The Placement Diaries: Week 24 - Setting Up Freelance Profiles, Finally Having the Right Tools, and Getting My First Potential Client

25th February 2022

I finally managed to set up some freelance profiles, by testing out different platforms and seeing which ones stick. So far, I've tried out 99designs, PeoplePerHour, and Ko-fi, just by seeing which platforms work best for me, as well as figuring out how to use them. Sure, I could try out literally every single platform ever, but it won't be a good use of my time, plus I don't want to deal with platform fatigue, where I post the same few things on each platform, in the hopes that someone will come across it, because let's face it, it will get tiring really quick, plus there'd be a lot to maintain, so for now I'm sticking to a few handful.

However, despite applying to 99designs, I didn't get accepted at all, especially since it's an industry specific platform, where they only pick a few designers who have lots of experience as well as those with a good skill set, so at the moment, I'm not qualified for that platform yet, but I could try again next year and see what happens.

As for the other platforms, there's a slightly lower barrier to entry, although you still have to apply to be a freelancer on PeoplePerHour, it's a good way to get started in the freelance market, in order to build up your experience so that you can get accepted to the more industry specific platforms, although building up experience naturally takes years to do, and there's no way that you can fake it, let alone take shortcuts, because that'll just make things harder and longer when they don't need to be.

Ko-fi has the lowest barrier to entry, and literally anyone can sign up to it in just a matter of minutes, not to mention the fact that you can offer different things on that platform, as well as being able to potentially have multiple sources of income from just one platform, which is what I like about it, not to mention the fact that Ko-fi put their creators first and don't obsess over money like how most other platforms do, which makes it really friendly, as well as it being a platform which can do a lot of things. On that platform, I'm planning on not only opening up commissions, but to potentially sell products as well as having different avenues of income, and whilst it won't happen overnight, I'll build up on it over time, so Ko-fi is basically the best platform out there for me since it's very versatile, and there's a lot that I can do with it, not to mention that there's no hidden things (such as discreet ads and algorithms) which I'm aware of, so it's all good.

I've also finally got the right tools to do the job, and buying them was only made possible through the Enterprise Grant, despite being able to easily afford those things

otherwise, but I used the grant in order to get experience in applying for funding, which will definitely come in handy in the future, when I apply to open calls and such. In short, I got a graphics tablet and a one year subscription to Adobe Creative Cloud, which doesn't sound like a lot, but it's what I need in order to do the job effectively, not to mention that these items were long overdue, so I'm glad I've got them now.

I tried to use different and free alternatives to Adobe Creative Cloud, but after having used them for a few months, they didn't work for me, and I need to accept the fact that I can't just be a 100% pure ethical anticapitalist idealist because that won't cut it, as well as being able to use the right and most effective tools for the job, even if it involves paying for them, along with them being tools that you're already familiar with, not to mention that they're the industry standard for a reason.

I've used those tools after 2 years, and it feels like I never left. As corny as this sounds, it feels like I've come home after a long time because I'm finally starting to do things again, by being able to focus more on the outcomes that I produce rather than the tools I use, because I've realised the long and hard way that focusing too much on what type of tools you use (as well as the company who makes them) is just a distraction and is something that you can easily get caught up in if you're not careful, and at the end of the day, you just want to use things that just work, instead of having to needlessly tinker around with your tools just to be able to make them work.

Yes, I have to pay a subscription to use Adobe Creative Cloud, and whilst it is annoying to just rent out the software, it's what I know best, plus I don't have the time and energy to learn new things in order to do more or less the same job, so in this case, having access to Creative Cloud is just another bill for me to pay (I'm not complaining about it), and is something that I'd factor in when it comes to pricing my work, for both clients and customers.

Speaking of which, I managed to get my first potential client this week, which (with anything new) is both nerve wracking and exciting. However, I'm not that anxious about it since it's literally someone from the Enterprise Team giving me my first opportunity, so that I can well and truly try out freelancing by working for an actual client, and (hopefully) getting paid to do so. It finally feels good to be able to do what you're good at, and why I kept talking myself out of it over the past couple of months, I'm not entirely sure, because all I've done is put things off for a while, but at least now, things are finally starting to happen, and it feels like everything is slowly starting to come together.

So, that's been my week so far, and hopefully my first commission works out well, not to mention that I'm finally coming out of the dark, with things becoming clearer all the time.