

DE/RECRUITERS · Q1 2026 · WITH THE SUPPORT OF ARCAP

# LATAM Talent Report.

Salary benchmarks, market dynamics and hiring insights — from 150+ active processes across Argentina, Uruguay, Colombia and remote LATAM. Verified data, not surveys.

**150+**  
ACTIVE PROCESSES

**50+**  
CLIENT COMPANIES

**100+**  
ROLES COVERED

## INDUSTRIES REPRESENTED

- Fintech & Payments
- B2B SaaS
- HR Tech
- EdTech
- Travel Tech
- eCommerce & Retail
- AI & Agentic Platforms
- Mobility
- Real Estate Tech
- Digital Infrastructure

### A PATTERN WORTH WATCHING

## Some companies are hiring AI talent so fast they've stopped asking whether their people can think without it.

When entire teams are built around AI-generated outputs, independent reasoning quietly atrophies. It's not visible until something breaks — and by then, the dependency is structural.

The companies navigating this well are evaluating independent thinking alongside technical skills — making sure hires can reason through a problem when the model is wrong, the pipeline breaks, or the prompt needs rethinking from scratch. The ones skipping this step are building fragile teams without realizing it.

# Tech & Engineering.

Monthly USD · Contractor / freelance · Semi-Senior & Senior · Argentina & remote LATAM

ROLE	FROM	UP TO	DEMAND
BACKEND			
<b>Node.js</b>	\$3,100	<b>\$5,000</b>	VERY HIGH
<b>Java</b>	\$3,800	<b>\$6,000</b>	VERY HIGH
<b>Kotlin</b>	\$3,800	<b>\$6,000</b>	MEDIUM
<b>Python</b>	\$3,300	<b>\$5,000</b>	HIGH
FRONTEND & FULLSTACK			
<b>React</b>	\$2,800	<b>\$5,000</b>	HIGH
<b>Fullstack Node + React</b>	\$3,300	<b>\$5,500</b>	VERY HIGH
<b>React Native (Mobile)</b>	\$3,300	<b>\$5,500</b>	HIGH
PRODUCT & DESIGN			
<b>Product Manager</b>	\$3,800	<b>\$6,000</b>	MEDIUM
<b>Product Designer UX</b>	\$2,800	<b>\$4,400</b>	HIGH
DATA & INFRA			
<b>Data Engineer</b>	\$4,400	<b>\$7,200</b>	MEDIUM
<b>DevOps / Infra</b>	\$3,800	<b>\$6,000</b>	HIGH
LEADERSHIP			
<b>Staff / Tech Lead</b>	\$5,500	<b>\$9,500</b>	MEDIUM

Monthly USD · Contractor / freelance · Argentina & remote LATAM

ROLE	FROM	UP TO	DEMAND
SALES & COMMERCIAL			
<b>SDR / BDR</b>	\$1,500	<b>\$2,800</b>	HIGH
<b>Account Executive</b>	\$2,500	<b>\$4,500</b>	HIGH
<b>Head of Sales</b>	\$4,500	<b>\$7,500</b>	MEDIUM
<b>Director Comercial</b>	\$5,000	<b>\$8,000</b>	MEDIUM
GROWTH & MARKETING			
<b>Growth Specialist</b>	\$2,500	<b>\$4,000</b>	HIGH
<b>Growth Experimentation Analyst</b>	\$2,800	<b>\$4,500</b>	HIGH
<b>Marketing Manager</b>	\$2,500	<b>\$4,000</b>	MEDIUM
<b>Head of Marketing</b>	\$4,000	<b>\$6,500</b>	MEDIUM
FINANCE & LEGAL			
<b>CFO</b>	\$7,000	<b>\$12,000</b>	MEDIUM
<b>GRC / Compliance</b>	\$3,000	<b>\$5,000</b>	MEDIUM
PEOPLE & CUSTOMER SUCCESS			
<b>Customer Success</b>	\$2,000	<b>\$3,500</b>	HIGH
<b>People / HR Manager</b>	\$3,000	<b>\$5,000</b>	MEDIUM

03 — PROCESS BENCHMARKS

Observed across 150+ active processes · Argentina & remote LATAM · Q1 2026

PROCESS THAT WORKS

## 3-5 weeks

5-8 candidates presented. Clear salary band defined at kickoff. Feedback within 48h of each interview. 1 hire.

PROCESS THAT STALLS

## 3-6 months

15-40 candidates presented. No salary band at start. Feedback delayed or subjective. Often 0 hires. Common causes: undefined budget, mid-process hiring manager change, or internal referral that short-circuits the pipeline.

