

BREAK INTO THE FREELANCE ILLUSTRATION JOB MARKET

You've been drawing and painting since you were a kid, just for the pleasure you derive from the activity. All of your friends and family tell you that you should try selling some of your work. Perhaps you're reluctant for a number of reasons. You think your work may not be professional. You've never sold anything. Professional artists hold degrees in art and you don't have one. Who's going to take a chance on you? Besides, you already have a job and consider your avocation to be just a hobby.

Nonetheless, you must admit art is what you love best. It isn't necessary to quit your day job and launch off into the wild blue, hoping to land a job. You can develop your opportunities over time. When you have enough clients to pay your expenses with freelance illustration jobs, you can quit your day job.

It isn't necessary to hold a degree in art to break into the freelance illustration jobs market. Your work speaks for itself. Businesses that need the services of an illustrator are more interested in what you can do and will usually ask for samples of your work. If they like what you send, you'll get the job or at least be in the running.

Now that we've dispensed with all the reasons you have for not doing so, let's look at some practical ways to land freelance illustration jobs that will get you where you want to go.

First, you'll want to get a web page. Look on artist's resource sites, as you'll often find links to sites which offer free hosting for artists to display their work. Many of these sites provide page setup for a nominal fee. If you can afford it, get your own domain name and engage the services of a web designer. The point is, you want a place where prospective clients can go and view your work. This helps establish you as a professional and gives you additional exposure.

Another good move is getting a myspace page, where you can contact friends to spread the word and gain new contacts. Exposure is what you want.

Join forums and frequent art-related message boards. You can gain lots of valuable information on getting freelance illustration jobs and make other new and more experienced friends, already making a living as illustrators. You'll pick up pointers, leads to legitimate job boards as well as encouragement.

There are many job boards that list jobs for freelance illustrators. Avoid those requiring a membership fee before you can see the listings. You don't have to

pay to get a job.

Craigslist has a huge compilation of jobs by category. To make this lead work, you've got to scan job opportunities daily, because there are thousands of applicants and jobs go fast!

Give these tips a try - what have you got to lose? You may well find some good freelance illustration jobs with your name on them!