



# How Freelancers Market Their Services in 2019

## SURVEY RESULTS REPORT

# Introduction

**How Freelancers Market their Services: 2019 Survey** asked freelancers about what works best for them in marketing their businesses, the challenges they face, their use of social media for business, membership in professional associations, and more. Highlights of key survey findings start on page 3, followed by results for the main questions. I thank the 155 freelancers who took the survey, fielded from March 13 to April 28, 2019 and again from August 1 to September 25, 2019.

## How Will the Survey Results Help You?

If you're like most freelancers, you're smart and you're talented. But you're not getting the clients you deserve. And building a stable, high-income freelance business is a struggle.

This isn't your fault.

You probably never had a chance to learn about freelance marketing.

That's where the survey results can help.

The results clearly show that some types of marketing work better than others in helping freelancers build stable, successful freelance businesses. Compare what you're doing now to what other freelancers are doing. Then set a course to improve your marketing approach, and ultimately, your results!

## Who Conducted the Survey?

I'm Lori De Milto, a freelance writer and founder of [The Mighty Marketer](#). I help freelancers get the clients they deserve by focusing on what works best, so you don't without waste time or money.

Every freelancer can become a Mighty Marketer. Page 14 has links to free freelance marketing resources to help you do this.

## Highlights of Key Findings

**94% of freelancers who took the survey find marketing to be a challenge:**

- 25% of freelancers: “Biggest challenge”
- 34% of freelancers: “One of the major challenges”
- 23% of freelancers: “Somewhat of a challenge”
- 11% of freelancers: “Minor challenge”

Only 6% of freelancers said marketing is not a challenge.

**The top 3 marketing challenges are:**

1. Understanding how and where to get better clients
2. Finding clients to market to
3. Making time for marketing.

**Word of mouth (mostly referrals) is the #1 source of the best clients for freelancers.** Other top sources of the best clients are networking and LinkedIn.

**Most freelancers are already using some of the most effective marketing tools:**

- 80% of freelancers have a specialty.
- 98% of freelancers have a LinkedIn profile.
- 76% of freelancers have a website for their freelance business.

**76% of freelancers use social networks for business. LinkedIn is the #1 social network:**

- 95% of freelancers who use social networks for business use LinkedIn.
- 61% of freelancers who use LinkedIn say it’s “important” or “very important” in getting clients.

**87% of freelancers belong to professional associations.** Of the freelancers who belong to professional associations:

- 62% say professional associations are “important” or “very important” in helping them get clients.

**Few freelancers are taking full advantage of referrals, one of the easiest ways to get great clients:**

- **Just 33% of freelancers get at least 51% of their business from referrals.**
- 12% of freelancers get less than 25% of their business from referrals.

**Many freelancers are getting much of their business from repeat business from satisfied clients:**

- **72% of freelancers get at least 51% of their business from repeat business.**
- Just 12% of freelancers get less than 25% of their business from repeat business.

**Many freelancers are making decent money, but some could be making substantially more:**

- 60% of freelancers make at least \$75 per hour
- 11% of freelancers make \$51-\$74 per hour.
- 18% of freelancers make \$25-\$50 per hour.
- 11% of freelancers make \$24 or less per hour.

# Survey Participants

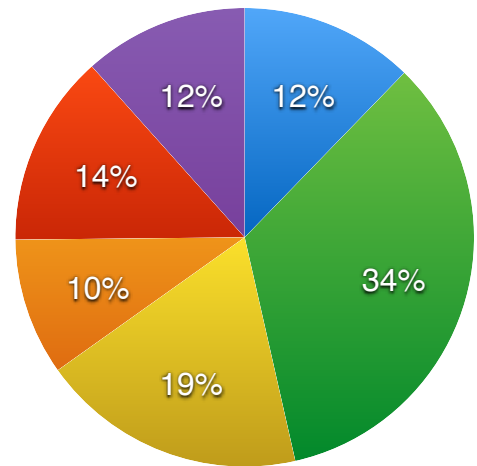
## Years of Freelance Experience

Survey respondents are a mix of new and experienced freelancers. Freelancers with 3 years of experience or less were the largest group (46%), followed by freelancers with 4 to 9 years of experience (29%) and freelancers with 10+ years of experience (26%).

