

Freelancers, are you getting paid enough and on time?



22 Oct 2018

While the changing world of work and need to supplement barely-meets-expenses media salaries means there are more freelancers than ever before, there's also a lack of consistency in fees and receiving payment. Here's how to ensure you get paid what you're worth.



Chakrit Thongwattana © 123RF

Freelancing is a career move many aspire to, yet others fear. It means the freedom of working from home, or from a coffee shop, or anywhere with Wi-Fi, really.

It means working when inspiration strikes, around set office hours. It also means isolation, self-doubt and undercharging for your services. And freelancers aren't exactly rolling in the money.



All about freelancing in the SA media industry

Leigh Andrews 31 Jan 2017



Laura Rawden, then-chair of the South African Freelancers' Association or Safrea explained last year:

The average earning of a freelancer in South Africa just doesn't match up even to the baseline wage of the average worker in the country. Freelancers are earning in the vicinity of R10k a month, whereas for the average South African employee it is at just over R18k.



#AfricaMonth: Safrea on the freelance future of work. Are you ready?

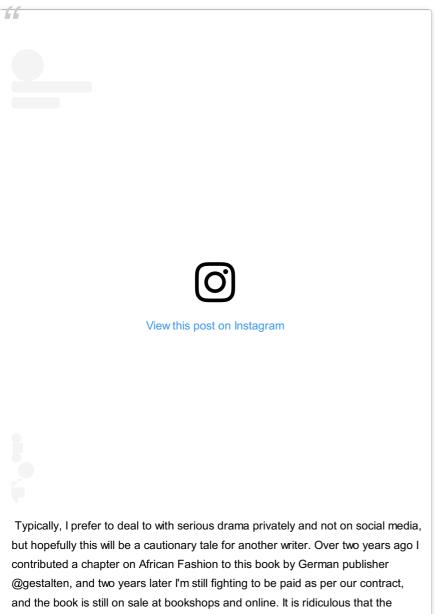
Leigh Andrews 22 May 2017



Unfortunately, struggling for fair payment is also a harsh reality for many freelancers.

In fact, just last week, News24 reported that local arts and fashion writer Malibongwe Tyilo vented on Instagram about

German publishing house, Gestalten, which allegedly failed to pay him for his contribution to a chapter on African fashion in their book, *Africa Rising*, over two years ago:



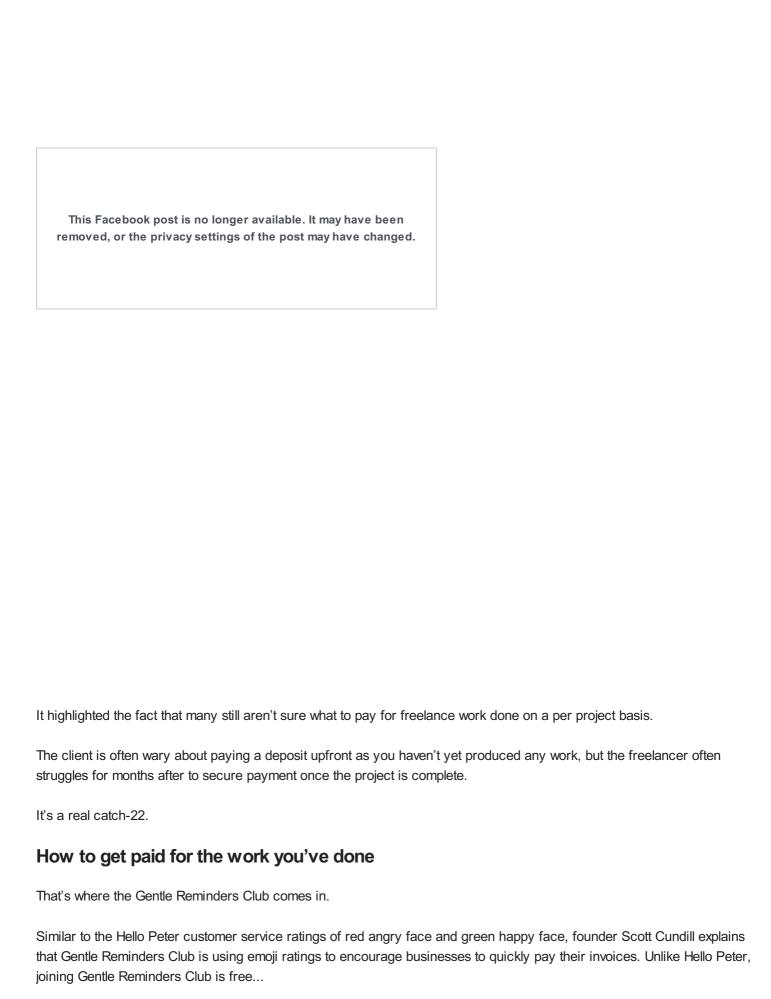
Typically, I prefer to deal to with serious drama privately and not on social media but hopefully this will be a cautionary tale for another writer. Over two years ago I contributed a chapter on African Fashion to this book by German publisher @gestalten, and two years later I'm still fighting to be paid as per our contract, and the book is still on sale at bookshops and online. It is ridiculous that the people behind a book that claims to celebrate African creativity refuse to pay for the very African creativity that makes the book possible. I've certainly learnt my lesson: while there's nothing wrong with collaborating globally across borders, we have every right to tell our stories and assert ourselves wherever we wish, but we must watch out for these people that come thru claiming to be about us, but actually continue the same old culture of extracting from and exploiting Africans, with no intention of fair exchange. Shame on you @gestalten

A post shared by Malibongwe Tyilo (@malibongwe) on Oct 8, 2018 at 3:03am PDT

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How much to charge for freelance work

Last week, independent public relations consultant Marisa Louw of eMlo Communications shared the following to Facebook:



Instead of constantly hounding the accounts department for money, the Club sends out weekly letters, notifying both parties that their public rating, which is broadcast on their website, is happy, grumpy or indifferent. The system effectively speeds up the collections process in a gentle and mostly, uplifting way.



Safrea and Gentle Reminders Club support prompt payment of freelancers

Safrea 1 Mar 2018

Here's how it works:

The creditor registers, chooses a letter template from the various options available and The Gentle Reminders Club sends it off to the debtor. Only the creditor can then change their emoji status and the payment status, which are publically reflected on the website.

If you're a freelancer, join the Gentle Reminders Club and Safrea. Click here for Safrea's tips on how much to charge for freelance work.

ABOUT LEIGH ANDREWS

Leigh Andrews AKA the #MlkshakeQueen, is former Editor-in-Chief: Marketing & Media at Bizcommunity.com, with a passion for issues of diversity, inclusion and equality, and of course, gourmet food and drinks! She can be reached on Twitter at @Leigh_Andrews.

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