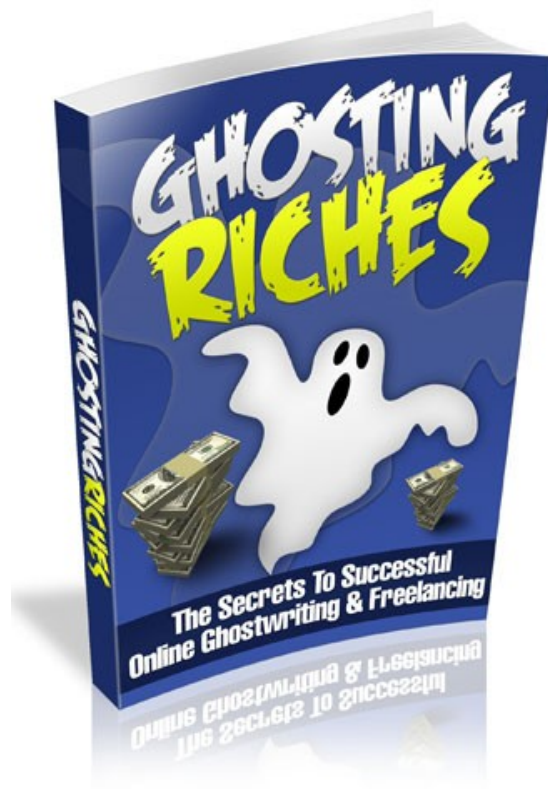
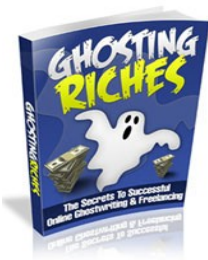


# Ghosting Riches







Many people dream of becoming their own boss and leaving their day job behind.

Working from home can be ideal in many ways. You set your own hours, you can make time for your family and yourself, and you can select work that you like and turn down work that you don't like.

But of course, there is a catch.

When you work at a regular 9-5 job (or any other hourly schedule) for a boss, you know that you have a paycheck coming on a regular basis, and you know how much that paycheck will be.

You most likely have benefits, including health insurance and at least two weeks paid vacation, and paid sick days.

When you become a full time freelancer, you give up all of that security for good.

Work is no longer handed to you; you have to go out and search for it. There is no vacation pay; if you don't work, you don't get paid.

Still, the freedom and potential of freelance work make the risks and uncertainty worthwhile for many people.

The good news is, making a living as a freelancer can be done alongside your day job – at least at first.

So if at all possible, you should start freelancing part time at first, enjoy the extra money you are making and take the time to figure out what works best for you before you quit your job. You might actually find that you enjoy the extra money SO much that you want to keep the security of your 9-5 while having the creativity and financial benefits of freelancing too. This is a great compromise and good for your bank balance too.

If however, quitting your job is your ultimate goal, then you're about to hit a quite tough but thoroughly enjoyable learning curve.

What works beautifully for one freelancer may not work for you or may not suit your style, and it takes a while to find out what methods bring in clients and cash.

It also takes a while to establish a reputation, start getting referrals, figure out which freelance sites are lucrative and which are wasting your time...and it's much better to have a steady paycheck coming in while you find all of this out. Much less stressful too.

If you're serious about going full time you also want enough of a financial cushion set aside so that if it takes a while to get up to speed, you have your basic expenses covered - rent or mortgage, utilities, food, internet, phone bill, and any other necessary living expenses.

Here are some questions that you need to ask yourself before you consider becoming a full time freelancer:

Do I really, truly have the necessary self discipline to go out and spend at least an hour or two searching for work every day - more if necessary?

Do I have enough discipline to set and meet my own deadlines, with no boss motivating me to get my work done on time?

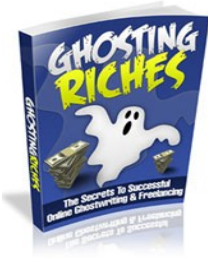
Have at least an idea that I can find clients and steady paying gigs?

