

Advanced Freelancing

Notes from the 2006 GAMA Trade Show
seminar led by
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for handling the heavy lifting in previous years.

Marketing Yourself

- Do good work.
- Do it on time.
- Be kind but not shy.
- Attend conventions.
- Volunteer.
- Network.
- Have a website/blog.

Time and Project Management

- Figure out how fast you can work.
- Determine how long it should take you to complete a project.
- Then double that.
- Set daily and weekly goals.
- Communicate with your clients if you fall behind.
- Learn to say no.

Going Full-Time

- Create a personal budget.
- Determine how fast you would have to work to meet that.
- If it's not possible, wait until you can raise your rates.
- Allow for clients who pay slowly or not at all.
- Consider costs of benefits, especially health insurance.

Tax Planning

- Self-employment tax: 15.3% (up to \$94,200; only 2.9% thereafter)
- IRS.gov.
- Find an accountant.
- Track expenses and write-offs.
- Quarterly estimates: if you owe more than \$1,000.
- Consider asking your day job (if you have one) to withhold more.

Royalties vs. Flat Fees

- Do the math.
- Ask the publisher about the expected print run and sales.

Work-for-Hire

- Most work is work-for-hire.
- If you create the original concept, you have more leverage.
- Artists may be able to negotiate to retain certain rights or can sell second-use rights.

Legal Recourses

- Avoid court if you can.
- Communicate early and often.
- A threat can end a relationship.
- Keep contracts and correspondence.
- Consult with a lawyer if all else fails.

Raising Your Rates

- The better your rep, the more you can earn for each project.
- Value your time.
- Keep reaching higher.