

# SAFREA

Southern African Freelancers' Association

## SOUTH AFRICAN FREELANCE MEDIA INDUSTRY & RATES REPORT 2016



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## INTRODUCTION

Over 43% of South Africa's media freelancers earned less than R10,000 per month in 2016. Freelancing is their sole source of income and they earn well below the average SA salary.

According to Statistics SA, the average monthly earnings of SA workers in 2016 was R18,045.

Research conducted by the Southern African Freelancers' Association (SAFREA) in October 2016 for the first South African Freelance Media Industry Report revealed a number of trends in the local media freelance industry.

Response to a survey from 184 SAFREA members revealed the average age, gender, residence, levels of education, specialty, average working hours and income of the freelance media workforce.

This research is the first in an annual series of industry barometers to be conducted by the organisation and uncovers some of the first data available about media freelancers in the country.

In the creative industries, freelance work predominates. According to the Department of Labour, "Given the inherent nature of the sectors, much of the work is freelance, contract or piece based, with most enterprises contracting up to 50% of capacity when needed."

However, SAFREA noted during the past year disturbing trends in the freelance media industry. From shockingly low rates offered to media interns, to the dramatic effects of lowly paid journalism, the organisation has been vocal about the need to build a stronger freelance environment in SA.

While this report isn't exhaustive, owing to its small sample size, SAFREA hopes it serves as a starting point to establish a database of freelance media information and trends. SAFREA's goal is to build on this data annually through continued research among its members, freelance media employers and partner organisations.

SAFREA remains committed to champion the rights of media freelancers and to create a stronger freelance industry in South Africa. It remains open and responsive to any support and collaboration towards these ends and welcomes contact and discussion on this report.

For more information on this report, or to partner with SAFREA or address issues faced by freelance media professionals in Southern Africa, please contact:

### SAFREA

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## SOUTH AFRICAN FREELANCE MEDIA INDUSTRY REPORT

### AT A GLANCE

- Dominated by Baby Boomers and Generation X
- 78% female
- Concentrated in Gauteng (43%) and the Western Cape (35%)
- Writing, editing and translation services predominate
- Average income less than R10,000 per month

In October 2016, SAFREA surveyed its membership of 418 members of which 184 (44%) responded.

SAFREA acknowledges the small sample size and limitations of the survey. However, it is proud to offer this research into the South African freelance media industry as the first of its kind.

As SAFREA represents the freelance media profession, the results detailed below are presented in the broadest terms as indicators of the South African media freelance industry.

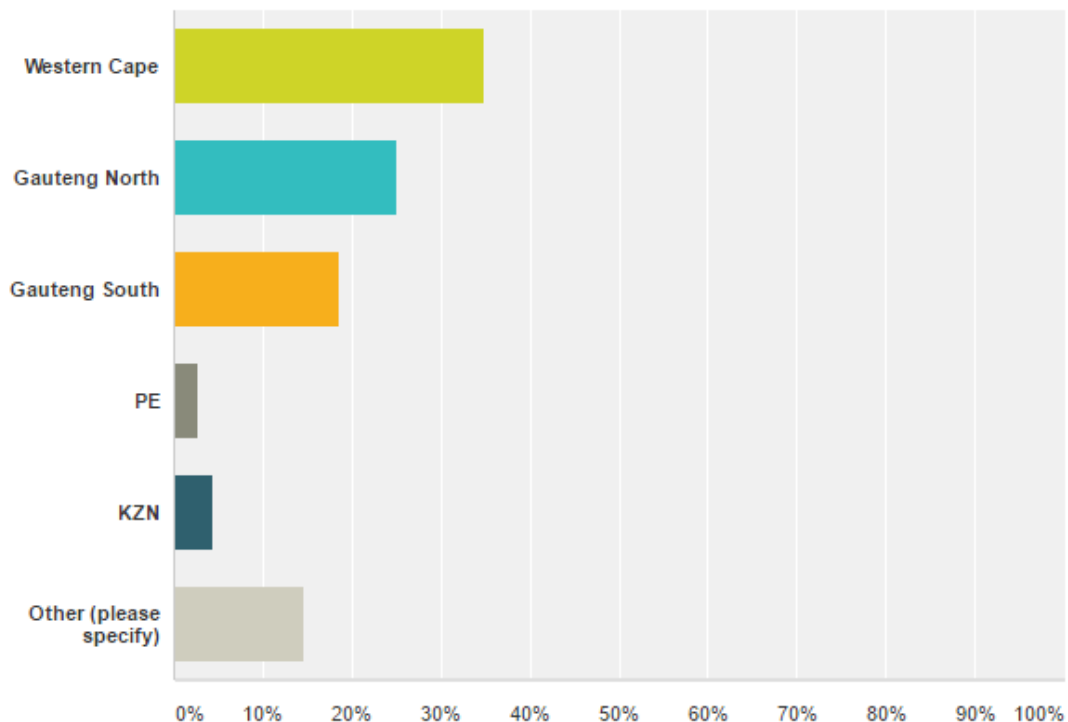
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## ABOUT OUR RESEARCH