Will I be able to handle the social isolation that comes with being a freelancer and working from home? (don't underestimate this one)

Are my finances in good enough shape that I can survive my first few months working as a full-time freelancer?

If you can answer yes to these questions, you are ready to go!

If not, then it's time to start learning or go back to your day job.



## FREELANCING: FIRST STEPS

If you are still maintaining a full-time job, you have to consider that when you go online seeking work – it'll have a bigger impact on your first freelancing steps than you might think.

Is it all right with your boss that you are moonlighting? You do not want to make the fatal mistake of assuming that your employers won't find out.

Some jobs will allow you to take on extra part time work as long as it does not interfere with your regular job. If it is not all right with your boss for you to be seeking freelance gigs, you need to be discreet.

This is going to include not using your real name, and not using your photograph, or using a stock photograph.

You might want to consider incorporating, or forming a limited company if you're UK based which is often (although not always) a good idea anyway if you plan on going into business for yourself – get some advice from an accountant or business advisor about this.

Incorporating comes with numerous benefits.

It can make it easier to keep track of your business expenses, and to write off necessary business expenses on your taxes - consult an ac-

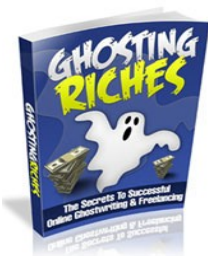
countant to make sure that you do it correctly. But if you are freelancing you may be able to write off expenses like your internet connection, office supplies, travel expenses, business books that you purchase, software, and other items as business expenses.

It can give you the anonymity you need if you are seeking out part-time jobs without your employer's knowledge - you can search for freelance work under your business name of "Speedy Article Writing Services" or "Da Vinci Web Graphics" (or whatever name you incorporated under.)

If you select a professional sounding name like "Ghostwriting Solutions, Inc." or "Gorgeous Web Graphics, Inc.", clients may have more confidence in you and your services.

The fact that you have incorporated shows potential clients that you are serious about your business and makes them feel as if they are dealing with a professional company rather than an individual who could take their money and run.

And forming a corporation can give you some protection of your assets in case of a lawsuit against your business, although you need to consult with an attorney or solicitor to find out the specifics.



## SHOWCASING YOUR WORK

Whatever type of freelancing that you are doing - ghostwriting, web-site design, designing wordpress themes, etc. - you **MUST** get a web-site up and running to showcase your work.

There's no doubting the fact that most of your work will involve the internet at some point, whether it;s for research purposes, getting work from freelance sites or writing copy or articles for websites, so you absolutely **MUST** get a website to show prospective clients what you can do.

If you have no clients at all yet, you can just write a few articles and show them on your site as examples of your work.

On the other hand you could offer to work for free or for a nominal fee on elance.com, get a freelancer.com or one of the other sites where freelancers offer and request work to build up your portfolio.

If the client you write for likes your work he's much more likely to use you again. I'll say again though – a website with samples is a must.



It is going to be much harder, if not impossible, to convince a client to buy from you if they can't see the quality of what you will be selling them.

So it's easy to say 'get a website', and if you have web design skills then you're sorted, but chances are you're just a writer, and most aspiring writers don't have a spare five or six hundred dollars or pounds lying around to pay for a site to be designed for you.

But there's good news -

That is absolutely no problem at all these days.

There are numerous free website and blog options available for those who lack a website, and you don't need to have any design skills either.

Ideally, you want to have your own domain name, and have it hosted on a website hosting service.

It costs about \$8-\$10 a year to get your own domain name, and you can get register a domain name within minutes from numerous companies, such as [www.godaddy.com](http://www.godaddy.com) or [www.1and1.com](http://www.1and1.com) or [www.namecheap.com](http://www.namecheap.com).

Many of those companies have cheap website hosting services available for anywhere from \$5 to \$10 a month, and they will provide free "site builder" templates along with the hosting. Hostgator is one company that provides the free sitebuilder services.

