

2025 Tech Salaries and Benefits Trends in Latin America

Q4'25 Salary Survey



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Introduction

Engineering Hiring in 2026: The New Baseline

Engineering Hiring in 2026: The New Baseline

As companies plan for 2026, a fundamental question keeps resurfacing:

What does engineering hiring look like in an AI-driven world?

The answer is counterintuitive for many leaders.

More software will be built than ever before. With fewer engineers.

And yet, demand for senior talent will rise sharply.

AI is collapsing the cost of building software. When experimentation becomes cheaper and faster, ambition expands. Companies ship more products, iterate more aggressively, and take more bets. In that environment, execution becomes commoditized, but judgment does not.

Andrew Ng puts it simply: *“AI will make many jobs more productive. The highest gains will be for those who know how to use it well.”*

That advantage disproportionately belongs to senior engineers. The ones who design systems, make architectural tradeoffs, own outcomes, and understand how to turn tools into products.

Thomas Dohmke, CEO of GitHub, reinforces the point: *“The companies that are the smartest are going to hire more developers. If you 10x a single developer, then 10 developers can do 100x.”*

AI does not flatten teams. It amplifies them.

And it widens the gap between average output and exceptional output.

Alongside this shift, several structural changes are now firmly in place.

Remote work is no longer an experiment. For mid size technology companies, it is the default operating model. Restricting hiring to a single geography is increasingly a liability.

Recruiting tools will continue to evolve. AI will assist sourcing and screening. But the true differentiators remain human. Signal over noise. Judgment over volume. Fit over speed.

At the same time, trust has become table stakes. Compliance, verifiable credentials, and operational transparency are no longer optional.

In this context, Latin America is no longer an alternative sourcing option.

It is becoming a core component of US engineering strategies.

Senior talent availability, strong time zone alignment, cultural compatibility, and growing operational maturity have reshaped the landscape. The economics reinforce the shift. Across comparable roles and seniority, companies continue to see 40 to 60 percent cost differences versus US benchmarks, without sacrificing quality or performance.

So how should companies think about engineering hiring in 2026?

By treating Latin America as part of the baseline, not the exception.

This report lays out the data behind that shift. And at Nexton, we are building the infrastructure to support it at scale.

Diego Sternberg,
Co-Founder and CEO



2025 was a transformative year marked by rapid change. Artificial intelligence reshaped the way we work and live. Technological breakthroughs abounded, including Firefly Aerospace's "Blue Ghost" accomplishing the first successful commercial soft landing on the Moon. Meanwhile, Labubu tiny monster dolls sparked a global craze.

While change is exciting, nothing compares to the peace and comfort found in things that remain constant.

Q4'25 was significant because it brought little change and many constants, highlighting ongoing stability in the industry.

- The LATAM engineers Expected Annual Salary remained at 72K.
- Their current salaries remained consistent at 60K.
- The overall gap, for several roles in the engineering space held at 20%.

Yet beneath that calm surface, role-level shifts tell a subtler story:

- Data Scientist salary gap is closing to the expected salary by 7% as are SRE/Dev Ops at 4%
- Data Analyst and Data Engineer have the higher salary gaps by 39% and 20% respectively.
- Other roles, like Back End, Mobile, and Tech Lead, held steady.

The benefits landscape also saw movement.

Remote work is universal (100%), but we saw growing emphasis on **Vacation/PTO now at 88% and Career Growth at 46%.**

As we roll out this report, you'll get full role-by-role benchmarks, deeper benefit analysis, and trend visuals.

Let's get to insights you can use!





Exploring the 2025 Trends

Data specialization and generative AI impact

The remote work world has changed. The old days of hiring remote talent just to save money are over. In 2026, outsourcing is about speed, compliance, and smart technology.

As we look at the year ahead, Agentic AI and new regulations are reshaping how we build teams. Here is what you need to know to stay ahead.

1. From "Hiring Hands" to "Hiring Outcomes."

We are no longer just hiring people to write code line-by-line. AI agents now handle the routine work. We are entering the age of "**Vibe Engineering**". This means humans provide the intent (the "vibe") and the context, while AI builds the software.

- **The "Junior Cliff":** Since AI handles basic tasks, the demand for junior developers is dropping.
- **Context Architects:** Look for senior talent who can guide AI agents.
- **English is Tech:** High-level English is now a technical requirement to prompt AI effectively.

2. The End of the Hourly Rate

AI makes work faster. If a task that took 10 hours now takes one hour, paying by the hour no longer works for vendors. The market is shifting away from "Time and Materials."

Value Over Cost: Wages have stabilized, but the focus is on quality and speed, not just the lowest price.

3. Where to Look in 2026

Geography still matters. Time zones are critical because humans must supervise AI agents in real-time.

- **LATAM:** The top choice for US companies due to time zone alignment and new tax incentives.
- **Emerging Hubs:** Keep an eye on the Caribbean for cost-effective support roles.

LOOKING AHEAD: AGENTIC AI & NEW REGULATIONS RESHAPING TEAMS.



Agentic AI



Regulations

Here is what you need to
know to stay ahead.



