

# INDEPENDENT CONTRACTOR/ TEMP AGENCY EMPLOYEE SURVEY

**T**wenty-four percent of all STC members identify themselves as consultants or contractors. In 2003, STC surveyed a sample of its consultant/contractor members who live in the United States and Canada. The survey included questions about income, types of work, work environment, and other issues.

STC sent this survey to 3,059 people, 321 of whom responded (a response rate of approximately 10 percent). Of these, 268 responses from independent contractors and 120 responses from employees of temp agencies were used in the results that follow. (Other responses were discarded because respondents gave incomplete or self-contradictory information.)

The income tables incorporate data only from respondents who worked 35 hours per week or more and who grossed \$10,000 per year or more. (Note: The hours per week refers to the total billable and non-billable hours.) All income figures represent gross income. The column headings for these tables are defined below.

**Base**— The total responses in a given category.

**Mean**—The value computed by averaging the tabulated responses.

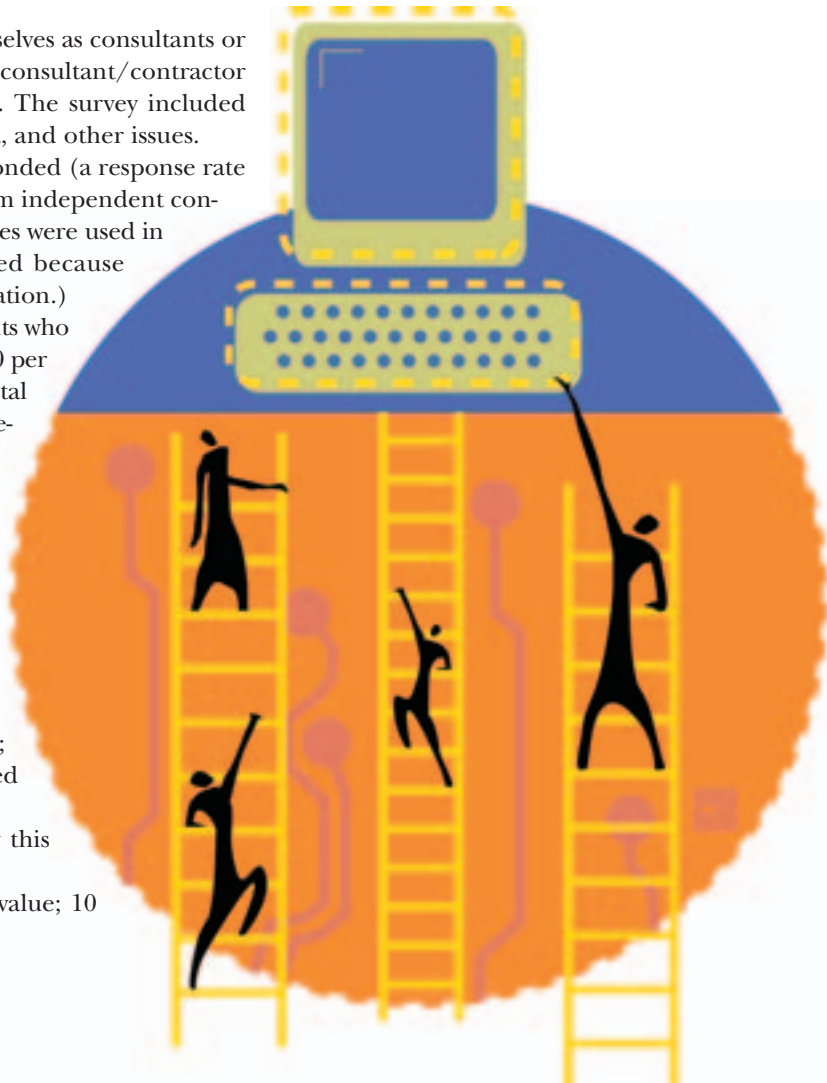
**10%**— Ten percent of the responses were below this value; 90 percent were above this value.

**25%**— Twenty-five percent of the responses were below this value; 75 percent were above this value.

**50%**— Fifty percent of the responses were below this value; 50 percent were above this value. (This is also called the *median*.)

**75%**— Seventy-five percent of the responses were below this value; 25 percent were above this value.

**90%**— Ninety percent of the responses were below this value; 10 percent were above this value.



## Work Habits—U.S.

During a typical week, how many hours do you work?