### What is your area of residence?

Answered: 184 Skipped: 0



Freelance serves as the sole source of income for more than 60% of media freelancers. For 17%, freelance is considered a part-time income source.

Freelance income is a supplement to contract work for about 10% of media freelancers and a supplement to full-time employment for 9% of freelancers.

Over 60% of media freelancers hold postgraduate degrees and 39% have 20 or more years' experience in their specialty field.

SAFREA's membership breakdown indicates that the majority of freelancers are based in the Western Cape and Gauteng. Respondents to this survey reside in the Western Cape region (35%), followed by the broader Pretoria region (25%) and the broader Johannesburg region (18%).

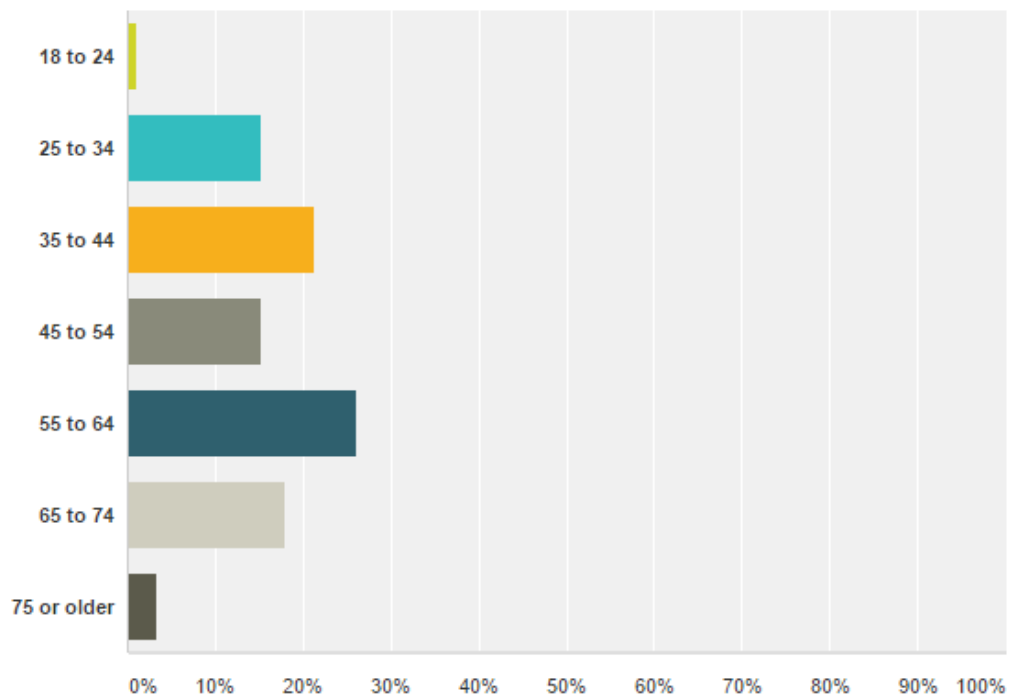
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## FROM BABY BOOMERS TO GEN X

### What is your age?

Answered: 184 Skipped: 0



Baby Boomers, those aged 55 to 64, represent the largest age group of media freelancers in SA at 26%.

