



SOCIETY FOR TECHNICAL COMMUNICATION

2003 TECHNICAL
COMMUNICATOR

SALARY SURVEY



SOCIETY FOR TECHNICAL COMMUNICATION

2003 TECHNICAL COMMUNICATOR SALARY SURVEY

The Society for Technical Communication recently surveyed a random sample of its members regarding their current salaries and benefits. Questionnaires were mailed to more than 3,200 technical communicators residing in the United States or Canada whose primary specialties are technical writing or editing. More than 800 questionnaires were completed and returned, for a response rate of 25 percent.

Results are given separately for the United States and Canada.

SALARY PERCENTILES

The tables on the following pages show the salary data for technical writers/editors residing in the United States or Canada. The salary data is presented by selected groupings and shown in percentiles. All figures are in U.S. or Canadian dollars as indicated.

The following definitions pertain:

- Base** The total responses in a given category.
- Mean** The value computed by averaging the tabulated responses.
- 10%** Ten percent of the responses were below this value; ninety percent were above this value.
- 25%** Twenty-five percent of the responses were below this value; seventy-five percent were above this value.
- 50%** Fifty percent of the responses were below this value; fifty percent were above this value. (This is also called the *median*.)
- 75%** Seventy-five percent of the responses were below this value; twenty-five percent were above this value.
- 90%** Ninety percent of the responses were below this value; ten percent were above this value.

2003 UNITED STATES SALARY SURVEY

(figures in U.S. dollars)

| Grouping | Base | Mean |
|---|-------------|-------------|
| Total | 643 | \$61,670 |
| Employment Level* | | |
| Entry | 24 | 43,260 |
| Mid-Level, Non-Supervisory | 233 | 54,510 |
| Mid-Level, Supervisory | 37 | 60,510 |
| Senior-Level, Non-Supervisory | 262 | 66,590 |
| Senior-Level, Supervisory | 81 | 72,340 |
| Education Level | | |
| Bachelor's Degree | 376 | 60,120 |
| Master's Degree | 189 | 65,660 |
| Doctorate | 25 | 68,030 |
| Sex | | |
| Female | 458 | 60,870 |
| Male | 185 | 63,860 |
| Age | | |
| 20-29 | 54 | 48,900 |
| 30-39 | 193 | 59,990 |
| 40-49 | 213 | 63,330 |
| 50 years and over | 183 | 65,480 |
| Years of Experience (in technical communication field) | | |
| Less than 2 years | 9 | 46,970 |
| 2-5 years | 150 | 53,540 |
| 6-10 years | 204 | 60,710 |
| 11 years or more | 280 | 67,320 |

*Respondents classified themselves as entry-level, mid-level, or senior-level. In a separate question, they indicated whether they supervised other technical communicators, i.e., whether other technical communicators reported directly to them. These statistics combine the information gathered in the two questions.

(BY SELECTED GROUPINGS)

10% **25%** **50%** **75%** **90%**
\$42,000 \$50,000 \$60,240 \$72,000 \$82,500

| | | | | |
|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| — | 35,500 | 42,000 | 48,000 | — |
| 38,300 | 43,630 | 52,000 | 62,950 | 73,000 |
| — | 49,630 | 58,500 | 69,330 | — |
| 50,000 | 55,550 | 64,500 | 75,110 | 85,000 |
| 51,000 | 63,000 | 70,000 | 80,000 | 96,650 |

| | | | | |
|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| 40,600 | 49,000 | 60,000 | 70,000 | 80,000 |
| 43,930 | 53,970 | 65,000 | 77,000 | 87,400 |
| — | 54,810 | 63,000 | 76,980 | — |

| | | | | |
|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| 42,000 | 50,000 | 60,000 | 71,000 | 81,000 |
| 42,500 | 51,000 | 63,300 | 75,000 | 86,500 |

| | | | | |
|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| 34,400 | 41,500 | 47,000 | 54,500 | 65,000 |
| 40,000 | 49,600 | 57,800 | 70,000 | 80,700 |
| 43,600 | 51,000 | 63,000 | 73,000 | 84,700 |
| 45,300 | 53,000 | 63,000 | 75,000 | 87,470 |

| | | | | |
|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| — | — | — | — | — |
| 37,500 | 43,000 | 50,020 | 63,000 | 73,000 |
| 43,200 | 50,100 | 59,000 | 70,000 | 80,000 |
| 48,000 | 56,120 | 65,000 | 76,800 | 90,000 |