How many hours do you bill?

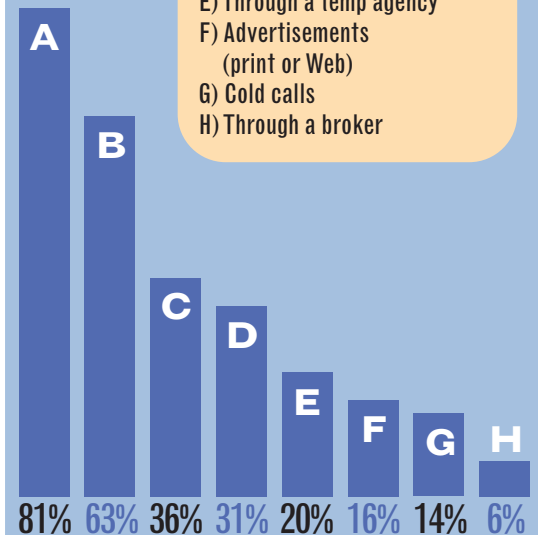
	Base	Mean	25%	50%	75%
<b>All Respondents</b>					
Hours Worked	244	38	30	40	44
Hours Billed	244	35	30	40	40
<b>Independent Contractors</b>					
Hours Worked	194	38	30	40	45
Hours Billed	194	34	25	35	40
<b>Temp Agency Employees</b>					
Hours Worked	106	40	38	40	44
Hours Billed	106	38	36	40	40

## Marketing—U.S.

### INDEPENDENT CONTRACTORS

How do you get new clients? ⇨

- A) Referrals
- B) Reputation
- C) Networking through STC
- D) Networking through other organizations
- E) Through a temp agency
- F) Advertisements (print or Web)
- G) Cold calls
- H) Through a broker



## Job Satisfaction—U.S.

### ALL RESPONDENTS

How many years have you worked in the technical communication field?

15 years (average)

### INDEPENDENT CONTRACTORS

Is being an independent contractor what you expected?

Yes .....	92%
No .....	8%
	100%

Given the choice, would you opt to be an independent contractor rather than hold a full-time, salaried position?

Yes .....	79%
No .....	21%
	100%

### TEMP AGENCY EMPLOYEES

Is being an employee of a temp agency what you expected?

Yes .....	88%
No .....	12%
	100%

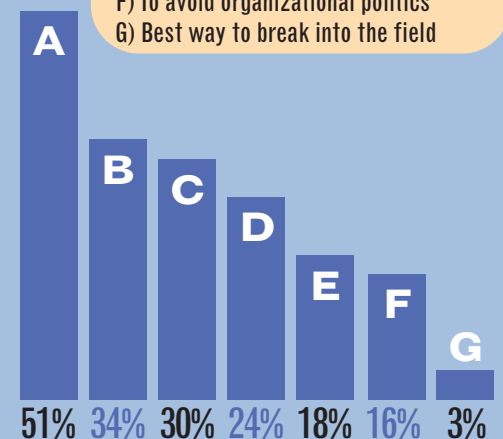
Given the choice, would you prefer to be an employee of a temp agency rather than a full-time salaried employee of another type of company?

Yes .....	61%
No .....	39%
	100%

### ALL RESPONDENTS

Give the most important reasons why you are an independent contractor or temp agency employee. ⇨

- A) Flexibility in work schedule
- B) Opportunity for greater income
- C) Prompted by getting laid off
- D) Need for autonomy/independence
- E) Makes the most of my skills/ interests
- F) To avoid organizational politics
- G) Best way to break into the field



⇨ Because respondents were asked to give multiple answers, percentages do not add up to 100 percent.



## Conducting Business—U.S.

### INDEPENDENT CONTRACTORS

On average, what percentage of your work is performed on a fixed contract (one price for the job)? What percentage is performed on an hourly rate?

Fixed contract .....	17%
Hourly rate .....	83%
	<u>100%</u>

Regardless of your actual employment status, which category best describes your level of authority on your current contract or project?

Staff .....	53%
Supervisor .....	3%
Project manager .....	30%
Other .....	14%
	<u>100%</u>

Do you subcontract work to others?

Yes .....	24%
No .....	76%
	<u>100%</u>

What percentage of your work is performed in each of these environments?