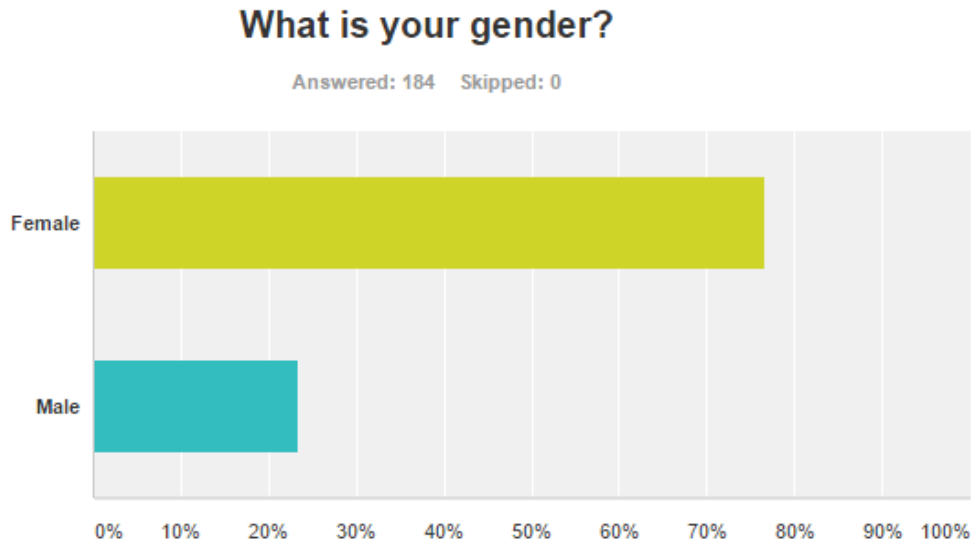
Media freelancers from the Generation X category, those 35 to 44, follow closely behind on 21%.

While this may be indicative of trends in the media industry, such as downsizing or lay-offs, these figures may also be attributed to SAFREA's membership demographics.

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## GENDER GAP



An overwhelming majority of SA's media freelancers are female (78%).

This is consistent with international data that suggests freelancing is a female-dominated profession, as published in the Freelance Industry Report 2012 by the International Freelancers Day organisation.

However, this data may challenge conclusions from the 2015 Women's Media Centre gender report that concludes the media landscape is male-dominated.

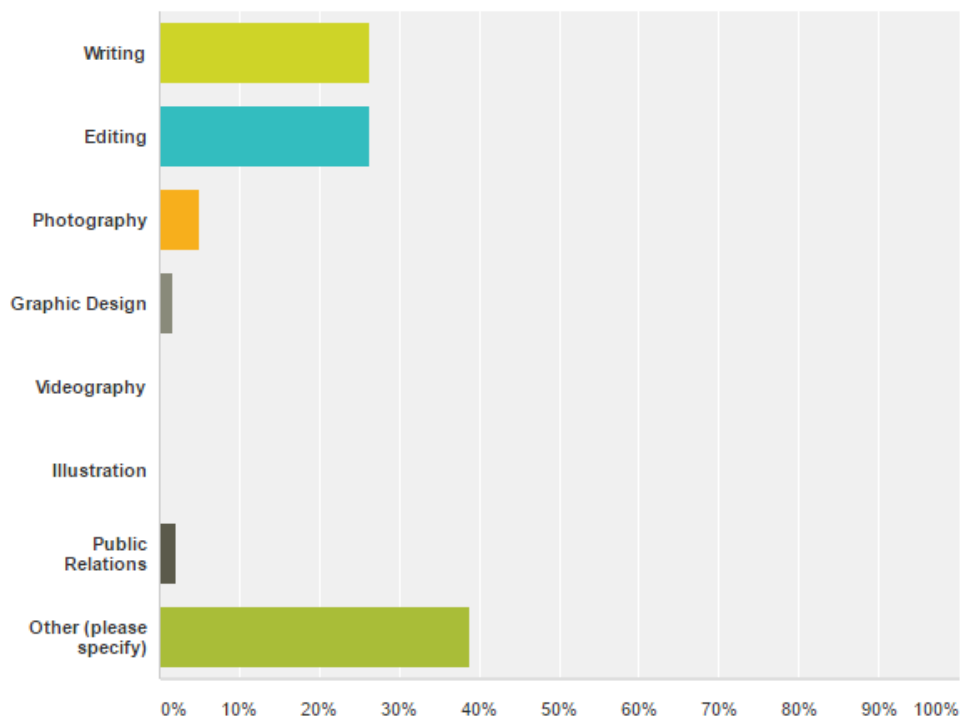
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## WORDS DOMINATE