Godaddy and Homestead.com are another couple of hosting companies that provide a free "site builder" service.

They provide templates that you can choose from and customize to an extent; with some of them you can upload your own pictures or artwork.

The only downside is that if you decide to go with a different hosting company, you would have to redesign your new website from scratch.

There are also some companies that provide hosting and a website design free, but you do not get your own domain name with it.

[www.weebly.com](http://www.weebly.com), for instance, provides website templates and allows you to host your website there for free. Your website name would have the word “weebly” in it, so it would be something like [www.freelancewriter.weebly.com](http://www.freelancewriter.weebly.com). They provide some additional services for a fee.

[www.blinkweb.com](http://www.blinkweb.com) has similar services to [www.weebly.com](http://www.weebly.com).

You can also create a blog and host it for free at [www.blogspot.com](http://www.blogspot.com), [www.wordpress.com](http://www.wordpress.com), and many other free blog hosting services.

The downside is that you don’t own the blog. In theory the blogging company can shut it down at any time, although there’s really no reason for them to as long as you make sure that you don’t violate their terms of service.

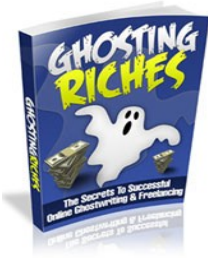
You own the written content on the site, but if you decide to move the blog, site, etc. elsewhere, you will have to transfer it all yourself, and you would want to keep a backup copy of all the site’s content.

You can also create a free “lens” on [www.squidoo.com](http://www.squidoo.com) - a “lens” is basically a webpage - or a free hubpage at [www.hubpages.com](http://www.hubpages.com) to showcase your services.

Or, you can use wordpress themes - there are tens of thousands of free themes available on the net - and have a wordpress blog hosted on your own domain.

This does take a little bit of technical knowledge; you have to download a program called an “FTP” program - file transfer protocol - and drag files from your computer to your host’s server.

You can also hire someone to do this for you.



## WHAT TO PUT ON YOUR WEBSITE

So what should you have on your website/blog/lens/hubpage?

At an absolute minimum you should have several samples of your work...testimonials from satisfied customers are gold-dust if you can get them...a brief bio about you and your qualifications...and your contact information.

It's a good idea to put your rates on there; it can save time for both you and your potential clients. We'll talk more about setting rates in a little while, but in the meantime, consider what products or services your clients are going to be buying from you most often, and come up with your rate for that.

If you are an article writer, come up with a price for a 300 word, 500 word, and 1000 word article, or come up with a price for word.

The same goes for ebooks or short reports or whatever form of writing you are promoting. Have a rate ready to quote for your clients.

If you are a website or graphics designer, you want to have links to a couple of websites that you have designed or samples of your graphics work.

And you should include several testimonials from satisfied customers. This is referred to as “social proof” and it is very powerful. It’s even more powerful if the customer allows you to put a live link to their website along with their testimonial.

Ask every satisfied customer for a testimonial but don't be offended if some of them say no. Many internet marketers or website owners use ghostwriters to provide them with ebooks, articles, webpage content and even blog posts, and often *they don't want people to know they're using a ghostwriter*.

So they won't want to provide a testimonial. In the past when I've used ghosties myself I haven't given testimonials because when I find a good writer I want to keep hold of them for myself and the best way to give away who your top ghostwriters are is to give a testimonial which will go on the writers site.

But when you do find someone who's happy to give a testimonial, it can really help business, especially if the person giving the testimonial is well known by his peers in the industry.

A live link as mentioned earlier is a great thing if you can get it.

And this is something that serves both of you; the customer gets people coming to their site through that link, and they get a back link from you, and you get

But what should you do if you are brand new and have no customer testimonials yet?

This is actually a very easy problem to solve.

First of all, you can get friends or family members to provide a testimonial for you in exchange for you doing some work for them.

You should not ever create fake testimonials. Your credibility is infinitely higher if you provide a real customer name with a link to a real website – and if you get caught doing this your reputation is shot.