A rented office .....	3%
Home .....	57%
Client sites .....	40%
	<u>100%</u>

## Legal Status—U.S.

### INDEPENDENT CONTRACTORS

What is the legal status of your business?

Sole proprietorship .....	69%
Partnership .....	1%
Limited liability company .....	5%
Corporation .....	20%
Other .....	5%
	<u>100%</u>

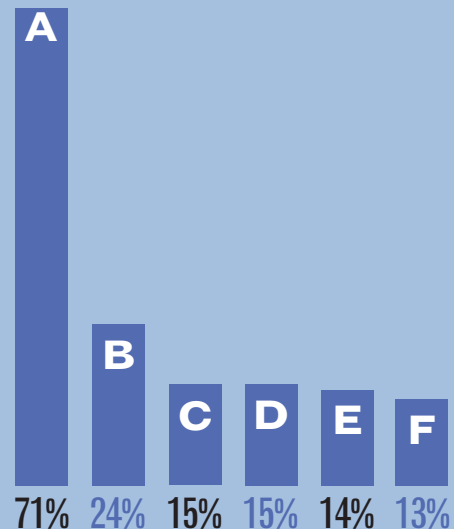
### TEMP AGENCY EMPLOYEES

What is the legal status of the entity that issues your IRS 1099?

Sole proprietorship .....	11%
Partnership .....	1%
Limited liability company .....	11%
Corporation .....	70%
Other .....	7%
	<u>100%</u>

