EXTRACT

The UK Consulting Market in 2022

Market Trends Programme





What's included in this report

Our reports offer a wealth of market sizing, growth, and forecast data alongside engaging, in-depth analysis of the trends that matter. Using our highly flexible, multidimensional model we provide firms with robust, trusted data to make informed decisions about strategic investments and plan for the future.



Contents

Market overview

Explores the key trends that were front of mind for consulting firms in this market in 2021.

The UK consulting market in numbers	4
The UK consulting market in 2021	6
Services	8
Sectors	8

The client perspective

What clients tell us about their plans for the year—and where they'll be asking consultants for help. Not over yet: Half of UK client organisations are still in crisis mode Post-pandemic, clients' investment priorities are different

As the pandemic recedes, it's clear that UK organisations' biggest problems are around people and skills 22 Post-pandemic ambitions and a labour shortage will boost UK clients' use of consulting services in 2022 28 Five critical success factors for consultants 38

Insights from consultants

The views of consulting leaders in the UK. Interviews with consulting leaders

41

The UK consulting market in 2022

Our forecasts for growth through the end of 2022. Forecast for 2022 70

About this report

Our report draws on four main sources:

- Our Global Data Model covering the professional services market
- Our annual global client perception survey of senior end-users of consulting firms
- Our interviews with senior management consultants from a range of consulting firms
- Our in-depth desk research on the market

A detailed view of our methodology and more information about Source can be found below:

Methodology	71
Definitions of sectors and services	74
Contributors	76
Meet the experts	77
About us	78
How we can help you	79
Programme schedule for 2022	80

9

17



After a challenging 2020, the UK's consultants had a better 2021. COVID-related uncertainty continued to linger over the market, but clients increasingly turned to consultants for help navigating both the challenges and the opportunities the pandemic presented. A surge in deals activity towards the end of 2020 further helped to put some of the market on more solid footing. And while the market was somewhat split between strong growth and modest recovery in the opening months of 2021, as the year progressed and the worst of the pandemic seemed to be well and truly in the rear-view mirror, more opportunities started to open up, even in sectors and services that had been slower to return. As a result, the UK consulting market saw a rapid return to growth last year, with revenues up 11.6%.

Cybersecurity remained the fastest growing service for consultants. Clients continued to seek advice on how best to protect their increasingly digitised systems while also putting existing provisions through their paces with stress testing and wargaming initiatives. The challenges of responding to breaches were also a big driver of consulting work, with incident response capabilities seeing the sharpest uptick among consulting services, as clients sought to plug the gaps and mitigate the fallout from nefarious intrusions.

Firms with a strong strategy offering saw demand pick up strongly in 2021 after a double-digit decline the previous year. Client appetite for deals positively boomed last year amid pent-up demand from private equity. Companies were also eager to pick up bargains in their own market in addition to eyeing acquisitions as a means for new market entry. Research was another key area of growth last year, with market research—one of the largest capability lines within the strategy service—and macro- and microeconomic research services all up around 20%, as clients sought to better understand how the pandemic and other geopolitical and international trade changes had affected customer behaviour and the markets more broadly.

While risk and financial management consultants had a very mixed 2020, the market was overall more positive last year. Demand for financial management expertise recovered from double-digit decline in 2020 to achieve high single-digit growth in 2021 thanks to clients seeking support with debt and financial planning as well as financial restructuring and insolvency work. Risk consultants also had a better year, growing around 10% as clients sought to mitigate operational and programme risks and bolster their risk management capabilities.

A surge in deals activity towards the end of 2020 further helped to put some of the market on more solid footing.

The client perspective

Not over yet: Half of UK client organisations are still in crisis mode

Data we gathered from clients at the start of 2021 painted a picture of a business community worn down by the combination of Brexit-related uncertainty and COVID. More than in almost any other country we surveyed last year, businesspeople complained of demotivated staff, and the gap between generally more positive leadership teams and the struggling staff who reported into them was considerable. Yet, despite this-and perhaps even because of it-the UK went on to be one of the fastest growing markets last year, rivalling the US in terms of the extent to which clients turned to consulting firms for help. According to the clients we've interviewed, better-than-expected economic performance boosted investment confidence, and post-Brexit/pandemic supply chain shocks, while still serious, didn't bring business to its knees. Omicron, while it may have sent workers away from the offices they'd just begun to return to, doesn't look as though it will have a long-term impact on a population with reasonably high vaccination and immunity rates.

