Interactive Media – Labour Market Intelligence Digest

Background

Labour market data provided by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) do not provide the sectoral detail required by the Creative Media Industry and Skillset to identify and fill skills gaps and shortages[1]. As a result the industry charged Skillset in 1999 with generating Labour Market Intelligence (LMI) to a sectoral level throughout the four nations, where possible.

The LMI presented in this Digest are a summary of those generated through Skillset's comprehensive research programme. The full reports for each source and more information about Skillset's research programme can be found by visiting www.skillset.org/research.

Size of Interactive Media Sector[2]

Overall the Interactive Media industry comprises in excess of **8,000** businesses which are shared among four sub-sectors as follows: around 7,500 web and internet companies, around 500 offline multimedia companies, around 40 companies specialising in mobile content and a growing number of interactive TV companies.

The Interactive Media industry is characterised by a large number of small companies and very few big companies. Almost half (46%) the companies in the Interactive Media industry employs between 1 and 5 people and a quarter (23%) employs between 6 and 10 people. A further 15% employs 11 to 20 people and 13% employs between 21 and 50 people. Just 3% of the industry has more than 50 people working for them.

A total of **39,750** people are employed in the Interactive Media industry. As can be seen below in **Figure 1** this is estimated to be 8% of the entire creative media workforce[3].
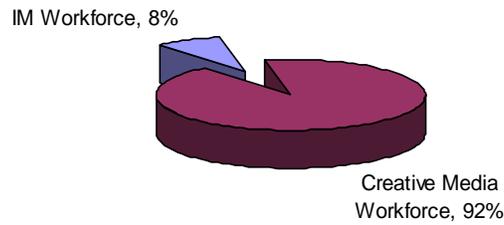
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[1] This is in part due to the way in which industries in the UK's economy are classified e.g. TV and radio are combined and cannot be disaggregated, and freelancers are systematically excluded.
[2] Until otherwise specified, data are taken from the Skillset 2006 Employment Census, which excludes film production, performers, photo imaging and freelancers not working on Census Day.

[3] Until otherwise specified data for the Creative Media industry as a whole are taken from the following sources: Skillset Employment Census 2006, Joint Skillset/UK Film Council Feature Film Production Workforce Survey 2008, Experian 2007, Skillset/Equity Performing Arts Industry Survey 2005 and Labour Force Survey 2005-2007.


Also available in large print, Braille, audiotape and PC formatted disc formats.

Figure 1   **Proportion of Creative Media Workforce in Interactive Media**

IM Workforce, 8%

Creative Media
Workforce, 92%

At a given time the Interactive Media workforce can broadly be divided as follows: almost three quarters in web and internet (73%), approaching a quarter in offline multimedia (23%), just 2% in interactive TV and 1% in mobile content (these last three sub-sectors are categorised as 'other interactive media' elsewhere in this report).

Figure 2 below illustrates the distribution of the workforce in Interactive Media by occupation. Almost 24,000 people in Interactive Media (60%) work in Interactive or Games Production making this by far the largest occupational group within the sector. A further 6,100 people (15%) have roles in Interactive or Games Business and 1,100 have roles in Interactive or Games Operations (3%). The 6,300 people working in finance, HR, IT, sales and general management roles that fall under an umbrella heading of 'other occupational groups' make up 16% of the Interactive Media workforce.