WHAT BREAKS IT

## 3 root causes

No salary band at kickoff. Subjective or delayed feedback. Hiring manager change mid-process. Any one of these alone can stall a search for months. All three guarantee it.

04 — KEY INSIGHTS

# 30%

### The "crack premium" is real

Top Senior profiles ask 30-40% above the published ceiling. Companies that stretch their budget to \$5,500-\$7,000 USD close 2x faster.

# 3x

### Java & Kotlin: most contested

Strong scarcity of fintech-grade Java/Kotlin profiles. A strong candidate typically receives 2-3 simultaneous offers.

# 3w

### Slow processes = lost candidates

Senior profiles with strong English won't wait more than 3 weeks. Companies that take 30+ days lose 70% of their finalists to competing offers.

# -20%

### Remote vs. hybrid still matters

100% remote allows companies to reduce budgets 15-20% without losing quality. Hybrid in Buenos Aires requires either a premium or an exceptional culture story.

# 4k+

## **MercadoLibre sets the floor**

Many Senior profiles come from MeLi or Globant. That establishes baseline expectations: strong practices, high technical bar, and \$4K+ minimum.

# \$1.5k

## **English multiplies value**

A C1/C2 English profile can command \$500-\$1,500 USD more per month. The gap is even wider for leadership and Product Management roles.

# 3x

## **No salary band = wasted pipeline**

Processes that start without a defined salary band have a 3x higher candidate drop rate at the offer stage. Mismatches that could have been filtered in week one surface in week eight — after both sides have invested heavily.

# ≠

## **Subjective feedback breaks good processes**

Candidates rejected for reasons that can't be measured — "doesn't seem genuine," "talks too much," "lacks spark" — are a signal that evaluation criteria weren't defined before the search started. The result: good candidates lost, search restarted.

# 3x

## **Misaligned hires are expensive**

A role that's hired wrong costs between 1.5x and 3x the annual salary once you factor in time-to-detect, lost team productivity, and the cost of replacing. A Senior Backend at \$5K/month can represent \$90K-\$180K in total cost if it doesn't work out.

**"LATAM doesn't have a talent shortage.  
It has a shortage of processes fast enough to close the right people before someone else does."**

— DE/RECRUITERS · Q1 2026

01

## **AI/agent engineers: the defining hiring challenge of 2026**

This is no longer a niche role — it's the most requested profile we've seen in a single year across our entire client base. Companies building AI products, automating workflows, or integrating LLMs into their core stack are all competing for the same tiny pool of verified talent.

Budgets start at \$5,000 USD/month and regularly exceed \$8,000 for profiles with real production experience. But here's the problem: verified supply is extremely thin. Many candidates list "AI agent experience" on their CVs — and fail basic technical challenges when tested. We've seen this pattern repeatedly across our own processes: profiles that looked strong on paper, with the right keywords and GitHub links, who couldn't demonstrate actual production-grade agentic work when put to the test.

The profiles that actually deliver combine three things: deep Python or backend fundamentals, hands-on experience with orchestration frameworks (LangChain, LlamaIndex, CrewAI or similar), and — critically — the ability to think and reason independently of the tools. The ones who don't have that last piece are the ones who struggle when the model hallucinates or the pipeline breaks.

For companies hiring in this space: slow down the screening. The gap between a candidate who "works with AI" and one who can architect and own an agentic system in production is enormous — and the market hasn't priced that difference correctly yet.

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02

## **Startups now compete with big tech for the same talent**

LATAM scaleups no longer have to settle for profiles that "didn't make it to MeLi." The equity + growth + culture proposition is genuinely competitive — but only if the hiring process is fast enough to win.

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03

## **RPO models gaining ground over per-position fees**

Companies with 5+ simultaneous openings prefer a flat monthly rate with guaranteed SLAs. More predictability, less friction per search. We're seeing this shift accelerate in 2026.

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04

## **The best candidates are evaluating 2-3 offers at once**

A Senior profile who enters a process today is almost certainly in 2 or 3 other processes simultaneously. By the time a company finishes their internal deliberation, the candidate has already accepted elsewhere. The companies closing best in 2026 are the ones that compress decision time — not the ones

with the highest offer.

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05

## **Internal referrals are quietly killing structured processes**

A pattern we see repeatedly: a company runs a 3-month search, builds a solid shortlist, and then the hiring manager hires someone from their personal network who doesn't meet the criteria they defined at the start. The structured process was real effort, the referral was a shortcut — and the cost shows up 6 months later. The fix isn't eliminating referrals. It's applying the same evaluation criteria to everyone, regardless of how they entered the pipeline.

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**de/Recruiters**

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