## ALL RESPONDENTS

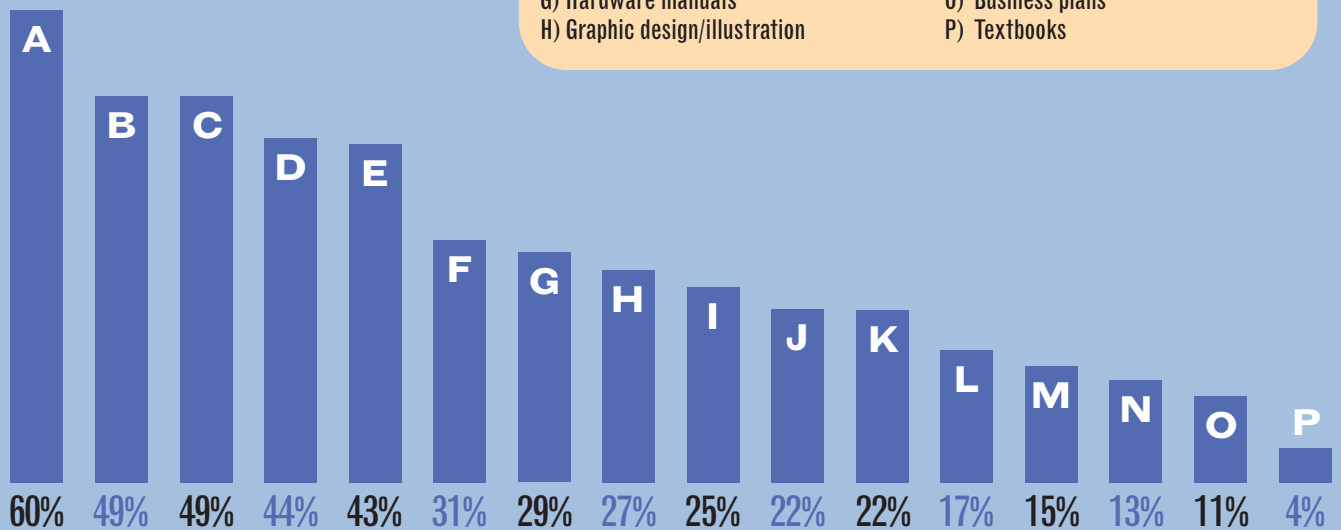
In which industries do you work? ⇨



## Kinds of Business—U.S.

### ALL RESPONDENTS

What do you produce for your clients? ⇨

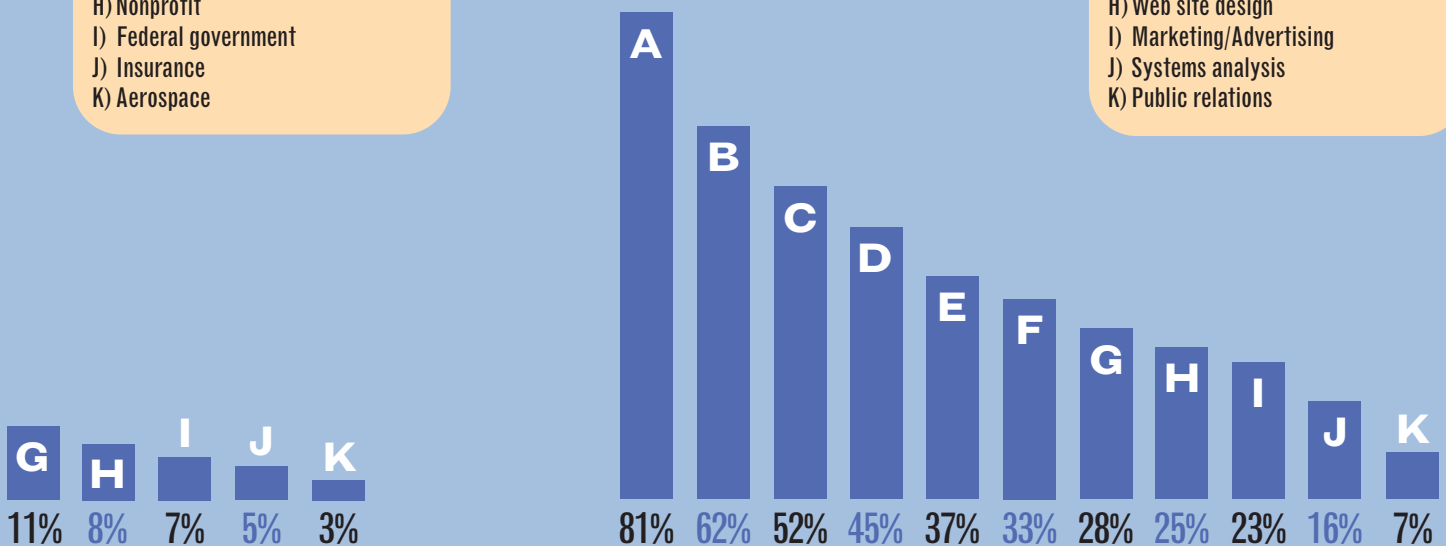


- A) Software manuals
- B) Technical reports/documents
- C) Training materials
- D) Online information systems
- E) Policies/procedures
- F) Web pages
- G) Hardware manuals
- H) Graphic design/illustration
- I) Corporate communication
- J) Promotional materials
- K) Indexes
- L) Multimedia presentations
- M) Newsletters
- N) Magazine/journal articles
- O) Business plans
- P) Textbooks

- A) Computer/hardware/software
- B) Medical/health care
- C) Engineering
- D) Manufacturing
- E) Telecommunications
- F) Education/university/academia
- G) Banking/finance
- H) Nonprofit
- I) Federal government
- J) Insurance
- K) Aerospace

### ALL RESPONDENTS

What kinds of work do you do for your clients? ⇨



- A) Editing
- B) Desktop publishing
- C) Copywriting
- D) Project management
- E) Training
- F) Indexing
- G) Business process analysis
- H) Web site design
- I) Marketing/Advertising
- J) Systems analysis
- K) Public relations

⇨ Because respondents were asked to give multiple answers, percentages do not add up to 100 percent.

## Income — Annual Wages—U.S.

### STC's 2003 Independent Contractor/Temp Agency Employee Annual Income Survey

(Note: The figures below represent U.S. dollars per year. Respondents reporting less than 35 hours [total billable and non-billable] of work per week or a gross income less than \$10,000 per year were not included in this table.)

