



# **Stop Thinking Like a Freelancer: The Evolution of a \$1M Web Designer**

*Liam Veitch*

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# Stop Thinking Like a Freelancer: The Evolution of a \$1M Web Designer

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## **Stop Thinking Like a Freelancer: The Evolution of a \$1M Web Designer** Liam Veitch

### Make Freelancing More Stable

Freelancing is difficult. It's tough to plan for growth (in client volume and revenue) when current income is too unstable to even consider anything beyond the here and now.

This book dives deep on making freelancing more stable, beating "treading water" cycles, repelling 'bad apple' clients, multiplying online exposure and follows the journey of Liam, with honest, clear advice and guidance from laptop and rented desk to \$1m web agency.

### Achieve the freedom you're looking for

A perennial business builder who 'finally got something to work', Liam Veitch has many strings to his bow along with many failures to learn from. Web designer and now founder at UK based web agency Tone ([tone.co.uk](http://tone.co.uk)) as well as freelancer community Freelancelift ([freelancelift.com](http://freelancelift.com)) this book comprises everything he wished he knew first time around.

In his own words, he did freelancing 'right this time' and this book comes from a realisation that in the three years which passed - this second time round as a freelancer - the business has generated over \$1.1M. This debut, feature length book lays out the key mindset fixes which made this possible.

### Who's it for?

This book exists to help freelancers earn more this month than they did last month, by leveraging big-business thinking and creating a state of constant evolutionary improvement.

"My intention is to describe my experiences and provide inspiration and practical advice for putting them to work in your business. These experiences have led to an enormous amount of financial freedom and professional predictability for me...something I could only dream about before."

### What's inside?

226 pages of honest, actionable advice to help you build something incredible from your tiny freelance business.

- Make freelancing more stable
- Beat "treading water" cycles
- Repel 'bad apple' clients
- Multiply online exposure
- Build income predictability
- Have dream clients find you
- Leverage recurring revenue
- Work less while earning more

### Let's do this

The purpose of this book is not to show you how to build an agency, nor is it to improve the actual service you're providing (I'm making the assumption this is already the best it can be). This book is here to help give a fresh perspective in a space dominated by mediocrity.

Your time is now.

As a one-person business, it's easy to think that you're somehow exempt from that word... 'business'.

I'm here to tell you this is what keeps most freelancers thinking like, well, freelancers. Screw that! This book serves to lay out everything I wish I'd have known first time around. It's been exhausting, a blast, and I can't wait to show you what I came up with.

## **Stop Thinking Like a Freelancer: The Evolution of a \$1M Web Designer Details**

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# From Reader Review Stop Thinking Like a Freelancer: The Evolution of a \$1M Web Designer for online ebook

## Eystein says

You can think of this as a companion or light weight alternative to Tim Ferris' 4 Hour Workweek. Many good tips and ideas - which will only work if you actually implement some of them :) Doesn't have to be all!

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## Schalk says

This was an good read. Liam did a really good job and provides a lot of great information for freelancers looking to evolve their freelance business. There is some repetition here and there, especially if you have taken the Udemy course or are a member of Freelancelift but, there is enough unique content in the book to justify a purchase and read.

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## Curtismchale says

This was a quick read and had lots of useful tips.

One of my favourite sections was the 10 failures listed at the end of the book. If you can simply avoid most of those your business is going to be much better off than it would have been. P

Worth a read by any freelancers, you'll certainly pick up some tips.

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## Maciej Bak says

Very good book!

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## Tomas Laurinavicius says

An inspiring and actionable book for every freelancer interested in growth, better life, less stress and more money. I like how easy it reads and provides useful advice that I started implementing in my own business.

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## Miguel Ángel Alonso Pulido says

Un libro-guía muy interesante para todo trabajador autónomo que desee llevar su negocio al siguiente nivel. No ofrece consejos garantizados ni nada que uno realmente no sepa, pero lo formula de una manera diferente (al menos para mí) y es bastante directo. Recomendable si quieres que te den un punto de vista distinto sobre

el tema.

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## Cara says

Quick read, lots of good tips. I'd heard most of this before, but it was a useful refresher. This dude could sure use a good editor, but overall, it was worth a read.

