

FREELANCING SURVIVAL

Christina Fox

www.urbanfox.tv

UrbanFox Ltd

All of this is on the
website

www.urbanfox.tv/seminar

Get to know your client
and their business

So, a few questions first...

- How long have you been freelance?
- What other skills do you have?

Think Like A Business

- You are a business (yes a brand too)
- You need to get your finances sorted
- Get your paperwork in order
- You need to market your services (...and yes, that means learning to sell yourself)
- Get professional advice

Forum advice - good

- There are some excellent fora out there
 - GTC forum (of course)
 - www.creativecow.net
 - www.2-pop.com
 - www.kenstone.net
 - www.larryjordan.biz

Forum Advice - bad

- Accounting
- Tax
- Financial planning
- Legal (especially copyright)

Don't listen to people like me

- I've made loads of mistakes
- Talk to the experts

Best advice given to me...

- Work out your expenses for 3 months (ie rent/mortgage, food, utilities, tax)
- Then start saving...
- ...into a high interest account
- www.fool.co.uk
- www.moneysavingexpert.com

Then...

and this is the important bit...

Forget all about it

Use it in the bad times

And to help you enjoy
the good times

Bank Accounts

- Personal bank accounts...
- ...are for personal finances
- Get a business bank account...
- ...to separate you from the business
- Watch out for banks that charge

Talking Of Money

- Get a receipt for everything - even magazines, cinema tickets, bus tickets, this seminar...
- If you drive keep a note of your mileage (even if you cycled here)

Proper Advice

- Get a good accountant - ask around
- Take their advice on how to trade
 - I started as a Sole trader
 - Then became a Limited company

Accountants

- Ask about their qualifications - specialisation
- Are they experienced in dealing with businesses of a similar size to yours
- Do they understand your business sector and its needs

Accountants

- Check who will look after your business on a day-to-day basis
- will they remind you when to submit accounts
- find out if they offer any additional services - eg financial planning, insurance
- Ask about charges and what exactly they cover

VAT registered

- You must register if your turnover is over £68,000
- BUT ALSO...
- If you want to make your business look successful from day 1
- You like getting 15-17.5% discount on everything - even stuff you've bought already

However...

- If your clients are members of the public you will be 15-17.5% more expensive than your competitors
- You must file a return on a regular basis (usually every 3 months)
- ...Although you simplify things by using the flat rate scheme.

Paperwork

- A verbal agreement is legally binding
- But, as some wag once said.....a verbal agreement is only as good as the paper it is written on.
- Therefore, I cannot stress enough...

GET IT IN WRITING

Because...

He who has the best paperwork wins.

MANDATE

This is to confirm you have booked Christina Fox (of UrbanFox.com Ltd) to provide two days camera training at £500 per day, plus VAT.

This will take place in Leeds on Thursday 10th and Friday 11th December 2009. Please note those dates are now in my diary and will not be offered to anyone else. (Please see my full terms and conditions - attached.)

Talking Of Paperwork

- Read the small print
- Don't sign if you are unhappy
- Never - do nothing
- Question the wording
- Ask if it can be changed

How many of you
own your own
domain name?

DO IT

**GET ONE NOW
AS SOON AS POSSIBLE**

Cost less than lunch

- www.1and1.co.uk
- .co.uk will cost £2.99 per year
- .com - around £9.00 per year
- www.tv
- .tv - start around \$25
- ...or blog for free!

Marketing

- A website is cheap advertising
- ...people can Google you
- You can add testimonials about how wonderful you are
- You can show examples of what you've done (www.vimeo.com)

Who has an
iPod or iPhone?

Raise Your Profile

- Take part in industry fora - answer questions, be helpful - get noticed (leave your web address - helps your google rankings)
- Volunteer for panels at conferences
- Write articles (and also use them for your website)

High Profile

- Enter competitions
- Put your stuff on Vimeo.com, YouTube, Facebook ...and any other site that will get you noticed
- Put your best stuff on sites that will pay you money. Such as BabelGum, Metacafe, Revver and Joost
- Link up with other people in complimentary areas eg new bands, new directors

Skillset money

British Film Council

EU script fund

Charge the going rate

- There will be times when you will happily work for less
- Perhaps the client is a charity/good cause
- Perhaps it gives you an opportunity to do something new

Do You Give Discounts?

- Some clients like to haggle - don't be frightened to just say no
- Maybe a yes - If they are offering a lot of work. But, get the details in writing first
 - How many days work are they guaranteeing?
 - What are the start and end dates
 - Discount on fees? Mileage? Travel time?
- Show the discount on your invoice.

Do You Give Discounts?

- Yes, but get something in return
 - Guaranteed work
 - Photos/testimonials for your website
 - Permission to use x minutes of their video in your showreel
 - Extra days leave
 - Perhaps they can organise the kit hire, transport, hotels?
- i.e. things that don't seem to cost them money - but, is worth something to you (in time or money).

Getting Paid

- Send in the invoice asap
- Make sure you clearly state when payment is due (28-30 days)
- Clearly state how they can pay (BACS, Cheque etc)
- Clearly state who they pay
- Get staged payments for long term projects

Watch Out

- Do you need a purchase order number? (the BBC is very picky about this)
- "Please note – if your accounts dept insists that they won't pay without a PO number. Then I have to insist that they provide it BEFORE the training begins."
- Are you sending it to the correct person? (client or accounts dept)

Pay Up

Don't pussy-foot around

This is your money!

Please Pay Up

- Friendly phone call
- Follow up with a polite letter/email
- www.payontime.co.uk
- <http://tinyurl.com/2hguop>
(very useful sample reminder letters)

Pay Up Or Else!

- Include another copy of the invoice
- Print it on pink/red paper
- State the exact date you want it paid
- ...and what will happen if they don't
- Send it recorded delivery and email

Whatever You Do

- Keep a record of calls
- With who and when
- Keep copies of all paperwork
- Because....

He who has the best
paperwork wins

Late Payment of Commercial Debts (Interest) Act 1998

- Interest can be charged at a rate of 8% above the official dealing rate of the Bank of England (base rate).
- Plus a charge for debt recovery costs
- <http://tinyurl.com/288fju> (calculator)
- <http://tinyurl.com/yu9mn3> (legislation)

Now What?...

- Another friendly phone call/letter
- Threaten to charge interest and recovery costs
- Remind them you still own the copyright until you are paid
- Time to go to court

Small Claim - on line

- <https://www.moneyclaim.gov.uk/csmco2/index.jsp>
- **Full name** and **address** of the person(s) you wish to make a claim against
- **Amount** you wish to claim (with interest)
- **Facts** relating to the claim e.g. dates, times, events, invoice numbers
- ...and you have all of this because...

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A few random
thoughts...

Diversify
or
specialise?

Copyright

A BBC contract clause used to ask you to sign away your copyright and moral rights ...

To all media, for all time
...in the known universe.

If owning your
copyright is so
important to them...

Make sure they
understand it is of
great value to you too.

One reason why
companies fail is
because they have no
assets to sell when the
bad times come.

A camera and copyright
are both company assets

So, sweat your assets.

Copyright is a real
money making asset

www.pond5.com
www.beamups.com
www.stockfootageonline.com
www.ingenioustv.co.uk

Copyright is the gift
that keeps on giving

Get proper legal advice

How many of you have
a pension?

DO IT
GET ONE NOW!
AS SOON AS POSSIBLE

Give your clients a
good experience

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All of this is on the
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