

# Freelance Behaviour Report 2016

---



# Freelancing Fever: What's behind the boom in freelancers?

Freedom and flexibility makes the freelance economy tick.

The Freelance Behaviour Report examines how freelancers live and work and what motivates them to choose freelancing over a traditional workplace.

The survey of 1,000 freelance designers was conducted by DesignCrowd, a website that brings freelance designers and global businesses together.



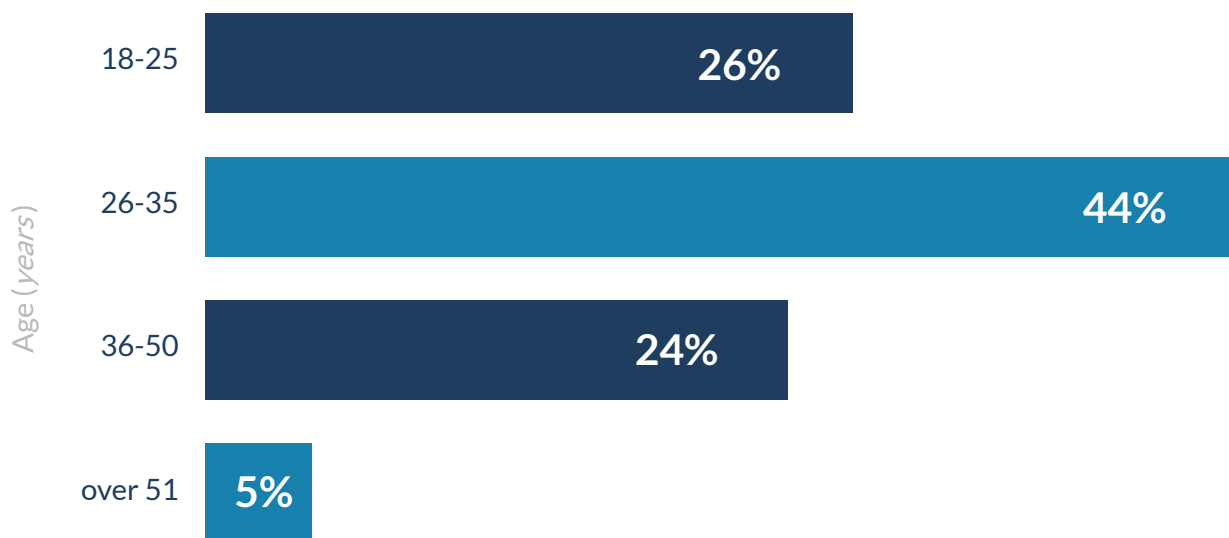
*Total respondents: 1,065*

"The global freelance economy is booming. Freelancing is becoming an increasingly mainstream and popular career path - especially for designers and creatives. People are joining the freelance economy every day in search of the flexibility, experience, money and freedom it provides."

**Alec Lynch, Founder and CEO of DesignCrowd.com**

## Is freelancing just for the young?

- Just over a quarter (25.7%) are aged between 18 and 25 years
- Over 40 per cent (44%) are aged between 26 and 35
- Just under a quarter (24.3%) are aged between 36 and 50
- Almost five per cent (4.8%) are aged 51 years and over

