

EXTRACT



Market Trends

MARKET

The UK Consulting
Market in 2024

Report

Mar 2024

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.



Geography model

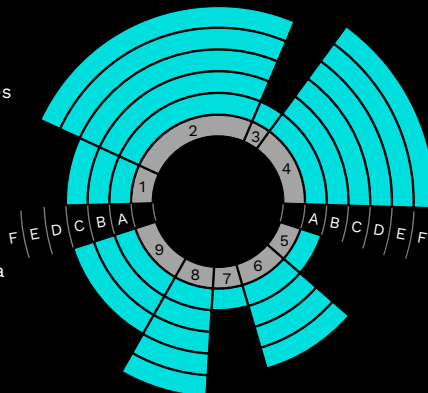
Countries covered

Albania	Chile	Greece	Libya	Pakistan	Slovakia	
Algeria	China	Hong Kong	Luxembourg	Papua New Guinea	Slovenia	
Angola	Colombia	Hungary	Malaysia	Peru	South Africa	
Argentina	Côte d'Ivoire	India	Mexico	Philippines	South Korea	
Australia	Croatia	Indonesia	Morocco	Poland	Spain	
Austria	Cyprus	Iran	Mozambique	Portugal	Sri Lanka	
Bahrain	Czech Republic	Iraq	Myanmar	Qatar	Sudan	UAE
Belarus	Denmark	Ireland	Netherlands	Romania	Sweden	Uganda
Belgium	Egypt	Israel	New Zealand	Russia	Switzerland	Ukraine
Bosnia	Ethiopia	Italy	Nigeria	Saudi Arabia	Taiwan	United Kingdom
Brazil	Finland	Japan	North Macedonia	Serbia	Tanzania	United States
Bulgaria	France	Kenya	Norway	Singapore	Thailand	Venezuela
Cameroon	Germany	Kuwait	Oman		Tunisia	Vietnam
Canada	Ghana	Lebanon			Turkey	Zambia

Sector model

Sectors

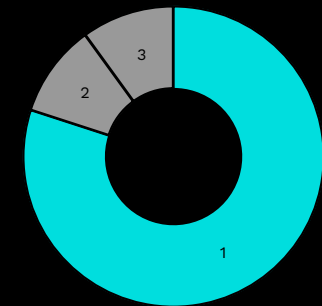
- 1 Energy & resources
- 2 Financial services
- 3 Healthcare
- 4 Manufacturing
- 5 Pharma & biotech
- 6 Public sector
- 7 Retail
- 8 Services
- 9 Technology, media & telecoms



Sub-sectors

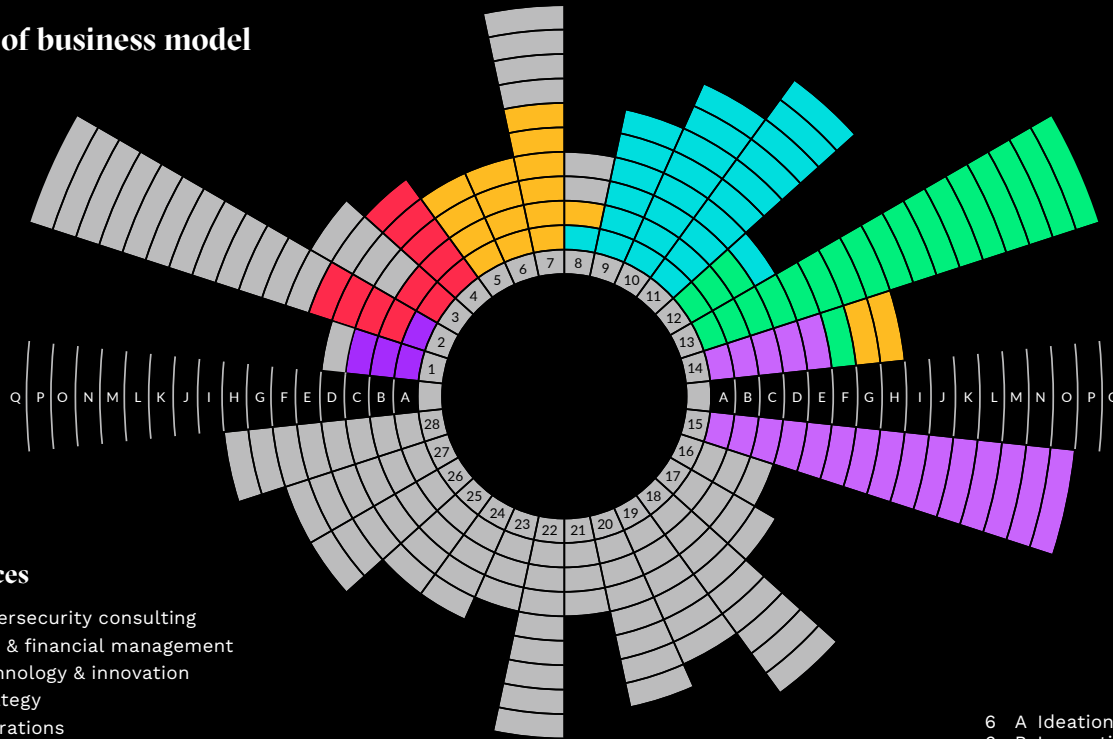
- | | | |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1 A Energy | 4 A Aerospace | 8 A Business services |
| 1 B Primary resources | 4 B Automotive | 8 B Leisure |
| 1 C Utilities | 4 C Construction | 8 C Logistics |
| 2 A Banking | 4 D Consumer electronics | 8 D Real estate |
| 2 B Capital markets | 4 E Consumer packaged goods | 8 E Transportation |
| 2 C Insurance | 4 F Industrial products | 9 A High-tech |
| 2 D Investment and wealth management | 5 A Pharma | 9 B Media |
| 2 E Private equity | 6 A Defence | 9 C Telecoms |
| 3 A Healthcare | 6 B Education | |
| | 6 C Not-for-profit | |
| | 6 D Public sector | |
| | 7 A Retail | |

