

THE ROLE OF UI DESIGNERS



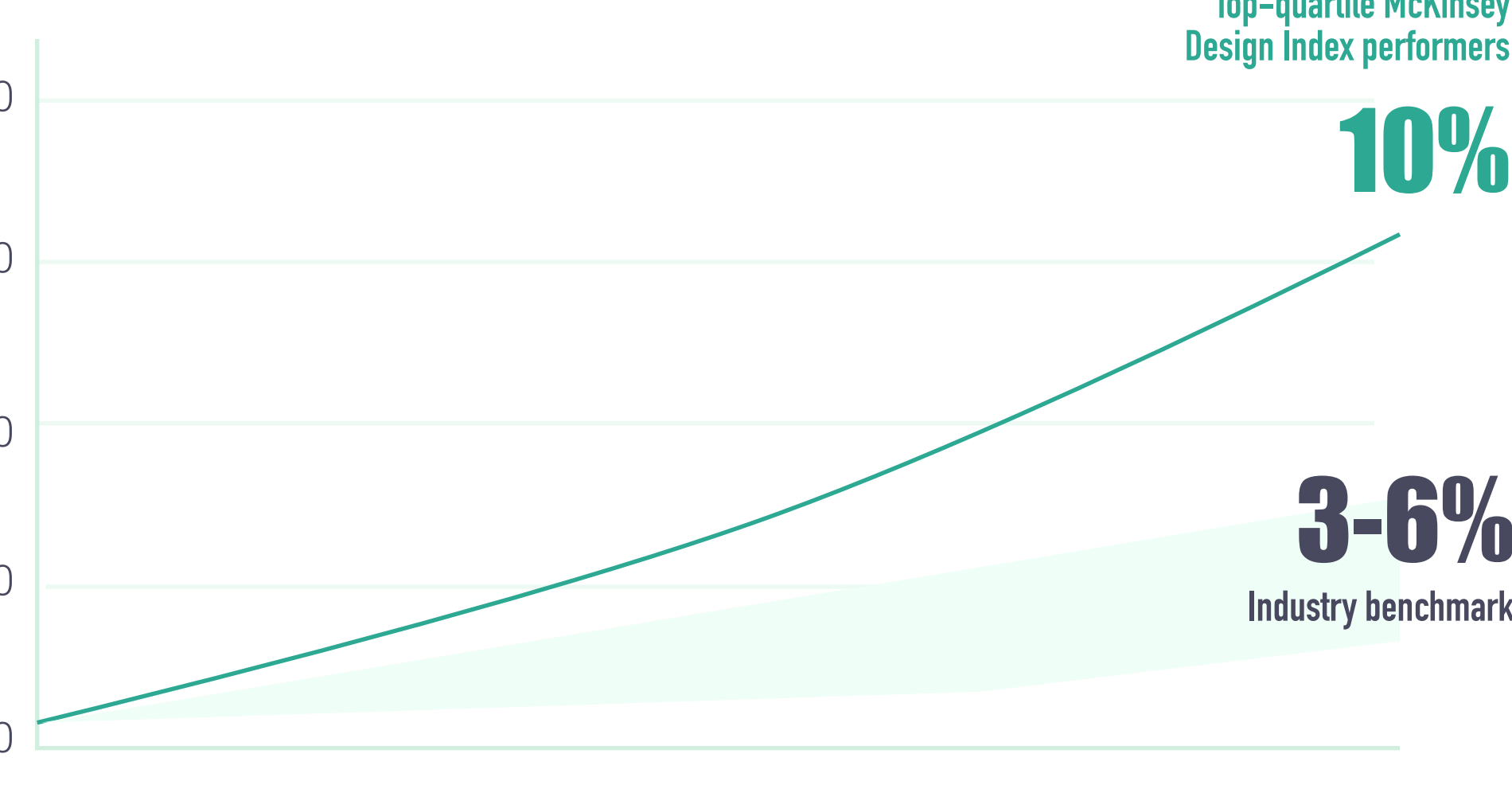
As overlapping fields, User interface (UI) and user experience (UX) design have a lot in common and professionals with these skills are in enormously high demand. In fact, as of this writing, there are approximately 8,500 UI and 27,000 UX job openings in the United States on [Glassdoor](#) alone.

The overall goal of UI Designers (UIDs) is primarily to create the software and/or hardware interfaces that add up to a delightful user experience. As opposed to UX Designers (UXDs), who are more broadly focused on the end-to-end user experience, UIDs typically work more closely with developers on the details and implementation of an interface. This entails the creative yet consistent utilization of design systems, patterns, style guides and branding, in close collaboration with front-end engineers, to create the displays and controls that users' interface with throughout an experience.

This infographic offers an overview of a role that is a bit more technical than strict UXD, absolutely critical for any design-conscious organization, and highly valued from a compensation perspective. Welcome to the fascinating world of UI Designers!