Grouping	Base	Mean	10%	25%	50%	75%	90%
<b>Total</b>	164	\$74,710	\$36,000	\$50,000	\$70,000	\$86,000	\$120,000
<b>Independent Contractor</b>	122	71,850	36,000	45,750	68,000	85,000	124,000
Sole Proprietorship	79	68,910	35,900	50,000	68,000	80,000	101,600
Corporation	21	83,220	—	41,250	80,000	108,750	—
<b>Temp Agency Employee</b>	76	78,170	36,440	52,000	70,000	87,420	120,000
Sole Proprietorship	5	54,400	—	—	—	—	—
Corporation	45	87,360	—	52,500	73,300	89,500	—
Limited Liability Co.	8	77,660	—	—	—	—	—
<b>Education Level</b>							
Bachelor's	91	76,220	38,480	54,750	70,000	85,230	107,900
Master's	58	69,700	34,110	46,250	66,000	82,500	122,000
Doctorate	5	72,160	—	—	—	—	—
<b>Sex</b>							
Female	88	75,970	34,110	50,000	64,500	85,000	117,600
Male	76	73,250	37,990	50,000	71,000	88,000	120,000
<b>Age</b>							
30–39	24	67,040	—	52,000	64,000	75,000	—
40–49	56	81,410	34,200	40,000	70,000	88,000	123,600
50 years and over	81	71,990	38,480	50,000	70,000	87,250	120,000

## Income — Hourly Wages—U.S.

### STC's 2003 Independent Contractor/Temp Agency Employee Hourly Income Survey

(Note: The figures below represent U.S. dollars per hour. Respondents reporting less than 35 hours [total billable and non-billable] of work per week or a gross income less than \$10,000 per year were not included in this table.)

Grouping	Base	Mean	10%	25%	50%	75%	90%
<b>Total</b>	178	49	30	35	50	60	65
<b>Independent Contractor</b>	133	51	30	38	50	60	74
Sole Proprietorship	82	48	30	35	50	55	65
Corporation	27	60	—	50	60	65	—
Limited Liability Co.	7	52	—	—	—	—	—
<b>Temp Agency Employee</b>	87	43	29	35	40	50	60
Sole Proprietorship	7	38	—	—	—	—	—
Corporation	51	44	25	35	43	55	62
Limited Liability Co.	10	42	—	—	—	—	—
<b>Education Level</b>							
Associate's	5	40	—	—	—	—	—
Bachelor's	97	48	30	35	50	55	65
Master's	65	49	25	35	50	60	71
Doctorate	5	59	—	—	—	—	—
<b>Sex</b>							
Female	98	48	30	35	50	60	65
Male	80	49	30	35	46	57	75
<b>Age</b>							
30–39	25	45	—	33	46	55	—
40–49	60	51	30	35	50	60	75
50 years and over	90	48	30	35	46	53	67

## Work Habits—Canada

⚡⚡ During a typical week, how many hours do you work?

⚡⚡ How many hours do you bill?

	Base	Mean	25%	50%	75%
<b>Independent Contractors</b>					
Hours Worked	49	41	35	40	50
Hours Billed	49	37	30	38	40

## Marketing—Canada

### INDEPENDENT CONTRACTORS

How do you get new clients? ⚡



## Job Satisfaction—Canada

### ALL RESPONDENTS

How many years have you worked in the technical communication field?

12.5 years (average)

### INDEPENDENT CONTRACTORS

⚡⚡ Is being an independent contractor what you expected?

Yes .....	85%
No .....	15%
	100%

⚡⚡ Given the choice, would you prefer to be an independent contractor rather than a full-time, salaried employee?

Yes .....	86%
No .....	14%
	100%

### ALL RESPONDENTS

Give the most important reasons why you are an independent contractor or temp agency employee. ⚡



⚡ Because respondents were asked to give multiple answers, percentages do not add up to 100 percent.

⚡⚡ Note: For this question there were not enough responses from temp agency employees to be statistically significant.



## Conducting Business—Canada

### INDEPENDENT CONTRACTORS

On average, what percentage of your work is performed on a fixed contract (one price for the job)? What percentage is performed on an hourly rate?

Fixed contract .....	17%
Hourly rate .....	83%
	<u>100%</u>

Regardless of your actual employment status, which category best describes your level of authority on your current contract or project?

Staff .....	55%
Supervisor .....	0%
Project manager .....	33%
Other .....	12%
	<u>100%</u>

Do you subcontract work to others?

Yes .....	35%
No .....	65%
	<u>100%</u>

What percentage of your work is performed in each of these environments?