Compensation Report

We’re closing Q4, having interviewed 243 engineers, and coming up with the following highlights:

1. They’re from the following Latin American countries:

- Argentina
- Brazil
- Chile
- Colombia
- Costa Rica
- Dominican Republic
- Ecuador
- Guatemala
- Honduras
- Mexico
- Nicaragua
- Panama
- Paraguay
- Peru
- Uruguay
- Venezuela

2. They have at least 3 years of experience in relevant roles in tech.

3. They all have an upper-intermediate or advanced English level.

4. They are currently working in any of the following roles:

- Back End Engineer
- Data Engineer
- Data Scientist
- DevOps/SRE Engineer
- Engineering Manager
- Front End Engineer
- Full Stack Engineer
- Mobile Developer
- Product Manager
- Tech Lead

5. They are 100% remote as long-term foreign contractors to a U.S. company.

Definitions

Expected Salary

Declarative expected gross monetary compensation to consider a job opportunity by the interviewee, including taxes, in U.S. dollars.

Current Salary

Declarative current gross monetary compensation by the interviewee, including taxes, in U.S. dollars.

Salary / Compensation Gap

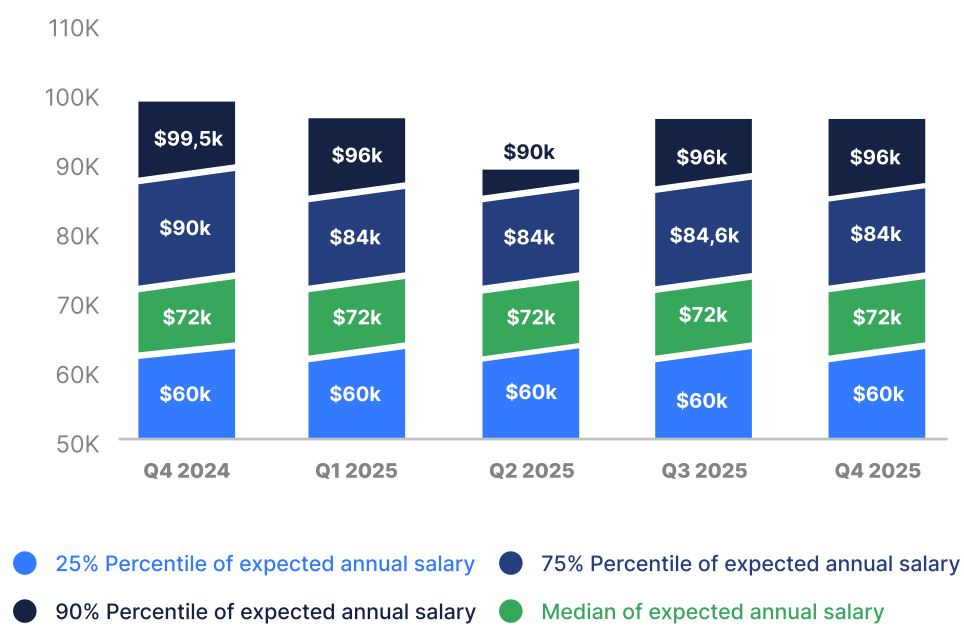
The difference between the Engineers' Expected salary to change jobs and their Current salary at their actual position.

This quarter, salary expectations in LATAM tell a story of stability...

The median expected salary for Q4, much like Q3, was 72K for all the roles we included. Current salaries remained consistent at \$60K. The salary gap between what candidates expect and what they currently earn stayed locked at 20%.

We closed the year with a steady pace. Both candidates and companies appear to have reached a point of alignment, where expectations meet reality.

