

# Lifestyle, revenues and opportunities

[Business](#), [Work](#)



For what is better than doing what you love, the freedom of being your own boss and getting paid for it? To some this is the dream, nothing more while to others, it is an all too real reality in the form of Freelancing. To be freelance entails doing particular pieces of work for different organization at a given period of time instead of being a permanent employee of a single organization. In simpler terms means being independent like a mercenary for hire only that it is legal. The rapid emergence and spread of freelance work in the world today can be credited to the internet and all that comes with it; the blogs, social media and so on but freelancing can be traced back to the medieval times according to Merriam – Webster dictionary and earliest written evidence for ‘freelance’ comes from Sir Walter Scott’s *Ivanhoe*, in which a lord refers to his paid army of ‘freelancers’.

Since that period, freelancing as a job as gone through various modifications due to modernization with its spread cutting across various sectors both the public and private sector from health and Agriculture to photography, graphic designing, writing, web designing and even economics. Although freelancing is a common way of earning a living in the developed part of the world, in Africa it is still underutilized and just like a gold mine waiting to be explored if given the right tools and information.

Where then is this gold mine and how may I get to it you might ask? Seat back, relax grab a pen and book and open your minds. Freelancing is a fast emerging business in Africa and if not harnessed fully can lead to even worsened economic conditions faced in Africa today. To prevent that, we need to enlighten and promote it as a legitimate and lucrative business which can help reduce the unemployment rate, increase the revenue of

some and help in education in the case of students or uneducated individuals working for freelance company. The individual gets to do what they love, develop their skills, make use of their creativity, and of course fetch them some money. But how does this happen? How can mere words fetch you a livelihood?

Currently, Africa is faced with a challenge of increasing unemployment rates, with the ratio of qualified individuals to the number of available jobs very high. With the job market gradually shrinking in size, the interest and hope of may graduates and other unskilled labourers have shifted from having to get their 'daily bread' from paid employment to a more flexible means of self-employment in freelancing. They are attracted by the freedom of having to work from anywhere and at their own time. This truly makes it very appealing to modern youths. Technological advancements seen in the use of mobile phones, as well as the internet, has also helped make this business very lucrative. According to a study made by Contently: The state of freelancing in 2015, after 643 freelancers were surveyed to show the income data of freelancers, reports shows that about 24 percent earn \$50 000 annually although there was a close relationship between income and marketing efforts. Hence how much a freelancer makes has a lot to do with consistent marketing as with every business.

Also, how much a freelancer charges or bids for is entirely up to the individual, depending on the quality of the work and order of clients. This is different in comparison to a day job where one has to work for a fixed pay, with little or no time for themselves or even family. A freelancer has a very

wide range of opportunities, and how he/she ends up is entirely up to him or her. A good marketing platform is required for every good business.

Freelancing is no different and should be treated as such so as to get the maximum benefit out of it. With Africa slowly coming out of its 'shell', a lot of businesses and companies are shifting from the regular hiring of an employee to using freelancers, because it cuts down costs, and saves for the administrative protocols involved. There has not been a better time for the freelancer in Africa.

As an Entrepreneurship skill, freelancing helps turn an individual idea into action. Why entrepreneurship? This is because an entrepreneur as defined by Pegem. net is a person who has decided to take control of their own future and become self-employed by creating their employment opportunities. This, however, is what freelancing affords one to do, to create their own future. It is not enough to have the creative skill of your work as time has proven to us, it is also important if you can organize and manage it because let us face it. Freelancing is a booming business enterprise.

Although like most self-employment, the revenue is not fixed as in a regular business, some months can be as good as getting about 12-20 clients. While some months, less than 10. How well the business thrives can be linked to how the individual runs it. If managed well, it can be better than most regular paying jobs, and the upside is that you get to work at your own time and pace. It involves thorough marketing skills, either by the individual, or a freelance marketer.

Freelancing not only creates jobs for the freelancer but even those working under them. For example, a freelance contracting writing company would have several writers, editors and so on, even skilled/unskilled workers which can help in translation under them, which further reduces the unemployment pull, and cuts through the vicious cycle of poverty plaguing the African continent. How then do you go about this? Like every good money making venture, you have to spend money to make money. Hence, the tools for the job are pretty simple and relatively inexpensive, depending on the sector one wants to venture into. The world is now a global village. Therefore a good laptop, access to a fairly good internet connection, and a smartphone are quite necessary for this business. These tools are necessary so as to connect the service provider to those in need of their service, both locally and internationally.

Hence, comparing the money spent to the revenue that is going to be made, the benefits definitely outweigh the risks. Freelancers need not necessarily be unemployed. They can be students, regular workers who just want to supplement their pay, or even retirees. There is no age limit to this work, as long as you are good at what you do and can market yourself well. Presently, freelancing has provided Africa with the opportunity to mix with the global world. Due to the range of services it encompasses, it has helped even bring in foreign investments into some countries, and not just serve as a means of livelihood for some individuals. Many words can be said about why this business has come to stay in our world today. Beyond the fact that it can help put 'food on the table', it is very convenient, it helps to develop the

creative skills the individual possesses, and further removes the monotony of having to work a day job as there would be different jobs at different times.

Freelancing is not without its risks, one of the most recurring being uncertainty of when the next job will come, financial stress and so on, especially for those just leaving a traditional job. It also has numerous benefits, and may very well be one of the secrets to poverty alleviation in Africa. Hence, the numerous opportunities that it provides should be harnessed not only by the youths, but also governments, that can invest in it by contracting these freelancers. As we have seen, the life of a freelancer is not necessarily full of roses. Determination and an actual drive to learn has to be in the hearts of individuals who want to attain such feat, and get the pot of gold at the end of the journey. Like it is said, to take the road less travelled is not always easy, but very fulfilling in the end.