If you don't have any friends or acquaintances who need content writing or graphics or web design work, there is another alternative.

There are a number of internet marketing forums where people are perpetually looking for cheap writers and graphics designers (details below)

Go on those forums and offer to do a project very cheaply for a few people, in exchange for a testimonial.

Now, you can't come out and order people to say nice things about your product in exchange for cheap work, but it's just about guaranteed that if you provide them with excellent work they will provide you with a good testimonial IF they give testimonials.

If you are brand new and have not yet made a name for yourself, and you want testimonials quickly - and they really will help you get more clients - it will help to offer a discount price. So figure out what you would normally charge, and charge maybe 25 percent of that.

But make it clear these are not your usual rates.

Say something like "I am a new (article writer, ghostwriter, graphic designer, web designer, etc.) and I am looking for customer testimonials that I can use on my website. I will provide a VERY steep discount off of my usual prices to the first five people that respond. If you like my

services, I hope you will provide me with a testimonial.” And say what your price will be - if you plan to charge \$15 for a 300 word article, then say that you will be charging \$5 for a 300 word article.

This should get you a bunch of glowing testimonials very quickly. And if these people who take you up on your offer are satisfied with your work, and you provide a high quality product quickly, some of these people may become future customers. In fact there's a high probability they will. Most people who use ghostwriters tend to stick with the ones they know – because they know a level of quality is assured and it's just a lot easier than trying to find new ones.

Getting around five testimonials to use on your website - get at least three - is very, very powerful advertising for you and your services.

Make sure that you read the rules of the forum that you are posting on, and post in the correct section of the forum.

You may need to post in the classified advertising section of the forum if you are offering a service for money, even if it's very little money. However if you want to get started for free try The Warrior Forum first – they currently allow advertising links in post signatures (the bit that appears under each of your posts that tells readers about you)

If you are looking for a place to go get testimonials, some of the better internet marketing forums out there are:

The Warrior Forum

Sitepoint

Digitalpoint Forum

Webmaster World

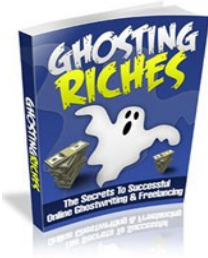
Ablakeforum

(Google them to get the web addresses)

It's a good idea to post on the forums for a little while, even if just for a few days, before offering your services. Make some of your own posts. Reply to other people's posts. People prefer to deal with people that they are familiar with.

And now, the next step - how do you decide how much to charge for your services?





## SETTING YOUR RATES

How much should you charge for your work? That's an eternal dilemma for freelancers, and you will find numerous answers if you do research on it.

Don't charge too much - you'll scare away customers and lose out to the competition. Don't charge too little - people will perceive that your work has no value.

Well, the undeniable fact is, there is a lot of competition these days because the internet has made it possible for people from all over the world to compete for freelance jobs.

However, here's the good news: there are a lot of freelancers who do not provide quality work.

In fact, it's more common to find poor quality work than it is to find high quality work; you will see people on internet marketing forums lamenting this all of the time.

This is especially true for writers. There are many, many people who call themselves writers just because they can type.

They are responsible for a lot of terrible, barely comprehensible articles and ebooks and Private Label Rights Products and web content.

So if you provide good quality work, then you are way ahead of the game., and you'll get work.

Now, it takes a while to build up a good reputation, but if you consistently deliver quality products to your clients on time, they will not only provide you with testimonials, they will recommend you to their friends and acquaintances.

So even though you are up against a lot of competition from unskilled people willing to work for very little money...remember that there are a lot of business owners out there who actually want quality work.

When you first start out, you may need to price your services a little lower to get clients, but you shouldn't accept ridiculously low prices.

Some article writers will work for \$3 an article. Considering that you want to produce quality work, and that it will probably take you at least half an hour to write a good article if you count in research time, spell checking, and grammar checking, and writing...

Can you afford to work for \$6 an hour? Is there any reason for you to do that?

