



Thailand IT Talent Report

WHAT'S INSIDE

- The market has flipped. Thai tech hiring is now employer-driven and most playbooks haven't caught up.
- \$7 billion of hyperscaler investment is landing in Thailand. The local talent to support it isn't here yet.
- The software role is being rewritten — AI Engineers, Forward Deployed Engineers, and Product Engineers lead.
- Only 9.4% of Thailand is on LinkedIn. Here is why that changes everything about how you hire.

What we are seeing right now, in numbers

The data underpinning every IT hiring decision in Thailand in 2026.

70,000

Thailand's annual digital talent deficit.
Demand: 100K professionals. Supply: 30K.

NXPO, 2025

\$7B+

Combined hyperscaler investment committed to Thailand — Microsoft, AWS and Google.

Official announcements, 2026

800%+

Growth in Forward Deployed Engineer job postings globally between Jan–Sep 2025.

Indeed / Financial Times, 2025

9.4%

LinkedIn penetration in Thailand. Fewer than 1 in 10 Thai residents on the platform.

NapoleonCat / DataReportal, Dec 2025

84%

Candidates who would reject a job offer without flexible work arrangements.

PwC Global Workforce Survey, 2025

4.7%

Projected average salary increase across Thailand in 2026. Down from peak years.

Various Industry Salary Surveys

40%

Share of True Blue 2025 placements that were software engineering roles.

True Blue internal data, 2025

1%

Share of Thailand's population with advanced (level 4) digital skills.

Digital Council of Thailand

How this report was built

- Direct market intelligence from active IT searches and client conversations across Thailand throughout Q1 2026.
- Cross-referenced with NXPO, ManpowerGroup, WEF, DataReportal, and major tech investment announcements.
- True Blue proprietary placement data from 2025 and Q1 2026 — a ground-level view of what is actually moving in the market.



The 3 forces reshaping every IT hiring decision in 2026

What looks stable on the surface is shifting on three axes at once.

01

The pendulum has swung. The employer-driven market is here.

Processes that used to take 2-3 weeks now stretch to 5-6 weeks or longer. Salary increments have slowed or frozen across most roles. Employers are more selective. But the best candidates still have options and will walk from a slow or poorly structured process. The employer-driven market is not a licence to be slow.

77% of APAC employers report difficulty finding skilled talent, despite the market shift.

ManpowerGroup, 2025

02

The software role is being rewritten by AI. Fast.

AI Engineers, Forward Deployed Engineers, and AI Native Product Engineers are now distinct hires that barely existed two years ago. Legacy system modernisation continues to drive backend and full-stack demand. Companies still briefing on 2022 profiles are missing the market. Generalists are finding it harder. Niche skills with proven ROI are standing out.

39% of core job skills are expected to transform by 2030.

WEF Future of Jobs Report, 2025

03

The talent you need is not on LinkedIn. Most companies don't know that.

LinkedIn penetration in Thailand is approximately 9.4% of the total population. In Singapore it is estimated to be 68%. Posting a role and waiting reaches fewer than 1 in 10 Thai residents by definition. Senior tech talent in Thailand is reachable only through direct, relationship-based outreach — in Thai and in English — built over years.

Most companies access around 30% of the available talent market.

True Blue market intelligence, 2026



Contracting and expanding roles

The WEF projects 39% of core IT skills will transform by 2030. The direction is already visible in Thailand's market.

▲ ROLES IN HIGH DEMAND (GROWING)

AI Engineers

Build on LLMs, design AI pipelines, maintain production AI systems. Rare in Thailand. Salary premium applies.

Forward Deployed Engineers

Embedded in client environments to make complex AI software actually work. Job postings up 800%+ globally in 2025.

Cybersecurity Specialists

PDPA enforcement and weekly data breaches have made security a board-level priority. APAC holds the largest global shortfall.

Technical Commercial Roles

Pre-sales engineers, solutions consultants, and technical account managers growing fast alongside FDE and AI software demand.

Backend / Full-Stack Engineers

Legacy system modernisation in banking and enterprise is structural demand. It does not go away when AI arrives.