### The Numbers\*

Less than 1 year	19
1-3 years	53
4-6 years	29
7-9 years	15
10-19 years	21
20 or more years	18

\* 155 responses



● Less than 1 year    ● 1-3 years  
● 4-6 years        ● 7-9 years  
● 10-19 years        ● 20+ years

## Types of Freelancers

69% of the survey respondents were writers or writers and editors. The next largest group, at 21%, was editors and editors and writers.

10% of the freelancers work in other freelance fields. These freelancers were mostly writers or editors also working in other fields or designers. The 9 remaining freelancers were one each in other fields.

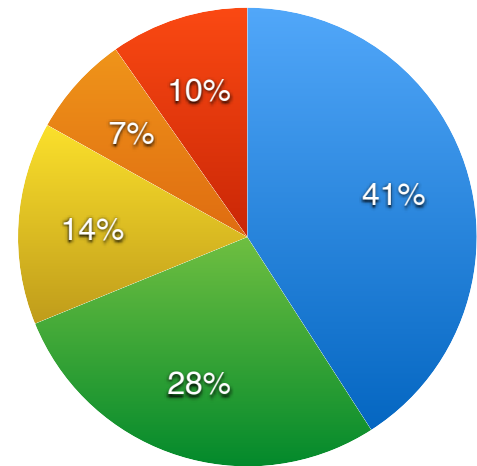
### The Numbers\*

Writer	63
Writer + editor	43
Editor	22
Editor + writer	11
Other	15

The most common "Other" responses were:

Writer, editor + other	5
Designer	2

\* 154 responses



● Writer                      ● Writer + editor  
● Editor                      ● Editor + writer  
● Other

# Marketing Challenges

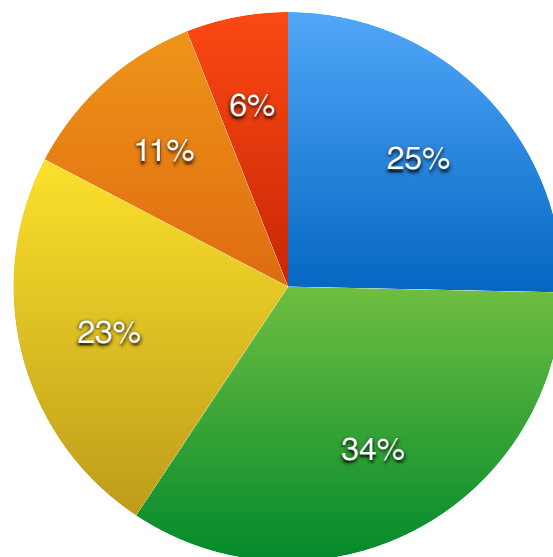
94% of freelancers find marketing to be a challenge:\*

- “Biggest challenge”:
  - 25% of freelancers (38 freelancers)
- “One of the major challenges”:
  - 34% of freelancers (51 freelancers)
- “Somewhat of a challenge”:
  - 23% of freelancers (36 freelancers)
- “Minor challenge”:
  - 11% of freelancers (17 freelancers)

Only 6% of freelancers (9 freelancers) said that marketing is “not a challenge.”

\* 151 responses

### How Challenging is Marketing?



- Biggest challenge
- One of the major challenges
- Somewhat of a challenge
- Minor challenge
- Not a challenge

