NOA RECRUITMENT

UK Tech Market Research and Salary Survey

2026 Edition

Presales, Sales Engineering, Customer Engineering and Product

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> **How to read this report.** All figures are indicative UK base salaries for 2026 and exclude bonus, car allowance, commission and equity. London figures are shown separately. Ranges reflect the spread within a single level, which is driven by scope rather than years served. Use them to set a band and start a conversation, not as a substitute for a live benchmark against your specific role.

1. About this report

This is Noa Recruitment's 2026 edition of the UK Tech Market Research and Salary Survey, replacing the 2025 edition.

Where the 2025 report took a broad view of the UK technology market, this edition focuses on the disciplines we actually recruit: presales and solution consulting, sales engineering, customer engineering and product management. That focus means the salary data reflects live hiring conversations rather than published averages, and the market commentary reflects what we see when roles are briefed, candidates are assessed and offers are made.

Noa is a UK technology recruitment firm. We work across the UK, East Coast USA and Germany, with a strong local base in the Milton Keynes and South East corridor. Every candidate we shortlist is assessed on the things that predict performance in the role, not keyword-matched from a CV database.

2. Executive summary: the 2026 market

Three themes define technical go-to-market hiring in 2026.

Hiring is selective, not frozen

Headcount approval moved up a level in most organisations. Roles are open, but they are justified harder and take longer to sign off. The effect on candidates is a slower process; the effect on employers is that a slow process loses the best people. Our single strongest piece of advice for this market is to compress decision-making, not to widen the search.

Senior talent is scarce while junior supply is abundant

The market for junior and generalist applicants is competitive. The market for people who have genuinely owned complex decision-making is not. A principal sales engineer, an AI product manager or a presales lead with enterprise depth will typically hold more than one live option, and will choose on scope rather than salary alone.

AI changed the floor of several roles, not the ceiling

Demo automation, AI-assisted specification writing and faster research have absorbed a meaningful slice of repetitive work in presales and product. What remains, and what is now priced at a premium, is judgement: discovery, trade-offs, trust with a technical buying group, and the willingness to say a deal is not a fit.

3. Market conditions and what changed since 2025

- **Salary bands broadened rather than shifted.** Mid-level bands moved little. The top of each band moved, as employers paid more for proven scope. Two people with the same title can now legitimately differ by 25 percent.
- **Hybrid settled into three patterns.** On-site for early-stage teams building a function, hybrid for established teams widening the pool, remote for mature products and contract work.
- **Contract and interim demand grew.** Defined projects, migrations and rescue work are increasingly staffed with short-term senior specialists rather than permanent headcount.
- **London premiums narrowed for hybrid roles.** Fully remote roles are benchmarked against national bands; hybrid roles still carry most of the London premium.
- **Interview processes became more practical.** Rehearsed demo tasks are being replaced by real scenarios and decision simulations, because polished presentations no longer separate candidates.

4. Presales and solutions consultancy salaries 2026

Role	UK base (outside London)	London base
Associate or junior presales consultant	£45,000 – £65,000	£52,000 – £72,000
Presales consultant / sales engineer	£55,000 – £75,000	£65,000 – £90,000
Senior presales consultant / senior SE	£75,000 – £95,000	£85,000 – £112,000
Principal or lead presales	£95,000 – £120,000	£105,000 – £135,000
Head of presales	£110,000 – £140,000	£125,000 – £160,000

Typically 10 to 20 percent of base is paid as variable or bonus, with enterprise and cloud security vendors at the upper end. Equity is common in venture-backed software companies.

What drives the top of the band: hands-on depth in cloud architecture or security, experience supporting six-figure and seven-figure deals with multi-stakeholder buying committees, and evidence of commercial effect such as win rate or deal velocity.

5. Sales engineering and customer engineering salaries 2026

Role	UK base (outside London)	London base
Sales engineer (mid-market)	£55,000 – £72,000	£62,000 – £85,000
Senior sales engineer (enterprise)	£72,000 – £92,000	£82,000 – £108,000
Customer engineer / technical account	£55,000 – £80,000	£62,000 – £92,000
Senior customer engineer	£75,000 – £95,000	£85,000 – £110,000

Customer engineering roles increasingly include a retention or expansion component in variable pay, reflecting the shift from implementation to adoption ownership.

6. Product management salaries 2026

Role	UK base (outside London)	London base
Product manager	£60,000 – £80,000	£70,000 – £95,000
Senior product manager	£80,000 – £105,000	£92,000 – £122,000
Lead or principal product manager	£105,000 – £130,000	£118,000 – £148,000
Head of product	£120,000 – £150,000	£135,000 – £175,000
VP product / CPO	£150,000 – £200,000+	£175,000 – £250,000+

The AI premium is real but narrow. AI and data product managers command the top of each band, particularly where they can evidence shipped products with evaluation, guardrails and real usage. Generalist PMs without a defined product area have seen the least movement.

7. Interim and contract resource

Day rates are set by project scope, seniority and scarcity rather than by a published band, so we quote against the specific requirement. In practice, three patterns dominate the 2026 market:

- **Defined projects.** A migration, a pricing overhaul or an AI feature launch, staffed for eight to sixteen weeks with a senior specialist.

- **Rescue work.** Two or three senior people brought in to recover a slipping programme, usually alongside an existing team rather than replacing it.
- **Pre-permanent testing.** A short interim engagement that establishes what a permanent role actually needs before you recruit against assumption.

Contract resource is available at short notice, which makes it the fastest way to change a project's trajectory. It is not a substitute for permanent capability where the requirement is ongoing ownership.

8. Hiring guidance for 2026

Write down the decisions, not the duties

List the ten hardest decisions the hire will make in their first year. Build the brief, the band and the interview around that list. If the list is empty, the role is not a senior one yet.

Test the half that cannot be automated

Give candidates a real scenario from your business. Ask what they would say no to. Change a constraint mid-conversation and watch the thinking adapt. Polished demo tasks no longer separate good candidates from rehearsed ones.

Compress the process

Strong technical candidates hold multiple options and are typically off the market within three weeks. Three weeks from first conversation to offer is the target; four is survivable; six loses the hire.

Match the profile to your phase

Your first presales hire or first product manager needs to build the function from nothing. Your fourth needs to coordinate specialists at scale. Same title, opposite profiles.

9. About Noa and how to use this data

Noa recruits presales, sales engineering, customer engineering and product talent across the UK, East Coast USA and Germany, for permanent and contract roles. Pricing is staged, with no placement fee until a candidate starts.

If you are benchmarking a role, briefing a search or sense-checking a candidate's expectations, that conversation is usually short and free of obligation. Contact us at **neil@thisisnoa.com** or via **www.thisisnoa.com**.

Figures in this report are indicative market ranges compiled from Noa Recruitment's 2026 hiring activity and published market data. They are provided for guidance and do not constitute a guarantee of salary outcomes. Published November 2026. Supersedes the 2025 edition.