### Highlights:

We certainly didn't apply for this 'Chief Octopus' role. When it gets in the way of focusing on what really matters, it becomes a real threat to the business. [Read more at location 414](#)

1. What is your destination? What is your vision, how might your life might be different and what will this take in terms of a specific time, or money. Example: If I have \$8,000 a month in revenues I'll be able to live well, lease a great car and not be so reliant on working so hard, giving me more time with the family 2. What are your specific objectives to get there? What needs to change from your current benchmarks to make that happen? Example: I need to double my income – here are my chosen objectives: Objective 1 = Increase traffic by 30% Objective 2 = Increase average project fee by 30% 3. Which areas could you be a specialist in? If you have areas you're currently serving which can be grouped, add them here. Or if there is an area you're particularly comfortable in you can include that too. Don't be afraid to take more than one at this stage. Example: I can specialize in on web design for the music industry 4. What is the worldview of that prospect? Combine answers from questions like the ones below, to draw out a picture of the worldview of this prospect. What do they think they need? What else are they trying? What is their general perception of businesses like yours? Example: Bands and musicians think they need a site which offers an extension to their current social media presence. They have a need to be taken seriously, so an official web presence is required. They are having limited success building out their own WordPress sites or by using platforms like Squarespace. They perceive web designers to either provide generic designs or be overly expensive vs DIY options. 5. Why are you different? Taking a lead from your answers in number 4, how can you reverse some of these worldview aspects and position yourself as different to the 99%? Example: I know how to ensure maximum engagement with websites – this results in a site that's more 'sticky' and has a potential to deliver more music & ticket sales to the band or artist. My pricing supports both new and established artists and given my experience being involved in the industry I am clear on the goals of artists, to generate more exposure and be noticed by labels and fans. 6. What are you committing to? Put simply, what are you putting into this? Are you going to invest in your 'Me Project'? If so, what is the maximum you can commit to per week and when will that be? Even if its an hour a week, make it really specific. Example: I'm going to do 3hours on a Monday morning then 2 hours on Thursday, before opening my work emails. I'll be in early on those days and commit 5 hours per week in total 7. How are you going to hold yourself accountable? How often will you look back on results and what specifically will you monitor? Example: Every Sunday, prior to the Monday AM burst of 'Me Project' work I will check on traffic numbers – I'll consider 2% or more growth in traffic per week as a success. Then I'll give myself a beer for every project I win over 50% of my benchmark. I'm looking to hit my destination within 6 months. Once you have this brief map of intent created, it's time to move on to the next phase. Download full versions of the tools, resources and worksheets which support this book, by heading to [freelancelift.com/book](http://freelancelift.com/book) [Read more at location 855](#)

"To which I say, 'so what are you not saying in your copy, that you're saying in person?'" [Read more at location 1063](#)

1. What do they care about most? What are their virtues and values? Do they value time, money, happiness,

belonging? What drives them on a personal level?Read more at location 1084

2. What positive qualities do they carry? Every client should have positive qualities to bring to the table. Bad apples will not display these or will only showcase negatives. Are they passionate about their craft? Driven? Motivated to do more? Super-friendly? Well-connected? Generous?Read more at location 1089

3. How clear is their vision? Will they allow you to flex your expertise and imagination to help them reach their goal, or will they stifle your creativity by having pre-conceived ideas?Read more at location 1094

4. What is their financial outlook? If you are going to make more money every month, you need to work with financially liquid clients. This should not be confused with wealth, though. Some wealthy clients are a pain and barter over every penny, while others will pour their life into investing at the very limits of their capability for the right project.Read more at location 1099

5. In real terms, what do they expect working with you to deliver? When scoping out a client and project, you should have clear areas you can make an impact on. When you spell out the upside, specifically, and get the client's buy-in, it makes justifying a cost almost trivial. If you have a clear objective the client believes you can achieve, you have the freedom to build a fee that's weighted against this upside.Read more at location 1105

The formula for this statement is fairly basic, and deliberately so as it should be easy to create and adapt over time. [brandname] [standfor]. We help [customer] by [the frame] with [primary] and [secondary]Read more at location 1172

Put into words how you improve the lives of your clients. Try to do it without mentioning your primary or secondary service. Example: I provide the confidence that comes from income stability and business predictability.Read more at location 1219

"I work best with [insert dream client characteristics], if you're looking for quick results for the lowest cost, or for someone to simply take your instructions I don't think we'll be a good fit for each other." If you know what the early warning signs are for good and bad clients, you can repel potentially bad clients by convincing them that they 'need not apply'. You don't need to put it in negative terms, either. This technique works for simply extending any touchpoints on your site or onboarding process so that you allow prospective clients to self-select which 'bucket' they fall into.Read more at location 1287

If you do have the opportunity to scope out the project before drafting your the proposal, try to get as much detail as you can about the upside your client expects from this new project. Some great questions to ask are: What is your average customer worth? Will this logo/website/application/ebook/content make it easier for you to get clients? Will this save you time? How much? What does success look like to you? What is holding you back from hitting your current targets?Read more at location 1402

They need to know you understand their problem, 'pacing' is a storytelling technique where you put in the work to describe their problem so clearly and vividly that they can almost imagine themselves pacing up and down, in their own mind trying to solve it. Understand what it is they really desire from investing in this project, and leave no doubt in your pitch or proposal that your solution will solve this problem easily, efficiently and conclusively.Read more at location 1432

