One of the biggest problems freelancers run into is knowing their own self worth. I haven't seen your portfolio, but most people immediately under value their service. This usually starts because they get low ball offers from clients and prospects.

Make Sure Your Prospect Has Money

It's easy to feel like you're not doing well as a freelancer when you constantly 'over-bid' or your proposal is 'too expensive'. Sometimes this is true. Often the prospect just doesn't have the cash to afford you.

Most of the projects on eLance/oDesk are in the $10/hr range, but not all (Believe it or not, there are some very good projects on these sites).

Three Strategies For Building Your Client List

1. Network Locally. Search sites like Meetup and ask around your friend group for networking groups that meet on a weekly or monthly basis. I've found thousands of dollars in freelance gigs, including my favorite project I've worked on, through networking groups. People will usually pay more for your services when they can meet you face to face. Also, you'll be able to get an idea of who can afford you and who can't.

2. Target Small Businesses. This is a great target client because they usually have the budget for side projects and you can add serious value because they have an existing customer base. Not sure which business to ask first? Think of twenty to thirty businesses in your area. Come up with ten ideas for each business, and they DON'T all have to be original. Email them to the owners, mail them, or even hand deliver them to the store/office. They probably will hate your ideas. That's okay. They'll like your initiative, and you'll gain a premium client.

3. Search Online. You'd be surprised what opportunities searching Twitter for 'iOS freelancer' can lead to. People are always looking for developers. Find people with Klout in the iOS community and follow them on Twitter, friend them on Facebook, and check out their Instagram. Get to know them and engage with them. It's the friendliest community. I've seriously made some good friends by doing this.

If you do those three things, you'll absolutely find business. Selling yourself is the most important skill of a freelance developer. Not your development skills. Odd isn't it.

1. AngelList (Highly recommend, it's where start up's are seeking iOS developers)
2. Craigslist.org - Yes Believe it or not it's a gold mine if done right. I use it all the time to pitch out development bids.
3. Stack Overflow (ton's of great freelance jobs, make sure to filter and search "freelance"/or "remote")
4. also apply on Web, Design, Freelance, and Tech Jobs
5. Remote Jobs: Design, Programming, Rails, Executive, Marketing, Copywriting, and more.
6. Remote Jobs for Digital Nomads
7. I recommend these freelance sites : Gigster - Hire a quality developerand Upwork, the world's largest online workplace

8. ***Hiring a tech agent can help beyond measure, check out** Your Coding Job Search Agent Under Cover.

In addition to what Giacomo said, *go to conferences and get to know people*. One of the most striking things about iOS developers is how often any two random individuals already know each other. Conferences are where a lot of this happens. Long ago the only option was Apple's WWDC, but these days there's almost a glut of conference opportunities. The most prolific are CocoaConf events (http://cocoaconf.com/events) but there are plenty of others.

You'll help build your reputation if you start or contribute to open source projects, too. People won't wonder if you know what you're doing, they'll be able to see for themselves. Find a project that interests you and help out. Start your own, if you have something you think other developers would find worthwhile.

Your thoughts about sites such as Odesk/Elance/Freelancer are right. They are great when you are just starting and no one can vouch for you, but once you land your first job, you then realize no matter what job you find on those sites, you will be underpaid or always rejected for some other guys who offers to work for impossible rates.

I'd start by "hinting" everyone you know, over Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn that your current contract is about to finish. This can do wonders if you have a good network of contacts in your industry.

Another step would be to ask your current client if he knows someone who might be in need of your services and if he could make a recommendation.

Don't get desperate, it is a good thing you have started looking for other clients before your current contract ends, it will give you some time even for choosing between different opportunities.

Use the time you have to update your portfolio, your CV with the latest information, to promote yourself around.

Working on the iOS industry also makes things easier, if you know people in the major cities in the US, it is very likely they need or know someone who needs an iOS developer for their startup, many of them are ok with freelancers.

avoid those websites. Nothing good comes out of there.
Focus on crafting your online presence (blogs, forums, landing page etc) and then go meet people.

You'll be surprised by how much demand there is for developers. I get contacted 2-3 times each week but mainly for fulltime which I'm not interested in.

See, As per your specification in details about Elance and other platforms. I would like to suggest at initially start with that price. Once you have good numbers of client's positive feedback you can set desire price range whatever you are looking to charge for application development services. But, that's purely depends on what kind of work you have done for client's and must need to show off your expertise wherever you are experts. This is the simple and best way to start with Freelance portal. As portal will sure take time to give best outcomes. Passion must needed if you wanted to lead it from the front.

In other case, You have to design and develop website to market your services. In that case, you have to work it out on many-things like SEO, content marketing and other aspects related to marketing and conversation optimization. To win client trust you have to mention as you are working freelancing. From this ways you will have chances to win good numbers of projects. SEO is not rocket science, it is pure process which takes time to give good outcomes.

I am suggesting you stick with Elance. Elance is one of the best platform where you can invest time which rewards you in a better way.

I've been freelancing for over a decade, and over 3 years as an iOS Dev. I put a free course together for other freelancers just starting out where I talk a bit about this in addition to other things. You can find my free video course here http://www.udemy.com/how-to-free... . Hope it might help!

We run a project board called http://www.freelancermap.com where our clientspublish a lot of iOS projects too. All iOS projects are listed here: http://www.freelancermap.com/it-.... Feel free to check and get in touch with the hiring companies directly. It's free of charge!