The revenue-earning model



- 1 Consulting
- 2 Managed service
- 3 Other (contingent fees, software licensing, associate networks)

Line of business model



Services

- Cybersecurity consulting
- Risk & financial management
- Technology & innovation
- Strategy
- Operations
- HR, change & people strategy

Line of business

- | | |
|---------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1 Cybersecurity | 20 Legal |
| 2 Risk | 21 Litigation |
| 3 Forensic | 22 Marketing & creative |
| 4 Financial management | 23 Network engineering |
| 5 Design & UX | 24 Product engineering & R&D |
| 6 Innovation | 25 Recruitment |
| 7 Technology | 26 Software engineering |
| 8 Data & analytics | 27 System integration |
| 9 Research | 28 Tax |
| 10 Deals | |
| 11 Strategy | |
| 12 Real estate | |
| 13 Operations | |
| 14 Sustainability | |
| 15 HR & change | |
| 16 Architecture | |
| 17 Audit & assurance | |
| 18 Business process outsourcing | |
| 19 Civil engineering | |

Capabilities

- | |
|--|
| 1 A Cybersecurity advice |
| 1 B Cybersecurity incident response |
| 1 C Penetration testing & wargaming |
| 2 A Technology & security risk services |
| 2 B Operational risk |
| 2 C Programme risk |
| 2 D Responding to regulation |
| 2 E Risk management |
| 3 A eDiscovery |
| 3 B Forensic accounting |
| 4 A Budgeting/financial planning process |
| 4 B Debt advisory |
| 4 C Finance function |
| 4 D Financial advisory |
| 4 E Financial restructuring & insolvency |
| 5 A Corporate identity |
| 5 B Customer journey & UX benchmarking |
| 5 C Graphic & UI design |
| 5 D UX & service design |
| 6 A Ideation |
| 6 B Innovation management |
| 6 C Innovation strategy |
| 6 D Strategies for growth from innovation |
| 7 A Cloud advice |
| 7 B ERP consulting |
| 7 C IT strategy, planning & review |
| 7 D IT training |
| 7 E Programme management |
| 7 F Vendor selection |
| 8 A Advanced analytics |
| 8 B Data visualisation, business intelligence & semantic layer |
| 9 A Customer feedback |
| 9 B Customer segmentation |
| 9 C Employee feedback |
| 9 D Environmental & social impact research |
| 9 E Macro/microeconomic research |
| 9 F Market research |
| 10 A Capital allocation strategy |
| 10 B Commercial due diligence & valuation |
| 10 C Financial due diligence |
| 10 D M&A transaction strategy |
| 10 E Operational due diligence |
| 10 F Portfolio & investment strategy |
| 10 G Public-private partnerships |
| 10 H Technology due diligence |

