The Rate for the Job

This month’s crop of Rates for the job includes data on what freelances are actually getting paid for CD sleeve notes in the UK and for travel writing and for a day’s worth of journalism training, both in the sterling zone and in the Eurozone. Thinking about work for a company you’ve not dealt with before? Simply look at the Rate for the job to find out what companies in similar niches have paid. Then aim higher. You can submit rates online, in confidence, at any time, at www.london-freelance.org/rates – please give not only the basic rate (e.g. for FBS, First British Serial rights) but extra payments negotiated for extra uses, like the Web – or for print if it’s a Rate for the Online Job. These are shown as (eg) £400 + 100. We now record rates paid in Euro as well.

Rates marked X are, in the editor’s fallible opinion, below par. Treat all rates as minima, even perhaps the happy few.

Photography: Port of London Authority, use of one image from the Great River Race Sept 2012 – low res jpeg for single use in internal PowerPoint presentation £60; Independent on Sunday Review single editorial portrait £250.

Shifts: BBC radio newsroom news writing day (10 hours) – says here £30 holiday pay – £180.

Teaching: Frontline Club Journalism training (day) £400; International Federation of Journalists training workshop (day) £400.

Words, per 1000: Daily Express 1200-word feature plus 200-word boxout @ £700 = £500; Michelin tourist guides tourist info €490; Design Week feature £400; National Catholic Reporter (Kansas City) first serial rights (print and online) $250 US X; Blues reviews £150 X; Coast £563; Daily Express interview £500; Telegraph £400; BBC Travel Feature 700-900 words @ £220 = £314; Investment feature £300; The Lady interview £250 X; Telegraph Arts feature £250 X; Salisbury Review £100 X; Anthem feature £100 X; DJ magazine £100 XX; BBC Music online 350 words @ £30 = £86 XX; The Wire (now owned by staff) features + reviews £70. Words, other: Record Collector feature article 8000 words, not specified if rate was per 1000, (!) and they claim copyright, £800; Cherry Red Records liner notes for reissue CD, word count not specified, not terms specified £125 X; BBC News Online 750 words plus 5 original photos £216; glossy county magazine full page article, 750 words + 2 original photos £30 XXXX; Daily Telegraph 350-word website news story @ £25 = £71 XX.

I-less in Guernsey

Many readers have asked about the creation of a new “intellectual property” right in the Bailiwick of Guernsey, the island in the Channel that is a British Crown Dependency but not part of the UK or the EU. Here’s what the freelance has been able to find out so far: it’s strange, but not apparently lethal. From 3 December, people and companies are able to register a “personnage” – rights that in many ways resemble a trademark in the “image” of a person or group; whether flesh or corporate, real or fictitious; and whether alive, or dead or wound up in the past century. Registration of an individual costs £1000 for 10 years, plus agent’s fees.

As the freelance sees it, this will work as a tax dodge. Currently, for example, starbucks in the UK pays starbucks in the Netherlands for use of its trademark rights. Starbucks pays enough, doubtless by coincidence, to register a UK tax loss and take advantage of a low Netherlands corporate tax rate.

The new right will allow a sports personality – or a presenter or columnist – to register their “image” in Guernsey and have a part of their income sent to a company there that licences its commercial use – and pays no corporation tax.

There will be side-effects: lawyers are curious about what these may turn out to be.

A briefing from Taylor Wessing solicitors suggests that companies may block their websites in Guernsey, as a foolproof means of avoiding unintentional infringement (www.taylorwessing.com/download/article_guernsey_image_rights.html). The rights can be assigned, which opens a number of bizarre possibilities, including contracts that turn away performers’ rights to depict themselves. Registered personal names and groups of them, and their heirs, gain the moral rights to be identified with uses of their image and also to object to distortion or mutilation of their images.

Crucially for journalism, all image rights are subject to “exceptions” that allow “fair dealing” for the purposes of news reporting, commentary and satire, as well as for education, research, the arts, and “incidental” use including the mere presence of a registered personnage in a crowd. Sadly, the precise scope of these permitted uses remains to be determined, expensively, in court, probably in Guernsey.

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Guardian/Obsver freelances – get in touch

Do you work as a freelance for the Guardian and/or Observer – either as a casual or on contract? If so, we need to hear from you.

The editorial management is looking to slash its budget, and it has proposed doing so at the expense of NUJ members.

If we are unable to negotiate an amicable settlement it will not just be staff journalists who pay the price – casuals and freelances will be hit hard too.

We are now on the point of balloting for industrial action, and we want to include eligible freelances and casuals.

So, using one of the email addresses below, drop us a line with a few details of your working arrangement with Guardian News and Media (casual, freelance on retainer contract, occasional freelance etc) and an indication of the percentage of your overall earnings that your income from the Guardian and Observer represents. It would be really helpful if you could include your NUJ membership number as well.

Who to contact:

• Ben.Tarring@guardian.co.uk
• David.Marsh@guardian.co.uk
• Brian.Williams@guardian.co.uk

The Trireme Award

This month’s Trireme Award for “the worst terms since I was last chained to the oars” goes to an unnamed I was last chained to the oars’ goes to an unnamed glossary county magazine that asked a full page article of 750 words and two original photos – all for £30. There’s no more to say…

Solidaridad!

The Spanish newspaper El Pais wants to cut 149 of its journalists – a third of them. Journalists are trying to negotiate with management to achieve savings without cuts: El Pais made €1.8 million in the first half of the year. Julian Cebrian, the president of the company that owns the paper, says the staff are too old (he just turned 68) and too comfortable (he earned €13 million last year). Please sign the petition at elpais.notlong.com to show your support for the journalists, who hoped for 3000 signatures and had 8642 when the freelance went to press. Be aware that change.org demands that you give any comments you add to the world under a Creative Commons licence and that you indemnify them against libel, etc. We’re looking into better petition hosts.