

Global Freelancer Survey Report

2022

The world of work is changing. Our global freelance survey highlighted how companies can harness that change for good.



If you've read a single article about the corporate world over the last year, it's likely been about the so-called "Great Resignation." Employees left companies at record rates in 2021, and in 2022, recruiters are still struggling to fill those gaps. Dozens, if not hundreds, of articles have built the Great Resignation up as a force to contend with, ready to sweep through companies and decimate their ranks.

But what if we got to know this shift in the workplace? If we understood what was happening and why, we might find that these new ways of working look less scary — and far more exciting.

With our 2022 Global Freelance Survey, we did just that. Let's dive in.

Where has all the talent gone?

First off, let's clarify: people aren't just quitting jobs and then doing nothing. Nor, in many cases, are they all going on to newer, more attractive roles. Instead, they're striking out on their own, with the freelance economy in the United States alone growing 78% year-over-year.

For companies, this global shift to the gig economy presents a massive opportunity. Because while, sure, it may make it harder to hire full-time workers — why would you want to?

1

Leaders at small- to medium-sized businesses say they save approximately \$71,000 per marketing campaign by working with freelance talent. At the enterprise level, these savings jump to nearly \$125,000 per campaign.

2

When working with freelance talent, companies save on benefits, unemployment insurance, vacation time, and time spent training hires. Instead, they can work with experts who are already highly specialized to meet their needs.

3

Working with freelancers allows you to scale your workforce up or down as needed — without worrying about hiring sprints or the cost of letting someone go.

The trick to taking advantage of this opportunity, however, lies in understanding freelance workers' motivations and frustrations. Here's what we learned from chatting with over 700 freelancers around the globe — in their survey answers and their own words.

Statistics

What you need to
know about working
with freelancers

Don't nickel-and-dime them



45%

of freelancers say they've experienced increased demand for freelancers since COVID-19

33%

of freelancers say demand has remained steady.

Long gone are the days where freelancing was associated with earning peanuts on platforms like Upwork or Fiverr. While freelance rates vary greatly, keep in mind that you get what you pay for — and that freelancers today aren't desperate for work.

In fact, freelancers have been busier than ever. Over 45% say they've experienced increased demand for freelancers since COVID-19, while 33% say demand has remained steady.

Freelancers are also earning more than they did in their full-time roles. Over half of the freelancers we surveyed said they were out-earning their full-time salaries, while another 17% were making the same amount they'd made in their full-time positions.

“Sometimes agency recruiters only write back when they need you. We are never told how long the job will last for. They can terminate us at any time. They don't make commitments. People should be prepared to pay a fair price for my skill levels. And pay on time.”

— Survey respondent



17%

of freelancers said they were making the same amount they'd make in their full-time positions

>50%

of freelancers said they were out-earning their full-time salaries

Don't have full-time expectations of part-time freelancers

Often, when companies hire freelancers for select projects or part-time engagements, they'll expect them to join their internal Slack groups, answer calls at any hour, or work weekends to meet rush deadlines.

Considering that freelancers juggle multiple clients' diverse deadlines, however, these expectations are generally unrealistic. It also simply doesn't fit with the reasons why freelancers choose to freelance:



of freelancers say their number one motivator at work is achieving **work-life balance**

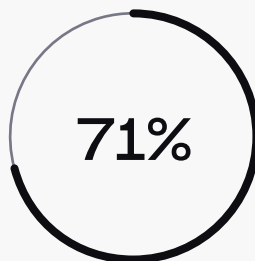


of freelancers that left their job during the pandemic did so because they were **burnt out**



of freelancers say they have **more free time** now than they did in their full-time roles

And as a result



of freelancers say they are **happier** freelancing than they were in their full-time roles

“The biggest benefit for me being freelance is the flexibility to manage my own time and to pick and choose my clients and type of work I want to do.”

Freelancers are motivated by much more than simply their earning potential. To keep them happy and develop long-term relationships with them, respect their need for flexibility, downtime, and their right to disconnect from work. (Psst! This is also generally good advice for your full-time employees, too.)

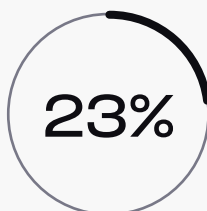
Make it easy to work with you

Not only do freelancers need to specialize in their respective fields, but they also need to treat their work as a business — because it is. Aside from working as a graphic designer or content writer,

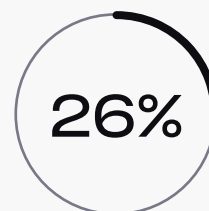
they are also their one and only salesperson, office manager, accountant, marketer, and administrator. And that's reflected in their common pain points.



of freelancers rank **billing, invoicing, and managing payments** as one of their top three challenges as a freelancer



rank client **communications** as one of their top three challenges as a freelancer



say **managing clients** is one of their top three challenges as a freelancer

“Occasionally, working with agencies can get muddled as there are ‘too many cooks in the kitchen.’ Multiple departments are involved in a project, which can cause your work to get lost in the shuffle, responses to be delayed, and payments to be late. It’s rare, but it happens, and it’s one of the more frustrating elements of being a freelance talent.” — Survey respondent

When clients don’t pay freelancers on time, respond to requests for information, or leave things to the last minute, it creates extra work for already-busy freelancers — and makes them want to work with you less.

