

The Freelance Writer's Six-Figure

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# CAREER BLUEPRINT

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Written by Jacob McMillen



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Follow my step-by-step journey from \$15 per article to  
\$15k per month:

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The Freelance Writer's Six-Figure Career Blueprint by Jacob McMillen

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# WELCOME

In this guide, I've condensed my three-year journey to six-figures into a 12-month blueprint you can use to cross that same milestone with your own freelance writing business.

How great is it to be a freelance writer? Your friends are out clocking in for pennies, dealing with bosses they can't stand, and locked into a demanding schedule. And here you are, making good money from home, on your own schedule, doing something you love... writing!

If you're not there yet, but you want it to be, this guide will help you get there in the next 12 months! And if you're there already, this guide will help you solve the key problems that have been holding you back and turn "good" money into "great" money.

Let's get started!



# PHASE #1: CHOOSE WHAT TO WRITE

*Timeline: Week 1*

When it comes to money, not all writing is created equal.

Some types of writing are extremely lucrative. Other types of writing are not.

If you write for the art of it, that's great, but you just have to accept that you are unlikely to bring in a lucrative income from your writing. If you are willing to adjust a bit to make more money, you'll need to pick at least one of the following three writing types.

1. Website copywriting
2. Email copywriting
3. Long-form blog writing

These three types of writing are all great choices, because virtually every online business needs all three, and the quality of each has a large impact on their sales. The work demand is literally endless, and the better you get at writing these, the higher rates you can command.

Personally, I would recommend spending some time learning all three. That way, you can offer all of them and upsell clients who approach you about one of them to another or even all three. As you will see in a later phase, blog writing will also serve as a major form of free advertising for you.

Learning how to write is quite the rabbit hole, **but you can begin here.**

# PHASE #2: PRACTICE REAL WRITING

*Timeline: Month 1*

90% of your education will take place on the job, so once you've spent 12-15 hours reading about writing, it's time to stop reading and start writing.

The first thing you should do is setup a quick website and then write the copy for your own writing business. If you are going to be a freelance writer, you are a real business owner with a real need for effective copy.

**Here's some examples of great writer websites.**

Boom! Project #1 in the books.

Next, have an established writer take a 5 minute look at your copy and give you some feedback. I don't care if you don't know any established writers. Find some on Twitter and message them.

Just like dating, some of them will probably say no. Don't sweat it! Move on to the next writer and keep asking until someone says yes.

Next, write new copy or a blog post for two additional businesses. If you have friends with businesses, write copy for them. They don't need to be interested in paying you or even using the copy. The goal is for you to practice and get feedback from relevant people. Get as much feedback as you can get.

Once you have written something for 3 businesses (including yours), it's time to go get paid.

# PHASE #3: GET PAID

*Timeline: Months 2-6*

It's time to make some money.

Not a lot of money... you don't deserve a lot of money yet at this stage, and that's okay! It's time to land your first clients, and I'm talking anybody willing to flash a \$20 at you in exchange for those sweet, sweet words.

Here are some of the best places to find your initial clients:

- [Craigslist](#)
- [Upwork](#)
- [FWJ daily listings](#)
- [Prologger Job Board](#)

You will find some quality gigs here along with a ton of garbage. Take everything you can get and then treat it like your dream gig. The people you will be working for probably don't deserve the effort, but *YOU* do deserve to get the most out of your practice time.

You might even come across some great clients who grow with you and end up working with you for years to come.

**Here's the best way to pitch these gigs.**

# PHASE #4: GET PUBLISHED

*Timeline: Months 3-6*

While pitching gives us an immediate payout, if you are really serious about hitting six figures, you're also going to need to start planting some seeds that won't bloom for awhile, and the best, simplest way to do that is guest posting.

Guest posting is where you reach out to people who run blogs and offer to write something for them at no cost. Your goal here is have your writing ability and topical expertise published in as many places as possible with links pointing back to your website. Here's why:

1. Published articles on noteworthy blogs give you instant credibility
2. Great content on great sites tend to attract great clients
3. Going through the editing process on a top blog will improve your writing
4. If your guest post performs well, you might be asked to do paid posts
5. Links from top websites to your own website will be important later

The more popular the blog, the harder it will be to get your article accepted and the more beneficial it will be to you if you do.

If you can find people who will pay you to write blogs for them that are credited to you and link to your business, that's great too! But our goal here is to get published in as many places as possible, and that will mostly be through unpaid guest posts.

