

Salary Survey 2004 — Executive summary

Following is a summary of the ASI 2004 Salary Survey, including analysis and commentary on results of interest and historical comparisons.

Approximately one third of the ASI membership replied (227).

Age, Gender, and Years of Experience of Indexers

The number of indexers aged 50-59 years is up from 35% (2000) to 46% and the number of indexers aged 60-69 years is up from 9% (2000) to 14%. With the aging of the baby boomers, we see the “graying” of our membership. Also, indexing seems to attract folks as a second career so even newbies are likely to be older.

There is a slight increase in the number of female respondents and a decrease in the number of male respondents.

21% of indexers have less than 2 years’ experience in indexing, and 32% have more than 10 years’ experience in indexing.

Income and Rates

The **average income** range for full-time salaried indexers: \$50,000–\$54,999; for full-time independent contractors: \$45,000–\$49,999. Compared to 2000, freelancer incomes stayed the same while salaried indexer incomes went up.

11% of full-time respondents earn over \$100,000. This is an increase from the 2000 survey. 25% of the respondents earn less than \$10,000 from indexing. 37% of the respondents are part-time indexers.

All independent contractors earning over \$75,000 a year have been indexing for more than 8 years. All salaried indexers earning over \$60,000 a year have been indexing for more than 8 years.

Median income range by part of the country for all full-time indexers:

Northeast: \$50,000–54,999	Southwest: \$35,000–\$39,999
South: \$45,000–49,999	Northwest: \$30,000–\$34,999
Midwest: \$50,000–54,999	Canadian or other countries: \$40,000–\$44,999
Rural indexers: \$20,000–\$24,000	Suburban indexers: \$20,000–\$24,999
Urban indexers: \$30,000–\$34,999	

Indexers in the Northeast region made the highest median income while those in Northwest made the lowest.

Who earns more than \$80,000 per year from indexing

- 1) 90% were ASI members for over 10 years.
- 2) 71% say self-taught indexing skills were most important.
- 3) 38% have web pages.
- 4) 90% declared an area of indexing specialization.
- 5) 24% are incorporated.
- 6) 100% have been indexing for more than 8 years.

The **median rate** full-time professional freelancers charge: \$30-\$34 per hour; \$3.26-\$3.50 per page (in 2000 the median page rate was \$3.21).

Historical notes

In 1973, with low returns for this survey, the range of indexer income was \$9,000–\$30,000 a year and the range for hourly rates was \$7.50–\$12.50/hour.

2000 results:

- Median income for all indexers: \$25,000–\$29,999.
- Median income for salaried indexers: \$45,000–\$49,999.
- Median income for full-time freelance indexers: \$45,000–\$49,999.
- Hourly rates: \$15.00–\$60.00.
- 8–9% earn more than \$80,000/year.

2004 results:

- Median income for full-time salaried indexers: \$50,000–\$54,999.
- Median income for full-time freelance indexers: \$45,000–\$49,999.
- Hourly rates: 5% charge less than \$20/hour. Maximum hourly rate is over \$100/hour; median hourly rate is \$30-\$34/hour.
- 8% of all respondents earn more than \$80,000/year.
- 11% of all full-time respondents earn over \$100,000 per year.

Median Rates:

	1985	1997	2000	2004
per entry:	\$0.41 (.30-.75)	\$0.60-\$0.69	\$0.66 (.15-1.10)	\$0.70-\$0.74
per page:	\$1.50 (1-4)	\$3.00 (2-7.50)	\$3.21 (1.75-8.50)	\$3.26-\$3.50
per hour:	\$11-\$12	\$25-29	\$29.67 (15-60)	\$30-\$34

ASI Participation

There is more attendance at national and less at local events. 60% of the respondents have been ASI members for over 5 years, and only 21% have been members for less than 2 years.

There is a notable increase in SIG membership, which is up from 40-51%. This increase is about 20% over the 2000 result.

General Education

Educational levels are much the same, though there were some increases in high school and associate degree levels and a slight decrease at Bachelors level. 49% of the indexer respondents have Master's degrees and 12% have Doctorate degrees. There was also a slight increase in library degrees.

Indexing Education

There was a decrease the ranking of USDA indexing education, and an increase in education based on mentoring relationships and apprenticeships. 33% of the respondents indicated they are "self-taught."

Areas of Specialty

Largest areas:

- Computer science 17%
- Medicine/surgery 14%
- Law 13%
- Business/management 10%

Types of Indexing

Largest types:

- Trade books 66%
- Scholarly books 62%
- Textbooks 61%
- Reference books 59%
- Journals/periodicals 46%
- Technical documentation 24%

Indexing Software

SkyINDEX software shows the most increase in use by indexers, at 22%. Cindex is most widely used, at 53%.

Internet Use

99% of all indexer respondents use email, and indexers with Websites went up from 24% to 37%.

Salaried Indexers

There were decreases in the number of employed indexers who are paid overtime and in those receiving employer contributions to pension plans.

There were increases in the number of those receiving health insurance benefits, "other benefits," and in those whose employers offer contributions toward educational programs as well as stock options/profit sharing.

Independent Contractors

Incorporation status (only 8% are incorporated) or employee hiring (only 5% have employees) did not change much. Billable hours worked per week (44% work 17-32 hours/week; 7% work 50 hours or more/week) also did not change much.

On the other hand, there were increases in those who manage big projects (14%), and in those referring work to other indexers (64%).

The number of indexers who charge by the entry went down, and the number of those who charge by the page went up.

More than one-third of independent indexers offer other services in addition to indexing.

Fewer indexers are finding work through advertising and letters. More indexers are finding work through other indexers.

What we can learn from the self-employed indexers who earn more than \$100,000 per year

- 1) They have been indexing more than 8 years.
- 2) 38% have web sites compared with 37% of the general survey population.
- 3) 90% declared an area of indexing specialization.
- 4) 24% are incorporated compared with 8% of the general survey population.
- 5) 90% have been ASI members for more than 10 years.

Historical notes

Independent Contractors:

	1997	2000	2004
Incorporated:	6.2%	7%	8%
Have employees	6.7%	4%	5%
Manage large project	13.6%	8%	14%
Refer work to others	58%	58%	64%
Use contract: yes	16%	13%	12%

How jobs are obtained:

	1985	1997	2000	2004
Personal contact/referrals		56%		
Letters	32%	34%	39%	30%
Locator/directory listings	9%	25%	36%	25% (minus Locator)
Freelancer networks	2%	37.6%	37%	41%
Advertising	1%	12%	12%	9%
Internet-based marketing (other than website)				2% 4%

Writing for trade journals			2%	1%
Speaking engagements		4%	5%	
Mentoring relationship	5.3%	7%	6%	
Web sites			14%	19%
Cold calls	22%	28%	27%	
Previous employers		42%	25%	27%
Repeat business			83%	85%
<i>ASI Locator</i>			31%	

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