If you pay freelancers promptly, communicate readily, and bake turnaround time into your projects, freelancers will be far more likely to want to work with you — again and again and again.

Embrace automation and digital systems

While many enterprises have embraced automation and digital tools when it comes to managing their employees, they've often lagged in doing the same for their freelance hires. However, 49% of freelancers are Gen Z and Millennials, who are more

than comfortable embracing technology — and in fact, survey respondents overwhelmingly said freelance platforms like Worksome were helpful in running their businesses.



60% of freelancers said they were paid **upfront, on time, or within a week** when using Worksome



61% of freelancers felt equally or **more stable** in their freelance careers by using Worksome



33% of freelancers said they preferred working with clients who used Worksome



63% of freelancers rated their **hiring experience** with companies on Worksome above average

Wondering what freelancers tend to look for in a freelance management system?

1 Automated global payments and compliance

2 Easy cross-team collaboration and communication

3 Streamlined project management

“Worksome took away the anxiety of financial and contractual admin and allowed me to focus on the job in hand.”

“

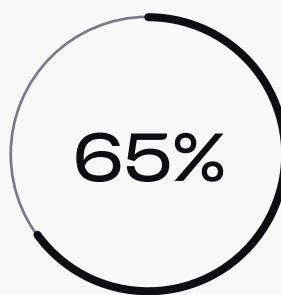
“Overall, using Worksome makes my life as a freelancer a lot easier, hassle-free and enjoyable.”

Make the freelancing relationship a warm one

Like anyone else, freelancers are motivated to have warm, engaging relationships and to feel like the work they do makes a difference. Freelancers want to feel valued for the work they do, feel like part of the team, and be thanked when they hand in great work.



of freelancers say **strong work relationships** are one of their top three motivators at work



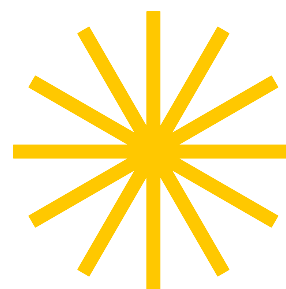
of freelancers say **doing something meaningful** is one of their top three motivators at work

Making a freelancer feel appreciated doesn't have to take a ton of effort. It can be as simple as genuinely complimenting their work, letting them know the impact a project has had, or taking the time to get to know them on a deeper level.

"As a freelancer, it is wonderful when an agency goes out of its way to make you feel part of their team and expresses their gratitude for your contributions!"

Ready to take advantage of the freelance boom?

At Worksome, we work tirelessly to remove the friction between companies and their external workforces — making it easy to find, manage, and pay the best freelancers around the globe. That way, everyone involved can focus on what matters: the work itself.