### What is your primary specialty as a freelancer?

Answered: 183 Skipped: 1



More than half of SA's media freelancers are in the writing and editing fields (52%).

While these specialities are characteristic of popular notions in the freelance industry, their dominance might reflect SAFREA's membership.

Indeed, photography, graphic design, and public relations were also reported, in addition to a variety of other services including interpreting, speechwriting and copywriting.

It's also worth noting a significant trend towards 'diversification' in the modern media industry. Freelancers who are diversified, despite having a specific specialty area, work in several other media-related fields, e.g. writing and editing or writing and photography.



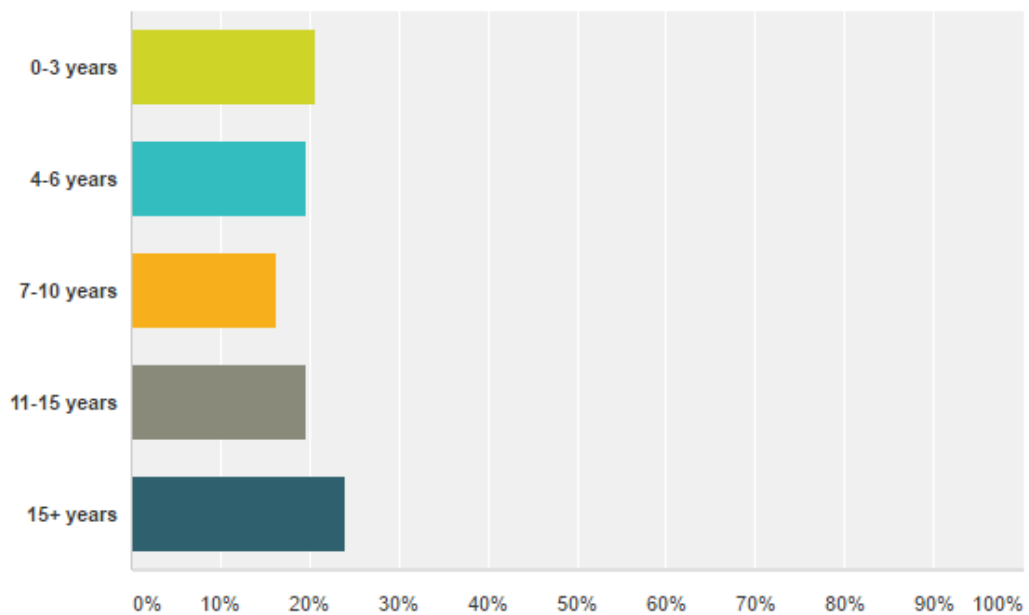


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EXPERIENCE IS RELATIVE

### How many years have you been freelancing?

Answered: 184 Skipped: 0



Almost half of SA's media freelancers (44%) have been freelancers for more than 10 years.