Expected Salary Evolution Quarter Over Quarter for All Roles Considered



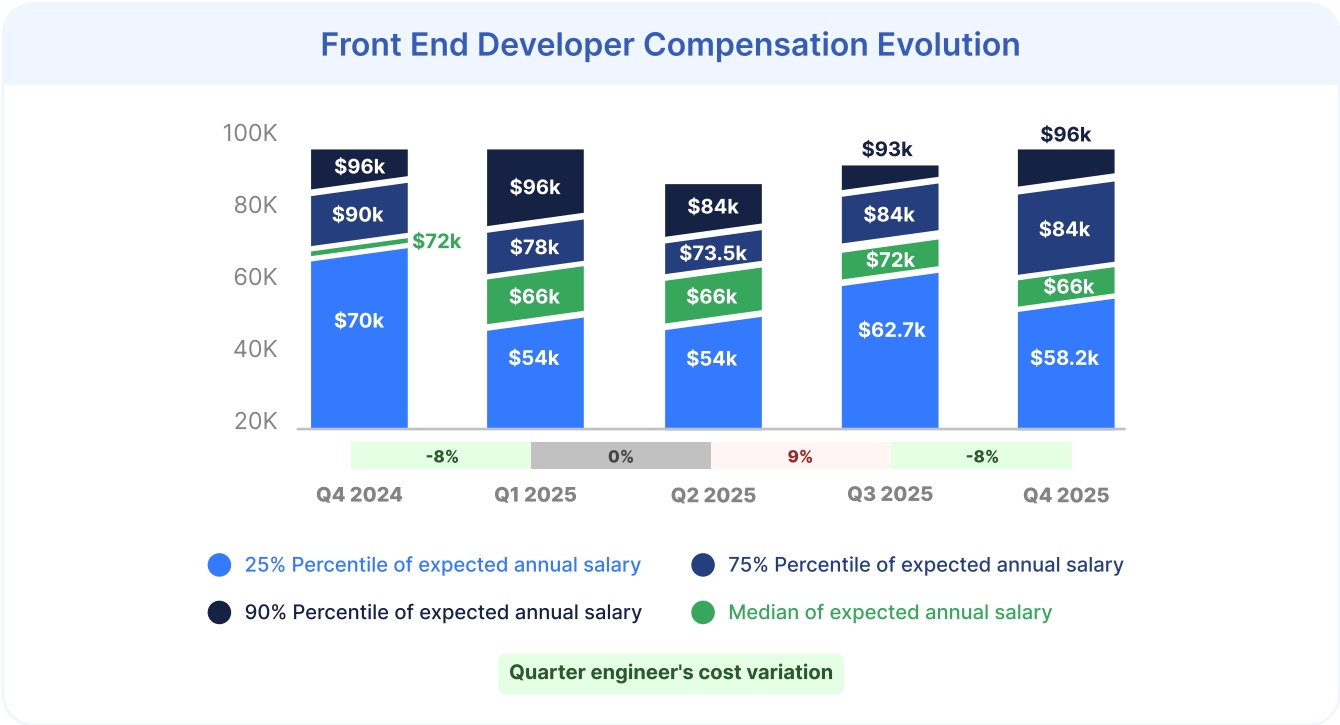
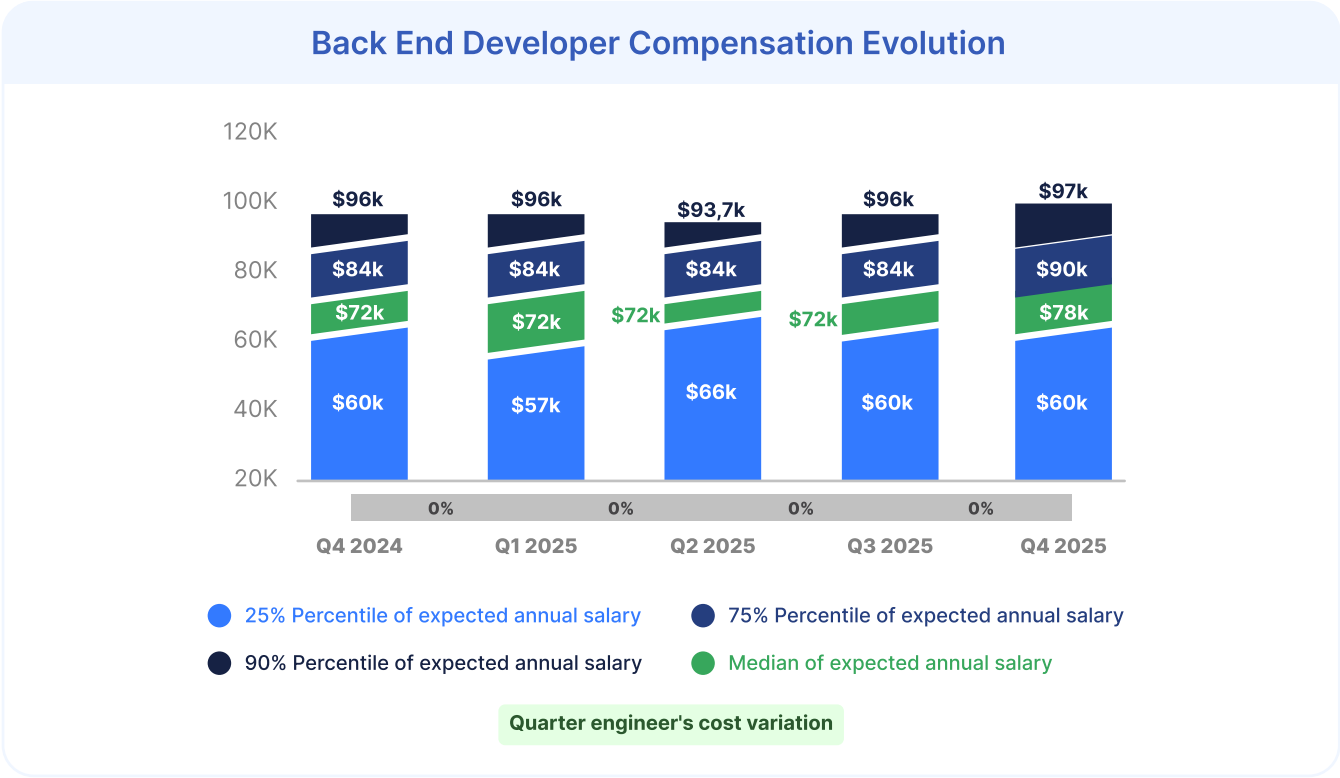
Latin American professionals bring a unique blend of technical expertise, adaptability, and creativity, making them invaluable assets to high-performing teams.

