

How to Start a Successful Freelance Career

A Newsletter by Inkwell Editorial

December 5, 2007



SECTION I: What Freelance Writers Make – A Year-End Look from Around the Web

I thought it would be fun to end the year by taking a look at what freelance writers make. The reason for doing this is three-fold, ie:

- i) **Inspiration:** Knowing what others make demonstrates what's possible. Freelancing can be very demoralizing sometimes.

When projects dry up, clients aren't paying on time and getting decent pay seems to be all but impossible, reading that someone made \$7,000 in a given month is inspiring (eg, if they can do it, so can I!);

- ii) **Market Research:** By this I mean, it can help you to expand the type of writing you do.

This year, for example, I started to do SEO writing. And, you know what? I enjoy it more than most other types of writing I'm accustomed to because it's relatively easy to pick up compared to other types of writing; it suits my schizophrenic writing personality (eg, I may write on 5 different topics in one day); and it's plentiful right now.

- iii) **Curiosity:** The final reason I thought this would be a fun issue to explore is because I'm just downright nosy when it comes to this type of info (my inquiring mind wants to know!)

In Part II, I look forward to what's coming next year, ie, plans I have to increase my income. I also reveal how I make my freelance income.

So, sit back and enjoy this issue. And, when you get discouraged, read it again and again.

Sincerely,

Yuwanda Black, Publisher

<http://www.InkwellEditorial.com>

<http://www.InkwellEditorial.blogspot.com>

<http://www.SEO-Article-Writer.com>

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P.S.: Get Part I and Part II of Inkwell Editorial's freelance writing e-course FREE. The New Year is a perfect time to put your freelance writing dreams into action.

Inkwell Editorial's freelance writing e-course is an intense five-part course designed to help you start making money as a freelance writer – either on a part- or full –time basis. So, what are you waiting for?

Simply send an email to info@InkwellEditorial.com with “*Send me Parts I and II of the Ecourse*” Again, it's free. **Full course details here:**

<http://www.inkwelleditorial.com/SmallBizCntr/black-freelance-writing-ecourse.htm>



WHAT FREELANCE WRITERS MAKE: A YEAR-END LOOK FROM AROUND THE WEB

Note: Many of the posts below contain links to, and/or info on, other articles about freelance writing income.

From ChrisBlogging.com: For more than three years I have been earning a full-time income online. My main sources of income include a wide range of freelance writing projects, and of course, blogging. (Blog owner Chris Bibey)

Here are my freelance writing income stats for October 2007.

Number of Completed Projects: 24
Payment by PayPal: 20
Payment by Check: 3
Payment by Bank Wire: 1

Total Monthly Income: \$7,047.84

Link: <http://www.chrisblogging.com/freelance-writing-income-october-2007>

STATISTICS CONTINUED BELOW

New Site Launch! <http://SEO-Article-Writer.com>: List your freelance writing profile for only \$4.95/month. Log on for details.

From Work-at-Home-Mom.blogspot.com: In July, 2000 I began working from home full time via the Internet and have never looked back. It wasn't until March, 2004 that I stumbled on blogs and became hooked on the concept.. (Gayla McCord - From About Page on Work-at-Home-Mom.blogspot.com).

Blogging and hard work can pay off. Proof?

Affiliate 1 - 1131.00
Affiliate 2 - 595.00
Affiliate 3 - 785.00
Affiliate 4 - 25.50
Affiliate 5 - 116.00
Affiliate 6 - 640.00
Additional internet income resources - 1308.00

Total Income for February 2007 - \$4,602.00

Link: <http://work-at-home-mom.blogspot.com/2007/03/february-commissions-revealed.html>

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Read an interview with Gail on CanIMakeBigMoneyOnline.com at :

<http://www.canimakebigmoneyonline.com/index.php/20070327-interview-with-professional-blogger-gayla-mccord/>

From AbsoluteWrite.com Forum: Kara Williams is an award-winning freelance journalist who has covered topics ranging from business and babies to skiing and spas in her 16-year writing career. (About Poster Kara Williams (from KaraWilliams.com)).

I land big-money feature magazine assignments by writing killer queries to high-paying magazines. Or, like today, I got a \$1,000 feature assignment from an editor at a local magazine who "thought of me" for this topic. I am always networking.

I landed a \$45/hour proofing/editing assignment (several thousand dollars) from a former employer, about a year after I left the company and moved 4 hours away.

I landed a steady \$750/month gig editing a local parenting magazine, because I saw the first issue on the stands and said to the owners, "I can help you."

I landed a \$50/hour copywriting gig for a company based in Atlanta (far from my Colo. home) via Deb Ng's blog.