You might as well work at a fast food place and at least have some benefits if you can live off of that kind of money.

It's impossible to say exactly what you should charge given that everybody's experience level and personal situation is different, but I would recommend against accepting less than \$10 per article.

If you have an English degree, or are a former professional writer or published editor, you can command more money.

For graphics and website design, if you worked for a graphics or website company in the past, or have done design work for a big company that will let you use them as a testimonial, then you can also command some more money up front.

If you are just starting out and have only your high quality samples and a few testimonials to show your clients, then you may not be able to charge quite as much in the beginning, but there is nothing wrong with raising your rates as time goes on and you get well known .

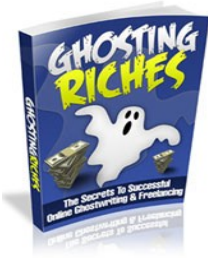
You don't want to price yourself out of the market, but you also don't want to set your prices so low that people perceive that you must not be very good because you're so cheap.

It's a good idea to go do some investigating and see what other people with similar levels of experience are charging.

From time to time you will get people asking you if you can lower your prices for them.

It might be worth giving them a slight discount, say up to 10 percent, when you are first starting out, but don't drastically slash your prices for anyone.

Again, think of the bottom line. You can not afford to work for very little money - and if you are talented and have the product and testimonials to prove it, there are people out there who would love to find you and be rescued from all of the mediocre content providers they've been dealing with.



## WHERE DO YOU FIND CUSTOMERS?

Now that you've created a website, filled it up with samples, decided on your prices, and gotten glowing testimonials...where and how do you find customers?

Well, the internet marketing websites that were mentioned previously are a good place to start.

Again, they are:

The Warrior Forum

Sitepoint

Digitalpoint Forum

Webmaster World

Ablakeforum

People on those websites are always looking to outsource, either because they don't have skills in some areas, or they don't have the time or desire to do some tasks.

Web designers or code writers may need website content.

Writers need graphic designers to help them create logos or headers or banners, or they need web designers to create websites for them.

A lot of internet marketers need experienced programmers and code writers to help them design products or create or fix a website.

Probably the most popular reason for needing a ghostWRITER if you're an internet marketer is time. It takes a lot of time to put together a 40 page ebook or 4 pages of website content, or even to write 5 articles.

And the best place to find internet marketers is on an internet marketing forum.

Before you advertise your services on these forums, it is very important to read the terms of service and make sure that you advertise them in the right area of the forum.

You don't want to advertise services in an area where members go to chat, unless this is allowed.

It's also really helpful to become part of the community, to post regularly, to answer other people's posts, and to let people get to know you.

People generally prefer to do business with someone that they feel that they know something about.

That level of comfort and familiarity don't happen overnight. So if you check in to a few of your favorite forums a couple of times a day and take the time to interact, you will be helping yourself a great deal.

This doesn't mean that you can't get clients immediately; it just means that you will get more clients over time if you take time to participate in the community.

There are also a lot of well known freelancers forums on the internet. For some of them, you have to pay a small fee to join and bid on projects, but many freelancers make their living off these sites, so it can be well worth it.

[www.elance.com](http://www.elance.com) is a well known freelancer's website.

The screenshot displays the Elance website interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with categories: Web & Programming, Design & Multimedia, Writing & Translation, Admin. Support, Sales & Marketing, Finance & Mgt., Legal, and Engineering & Mfg. The main content area is titled 'Web & Programming (30222 professionals)' and includes a 'More »' link. Below this, there are three sections: 'Professionals (Rated Today)' with a 'More »' link, 'Skills for Hire' with a 'More »' link, and a list of professionals. The 'Professionals' list includes BillWebStudio (Personal Web Services), smartData Enterprises (Software Development & Application Development), and Black Colin Designs (We take pride in our Excellence!). The 'Skills for Hire' list includes PHP (12391), SQL (11536), .NET (9841), HTML (9562), Java (9535), C (8873), ASP (7984), MySQL (7855), Flash (7094), Linux (3234), VB.NET (2521), Joomla (2349), JSP (2284), J2EE (2140), Perl (1978), Web Services (1953), DHTML (1789), MS Access (1768), and CSS (16985). On the right side, there are three statistics: 'Today on Elance' with 21,896 New Jobs Posted (Last 30 days), '119,615 Experts' Available on Elance, and '\$127,020,271 Earnings' Work done since 2005. At the bottom right, there is a 'Recent Blog Posts' section.