Salary Expectation: Evolution by Role

Not all roles moved in the same direction. Here's where we saw the biggest shifts:

- Tech Leads expected salary took a tumble of 3% from 84K in Q3 to 81K by EOY
- Front-end engineers expectations decrease by 8% from 72K in Q3 to 66K in Q4
- Full Stack engineers are experiencing a large downturn of 7% finishing the year on 72K

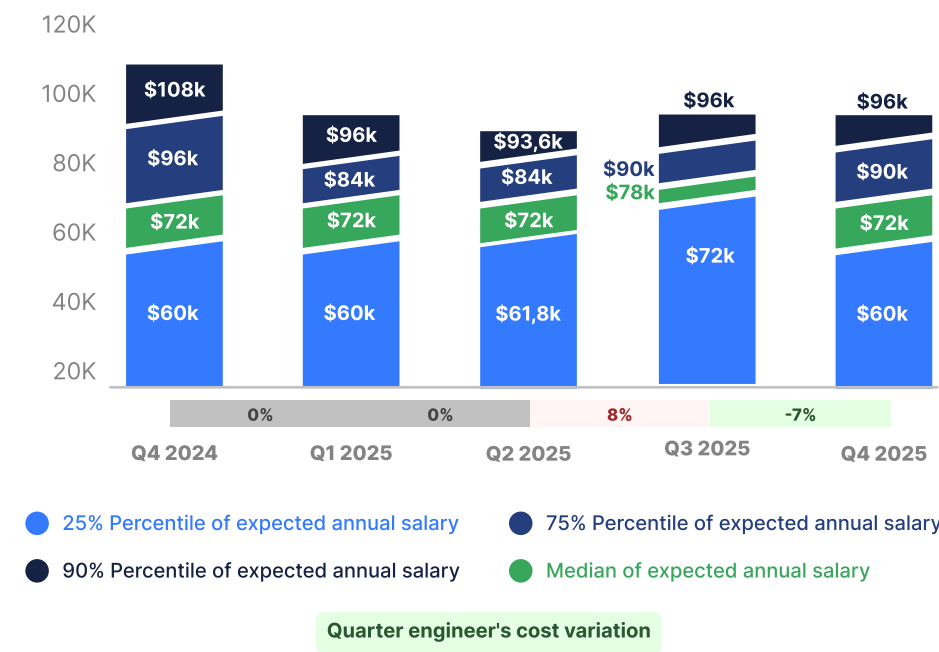
These variations reflect shifting hiring priorities. Companies appear to be doubling down on specialized technical roles, particularly in data, while product leadership salaries are softening. The increased stability in core engineering roles suggests growing clarity in compensation bands across the region.