Figure 2   **Distribution of the Interactive Media Workforce by Occupation**

All Other
Occupational Groups
16%

Producing
3%

Other Core Roles
2%

Post Production
1%

Interactive or Games
Business
15%

Interactive or Games
Production
60%

Interactive or Games
Operations
3%
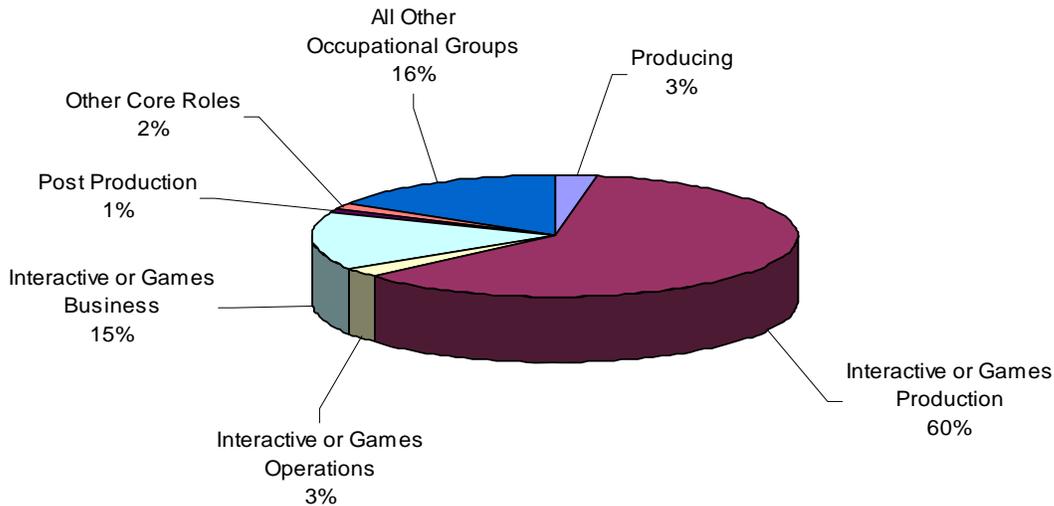
As can be seen below in **Figure 3** the Interactive Media workforce is relatively well spread across the UK, particularly when compared to some other Creative Media sectors. A third (33%) of the Interactive Media workforce is based in London, with other sizeable communities in the South East (15%) and Yorkshire & the Humber (14%).

Scotland and the North East both account for 7% of the workforce. All other nations and English regions account for 5% or less of the Interactive Media workforce.

Figure 3   Distribution of the Interactive Media Workforce by Nation/English Region
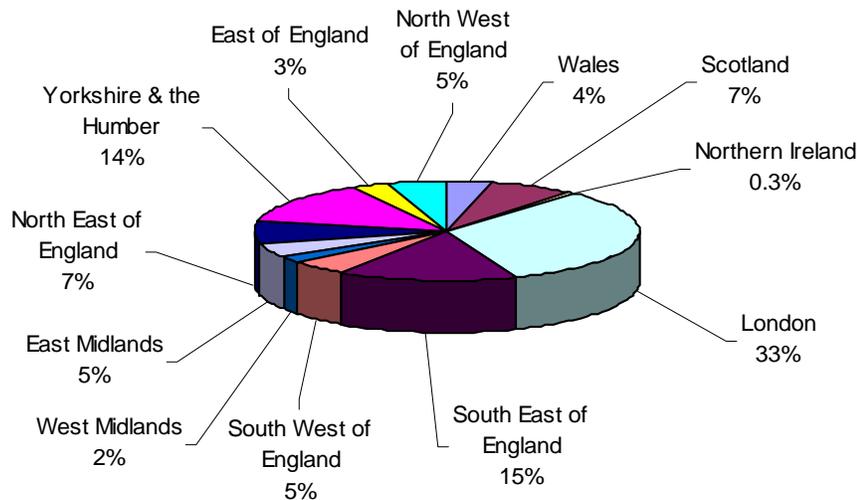
Shape of Interactive Media Sector

The Interactive Media sector has a relatively low percentage of freelancers[4]; just 17% of the workforce across the four Interactive Media sub-sectors are freelance compared to 29%[5] across the wider creative media industries. This overall figure hides some variation by sub-sector; a fifth (20%) of the offline multimedia workforce are freelance, dropping to 19% in interactive TV, 16% in web and internet and 6% in mobile content. In the offline multimedia sub-sector the trend appears to be on the increase from 16% in 2004 to 20% in 2006. The phenomenon in web and internet is relatively stable.

Women make up a third (32%) of the Interactive Media workforce, which is lower than the representation of women in the wider Creative Media workforce (42%) and in the whole economy (46%, Labour Force Survey, 2006). The offline multimedia workforce comprises a higher proportion of women (37%) than the web and internet workforce (31%). Around three in ten of those working in interactive TV and two in ten of those working in mobile content are women.