The aim of this part of our report is to look forwards, to explore investment priorities and challenges, and to understand the impact of those on demand for consulting services in 2022.

More than in almost any other country we surveyed last year, businesspeople complained of demotivated staff, and the gap between generally more positive leadership teams and the struggling staff who reported into them was considerable.

Details of our survey methodology are here.

For the purposes of analysing the key differences by sector, we've aggregated the responses into three main groups: financial services; goods and services (which includes the manufacturing, retail, and services sectors); and technology, media & telecoms (TMT). The public sector market, while significant in the UK, operates under very different constraints and parameters, but we've commented on it where especially relevant.

Throughout this report, the term "large organisations" refers to businesses with more than 5,000 employees, and "mid-sized organisations" refers to those with between 1,000 and 4,999 employees.

Insights from consultants

Interviews with consulting leaders

At Source, we have always believed that the only way to truly understand a consulting market is to have real conversations with the consultants who are on the ground working it that market, serving their clients day in and day out. Below, you'll find condensed versions of our most recent discussions with the UK's consultants as they reflect on 2021, and in the case of a few brave souls, venture a guess as to what comes next.

Amanda Gosling, Vice President - Telco, Media, Technology and Services Market Leader, Capgemini Invent

How did the market perform last year, and what were the key drivers?

The market was very robust in 2021. The main drivers were continued spending in the public sector and an accelerated rate of change due to the pandemic, which led clients across industries to speed up their transformation plans.

Have you seen any change in the transformation programmes that clients are coming forward with?

As transformations were accelerated, clients found that some of the supporting mechanisms within their organisations were not necessarily fit for purpose. So, their plans have expanded in scope to include areas of the business that weren't part of the transformation agenda before, like the procurement department.

How much interest are you seeing in sustainability?

People are struggling to take sustainability from a CSR initiative to part of the fabric of their operations. Clients believe that they have their own organisations under control to whatever extent, but reducing scope 3 emissions is difficult, and a lot of companies seem to be paralysed. This does, however, present an opportunity for consultants to help them break it down.

Ways of working changed dramatically during the pandemic, and this has been a major driver of work over the last two years. Do you see that continuing to be a theme?

The need to accommodate working from home was one big source of demand from the pandemic, but much of that work is now completed, and not everyone wants to be at home all the time, so many people are coming back to the office. But we will continue to see a big shift towards the future of work, and that will drive demand.

The pandemic also led to a return of empathy and humanity in the workplace. The old ways of management are unacceptable, so we need to work out how to help people change their ways of working. The focus is on behaviour rather than technology now.

How has your approach to talent changed over the last year?

We have grown so much in the last eighteen months, and we have had to change the way we recruit dramatically. Recruitment now requires different ways of screening resumes and helping people understand how to recruit people who don't look like them. Then, we have to make sure the new joiners are treated like they have always been a part of the team, which is especially hard when they join remotely. We have to figure out how to bring in large cohorts of people and still make it feel intimate. As a leader, it's important to reinforce the importance of investing time into this. Leadership shouldn't see this as something they make time for during the day; it should be in the fabric of what they do.

Have you seen a shift in the types of profiles that people are trying to recruit?

There are different profiles being hired, and that means new appraisal systems required and there's a need for a different type of investment in learning and development. Certifications will never go away, but the other side of talent—behaviour and soft skills—is so much more important now.

We're also seeing a change in how our clients approach sourcing talent. They either want closer relationships with their consulting partners, or they want the people who do this work to be their employees.

Last year, we saw an explosion in the deals market in the UK. What do you expect for 2022?

Within the consulting industry, we'll see a lot of M&A activity this year, and it will come from consulting firms continuously needing to expand and enhance their services offerings. The challenge is keeping the soul of the company you bought with the intention of increasing its performance. There is a tension between a smaller company and the larger company acquiring it, so the management infrastructure needs to be considered to ensure you're getting the best out of them and recognising that the cultures are going to be very different. All of this goes back to the fact that humanity has returned to the workplace and to consulting. As much as brands do matter, we are our people, and it's important that we look after them.

From an industry perspective, we are going to continue to see the big technology players overtake the little

ones. The tension will come from figuring out whether the decentralised technology stack is wanted or if integration into the platform will be required. I don't know how this might play out, but there will always be winners and losers in a binary choice like this.

No industry will be immune to the inevitability of start-ups, especially with more people starting businesses in the pandemic. It will be interesting to see their half lives and if bigger companies buy them.

With Brexit continuing to evolve, how is this translating into consulting work?

