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121st Annual Meeting

New Frontiers in Newspapering

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NEWSPAPER INDUSTRY COMPENSATION SURVEY (NICS)



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Tuesday, July 18, 2006

Inland releases NICS

Inland Staff Report

Online editors enjoyed the biggest increases in base pay and incentives last year, according to the 2006 Newspaper Industry Compensation Survey.

Specific salary figures and ranges from the confidential survey are released only to study participants. The percentage changes released to the public are useful in identifying patterns and trends in occupational groupings, said Robert Greene, principal and CEO at Reward Systems, Glenview, Ill., and quality control consultant to the NICS for more than 10 years. Persistence of rapid upward trends can indicate a function is taking on more significance in organizations, he said.

The position of online editor recorded an **8.1 percent** increase in base pay from 2005 to 2006, according to the NICS. The position also posted an **8.8 percent** increase in total direct pay, which consists of salary and incentives.

Greene noted that the NICS figures are highly reliable. The 2006 NICS includes data from **521 daily newspapers**, up from 519 last year. Participation has been up significantly from 455 newspapers in 2003. The number of papers reporting and Inland's more than 75 years of compiling confidential compensation data make the NICS the industry standard in measuring newspaper compensation levels.

Year-to-year comparisons measured by the NICS are based on responses from newspapers reporting in both years. For 2005 and 2006 comparisons, 484 newspapers were used. The percentages reflect changes only at those newspapers participating in both years.

A comparison of all newspapers reporting in 2006 with all newspapers reporting in 2005 shows an average increase in base pay of **2.58 percent** across all occupations, a slight dip from last year's 2.72 percent.

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Reporters' salaries reflected historically modest increases in 2006. Entry-level reporters saw a **2.1 percent** increase in base pay and a 2.3 percent increase in total compensation. Experienced reporters saw a 2.6 percent increase in salary and total compensation. This job category saw increases of **1.5 percent** in salary and 2.2 percent in total compensation last year.

The newspaper-specific information makes it more useful than generic salary surveys. Newspapers are able to compare their situation to papers of similar circulation and demographics. It is helpful for when newspapers create a new position or add staff. The survey provides information more quickly and reliably than calling a host of other papers for the information. The NICS can be used by newspapers or groups of all sizes to help assure employees they receive fair compensation.

The confidential NICS covers **90 newspaper job positions**. It provides medians, means and ranges. Study participants receive base pay and total direct compensation averages for the job titles plus the results of an exclusive mini-survey. Regional and customized reports are available

The NICS shipped to participants June 23. It is administered by Inland Press Association and co-sponsored by Inland, Newspaper Association of America, International Newspaper Financial Executives and New England Newspaper Association.

For more information, contact **Karla Zander** at Inland, (847) 795-0380 or kzander@inlandpress.org.

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118th Annual Meeting



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