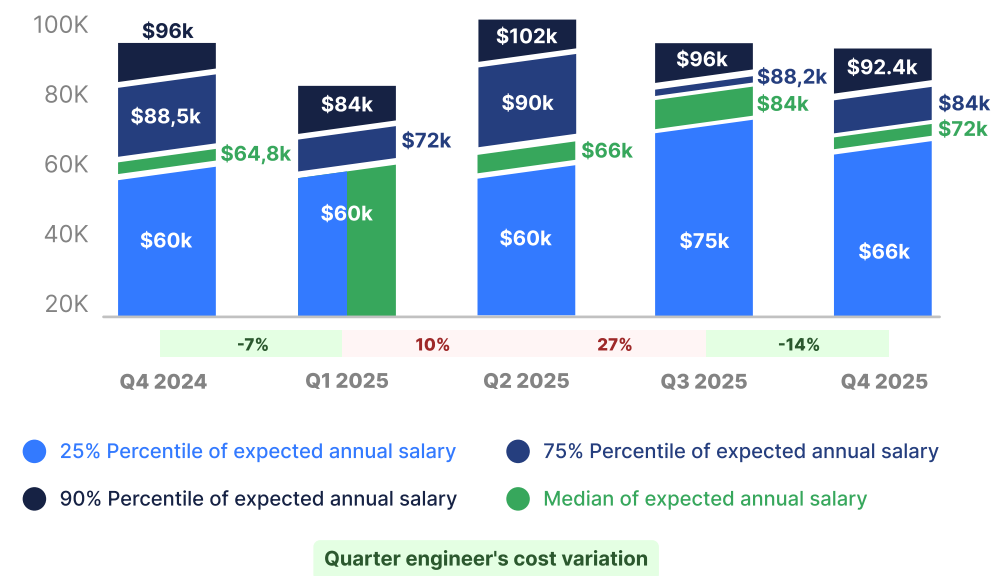
Salary Expectation: Evolution by Role

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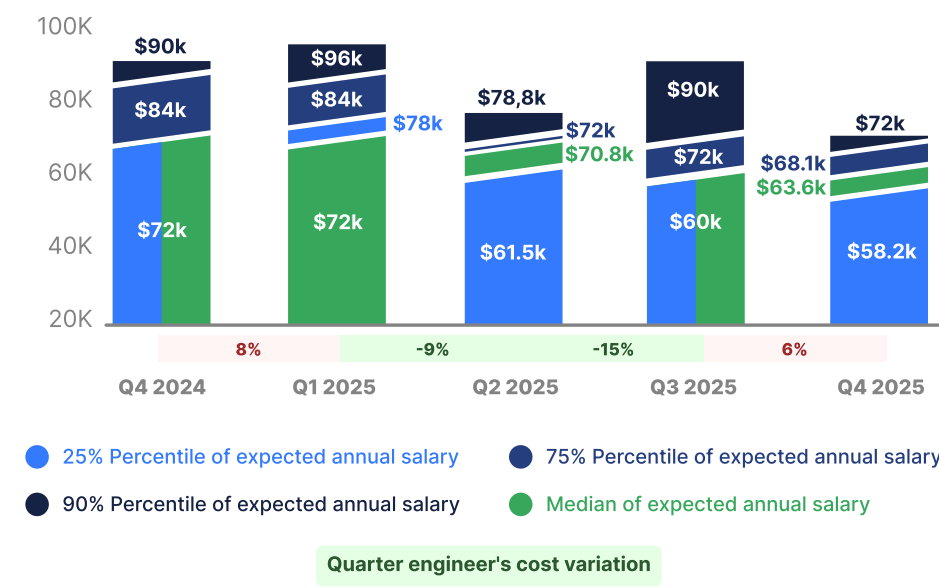
Full Stack Developer Compensation Evolution



