



*Widen your*  
**FREELANCE  
HORIZONS**

**13 FREELANCE MARKETS TO EXPLORE BEYOND ARTICLE WRITING.**  
*By Kerrie Flanagan*



**M**any people equate freelancing with writing magazine articles, but savvy freelancers know there are many, many other avenues available to writers looking for work. These paid jobs can be a great way to stretch your skills as a writer and bring in some extra cash to boot. With a little research, a polished cover letter, and an updated resume, you will be on your way to expanding your freelance horizons. Here are some freelancing opportunities to consider.

#### **Resume writer**

Do you have an eye for detail and an understanding of human resources or the corporate world? If so, resume writing may be something to consider. Start by reading current resume writing reference books to understand what goes into an effective resume, and then read examples online from professional resume writers. Each industry has its own set of corporate phrases and jargon, and you need to learn and understand those as well. There is an art to highlighting a client's skills, job history, strengths, and achievements in a clear and succinct way. Pam Farone, certified resume writer, career coach, and founder of Careerfulness, suggests having a good working knowledge of Microsoft Word. "Knowing different formatting tricks is important," Farone says. She aims to make a resume look visually appealing without being overly fancy. Why? Employers use software to filter resumes, looking for keywords that bring people with the most relevant experience to the top. Complex formatting can throw off those results. To find clients, Farone suggests starting with your own network of friends and professional colleagues to let them know you are offering this service. Also think about providing coaching or resume assistance at a local library or other organization to help spread the word.

#### **Greeting cards**

Finding the perfect card to send a friend or loved one can take time because you want one that conveys a special heartfelt message like cards from Blue Mountain Arts or something witty from Oatmeal Studios to make them laugh out loud. Many greeting card companies rely on freelance writers to create this content. Although there is not much text in a greeting card, there is skill involved when creating the messages. Dawn Abraham, editor at Oatmeal Studios,

says when crafting humorous cards, writers should "think positive, short, funny copy that has a good lead on the outside (that makes you want to open the card) and a good punchline on the inside (that makes you laugh)." She adds that certain qualities go into an effective funny card. It should have some tie-in with the special occasion, and it should have a broad



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humorous appeal (like a good one-liner). The card might accomplish these things by using visual tie-ins with illustration, cartoon, or photo suggestions, but a good card idea often will stand on its own with just the writing.

With heartfelt cards, create a sentiment that focuses on the emotions surrounding a special occasion or life event. Have a specific person in mind when writing any greeting cards. This will help create an authentic voice and make your words more marketable. Read and follow submission guidelines before submitting your ideas.

#### **Travel guide writer**

Companies like Lonely Planet and Frommer's create comprehensive travel guides, and they seek writers knowledgeable about specific travel destinations to write these guides. Experienced freelance writer Kinsey Gidick, who has written travel guides for Fodor's, Roads & Kingdoms, and Anthony Bourdain's Explore Parts Unknown, believes the best travel guide writers are experts on the destination they're writing about. "This means they haven't just parachuted into a location for a weekend," she says, "but have either lived there or visited frequently and can bring institutional knowledge to the destination."

Gidick has three pieces of advice for those seeking to write travel guides. First, know your audience, be it a traveler on a budget or a big spender, and be as inclusive as possible with your information, including everything from family-friendly options to travel tips for those living with a disability. Next, always fact check. "The minute you write about one new restaurant, another has closed," Gidick says. Ensuring your copy is as current as possible will show editors you are thorough and meticulous. Finally, she says to go off the beaten path. "Differentiate yourself by showcasing to readers the new and unexpected things they can find in a given destination. Then back it up with strong reporting and easy-to-follow how-tos that guide the reader as to how they can uncover the same spots you've found." To find these jobs, you can pitch the editors directly or look on job boards. Gidick suggests starting with convention centers and visitors bureaus to see if they need copywriters.

#### **Devotionals**

If you enjoy writing short, inspirational words of encouragement based on biblical or spiritual messages, devotional writing may be perfect for you. The good news is that editors in

this market tend to be open to new writers. Each piece usually averages around 250-300 words and is anchored on a passage of scripture or certain message. In their online writers guidelines, the Christian publishing organization The Upper Room says devotionals should contain a personal story, connection to scripture, and a way for the reader to apply the story to their life. Keep the devotionals more inclusive, so they appeal to a broader audience. Your messages should be genuine and honest while not being too preachy. Powerful devotionals tend to draw from personal experiences. Think about challenges you have experienced, a powerful event, an awakening, a life-changing moment, a sad or funny

### Scriptwriting

When you think of scriptwriting, you probably think of movies and television shows. But freelance writing opportunities go beyond the big screen. If you have ever had to watch a training video or taken a structured online e-learning class, chances are high that a freelance writer wrote the scripts for those programs. Denver-based freelance video producer, eLearning developer, and scriptwriter Kevin Hart (not the actor and comedian from *Jumanji* and *Ride Along*) makes his living writing these types of scripts. He says the biggest difference between writing scripts for movies and business purposes is that movie scripts focus on entertaining, and corporate-centered writing focuses on