Individuals from a Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) background make up 6% of the Interactive Media industry's workforce which is the same proportion as the wider Creative Media workforce (6%). Representation of people from a BAME background is slightly above average in web and internet (7%), but lower in the offline multimedia workforce (5%). Labour Force Survey data indicates that 8% of the population of working

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[4] For the purpose of this document, and the sources of these data, as agreed by industry 'freelance' is defined as an individual with a contract of fewer than 365 days and an 'employee' is defined as an individual with a contract of 365 days or more. For how long the individual has been freelancing and the mode of payment is not taken into consideration.

[5] This increases to 36% when freelancers available to but are not working are included.

age across the entire UK economy are ethnic minorities (Labour Force Survey Quarterly Supplement, 2006).

5.2%[6] of individuals working in the Interactive Media industry consider themselves to be disabled as defined by the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA)[7], compared with 8% in the wider Creative Media workforce[8]. This represents an increase since 2005 when 4.4% of the Interactive Media workforce self-classified as disabled. The profile does not vary by Interactive Media sub-sector.

Since 2005 the profile of the Interactive Media workforce has aged overall: in 2005, three fifths (58%) of the workforce were aged under 35 compared with 49% in 2008. Overall, the age profile of the Interactive Media workforce is younger than both the Creative Media workforce as a whole and the wider economy; more than two fifths (43%) of the Creative Media workforce is aged under 35 and this is the case for just under two fifths (36%) of the workforce in the wider economy. The age profile varies greatly by Interactive Media sub-sector, with 53% of the web and internet workforce aged under 35 compared with 36% of the other interactive media workforce.

As is typical of the wider Creative Media industry, the age profile of women working in the Interactive Media sector is much younger than the age profile of men. Over half (54%) of women working in Interactive Media are aged under 35, compared to 44% of men.

Despite having a younger age profile, 70% of the Interactive Media workforce are married or in a long-term relationship. This is higher than in the wider Creative Media workforce where 60% are married or in a long-term relationship. There has been an increase since 2005, when 56% of the Interactive Media workforce were married or in a long-term relationship (which may reflect the changing age profile of the workforce).

The web and internet workforce (72%) is more likely to be married or in a long-term relationship than those working in other interactive media (65%).

Over a quarter (28%) of those working in the Interactive Media industry have a dependent child under 16 years (there is no difference by sub-sector). This is a smaller proportion than across the Creative Media workforce as a whole, where this is the case for more than one in four people (27%), and it is a much lower proportion than across the whole economy (62%). The overall proportion of the Interactive Media workforce with a dependent child has risen slightly since 2005 (when it stood at 24%).

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[6] Unless otherwise specified data for the Interactive Media workforce as a whole are taken from Skillset's 2008 Creative Media Workforce Survey. Comparative data are taken from the Skillset 2005 Survey of the Audio Visual Industries' Workforce.

[7] Disability, as defined by the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA), covers many people who may not usually have considered themselves disabled. It covers physical or mental impairments with long term, substantial effects on ability to perform day-to-day activities.

[8] Until otherwise specified data for the Creative Media industry as a whole are taken from the following sources: Skillset 2005 Survey of the Audio Visual Industries' Workforce, Joint Skillset/UK Film Council Feature Film Production Workforce Survey 2008, Experian 2007, Skillset/Equity Performing Arts Industry Survey 2005 and Labour Force Survey 2005-2007. Data for Interactive Media includes those working in web and internet and offline multimedia.

In addition, family status varies by gender within the Interactive Media workforce; one in three men (29%) have a dependent child compared with 26% of women.

Working Patterns and Career Development of Interactive Media Sector

Over half (52%) of the Interactive Media workforce surveyed in 2008 entered the Creative Media industries after 1999, including 17% who started their job since 2004. This varies by sub-sector, with 18% of the web and internet workforce having started work in the industries since 2004, compared to 15% of those working in other interactive media.

