

Out On Our Own

Section Editors:

Sam Hamilton
sam@samhamiltonmwservices.co.uk

Kathryn White
Kathryn@cathean.co.uk



Editorial

Making the leap to become a freelancer is daunting enough, but once established how do we ensure our business has staying power? Thank you to our experienced freelancers who share their top tips for longevity. Never let it be said that

OOOO is one-sided – our newbie contribution comes from Tania Kotsokechagia who reports on her first ever EMWA conference. Our new 'Day in the Life' series begins with an interesting insight into the lives of fellow medical writers, Wendy Kingdom from the UK and Ingrid Edsman from Sweden. As freelancers, our organisational skills are certainly tested with the busy and varied lives we lead! Legal matters can be a daunting aspect for any business owner but cannot be ignored, so we are grateful to Tim Bradburn from the Professional Contractors Group (PCG) for his helpful commentary on the legalities of managing a business.

We include Gina Dungworth's entertaining piece describing the diverse range of blogs she writes alongside her day job authoring healthcare documents. This is with sincere apologies as this should have featured in March's edition of OOOO but due to an oversight on our part it is included this time. Tool box introduces the electronic note-taking software, Evernote®, while Freelance Foraging takes on a nautical theme.

After a tremendously successful new-look Freelance Business Forum (FBF) in Budapest in May 2014, we look forward to welcoming you to the FBF on Thursday 6 November 2014 at 17.15 in Florence. Experienced freelancers will again be on hand to share tips and answer your questions in the same relaxed networking atmosphere that we all so enjoyed in Budapest. Make a date in your diary and we'll see you there!

Kathryn White

Kathryn@cathean.co.uk

Sam Hamilton

sam@samhamiltonmwservices.co.uk

The secrets of longevity

Top tips for freelance durability

As we freelancers know, running our own business is an enjoyable challenge. It is certainly not for the faint-hearted, and we all strive to maintain a thriving business. So how do we ensure that we stay in business for the long term? We asked several of our most experienced freelancers to share their tips for longevity. A big thank you to Kari Skinningsrud, Ingrid Edsman, Sam Hamilton, Gillian Pritchard, Debbie Jordan, and Wendy Kingdom, who contribute over 60 years of cumulative wisdom as freelancers.

1. Tackle that triple constraint – time, cost, quality – wisely, by offering a range of services narrow enough to maintain an acceptable quality, speed of delivery, and competitive pricing, yet broad enough to

remain flexible while keeping the work sufficiently varied to keep it interesting.

2. Freelancing encompasses the roles of medical writer, company director, and a manager of marketing, sales, accounting, human resources, and information technology. Therefore, to minimise the administrative burden of running a business, establish a company infrastructure early on to include a computer environment (hardware, software, back-ups), document templates (proposals, invoices, time sheets), marketing tools (logo-type, business cards, website), accounting method, bank accounts, office space, and equipment. Investing in this infrastructure will free up time for more medical writing, which should in turn increase your income and your longevity as a freelancer.

3. Enjoy the kind of work you are involved with and then it won't feel like work at all. As a freelancer it is also important that you enjoy the business management aspects of being self-employed as this takes up a significant amount of time.
4. Always remember that your job is to help your clients. Provide what the client wants by sticking to the brief. Know exactly what the scope of the work is – review your facts early on and clarify any anomalies – and then ensure you provide exactly what is needed. If you don't provide what they need then they may be disappointed and may not come back to you for repeat business or recommend you to others.
5. If you think what a client is requesting is wrong, or there is a more appropriate solution for their needs, then of course you can advise them and make alternative recommendations, but in the end you need to give them the service they requested in order to fulfil your contractual obligations with them (barring anything that is against GCP or codes of conduct of course).
6. Tip 4 also applies to timelines – if the client wants it done by a set date and you have agreed to it then you need to stick to it, even if it means working late or working at the weekend. Therefore, whenever possible, ensure timelines are achievable and realistic before they are agreed.
7. Sometimes you have to say 'yes' to new work from a longstanding client even though you are already busy because if you turn work away enough times, sooner or later they will become someone else's longstanding client.
8. Remember that we work in a small, ever-circulating pool of professionals. No matter how challenging a team member/client is to work with, always behave professionally and courteously.
9. Build strong freelancer-client relationships. When colleagues move on to pastures new, they will remember you, your work, and your attitude. If you tick all their 'good' boxes, they will be more likely to contact you with new opportunities. As they say, 'what goes around comes around'.
10. And finally, don't try to become a freelancer too soon. Of course, 'too soon' is not an exact science and will vary according to the individual and what experience they've already gained. Don't forget that one company's processes may be very different from another's so having a wide range of experience is often beneficial for you and your clients.

