

How I Made My First US\$ 50 Writing Online As a Freelance Writer in Kenya

by

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Also remember that the content in this ebook is meant to inform you about things you can do when thinking of starting your own freelance writing career / business.

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Future editions of this ebook will bring you more tips and suggestions on how to start and make your freelance writing business even better. Subscribe to get links to those editions. You'll find instructions on how to do this at the end of the ebook.

If you have any questions, you would like to ask, [click here to get in touch with me.](#)

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This ebook is meant to do one thing: To get you thinking of ways to start your writing career / business and give it a chance at success.

This ebook gives you a few important things to look at before you even start. These things will fill your head with ideas which you will need as you start and grow your career / business.

The ebook is divided into different sections - all filled with questions and answers that should help you build a content business that offers solutions people are willing to pay for.

I highly recommend that you refer to this guide from time to time, and follow the instructions at the end of the ebook to get download links to future editions (of this ebook) whenever they are made available to Niabusiness.com subscribers.

So get your pen and paper ready, and let's begin.

NOTE: This is just a short PDF guide retelling the story of how I made my first fifty dollars working online as a freelance writer.

For a detailed guide, check the step-by-step instructions in the accompanying guide *How to Be a Freelance Writer in Kenya & Make Money Online*, which you can find [here](#).

If you don't want to bother with PDF files, simply [click here](#) to read the whole guide as published on Niabusiness.com.

Here is a sample cold pitch email I sent to dozens of clients (with minor variations) when I first started doing freelance writing work.

Hello [first name of client]. My name is Philos Mudis.

I'm a WordPress user (for several years now) and I'd like to contribute regular IN-DEPTH content to your sites as a paid writer (at a rate of US\$ 0.04 per word) on topics like WP, personal development, publishing and online businesses.

For examples of how detailed I go, check this eleven thousand post sample I published on my blog: <http://niabusiness.com/reasons-to-start-a-blog/>. It's really good.

Of course if you don't want articles I can also write ebooks or guides which you can turn into Kindle books or online courses.

I really want to work with you contributing content to various projects you handle. Looking forward to your response.

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PS: On the blog you can also see my sample posts on reducing TV time, becoming an early riser, becoming a better person, deciding whether to go to college among other topics.

Philos Mudis

The subject line I used for these emails was: **Writing for your site as a paid freelance writer.**

On occasion, I'd change the subject line and body a bit. For example by mentioning the name of the site or domain name in the subject line instead of referring to it as just '...for your site'.

For the body, I'd include more links to some of the content I'd created and published on my blog (I used to have a different blog with a longer domain. I have since switched to Niabusiness.com)

Since then I have refined my template a bit – and continue to do so as you can see in the example cold email outreach pitch here.

When you are just starting out, I recommend sending at least 20 of these emails every day. That is, sending outreach emails to at least 20 new potential clients each day.

It's a numbers game. And you will quickly learn a lot from each email you send. You will learn from every NO, near-YESes, counter-offers and YES replies that you get.

From your interactions with these many potential clients each day, you will quickly learn what works and what doesn't and therefore iterate your email copy and subject lines accordingly to increase your chances of more prospects saying YES to you.

Some individuals, businesses, websites, blogs and media companies won't even reply to your emails. That's OK.

Some will tell you that they don't have work for you now but will let you know, at a future date, if something pops up.

So, prospects like this might not hire you right away, but may have work for you weeks or months down the road. So, don't write-off them off.

Just continue reaching out to new people and you will start to get more and more people saying YES to you and offering you work.

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Reach out to blogs and websites you already read. Reach out to the owners of companies making products and services you already use online or offline.

Contact their marketing division if you can't reach them (by getting contacts of their marketing team from LinkedIn, their website or via a quick search on Google, Duckduckgo, Bing, Facebook or Twitter).

Some prospects who say YES to you will agree to work with you without any need for rate negotiations. They'll just accept your rates and give you work.

Some will say YES to you but negotiate for lower rates.

It is up to you to decide if the rates are too low for you (and therefore not work with the client if they are not willing to increase the amount they pay you) or not (and accept the work but agree that the more you work with them the more they will gradually increase your rates).

How much to charge for your first freelance writing assignments

When it comes to your first assignment, you have the option to charge a certain rate you have in mind (based on the complexity of the project, time needed to complete writing or word count).

You also have the option to take anything the first prospect offers you.

When I got started, I quoted my rates in the emails I sent prospects I pitched. But now, I don't do this.

Once a prospect sees my pitch and shows interest in working with me, we negotiate – and come to an agreed rate (per project or weekly / monthly payouts if they opt to give me on-going work).

When I first started, I charged US\$ 0.04 per word. That means that for a 500-word article I wrote, I was paid 20 US Dollars. For a 1000 word blog post, I was paid \$ 40 or KSh 4000. For a 2000 word post, I was paid 80 dollars.

But when my first prospect showed interest in working with me and said he only had \$50 for the review article (1000 to 2000 words) he wanted me to write, I accepted the amount.

You can opt to do this as well when you are just first starting out. To have a per word rate.

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Gradually, you can move from this and decide to charge on a per-project basis instead of using a per-word rate.

If you follow this route, I advise to **charge a minimum of US\$ 0.05 per word**. Your writing still needs to be good, well-written. Charging per word shouldn't be an excuse to pour into your document words that can be done away with.

Write the best you can. Write your way, still adhering to your client's instructions. Be concise in your writing but still give readers what is promised to them in the title of the piece you are writing.

If you opt to charge 5 US cents per word (there's nothing stopping you from charging more) that means that you will charge the following rates: 25 dollars for 500 words; 50 dollars for 1,000 words; 75 dollars for 1500 words; 100 dollars for 2000 words; 125 dollars for 2500 words; 150 dollars for 3000 words; 175 dollars for 3500 words; 200 dollars for 4000 words; 225 dollars for 4500 words; 250 dollars for 5000 words...and so forth.

Use the 5 cents as your minimum per-word rate for your first writing assignment.

If your client is willing to pay you more from the get-go, great.

If not, do your best to stick to the 5 cents per word rate base.

To those who think 5 cents / word is too little, let me restate the point I made earlier. This amount is what you are charging for your first writing assignment.

You can adjust your rates as you land more clients - and get more work.

So, if the money you are offered is reasonable to you, take it.

That is how you start growing your PayPal balance – and getting more money you can reinvest in buying internet data bundles, power backup, modem and laptop to make your life as a Kenyan freelance writer easier.

Another thing you might be wondering about is this: Should you write the first article for free to demonstrate your writing ability and adherence to client instructions?

No.

Assuming you have great sample articles in your portfolio, anyone who hires you to write for them should pay you for the content you write for them –

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even for that first piece of content that acts as a test to help a prospective client decide if they want to keep working with you or not.

So, don't go writing free articles for people just because you didn't know better.

There are people who con Kenyan freelance writers this way. Be wary and insist on working with legitimate businesses, blogs, websites and individuals – and insist on getting paid for your work.

Writing takes a lot of work, research and creativity, so make it clear to your prospects that you are looking to contribute content to them as a paid freelance writer – to differentiate yourself from the people who send them emails asking if they can, for example, submit free content to them in the form of guest post contributions with the aim of getting traffic and links back to their sites.

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