The Interactive Media workforce, as with the wider Creative Media industries, tends to rely more on informal than formal approaches to gaining employment. However, unlike most Creative Media sectors, those working in Interactive Media were *most* likely to say that they had heard of their most recent job from a job advertisement (31%, compared to 27% of the whole Creative Media industries' workforce[9]). Nevertheless, when taking into account other informal sources of work such as directly from an employer (28%), through someone they had worked with before (13%), a friend or relative (9%) and via word of mouth (8%), informal routes make up a large proportion of all routes into current roles. This pattern remains largely unchanged since 2005.

The average working week consists of 4.7 days for the Interactive Media workforce, very similar to the 4.8 days reported in 2005, and the same average as worked within the wider Creative Media industry. However, the average working day for those in Interactive Media is slightly shorter with a reported average of 8.6 hours per day compared with 9.3 hours across the wider Creative Media workforce. This average represents a slight drop from 8.8 hours in 2005.

The average income received by the Interactive Media workforce is higher at £33,646 relative to the average received by the Creative Media workforce as a whole at £32,200, and is also higher than the average reported in 2005 (£31,800). The web and internet workforce earns on average more than those working in other interactive media (£34,127 and £32,623 respectively).

Average income also varies by age and gender. Those working in Interactive Media aged 35 to 49 earned £36,696 on average, compared with average earnings of £32,820 among those aged 25 to 34. Average earnings for those aged 16 to 24 stand at £18,507. Men earn on average more than women working in Interactive Media (£35,783 and £31,194 respectively).

Approaching half (48%) of the Interactive Media workforce have ever undertaken unpaid work within the Creative Media industries (excluding an occasional charitable contribution). This is considerably higher than the corresponding figure in 2005, when 32% of the workforce reported having undertaken unpaid work. Those working in other interactive media (53%) are more likely to have undertaken unpaid work than the web and internet workforce (46%).

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[9] Until otherwise specified data for the Creative Media industry as a whole excludes film production, performers, photo imaging and publishing.

One in three (29%) of the Interactive Media workforce have received structured careers advice or guidance during their career, around the same proportion as was the case in the wider Creative Media workforce in 2005 (28%); this does not vary by Interactive Media sub-sector.

Qualifications in Interactive Media Sector

Perspective of Workforce

The Interactive Media workforce is very highly qualified and nine in ten (88%) has an undergraduate or postgraduate degree or diploma (the highest amongst all Creative Media sectors). This marks an increase since 2005, when 80% had a degree, and is high relative to both the entire UK population of working age, 24% of whom are graduates (Labour Force Survey, Historical Quarterly Supplement, Autumn 2008), and the proportion across the wider Creative Media workforce (56%)[10]. There is no variation by Interactive Media sub-sector.

Over two fifths (45%) of the degrees held by those in Interactive Media are media related compared with just under two fifths (38%) of those held by individuals across the wider Creative Media workforce. This marks an increase since 2005, when 36% of degrees held by the Interactive Media workforce were media related. The web and internet workforce is more likely to hold a media related degree (46%) compared with those working in other interactive media (42%).

Technical qualifications, held by 18% of the workforce (the same as in the Creative Media workforce overall), are also relatively common within Interactive Media, and their incidence has increased slightly since 2005 when 16% of the workforce had a technical qualification. There is considerable variation by Interactive Media sub-sector: 14% of those working in web and internet have a technical qualification, compared with 29% of the other interactive media workforce.

Fewer than one in ten (7%) of the Interactive Media workforce does not hold any qualifications (this includes degrees, technical qualifications, A Levels or GNVQs, S/NVQs and Modern Apprenticeships), compared with almost a fifth (18%) of the wider Creative Media workforce. This proportion has decreased since 2005, when 11% of the Interactive Media workforce had none of these qualifications.

The most popular subjects of study for both media specific postgraduate qualifications and media specific undergraduate degrees and diplomas are listed in **Figures 4 and 5**. Amongst the Interactive Media workforce as a whole, journalism is the most common subject area amongst those holding a media specific postgraduate qualification (59%), followed by Digital Media/Multimedia/Media Technology (9%) and Communication/Media Studies (inc. Cultural Studies) (6%).