There will be a lot of work in risk and regulation across different industries. It has always been a big driver in financial services, but as the government rewrites regulation across the board, there will be a lot of work helping clients to understand how they are affected. This includes looking at how regulation flows through the organisation, the impacts it has, what it changes, how you engage with partners, and the legal implications that might come with all of this. There will be a lot of revenue there.

Are you or your firm following the Levelling Up agenda? Do you see any work coming out from that?

There appears to be some naivety in the Government's approach to some aspects of the Levelling Up agenda like the freeports, however it is likely there will ultimately be some big infrastructure projects around highways and railway. I do hope that it translates into the birth of great new industries all across the UK. There is no reason why it can't be the green revolution that delivers the levelling up. Within our own organisation we are certainly diversifying our locational footprint. We've moved from being Londonbased to being a distributed organisation, and we've opened offices in Glasgow, Manchester, and Bristol, and we will open one in Edinburgh. We will continue to look at that as a talent strategy, part of a social agenda contributing to our sustainability goals.

About this report

Methodology Sources

Megamodel: our Global Data Model

The quantitative market data in this report comes from our unique model of the global professional services market.

Rather than making high-level assumptions, this model has been built from the bottom up, sizing the market capability by capability—assessing how much work a firm earns delivering each professional capability within each sector and country. This results in a robust view of the size of the supply-side market, which can then be broken down to view the size of the market by country, sector, line of business, capabilities, and service.

Alongside this market segmentation, we also limit our market sizing and analysis to what we at Source call "big consulting"—work done by mid- and large-sized firms (those with more than 50 people). Please note that we don't track the long, thin tail of work done by contractors and very small firms, as most readers of this report would not seek or be able to compete in this part of the market.

All of the data in the model is calibrated through extensive interviews with, and surveys of, professional services firms and their clients, allowing us to discuss broader trends in the market alongside detailed dimensions such as headcount. These interviews and surveys are supplemented with desk research, which allows us to assess the impact of wider macroeconomic trends on professional services. This, combined with our detailed modelling, results in a longterm view of the market that is able to support both historic and forecast data. All figures given in this report are in pounds. For reference, Source is using the following exchange rates in its reports this year:

US dollar to British pound US\$1 = £0.73

US dollar to euro US\$1 = €0.84

We carry out a client survey to help us build a rich picture of how different trends in the UK are affecting clients' organisations and their use of consulting. One survey focuses on trends in the UK, providing detailed insights into the nuances of the market. For this, we surveyed 100 senior clients of consulting firms from across the UK, all of whom work in organisations with more than 500 employees. This survey focuses on the following areas:

- How they expect to use consultants during 2022 and the first half of 2023
- Factors that affect the way clients work with consulting firms
- The ways consulting firms market themselves to clients and the impact this has on client decision making.

Figure 36

Respondents by sector



- Financial services
- Technology, media & telecoms
- Services
- Manufacturing
- Public sector/state-owned organisations
- Retail
- Healthcare
- Pharmaceuticals and life sciences
 Energy, natural resources, and utilities



Interviews with senior consultants

In addition to our quantitative research, we interviewed 15 very senior consultants in the UK, representing most of the leading consulting firms in the geography and many smaller local specialists to understand more about how the consulting market is performing and the major trends, changes, and challenges consultants and their clients face. Throughout the year, Source analysts remain plugged in to the global consulting market through our bespoke research and consulting projects, adding further depth to our understanding of the consulting industry.

In-depth desk research

We also conducted a thorough PEST analysis in the UK that drills down into finer macroeconomic details on a holistic and sector-by-sector basis and allows us to fit our research into a wider macroeconomic picture.

Definitions of sectors and services

Our definition of management consulting includes a broad range of business advisory services, but excludes:

- tax advisory
- audit
- the implementation of IT systems
- the delivery of outsourced/offshored services
- HR compensation/benefits administration and technology

Where mergers & acquisitions work is concerned, consulting on deals is included (under strategy), but corporate finance fees on deals themselves are generally not included, although it is not always straightforward to separate the two.

For more information about how we classify consulting services and sectors, please see "Definitions of sectors and services".

Definitions of sectors and services

Sectors



Energy & resources

Energy Includes the exploration and production of energy, including oil, gas, coal, and renewables.

Utilities

Includes the delivery of electricity, gas, water, sanitation, and other related services.

Primary resources

Includes agriculture, chemicals and chemical products, commodities, forestry, fishing, metals, mining, and plastics.