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experience...start creating a list of these different topics you can write about. Study the market, read the guidelines and follow them for each place where you plan to submit your work. Read devotionals they have already published to give you an idea of the style, tone, and formatting they expect. Once you understand what is expected, write a few and then submit them to various markets.

learning and informing. To effectively create such scripts, Hart says, it's beneficial to have worked in any kind of corporate environment. "It helps to gain a working understanding of business systems, practices, and culture." If you consider this type of work, Hart has a few suggestions. First, learn how to learn. "You must figure out how to write – and write with authority – on any topic. Regardless of any corporate

experience, you will always encounter situations where you are writing about something you don't know anything about. Presently, I'm writing scripts for a biologics company that creates and sells stem cells. Before taking this job, I never knew a thing about that." Next, he encourages writers to reach out to experts. "Find the stakeholders and experts – or subject matter experts (SME) – and cull all the relevant knowledge you can from them. Drill down to gain insights on the 'inside' stuff." Have a professional and up-to-date profile on LinkedIn before seeking these jobs. Hart finds most of his work through former and present colleagues, so networking is an important aspect of success in this line of writing.

### Book reviews

Reading is a favorite pastime for most writers, so why not combine the two and become a book reviewer? Outlets like *Kirkus* and Online Book Club pay for reviews, plus it's a great way to build your writing skills and get free books in the process. That said, when writing book reviews, you always need to keep the reader in mind and consider what will be the most helpful to them. Your review needs to be honest, but since not everyone has the same tastes as you, it must also be as objective as possible. There may be a story that's written well, but it might not be your cup of tea. It would be unfair to the author if you left a scathing review just because you don't like stories with certain elements or tropes – and unfair to fans of those elements and tropes, too. You want to step back and look at the story as a whole and share what you liked, what could have been improved, what questions it made the reader consider, and the reasoning behind your thoughts. If you're just starting out, think about the types and genres of books you are interested in reviewing. By specializ-



## TIPS FOR GETTING FREELANCE JOBS

- Have a solid resume highlighting your work and writing experience
- Sign up for freelancing newsletters that send out daily or weekly job information
- Create a LinkedIn profile highlighting your skills and expertise
- Network at local or online business events
- Sign up to receive notifications from job boards like Indeed.com
- Write a general cover letter that you can customize for each potential job
- Research potential jobs to ensure you have the skills they seek
- Create a simple website highlighting your services and experience

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ing in specific genres, you become more familiar with the nuances of those books and ultimately will be seen as more of an expert in those areas. To practice writing reviews, read lots of books and consider posting reviews on your own blog, social media accounts, or an established site like Goodreads. When you are ready to pitch your reviews to book review sites, magazines, or newspapers, carefully read and follow their guidelines.

### Video game writing

For writers who love playing video games, there are opportunities to write game storylines. It's not easy to break into this field, but if you are a passionate gamer with good writing skills and are willing to research this market, you are more likely to find success. Evan Skolnick, a narrative contributor on over 50 video game titles, says, "a writer needs to learn the conventions, challenges, and pitfalls of every storytelling form they are going to attempt to tackle. This is true of video game writing, too." You are catering to players, not readers, and because of the interactive nature of the games, the field has unique nuances. Arjan Terpsstra, a freelance game writer and author of six game books, uses his background in journalism and copywriting to help with the games he writes: "Copywriting taught me to listen closely to the client and find creativity while being constrained by a certain format." His background performing interviews as a journalist taught him how to mimic speech patterns for game dialogue.

Skolnick's advice for newbies? "If you're interested in dipping your toe into the game writing space, the book I recommend is *Game Writing: Narrative Skills for Video Games*, edited by Chris Bateman, and the tool I recommend starting with is Twine (twinery.org), which is a free and easy-to-learn platform for quickly creating interactive, prose-based stories."

### Grant writing

Do you have an eye for details and a talent for technical writing? Then grant writing might be a great option for you. Many nonprofits rely on grants to raise money for operations, capital expenses, events, and programs. Foundations, corporations, and the government offer grants to provide funding to an organization or individual. A grant writer is expected to research grant opportunities and find the ones worth applying for, review the guidelines, and then create proposals that include all the needed information, along with compelling content to showcase why the organization deserves the grant money. To be a grant writer, you need solid writing skills (which include being a persuasive writer), the ability to conduct thorough research on the types of grants available, a knack for organizing all the paperwork involved, an eye for details concerning guidelines, and the capability to include all the needed documents in the proposal.

For those willing to put the time and effort into learning how to be an effective grant writer, this type of freelance work can be lucrative. Study what it takes, create a LinkedIn profile, research opportunities, make a professional website showcasing you and your skills, and consider joining the American Grant Writers' Association (agwa.us). Grant writing certification programs and classes, such as those at nonprofitready.org, can also help you learn more about this field.