2003 CANADIAN SALARY SURVEY

(figures in Canadian dollars)

| Grouping | Base | Mean |
|---|-------------|-------------|
| Total | 181 | \$58,180 |
| Employment Level* | | |
| Entry | 6 | 41,030 |
| Mid-Level, Non-Supervisory | 72 | 51,490 |
| Mid-Level, Supervisory | 8 | 58,200 |
| Senior-Level, Non-Supervisory | 59 | 61,810 |
| Senior-Level, Supervisory | 36 | 68,490 |
| Education Level | | |
| Bachelor's Degree | 113 | 57,690 |
| Master's Degree | 47 | 61,520 |
| Sex | | |
| Female | 123 | 57,580 |
| Male | 58 | 59,460 |
| Age | | |
| 20-29 | 19 | 51,750 |
| 30-39 | 69 | 58,270 |
| 40-49 | 52 | 59,390 |
| 50 years and over | 41 | 59,490 |
| Years of Experience (in technical communication field) | | |
| Less than 2 years | 2 | — |
| 2-5 years | 69 | 50,370 |
| 6-10 years | 59 | 60,960 |
| 11 years or more | 51 | 66,070 |

*Respondents classified themselves as entry-level, mid-level, or senior-level. In a separate question, they indicated whether they supervised other technical communicators, i.e., whether other technical communicators reported directly to them. These statistics combine the information gathered in the two questions.

(BY SELECTED GROUPINGS)

10% **25%** **50%** **75%** **90%**
\$43,000 \$48,000 \$55,430 \$65,000 \$75,900

| | | | | |
|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| — | — | — | — | — |
| 41,000 | 45,000 | 49,500 | 55,430 | 65,900 |
| — | — | — | — | — |
| 48,900 | 54,150 | 60,000 | 68,180 | 75,000 |
| — | 57,000 | 67,000 | 77,000 | — |

| | | | | |
|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| 43,060 | 48,000 | 55,000 | 64,875 | 75,000 |
| — | 50,380 | 62,000 | 70,000 | — |

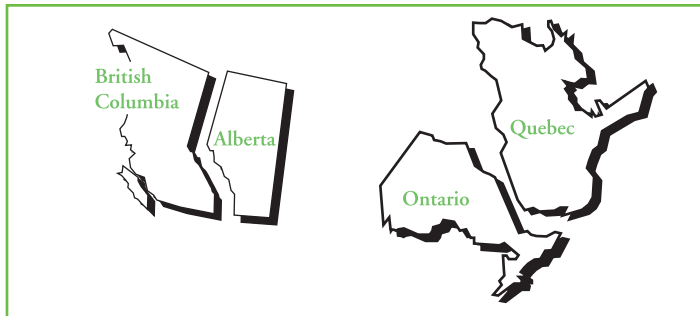
| | | | | |
|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| 42,150 | 48,000 | 55,000 | 65,630 | 75,700 |
| 44,000 | 49,000 | 57,000 | 65,000 | 75,200 |

| | | | | |
|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| — | — | 50,000 | — | — |
| 42,800 | 48,150 | 55,000 | 66,380 | 77,400 |
| 42,600 | 47,500 | 59,250 | 68,000 | 76,800 |
| — | 50,000 | 55,500 | 65,750 | — |

| | | | | |
|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| — | — | — | — | — |
| 40,000 | 45,000 | 49,000 | 54,500 | 63,200 |
| 43,180 | 50,000 | 58,000 | 69,000 | 76,100 |
| 49,050 | 55,000 | 64,500 | 74,250 | 83,950 |

MEDIAN CANADIAN SALARY BY PROVINCE

(figures in Canadian dollars)

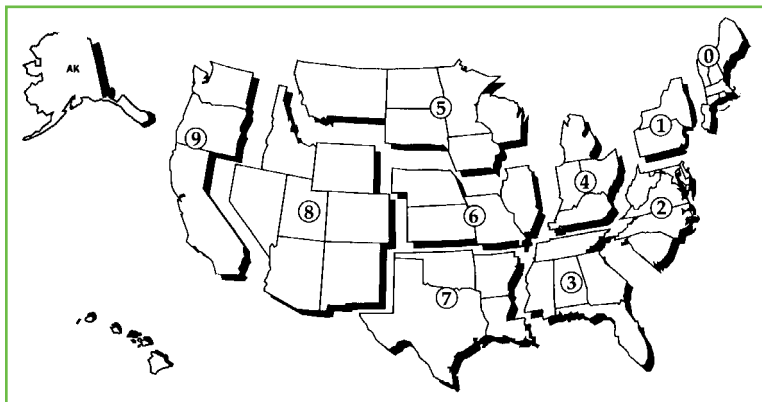


| Province | Salary | Province | Salary |
|------------------|----------|----------|----------|
| Alberta | \$56,500 | Ontario | \$60,000 |
| British Columbia | 55,000 | Quebec | 49,000 |

(Only the provinces for which data is available are shown.)