Financial services

Banking

Includes retail banking, commercial banking, and lending.

Insurance

Includes general insurance (e.g., motor, home, pets, health-anything on an annual contract), life insurance, pension products, and retirement planning.

Private equity

Includes both consulting work for private equity firms and consulting work with private equity portfolio businesses.

Capital markets

Includes investment banking, trading of stocks and financial products, corporate finance, and broking.

Investment and wealth management Includes private banking, high net-worth banking, investment management, trust funds, the management of pension funds, and asset management.



Manufacturing

Aerospace

Includes space research and technology, the manufacture of aircraft, aircraft parts, rockets and other space equipment, and tanks and ammunition.

Automotive

Includes the manufacture of motor vehicles, industrial vehicles, and vehicle supplies and parts.

Construction

Includes surveying, architectural, and engineering services, heavy construction, house building, and the building of infrastructure

Consumer packaged goods

Includes the manufacture of clothes. foods, alcohol, tobacco, furniture, home furnishings, cleaning products, small arms, children's toys, and sports equipment.

Consumer and industrial electronics Includes electrical components, household and industrial appliances, commercial and professional equipment.

Industrial products

Includes industrial machinery, steel and metal products, and plastic products.



Pharma & biotech

Includes research into and the production of drugs, biological products, medicinal chemicals, and life sciences.

Healthcare

Includes private and publicly-funded healthcare, hospitals, laboratories, and medical equipment.



Public sector Government

Includes federal/national, state/regional, local government, emergency services, justice, social services, public transport, and conservation.

Education

Includes public and private schools, universities, and libraries.

Defence

Includes national security and consulting around defence issues.

Not for profit

Includes non-commercial research organisations, religious, political and professional membership organisations, trusts, labour unions, and business associations.



Retail

Includes the selling of clothes, food, consumer goods, and automobiles.



Services

Logistics

Includes warehousing, storage, packing and crating, and distribution including cargo, freight, and haulage.

Business services

Includes services relating to law, accountancy, IT maintenance, security systems, advertising, employment agencies, and vehicle leasing.

Leisure

Includes museums, art galleries, theatre, golf courses, hotels, hospitality, travel agencies, restaurants, and bars.

Real estate

Includes estate agencies and operators of residential and commercial buildings.

Transportation

Includes private and people-related transportation, including airlines, airport management, train operators, rail infrastructure management, water transportation, courier services, and private bus services.

Technology, media & telecoms Telecoms

Includes telephone, mobile, digital, and other communication services.

High-tech

Includes IT-related devices, computer and computerrelated devices, audio and video equipment, broadcasting and communication equipment.

Media

Includes radio, television, and digital broadcasting stations and services as well as printing and publishing of newspapers, periodicals, and books.



Services

We've taken the lines of business and capabilities from our taxonomy that broadly align with traditional definitions of consulting and divided them into services that include the following. Please note that for some lines of business, for example, forensics, we've taken a subset of the relevant capabilities and excluded others.



Technology & innovation

Ideation, Innovation management, Innovation strategy, Strategies for growth from innovation, Cloud advice, ERP consulting, IT strategy, planning & review, IT training, Programme management, Vendor selection, Clean technology, Green IT, Corporate identity, Graphic & UI design, UX & service design, Customer journey & UX benchmarking, Data visualisation, business intelligence & semantic layer.



• Strategy

Capital allocation strategy, Commercial due diligence & valuation, Financial due diligence, M&A transaction strategy, Operational due diligence, Portfolio & investment strategy, Public-private partnerships, Technology due diligence, Business & financial modelling, Category management, Channel management, Corporate recovery & turnaround, Corporate restructuring, Corporate strategy, Market analysis & strategy, Policy formulation, Pricing, Strategic sourcing/offshoring services, Real estate strategy, Environmental & social impact research, Macro/microeconomic research, Market research. Customer feedback. Customer segmentation, Employee feedback, Advanced analytics, Sustainable investment.



Cybersecurity consulting

Cybersecurity advice, Cybersecurity incident response, Penetration testing & wargaming, Technology & security risk services.



HR, change & people strategy

Benefits, compensation & pensions, excluding actuarial & investment advice, Change management, Diversity & inclusion, Employee engagement, Governance & board effectiveness, HR strategy & effectiveness, Leadership, Organisational design & culture, Organisational training & development, Outplacement, Pension fund evaluation & advice, Performance management, Stakeholder management, Talent management, Team effectiveness & collaboration, Resourceefficiency strategy, Purpose-led strategy & change, Resource-efficiency implementation, Social impact & trust.