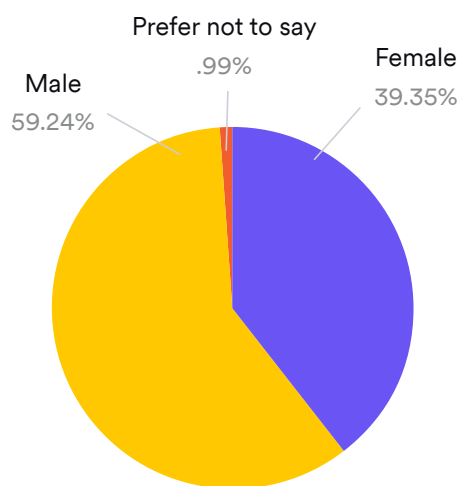


Survey Data

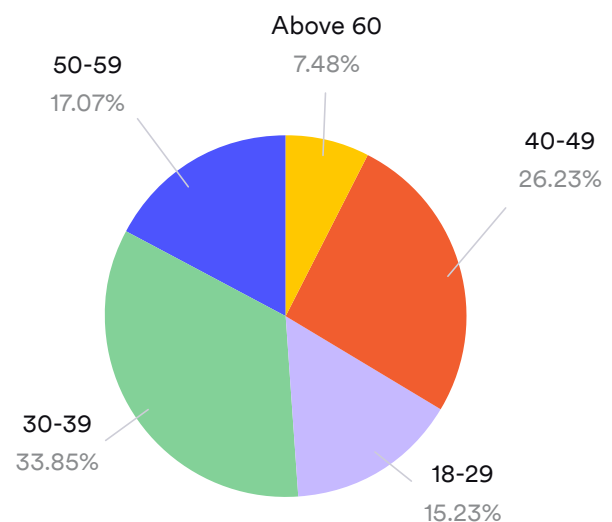
Appendix

Survey Data

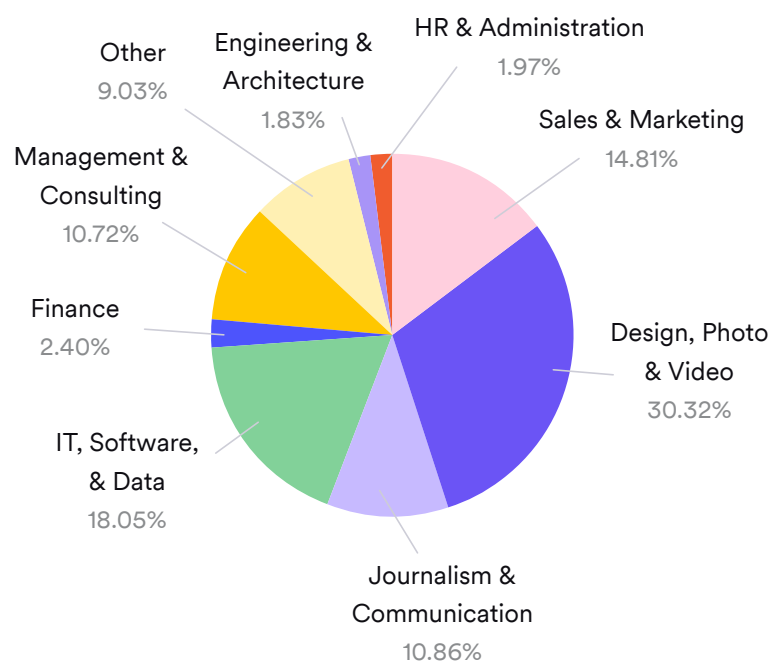
702 Contractors and freelancers surveyed



Gender Breakdown



Age Breakdown



Professional Category Breakdown

Worksome Survey Questions

Are you a freelancer/independent contractor?

Yes: 87%
 No: 2.5%
 No, but I've previously worked as a freelancer/
 independent contractor: 10.4%

What is your gender?

Male: 59.2%
 Female: 39.4%
 Prefer not to say: 1%

What is your age?

18 - 29: 15.2%
 30 - 39: 33.9%
 40 - 49: 26.2%
 50 - 59: 17.1%
 Above 60: 7.5%

What professional category do you belong to?

Design: 30.3%
 IT, Software, and Data: 18.1%
 Sales and Marketing: 14.8%
 Journalism & Communication: 10.9%
 Management & Consulting: 10.7%
 Other: 9%
 Finance: 2.4%

What country are you from?

UK: 64%
 Denmark: 23.8%
 United States: 5.8%
 Lithuania: 2.1%
 Other: 4.3%

What are your top three challenges, as a freelancer?

Finding the right jobs: 561 / 711 responses
 Using the right pricing: 393 / 711 responses
 Taxes and accounting: 276 / 711 responses
 Managing clients: 189 / 711 responses
 Client communications: 165 / 711 responses
 Creating contracts: 159 / 711 responses
 Tracking projects and tasks: 109 / 711 responses
 Billing/invoicing: 96 / 711 responses
 Time tracking: 91 / 711 responses
 Managing payments: 88 / 711 responses

Are you happier at work as a freelancer/independent contractor than as a permanent employee?

Yes: 71.5%
 Equal/Same: 21.7%
 No: 6.8%

Do you have more free time as a freelancer / independent contractor than as a permanent employee?

Yes: 60.9%
 No: 21.6%
 Equal/Same: 17.5%

Did you see a change in the demand for freelancers and independent contractors as a result of COVID-19?

Increased: 45.4%
 Same/Not Affected: 33.7%
 Decreased: 20.9%

Did you become a freelancer recently, as a result of the Great Resignation? (The Great Resignation refers to the recent global shift of full time employees leaving their corporate jobs, as a result of self-assessment during the pandemic.)

No: 81.1%
Yes: 13.5%
I don't know: 5.4%

If you decided to make a change and leave your job/career during the pandemic to go freelance, what was the reason for this?

I didn't become a freelancer during the pandemic: 68%
Other: 9.6%
Burnout: 7.8%
I got laid off: 4.7%
Not enough room for development: 3.5%
Inflexible corporate policies: 3.4%

Do you earn more as a freelancer than a permanent employee?

Yes: 52.9%
No: 29.3%
Same/Equal: 17.8%

What top three things motivate you the most at work?