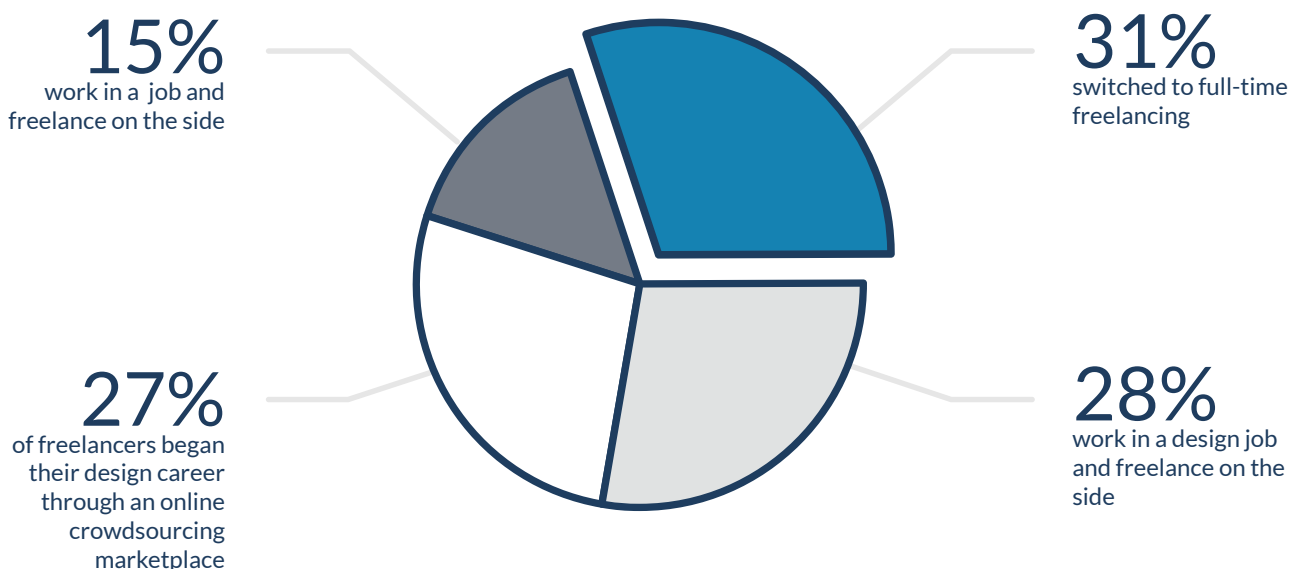


*Total respondents: 1,065*

“I’m a self-taught graphic designer. From my childhood I had a huge passion for drawing, and after 22 years working as graphic designer, the job turns into a hobby.”  
**Sergio Coelho, Logo and Stationery Designer from Brazil**

## Adopting the freelance life

- Almost a third of freelancers (30.5%) switched to freelancing, leaving behind the traditional workplace completely
- Over a quarter of freelancers (28%) work in a design job currently, but freelance to make extra money on the side
- 15 per cent of freelancers work in non-design jobs, but freelance online to make extra money on the side
- Over a quarter of freelancers (26.5%) started their graphic design career through an online crowdsourcing marketplace and it has become their only source of income



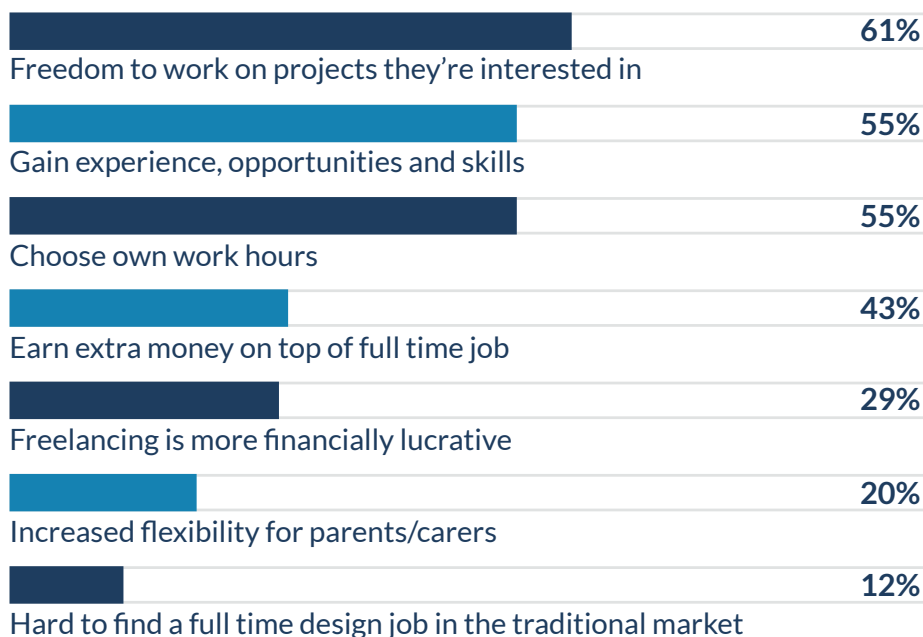
*Total respondents: 1,065*

“Joining DesignCrowd has turned my lifestyle upside down. I used to earn £1750 a month, while working full time under my dull headed boss. Freelancing online, it has zoomed up to more than £6000 a month, on average.”