- | |
|---|
| 11 A Business & financial modelling |
| 11 B Category management |
| 11 C Channel management |
| 11 D Corporate recovery & turnaround |
| 11 E Corporate restructuring |
| 11 F Corporate strategy |
| 11 G Market analysis & strategy |
| 11 H Policy formulation |
| 11 I Pricing |
| 11 J Strategic sourcing/offshoring services |
| 12 A Corporate, occupier services & facilities management |
| 12 B Integrated real estate developer services |
| 12 C Real estate deal/transaction services |
| 12 D Real estate strategy |
| 13 A Benchmarking |
| 13 B Business continuity & recovery |
| 13 C Cost cutting |
| 13 D Customer service |
| 13 E DevOps |
| 13 F Distribution strategy |
| 13 G Lean & Six Sigma |
| 13 H Operational review |
| 13 I Outsourcing advice |
| 13 J Post-M&A integration |
| 13 K Process design, re-engineering & automation |
| 13 L Procurement/purchasing |
| 13 M Property & estate management |
| 13 N Sales & distribution planning |
| 13 O Sales force effectiveness |
| 13 P Supply chain management |
| 13 Q Target operating model |
| 14 A Purpose-led strategy & change |
| 14 B Resource-efficiency implementation |
| 14 C Resource-efficiency strategy |
| 14 D Social impact & trust |
| 14 E Sustainable investment |
| 14 F Sustainable supply chain |
| 14 G Clean technology |
| 14 H Green IT |
| 15 A Benefits, compensation & pensions, excluding actuarial & investment advice |
| 15 B Change management |
| 15 C Diversity & inclusion |
| 15 D Employee engagement |
| 15 E Governance & board effectiveness |
| 15 F HR strategy & effectiveness |
| 15 G Leadership |
| 15 H Organisational design & culture |
| 15 I Organisational training & development |
| 15 J Outplacement |
| 15 K Pension fund evaluation & advice |
| 15 L Performance management |
| 15 M Stakeholder management |
| 15 N Talent management |
| 15 O Team effectiveness & collaboration |

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Underpinned by our MegaModel, our reports deliver an independent and objective understanding of the markets that matter most; including everything from key trends and growth opportunities to the latest views of consulting leaders and a detailed analysis of the buyer's voice.

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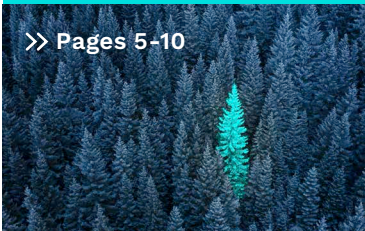
What really matters

We identify the things that really matter to firms—a snapshot of the most important dynamics in the market.

The big answers

We ask Source's experts what they think are the big opportunities and risks in today's market.

>> Pages 5-10



2

Market overview

Bringing together our market data, forecasts, and analysis, we provide a comprehensive picture of the state of play from a geographical, sector, and line-of-business perspective.

>> Pages 11-16



3

Client priorities

Using data from our survey of senior buyers of consulting, we explore the most important priorities, opportunities, and challenges for clients.

>> Pages 17-32

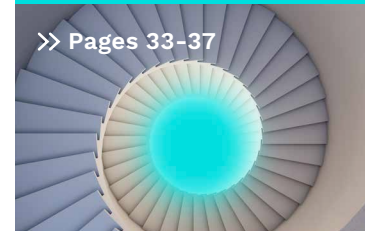


4

Implications for firms

We take a look at the factors influencing clients' buying behaviours, and what this means for the services firms provide.

>> Pages 33-37



5

Insights from consultants

In this series of interviews, senior leaders from professional services firms offer their perspectives on what really matters in the market today.

>> Pages 38-48



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1



“The number one driver for using consultants right now is technology, as both a threat and opportunity.”

Tim Roberts, AlixPartners

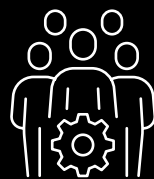
What really matters

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Three things for a firm to act on

1

Growth in the UK consulting market slowed to 4.7% in 2023, down from 15.6% in 2022.



the public sector is now home to the UK's fastest consulting growth—13.9% (forecast) in 2023

While the UK consulting market still achieved modest growth in 2023, the polycrisis created by rising inflation, macroeconomic headwinds, and geopolitical uncertainty reached new heights. This created huge levels of trepidation for clients, resulting in hesitancy when looking to put new consulting contracts out to tender.