# Top Marketing Challenges

The top 3 marketing challenges are:\*

1. Understanding how and where to get better clients
2. Finding clients to market to
3. Making time for marketing.

\* 151 responses



\* Ranked #1, #2, or #3

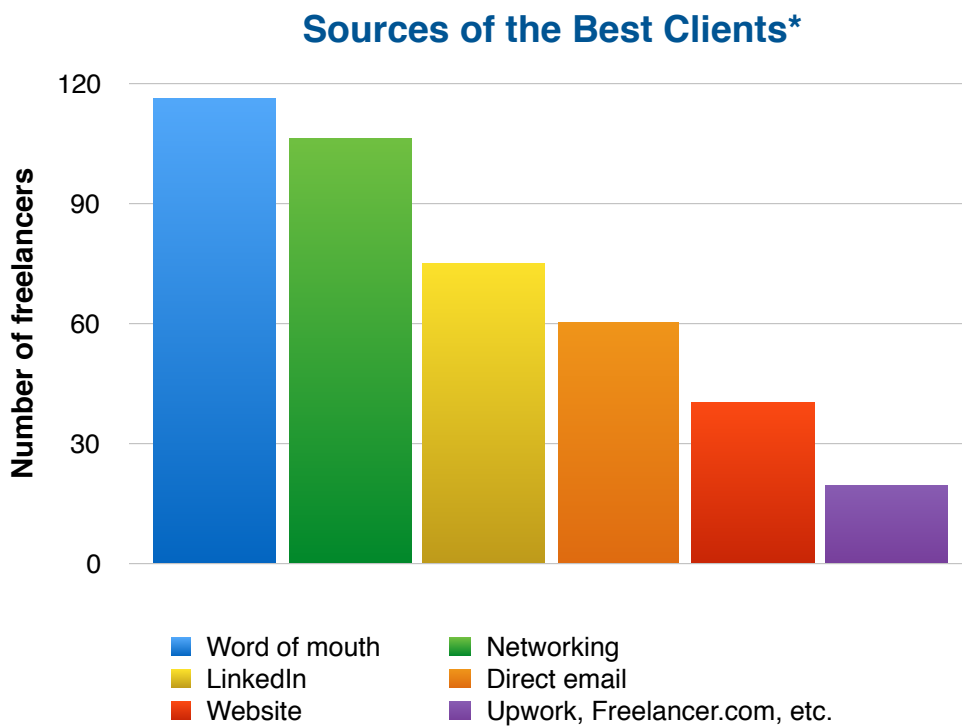
# Sources of the Best Clients

The top 3 sources of the best clients are:\*

1. Word of mouth (mostly referrals)
2. Networking
3. LinkedIn

Overall, word of mouth and networking were by far the top sources of the best clients.

\* 146 responses



\* Ranked #1, #2, or #3



## Specialty (or Niche)

80% of freelancers (120) have a specialty (or niche). 20% of freelancers (30) do not have a specialty.\*

\* 150 responses

### Types of Specialties

Medical writing/communication was by far the most common specialty:

Medical writing/communication	79% (93)
Business	6% (7)
Technology	3% (3)
Other	12% (16)

\* 119 responses

## LinkedIn Profiles

98% of freelancers (152) have a LinkedIn profile. Just 2% of freelancers (3) do not have a LinkedIn profile.\*

\* 155 responses

## Websites

76% of freelancers (118) have a website for their freelance business. 24% of freelancers (37) do not have a website.\*

\* 155 responses

## Use of Social Networks for Business

76% of freelancers (118) use social networks for business and 24% (37) do not.\*

\* 155 responses

Of the freelancers who use social networks for business, the top 3 social networks were LinkedIn (by far the top social network), Twitter, and Facebook:\*