**Anand Thangavel, DesignCrowd’s top earning designer**

# What's really driving the switch from traditional work?

- More than half (55%) choose to freelance because they love being able to pick their own work hours
- More than 1 in 10 (12%) started freelancing because the traditional market was too competitive to find a full-time design job
- One in five (20%) is a parent/carer and freelancing gives them the flexibility they need
- Over a quarter of respondents (29%) said they choose to freelance because they can earn more money than if they worked full time
- Almost two thirds (61%) said the freedom to take on the projects they're interested in drives them towards freelance work
- Over 50 per cent (55%) want greater experience and the opportunity to expand their skills
- Over 40 per cent (43%) choose freelancing to earn extra money on top of their full-time job

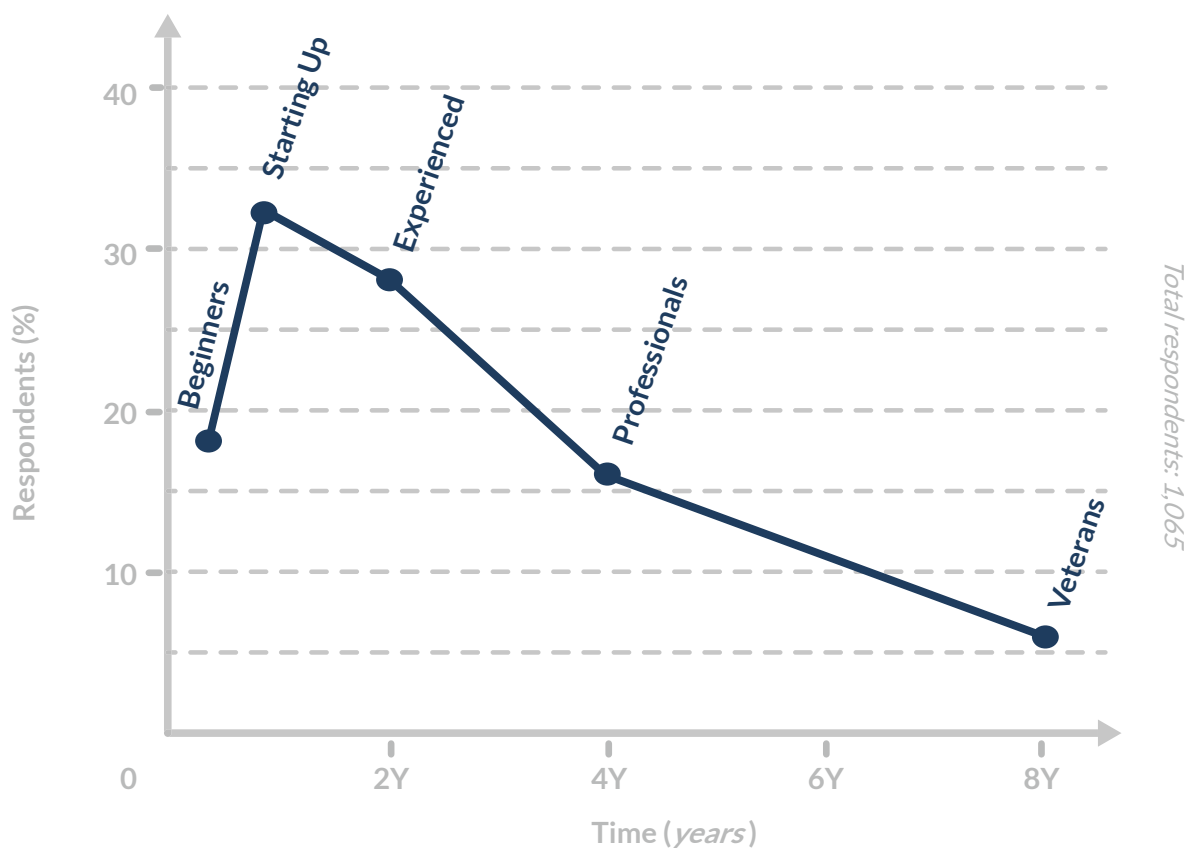


"I remember working for a company a few years ago and I really hated having to go to work on a rainy Monday morning, I hated being stuck in an office in the middle of summer and I always just wanted to be outside. Now I have total freedom to work when I want and how I want!"

**Jemma Shelley, DesignCrowd designer based in the UK**

## But can freelancing really be a long term career path?

- 18 per cent are beginners, having freelanced for under six months
