How Much Time do I Charge For?

If you are just starting your business, you may want to offer an hourly rate. This is a good way to get to know your limitations, and also what services you really enjoy and want to offer your clients.

VA Time Checklist for Potential Client

Timing: One of the hardest things when you first start your business is HOW much time do I budget for a certain task? I always encourage my VA's on two very important subjects

  a) Actual Time Spent – TEST IT – don't offer a client anything you have not done for yourself or another client. I am ALWAYS testing how long something takes to do (and researching how to make my time more efficient).

  b) Test It on Yourself – what better person to test then YOUR VA business? See how long it takes you to set up a newsletter, blog, social media post, etc.

Below is an ESTIMATE of how I charged clients when they asked for certain services from AssistantAngel. Keep in mind this is on a specific needs basis and each client is VERY different.

Please Note: If I start doing a task and I go over the time I estimated for the client, I do NOT go over that time without written consent. Many times I eat the time and use it as a learning / life lesson. If there is a HUGE discrepancy (for example, the data is way more complicated than the client realized, I would call and follow up with an email telling them what I am running into.)

Most clients are VERY understanding of time, as long as you are up front and honest. Also, don't wait until the day before something is due to call them. I usually try to do a first stab at things within a day or so of receiving the signed proposal and payment.

Client Need Times:

Step 1: Determine the Time for the client Needs

(See below sample list)

Event

◊ Plan for 2 hours

Blog

◊ If you write it plan for 2 hours,

◊ If the client writes it plan for 1.5 hours

Newsletter Update

◊ Varies on the needs of the client (from 2 to 4 hours)

Social Media Updates

◊ Varies on the needs of the client (from ½ to 2 hours)

Step 2. Analyze

Take the Task the Client needs x VA Hours (your rate) = $Total

◊ For Example – if you have an event to add for a client to their registration site and local postings plan for 2 hours x $30 / hour (example) = $60

◊ If the client is going to need events posted on a consistent basis, you may encourage the client to purchase x hours per month.

◊ Offer a discount if they sign with you for 6 months or longer.

Step 3: Proposal

Update the Proposal with EVERYTHING you spoke of. Make sure EVERYTHING is in writing. You never want to "assume" anything.

Keep in mind; everyone is nice during the negotiation period. Relationships can be strained when a challenge arises, you will want to have your tasks noted in the Proposal accordingly.

Step 4: Review and Send

Review the proposal; send to the client in a PDF format. ALWAYS cc yourself on the email so you know it went through.

You want to make sure that no one can edit the document before signing.

Here is a link for a free program that will allow you to transfer a Word document to a .pdf format.

<u>PDF Creator</u>

http://sourceforge.net/projects/pdfcreator/   Simply select a printable Windows file, print to the PDFCreator and your document will save in PDF format. You can then read, print or e-mail the finished product.

Install PDFCreator carefully. Some have complained about PDFForge toolbar, which is included. It apparently directs users to urlseek20.vmn.net. You should have the option of not installing it. However, some people believe it installs regardless.

If you install the toolbar and have problems, it can be uninstalled. Click Start>>Control Panel. In Windows XP, double-click Add or Remove Programs. In Vista, double-click Programs and Features. In either, find the toolbar in the list and remove it (info compliments of Kim Komando (www.Komando.com)

Procedure

1. Document Information – Open a File

2. Complete New Client Checklist

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3. Schedule Phone Consult

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4. Take Good Notes

5. Repeat Back to the Client what it is they are looking for

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6. Follow Up with a thank you Email

7. Calculate amount of time you will need to do the tasks required. (See above VA Time Checklist for Potential Client)

8. Send Proposal on specified day (as promised or a day earlier). Be sure to note what date the proposal is good through. (I have had some clients call me 1 year later and want to use an old proposal..:o))

9. Set up a reminder to follow up with client to see status of proposal. (You can use www.FollowUpThen.com to have an email reminder sent to your inbox).

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