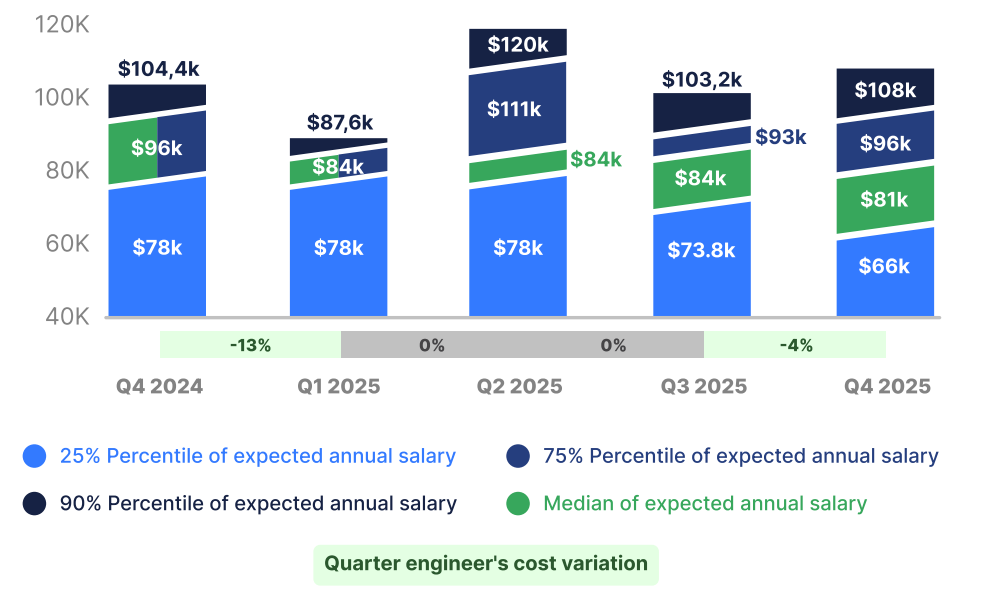
Data Engineer Compensation Evolution



Product Manager Compensation Evolution



Tech Lead Compensation Evolution

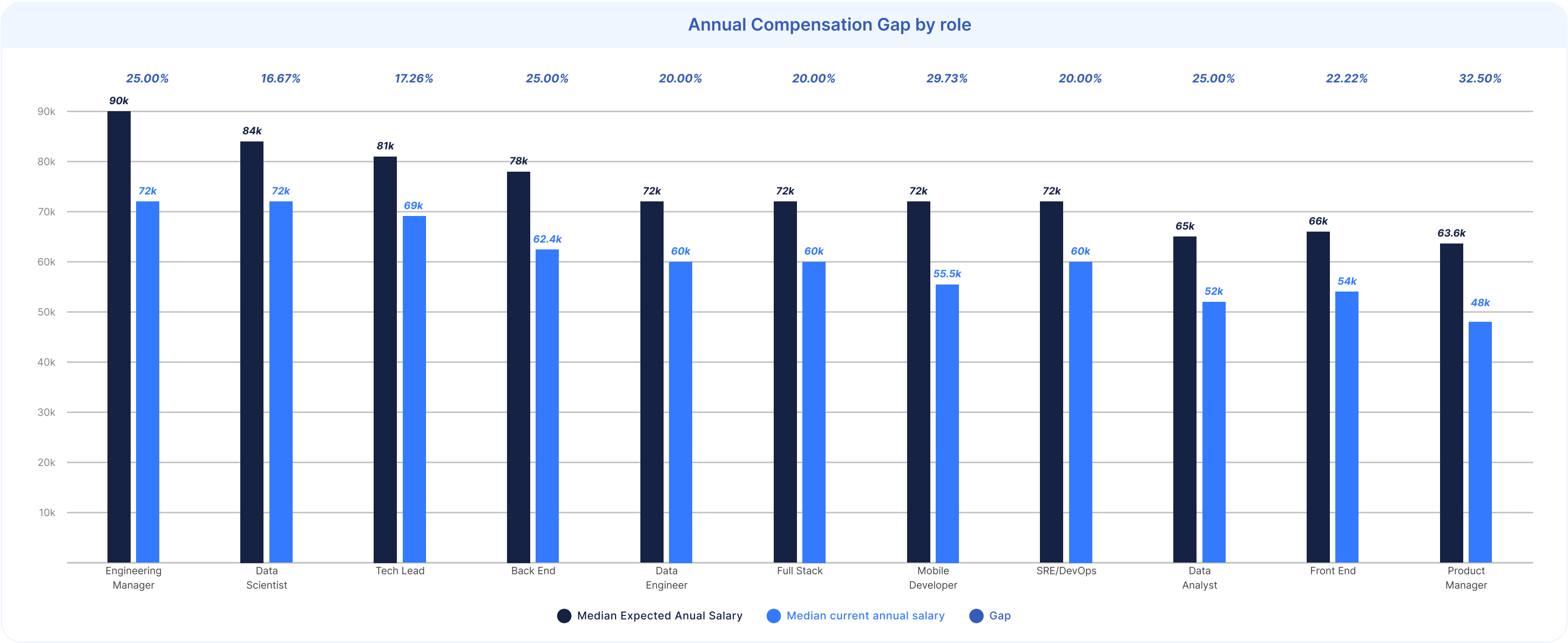


Yearly Salary Gap

For the fourth consecutive quarter, the salary gap has **remained consistent at 20 percent**.

This balance tells us something important. Employers are budgeting more strategically, while candidates remain confident in their value. The gap itself isn't a red flag; it's a healthy negotiation space. It shows that while engineers are aiming higher, they're not overshooting the market.

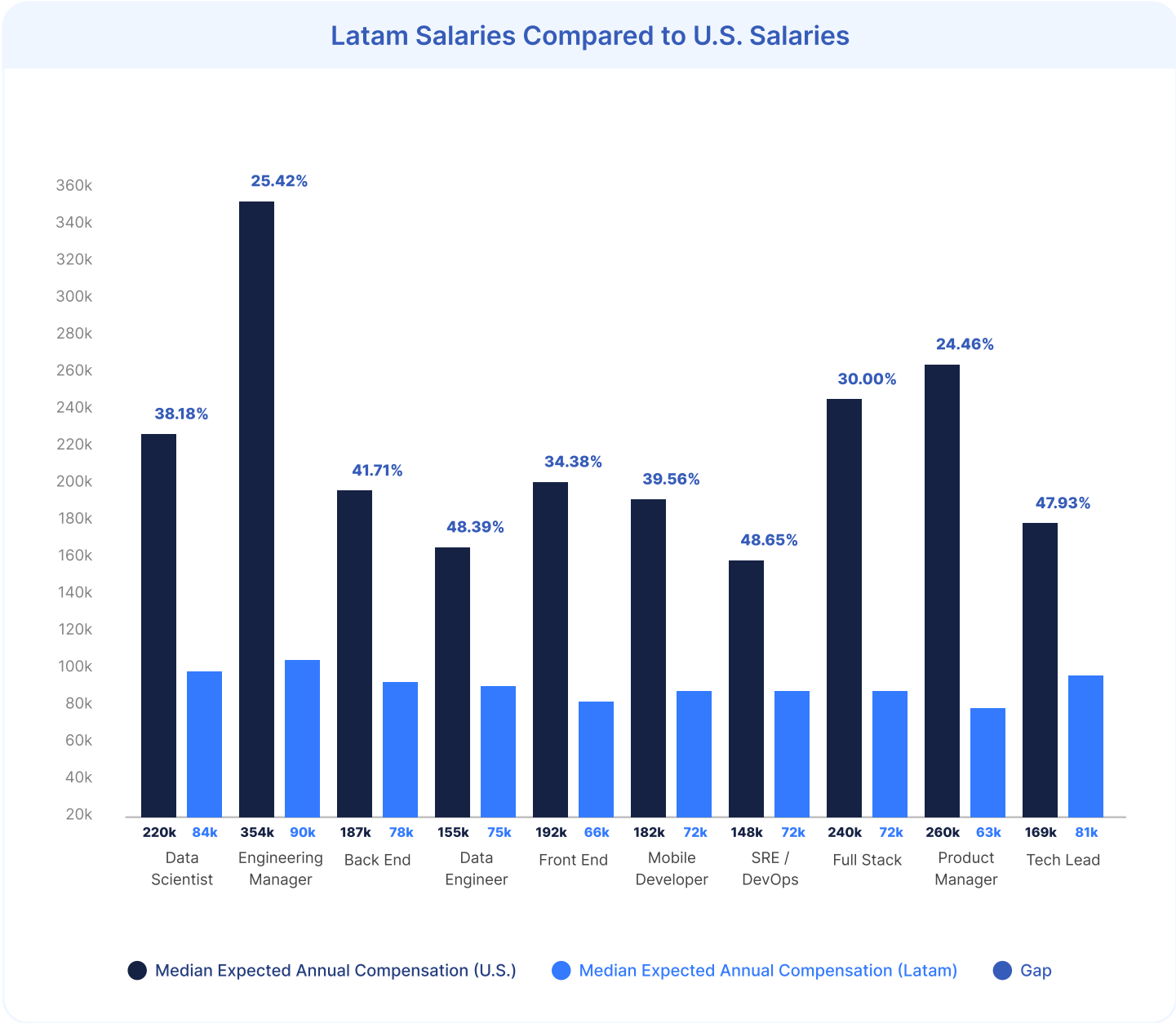
In a time where global compensation is shifting fast, a steady salary gap can be read as a sign of trust and predictability.



