HIRE

TRU's salary data reflects what hiring managers paid to acquire talent in 2023. This report focuses on salary averages specific to the United States, broken into three regions for law firms (East, West, and Midwest) and averaged nationally for service providers. Variances in geographic salary bands for law firms relate directly to their in-office requirements. In 2023, TRU found most vendor opportunities were remote and, if not, salary bands did not change as noticeably based on in-office geography.

TRU's point-of-hire data tracks what candidates are actually accepting and employers are actually paying in real time, at the point of hire.

US LAW FIRM ESI SALARY AVERAGES BY REGION

(base compensation at point of hire)

	East	West	Midwest
Technician (entry level)	55K-75K + OT	55K-75K + OT	55K-75K + OT
Analyst (2-3 years)	100K-120K + OT	100K-130K + OT	100K-115K + OT
Specialist (3-5 years)	120K-140K + OT	120K-150K + OT	90K-130K + OT
PM/Coordinator (4-7 years)	110K-150K + OT or 125K-185K + bonus	110K-150K + OT or 135K-185K + bonus	100K-130K + OT or 110K-160K + bonus
Consultant/Sr PM (7-10 years)	165K-195K + bonus	175K-195K + bonus	160K-195K + bonus
Director/Manager (10+ years)	250K-325K + bonus	250K-325K + bonus	250K-300K + bonus

US SERVICE PROVIDER ESI SALARY AVERAGES

(base and total compensation at point of hire)

Role	Base (total comp)	Role	Base (total comp)
Technician (entry level)	55K (55K-75K)	Review Manager	80K-125K (90K-160K)
Analyst (proc/prod) (2-3 years)	85K-110K (85K-125K)	Client Services (Manager)	150K-200K (165K-240K)
Specialist/Sr Analyst (3-5 years)	120K-135K (125K-150K)	Client Services (Director)	165K-225K (180K-275K)
Coordinator (Assoc) (2-4 years)	65K-100K (70K-110K)	Analytics Overlay	165K-225K (175K-265K)
Project Manager (Senior Assoc) (4-8 years)	100K-135K (110K-155K)	VP, Divisional Lead (MD/SMD)	225K-350K (285K-575K+)
Sr PM/Team Lead (7-10+ years)	125K-175K (140K-200K)	ESI Sales (10+ years)	125K-275K (150K-500K+ & equity)

A.I. JOBS IN ESI

2023 was a year when a vast number of eDiscovery professionals began to brand themselves as having A.I. or A.I. governance experience. But 2023 bore very few externally hired full-time or contract opportunities aimed at capturing A.I. specialization within eDiscovery. 2024 will not see an explosion of A.I. in ESI job opportunity, but rather the beginning of a standardization of role definition as it relates to A.I. in the legal technology community. Roles most likely to evolve first are A.I. attorneys in two varieties: litigators who understand current and future legislative and regulatory rules and requirements related to how a business can or should leverage A.I., and lawyers who have begun experimenting successfully at wielding and integrating A.I. technology into their legal practice. Additionally, expect to see the emergence of governance, engineering, prompt and project management, and C-Suite positions gaining visibility, credibility, and accountability for how organizations integrate artificial intelligence in late 2024 and into 2025.

TOP 5 MOTIVATIONS OF ESI SALES JOB SEEKERS

1. Changes in comp plan
2. Service delivery issues
3. Selling something different
4. More territory
5. Move into leadership

WHY DO ESI SALES PROS CHANGE JOBS?

The fastest way to send your eDiscovery sales professionals looking for work is to change their variable compensation plan, particularly by creating more limitations than new incentives in 2024. The second primary reason ESI sales professionals are seeking representation is service delivery issues at their current employer. As vendors hired fewer mid-market eDiscovery professionals (project managers, analysts, client services, etc.) in 2023 and are now seeking to pay less for talent than they did in 2022, many ESI sales pros are losing business due to client satisfaction complaints regarding project management or technical deliverables. Service providers are advised to closely watch which sales pros are experiencing customer satisfaction issues as an indicator of potential attrition.

While many eDiscovery sales professionals are looking to expand into other areas or grow into management positions, they rarely take this path because of a lack of available opportunities in leadership and/or the lack of equivalent earning potential in other industries. Boutique eDiscovery providers will continue to attract talent from large eDiscovery providers by providing more territory and less internal sales competition. Large eDiscovery providers will continue to attract sales pros from boutiques who need a larger array of services and a more recognized brand to take their sales capabilities to the next level.