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[10] Until otherwise specified data for the Creative Media industry as a whole are taken from the following sources: Skillset 2005 Survey of the Audio Visual Industries' Workforce, Joint Skillset/UK Film Council Feature Film Production Workforce Survey 2008, Experian 2007, Skillset/Equity Performing Arts Industry Survey 2005 and Labour Force Survey 2005-2007.

A similar pattern is evident for media specific undergraduate degrees or diplomas, although Cross Sector Study/Media Production/Broadcasting features more prominently (15% of media related undergraduate degrees are in this subject). Approaching one quarter (23%) of media related degrees held by the Interactive Media workforce are in journalism and one in five (20%) are in Communication/Media Studies (inc. Cultural Studies).

Figure 4   Top Subjects of Media Related Postgraduate Qualifications in the Interactive Media Sector

Subject of Study	
Journalism (inc. Broadcast, TV, Radio, Online, Newspaper, Periodical)/NCTJ	**59%**
Digital Media/Multimedia/Media Technology	**9%**
Communication/Media Studies (inc. Cultural Studies)	**6%**
Cross Sector Study/Production/Design (combination of TV/Radio/Film/Video/Theatre) or Media Production or Broadcasting	**4%**
Animation/Computer Animation/3D/Electronic Imaging	**4%**

Figure 5   Top Subjects of Media Related Undergraduate Degrees/Diplomas in the Interactive Media Sector

Subject of Study	
Journalism (inc. Broadcast, TV, Radio, Online, Newspaper, Periodical)/NCTJ	**23%**
Communication/Media Studies (inc. Cultural Studies)	**20%**
Cross Sector Study/Production/Design (combination of TV/Radio/Film/Video/Theatre) or Media Production or Broadcasting	**15%**
Animation/Computer Animation/3D/Electronic Imaging	**8%**
Digital Media/Multimedia/Media Technology	**7%**

The most popular subjects of study for other postgraduate qualifications and undergraduate degrees and diplomas are listed in **Figures 6 and 7**. A wide variety of subjects were mentioned but just the five most common are listed for each type of qualification.

Teaching is the most common subject area amongst those holding a postgraduate qualification in another subject (9% of those with such a qualification). Other common subjects areas include Business, Administration and Law (8%), Science (7%), Politics (7%) and Other Languages, Literature and Culture (7%).

Amongst those holding an undergraduate degree or diploma in another subject, Languages Literature and Culture of the British Isles is the most common subject area (held by 17% of those with such a qualification), closely followed by Other Languages Literature and Culture (16%).

Figure 6   Top Subjects of Other Postgraduate Qualifications in the Interactive Media Sector

Subject of Study	
Teaching and Lecturing	**9%**
Business, Administration and Law	**8%**
Science	**7%**
Politics	**7%**

Other Languages, Literature and Culture	7%

Figure 7 **Top Subjects of Other Undergraduate Degrees/Diplomas in the Interactive Media Sector**

Subject of Study	
Languages Literature and Culture of the British Isles	**17%**
Other Languages Literature and Culture	**16%**
History	**9%**
Crafts Creative Arts and Design	**7%**
Performing Arts	**6%**

With such a wide variety of subjects specified it is no surprise that the institutions of study are also numerous. For those holding a media specific postgraduate qualification the most common institutions of study are: Cardiff University (13%), The University of Central Lancashire (10%) and The University of Westminster (5%). For those holding a media specific undergraduate degree or diploma the most common institutions of study are: Bournemouth University (4%), Leeds Trinity & All Saints (Accredited College of the University of Leeds) (4%), The University of Manchester (3%) and The University of Plymouth (3%).

In terms of qualifications in other subjects, the most common institutions of study for postgraduate qualifications are: the University of London (Institutes and activities) (11%), The University of Lincoln (5%), Oxford University (5%) and The School of Oriental and African Studies (5%). For undergraduate degrees or diplomas in other subjects the most common institutions of study are: The University of Edinburgh (6%), The University of Leeds (5%), The University of Sheffield (4%), Oxford University (4%), and The University of Manchester (4%).

Perspective of Employers[11]

Overall, employers in the Interactive Media industry rate accredited training and more specifically formal qualifications highly. Pre-entry FE was the most popular type of provision amongst large[12] Interactive Media employers (80% rated it as important) and around two thirds or more rate all post-entry training as important including CPD, management, technical and business training.