A rented office .....	3%
Home .....	54%
Client sites .....	43%
	<u>100%</u>

## Legal Status—Canada

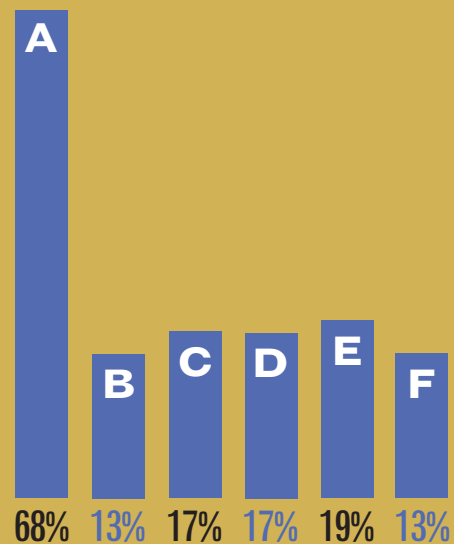
### INDEPENDENT CONTRACTORS

What is the legal status of your business?

Sole proprietorship .....	60%
Partnership .....	0%
Limited liability company ....	6%
Corporation .....	34%
Other .....	0%
	<u>100%</u>

### ALL RESPONDENTS

In which industries do you work? ⇨

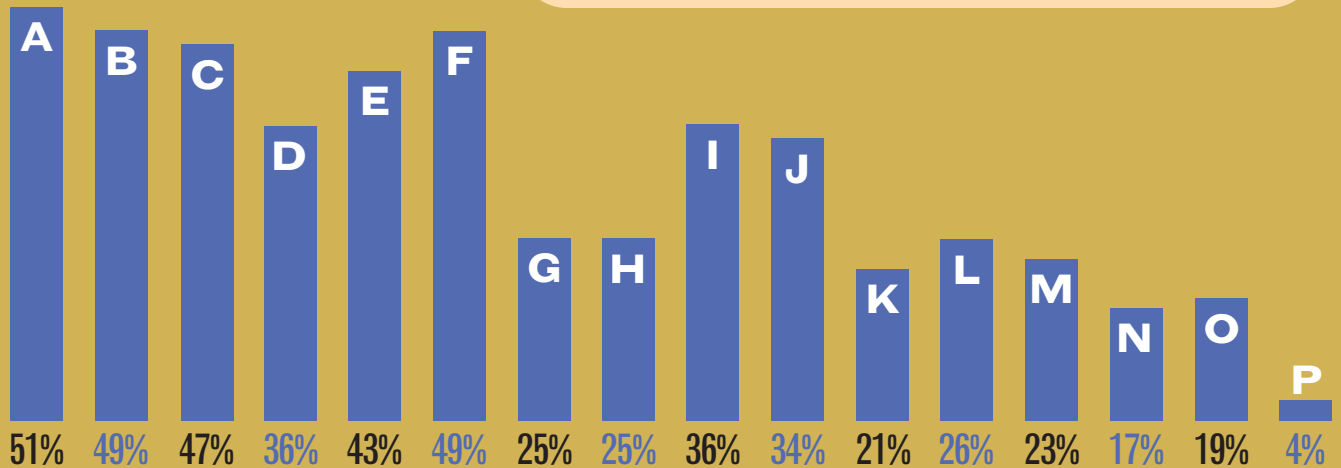


## Kinds of Business—Canada

### ALL RESPONDENTS

What do you produce for your clients? ⇨

- A) Software manuals
- B) Technical reports/documents
- C) Training materials
- D) Online information systems
- E) Policies/procedures
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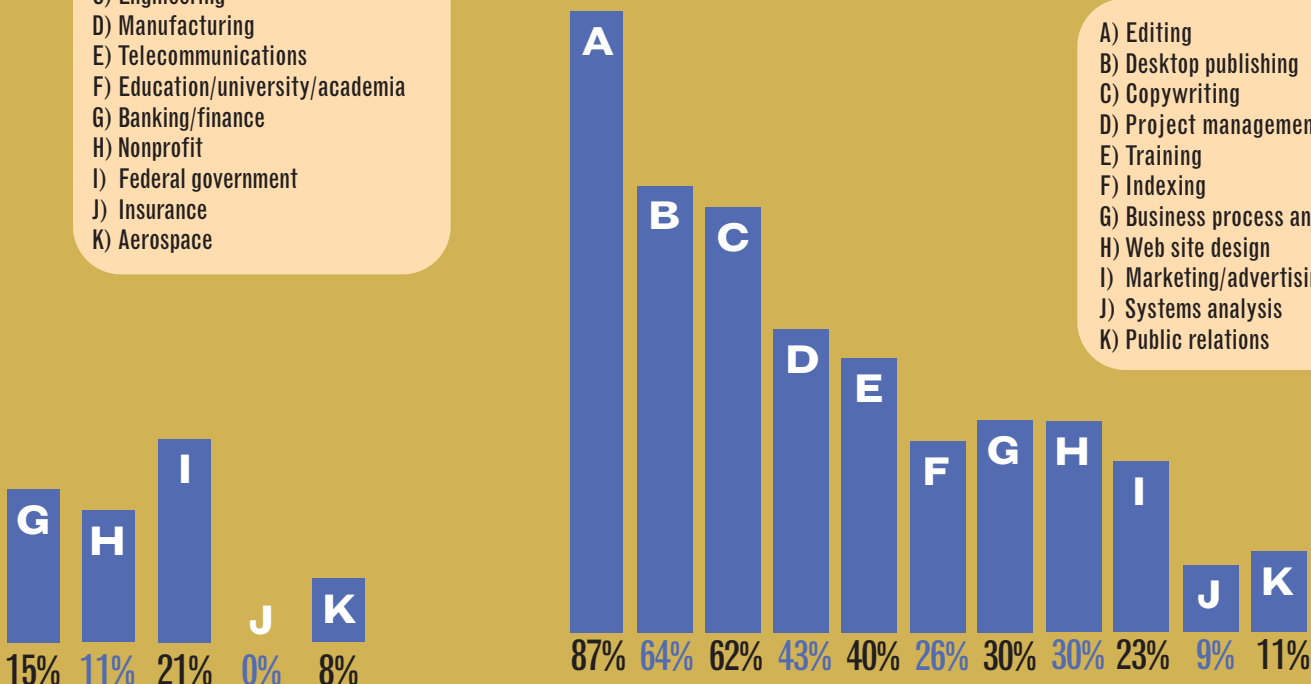


### ALL RESPONDENTS

What kind of work do you do for your clients? ⇨

- A) Computer/hardware/software
- B) Medical/health care
- C) Engineering
- D) Manufacturing
- E) Telecommunications
- F) Education/university/academia
- G) Banking/finance
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- A) Editing
- B) Desktop publishing
- C) Copywriting
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⇨ Because respondents were asked to give multiple answers, percentages do not add up to 100 percent.