Flexibility / work-life balance: 552 / 711 responses
Money: 499 / 711 responses
Purpose / doing something meaningful: 466 / 711 responses
Making a difference: 206 / 711 responses
Career progression: 168 / 711 responses
Strong work relationships: 146 / 711 responses
Other: 90 / 711 responses

Have you ever experienced difficulty in finding a job or losing a job because of your age?

No: 63%
Yes: 23%
Maybe: 14%

Do you feel more stable as a freelancer/independent contractor by using Worksome?

Same/Equal: 39.9%
No: 38.8%
Yes: 21.3%

What are the top three benefits of Worksome?

Less manual processes (creating contracts, bills, etc.): 489 / 711 responses
Getting paid on time: 453 / 711 responses
Taking care of compliance: 348 / 711 responses
Finding jobs more easily: 329 / 711 responses
Building up network: 273 / 711 responses
Getting support in freelance matters: 189 / 711 responses
Other: 46 / 711 responses

How fast do you typically get paid by clients who don't use Worksome?

Up front / on time: 42.3%
1 - 8 days overdue: 23.8%
8 - 29 days overdue: 17.6%
30+ days overdue: 12.6%
I only work with clients who use Worksome: 3.7%

How fast do you typically get paid by clients when they are using Worksome?

Up front / on time: 48.9%
1 - 7 days overdue: 11.6%
8 - 29 days overdue: 10.3%
30+ days overdue: 3.8%
Other: 25.4%

Do you prefer Worksome to other freelancing marketplaces?

Same/Equal: 52.9%
Yes: 25.7%
No: 21.4%

Are you more confident in your own admin and organization by using Worksome?

Same/Equal: 48.1%
Yes: 29.9%
No: 22%

Would you prefer to work with companies who use Worksome?

Indifferent: 56.3%

Yes: 33.9%

No: 9.9%

What are the top three benefits of Worksome vs. other freelance marketplaces?

Payments on time: 441 / 711 responses

Easy sign-up: 441 / 711 responses

Fair pricing for freelancers: 365 / 711 responses

Compliance (taking care of determination/ classification): 355 / 711 responses

Support: 247 / 711 responses

Higher quality jobs: 226 / 711 responses

Other: 55 / 711 responses

For your clients that use Worksome, how would you rate your hiring experience (communications, contract, and payment)?

Good: 39.4%

Average: 29.3%

Great: 23.7%

Poor: 7.6%

For your clients that don't use Worksome, how would you rate your hiring experience (communications, contract, and payment)?

Good: 52.9%

Average: 29.9%

Great: 14.8%

Poor: 2.4%

Do the work contracts found on the Worksome platform have a higher pay / average contract value than other marketplaces?

Same/Equal: 60.6%

No: 24.8%

Yes: 14.5%

IPSE UK Survey Questions

Has the effects of Brexit (more difficulty for employers to recruit the right people for certain sectors, increased taxes for import/exports) made it more difficult for you to find work?

No: 49.8%
Yes: 27.6%
Maybe: 22.6%

Which of the following, if any, are you currently saving for? Please select all that apply.

For later life and retirement: 57.5%
For future periods of no work: 55.5%
To buy a house or for a wedding: 39.3%
For large purchases (car, software, equipment, etc.): 31.8%
For my child/children: 30%
For training/studying: 14.3%
I am not currently saving: 9.2%

In which of the following ways, if any, are you currently saving for later life? Please select all that apply.

Private/personal pension: 58.1%
Individual Savings Account (ISA) or Lifetime Individual Savings Account (LISA): 44.7%
Investing in trusts, funds, bonds, stocks, or shares: 33.1%
Investing in your company/business: 23.2%
Investing in cryptocurrencies: 18.2%
Auto-enrolled in a pension as part of my current role: 11.2%
None of the above, I am not saving for later life: 10.7%
Property: 0.7%

Outside of government support, which of the following measures, if any, have you adopted to support your financial situation since the coronavirus outbreak? Please select all that apply.

None of the above: 53.5%
Used most or all of my savings: 23.9%
Used my credit card or overdraft facility: 18.2%
Borrowed money from friends/family: 13.4%
Sold items I own (e.g. car, TV): 13.4%
Took out a loan from a commercial bank: 7%
Re-mortgaged my home: 2.4%
Took out a loan from a non-bank financial institution (e.g. payday lender): 1.3%

If you took on debt during the pandemic, is your debt preventing you from saving as much as you would like for retirement or later life?

I didn't take on any debt: 69.3%
Yes, because of debt I am unable to save as much as I would like: 13.2%
No, my debt has not affected my ability to save: 7.7%
Yes, because of my debt I am not able to save at all: 7%
Don't know: 2.9%

How concerned, if at all, are you about your future financial security?

Neutral: 36.8%
Concerned about my financial security: 34%
Very concerned about my financial security: 14.7%
Not very concerned about my financial security: 14.5%



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