In terms of graduate qualifications, four fifths (80%) of Interactive Media employers rate any degree as important and this is very similar to the proportion of employers across the creative media industry as a whole (79%). Fewer employers rate pre-entry degrees in media subjects as important in comparison with pre-entry degrees in other subjects (31% vs 77% in Interactive Media and 39% and 75% across the entire creative media

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[11] All figures pertaining to the perspective of employers are taken from Skillset's Employers Survey 2006 which excludes film production, cinema exhibition, performers and photo imaging. A total of 322 interviews were carried out with employers in the interactive media industry.

[12] For the purpose of this document and the source of these data all 'large' employers employ 26 people or more and all 'small' employers employ 25 people or fewer.

industry). However, it is important to note that vocational media courses that are designed to meet industry needs are often well regarded by employers. The perceived importance of media specific qualifications may be impacted by views on those that are less vocational in nature.

More than three fifths (63%) of Interactive Media employers would consider encouraging their permanent staff to work toward a qualification, a greater proportion than across the creative media industry overall (51%). Degrees and postgraduate qualifications (70%) and specialist and specific vocational qualifications such as health & safety (59%) are the most popular options for Interactive Media employers. One in ten (9%) Interactive Media employers take on apprentices and a further quarter (24%) would consider doing so, phenomena mirrored across the wider creative media industry (9% and 28% respectively).

Over half (54%) of Interactive Media employers demonstrate their value of education by maintaining links with schools, colleges, universities and/or private training providers, which is very similar to the proportion of employers across the creative media industry as a whole (55%). The links take the form of work placements, provision of teaching support and providing them with information about the industry for example.

Training Delivery in Interactive Media Sector

Perspective of Workforce

Approaching two thirds (64%) of the Interactive Media workforce had received some training in a twelve month period between 2007 and 2008, compared to 66% of the wider Creative Media workforce in a twelve month period between 2004 and 2005.[13] This varies by sub-sector, with two thirds (66%) of those working in web and internet having undertaken training compared with 60% of the other interactive media workforce.

On average the Interactive Media workforce received 6.6 days training in the twelve month period, compared to 8.2 days between 2004 and 2005. Individuals working in web and internet received the greatest number of days training on average (6.8 days) compared with an average of 6.2 days for the other interactive media workforce.

Figure 8 shows the most common areas in which training had been received in the twelve month period. The Interactive Media workforce were most likely to have received training in on-line/web design/interactive media/electronic games (22%), specific software applications (20%), ethics/safeguarding trust (16%) and legal (15%).

Training received varies by Interactive Media sub-sector. Amongst the web and internet workforce the most common areas of training received are on-line/web design/interactive media/electronic games (29%), specific software applications (19%) and legal (18%). Training received amongst the other interactive media workforce is a little different, with one quarter (25%) of those in receipt to training having received it in specific software applications and ethics/safeguarding trust, while 23% received training in health and safety.

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[13] Skillset 2005 Survey of the Audio Visual Industries' Workforce. NB Excludes film production, performers, photo imaging and publishing.

Figure 8   Topic of Training Received in the Interactive Media Industry

Topic of Training Received	ALL INTERACTIVE MEDIA	Web and internet	Other interactive media
Industry Specific			
On-line/Web design/interactive media/electronic games	22%	29%	2%
Specific Software applications	20%	19%	25%
Ethics/Safeguarding Trust	16%	13%	25%
Editing	12%	10%	16%
Journalism/presenting	9%	11%	4%
Writing/publishing for the web	7%	7%	8%
Production	7%	7%	6%
Generic			
Legal	15%	18%	8%
Business Skills	12%	14%	8%
Health & Safety	9%	4%	23%

Of the training received by the Interactive Media workforce, 80% was delivered in the classroom. Nearly two fifths (36%) of the Interactive Media workforce had received on the job training, and a quarter (24%) said their training had been delivered using a combination of classroom and technology. Those working in other interactive media were particularly likely to have received training in the classroom (84%), while those working in web and internet were particularly likely to have received on the job training (41%).