### Film critic

The internet is filled with moviegoers who share their opinions about the films they see. To become a freelance film critic who earns a paycheck, it takes more time and perseverance. Tony Macklin, a freelance film critic with decades of experience, says the world of film criticism is different from when he started. "I'd recommend trying to find a specialty. One potential,



## WHERE TO FIND FREELANCE WRITING JOBS

**Indeed**  
[indeed.com](https://www.indeed.com)

**Freedom With Writing**  
[freedomwithwriting.com/  
freedom](https://freedomwithwriting.com/freedom)

**Freelance Writing**  
[freelancewriting.com](https://freelancewriting.com)

**Freelance Writing Jobs**  
[freelancewritinggigs.com](https://freelancewritinggigs.com)

**All Freelance Writing**  
[allfreelancewriting.com](https://allfreelancewriting.com)

**The Write Life: 20 Online  
Gold Mines for Finding  
Well Paid Freelance  
Writing Jobs**  
[thewritelife.com/  
find-freelance-writing-jobs](https://thewritelife.com/find-freelance-writing-jobs)

growing field is independent films. I think one could concentrate on doing criticism on independent films – the filmmakers want and need any recognition or support they can get.” Obviously, a love of films is a must for this type of writing, but it goes beyond what you liked and didn’t like about the big-screen story. A good film critic analyzes all aspects of the film, including plot, directing, editing, cinematography, and acting. With the rise of online technology and social media, you can begin to build your portfolio by submitting your film critiques to user-submitted sites like Rotten Tomatoes, create your own review website, or start a podcast that analyzes films. Also consider reaching out to local newspapers, radio stations, and magazines to offer freelance film reviews.

### Website copywriting

In a digital age where we rely on a company’s website to learn about the services and/or products a business offers, well-written content is crucial to providing information to potential clients and customers. Many businesses hire freelance writers to create compelling and informative website content that is also mindful of being found online via search engine optimization (SEO).

Jordan Rosenfeld, an accomplished freelance writer and author of six writing craft books, says, “It’s important for writers to adhere closely to style guidelines and the client’s expectations. Ask questions if you aren’t sure.” The goal of this type of work is to produce solid, informational, optimized copy that will allow potential customers to discover a client’s business online. Rosenfeld has found success as a freelance website content writer because she works fast, turns her work in on time, and produces clean copy that requires little editing.

### Blogging for businesses

Many businesses have blogs to drive traffic to their websites, provide useful content, build trust with customers, and

generate leads, and many companies hire freelance writers to write them. Many digital marketing firms work with corporations and subcontract the blogging work to different freelancers. Working for an agency like this can be easier than seeking out individual opportunities, but the pay is often lower than gigs you’d find on your own.

Over the years, I’ve blogged for various businesses and created posts on topics from wallpaper to cooking with kids to writing tips. If you have experience writing for magazines, the transition to blog writing is easy. They are similar in regards to knowing your audience, researching the topic, and creating interesting content, but blogs tend to be shorter, be very mindful of SEO, and include links. If you have no magazine or blogging experience, consider creating your own blog. Think about a topic you want to focus on. It can be parenting, cooking with an air fryer, fishing – anything you’re interested in, as long as your posts relate to your main topic, or “niche.” This provides boundaries and makes it easier to find your target audience. Find a blogging platform you want to use, like WordPress, and start writing. To build your audience and become familiar with the style and formatting of blogs, read and comment on other blogs. Look for blogging gigs at sites like [bloggingpro.com/jobs](https://bloggingpro.com/jobs) or [prologger.com/jobs](https://prologger.com/jobs).

*One word of caution when looking for blogging jobs: Many “content mill” companies hire writers at an extremely low wage to crank out content. If you are looking into these, proceed with caution and always do your research.*

### Social media manager

Social media is a vital component to many businesses – and a time-consuming one to boot. Many companies hire freelance social media managers to oversee this aspect of their business. This job entails more than just under-

standing the different platforms and writing witty or poignant posts. Effective social media managers focus on the company’s brand to create strong campaigns, generate editorial calendars, analyze the data to see what is and isn’t working, produce engaging posts, respond to comments and feedback, and have an understanding of visual design strategies. They stay current on trends on each platform. For writers who enjoy being creative, communicating with an audience, and studying analytics, a social media manager job might be right for you. You can find plenty of job opportunities on places like [indeed.com](https://www.indeed.com) or venture out and seek your own clients. Create a professional website highlighting your services and experiences, and then pitch your services and the value you will bring.

### Press releases

Early in my freelance career, I explored ways to expand my writing and looked into public relations. After researching and studying effective press releases, I became efficient at writing them for clients such as the local convention and visitors bureau and a nearby bank. The purpose of press releases is to inform the press (magazines, newspapers, television, radio, etc.) about an upcoming event, exciting changes at a company, highlighting certain employees’ accomplishments...anything that would make a great news story. A good press release writer will find an interesting angle and craft their release in such a way that a newspaper or magazine could run the whole release in their publication. To find these jobs, reach out to your local CVB, marketing, and PR agencies to see if they are looking

for writers. Study press releases at outlets like [prnewswire.com](https://prnewswire.com).

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Many freelance opportunities await you. With a little research, perseverance, and upfront prep with your resume, LinkedIn profile, and website, you can generate income from your writing. Make 2022 the year you step out and make it happen. 📝

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