

7 Ways to Make Money Storytelling

By Rebecca Matter



In 1964, a 5-year-old boy sat in a darkened movie theater for the very first time. He was mesmerized by the tale of a magical nanny who brings a world of tea parties on the ceiling, dancing penguins, and popping through chalk pictures on the pavement ... and a crusty bank director named Dawes, portrayed by the legendary Dick Van Dyke.

Fast-forward more than 50 years, and he's once again mesmerized by Van Dyke as a crusty bank director telling a story to a new generation of Banks children. But this time, he's the movie's *director* and he was so moved to tears by the performance, he was too emotional to even utter the word "Cut" at the end of the scene ...

That's the power of good storytelling.

The young boy turned award-winning director is Rob Marshall. And the magical nanny is, of course, Mary Poppins.

The classic 1964 version of *Mary Poppins* was a groundbreaking film for Walt Disney. It was nominated for 13 Academy Awards and won five. Marshall's *Mary Poppins Returns* was released in December to rave reviews, and it's already garnering award nominations.

If you've seen either *Mary Poppins* — or both — you know the magic and wonder of the stories and the range of emotions they stir up. Good stories are hard to resist.

But stories do much more than simply entertain us. They also influence the way we think, and even what we feel. Stories have the power to sway the way we see the world ... not to mention our decision-making processes.

That's why telling a good story is one of the most powerful skills you can have as a writer. And it's an easy way to make your copy memorable — as well as profitable.

So today, I'm going to show you how you can use your story-writing skills to boost your income, and where to find the most lucrative story-based writing jobs.

But first, let's dig a little more into the science of why good stories are so valuable to businesses ... and why they'll gladly pay you to write them!

Let's say a company puts out a brochure with a list of facts and statistics. Your brain processes that information as an intellectual experience. Interesting and educational, but not necessarily memorable.

You might be able to recall a few of the facts, but probably not all. That's because informative writing only taps into your cerebral cortex, which is the part of your brain that decodes words into meaning.

A well-told story, on the other hand, takes the reader on an emotional adventure. It involves the language-processing areas of your brain along with many other areas — including your sensory cortex.

The sensory cortex is the part of your brain you'd use if you were actually experiencing the events of a story. It's the area where you detect sight, sound, taste, smell, and touch.

When you're involved at a *sensory* level, it's easy to feel like you're *in* the story, which is the reason you remember stories more so than statistics.

And when stories are used in persuasive writing, the *story* becomes representative of what's being sold or presented.

Persuasive writers who know how to tell a good story use it to move people to action, whether that means buying a product or service, making a donation, signing up for a free newsletter, or picking up the phone to talk to a member of the company's customer service team.

And THAT is why good storytellers stand to make a great deal of money.

This quote from AWAI Founder Mark Morgan Ford sums it up perfectly ...

"You're a good writer if you can write a story that can make people cry ...

"You're a better writer if your writing can make people laugh ...

"But, if your writing can **persuade people to take action** — that's when you know you can be a very *wealthy* writer."

So now that you understand why storytelling is important in good copy and content, let's look at some of the projects where you can use that skill and the amount of money you can earn ...

7 Paid Writing Projects that Benefit From Good Storytelling

1. Case Studies

Fees: \$1,250-\$2,000

Case studies are success stories that detail a customer's experience with a company's products or services.

Their goal is to tell the story of how a company or individual solved a challenge using a product or service. In other words, a "before-and-after" story.

If you have a journalistic background or mindset ... this project is ideal for you!

2. Emails

Fees: \$150-\$500 (and upwards of \$1,250 in B2B, or for more experienced writers)

Companies email prospects and customers on a regular basis — often daily. Stories keep their emails interesting, and encourage readers to engage in a real conversation.

If you like writing short, conversational copy, this is a great opportunity. Along with fitting your style, the frequency of writing emails is very high — so you can make a lot from just a few clients.

3. Long-Form Sales Letters

Fees: \$2,000 to \$10,000 plus royalties

Story-based leads often outperform all others when it comes to long-form sales letters ...

The story draws the reader in while breaking down their resistance to "being sold," and engages them for the entire letter.

4. Social Media Campaigns

Fees: Upwards of \$2,000/Month

Social media platforms were built to share stories ...

And it's where companies' customers and prospects are connecting, researching, and making buying decisions.

As a social media writer, you'll use stories to grab their attention, and connect on a personal level ... to start and then further develop a relationship with the client.

5. Video Marketing

Fee: Upwards of \$200 per video minute

Videos are an effective way to connect with any online audience and allow you to tell your story visually.

If you have any desire to teach ... or you come from the screenwriting world ... this is definitely for you.

6. Blogs

Fee: \$100 to \$500 per post

Like social media, the blog was created to share a story! They often have an ongoing theme, and your job is to discover and write new stories that are related to the theme.

7. Websites

Fee: \$1,500 to \$3,500 for a small website (5-7 pages)

Whether you're telling the story of how a company first came to be or you're telling the stories of many satisfied customers, website pages often house a variety of short stories interlaced with a common theme.

As you can see, stories can play a role in every form of copy and content ...

Compelling stories entertain, inform, and offer value to readers. Which makes them more likely to connect with your clients and their products and services.

They also cut through the noise, grab people's attention, and make the messaging more "real."

So put your storytelling skills to use! Decide which project types interest you most, and get going.

And while your stories may not win any literary awards ... your clients will certainly value every word you write. And that's when you'll see your freelance writing income soar.

Ready to put your storytelling skills into practice? Which type of storytelling appeals to you? Do you have any questions about getting started? Please share with us in the comments below.

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4 Responses to "7 Ways to Make Money Storytelling"

So what AWAI program do you recommend for developing this important story-telling skill!?!

Guest (John) – over a year ago

That's a great question, John. I don't think they have a course that teaches story-telling just yet, but I recommend reading some great fiction or memoirs. Go to a book-selling website and look for reviews that say things like "I felt like I was right there with [character]!" Get a copy and after reading a particularly engaging paragraph, take out a notebook and list the words that referred to the senses (sight, hearing, touch, that eerie sixth sense). It only takes a sprinkle to make a big impact. [Btw, I can write that course.]

Carey E – over a year ago

I took the courses on how to write in these formats. Where do I find the companies who are hiring writers to do this work at those rates?

Guest (Pete) – over a year ago

i have a story to tell but i dont know how to write a story im not very good at it when i so this i was very excited and happy that there is some way of help in this i dont have much confidence and i really dont know what to do but reading all this has made feel that i might just have a chance

Guest (parveen hussain) – over a year ago

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