When drafting a value-based pitch or proposal, you only need to do three things: Build value Justify the investment & upside Ask for the sale Adapt to your own needs, but here is an example structure to

follow:Read more at location 1440

By not managing expectations, you're leaving the door open for bad apples. Here are the questions that will likely come up during the early stages of a relationship. If you can pre-package answers to these questions, you'll mold a client to the way you want to do business, not the way they want to. Who is working on my project and who do I contact day-to-day? Can I give you my suggestions up front? If so, how? How often will I hear from you? How will you update me on progress? What is the best method of communication?Read more at location 1520

You need to figure out what prospects are looking for when they absorb information about the projects you've completed before. Pretty pictures help but what really sets you apart is a short, punchy case study covering how your work made a difference, set against the backdrop of the prospective client's worldview and their core values (as highlighted when we mapped out the dream client).Read more at location 1586

It's up to you alone to paint a picture of your dream client. With this information you can engineer a perception of value and a core reason for being which will attract their attention and repel bad apples. Framing this value in website messaging and backing it up with good discovery, effective communication and an excellent proposal will allow you to bill two or three times more than you do currently and keep over delivery to a minimum.Read more at location 1622

Top bracket freelancers like Paul take the exact opposite stance and see this as a strategic challenge - an objective they must achieve to extend their reach and increase the size of their online footprint. They strive to be visible in the areas their dream clients are too loyal to move away from.Read more at location 1771

To overcome the 'I don't care' reflex you should tie your experiences to the struggle your dream clients (or indeed peers) are experiencing and a good story is useful for that purpose, building attention with empathy. What's your struggle? How did you overcome them Why do you do this? What are you most proud of?Read more at location 1841

You'll get more out of your social media presence by looking to it more objectively, as a: ? Networking tool ? Promotion tool ? Audience nurturing tool ? Customer service toolRead more at location 1927

Personally, I have the Buffer App on my iPhone, which allows me to pull in RSS feeds from the channels I pay attention to. Read more at location 1954

Then keep in mind the three C's when it comes to social, if your presence ticks all these boxes you have a recipe for a valuable, interesting set of profiles. Creator Curator Chatterbox Successful social media accounts have a healthy mix of these three areas.Read more at location 1971

3. Teach, but build intrigue and demand By developing content that gives "tip of the iceberg" messaging and addresses a pain or a problem your prospect is facing you'll create a sense of curiosity that pushes a dream client closer to your "buy" zone. Without resorting to deception, try to leave some ideas open or push users in the direction of other content, to engineer a hunger for understanding more.Read more at location 2010

Sites like Quora and Medium offer a great way to broadcast your message further than your current online circle allows. Utilizing both, you can have a blog set up in 10 minutes, which you can then re-post your own blog content to.Read more at location 2142

A rye smile broke across my faceRead more at location 2159

We've already outlined who our dream client is, so you should look to profile who these are and what their characteristics are. Don't be afraid to look for the level below the top if necessary. I recommend building clear criteria for your 'stepping stone' client. Take this as an example: - Client must have credibility in their area of expertise. - The brand must be recognizable and established. - The brand must be connected and relevant to my vision. Creating a specific list of 'stepping stone' clients is rather simple – you should have a go right now. Once you have established who your ideal client is, you can begin to draw a personal path to the top of the pyramid. Read more at location 2227

Subject: An idea/feedback for [prospect-name] [your-skill] enhancement/improvement Dissected: There is no mention of an offer here; you're providing ideas or feedback for enhancement first. This starts the dialogue in a collaborative tone. The subject is the most important element here, but within the body content you should address: - A particular pain point this prospect might have (Tip: A globally true pain or fear is being overtaken by competitors) - That this is in no way a pitch, only a contribution from a follower with ideas - That a reply is optional, you'd be just pleased they consumed it. This is known as 'an easy out'. Arguing against the primary purpose of your contact is a surefire way to ensure you do get a response. Read more at location 2260

The second potential benefit of being an active contributor to discussions is the visibility and authority you might generate with parties who may eventually be your clients. Blogs and online brands with a good amount of comments (average 10-30) per post are perfect, as these will have an active, engaged audience. Too many and you'll be lost in the mire, too few and you'll find it to be a bit of a ghost town. Read more at location 2323

Here is my take on approaching influencers: Build a target list of around 20 influencers whose message, outlook and audience match your own You must be confident they (and their audience) would get value from your content and have something you'd like their opinion on Have an engagement map (to ensure you're visible on their radar) Two blog comments Follow on Twitter Two tweets Two shares of their posts on social Personally email to make a more real connection with a purpose This 'purpose' could simply be a second look at one of your own content pieces it could be to introduce yourself and ask for an interview which you can house on your own site but the idea is to send that email with a distinct goal in mind in order that you can be sure of a response. Read more at location 2335