▼ ROLES UNDER PRESSURE (SHRINKING)

Junior Generalist Developers

The post-AI market rewards specialism and penalises generalism. Junior engineers without a clear skill niche are finding it significantly harder.

Dashboard and Reporting Analysts

AI tools now handle dashboard generation and manual reporting. Execution-only analyst roles are shrinking across every industry.

Non-AI-fluent Mid-Level Engineers

The productivity gap between an AI-fluent engineer and a traditional one is widening. Employers notice. The salary difference follows.



Three generations. Three completely different deals.

One EVP does not work for all three. Understanding each is how you hire — and keep — the right people.

EARLY CAREER

Graduates to ~4 years' experience

- 42% experience burnout early in career
- 84% reject no-flexibility offers
- Shortest average tenure on record

THEY FEEL

Confused and cautious. They entered work during rapid disruption and have seen boom and bust within a short career. They show less loyalty because less has been shown to them.

THEY WANT

- Clear career path and visible progression
- AI tools and skill development in the role
- Hybrid work as a baseline, not a benefit
- Salary stability over equity or bonus gambles

MID-CAREER

5–12 years' experience

- Rarely active on LinkedIn or job boards
- Highest optionality of any segment
- Will not wait 5–6 weeks for an offer

THEY FEEL

Cautious in the current market but quietly aware of their value. They are not browsing job boards. They need to be found — through direct, specific, researched outreach.

THEY WANT

- Compensation at actual market value, not last year's benchmark
- Flexibility that is real and not revoked
- Stability and clear scope over startup excitement
- Genuine authority in the role

SENIOR & LEADERSHIP

12+ years' experience

- Selective and strategic, not actively looking
- Will disengage from careless outreach
- Move only for the right role and organisation

THEY FEEL

They will only move for the right opportunity — the right role, organisation, and conversation. Mass outreach and generic job descriptions will not reach them.

THEY WANT

- Genuine strategic influence and autonomy
- Respect for their career track record
- Compensation that reflects seniority
- Stability and clear organisational direction



What's actually working in Thailand right now

Specialist recruitment, real market intelligence, and end-to-end ownership.

01. EMBEDDED RPO — TALENT ACQUISITION AT SCALE

Leading Thai Fintech

Embedded RPO partner to build an entirely new technology organisation at speed

What happened:

- Specialist roles spanned engineering, data, AI enablement, risk modelling, cybersecurity, and project management — far beyond standard job-posting reach.
- One embedded bilingual recruiter placed on-site, operating under the client's own email and LinkedIn branding. Not a vendor — part of the team.
- Full-cycle ownership: sourcing → screening → interview coordination → background checks → offer negotiation → signed contract.
- Weekly reporting and real-time market intelligence built into every stage of the engagement.
- Initial target: 30 hires in 3 months. Final outcome: 58 confirmed FTE placements in 5 months — 93% above the original target.

58

FTE Hires

5

Months

~93%

Above Target

1

Recruiter

02. SPECIALIST SEARCH

For individual senior or hard-to-fill roles

A dedicated exclusive search with full market mapping and direct outreach into passive networks. Every submission backed by live salary benchmarking. No handoffs, no multiple agencies — one partner with real accountability from day one.

03. MARKET INTELLIGENCE

Embedded in every engagement

Every search True Blue runs generates live intelligence: what candidates are earning, what they are being offered elsewhere, what is causing drop-off, and what the competition is paying. Clients get a hire and a real-time market map.



What this means for your team

Hiring decisions made on 2022 data will produce 2022 results. The market has changed on every axis.

The companies winning in 2026 are doing three things:

- Identifying which roles have evolved — and briefing for the right profile, not the 2022 one.
- Accessing the full market, not just the 30% of candidates who are visible and actively looking.
- Moving decisively when the right candidate is in front of them. Slow processes lose great people.

If you are thinking about:

- Building a specialist IT team without an internal TA function
- Which roles to prioritise as AI reshapes engineering
- Reaching Thai tech talent that won't find you on LinkedIn

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