You can use **the same pitch strategy** I linked to in the last phase, but instead of offering the piece on spec, you'll be offering it completely free.

# PHASE #5: BEGIN SPECIALIZING

*Timeline: As early as Month 7*

Up until this point, you should have been taking on any writing job you could get your hands on. But now that you have a range of writing experiences under your belt, it's time to begin specializing.

What styles of writing have you enjoyed most, and which topical areas have you enjoyed writing about? Which areas have you noticed pay more and seem to be more in demand? You want to find something that is in high demand and pays well while also being reasonably enjoyable to write about. After all, you didn't become a freelance writer to hate your job!

Here are some niches that tend to pay higher than most:

- Marketing
- Finance
- SaaS
- Ecommerce
- Lifestyle
- Small business
- Any professional service (legal, medical, etc)

Once you've found your niche, it's time to specialize, by:

- Focus most of your pitches on clients in that niche
- Brand your business, website, and social profiles around that niche
- Network like crazy with everyone you know in that niche



# PHASE #6: RAISE YOUR RATES

*Timeline: Month 9*

As you continue to specialize in your niche, you will become better and better at delivering great value to your clients, and that means it's time to raise your rates.

This starts by simply saying "no" to lower priced gigs. It means you don't bother pitching them, and when they come directly to you, you respond with your rates and don't compromise on them if they try to talk you down.

Once you have enough work where you start needing to decline new opportunities, it also means raising your rates with ongoing clients who you've worked with for awhile. Sometimes, you build really solid relationships with clients and even when they become one of your lower-paying gigs, you don't want to stop working with them.

In these cases, inform the client that demand for your writing has increased, and while you'd love to continue working with them, you will be raising your minimum rate to X amount on X date.

Don't try this unless you've been working with the client for at least 3-6 months. And don't do this unless you can afford to lose the client. The idea is that you have numerous opportunities coming in at a higher rate than the existing contract, and you are giving a favorite client the chance to essentially price match and continue working with you.

# PHASE #7: GET RECURRING LEADS

*Timeline: As early as Month 9*

Everything we've covered so far is enough to get you to around \$5k per month, give or take a grand. From there, it comes down to how efficiently and effectively you can bring in new new leads.

If you have to invest time actively pitching each week to bring in new clients, you are going to have less time available to do client work and both the quality and quantity of leads will remain relatively low.

By building an inbound, recurring leads channel, you solve all of these problems at once. It's a lot of work upfront, but once things get rolling, you'll need to spend less time on acquiring leads, the leads you get will be much higher quality, and you'll get a lot more leads than you would ever be able to get through pitching alone.

This is why I can make \$15k month in and month out. People find my site in Google every single day and email me directly looking to hire a copywriter, no pitching required. I get to spend nearly all my time delivering actual work.

There are four primary channels available for writers seeking to build out their own recurring leads channel:

- SEO
- LinkedIn
- High-End Guest Blogging
- Paid Advertising

To dive deeper into each of these leads channels, [click here](#).

# PHASE #8: UPSELL EVERYTHING

*Timeline: As early as Month 9*

Let me give you an idea of what's possible when you approach every client as an opportunity to make moves.

I had a client hire me to solve a specific SEO problem he was dealing with. I offered to tackle it on a "you only pay if it works" basis (not typically recommended, but I was confident). I knocked it out of the park, and I then "upsold" him to a \$2,000 per month SEO contract.

After some SEO results started to show, I used the momentum to upsell the client to a \$16k per month content marketing contract. I had never handled a contract that big, but I was determined to bust my ass and get results, and the results were **\$415,305 net profit within 9 months**, which I promptly used to upsell the client yet again to \$30k per month.

Every one of your clients would love to pay you more. They would love to be making so much money from your writing and marketing, that they'd be fools to not have you do more for their business.

If you can figure out what your clients need to better succeed and then provide it for them, you will quickly begin keeping clients longer and making a lot more from each one.

For a deeper look at upselling, [\*\*check out this guide.\*\*](#)



## NEXT STEPS

I've been helping freelance writers succeed online for the last 6 years, and I've learned that what people need changes at each stage of their journey.

### **"I'm a beginner making under \$2k per month."**

At this stage, what you need most is great information, great focus, and a ton of hustle. This stage is where a course is most helpful, and I've made one just for you:

[Learn More](#)

### **"I average more than \$2k per month."**

You've built a great foundation, and now it's all about consistency, positioning, and making those small, critical adjustments over time. What you REALLY need is a team in your corner... a team like Write Minds:

[Learn More](#)