Professionals (Rated Today)	Skills for Hire
<b>BillWebStudio</b> Personal Web Services	PHP (12391)
<b>smartData Enterprises</b> Software Development & Application Development	SQL (11536)
<b>Black Colin Designs</b> We take pride in our Excellence!	.NET (9841)
	HTML (9562)
	Java (9535)
	C (8873)
	ASP (7984)
	MySQL (7855)
	Flash (7094)
	CSS (16985)
	Linux (3234)
	VB.NET (2521)
	Joomla (2349)
	JSP (2284)
	J2EE (2140)
	Perl (1978)
	Web Services (1953)
	DHTML (1789)
	MS Access (1768)


As you can see, there are numerous categories of freelancers who can sell their services on their site.


Freelancers can - and should! - post a portfolio, and clients can leave testimonials about the quality of the work.


Many business people go to use sites like this because it allows them to hire people for projects whenever they need them, rather than hire someone full time when they may not need the services that frequently.


[www.guru.com](http://www.guru.com) is another popular service. As you can see, they also have a wide variety of types of freelance work available.


**How it works - Outsource your contract work today.**

**Search for Freelancers**  
  
More than 100,000 active freelance profiles.


**Post Your Project**  
  
Only takes minutes to post!


**Get Free Quotes**  
  
Competitive quotes within hours.


**Award Work**  
  
Choose the best quote.


**Pay Freelancer**  
  
Risk-free with SafePay Escrow.


**Get started now - Search more than 100,000 active freelance profiles.**





 Website Design / Website Marketing


 Graphic Design / Presentations / Multimedia


 Illustration / Cartooning / Painting / Sculpting


 Marketing / Advertising / Sales / PR


 Engineering / CAD / Architecture


 Networking / Hardware / Telephone Systems


 Legal


 Fashion / Interior / Landscape / Set Design


 ERP / CRM Implementation


 Programming / Software / Database Development


 Writing / Editing / Translation


 Admin Support (Legal, Medical, & Accounting)

 Sales / Telemarketing (Front-end)

 Business Consulting

 Photography / Videography

 Finance and Accounting

 Broadcasting

You may have noticed the escrow payment option in the upper right hand corner. This is a good way to protect both customer and freelancer – it basically means that the money is held by the site (securely) until the work has been done. It is then passed to the freelance.

For coders (programmers), rentacoder.com is a popular place to find work.

## RentACoder



### Software Buyers

Need custom software? Receive bids from our pool of 228,481 registered coders. Review work histories and resumes online, and then conduct business stress-free using our "[Safe Project Escrow](#)" (tm).

[How Does It Work for Buyers?](#)

[Request bids on your project or problem](#)

### Software Coders

Earn cash with your high tech skills on 2,608 currently open bid requests. Then subscribe to our newsletter and receive daily bid requests from our 105,965 registered buyers.

[How Does It Work for Coders?](#)

[Register and be notified of new projects!](#)



Here are some more popular freelance sites:

[www.freelancewritinggigs.com](http://www.freelancewritinggigs.com)

[www.freelancewriting.com](http://www.freelancewriting.com)

[www.online-writing-jobs.com](http://www.online-writing-jobs.com)

[www.scriptlance.com](http://www.scriptlance.com)

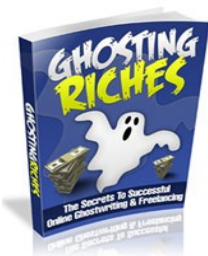
[www.ifreelance.com](http://www.ifreelance.com)

[www.sologig.com](http://www.sologig.com)

[www.getafreelancer.com](http://www.getafreelancer.com)

[www.journalismjobs.com](http://www.journalismjobs.com)

[www.mediabistro.com](http://www.mediabistro.com)



## PUBLICIZING YOURSELF ON THE NET

You want to get as much exposure as possible, of course, especially when you first get started.