1. LinkedIn: 95% of freelancers
2. Twitter: 36% of freelancers
3. Facebook: 20% of freelancers.

\* 133 responses

## Importance of Social Networks in Getting Clients

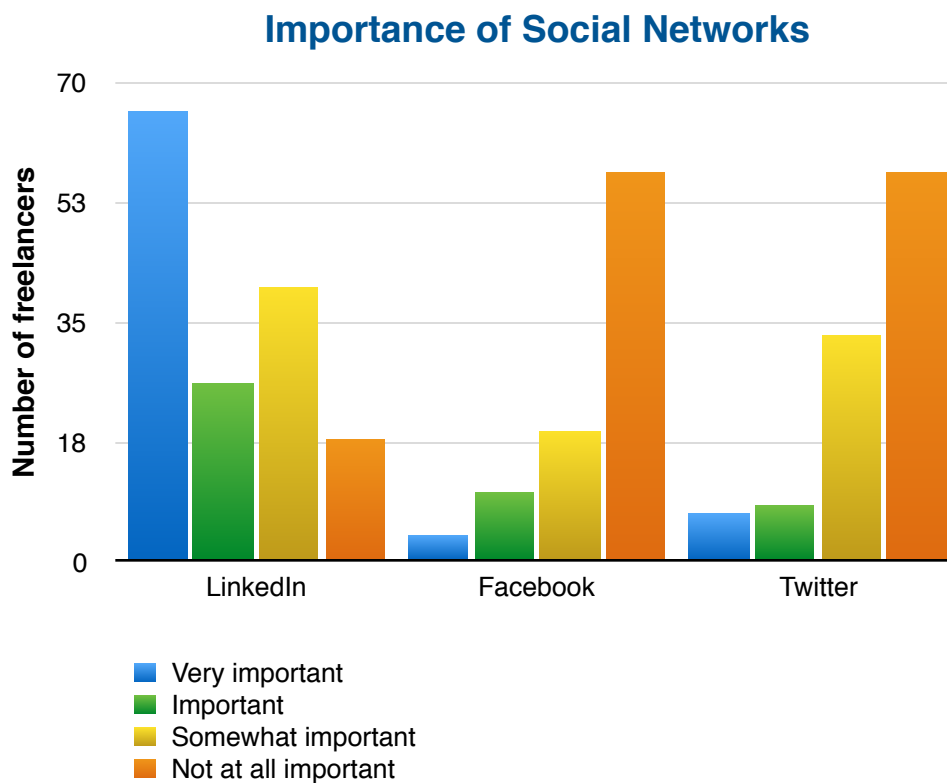
In helping freelancers get clients, LinkedIn was by far the most important social network:\*

- 61% of freelancers (93 freelancers) said LinkedIn was “important” or “very important” in getting clients.

Also rated as “important” or “very important” in getting clients were:

- Facebook: 10% of freelancers (15 freelancers)
- Twitter: 9% of freelancers (14 freelancers).

\* 153 respondents



## Professional Associations

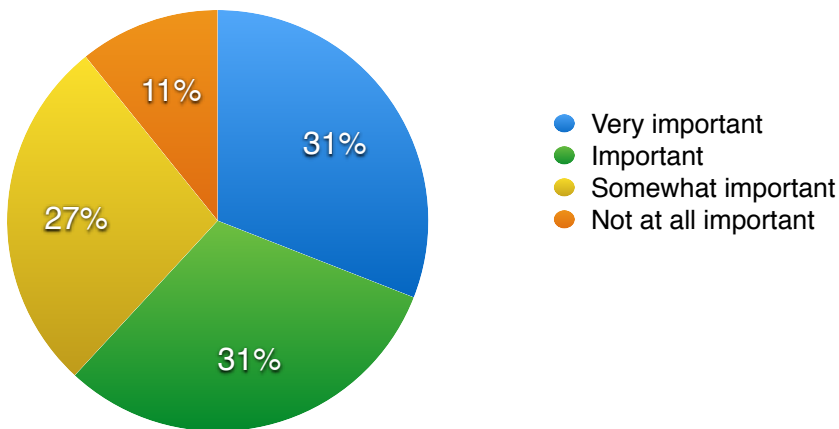
87% of freelancers belong to professional associations (134) and 13% (21) do not.\*

\* 155 respondents

### Professional Associations and Getting Clients

62% of freelancers who belong to professional associations say they're "important" or "very important" in helping them get clients. Just 11% say professional associations are "not at all important" in helping them get clients.\*

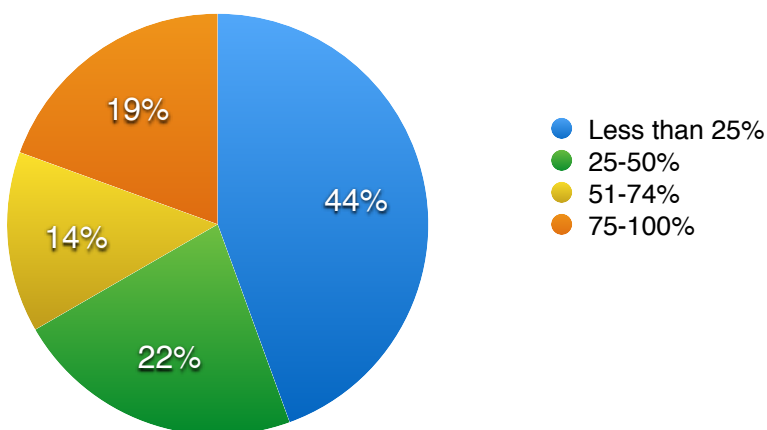
\* 140 respondents



## Referrals

Just 33% of freelancers get at least 51% of their business from referrals. 44% of freelancers get less than 25% of their business from referrals.