WHY ARE UI DESIGNERS NEEDED?

Much like other UXers, these professionals help ensure the success of products, systems, and services through user-centered thinking and design. Although most UI designers are focused on external contexts (outward UX) for customers and people outside of their organization, expertise is also leveled at internal contexts for employees, contractors, suppliers, and vendors (inward UX). In a new report by McKinsey, who tracked the design practices of 300 publicly listed companies in multiple countries and industries over a five-year period, top quartile McKinsey Design Index (MDI) enterprises exhibited a strongly positive correlation between MDI and business performance:



WHAT DO THEY DO?

Leverage User-Centered Thinking

Design with users in mind, exploiting use-related data to drive the best design solutions forward.

Empathize

See experiences from user perspectives and design for them.

Translate Requirements into Designs

Take specs from business, IT, UX, and front-end developers and bring them to life, visually.

Create New Interfaces

Design displays, controls and interactions for brand new products.

Redesign Existing Interfaces

Creatively change and optimize the interfaces of existing products.

Above information synthesized from [The UXology Group's website](#) and related publicly available information.

Collaborate

Work with cross-functional teams, IT, UX and front-end developers on design efforts.

Iterate

Envision, present, and iterate upon design artifacts and live interfaces.

Lobby for UI Internally

Evangelize user-centric thinking throughout the organization, especially to developers.

Standardize

Systematize design with guidelines, brand platforms, style guides, pattern libraries, and UI elements.

Support UX testing

Build the necessary stimuli for use-related testing and research.

WHERE DO THEY COME FROM?

Most relevant backgrounds

Graphic design
Visual design
Product design
Interactive design
Industrial design
Fine arts
Web design
Web development
Software development



WHAT QUALITIES DO THEY USUALLY POSSESS?

Detail-Oriented

Creative

Pixel-Perfectionist

Imaginative

Communicator

Tech-savvy

Data-Driven

Technical

Curious

Problem Solver

Cooperative

Open to Feedback

Empathetic

Negotiation

Popular education

Bachelor's degree or higher in the fields of:

Design
Visual arts
Fine arts
Digital media arts
Computer science
Engineering
Information systems
Technology

Additional education and certification (such as through [online bootcamps](#))

Related titles

Interface designer
Visual designer
Human-machine interface designer
UX engineer
UI developer

Business

- ✔ Understand business fundamentals
- ✔ Help balance business needs with user needs
- ✔ Identify use-related problems and generate design solutions
- ✔ Serve as liaison to developers
- ✔ Facilitate group settings and design reviews
- ✔ Lead workshops and participatory design sessions
- ✔ Leverage constructive feedback from multiple directions (e.g., users, developers, UX researchers, stakeholders)
- ✔ Communicate professionally
- ✔ Manage projects effectively
- ✔ Present ideas and designs persuasively

Design

- ✔ Help define UI layouts, color palettes, fonts, iconography, etc.
- ✔ Construct and apply design systems, patterns, and UI elements
- ✔ Utilize style guides, brand platforms, design guidelines, and pattern libraries
- ✔ Gather requirements and translate into interface designs
- ✔ Apply interaction, graphic, visual, data, motion, instructional, and related specialties to interface design
- ✔ Sketch, illustrate, and present UI designs
- ✔ Craft storyboards, workflow models, flow diagrams, site maps, journey maps, UI concepts, wireframes and prototypes
- ✔ Conduct design critiques and heuristic/expert reviews
- ✔ Support UX research by developing necessary artifacts
- ✔ Complete design handoffs to developers