One good way to do that is to write press releases about your company and your services, and to submit them to free press release services (prweb.com is an example of this type of site)

This will get you traffic, and create backlinks to your site so your site rises in the search engine rankings.

It's a good idea to submit at least a couple of press releases a week to make sure that you get maximum exposure. Each one should be original; don't just send the same press release out over and over, although you can send the same press release to a bunch of different services - once.

Then, a few days later, write a fresh press release and send that one out to a bunch of different services.

Here are some free press release services:

[www.addpr.com](http://www.addpr.com)

[www.free-press-release.com](http://www.free-press-release.com)

[www.i-newsire.com](http://www.i-newsire.com)

[www.pr-inside.com](http://www.pr-inside.com)

[www.prlog.com](http://www.prlog.com)

[www.prfree.com](http://www.prfree.com)

And there are many, many more.

Go on blogs where writers or freelancers in your field congregate, and join the conversation. You can make connections that way, put a link back to your site in your signature on your post, and start getting your name out there as a freelance writer.

[www.menwithpens.com](http://www.menwithpens.com) is a popular writer's site.

[www.freelanceswitch.com](http://www.freelanceswitch.com) is a popular freelancers site.

Another good way to get publicity for yourself is to write short free articles for sites like [www.ezinearticles.com](http://www.ezinearticles.com), [www.americanchronicle.com](http://www.americanchronicle.com), or [www.associatedcontent.com](http://www.associatedcontent.com).

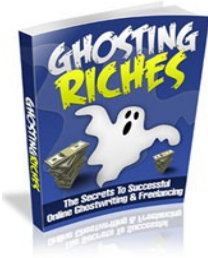
You would write an article about your field of specialty.

If you are a web designer, write an article about how proper web design increases conversion, or five web design mistakes to avoid, or similar subjects.

If you are an article writer, write about using articles to drive traffic to a website, or how to write article headlines that captivate readers. If you are a ghostwriter write about the benefits of hiring a ghostwriter.

All article directories allow you to include a link back to your site, and a profile with a short biography about yourself and your qualifications.

This gets you traffic, it gets you exposure, and it gets you backlinks.



## Summary

Sounds like the life eh?

Get a well paid commission to write a few articles a month, maybe combined with an ebook, some web content and a few blog posts.

Do a little internet research, spend a few hours a day at your computer and BANG! You're a freelancer.

Not quite so simple is the reality.

You are going to be in competition with a lot of people. You will probably have some idea of whether you're a good writer or not. A rule of thumb I've always found worth listening to is that good writers find it easy to write.

If you stare at a blank word processing page for hours on end you should maybe go do something else instead.

And like every job in the world, you get used to it. The grass is always greener on the other side and while you might want to be a beer taster or chocolate taster the reality is that you'll get used to it and it'll end up just being a .....job.

Freelancing is exactly the same. There are days when you'll get up raring to go, and days when you think if you write another word you'll explode.

If you have the motivation to keep going when you feel like this and deliver your work on time you'll do well.

Now the flip side is that ghosting can be a highly profitable, extremely enjoyable form of work that also allows you to be at home during the day, be your own boss and work when you want.

Even better you can get your freelancing business going part-time while you work your 9-5, so it's an ideal way into working on the internet.

Which is another point – I know of freelancers who started out as writers or coders and are now highly successful millionaire internet marketers. It's a great way into earning money on the net too.

You don't really have an excuse any more for not starting right now do you?

Now, you've been given the secrets of successful freelancing. It's up to you to get out there and start promoting yourself!

Good luck.