While the largest bracket of freelancers (24%) have over 15 years' experience, this may be attributed to SAFREA's membership.

However, there seems to be an even spread of experience among media freelancers in SA.

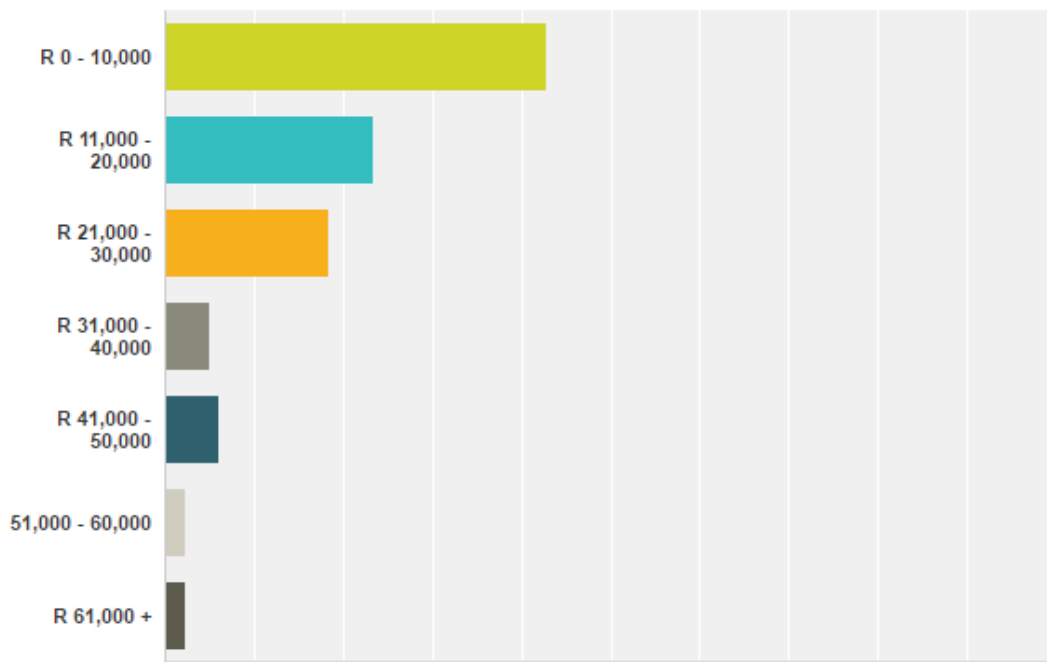
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## MONEY TALKS

### What is your average monthly income earned through freelancing?

Answered: 180 Skipped: 4



- R 0 – 10,000 42.8%
- R 11,000 – 20,000 23.3%
- R 21,000 – 30,000 18.3%
- R 31,000 – 40,000 5.0%
- R 41,000 – 50,000 6.1%
- R 51,000 – 60,000 2.2%
- R 61,000\_ 2.2%

Nearly half of SA media freelancers are earning less than R10,000. Two-thirds earn less than R20,000.

Comparing these figures with SA's average monthly salary of R18,045, is cause for concern.

This data seriously calls into question whether media freelancers are earning as much as they should and whether freelancers are being paid adequate rates.



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# SOUTH AFRICAN FREELANCE MEDIA RATES TRENDS



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## SOUTH AFRICAN FREELANCE MEDIA RATES TRENDS

### INTRODUCTION

The rates below were compiled and based on a rates survey conducted among members of SAFREA, as well as research obtained from relevant media bodies and industry partners. These rates are in line with fees that are reportedly charged by professionals in the media freelance industry in 2016.

By presenting these rates, SAFREA intends to build informed and standardised rates guidelines. However, SAFREA does not intend to influence or control pricing policy. All rates should be agreed between freelancer and freelance employer/client and should be in line with the freelancer's experience and qualifications.

Rates are presented in a range, showing higher and lower fees charged. In most cases, experience and qualifications should determine whether a freelancer would charge a higher or lower rate.