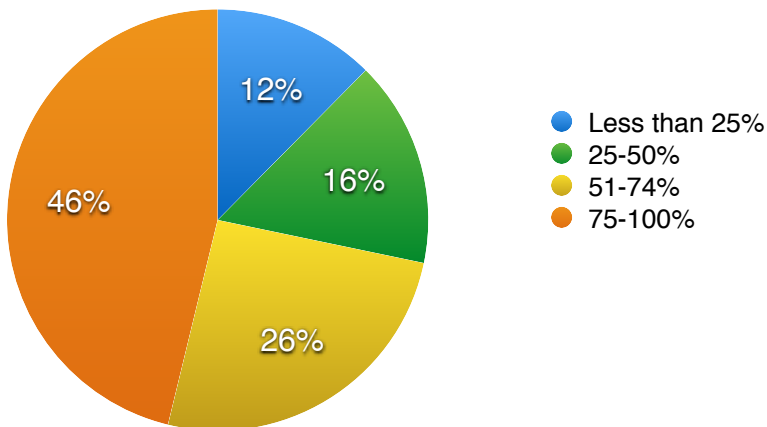
\* 144 respondents



## Repeat Business from Clients

72% of freelancers get at least 51% of their business from repeat business from clients. Just 12% of freelancers get less than 25% of their business from repeat business.\*

\* 145 respondents

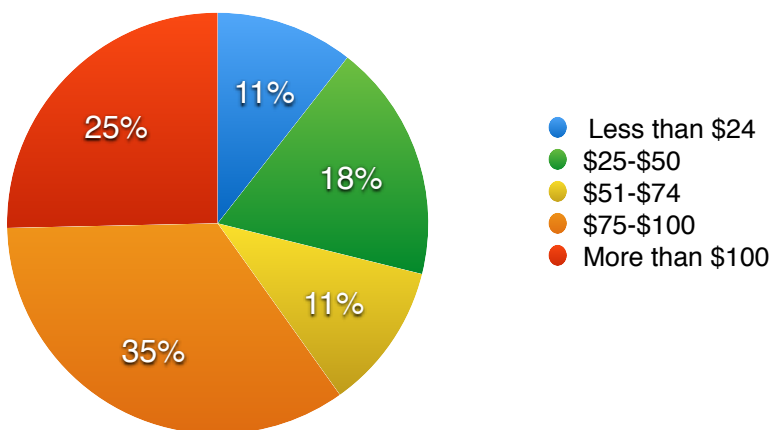


## How Much Freelancers Make

60% of freelancers make at least \$75 per hour. 11% make less than \$24 per hour.\*

The average hourly rates are higher than what most freelancers make because 78% of the survey respondents were medical writers and/or editors. Medical communications is a high-demand, highly paid field.

\* 142 respondents



# What Freelancers Want to Learn

The top 3 marketing tools freelancers most want to learn about are:\*

1. Direct email
2. LinkedIn
3. Marketing plan.

\* 139 responses



\* Ranked #1, #2, or #3

## Free Marketing Resources

Here are some free resources to help you get the clients you deserve and build a stable, high-income freelance business.

### Roadmap to High-Income Freelancing

A proven step-by-step process that's helped hundreds of freelancers build their confidence and their income.

Get [your roadmap](#).

### Getting Better Clients and Finding Clients to Market to

#### *Direct email*

[Why You Need to Use Direct Email: What 4 Freelancers Say](#)

[Direct Email Swipe File](#), a collection of proven templates and examples

#### *Networking (including word of mouth)*

[Ultimate Guide to Networking for Freelancers](#)

#### *LinkedIn*

[Ultimate Guide to LinkedIn for Freelancers](#)

### Making Time for Marketing

[What Happened When 3 Freelancers Made Time for Marketing: Success](#)

### The Freelance Marketing Blog

Practical advice on marketing for freelancers. Many posts include free tools and/or freelance success stories.

Visit the [Freelance Marketing blog](#).