LESS EXPERIENCE = BIGGER SALARY INCREASE IN 2024

Another job market metric that TRU tracks is the increase a job seeker receives in base compensation when changing employers. By cross-referencing a job seeker's years of industry experience relative to the increase they received in base compensation at the point of hire, TRU can determine what levels of experience are commanding the greatest increases in base compensation at any given time.

Figure 6 shows salary increases during 2022, which highlight that job seekers with 4–10+ years' experience were in the highest demand, thus commanding the greatest increases in base compensation (20–40%). Data from 2023 (Figure 7) indicates hiring managers in eDiscovery have been less willing or able to pay the salary requirements to attract talent in the 6+ years of experience bracket. Instead, employers that successfully filled positions in 2023 asked for fewer years of experience at lower base compensations.

As a result, most jobs in the first six months of 2024 will be best suited for eDiscovery professionals with fewer than six years of experience. This is good news for early career ESI job seekers as the high demand and low supply for their skills has enabled 25–32% salary increases over the course of 2023 (see Figure 7). That means that an eDiscovery job seeker currently making \$100K in base compensation could negotiate a base salary at a new employer at \$125–132K. A job seeker making \$80K could easily command \$100K+.

There will still be opportunity for job seekers in eDiscovery commanding base salaries north of \$150K per year. TRU anticipates those opportunities will be scarcer in the first half of 2024 than they were in 2022, but in late 2024 and 2025 eDiscovery job seekers can expect increased demand for higher levels of experience and a willingness from employers to pay for that experience as macroeconomic conditions improve relative to 2023 and 2024. The eDiscovery job market may not experience the frenzy of 2022 in terms of the volume of jobs and the pay associated with those jobs, since that frenzy was directly related to a post-pandemic recovery and recalibration. However, 2025 and 2026 will likely provide more opportunity and increased salary potential for all eDiscovery professionals.

“A job seeker making \$80K could easily command \$100K+.”

SUBMIT
YOUR
RESUME



2022

PERCENTAGE OF SALARY INCREASE BASED ON YEARS OF EXPERIENCE AT POINT OF HIRE

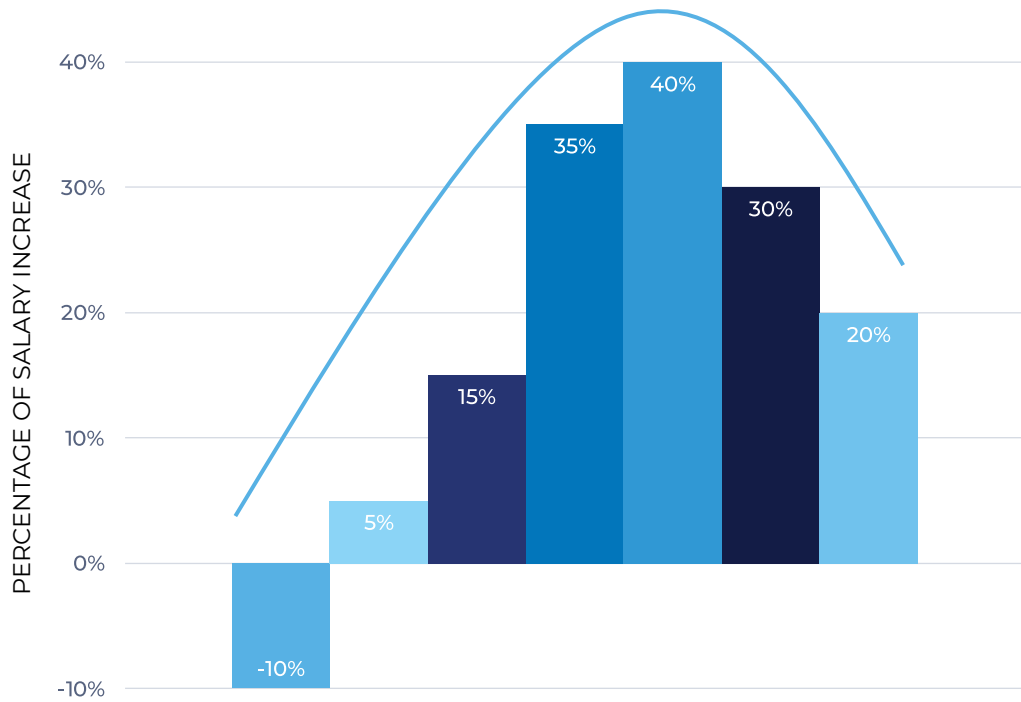


Fig. 6 ■ 0 years ■ 1-2 years ■ 3-4 years ■ 4-6 years ■ 6-8 years ■ 8-10 years ■ 10+ years
Years of Experience