Compared to U.S. benchmarks, LATAM salaries continue to offer significant cost efficiency.

Most roles in the region remain between **45% and 70% more affordable** than their U.S. counterparts. Back-End engineers in LATAM hold a \$78K median, while the same role in the U.S. averages to \$187K. Full Stack engineers in LATAM are earning around \$72K, compared to upwards of \$240K in the U.S.

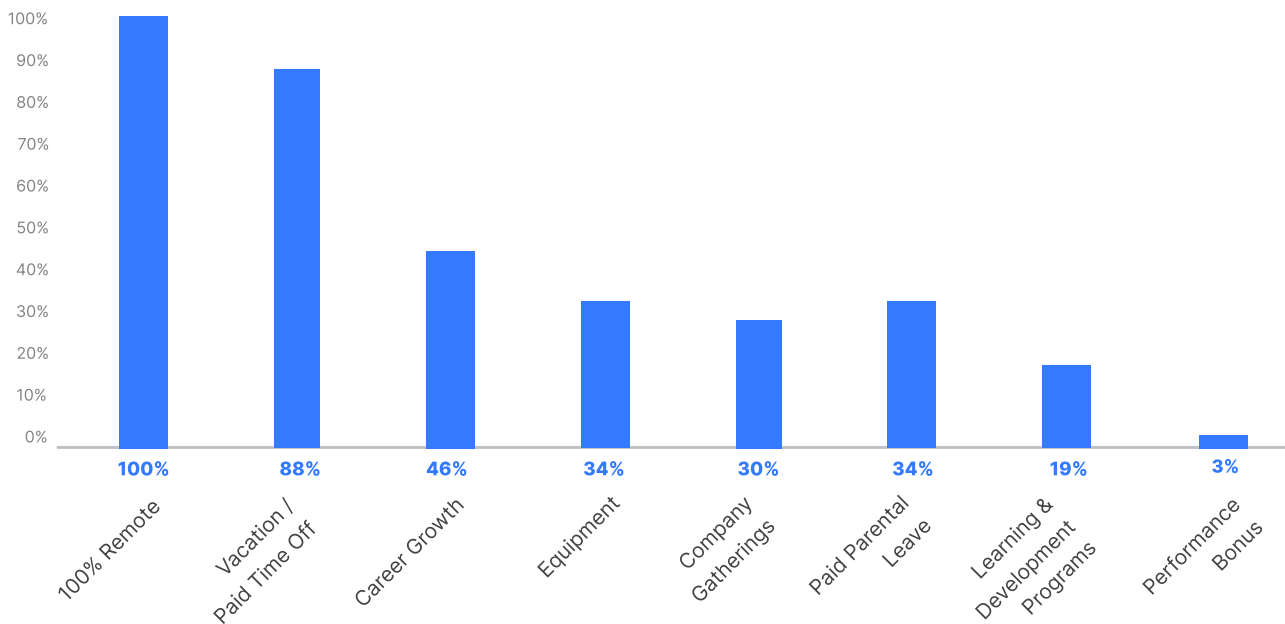
The takeaway is clear. LATAM remains one of the most cost-effective regions to source senior-level talent without compromising on output, timezone alignment, or team continuity.