MEDIAN U.S. SALARY BY ONE-DIGIT ZIP CODES

(figures in U.S. dollars)



| Zip Code | Salary | Zip Code | Salary |
|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| 0**** | \$66,850 | 5**** | \$52,000 |
| 1**** | 53,000 | 6**** | 58,000 |
| 2**** | 62,790 | 7**** | 63,000 |
| 3**** | 53,000 | 8**** | 56,000 |
| 4**** | 52,000 | 9**** | 70,000 |

MEDIAN U.S. SALARY BY TWO- AND THREE-DIGIT ZIP CODES

(figures in U.S. dollars)

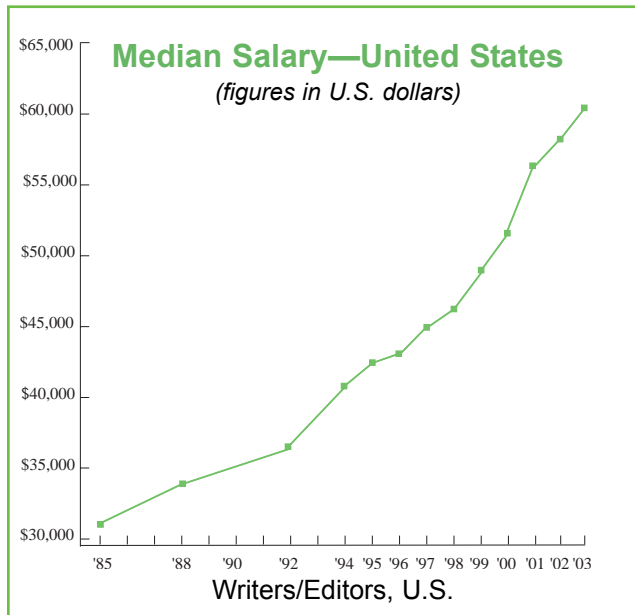
| Zip | State | Salary | Zip | State | Salary | Zip | State | Salary |
|-----|----------|----------|-----|-------|--------|-----|-------|--------|
| 01 | MA | \$71,442 | 43 | OH | 50,000 | 787 | TX | 64,500 |
| 017 | MA | 72,000 | 432 | OH | 57,000 | 80 | CO | 60,000 |
| 018 | MA | 72,940 | 44 | OH | 50,000 | 801 | CO | 67,770 |
| 02 | MA | 64,000 | 441 | OH | 50,000 | 802 | CO | 61,300 |
| 021 | MA | 63,500 | 45 | OH | 51,200 | 803 | CO | 62,250 |
| 03 | NH | 64,300 | 48 | MI | 58,000 | 804 | CO | 69,500 |
| 06 | CT | 67,920 | 481 | MI | 64,000 | 83 | ID | 44,500 |
| 07 | NJ | 63,600 | 50 | IA | 43,000 | 84 | UT | 52,000 |
| 08 | NJ | 50,500 | 503 | IA | 57,000 | 85 | AZ | 59,000 |
| 14 | NY | 53,000 | 53 | WI | 50,770 | 90 | CA | 62,940 |
| 19 | DE/PA | 62,500 | 55 | MN | 55,750 | 91 | CA | 69,650 |
| 20 | DC/MD/VA | 73,000 | 551 | MN | 54,000 | 92 | CA | 68,950 |
| 201 | VA | 75,000 | 553 | MN | 56,250 | 921 | CA | 66,450 |
| 21 | MD | 59,240 | 554 | MN | 58,000 | 926 | CA | 70,000 |
| 22 | VA | 59,500 | 60 | IL | 63,000 | 93 | CA | 57,500 |
| 27 | NC | 66,000 | 600 | IL | 65,500 | 94 | CA | 80,000 |
| 277 | NC | 63,400 | 605 | IL | 61,630 | 940 | CA | 87,000 |
| 30 | GA | 53,950 | 606 | IL | 66,880 | 941 | CA | 82,500 |
| 300 | GA | 65,000 | 61 | IL | 55,000 | 945 | CA | 80,000 |
| 303 | GA | 53,000 | 618 | IL | 71,000 | 95 | CA | 80,000 |
| 32 | FL | 65,500 | 68 | NE | 62,500 | 950 | CA | 85,500 |
| 33 | FL | 53,500 | 75 | TX | 64,090 | 951 | CA | 81,000 |
| 35 | AL | 53,000 | 750 | TX | 71,000 | 97 | OR | 62,630 |
| 37 | TN | 48,990 | 752 | TX | 64,000 | 970 | OR | 62,630 |
| 372 | TN | 47,500 | 77 | TX | 72,500 | 98 | WA | 66,580 |
| 38 | TN | 40,000 | 770 | TX | 70,000 | 980 | WA | 70,000 |
| 381 | TN | 52,000 | 78 | TX | 63,000 | 981 | WA | 68,500 |

(Only the two- and three-digit zip codes for which data is available are shown.)

