

# Companies Looking to Hire Digital, New Age Tech Pros in 2020

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**Mumbai | Kolkata:** Digital and new age technology professionals will be the most sought-after talent among companies in India in the New Year. Demand for people with training in artificial intelligence, machine learning, natural language processing, robotics, blockchain, etc. are seen doubling in 2020 at a time when increasing cost pressures and an uncertain business environment is prompting many companies to go slow on overall hiring across other domains.

There are a little over 60,000 job openings currently for the top 10 new age tech skills for 2020, according to an estimate by specialist staffing firm Xpheno that was shared exclusively with ET. These include data analytics, AWS, data science, ML, NLP, data visualisation, IoT, AI and blockchain.

“There has been a consistent demand for these super-specialised skills thanks to the scale in which funded startups and global MNCs are scaling up their tech talent,” said Xpheno co-founder Kamal Karanth. “As we enter 2020, there is potential for talent specialising in these domains to go on a fresh hunt with potentially rewarding financial returns with the increasing supply-demand imbalance.”

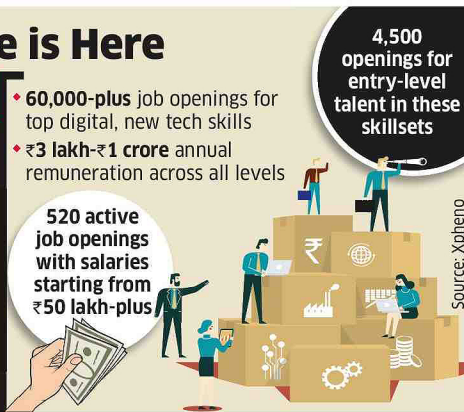
The openings are across entry, mid and senior levels with annual remuneration ranging from ₹3 lakh to over ₹1 crore. There are over 520 active job openings in AI, data science, AWS, analytics with salaries ranging ₹50 lakhs to ₹1 crore and above. Entry-level talent with these skillsets also has about 4,500 openings.

Some of the biggest and high remuneration openings are with industry leaders such as Accenture, Capgemini, IBM, Dell, NVIDIA, the Xpheno survey found. The funded startups are also competing with the branded

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### Top digital/new tech skills for 2020

- Data analytics
- Data science
- Machine learning
- Natural language processing
- Data visualisation
- Internet of Things
- Artificial intelligence
- Blockchain



big boys chasing some of the best available talent in the market.

ET spoke to HR heads across sectors such as IT, manufacturing, consulting, ecommerce and industrial sector companies who confirmed the trend.

“In 2020, we will stay on the path to

building specialised talent to address present and future customer needs, skilling our talent and acquiring fresh talent in areas like cloud, digital, security, AI, blockchain and emerging areas such as 5G and quantum computing,” said Mohan Sekhar, senior managing director of Ac-

centure Advanced Technology Centers in India.

Schneider Electric, the global specialist in energy management and automation, is increasing hiring of professionals in digital, robotics, AI, ML, etc. by 40% in India in 2020. Last year, the company hired around 2,000 professionals in related areas. “The hiring in new tech is to cater to the needs of our analytic hub based out of India... This is what our customers are demanding and is in response to the growing business needs,” said Schneider Electric India HR director Runita Verma.

The hunt for these top skills is tilting the scales in favour of candidates with these skillsets, with the expected hikes in a new job offer ranging from 35% to 60%, and some outliers commanding even 100%-plus in certain skills like data science and ML. “Servicing team that have tech-fluency is the ask of many clients,” said Deloitte India chief talent officer SV Nathan. “To work effectively

with clients, one needs to be able to understand the technology well too. For example, how can drones help in inventory management? How can driverless cars improve road safety? Or, how can analytics help companies with employee engagement and retention?” he added.

Even as ET reported that IT services company Cognizant will be laying off 350 senior employees to cut costs, the company said that with more students in campus becoming digitally ready, it plans to hire 30% more students from engineering and science in 2020. The company plans to hire more than 20,000 students from campuses in India, with an emphasis on hiring talent for cloud, data, digital engineering and IoT.

“Customers are increasingly turning to partners for digital solutions,” said Cognizant vice president and global head of talent acquisition Suresh Bethavandu, adding that the focus is on hiring new talent in digital areas.

Diversified miner Vedanta is looking to hire fresh talent as well as domain experts at leadership level with digital and technology expertise, especially in areas of smart manufacturing, industrial cybersecurity, digital capital management projects and other functional digital projects including HSE and exploration.

“In addition to productivity and efficiency improvements due to automation interventions, predictive analysis for asset integrity, unmanned surveillance systems etc. are a few other examples where tech will help us to reduce significant costs,” said Vedanta group CHRO Madhu Srivastava.

Startups and ecommerce companies are also looking to add people in new tech for better customer experience. Online grocer BigBasket will be looking for professionals with an understanding of statistical/operations research/machine learning techniques and data infrastructure, said Tanuja Tewari, VP, HR.