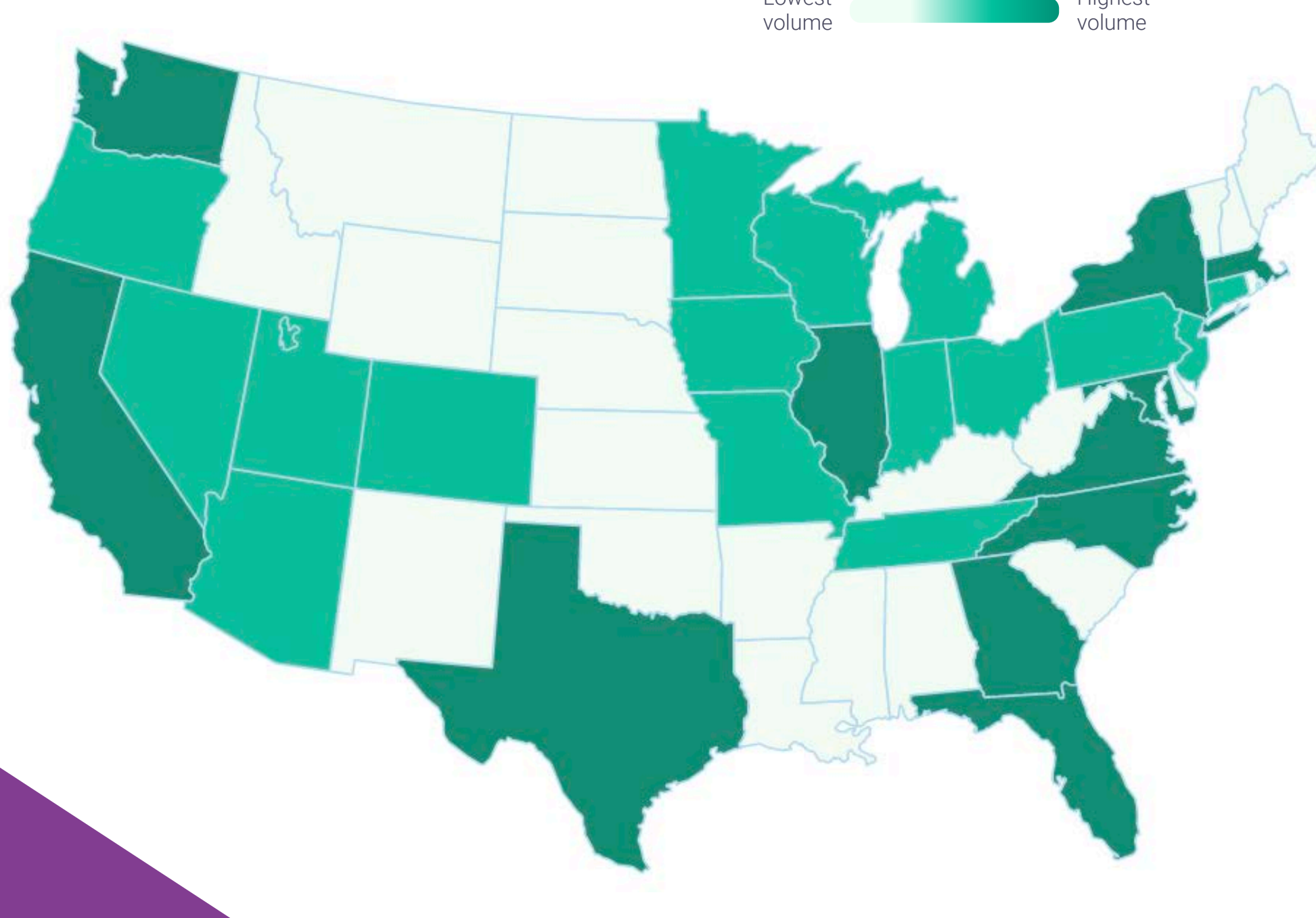
WHAT ARE THEIR KEY SKILLS?

WHAT TECHNOLOGIES DO THEY MASTER?

Design Software	Development Expertise	Project Management	Content Management	Communication Tools
Adobe Creative Cloud, Sketch, Figma, Zeplin, Proto.io, Marvel, MockFlow, WebFlow, Framery, ProtoPie, Origami, Principle, Atomic, InVision, Axure, UXPin, FluidUI, Omnigraffle, Balsamiq, etc.	Javascript, CSS, HTML, Java, .Net, AJAX, PHP, JSON, XHTML, Ruby on Rails, Angular, Bootstrap, jQuery, plus SQL database development and familiarity with common APIs.	Jira, Trello, Evernote, SmartSheet, Wrike, Microsoft Project, Zoho Projects, Podio, Confluence, Basecamp, Asana, etc.	WordPress, Joomla!, Magento, Drupal, Egnyte, Box, DropBox, OneDrive, Google Drive, etc.	Day-to-day collaboration (e.g., Slack) plus web conferencing solutions such as Zoom, WebEx, GoToMeeting, Hangouts/Meet, Skype, etc.
			General Office Technology	
			Word processors, spreadsheets, presentations, email clients (e.g., MS Office, G-Suite), etc.	

WHERE ARE THEY IN DEMAND?

- San Francisco Bay Area, California
- New York City, New York
- Seattle, Washington
- Chicago, Illinois
- Austin, Texas
- Washington, DC Area
- Boston, Massachusetts
- Atlanta, Georgia
- Los Angeles, California
- Charlotte, North Carolina
- San Diego, California



Domestic job market data compiled from [The U.S. Census Bureau](#) and [Indeed](#) on August 29, 2019.



HOW MUCH DO THEY EARN?

Average salary by job title and years of experience

U.S. salary data compiled from [Glassdoor](#) on August 29, 2019.



ARE YOU INTERESTED IN GETTING INTO UI DESIGN?

Check out Springboard's UI/UX Career Track, a mentor-led bootcamp structured to fit your life and guaranteed to get you a job.

[Learn more about UI/UX Career Track](#)