



## Landing an Entry-Level Marketing Position

By Donna McGill

**Sales and marketing jobs** have always been exciting positions. Considering the availability of these positions across numerous markets, finding the ideal job is a matter of choosing a market segment. If you have ever seen a commercial on television and thought to yourself, “Why don’t they tell the public about their new safety rating?” or “Why aren’t they promoting their new line of scented fabric softeners?” you might be an ideal candidate to fill one of the numerous sales and marketing jobs. It is fresh thought processes employers are constantly looking for. And, if you are a wandering soul who loves the thought of being able to travel, then you could be just one of the dream candidates many of the larger corporations actively seek. From polling audiences to determine a company’s new look to pouring over research data to determine product placement on store shelves, **jobs in marketing** are results-oriented positions that require one’s efforts to reflect through a company’s bottom line.

If you have ever happened by large department stores’ window creations, you have witnessed marketing efforts at their creative bests. If you have ever heard a news release, a marketing and public relations team carefully chose every word and may have even coached the speaker on every syllable of enunciation. Marketing is the art of placing products, companies, services, politicians, and any other commodity or service your mind can consider, into the most beneficial location and/or position. These locations or positions can be defined as a timeframe for company announcements, shelves in grocery and department stores, advertisements on billboards or other media sources, and locations that are broadly defined as entire cities (consider city benches, billboards on buses and targeted mail-outs for a company’s grand opening). So do you think you have the creativity and ability to step outside the box? For those creative people who are looking to revamp their careers, these are dream jobs for those who are bold and not afraid of taking risks. Some of the most requested skills and required traits for **marketing positions** include:

- the ability to speak multiple languages.
- stress resistance.
- the willingness to work long hours, evenings, and weekends.
- the ability to speak to large groups, including the media.
- good judgment and fast thinking skills.
- the ability to build effective relationships with co-workers, management, media, customers, and the general public.
- the ability to maintain a public persona that indicates grace under pressure; tasteful clothing choices; and an always-on smile.

Salaries are determined by experience and education, but most in this field earn slightly higher-than-average incomes,

even at the beginning of their careers, and usually enjoy consistent raises and promotions throughout their careers. Further, marketing positions are available in nearly every industry, including manufacturing, insurance, retail, and human resources groups. Statistics indicate steady growth for this sector, even in less-than-ideal economic times. Projections vary in just how well this industry can perform, but on average, this field can expect about an 8% growth over the course of the next decade. And if you are willing to relocate to better position yourself for ideal opportunities, consider the states that have the most sales and marketing jobs: California leads the pack with over 32,000 employed, New Jersey comes in second with 7,400 employees, and Massachusetts follows with slightly more than 6,500 positions. Even though California leads the nation in available jobs, New York state pays its marketing consultants nearly \$70 per hour, while Virginia follows with an average per-hour figure of \$63.

Also important to those self-sufficient and fearless souls: it is entirely realistic to believe you can strike out on your own and provide services as an independent contractor. In fact, many of the most-successful marketing gurus positioned themselves to go into business for themselves within three years of entering the sector. Few occupations offer such well-paying salaries, versatility in job descriptions, and success for independent contractors as those in the marketing field.

Education requirements are vital in this arena, and although many employers do not require degrees in fields such as business administration or engineering, it is strongly advised for those wishing to remain successful to continue their education efforts with courses in communications, consumer trends, marketing research, visual arts, and even journalism. Consider such organizations as Toastmasters as a way to further your career, since public speaking is nearly impossible to avoid in any of the fields within the marketing sector.



## Marketing Career Feature

When you are ready to put your name out there for consideration, be sure to polish your resume until it shines. This is one time you want to include all of your successes, education and non-credit courses, as well as a solid idea in your mind for presentation during your interview. Often

candidates are asked questions similar to, "What can you do for our company's bottom line?" Be prepared to answer such questions. Do your homework! You have to know the company with whom you are interviewing in order to make a credible and impressive impression on your potential employer.

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