## Income — Annual Wages—Canada

### STC's 2003 Independent Contractor/Temp Agency Employee Annual Income Survey

(Note: The figures below represent Canadian dollars per year. Respondents reporting less than 35 hours [total billable and non-billable] of work per week or a gross income less than \$10,000 per year were not included in this table. Because of the small number of responses, the 10 and 90 percent columns were not statistically significant and are not reported here.)

Grouping	Base	Mean	25%	50%	75%
Total	36	74,480	49,000	70,000	100,000
<b>Independent Contractor</b>	35	74,760	48,750	70,000	101,920
Sole Proprietorship	17	64,560	—	60,000	—
Corporation	17	88,470	—	75,000	—
<b>Temp Agency</b>	7	67,970	—	—	—
<b>Education Level</b>					
High School	5	78,900	—	—	—
Bachelor's	20	73,330	—	70,000	—
Master's	6	87,300	—	—	—
<b>Sex</b>					
Female	21	71,380	48,250	70,000	80,430
Male	14	76,590	—	71,000	—
<b>Age</b>					
30-39	6	64,960	—	—	—
40-49	15	80,080	—	70,000	—
50 years and over	13	74,500	—	75,000	—

## Income — Hourly Wages—Canada

### STC's 2003 Independent Contractor/Temp Agency Employee Hourly Income Survey

(Note: The figures below represent Canadian dollars per hour. Respondents reporting less than 35 hours [total billable and non-billable] of work per week or a gross income less than \$10,000 per year were not included in this table.)

Grouping	Base	Mean	25%	50%	75%
Total	39	51	35	45	58
<b>Independent Contractor</b>	38	52	36	48	58
<b>Temp Agency</b>	8	49	—	—	—
<b>Education Level</b>					
High School	7	50	—	—	—
Bachelor's	22	51	33	48	58
Master's	6	60	—	—	—
<b>Sex</b>					
Female	24	45	35	45	55
Male	14	62	—	50	—
<b>Age</b>					
30-39	7	44	—	—	—
40-49	16	56	—	53	—
50 years and over	14	53	—	50	—