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Benchmarking, Business continuity & recovery,
Cost cutting, Customer service, DevOps,
Distribution strategy, Lean & Six Sigma,
Operational review, Outsourcing advice,
Post-M&A integration, Process design, re-
engineering & automation, Procurement/
purchasing, Property & estate management,
Sales & distribution planning, Sales force
effectiveness, Supply chain management,
Target operating model, Sustainable supply
chain, Corporate, occupier services & facilities
management, Integrated real estate developer
services, Real estate deal/transaction services.
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Ľ	Risk & financial management
	Operational risk, Programme risk, Responding
	to regulation, Risk management, Budgeting/
	financial planning process, Debt advisory,
	Finance function, Financial advisory, Financia
	restructuring & insolvency, eDiscovery,
	Forensic accounting.

Contributors

We are extremely grateful to all the people we spoke to for making this report possible. Below is a list of individuals who have contributed (excluding those consultants who wished to remain anonymous).

Name	Job title	Organisation
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Philip Dunne	UK Managing Partner	Roland Berger
Alan Frost	Partner	Mazars
Amanda Gosling	Vice President - Telco, Media, Technology and Services Market Leader	Capgemini Invent
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Matt Prebble	UK Strategy & Consulting Lead	Accenture
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Andrew Stewart	Partner	Kearney
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Meet the experts

Ashok Patel

Ashok Patel

Ashok is a writer and editor at Source in our Market Trends team. He is an experienced writer, editor, and analyst, providing insights into the latest trends and developments across the professional services market. He has been quoted by a variety of trade publications and has previous experience in Source's Client Perception Programme. Prior to joining Source, Ashok was an editor and consultant in the commodities market, as well as working in the UK automotive industry.

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Fiona Czerniawska

A Co-founder and Managing Director of Source, Fiona is one of the world's leading commentators on the management consulting industry. Since founding Source in 2007, she has been bringing this expertise to bear on our clients' most pressing strategic projects and business issues. Fiona has published a dozen books on consulting topics, including two for The Economist: Business Consulting: A Guide to How it Works and How to Make it Work and Buying Professional Services.

She has more than 20 years' experience as a management consultant, working primarily in the areas of marketing and strategy. She was previously in charge of strategic planning for EY in the UK and has worked in the consulting practice of PwC. Fiona also has a PhD in 17th-century French art and lives in hope that it will be of practical use in business someday.

Fiona Czerniawska

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About us

We analyse and examine how change drives the way organisations use professional services, and the implications that might have for professional services firms.

Derived from data, years of experience, and sophisticated proprietary research, we use our team's extensive knowledge of the industry to provide actionable and clear conclusions on the best course of action for professional services firms around the world. Our insights not only provide interesting reading, but they have underpinned some of the biggest strategic investment decisions made by firms around the world.

So, how can we help you?



How we can help you _____

In addition to our reports, we also provide custom advice and evidence-based consulting services to the world's biggest and most successful professional services firms, helping them to better understand their markets and the challenges and opportunities they face. Underpinned by original research, interviews with your clients, extensive surveys of buyers of professional services, and our wealth of data and experience, our work is designed to help you fully understand the markets in which your firm operate, and want to operate.

Among other things, our offerings include:

- Market entry strategy
- Competitor profiling and research
- Access to our MegaModel tailored to your definition of the market

For more information about any of these, or our other work, please visit our website, or get in touch.

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Programme schedule for 2022

Rep 202	orts 2	Market Trends Programme	Client Perception Studies	Emerging Trends Programme	
	January	Forecasts for 2022 UK GCC India France	UK US		
Q1	February		GCC	Germany Financial Services	
	March		GCC France Healthcare & Pharma	Pricing: Your Biggest Barrier to Change?	
	April	Nordics US DACH Australia China South East Asia Sustainability	Nordics Energy & Resources Technology, Media & Telecoms		
Q2	May		China Japan	Next-generation Multidisciplinary Working	
	June				
	July	Tax South America Japan Africa Financial Services Energy & Resources			
Q3	August		Risk Tax	Innovation: What do Clients Really Want?	
	September		Audit		
Q4	October	Risk Consumer Products & Retail Healthcare & Pharma Planning for Growth in 2023		The New Consulting Value Chain	
	November				
	December				

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Space	latest content being produced and maximise their return on investment.
	A series of reports that analyse the quality and effectiveness of thought
	leadership are published throughout the year.