Freelance Economy Grows Amid Workforce and Economic Volatility, Expanding Across Every Major U.S. City

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Forget coasts: Las Vegas and Nashville are now America's highest-paying cities for freelancers, according to Fiverr's Freelance Economic Impact Report

Impact Report

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NEW YORK, Dec. 03, 2025 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- Economic shifts are remaking where and how Americans work, as the estimated population of independent professionals increased in every one of the United States' top 30 markets last year, with cities like Las Vegas and Nashville offering freelancers the highest average earnings, according to a new report released by Fiverr International Ltd. (NYSE: FVRR) today.

Analyzing data from millions of tax returns and Non-Employer Statistics compiled by the U.S. Census Bureau, the annual Freelancer Economic Impact Report developed with market research firm Illuminas estimates the size, growth, and earnings of the independent professional workforce in top markets from 2019 through 2024.

The data uncovers significant shifts in where and how America's freelancers are working, with the fastest growing markets for the number of freelancers including Orlando (32%), Miami (32%), Nashville (24%), Las Vegas (22%), San Antonio (20%), and Dallas (20%). Revenues increased the most in Miami (71%) and Orlando (62%), while New York, Los Angeles, and Miami had the highest number of freelancers overall.

Defying their reputations as solely entertainment and tourism hubs where artists, musicians, and performers chase their dreams, freelancers in Las Vegas ($62,083), Nashville ($61,569), and Los Angeles ($61,303) had the highest average incomes, showing that freelancing can help make those dreams financially sustainable. Despite ranking 22nd in total number of freelancers, Nashville outearned much larger markets for creative services revenue, ranking third behind only Los Angeles and New York City.

Reversing declines seen in some tech hubs, such as San Francisco and San Jose, during the pandemic, all 30 markets experienced growth in independent workers in the past year. The surge aligns with other data showing that U.S. businesses have increased freelance hiring by 260% in recent years. The U.S. now has an estimated 6.9 million independent professionals and nearly 4 million freelancers concentrated in the top 30 cities — an annual increase of 4.3%. The report also shows independent professionals in the U.S. are estimated to generate $319 billion in revenue, representing 1.1% of U.S. GDP, and $208 billion in just the top 30 markets.

"Freelancing has become one of the most powerful forces reshaping the American workforce," said Fiverr's Head of Community, Michelle Baltrusitis. "People are no longer tied to a single company or city; they're building flexible, fulfilling careers on their own terms. The future of work is already here, and it's independent."

According to Beau Vallis, a Miami-based Fiverr freelancer: "Miami gives you sunshine — freelancing gives you freedom. I went all-in on both, and it changed everything. Tens of thousands of projects later, I've helped transform lives worldwide… including my own. I cannot be more thankful for the life and flexibility freelancing has provided."

The report categorized cities into nine groups based on their freelance economies, growth rates, and demographics. Three patterns emerged:

- Sunbelt Professional Havens (Miami, Orlando, Tampa, Jacksonville, and Phoenix) experienced the fastest growth in the number of independent professionals and revenues over the past 5 years.
- Lone Star Boomtowns (Dallas, Houston, and San Antonio) were the second-fastest-growing market group, based on the number of independent professionals, and the third fastest in revenue. These markets are also young, with higher percentages of their total population falling under the age of 35 compared to other markets, and more diverse.
- Rising Tech Hubs (Austin, Denver, Atlanta, Charlotte, Raleigh, Richmond, and Salt Lake City) were the third-fastest-growing in independent workers and second-fastest in revenue, and may be the next tech hub for freelancers as the tech economy in general shifts from the large tech centers to smaller cities.

Additional findings from the report include:

- Location-driven earnings gap: There was a 60% difference between the highest average earnings market ($62,083 in Las Vegas) and the lowest ($38,871 in Minneapolis), with independent professionals in the top 30 markets earning $52,002 on average, around $5,748 more than the overall U.S. average.
- 3.5 million professional service freelancers (including those in legal, accounting, marketing, bookkeeping, management consulting, and business support) comprise more than half of independent workers (51%) and nearly half of the revenues (48%).
- 1.8 million technical service freelancers (architecture, computers, data processing, design, engineering, computer/IT, and scientific services) make up 26% of workers and 36% of revenues.
- 1.5 million creative services freelancers (artists, video producers, writers, performers, and sound professionals) represent 22% of independent workers nationally and 16% of revenues.

See the full report here, along with an interactive map where you can check out the data by region.

Methodology
The research was conducted by Illuminas in partnership with Fiverr, analyzing annual U.S. Census Bureau Nonemployer Statistics (NES) datasets from 2013–2023 to identify trends in the skilled independent workforce — defined as creative, technical, and professional independent workers across 26 NAICS industry codes. This data series, compiled by the Census Bureau, is based on tax filings from approximately 30 million businesses across 450 NAICS industries that have no paid employees or payroll, are subject to federal income taxes, and have receipts of $1,000 or more. The report

includes 2024 estimates for the total number and revenues of skilled independent workers, calculated by applying a balancing weight—based on the most recent market-level and U.S. GDP data—to 2021–2023 growth rates and projecting them from the latest available 2023 figures.

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Fiverr's mission is to transform the way the world creates and works together. We're shaping the future of work with the world's leading open platform, seamlessly connecting top talent and cutting-edge technology with businesses around the globe. From expert freelancers in over 750 skilled categories to best-in-class GenAI models and agents, Fiverr provides the most advanced and comprehensive talent and tools for digital services —helping businesses complete mission-critical projects quickly and cost-effectively.

From small businesses to Fortune 500 companies, millions trust Fiverr for projects in software and AI development, digital marketing, finance, business consulting, video animation, music, architecture, and more.

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