Further notes on freelance rates:

- Charging per word, per hour or per project:

The freelancer and freelance employer should decide whether charging per word, per hour or per project is suitable.

In the publishing industry, popular practice is to use a page rate rather than a word rate for editing and proofreading.

- Urgency:

If the work involves changing priorities and work flow, freelancers are encouraged to add up to 25% to the rate/project fee. If the work requires working nights and weekends, up to 50% may be added.

- Negotiating:

The rates in this report represent trends in fees reported by freelancers. They are meant to serve as an informed starting point for rates negotiations between freelancers and their employers.

In cases where a freelancer is new or inexperienced, it is reasonable to charge at the lower end of the range. Experienced freelancers should charge at the higher end.

Negotiations are a vital part of ensuring fair pay for freelancers. SAFREA recommends that freelancers negotiate reasonably and with relevant industry-related support for fees that are fair and equivalent to the value of time and effort put into their work.

SAFREA provides its members with tools and advice for negotiating rates.



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- Accepting low fees:

SAFREA strongly recommends that freelancers refrain from accepting low or unfair fees. While the nature of freelancing may tempt workers to accept whatever they can get, doing so hurts all freelancers in the long run.

Accepting low rates establishes a precedent that employers may use to justify lowering all freelance rates. SAFREA acknowledges there are some situations where accepting a lower fee is reasonable but it urges freelancers to stand firm behind reasonable rates structures and to negotiate fair pay.

- Protect yourself: T's & C's, quotes and contracts

To protect the freelancer's rights, and to avoid any misunderstandings, SAFREA strongly recommends that a written agreement stating full terms and conditions is made prior to commencement of work.

SAFREA provides members with templates and guidance concerning terms and conditions, quoting and contractual documents.



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## 2016 RATES TRENDS

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## WRITING RATES

General:

Type	Per word	Per hour	Project fee
Magazine writing	R 2.50 – 3.50		
Newspaper writing	R 2.00 – 3.00		
Academic theses	R 0.20 – 0.60	R 300 – 400	
Corporate content	R 3.50 – 4.50	R 400 – 800	
Annual reports	R 3.50 – 5.50	R 650 – 1,200	R 1,500 / page
Technical/specialist content	R 4.00 – 4.50	R 500 – 600	
Government docs	R 3.00 – 3.50	R 450 - 500	
Textbooks			R 50 – 75 / page
Ghost writing	R 2.00 – 3.00	R 500 – 550	

Advertising:

Type	Per word	Per hour
Marketing material (brochures, adverts, etc.)	R 3.00 – 4.00	R 400 – 600
Advertorial	R 3.50 – 4.50	R 500 – 800
Copywriting	R 3.00 – 5.00	R 350 – 550

Public relations

Type	Per word	Per hour
Press release	R 3.50 – 4.50	R 450 – 600

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Online

Type	Per word	Per hour	Project fee
Website content	R 3.00 – 3.50	R 400 – 500	R 1,000 / page
Online consumer content	R 3.00 – 3.50	R 400 – 500	R 1,000 / page
Link-building and keyword content	R 0.80 – 1.00	R 400 – 500	
Consumer/Journalism Blog	R 2.00 – 3.50	R 300 – 450	
Corporate/Content Marketing Blog	R 3.00 – 4.00	R 400 – 500	
Web-based copywriting	R 2.50 – 3.00	R 350 – 450	
Email marketing	R 2.00 – 3.00	R 350 – 450	

## SOCIAL MEDIA RATES

Type	Per word	Per hour	Project fee
Social media post writing			R 100 /post
Social media management		R 450 – 600	
Social media strategy		R 450 – 500	R 1,000 – 1,500