Link:

<http://www.absolutewrite.com/forums/showthread.php?s=346dc21f6f3186b79e02b555b47419b0&t=72361>

From PersonalFinancier.blogspot.com: I have an MBA (finance) and a BA in accounting and economics. I am currently employed as an economist for a large firm. I've recently discovered the joys of writing. (Blog owner Dorian Wales)

I've been experimenting with several options available to online authors:

1. I've set up my own Blogger blog named Personal Financier.
2. I've published articles on Helium and Associated Content for page views and rating.
3. I've submitted article for sale on Constant Content and Helium.

The results of my experiments have been very enlightening. Here they are:

1. In three months I've posted 50 posts to my blog which has attracted 367 visitors who visited 656 pages and generated a whopping 4.5\$ income.
2. In three months I've posted 36 articles on Helium, 3 of which to Marketplace. I've received a two star rating for my articles, sold one to marketplace for 60\$ and received 4.5\$ in page views.

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3. In three weeks I've posted some of my 36 article on Associated Content for 600 page views or 0.83\$ and a clout index of 3.

4. In two months I've submitted 17 articles for sale on Constant Content out of which I sold 6 for usage for 68.75\$ total.

Link:

<http://personalfinancier.blogspot.com/search/label/Freelance%20Writing%20and%20Blogging>

From Forums.DigitalPoint.com: I'm Vanessa Beaty, and I run FreelanceMoms, a blog (<http://www.FreelanceMoms.blog.spot.com>) all about becoming a freelance writer. I work completely from home and my goal is to help others to do the same. (From the Squidoo Lens page of Vanessa Beaty).

While I didn't actually start my writing business with DP (Digital Point), it was my second place to find writing jobs, and I have made several long term clients because of it. I have raised my rates, and while I'm not making near the \$7,000 mark, I did surpass the \$2,000 mark this month, which is fairly good seeing as I just started about 3 months ago.

Total Monthly Income: \$2,000+

Link:

<http://forums.digitalpoint.com/showthread.php?t=538310&highlight=%22freelance+writing+income%22+%22post%22&page=2>

From Sabahan.com: Hi, I'm Gaman. I've been working part time on the Internet since late 1997. Within two years, I discovered that this was what I wanted to do for a living so I went full time in 1999 and the rest as they said is history. I started Sabahan.com in January 2006 to give out tips and help other would be Internet marketers or bloggers make money on the Internet, one post at a time. (Gaman – from About Page of Sabahan.com).

Here are some of my income sources for the month of July, 2007. They were generated from several blogs and websites and not from Sabahan.com alone. The amounts are in USD unless stated otherwise.

Google AdSense: \$618.46
ValueClick.com: \$349.35
Commission Junction: \$990.45
Text-Link-Ads: \$291.73
MaxBounty: \$366.25
Other Affiliate Programs: Est. \$1000

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Grand Total: \$3,616.24

Link: <http://www.sabahan.com/2007/08/02/my-internet-income-report-for-july-2007/>

From WritingCareer.blogspot.com: I am a writer, Squidoo lensmaster, herbalist, and editor. I make my living this way, and I want to help others do the same. (Katherine, From About Page on WritingCareer.blogspot.com. My goal for November was to make \$1000. Here's how I did it:

MSC writing projects - \$735
Blogitive.com - \$30
BoxofDollars - \$100
Exquisitewriting.com \$40
Associated Content - \$20
Commission Junction - \$50
PayPerPost.com - \$15
Cash Crate - \$10

Total Monthly Income for November: \$1000

Link: <http://writingcareer.blogspot.com/2007/12/my-earnings-for-november.html>

From AllFreelanceWriting.com: I began freelance writing and editing in 1999, where I worked as an independent publications specialist in an academic environment. I currently hold a BA in Public Relations, and run a small PR firm as well as more than a dozen websites. I also take on freelance writing and editing work on a part-time basis, most often covering small business- and marketing-related niches. (Jennifer Mattern, from About Me Page on AllFreelanceWritng.com).

What I did to take my business blog from earning very little to over \$2000 in June (2007). Here's the breakdown:

Monthly Private Ads - \$625
Sponsored Posts - \$240
Sponsored Links in Existing Posts - \$1140
Adsense - \$11.02

Total Monthly Income for June 2007: \$2,016.02

Link: <http://allfreelancewriting.com/2007/06/29/types-of-writing/blogging/one-blogs-journey-to-2000-per-month/#more-192>

From FreelanceSwitch.com: My name is Leo Babauta, I'm married with six kids, I live on Guam, I'm a writer and a runner and a vegetarian and I love writing Zen Habits. (From About Page on ZenHabits.net)

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For years now, I've done freelance writing for newspapers and magazines as a way to make side income, supplementing my full-time job. But this year, I've made the conscious move to freelancing for blogs instead of print publications, to the point where I now make about \$2,000 a month as a blog writer (not including my own blog's income or my full-time salary).