Against this backdrop, we forecast that growth slowed considerably in 2023 to 4.7%, which is a steep decline from the rapid levels of growth seen in the past two years. This is a consistent picture across the majority of global consulting markets, with the strong ambitions for growth seen in the immediate aftermath of the pandemic giving way to an acutely more challenging environment.

While financial services remains the largest consulting market by far, the public sector is now home to the UK's fastest consulting growth and is forecast to have grown by 13.9% in 2023. This is driven by the need to develop better, more efficient digital public services, as well as investments in risk and financial management to help balance the books.

Cybersecurity remains the fastest-growing service overall. A steady stream of high-profile cyber attacks prompted more clients to look at their existing infrastructures, boosting spend both on incident response advisory and penetration testing, while the government's 2030 cybersecurity strategy maintained robust levels of spend across the public sector and government departments.

With clients continuing to adopt a wait-and-see approach to understand where to act if the economy begins to recover, we expect similar levels of hesitancy in 2024, particularly with the upcoming general election complicating public sector spending. As a result, the market is set to become both tighter and more competitive, and consulting firms must be able to communicate where value is being added across all touchpoints with existing and prospective clients.

3



“AI is being asked about everywhere—we’re in the very early stage of a big wave.”

Brandon Bichler, Elixirr

Client priorities

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What are clients' top needs and priorities?

Persistent macroeconomic headwinds have stripped UK clients of confidence about the future of their organisation

When we asked clients about the impact of macroeconomic and political challenges on their confidence in 2023, the results were stark. Clients were cognisant of the impacts of inflation, rising interest rates, and acute supply chain issues and as a result, felt that their ability to perform was hindered by the sheer scale of uncertainty permeating the market.

Revenues continued to be impeded by a decrease in consumer confidence and the associated slowdown in spending, plus rising costs, due to high inflation, caused margins to become slimmer as 2023 wore on. Organisations with extensive international operations were hit particularly hard in the past year, with the higher levels of risk and steadily rising costs associated with doing business across borders combining to make a volatile business environment.

As a result, it is perhaps unsurprising that clients believe their overall operating environment has worsened over the course of the past year. Indeed, 55% of clients told us that they felt this way, with 12% believing it had got significantly worse. As a result, the confidence clients have in the future of their organisation has suffered drastically: Eighty percent of clients told us that they felt less confident about their place in the market.

Figure 5

How has the overall economic environment in which your organisation operates changed compared to this time last year?

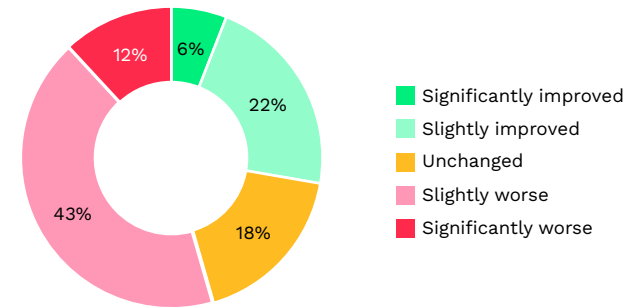
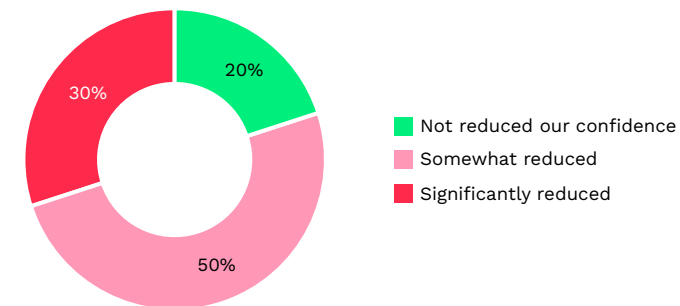


Figure 6

To what extent have macroeconomics and political tensions impacted your confidence when thinking about the future of your organisation?



6



“There are a lot of conversations around the instability of the economy, customers, and affordability.”