- Almost a third (32%) have been in the freelance business for 1-2 years
- Over a quarter (28%) are serious about it as a career path with 2-4 years under their belt
- 16 per cent have been freelancing for 4-8 years
- Six per cent have over eight years of freelance experience

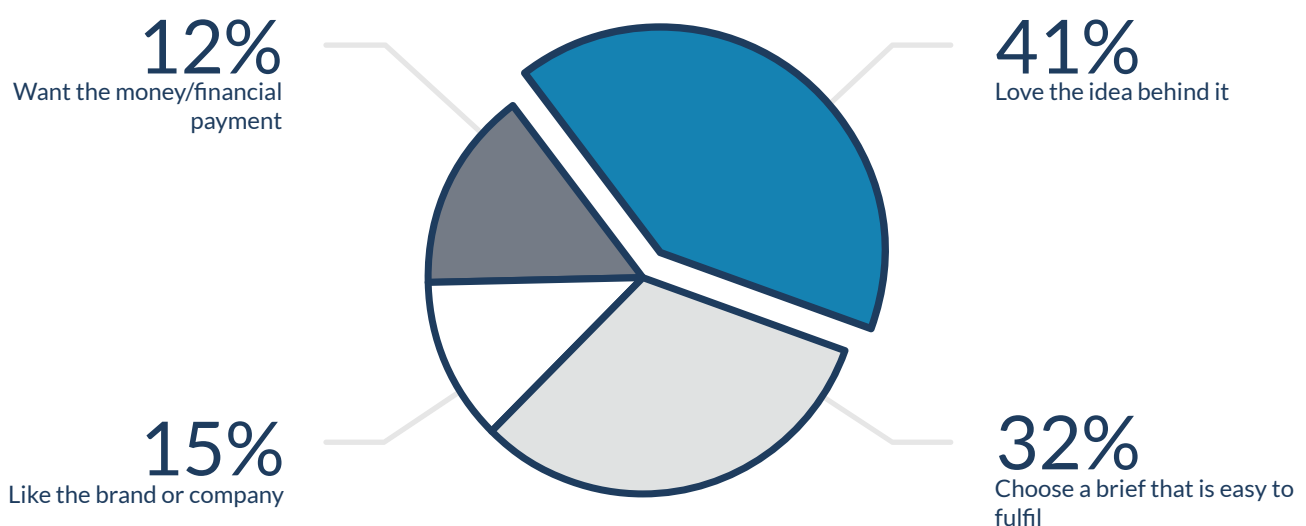


"I hesitated at first, but freelancing online has been the best personal and professional decision for me. I quit my full time job at a design agency, and even though my son is in school now and I could take on full-time work, freelancing is just a better way of work for my lifestyle."

**James Forest, DesignCrowd freelancer of 6 years**

## What makes a freelancer choose a job?

- 15 per cent choose a project if they like the brand or company
- Only 1 in 10 (12 %) choose a project for the financial payment
- Almost a third (32%) choose a job because they find the brief is easy to fulfill
- Almost half of respondents (41%) choose a job because they love the idea behind it



*Total respondents: 1,065*

"I pick the briefs that most appeal to me so I always have designs to work on that I can enjoy doing. It also allows you to decide on the amount of work you want to do so as a stay at home mum/freelancer, I can easily balance my time."