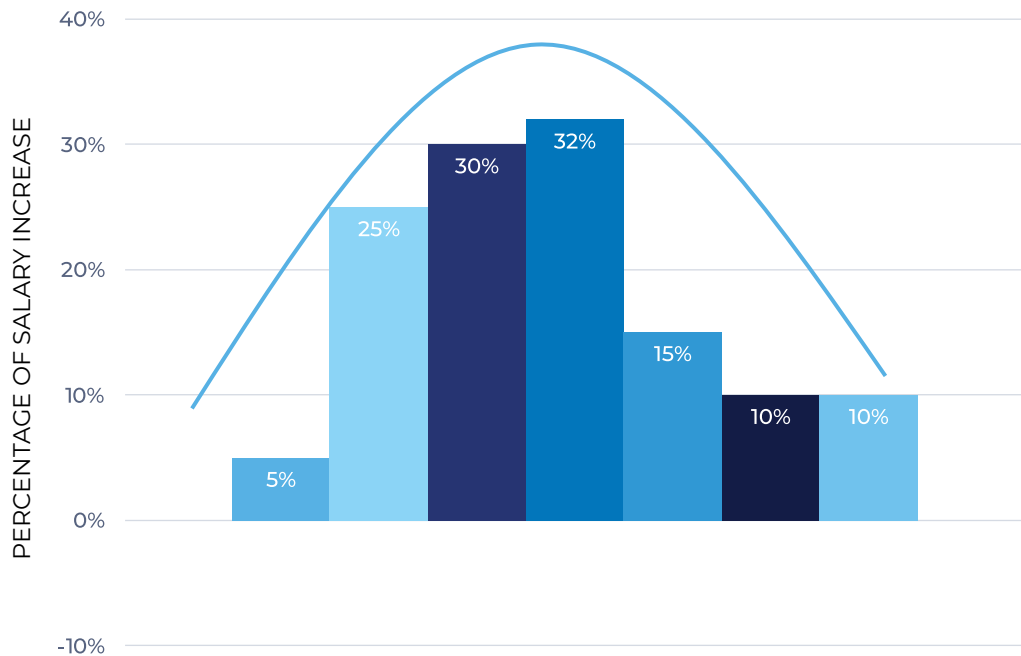


Fig. 7 ■ 0 years ■ 1-2 years ■ 3-4 years ■ 4-6 years ■ 6-8 years ■ 8-10 years ■ 10+ years
Years of Experience

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

TRU Staffing Partners is the gold standard for strategic intelligence and analysis on the eDiscovery job market. For real-time, ongoing eDiscovery job market updates, please take advantage of the curated resources below:



JOIN TRU & ACEDS MONTHLY

To receive monthly updates on eDiscovery job market trends, join TRU Staffing Partners and ACEDS for our free “Eye on ESI” webinar series, where Jared Coseglia, TRU’s Founder & CEO, discusses salary metrics and much more with the ACEDS executive team.



JOB SEEKERS

For job seekers, the TRU Staffing Partners weekly Hot Jobs Newsletter is the largest repository of active opportunities in the eDiscovery industry to browse or pursue.



HIRING MANAGERS

For hiring managers, the TRU Staffing Partners weekly Contract Staffing Newsletter is the ultimate resource for previewing eDiscovery talent before they enter the job market.

14 Years of proven experience

97% Success rate of TRU candidates meeting their guarantee

4:1 Referral to hire ratio

85% of jobs received are filled



CONNECT WITH TRU AT UPCOMING EVENTS



INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF PRIVACY PROFESSIONALS GLOBAL PRIVACY SUMMIT

Meet TRU at the biggest data privacy event of the year, April 2–4, 2024 in Washington, D.C. TRU's Founder & CEO, Jared Coseglia, and the TRU executive team will be participating in a privacy career workshop, panels and TED-style talks covering interviewing tips for hiring managers and job seekers, strategies for securing budget and buy-in for hiring privacy talent, and more.



CLOC GLOBAL INSTITUTE

The Corporate Legal Operations Consortium (CLOC) Global Institute is the premier event driving the legal operations industry, taking place May 6–9, 2024 at the ARIA Resort & Casino in Las Vegas. TRU's Founder & CEO will be leading a masterclass on "Interviewing in Legal: Land your dream job, hire your dream employee!"



CONSERO CHIEF PRIVACY OFFICER FORUM

TRU is looking forward to attending and speaking at Consero's Chief Privacy Officer Forum on May 15–17, 2024 in Westlake, Calif. TRU's Founder & CEO, Jared Coseglia, will be diving deep into the state of the privacy job market and how it impacts legal professionals. Request an invite now using the QR code to the left.

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