## EDITING RATES

Type	Per word	Per hour
Proofreading	R 0.20 – 0.30	R 250.00 – 350.00
Copy/sub-editing	R 0.35 – 0.50	R 350.00 – 500.00
Magazines	R 0.25 – 0.35	R 400.00 – 500.00
Newspapers	R 0.20 – 0.40	R 400.00 – 500.00
Academic theses	R 0.20 – 0.25	R 300.00 – 400.00
Corporate content	R 0.40 – 0.50	R 400.00 – 500.00



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Technical/Specialist content	R 0.30 – 0.40	R 350.00 – 450.00
General light editing	R 0.20 – 0.40	R 350.00 – 450.00
General heavy structural and language editing	R 0.35 – 0.50	R 300.00 – 600.00
Government documents	R 0.20 – 0.40	R 400.00 – 450.00
Textbooks	R 0.50 – 0.75	R 350.00 – 450.00
Novels/books	R 0.20 – 0.35	R 400.00 – 500.00

## TRANSCRIPTION RATES\*

Type	Per word	Per hour
Transcription	R 1.50 – 3.00	R 200 – 300

\* Rates provided by the Alliance of Language and Media Practitioners (LAMP)

## TRANSLATION RATES\*

Type	Per word	Project fee
Between English and Afrikaans	R 0.50 – 0.60	
English and an official African language	R 0.60 – 0.70	
Between English and major world languages	R 0.70 – 0.80	
Between English and less common world languages	R 0.80 – 0.90	
Sworn translation		Add 25-30% to the base rate
Specialised translation (e.g. financial, legal, highly technical or scientific)		Add 25-40% to the base rate, depending on the level of specialist knowledge and experience required

\* Rates provided by the Alliance of Language and Media Practitioners (LAMP)

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## INTERPRETING RATES\*

Type	Per hour
Between English and Afrikaans	R 300 – 400
Between English and an official African language	R 300 – 400
Between English and major world languages	R 450 – 550
Between English and less common world languages	R 500 – 600

\* Rates provided by the Alliance of Language and Media Practitioners (LAMP)

## PHOTOGRAPHY RATES

General:

Type	Per hour	Half-day	Full-day	Project fee
Product, advertising, branding, interiors, architectural	R 1,000 – 1,400	R 3,500 – 5,000	R 7,000 – 9,000	
Event photography	R 900.00 – 1,000	R 4,000 – 4,500	R 7,000 – 8,000	
Advertorial, Editorial, Modelling	R 750.00 – 900.00	R 2,500 – 3,500	R 4,500 – 6,500	
Wedding		R 6,000 – 7,500	R 10,000 – 14,000	Second day: R6,000 – 8,000
Media houses, newspapers	R 700.00 - 800.00	R 2,000 – 2,500	R 4,000 – 5,000	R350 / per half-page image 600 / per full-page image

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Post-production:

Post-production, retouching	R 600 – 650
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Dropbox / FTP	R 3.00 / MB
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Digital Capture Fee processed	R 150 / image
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## AUDIO VISUAL RATES\*\*

Camera operator

Type	Per hour	Full-day
Camera with professional sound, proper lighting and stabilised shots, with no edits required	R 2,900 for the first five recorded minutes  R850 for each five recorded minutes thereafter	R 3,500

Corporate audio visual presentations:

Type	Fee
Performance fee	R 2,900 for the first five recorded minutes  R 850 for each additional five recorded minutes thereafter
Recording fee (per script)	R 2,500 – 3,000 for the first five recorded minutes  R 850 for each additional five recorded minutes thereafter

Usage fee

Type	Fee
Once-off or for in-house viewing by staff	Included in recording fee

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Public Location (exhibitions, in-store, events, etc.)	Plus 50% of total recording fee for 12 consecutive months' license
Marketing (used by sales staff, shown to potential clients, etc.)	Plus 50% of total recording fee for 12 consecutive months' license.
Giveaways	Plus 100% of total recording fee for 12 consecutive months' license
Sales	Plus 200% of total recording fee for 12 consecutive months' license
Television broadcast	Plus 100% of the total recording fee for no more than three broadcasts

*\*\* Rates provided by InterTalent*



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