**Jacqui Lindsay, DesignCrowd's the top-ranked female graphic designer in Australia**

## The 'work uniform' of freelancers

- 71 per cent wear casual clothing like jeans and a t-shirt
- 19 per cent wear PJs
- Just eight per cent wear business or office attire
- And... two per cent *wear* their **birthday suit**

**71%**  
wear T-shirts



**19%**  
wear pyjamas



**8%**  
wear business attire



**2%**  
'wear' a birthday suit

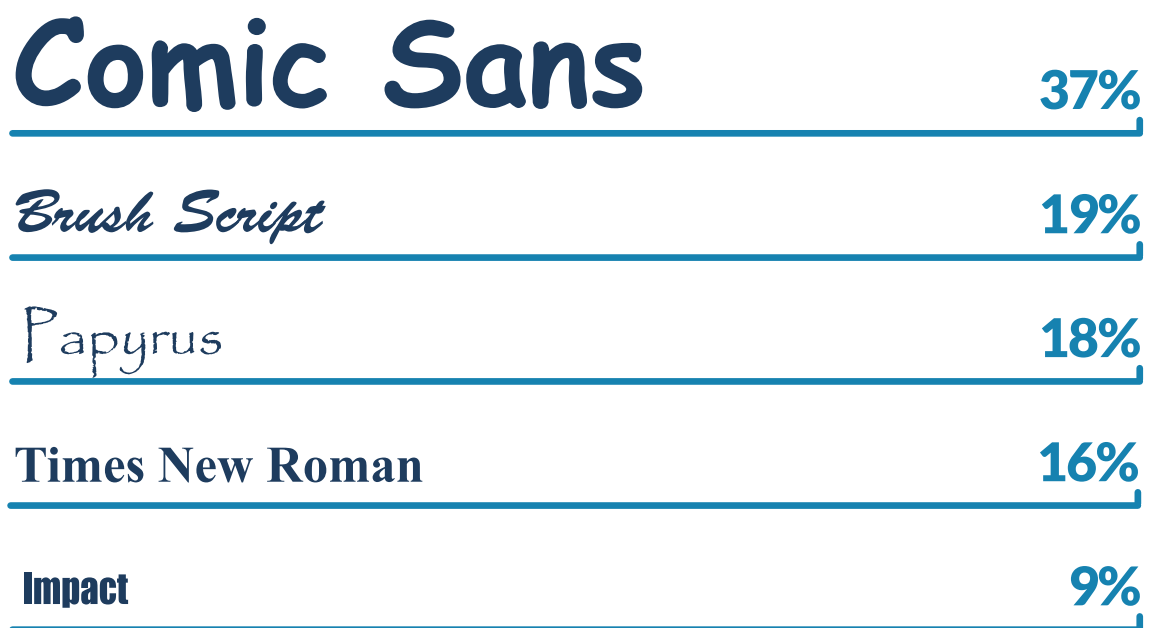


*Total respondents: 1,065*



## Which font makes designers reject a brief?

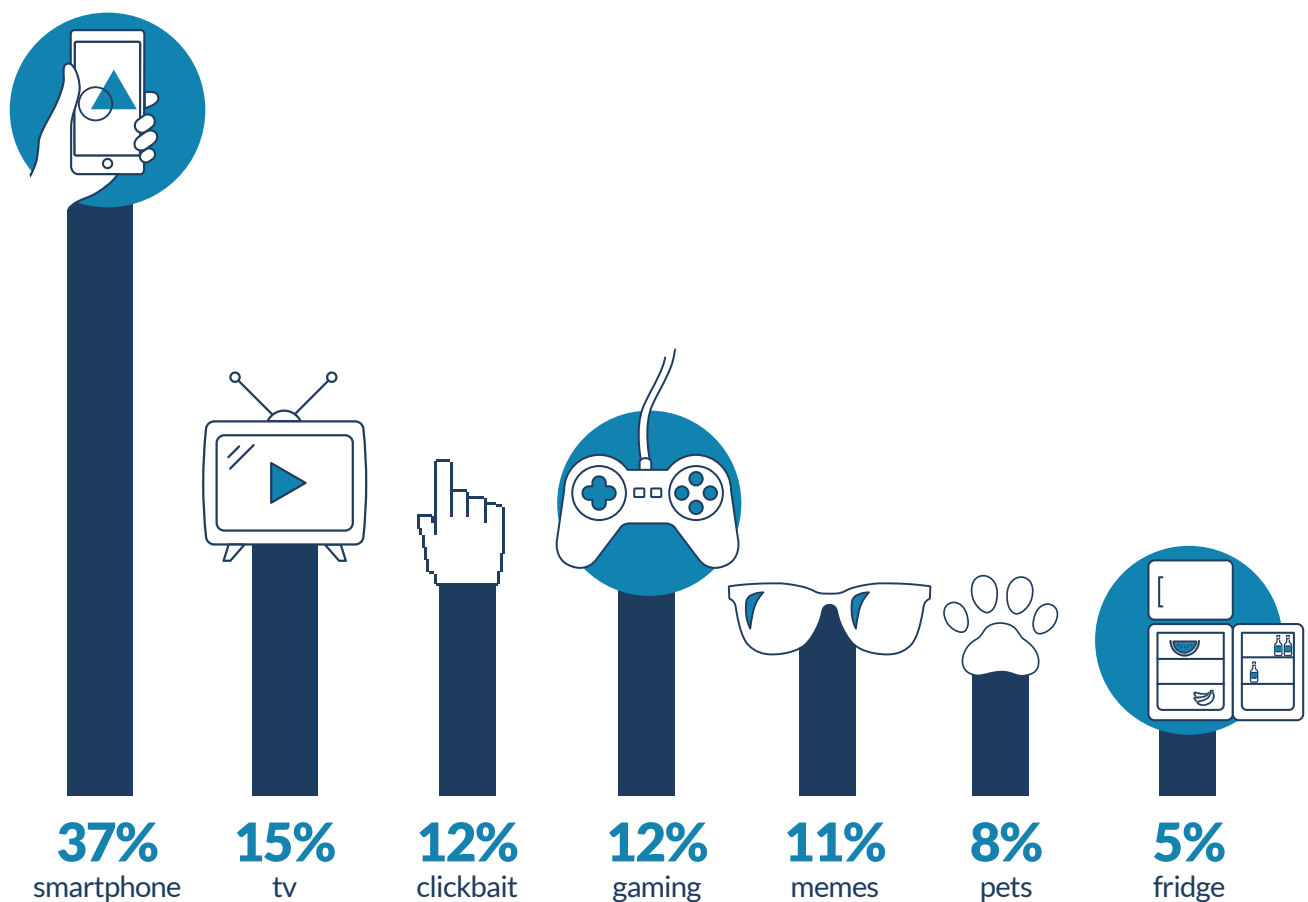
- 37 per cent would reject a brief if it was written in *Comic Sans*
- Almost a fifth (19%) would reject a brief if it was in *Brush Script*
- 18 per cent would reject a Papyrus brief
- 16 per cent would reject a Times New Roman brief
- Nine per cent would reject a brief written in **Impact** font



Total respondents: 1,065

## The biggest distractions for freelancers...

- A third (37%) are distracted by their smartphone
- Television is a big distraction for 15 per cent of respondents
- 12 per cent can't resist clickbait news articles
- Gaming consoles are guilty of distracting 12 per cent of freelancers
- Online memes hold 11 per cent of freelancers back from doing work
- Pets distract eight per cent of respondents
- Five per cent are distracted by their fridge



*Total respondents: 1,065*

### Brought to you by...

DesignCrowd is a website that helps entrepreneurs and small business outsource or 'crowdsource' custom graphic, logo and web design from more than half a million designers from around the world.



This report was based on the behaviour of **more than 1,000 freelance designers** around the world



DesignCrowd has over **540,000 designers** in its creative community



The DesignCrowd community is growing at a rate of **21 per cent** per year