

How Vista developed a team member location-based pay strategy with geo differentials to support a remote-first workplace

**Company**

Vista

Industry

Technology

Employees

Close to 8,000
team members

Location

Global

Headquarters

Dundalk, Ireland

**Payscale Info**

Marketpay

Geo Differentials Engine

Crowdsourced Data

Company-sourced Data

Professional Services

Situation and challenge

Vista is the expert design and marketing partner to millions of small businesses around the world and a subsidiary of Cimpres, together comprising close to 8,000 team members working out of both manufacturing plants and office environments in over 25 countries. When the COVID-19 pandemic hit in 2020, team members whose roles made it possible to work from home began doing so. During the course of the pandemic, a cross-functional project team conducted regular engagement surveys to evaluate how team members felt about their current work arrangements. They discovered that the majority of team members preferred working remotely.

Cimpres and Vista's executive leadership team made the courageous and datadriven decision to shift to a remote-first workplace model for 1,500 team members whose work is not tied to a physical location. "Remote-first" means their work environment is remote by default; however, it's not remote-only. The company evolved its traditional offices to become flexible workspaces for team members who need to do focused work, hold meetings better done in person, or have social gatherings.

This approach would allow their team members to work and live nearly wherever they wanted and enable the organization to hire the best talent from anywhere. However, the change in workplace strategy required cross-collaboration between HR and a myriad of business partners as well as an entirely new way of looking at talent management. It also required a new compensation strategy that could more easily accommodate a distributed remote workforce. Team member surveys showed that an increasing number were interested in moving outside of commuting distance from their pre-pandemic offices and were concerned about how their pay would be impacted if they did relocate.

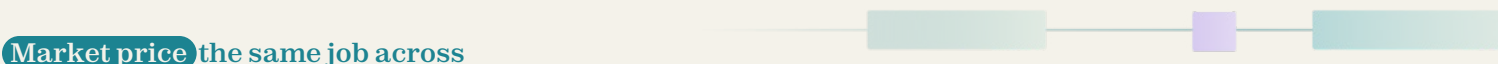
Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, Vista's pay strategy relied on salary data from traditional HR survey publishers to inform thousands of job-based pay ranges for jobs at every level and every location priced to the nearest office. The organization used data from over 20 surveys purchased from third-party providers and managed in Payscale's MarketPay product, which streamlines the survey management process and allows Vista to market price the same job across the world using global job levels and job codes.

However, the survey data was structured for locations where the organization had offices and manufacturing plants and was not adequate to help the organization price jobs accurately for any possible location. Furthermore, the number of new surveys that the organization would need to provide data on any conceivable location that a team member might move, or where Vista might hire, was not realistic.

Streamline the survey management process with Marketpay.



Market price the same job across the world with Geo Differentials.



Provide custom videos explaining the pay methodology to team members.



Solution and outcome

Using a variety of data sources and surveys from traditional publishers, Vista relied on Payscale MarketPay to manage the data aggregation of these resources along with **Payscale's crowdsourced data** with geo differentials. Payscale's online survey continually collects salary information for millions of users with multi-step validation processes to ensure the data is trustworthy and reflective of the market. Access to this data provides employers with a wide swath of location-specific salary information that empowers accuracy in market pricing down to the zip code. There are many ways to approach compensation structures, and Vista elected to adopt a team member location-based pay strategy using pay zones to group similar markets together. Using its team member population in Boston as pay zone zero, the organization settled on nine pay zones for the United States with percentage increases or decreases (geo differentials) applied to adjust pay accurately to reflect the job market in each pay zone relative to Boston. Vista also implemented pay zones for their international markets based on country. As an example, this in effect allows for team members previously tethered to the Barcelona office to move to any location in Spain and retain the same pay.

Vista relied on Payscale for professional services for the development of their new team member locationbased compensation strategy and roll-out of the program to their organization. In addition to informing various approaches to location-based pay and training on how to use Payscale's geo differentials engine, Payscale also provided Vista with a series of custom videos explaining the pay methodology to team members as part of a broader pay communications and pay transparency program that also included manager training. The videos were made publicly available to all team members in their remote-first handbook on Confluence, a web-based corporate wiki, with ongoing engagement managed through Peakon, which provides an anonymous comment option to collect feedback and monitor adoption.



Salary data

Technology to access salary data all in one place, including HR-reported salary data from participating Payscale customers, Crowdsourced data with geo differentials to inform pay adjustments when comparing locations, and tools to manage traditional surveys.



Pay strategy

Expertise and training on how to shift from an office-centric to team member location based pay methodology using geo differentials to price jobs anywhere as well as services to develop pay zones to support global job ranges for a mix of remote and non-remote workers.



Pay analysis

Tools that support deep statistical analysis with customizable dashboards in Payscale MarketPay, enabling analysis of team member pay versus the open market across jobs and by pay zone as well as an easy way to report on compensation with business partners.



Pay communications

Support from compensation experts to create materials to help train managers on how to have conversations with team members about pay, including custom-made videos to inform them about the organization's pay methodology.

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“Payscale has been a phenomenal partner during the COVID-19 pandemic. After surveying team members on their preferences, we opted to transition to a permanently remote-first workforce and were able to model costs and conduct analysis on pay strategies to develop a global approach to compensation with geographical differentials that would be fair and equitable for all team members. Payscale also provided services to help us deliver manager training and communicate our compensation strategy and rationale as part of a pay transparency initiative.”

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Stacey Sutela

Director of Global Compensation and HR Operations, Vista

Results

Vista collected data from their team members during the transition to their new remote-first workplace model and location-based pay methodology. Feedback from team members and leaders informed the decision not to adjust pay for current team members who move into a different pay zone. In these situations, only the pay range is adjusted based on the team member's new pay zone and moving forward will be referenced for any future pay actions. Copious communication from Vista's HR team to team members and their managers provided a solid foundation for understanding how the pay methodology was structured to provide fair and equitable compensation while also granting individuals the flexibility to choose where they want to live and work. Overall, Vista received positive feedback on the new paradigm. Over the course of a year, Vista experienced a positive increase in engagement scores related to rewards, discussion, and process across all team member groups. With a fair, flexible, and consistent approach to pay supported by modern salary data and compensation management technology, Vista is wellpositioned to focus on optimizing their compensation practices to attract and retain the best talent from anywhere in the world.

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“Being able to adapt our compensation strategies to the needs of our workforce — and our business — would be a daunting undertaking without proven compensation management software and an experienced partner like Payscale.”

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Stacey Sutela

Director of Global Compensation
and HR Operations, Vista

About Payscale

Payscale stands at the forefront of compensation data technology, pioneering an innovative approach that harnesses advanced AI and the most up-to-date and reliable market data to align employee and employer expectations. With its suite of solutions—Payfactors, Marketpay, and Paycycle—Payscale empowers 65% of Fortune 500 companies to make strategic compensation decisions. Organizations like Panasonic, ZoomInfo, Chipotle, AccentCare, University of Washington, American Airlines, and PetSmart rely on its unique combination of actionable data and insights, experienced compensation services, and scalable software to drive business success. By partnering with Payscale, businesses make confident compensation decisions that fuel growth and build value for both their organization and their people.

Create confidence in your compensation. Payscale. To learn more, visit www.payscale.com.