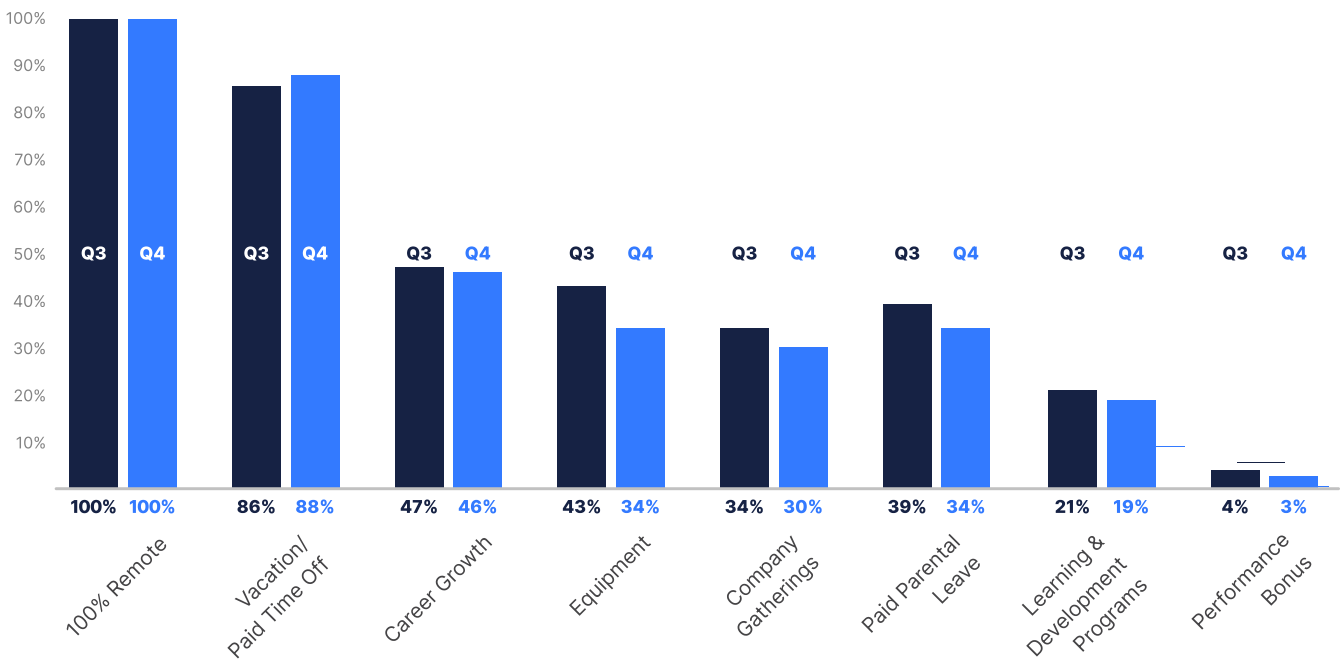
Most Popular Benefits for Remote Work Starting in 2025

- 🌴 **Vacation / Paid Time Off offered in 88% of roles** – up 2 points from last quarter, reinforcing its role as a top-tier priority.
- 📈 **Career Growth jumped back 1 point**, now present in 46% of job positions.
- 🏠 **Equipment benefits dropped to 34%** - companies might be prioritizing other benefits.
- 🍷 **Company Gatherings dropped 4 points** being offered to 30% of roles – still signaling renewed interest in building connection beyond the screen.
- 👶 **Paid Parental Leave declined further by 5 points**, now present in 34% of positions – a significant drop worth looking out for.
- 🏠 **Stock Options and Equity benefits disappeared entirely** since the last quarter, as well as Health Insurance and Career Support.

Most Offered Benefits by Remote Companies in Q4 2025



Most Offered Benefits by Remote Companies in Q3 2025 vs Q4 2025





Final Thoughts

The Efficient Path Forward

Final Thoughts



The Efficient Path Forward

The data paints a picture of the market, but let's discuss what this looks like on the ground.

In 2026, we see a distinct gap opening up. Companies have roadmaps accelerated by AI, but they face hiring budgets that remain flat. As operational leaders, our job is to bridge that gap without exposing the company to risk.

The risk today isn't a lack of code; it's a lack of oversight. AI provides speed, but it **requires senior-level architectural judgment to ensure that speed doesn't turn into instability.**

Trying to solve this by hiring exclusively in the US is no longer the prudent financial choice. It drives up burn rate and slows down deployment.

The solution is Distributed Integration.

This isn't about finding "cheaper labor." It is about finding the most efficient path to stability. By integrating senior Latin American engineers, you secure the high-level judgment your AI workflows need, but you do so at a cost structure that keeps your P&L healthy.

This allows you to scale your engineering output without scaling your administrative burden.

Our team exists to make this integration seamless. We absorb the operational heavy lifting, vetting, compliance, and payroll, so that your team remains focused on building. We don't just fill seats; we help you construct a resilient, distributed engine that runs on the same time zone as your headquarters.

This strategy is already the default for the most efficient companies in our sector. It is the practical way to balance ambition with budget.

Let us help you build that balance.



Lucas Arana,
COO



Hand-matched Engineers.
Vetted by Engineers.



350+
U.S. companies
already hiring with us.
In every Vertical, from Seed to Enterprise.

1500+
Latam Engineers
vetted by Engineers.
Working remotely for U.S. companies.

45%-70%
Cost Reduction
hiring with Nexton
vs. U.S. recruiting.

90%
Closing Rate
from offer to hire.
(no surprises at offer stage)

Want to see the difference LATAM engineers could make on your team?

Meet with our experts and learn how we achieve lower hiring costs and get better outcomes!

We've redefined nearshore headhunting, making it as seamless as hiring in the U.S.

Our not-so-secret hand-matching process, crafted by Engineers and executed by Humans, combines cutting-edge technology with human expertise. Featuring a self-developed AI platform, a team of 20+ wizard headhunters meticulously *hand-picking candidates*, and over 100 engineers vetting talent, we ensure that only the best candidates make it through.

As a leading provider of talent acquisition services for software engineering and technical roles, we pride ourselves on our absurdly good customer service— a reputation earned directly from the glowing feedback of our clients. From Full-stack engineers to CTOs, we've got you covered every step of the way.

2025 Tech Salaries and Benefits Trends in Latin America: Q4'25
Salary Survey

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