

Creative Endeavors & Income

Paul T E Cusack, BScE, DULE

23 Park Ave. Saint John, NB E2J 1R2 Canada

Linked-in, that internet company sent me an advertisement for a position as a writer with Urban Writers. It was unusual in my lifetime experience that the company stated up from what the income would be. They gave a range of \$1-\$1.4 per 100 words. They expect you to write 2000 words per day including research. That's about 7 pages per day of writing production. They expect you to maintain an internet connection and a home computer. That rate is an income of a maximum of \$28 per day! Subtract any materials you need like pens and pads and books to read for inspiration an idea.

I do write that much on a good day, or maybe a couple of days strung together, but not consistently although I do write something every day.

I also do photography mostly of architecture in Saint John, my hometown. My photos are posted on Wikimedia. My photographs are used in pieces all over the world and in a variety of languages. Big Oil can afford to pay for my photographs they use, but Shutter stock said my photographs were not good enough to sell. They are used by big oil and government reports for example.

In addition to photography, I do paintings in watercolor and acrylics. For example, I did a series on the ghost buildings-buildings that were torn down and exist on in the memory or in photographs. I frame most of them. I had put some of my paintings on KJI- an internet classified ads site. The only comment I got was from a woman who asked why I was charging as much as an unknown painter. I was asking \$75-\$150 per original framed painting. I asked a friend who would be a target customer how much she would pay for a painting? She answered \$16. I said the frame cost me \$12.

I wrote letters to the editor in the local newspaper owned by billionaires. I did submit longer pieces that were not published. There were about 150 letters to

the editor over a span of perhaps 5 years. Didn't make a cent despite that I helped them sell newspapers.

I wrote and self-published over 40 books on lulu. Even professors of Literature buy used books because they are cheaper which never gets the money to the writer. Lulu takes too much of the profit from the books an author tries to sell. I tried selling my books online to no avail. A large book chain carried one of my books selling only 3 copies in as many days. I was told, they are not selling. You might as well take them back.

I also wrote 17 blogs. One of the blogs was 4300 posts which I turned into a series of books on Cosmology. I deleted the blogs hoping that the readers would purchase the books. They didn't.

Finally, I write academic research papers. My most popular papers are in medicine, although my top paper is that one on cosmology. My papers help solve such disease as schizophrenia; that alone saves the health care systems billions of dollars per year. I wrote 800 papers; not a cent income. I write papers in virtually every sphere in which universities teach. Even though I'm the one doing the work, I'm expected to pay to have my papers published. Did you know that the New England Journal of Medicine charges \$3,300 US to publish a paper- if it's accepted?

A writer once said, you're not a writer unless you earn a living from writing. Not sure about that. The curator at the local museum said when I displayed my photographic calendars, in the book business, you make it big or not at all. I think she was right.

Some creative endeavors do make it big. Take Oprah on Television for example. She a billionaire. Jennifer Aniston made \$20 million per episode for the popular series "Friends". Madonna or the Rolling Stones

make millions in music. Wayne Gretzky made millions in hockey and even more after hockey with his investments. Universities is another business where the student doing the hard work of earning a degree or job training pays- through the nose – for education. My experience is that most people don't work at the degree they take. Even practical degrees such as civil engineering depend largely upon the state of the economy when you graduate.

A lot of transactions take place today on the internet. The motto of the internet I'm told is "Information for free". Indeed, Wikipedia and Wikimedia is all free information. A computer clerk told me "There is nothing free on the internet anymore." Has anyone been able to figure out how to make money off the internet? The internet seems to be replacing big box stores I think mainly due to the convenience of internet shopping with products shipped to your door. UPS and FedEx is making a killing. The Internet does provide some free services such as a

TYPEMATH SYMBOLS. The operating system LINUX has a free version and a paid version. I don't know if they are profitable.

It seems that it is difficult to make money from creative works in this new economy, but it is a trick to figure it out. Seems the underlying service provider from universities to couriers to camera manufactures are the ones making the money. Schools train kids in working for free. The most ones get is a star on their work or a degree on the wall. Maybe we should stop it? It was written in an MBA course I took that Madonna was not the best singer nor the best looking, but she was the wealthiest singer in her genre because she knew how to market herself better than the rest. Maybe there is a lesson to be learned there. Is it all about Marketing? Those with a Business seem to me to be best at developing and implementing a strategy for financial success. Some civil engineers make less than unionized secretaries.