

Freelance Indexing

Presented by

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If you don't find it in the index,
look very carefully through the
entire catalogue.

(Sears, Roebuck, and Company *Consumers Guide* 1897)

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- Indexing process
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Information that cannot be located
might as well not exist.

(Nancy Mulvany, *Indexing Books*, 1994)

If you don't index it, it doesn't exist.

It's out there but you can't find it, so it might as well not be there.

(Barbara Quint, ASI San Diego Conference, 1994)

Indexing process

If you're an artist, you don't create a masterpiece by starting on one side of the canvas and painting linearly to the other side. You don't start at the top of the canvas and paint 'til you reach the bottom.

Rather, you develop the masterpiece in **bits and pieces at a time**; then you stand back, get a broader perspective, and start to **pull it all together**.

Indexing is like that, too.

[Lori Lathrop (former President of ASI), *Key Words* (May/June 1998)]

Indexing process

Indexing cannot be reduced to a set of steps that can be followed! It is not a mechanical process. Indexing books is a form of **writing**.

Like other types of writing, it is a mixture of art and craft, judgment and selection. With practice and experience, indexers develop their own style as do other writers.

The best we can do as teachers of indexing is to present the rules and offer guidance.

(Nancy C. Mulvany, *Indexing Books*)

Roles of the indexer

- **Writer** who pulls together information scattered throughout the text and organizes it into a logical, cohesive structure
- **Advocate** for the reader
- **Liaison** between the author and the reader
- **Editor/Proofreader** (last person to read the entire manuscript)

Freelancing:

Types of indexing

- Back-of-the-book
- Embedded
- Database
- Online help
- Web indexing

Freelancing:

Who needs indexing services?

- Publishing companies
- Packagers
- Authors
- Corporations
- Other indexers

Freelancing:

How do indexers find work?

- Researching and contacting publishers
- Researching and contacting organizations
- Networking with other indexers
- Using a “market mentality”
- Doing a good, professional job

Freelancing: **What determines specialties?**

- Educational background
- Work experiences
- Life experiences
- Hobbies
- Memberships in organizations
- General interests

Freelancing: **What tools are needed?**

- Computer with Internet/e-mail capability
- Software applications
- Indexing software
- Reference shelf!!!

Freelancing tools:

Indexing software

CINDEX™ (demo available for download)
Indexing Research
<http://www.indexres.com>

Leverage Technologies (LevTech)
training, support, and utilities for CINDEX™
<http://www.LevTechinc.com>

Freelancing tools:

Indexing software

Macrex™ (demo available for download)

Macrex Support Office, North America

<http://www.macrex.com>

SKY Index™ (demo available for download)

SKY Software

<http://www.sky-software.com>

Freelancing tools:

Indexing software

Add-on utilities for Adobe Framemaker

IXgen <http://www.fsatools.com>

IXgen: Indexing Tool for Frame (Anne C. Barrett)
A to Z: The Newsletter of STC's Indexing SIG (Vol 4 No 3: Sept 2001)
<http://www.stcsig.org/idx/pdf/2001sept.pdf>

IXgen: Tips, Tricks and Totally Cool Techniques (Anne C. Barrett)
http://www.stc.org/48thConf/postconf/anne_barrett.pdf

emDEX <http://www.emdex.ca>

Freelancing tools:

Reference shelf examples

- Biographical dictionary (Cambridge; Larousse)
- Culinary Arts dictionary (Prentice Hall)
- Geographical dictionary (Merriam Webster)
- People's Names (Ingraham)
- Telecom and Networking dictionary (McGraw Hill)

Freelancing tools:

Publications

Ament, Kurt, *Indexing: A Nuts-and-Bolts Guide for Technical Writers* (William Andrew Publishing, 2001)

Bonura, Larry, *The Art of Indexing* (John Wiley & Sons, 1994)

Fetters, Linda K., *Handbook of Indexing Techniques: A Guide for Beginning Indexers* (1999)

Mulvany, Nancy C., *Indexing Books* (The University of Chicago Press, 1994)

Freelancing:

What training is available?

- Correspondence courses (USDA/SI)
- College courses (Library Science curriculum)
- Apprenticeships/mentoring
- Companies (inhouse staff)
- ASI chapter meetings
- Educational workshops/conferences

Freelancing:

How do indexers stay informed?

- Reading publications
- Subscribing to indexing discussion groups (listservs)
- Participating in indexing-related organizations

Staying informed:

Publications

ASI Key Words (selected issues)

<http://www.asindexing.org/site/keypast.shtml>

STC Indexing SIG newsletter

<http://www.stcsig.org/idx/newsltr.html>

Suite 101 web site (indexing topics)

<http://www.suite101.com/welcome.cfm/indexing>

Staying informed:

Index discussion groups

Index-L — a general indexing discussion list

IndexPeers — volunteer reviews of edited indexes

IndexStudents — for new/wannabe indexers

Listservs also exist for the main indexing software packages.

Staying informed: **Indexing-related organizations**

American Society of Indexers (ASI)

<http://www.asindexing.org>

Society for Technical Communication (STC)

<http://www.stc.org>

STC Indexing SIG: <http://www.stcsig.org/idx/index.html>

Freelancing:

What's needed to be a successful indexer?

- Love of reading
- Analytical and detail-oriented mind
- Well-honed indexing skills
- Ability to work under pressure/tight deadlines
- Professional attitude
- Self motivation
- Good entrepreneurial/business skills