Total Monthly Income: \$2,000+

Link: <http://freelanceswitch.com/blog-writing/how-to-become-a-freelance-blog-writer/>

From Performancing.com: I run College Startup, a site aimed at new web entrepreneurs, particularly college students wanting to start an online business. I split most of my time between blogging, link building and monetization. I also help others start blog networks. (Ryan Caldwell – from Performance.com Bio Page)

How I make **\$700 a month** is this: being a freelance reporter for Cheezhead.com, writing two reviews for Eaton Webdirectory, writing 20 ehow articles for \$300 for demand studios, and writing for a Canadian Blog. I have only just begun my freelance journey, but already I am quite profitable.

Total Monthly Income: \$700

Link: <http://performancing.com/tags/freelance-writing>

From Scalzi.com: I was born in 1969 and by 1983 it became clear to me that I had better become a writer because everything else was actual work. Fortunately, so far I've managed to pull this off: My first job out of college was as a film critic at the *Fresno Bee* newspaper in California, and I've been working as a writer ever since. Since 1998, I've been a full-time freelance writer, which is both fun and occasionally panic-inducing. (Joe Scalzi – from Bio Page on Scalzi.com).

In 2005, from writing and editing, I made \$100,600. And as it happens that is pretty much dead-on average for my writing income since 1998, which is the year I became a freelance writer. Some years I make more (the top year was 2001, when I made about \$150,000 due to a huge amount of corporate work) and some years I make less (in 2004 I made about \$80,000), but put it all in the pot and 100K is more or less where it averages out.

Average Annual Income: \$100,000+

Link: <http://www.scalzi.com/whatever/004082.html>

From StevePavlina.com: Steve Pavlina has written over 500 personal development articles, covering topics such as courage, motivation, productivity, and the meaning of life -- all of which are available for free on this site. Steve has been featured in the *New York Times*, *USA Today*, and *Self Magazine*. This web site, StevePavlina.com, is currently the most popular personal

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development web site in the world, receiving over 1.8 million visitors per month.

StevePavlina.com was launched on Oct 1st, 2004. By April 2005 it was averaging **\$4.12/day** in income. Now it brings in over ~~\$200/day~~ **\$1000/day** (updated as of 10/29/06). I didn't spend a dime on marketing or promotion. In fact, I started this site with just \$9 to register the domain name, and everything was bootstrapped from there. Would you like to know how I did it?

Projected Monthly Income Based on Info Discussed: Over \$30,000

Link: <http://www.stevpavlina.com/blog/2006/05/how-to-make-money-from-your-blog/>

VERY VERY INTERESTING: How Much Do Bloggers Really Make?

Read this informative post to see how your blog measures up:

http://mamarant.blogs.com/amnichols/2007/02/more_on_how_muc.html

SECTION II: My Freelance Writing Life (aka Yuwanda's Corner)



This has been a busy, busy year. I haven't achieved all I wanted to (do any of us ever?), but have made great strides.

My theme for this year has been focus. As in, focusing on how I really want my life to run. To that end, I've done the following:

a) Cut Off Some Income Streams: I've simply stopped accepting certain types of projects because I no longer enjoy the work. I struggled with this for a few years – but finally pulled the plug. ***I also no longer accept projects that pay below a certain rate – even if I need the money.***

In order to really embrace success, sometimes I think you have to trust that the work will flow. When I feel tempted to accept a project that is not particularly well paying, I remind myself of my worth and redouble my efforts to find those assignments that pay well. Otherwise, I say to myself, "Find a different line of work!"

My income has taken a hit, but in order to get where I want to be, this is a sacrifice I had to make – otherwise I'd be in the same position next year – and I didn't want that.

b) Started Other Income Streams: I started to do SEO writing this year – and I really like it. Many lament that it's low-paying, but it's all about who you market yourself to. I've always targeted businesses/business owners, so getting a decent wage hasn't been a real problem for me.

Increasing My Income in 2008!

FYI, that's why I started the site SEO-Article-Writer.com, and the soon to be published, SEO-Articles-for-Sale.com.

I've been sending out a lot of queries and from the calls I've been getting, I have a feeling I'm going to get slammed come mid-January. I'll be looking for help, so get your profile listed on SEO-Article-Writer.com.

c) Am Slowly Cultivating Other Income Streams: I'm still cultivating passive income streams. This involves primarily affiliate marketing and selling ad space on my main website, InkwellEditorial.com (which is virtual real estate I've been wasting for far too long).

I also have a couple of other things in the works along this line, (ie, minisites), but can only bite off so much at one time.

Although I'm hurting a bit now financially, it's because I'm taking the time to do all the behind-the-scenes work to get set up to really make some serious cash next year.

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A little income confession: I don't like to reveal my income, but as I've snooped out what others make, I feel it's only fair to give a little peek here.