Andrew Stewart, Kearney

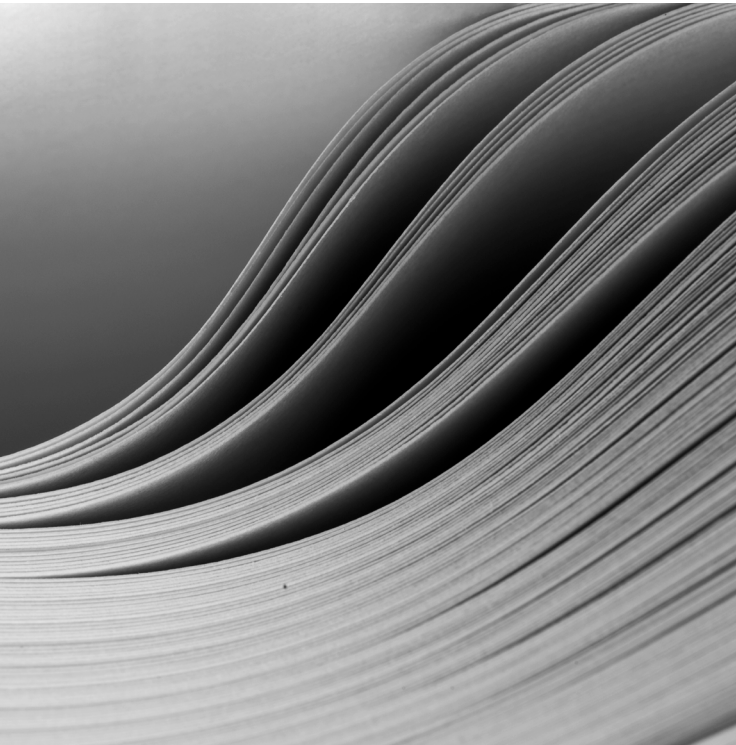
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Our approach to gathering data

The market for professional services is vast and highly dynamic, with deep roots spread out across the business world. The Source MegaModel helps you get to grips with the facts.

The MegaModel is the largest and most comprehensive database of its kind, anywhere in the world. It's used by the world's leading firms to identify where growth is coming from, which markets to invest in, and which sectors are driving demand.



Methodology—The MegaModel

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 long-term view of the market that is able to support both historic and forecast data.

All figures given in this report are in British pounds.

US dollar to British pound US\$1 = £0.80

US dollar to euro US\$1 = €0.92

The data in this report is rounded to the nearest whole number or stated decimal place. As a result, totals may display small discrepancies.

Who did we speak to

Client perspective

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. Our survey focuses on trends in the UK, providing detailed insights into the nuances of the market. For this, we surveyed 200 senior clients of consulting firms from across the UK, all of whom work in organisations with more than 1,000 employees. This survey focuses on the following areas:

- How they expect to use consultants during 2024 and the first half of 2025
- 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.

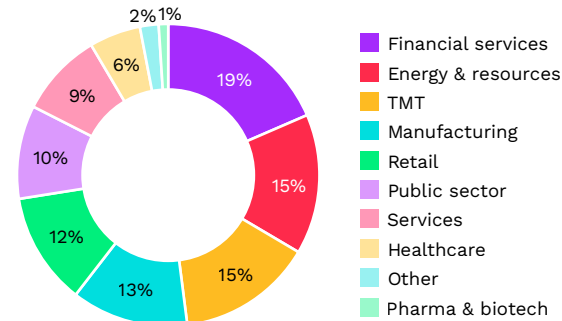
Insights from consultants

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.

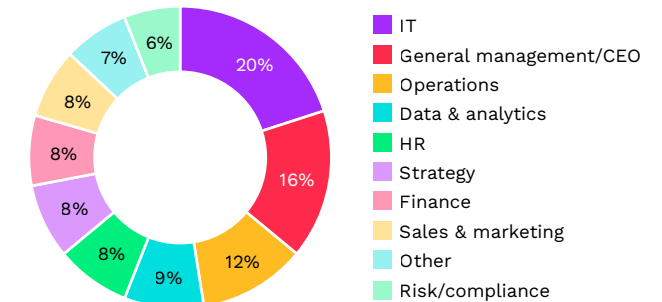
In-depth desk research

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.

