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Freelance Article Writing on the Net

By Jill Black

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Freelance Article Writing on the Net

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As a freelancer there are many opportunities available for working from home as a career or providing an extra stream of income for your established information publishing business by filling the needs of a widely diverse market as a paid freelance article writer both on the internet and in offline publications.

What is a Freelancer?

A freelancer is an independent writer who earns his/her living by contracting for work projects, working for no fixed employer, and may work for a number of employers at any given time.

You will be required to negotiate the terms and conditions of work and all work must be completed to the satisfaction of the clients requirements.

Note: The objectives and requirements of both parties should be understood fully by both parties from the start

to save any problems later on – this includes terms of payment.

As a freelancer you need to keep up with the latest developments to compete in the marketplace.

This requires studying and researching the needs of the marketplace along with selling yourself to your potential clients.

Getting Started as a Freelancer

The freelance market can be fiercely competitive at times requiring emphasis on marketing your work effectively and assessing your expertise and skills.

"How to" articles tend to sell well and most successful freelancers maintain constant contact with marketplace trends and requirements seeking those areas where they can fill the needs of potential clients.

Write your resume with the view of selling your strengths.

Use short sentences with each paragraph easy to read, clearly and concisely giving your qualifications or related experience for the job.

Usually you will only have a few seconds to make an impact on your prospective client and this can make the difference between hiring you over someone else.

To find a niche (your niche) Web monkey has a very good article on finding and defining your niche as a web freelancer.

<http://hotwired.lycos.com/webmonkey/98/44/index4a.html?tw=jobs>

Many writers prefer to stick within the topic subjects they can write confidently on although a good freelancer can research and write on any topic if and when required.

When you are decided on the subject niche you would like to fill seek out magazine publications, online and offline, on your chosen topic.

There are two main ways most freelancers find work –

Submitting to publications

Bidding on freelance contracts

If you do not wish to bid for work contracts until you have gained a degree of confidence in your abilities e.g. at some of the sites listed below...

Seek out publications in your chosen field that accept articles e.g. if your interest is in fishing go to your local outlet selling magazines and see if they accept article contributions (this can usually be found inside the front cover in most magazines)

Many freelancers start by submitting to local community newspapers/letters as a way of establishing credibility as a published writer.

Send a query letter or email your chosen publications with your subject ideas and an outline of your proposed article and how they may contact you if interested.

However, still expect to wait some time (sometimes up to three months if approaching offline publications) for a reply as most editors are very busy people.

Finding work on the Internet

The internet has made it easier to build a successful freelance career as an independent professional.

To find markets on the internet visit yahoogroups, topica etc and join writing job newsletters and job boards.

Some newsletters/groups I have found very informative are –

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/freelancewriters>
<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/workforwriters>
<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/webwritingbuzz>
<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/WritersMailBox>
<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/writesuccess>

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<http://www.inscriptionsmagazine.com> (fee \$5.00 per year – well worth the money to receive)

<http://www.sellwritingonline.com> –
(<mailto:sellwritingonline-subscribe@topica.com>)

There are many sites that bring people together... some offer a free service, others you will need to register with and/or supply your resume before you can get started.

<http://www.writerfind.com> (international)

<http://www.freelanceworkexchange.com>

<http://www.freelancewriting.com>

<http://freelancing4money.com>

<http://www.worldwidefreelance.com> (international)

<http://freelancewrite.about.com>

<http://www.burymann.com> (click on the freelance job and non-fiction writing link)

<http://www.burbages.com>

<http://www.flipdog.com>

<http://www.guru.com>

<http://www.writersweekly.com>

<http://writerslounge.com>

<http://www.smarterwork.com>

<http://www.writerswrite.com>

<http://www.bullhorn.com>

<http://www.writestart.com>

<http://www.jobsonline.com>

<http://www.elance.com>

<http://www.travelwriters.com> (for travel writers)

The government is the largest source of freelance contract work in most countries. One USA based web site set up to bring you the latest news in the market today, whatever your area of expertise, can be found at:

<http://www.bidmain.com>

For other countries try your local government web site for information.

Another option is to do some detective work to source work. Look for new web sites to send a congratulatory email.

Explain your services and how your work can improve chances of survival on the net while politely enquiring if they have any current or future needs for the services you can offer and how they may contact you.

Newly launched web sites can be found via press release sites–

<http://www.internetnewsbureau.com>

<http://www1.internetwire.com/iwire/home>

<http://www.pressreleasenetwork.com>

<http://prweb.com>

Sign up to receive the daily releases if you are serious about earning money as a freelancer.