The most I've ever made in one year is \$230,000. Remember, I still do part-time recruiting, so that includes those commission checks for FT placements that can range anywhere from a low of 3K on up to 10 or 12K.

I don't do much of that because it's a service I provide to long-time clients who know me from my Inkwell Editorial staffing agency days.

Next year, if I can top out at 150K just from freelance writing, I'll be satisfied. By the end of 2009, my goal is to make half of that from passive income.

You see, I want the option of retirement at 50 with a fully paid off mortgage. And, this is the income that I need to make to achieve that and still save heftily for retirement.

So, that's what I've been up to this year in my freelance writing career.

On the personal side, I had some setbacks. Namely:

My stepfather died. This was a real blow because his illness came out of the blue. He passed away rather quickly (which was really sort of a blessing because he had cancer in four places).

Marathon: I didn't even do the half marathon this year. I'd planned on doing the full one again, but a car accident in February nixed training time. And, sheer laziness (laced with a bit of exhaustion), killed any training I needed to do to be able to run the half-marathon as I had planned.

Oh well, there's always next year. I've vowed not to be so hard on myself about such things (I tend to pile a lot on my plate).

I'm looking forward to next year, as I hope you are too. Enjoy the season upon us. BUT, keep your goals firmly in sight. The years pass all too soon – have a plan to be where you want to be in 5, 10 or 20 years.

Next Issue: Wednesday, January 9, 2008

Seasonally yours,
Yuwanda

P.S.: Don't forget, **Get Part I and Part II of Inkwell Editorial's freelance writing e-course FREE.** The New Year is a perfect time to put your freelance writing dreams into action.

Simply send an email to info@InkwellEditorial.com with "*Send me Parts I and II of the Ecourse*" Again, it's free. **Full course details here:**

<http://www.inkwelleditorial.com/SmallBizCntr/black-freelance-writing-ecourse.htm>

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P.P.S.: Be featured in the newsletter! How? Send an email to info@InkwellEditorial.com with a "Yes, I'd like to be interviewed for the newsletter."

Who do we like to interview? Successful freelancers — eg, writers, graphic designers, illustrators, web designers, copywriters, editors, reviewers, etc.

We look for "success/how I did it stories." The main goal of the newsletter is to give readers first-hand information on how others achieved freelance success. Discovered a new niche? Snagged a big client? Used a marketing technique effectively? Tell us about it.

Your story doesn't have to be unique; it just has to be something you tried that worked. Upon receipt of your email stating your interest in being interviewed, you will be contacted with all the details.

We hope to hear from you soon.

Your Ideas Count! Send in your comments/questions/suggestions, etc. Have a freelancing issue you'd like to see covered? Send an email to info@inkwelleditorial.com. We'll do our best to cover it.

Want to read previous issues? Click on links below.



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SECTION III: PREVIOUS ISSUES

Issue 1: June 6, 2007 can be found at <http://www.inkwelleditorial.com/newsletter.pdf>
Topic: **How to Make Money with Elance**; Featured Freelancer: Michelle Devon

Issue 2: June 20, 2007 can be found at <http://www.inkwelleditorial.com/Newsletter/6-20-07.pdf>
Topic: **Get Paid to Write SEO Articles, Web Copy & More**; Featured Freelancer: Clark Covington of Internet Research Associates

Issue 3: July 18, 2007 can be found at <http://www.inkwelleditorial.com/Newsletter/7-18-07-freelance-writing-newsletter.pdf>
Topic: **How to Make Money Blogging**; Featured Freelancer: Paula Mooney

Issue 4: August 15, 2007 can be found at <http://www.inkwelleditorial.com/Newsletter/8-15-07-freelance-writing-newsletter.pdf>
Topic: **How to Make Money Writing for the B2B Sector**; Featured Freelancer: Meryl Evans

Issue 5: September 12, 2007 can be found at <http://www.inkwelleditorial.com/Newsletter/9-12-07-freelance-writing-newsletter.pdf>
Topic: **How to Make Money Writing White Papers**; Featured Freelancer: Gordon Graham

Issue 6: September 26, 2007 can be found <http://www.inkwelleditorial.com/Newsletter/9-26-07-freelance-writing-newsletter.pdf>
Topic: **How to Make Money as a Freelance Cartoonist**; Featured Freelancer: Dan Rosandich

Issue 7: October 17, 2007 can be found <http://www.inkwelleditorial.com/Newsletter/10-17-07-freelance-writing-newsletter.pdf>
Topic: **How to Make Money Freelancing for Newspaper**; Featured Freelancer: Sue Lick, Author of *Freelancing for Newspapers*

Issue 8: November 7, 2007 can be found <http://www.inkwelleditorial.com/Newsletter/11-7-07-freelance-writing-newsletter.pdf>
Topic: **How to Make Money as a Freelance Ghostwriter**; Featured Freelancer: Amanda Evans