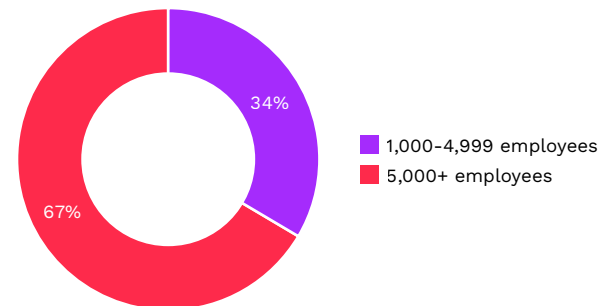
Respondents by sector



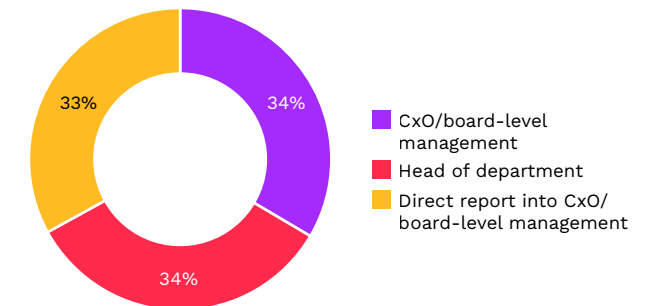
Respondents by function



Respondents by organisation size



Respondents by seniority



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 computer-related 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.

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, Resource-efficiency strategy, Purpose-led strategy & change, Resource-efficiency implementation, Social impact & trust.

Operations

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.

Risk & financial management

Operational risk, Programme risk, Responding to regulation, Risk management, Budgeting/financial planning process, Debt advisory, Finance function, Financial advisory, Financial restructuring & insolvency, eDiscovery, Forensic accounting.

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.

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.

Contributors

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

Name	Job title	Organisation
Simon Albrighton	Head of Consulting, Sectors UK	KPMG
Brandon Bichler	Partner	Elixirr
James Brown	Senior Partner, Managing Director UK	Simon-Kucher
Giles Colborne	Director of Strategy	Sopra Steria Next UK
Alan Frost	Partner (Management Consulting)	Mazars
Tim Roberts	Partner & Managing Director	AlixPartners
Alex Slater	Managing Director	Capgemini Invent UK
Andrew Stewart	Managing Partner UK & Ireland	Kearney
Luca Stoppino	Executive Vice President, North Europe	EFESO
Paul Terrington	UK and EMEA Head of Consulting	PwC
Mark Veldon	Partner & Managing Director	AlixPartners

Meet the expert

James Beeby

James is Research Lead at Source, producing research and analysis into firms, countries, sectors, and markets to understand the key trends impacting the professional services industry. James also plays a leading role in our internal research programme, tracking macroeconomic, political, and social changes to understand the risks and opportunities for client firms across a range of regions, sectors, and markets.

James Beeby

✉ james.beeby@sourceglobalresearch.com



About us

We help professional services firms understand what really matters when facing decisions of vital importance.

The best decisions are based on evidence, objectivity, and a willingness to change. That's why, at Source, we tell you what you need to hear, rather than what you want to hear.

We draw upon our deep roots within the professional services sector to provide firms with a clear picture of their clients' worlds. Through comprehensive research and meticulous analysis, we pinpoint what truly matters and deliver actionable insights that help firms map out the right way forward.

We believe in thriving individually and succeeding together. And we would love to help your firm crack its latest conundrum.

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Publication schedule for 2024

2024	Market Trends Reports	Market Trends Briefings	Client Perception Studies	Emerging Trends Programme	White Space Reports	White Space Insights
Q1	January	India				Featured thought leadership (monthly) Quarterly webinar series
	February		Forecasts for 2024 UK GCC France	ET1 Ecosystems	Client Perceptions of Thought Leadership	
	March			UK US Germany		
Q2	April		Financial Services GCC France			Featured thought leadership (monthly) Quarterly webinar series
	May		Nordics US DACH Australia East Asia	Retail Australia Energy & Resources		
	June		South East Asia	Technology, Media & Telecoms China Japan	ET2 Go-to-Market Strategy	
Q3	July	South America Healthcare & Pharma	Africa Energy & Resources	ET3		Featured thought leadership (monthly) Quarterly webinar series
	August		Financial Services Technology, Media & Telecoms			
	September		Sustainability	Risk Tax	ET4	
Q4	October		Audit Technology		Hot Topic Report	Featured thought leadership (monthly) Quarterly webinar series Source Thought Leadership Awards (virtual)
	November		Risk Technology	ET5		
	December		Planning for Growth in 2025		ET6	