Invest in Writers Market and digest books (both local and international). These list thousands of markets, niches and industries that require the needs of freelance writers.

Put together a portfolio with a selection of your best articles.

If you enjoy for example, travel writing, include a

selection of your best photos if sending queries to offline editors as many will ask if you will be supplying photos along with your story. If you can send photos to accompany your article your chances of having your article accepted increases as it saves them the trouble of sourcing photos to compliment the article.

At the bottom of the article include your resource box.

For example: Joe Bloggs is a freelance writer and webmaster at your domain.com and whatever ties your web site into the article...

Producing free content articles are a great way to build up your business and reputation. They can also be used as publishing credits if they have been placed on another's web site –mention where samples of your published work can be viewed.

Writing freelance articles increases exposure for your

business to another market segment of interested individuals.
If you had not considered freelancing as a possibility...
give it a try.

Jill Black is a professional freelance writer and photographer and member of the New Zealand freelance writers association (NZFWA). For writing and e-publishing resources and ideas visit <http://www.netwrite-publish.com>.

Break in with Fillers: The Best Market for New Writers

By Shelley Wake

Break in with Fillers: The Best Market for New Writers by Shelley Wake

Interested in breaking into writing or breaking into a new area? You can't go past writing fillers. Fillers are one of the most overlooked opportunities in the freelance writing world and offer one of the best opportunities for new writers.

Fillers Are In Demand

I've spoken to hundreds of editors and been told over and over again that fillers are the one thing they never get enough of. Most publications tend to publish more freelance fillers than they do freelance articles. Yet, they often receive 100 times more articles than fillers. This is a gap in the freelance market that you can take advantage of.

Fillers are a Great Place to Get Started

Many publications are careful about publishing feature articles from writers they don't know. Even if your article is good, an editor might decide not to publish you because they don't know you as a writer. This is especially true if you don't have a lot of experience or any clips. But even without experience or clips, most editors will consider a filler. In fact, many editors treat writing fillers as the testing ground to see if a writer can be relied on to write feature articles.

Here's what one editor had to say about fillers:

"One of the best ways to break in is to write fillers. It gives me a chance to start to build a relationship with a writer and see that I can trust them. Of all the freelancers I work with, over half started out writing fillers." – Margaret, Magazine Editor

So not only can writing fillers get you some clips, it also has the potential to turn into a long-term writing opportunity. Consider fillers a stepping stone to much bigger things.

The Smart Way to Write on Spec

Fillers are almost always submitted on spec. This means that you avoid the problem of having to query

the publication and sell yourself as a writer, because your filler is doing the work for you and showing the editor your writing skill.

The big argument against writing on spec is that you spend your time writing pieces that might never sell. Fillers reduce this problem because they are short and take less time to write. So even if your filler doesn't sell, you haven't wasted as much time as you would have on a longer feature article. Fillers are also more flexible, with few publications having set guidelines for fillers. This means that a filler will often be suitable for more than market. So if it gets rejected once, it's not a waste of time. You can just send it to a new market, often without having to make any changes.

Fillers Rely on Information, Not Writer Qualifications

Fillers usually rely on information, not on the writer's qualifications. This means that you don't have to sell yourself when you submit fillers. Instead, the information you put in the filler sells it for you. This makes fillers a perfect option for writers lacking the experience or clips to sell themselves to an editor.

You Can Write a Lot of Them

Since fillers are short, you can write a lot of them and submit a lot of them. You could literally have hundreds of pieces out in the market for consideration in a short time. And if you write them well, you could have a lot of them published in a very short time. That means you can build a list of clips fast.

And one other benefit is that magazines don't have as limited a space for fillers as they do for feature articles. So if your filler gets accepted, it's likely to get published fast. The same isn't true for feature articles, where an accepted article will often be scheduled for an issue a year or two away. That's one more good reason why fillers are a great way to build clips fast.

Once you've got the clips, then you have a few more options. Until then, fillers are a great place to start.

And one final tip. Once you have the clips and start moving into feature articles, don't forget about fillers. As you're researching a feature, take note of interesting facts, trivia, or anecdotes you come across. These can make fillers and be an added bonus, bringing in some extra cash and some extra clips.

Shelley Wake is the author of "Getting Published Without Clips." This practical no-nonsense guide shows writers exactly where to go and what to do to break into freelance writing. Packed with inside information, proven methods, hidden markets, and more, it's successfully launched hundreds of freelance careers in record time.<http://www.writingstuff.com/fr02m.html>



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