You have a great opportunity to establish expertise and an authority level in your space by utilizing Q&A platforms. In the online space you have a few options: Quora Clarity Reddit Stackoverflow (Tech & programming) The idea here is to be visible as an authority in your area and surprisingly few freelancers follow this technique through. There are lots of questions your ideal client persona will be posing, as will your peers. Read more at location 2349

Download full versions of the tools, resources and worksheets which support this book, by heading to [freelancelift.com/book](http://freelancelift.com/book) Read more at location 2415

"I just wanted to let you know that while the scope of the project didn't actually include [over delivered item] I would like to do it for you, in the spirit of partnership at no additional cost." Read more at location 2595

Getting on the path to creating a product I created a platform specifically for freelancers looking to build products; Handiwork so it would be impossible for me to lay out everything in this book (or it would be twice the length) but here are the 10 main questions you need to ask if you're considering building out a product: What's the big idea?



Who (specifically) will buy it?  
What problem does it solve?  
Where do they hang out online?  
How will you pull these to your offer?  
What is their “tipping point”?[Read more at location 2923](#)

Your ideal customer right now is at point A. This is their status quo, with a regular, specific pain. Point B is their enlightenment, the point at which the problem is solved and they are happy. Very few of your customers will be at point A when you’re selling them your solution. The Internet has brought an army of “doers”. We all naturally take to Google each time we need a problem solved. So at what point along their information-gathering journey will they get stuck? What is the most common sticking topic? They have restrictions that will prevent them getting past a point of ‘self-treatment’, if you can swoop in at that “tipping point” and show them the path to their enlightenment you will garner instant authority, credibility and be in the driving seat to make the sale.[Read more at location 2924](#)

Why should they trust you?  
How will you frame your offering?  
What is the resulting USP?  
How will you turn this into revenue?[Read more at location 2949](#)

if nobody values it more than the money in their pocket there is almost always a problem with clarity of message. You can only have a simple, clear proposition if first you know specifically who will buy the product and what they really care about.[Read more at location 2967](#)

Would you like to win more logo design gigs? You need to know more about this style of design and I can show you how. VS Would you like to know more about Illustrator? My product is... The second version will inspire the ignore reflex and a reaction of “No – leave me alone” Once you’re clear on this and you build a clear message that frames these surface problems as symptoms of an underlying problem you’ll have a much better proposition, which you can take to market.[Read more at location 2981](#)

So add an option for ongoing support to your next proposal, make sure you frame it as a no brainer option, being sure to speak to the worldview of the client and filling in the gaps in their knowledge. If they are generally not tech savvy talk to them about keeping a CMS updated or by preventing malicious attacks. If they are new to your area, talk in and around training or ‘help by email’. If they are time-poor frame it as a service to help them do the things they can’t, like reminding when its time to do certain activities.[Read more at location 3028](#)

An extension to this is to offer a retained option to your service. That is to say, a regular, agreed piece of the work (or time allocation) at a reduced rate based on a longer-term commitment. So if you’re a writer, this could be a monthly blog post to extend out your services, if you’re a web designer this could be bi-weekly split-testing to boost conversions, as a marketer this could be weekly analytics review.[Read more at location 3073](#)

a ‘free blog setup’ option. For no additional cost, he’ll handle the domain configuration, setup WordPress with a theme that looks good for the client’s market, migrate in the content he has created, install relevant plugins and ensure everything works well, at no extra cost. He can afford to do this – and not be bankrupt - as he makes a clear stipulation, they have to use his recommended hosting supplier. The setup takes around 30 minutes but his client sees this as superb value, then with a platform like WP Engine or Bluehost (Tom’s choice but not mine, as the commission on Bluehost is slightly less than WP Engine) he can earn \$175-200 in

commission for the new customer. For this value-add aspect of his service, he's earning \$350-400 per hour. Read more at location 3097

Sales & Marketing Attraction & Conversion Customer Retention Product Management Reporting Market Research Operations & Infrastructure Finance Human Resources IT & Systems Customer Service Administration Production & Fulfillment Service Development Service Delivery Service ImprovementRead more at location 3374

the UIHD technique, it's a simple way to ensure more efficient communication with clients as well as a more fluid workflow with outsourced support. Read more at location 3516  
??? never explained?

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### **Povilas Korop says**

Amazing book for changing the mindset of selling time for money, to actually making more money, while scaling your services, delegating tasks, coming up with processes and systems. Recommend to anyone who calls himself a freelancer. Don't.

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### **Angela Randall says**

Really solid advice for freelancers who want to step up.

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