Of the training received by the Interactive Media workforce in the past twelve months, 70% was provided by an employer, and one quarter was provided by a private company. Around one in ten (11%) had provided training for themselves (ie self-taught). There are some variations by sub-sector. Those working in web and internet were particularly likely to have provided training for themselves (12%), while those working in other interactive media were particularly likely to have received training provided by an employer (74%).

The most common source of payment of training fees for the Interactive Media workforce is an employer (78%). Over a quarter (26%) said they had no fees to pay, and 7% said they or a family member paid for the training. There is little variation by Interactive Media sub-sector.

Perspective of Employers

Seven in ten (70%) Interactive Media employers carry out some form of training or development for permanent employees (including both on and off the job training), which is higher than across the wider creative media industry where this is the case for three fifths of employers (60%). This varies from 76% of web and internet employers to 62% of offline multimedia employers. The most popular type delivered within Interactive Media companies is structured support on the job carried out by another member of staff (cited

by 86% of Interactive Media employers). In-house training sessions carried out by another member of staff (85%) and external courses/seminars (81%) are other popular methods of delivery.

In terms of training provided for freelancers, a fifth (21%) of Interactive Media employers carry out some form of training or development for freelancers (including both on and off the job training), compared with a quarter (26%) across the creative media industry as a whole. This varies from 28% of web and internet employers to just 6% of offline multimedia employers. As with the training of permanent employees, the most common mode of training for freelancers delivered by Interactive Media employers is through structured support on the job by another member of staff. Having said that, fewer employers cite this mode for freelancers than for employees (79% compared with 86% for employees). In-house training sessions carried out by another member of staff (73%) and external courses/seminars (70%) are also relatively common options.

Figure 9   Training Provided by Interactive Media and All Creative Media Employers by Contract Type
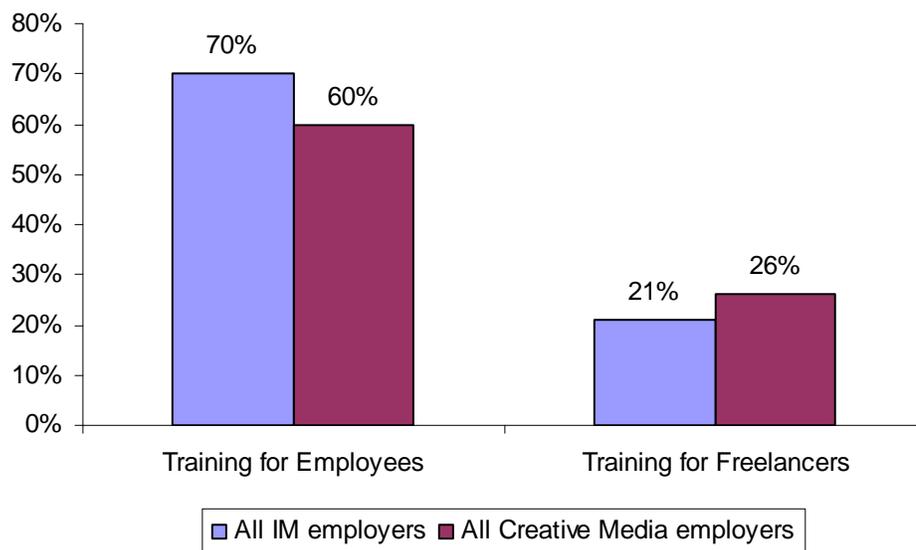
Seven in ten (68%) Interactive Media employers offer work experience or work placement posts to potential new entrants which is similar to the proportion of creative media employers as a whole who do this (67%).

Approaching three fifths (56%) of Interactive Media employers said that they were prevented from undertaking training/development more often. Of this group, the main reason given for the problems faced with training was that it is too costly (73%) and that they do not have enough time (52%).

Training Needs in Interactive Media Sector

Perspective of Workforce

Over half (55%) of the Interactive Media workforce cited a training need in 2008, and this is lower than in 2005 (70%). There is little variation by Interactive Media sub-sector.