MEDIAN SALARY

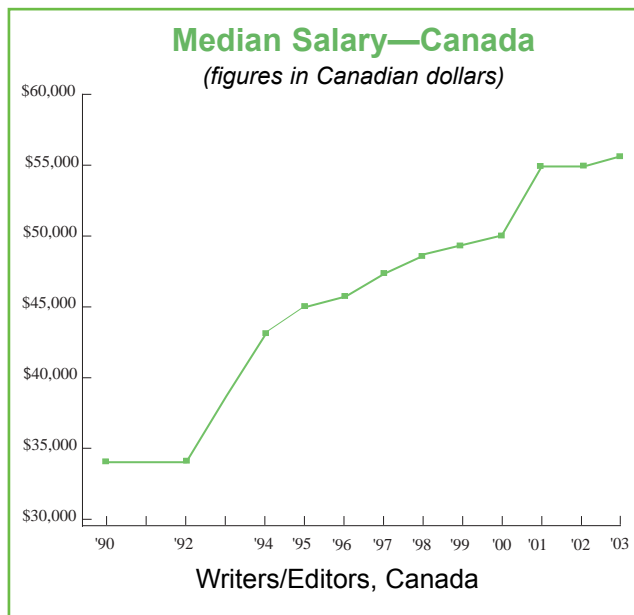
United States

This is the fourteenth in a series of surveys conducted by the STC office showing the median salary for U.S. members. This graph shows the change in the actual median salaries from 1985 to 2003.



Canada

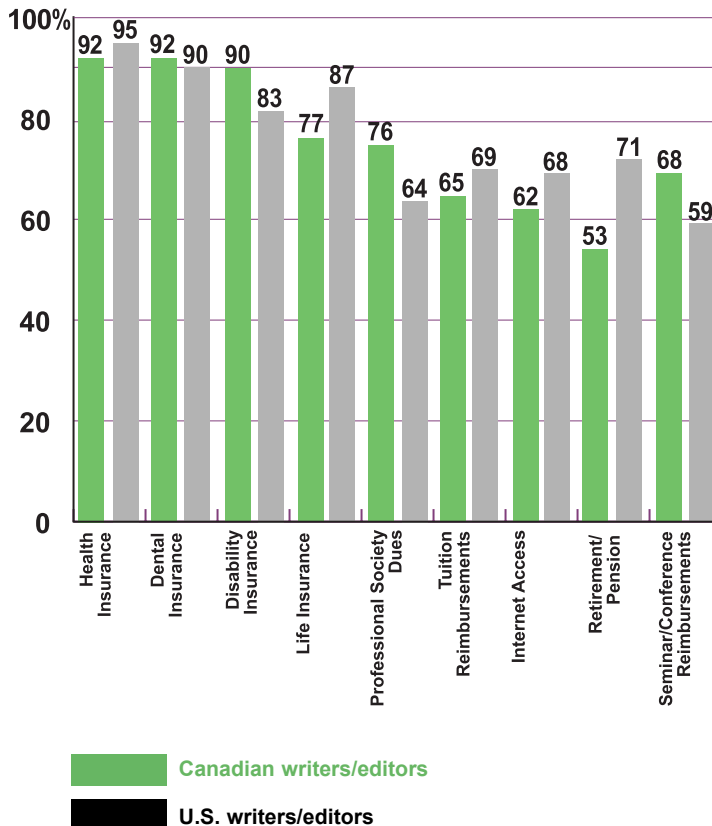
This is the twelfth in a series of surveys conducted by the STC office showing the median salary for Canadian members. This graph shows the change in the actual median salaries from 1990 to 2003.



ADDITIONAL COMPENSATION

The chart below lists some of the most common employee benefits and compares benefits offered by U.S. and Canadian employers of technical writers/editors. For each benefit listed, the bars indicate the percentage of respondents who received that benefit.

Benefits: United States and Canada



Note: For Canadians, "Health Insurance" refers to supplemental health insurance.

ABOUT THE SOCIETY FOR TECHNICAL COMMUNICATION

STC is an individual membership organization dedicated to advancing the arts and sciences of technical communication—the largest organization of its type in the world. Its more than 19,000 members include technical writers and editors, graphic designers and technical illustrators, information architects and developers, photographers and audiovisual specialists, Web and intranet page designers, multimedia artists, and others whose work involves making technical information available to those who need it.

STC promotes the public welfare by educating its members and industry about issues concerning technical communication.



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