

‘A Paradigm Shift’: This Centuries-Old Industry Is Embracing Flexible Work – and It Could Be the Chance to Start Your New Side Hustle



Is the future of work flexible? According to a survey by Future Forum reported by the Economic Policy Institute, 80% of knowledge workers want flexibility in where they work, and 94% of them want schedule flexibility.

Americans' desire for control over where and how they work coincides with the rise of the gig economy, allowing an increasing number of people access to freelance or part-time jobs – sometimes in the form of a side hustle, which about one-third of U.S. adults have.

Related: 'My Whole Life Changed': This 28-Year-Old's Side Hustle Made \$10,000 in the First Month. She Quit Her Job and Is About to Hit \$10 Million.

Even industries that have been around for centuries are embracing – and benefiting from – the U.S. workforce's new normal. Marketing, which traces modern roots back to the Industrial Revolution beginning in the late 18th century, is one of them.

We Are Rosie, a company offering strategic consulting and talent solutions for marketing teams, brands and agencies, compiled a report to explore how freelancing impacts the industry today.

The results are clear: Whether you're a 9-5 marketer interested in the pivot to full-time freelance work or searching for a marketing side hustle to supplement your primary income, it's a lucrative time to get started.

Related: How Side Hustles Are Redefining Careers and Shaping the Future of Work

The average marketing budget was slashed by 15% relative to revenue in 2024, which means that employers in the marketing space might need alternatives to traditional employment if they want to achieve a better return on investment (ROI), according to the report.

Over the past three years, roughly three-quarters (74%) of marketing teams have increased their use of freelance talent, and in 2025, 57% of those employers expect their use of freelance talent to increase, per the data.

An uptick in efficiency is the top reason business leaders cite for hiring freelance professionals (81%); additional benefits noted include more skill sets on the team (67%), temporary assistance to cover an increase in workload (63%) and that it's less expensive than hiring full- or part-time

employees, among others, the report stated.

Related: I Made Over \$4 Million on Upwork While Battling Kidney Disease. Here's How I'm Helping Patients Like Me Achieve Health and Financial Freedom.

The shift isn't just a positive one for marketing leaders, though. Workers who apply their talents to freelance opportunities, whether flexible full-time gigs or supplementary side hustles, can gain more flexibility in their schedules and control over their incomes.

Sixty-six percent of freelancers expect to still be freelancing in three years, and 68% of them are likely to recommend freelancing to a friend, the survey found. In addition to flexibility, freelancers appreciate independence (42%), the ability to earn a higher income (33%) and the opportunity to work on a variety of projects (30%).

Related: Scaling Up Your Freelancing Career to a Small Business

"Freelancing has given me the space and autonomy to figure out what I want to do next," Rosie community member Dwayna Haley said in the report. "I get to continue working, applying and learning against this discipline, but the level of flexibility that I receive allows me to shape my life and days so that I can really take the time to be thoughtful about what I'm doing."

<https://www.entrepreneur.com/starting-a-business/this-industry-needs-more-freelancers-your-next-side-hustle/486028>