U.S. Skilled Freelancers Are Estimated to Have Earned $234 Billion in 2020, According to Fiverr’s Freelance Economic Impact Report

May 19, 2021 12:00 PM EDT

Report reveals skilled freelancers in the U.S. feel hopeful, productive, and confident about their work in a post-pandemic world

NEW YORK--(BUSINESS WIRE)--Fiverr International Ltd. (NYSE: FVRR), the company that is changing how the world works together, today released its fourth annual Freelance Economic Impact Report, a comprehensive study that identifies and profiles the largest markets in the United States for skilled freelance workers. In partnership with Rockbridge Associates, the report analyzes secondary data sources, including the U.S. Census Bureau, to determine the size and revenues of U.S. based skilled freelancers. The Nonemployer Statistics series, based on a review of over 20 million tax returns, reveals there are over 6 million skilled freelancers working in creative, technical or professional positions in the United States, earning an estimated $234 billion in revenues in 2020.

This press release features multimedia. View the full release here: https://www.businesswire.com/news/home/20210519005128/en/

"2020 has been a challenging year but also one that propelled the digital workforce to heights we never could have imagined. For skilled freelancers, the pandemic exacerbated the difference between those that, up until now, had chosen to work offline, and those that had opened their eyes to online opportunities,” said Micha Kaufman, CEO at Fiverr. “The numbers don't lie and it's now abundantly clear to all that this form of work is a viable career choice for millions of people nationwide. Independent work is no longer a segment of the workforce that can be ignored.”

Skilled Freelancer Trends Across The U.S.

- Skilled freelancing is here to stay in a post-pandemic world. More than six in ten (63%) skilled independents believe their industry wasn’t impacted or there are more opportunities because of the pandemic. Three-quarters of skilled independents (75%) are more hopeful than fearful about the future of skilled independent work.

- Freelancing offers a viable source of income during a time of high unemployment. Six in ten (59%) skilled independents say their revenue was the same or greater in 2020 than in 2019 before the pandemic. Eight in ten (80%) skilled independents expect to make the same or more in 2021 compared to 2020.

- Freelancing provides freedom and flexibility for work and where skilled independents live. Eight in ten (79%) skilled independents believe their work gives them the freedom to live wherever they want and choose when and where they work.

- Online platforms help freelancers stay competitive. Four in ten (41%) freelancers that use online platforms say their revenue has increased compared to before the pandemic, as opposed to just one in five (19%) non-users. More than half (57%) believe they will earn more revenue in 2021 compared to 2020 while just four in ten (41%) of those who do not use the marketplaces believe the same.

- High-speed internet and friendly people make a community attractive for freelancing. Nearly all (92%) skilled independents say their community has high-speed internet available, and more than three-quarters (77%) think their community has friendly people. Similarly, three-quarters (76%) of skilled independents are in communities where they are near their clients.

Shifts in Major Markets for Skilled Independent Workers

- Miami overtakes Chicago to become the third largest market for skilled independents. Miami, which ranks 7th by total population, saw its skilled independent workforce grow by more than 10 percent in just one year, from 2017 to 2018, the latest year for which data are available from the Census Bureau. This increase led it to surpass Chicago and become the third largest market by number of workers in 2018 at just under 200,000, a lead that it held onto in our 2020 projections. In comparison, Miami’s total population grew 0.4% from 2017 to 2018, on par with the U.S. as a whole.

- Warm weather markets are heating up for skilled independent workers. In addition to Miami overtaking Chicago, other warm-weather markets climbed the rankings as well in 2018 (the latest year for which data are available from the Census Bureau). By revenue, Phoenix surpassed Seattle, Las Vegas overtook Baltimore, and Riverside climbed above Portland. For all three markets that rose in rank, revenue growth was driven by creative and professional services. In fact, Riverside was the fourth fastest growing market for creative revenues from 2013-2018 at 53 percent, while Las Vegas ranked fifth for professional services revenue growth at 43 percent. Also, San Diego and Phoenix edged out Minneapolis by workforce size.
Creative professionals in Los Angeles and New York City combined earned just under $11 billion in revenue for 2020. Los Angeles and New York City remain the two top markets for creative professionals, each with well over 100,000 workers. New York creative professionals earned over $5 billion in revenue, while Los Angeles actually generated more revenue from these workers by almost $1 billion ($5.9 billion). Nashville only has about 20,000 creative skilled independents but is the only other market where these workers collectively earn at least $1 billion.

Hilary Ross-Rojas, Research Director at Rockbridge Associates adds, “Skilled freelancers are highly satisfied with their independent work, more so than the traditionally employed, contributing to their optimism for the future and grit through the adverse economic conditions of last year. They have big plans for the post-pandemic future, with new marketing and offerings and more training and education to support their business expansion, and we look forward to expanding our insights on this population with Fiverr in the years to come.”

The top 30 cities in Fiverr’s Freelance Economic Impact Report in order of fastest-growing by population for skilled independents are: Orlando, FL; Nashville, TN; Miami, FL; Austin, TX; Tampa, FL; Las Vegas, NV; Charlotte, NC; Dallas, TX; Portland, OR; Houston, TX; Riverside, CA; Phoenix, AZ; Denver, CO; Atlanta, GA; Los Angeles, CA; San Diego, CA; Seattle, WA; New York, NY; Sacramento, CA; Washington, D.C; Philadelphia, PA; Baltimore, MD; St. Louis, MO; Pittsburgh, PA; Boston, MA; San Francisco, CA; Detroit, MI; Chicago, IL; San Jose, CA; Minneapolis, MN

For more detailed information and to view the full report visit fiverr.com/freelance-impact.

About Fiverr

Fiverr’s mission is to change how the world works together. For over 10 years, the Fiverr platform has been at the forefront of the future of work connecting businesses of all sizes with skilled freelancers offering digital services in more than 500 categories, across 9 verticals including graphic design, digital marketing, programming, video and animation. In the twelve months ended March 31, 2021, over 3.8 million customers bought a wide range of services from freelancers across more than 160 countries. We invite you to become part of the future of work by visiting us at fiverr.com, read our blog and follow us on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.

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Source: Fiverr International LTD.