The areas of training need most commonly cited by the Interactive Media workforce are on-line/web design/interactive media/electronic games (27%), specific software applications (22%) and business skills (17%). These and other common areas of training need are shown in **Figure 10** (although many more training topics are mentioned on a less frequent basis).

By way of comparison, the most common areas of training need in 2005 were on-line/web design/interactive media/computer games (31%), management/leadership (24%) and IT (22%).

Figure 10   Areas of Training Need in the Interactive Media Industry

Topic of Training Received	ALL INTERACTIVE MEDIA	Web and internet	Other interactive media
Industry Specific			
On-line/Web design/interactive media/electronic games	27%	31%	17%
Specific Software applications	22%	20%	28%
Production	12%	11%	16%
Editing	10%	11%	5%
Animation	6%	7%	4%
Writing/Script writing	6%	4%	12%
Generic			
Business skills	17%	21%	7%
Management/leadership	15%	17%	9%
Careers Advice/development	7%	4%	15%

Training needs also vary by Interactive Media sub-sector. Approaching one third (31%) of those working in web and internet cited on-line/web design/interactive media/computer games, while those working in other interactive media were most likely to cite a need for training in specific software applications (28%).

As shown in **Figure 11**, 87% of the Interactive Media workforce who had tried to obtain training or training materials had experienced barriers to receiving it. The most common obstacle cited was that fees were too high, reported by 36% of the Interactive Media workforce, followed by employers not being willing to pay for training (35%).

Those working in other interactive media are much less likely to cite as an obstacle that their employers were unwilling to pay for training (18%), while the web and internet

workforce is more likely to cite difficulty in assessing the quality of training (27%) than those in the other sub-sector.

Figure 11   Barriers to Training in the Interactive Media Industry

Topic of Training Received	ALL INTERACTIVE MEDIA	Web and internet	Other interactive media
Any barriers or obstacles	**87%**	**92%**	**76%**
Fees are too high	**36%**	**37%**	**33%**
Employers not willing to pay for training	**35%**	**43%**	**18%**
Training is in inconvenient times	**29%**	**28%**	**32%**
Lack of information about available training	**26%**	**30%**	**16%**
Employers not willing to give time off for training	**25%**	**31%**	**12%**
Lack of suitable courses/training in the region/nation I live/work	**24%**	**27%**	**17%**
Difficult to assess the quality of courses	**23%**	**27%**	**14%**
Training is in inconvenient places	**18%**	**18%**	**20%**
Lack of suitable courses/training in the UK	**18%**	**17%**	**20%**
Possible loss of earnings too high a risk	**13%**	**16%**	**6%**
Domestic/personal arrangements	**10%**	**9%**	**12%**
Fear of losing work through committing time in advance	**8%**	**7%**	**10%**
Lack of employment support	**6%**	**8%**	**-**
I don't have enough time	**2%**	**3%**	**-**
Other	**4%**	**6%**	**-**

Perspective of Employers

Three in ten (29%) Interactive Media employers recognise a gap between existing skills and those needed to meet business objectives, slightly higher than amongst employers in the wider creative media industry (26%). This varies from 40% of web and internet employers to 24% of offline multimedia employers. The most common skill gaps reported by Interactive Media employers are specific software/technical skills (e.g. ActionScript and Macromedia), engineering, digital compression, business skills, management/leadership skills and general understanding of the sector/business.

In addition, future skill gaps are anticipated by a quarter (24%) of large Interactive Media employers, fewer than the average across the wider creative media industry (36%). Specific skill areas cited relate to technical software and website design skills and project management skills.

In terms of the skills of new employees specifically, the view of Interactive Media employers is very similar to the view across the creative media industry as a whole; 27% of Interactive Media employers compared with three in ten (30%) employers across the wider creative media workforce rate them as 'fully equipped', and 45% in Interactive Media compared with 43% across the wider creative media industry rate them as having '…most of the skills but have some need for development'. Less than 1% of Interactive Media employers said that new employees have 'none of the skills' required.

Future Research

Labour market data from Skillset's regular cycle of research will continually update this Digest. This includes data gathered on the size and shape of the industry, the demands of individuals and employers in terms of training experiences, skill gaps and shortages.

Skillset, 2009