Kathryn White
Kathryn@cathean.co.uk

The new girl's EMWA conference

This is my first year as a freelance medical writer and, as I have come to realise, a year of many firsts: my first new client, my first sleepless night worrying, my first invoice... The list is long. It is also the year of my first EMWA conference and a whole host of associated 'firsts'.

Considering attendance

Back in February 2014, when I started considering attending the EMWA conference, I realised that after years of going to conferences worldwide, not once had I paid for my registration or had any idea of associated costs, something that now had immediate relevancy for my decision-making process. I was in need of some advice and an insider's point of view, so I spoke with an established EMWA member whose enthusiasm and encouragement drove my decision, and convinced, I registered and signed up for three workshops as well!

The weeks before the conference were so busy I didn't have much time to ponder, and was just looking forward to a break and some sleep! Having been to Budapest twice before, I was excited to be returning, although not expecting to see much of it based on my previous conference experience. I had only arranged to meet in person one other attendee I had met previously via email, so I was on my own but feeling fine about it.

The beginning

After registering, I took a seat for the opening presentations and started talking to another delegate who could tell it was my first conference from the colour of my lanyard; yes, first-time attendees were colour-coded and stood out. Brilliant! A great conversational starter and a great way of making you realise you weren't the only first-timer. The

opening presentations were interesting, light and funny, which is exactly what I would have wanted. I thought 'This programme was put together by like-minded people!'.

Then came the welcome reception, and I can only repeat what was in my mind the whole time I was there 'What a friendly bunch!'. I find it easy talking to new people and making conversation on all kinds of topics but I can also tell when it's hard work and when it's not. This was definitely the latter. I was in a room full of people with varied and often very different professional backgrounds to mine but I felt we were all connected via EMWA. We were, in a broad sense, colleagues and to me having colleagues is probably the one thing about permanent employment that I didn't know how much I loved until I lost it.

Workshops and symposium

The next day brought my first workshop and the realisation that due to the busy period leading up to the conference I didn't notice that the pre-workshop assignment had a deadline that I had already missed. So, I spent two hours the night before preparing, knowing I would not receive credit. It didn't bother me – I was still going to learn.

All the workshops I attended were great. I found my attention was completely held (perhaps I am becoming more focused on my work now I'm doing it all for myself), I had many questions answered and I came away with materials that I will be using in my work from now on.

On Thursday there was the full-day symposium and with me still learning how to say to my clients a firm 'No, I'm at a conference' I took care of some urgent client requests in the morning, joined the symposium just before the lunch break and got the morning's debrief from other attendees over lunch.

The theme of the symposium was transparency of clinical trial data and how it affected our sector, from the perspective of the industry, the regulators and finally the patient. All presentations and presenters were captivating, and the last one on the patient perspective by David Gilbert made me feel especially empowered, as though I can change things in the future, giving a voice to patients about their treatments in ways I previously didn't think were possible. This was so much more than a usual conference presentation.

Afterthoughts

After four full days of learning, networking, and socialising, the conference came to an end and my feelings were a mix of enthusiasm, excitement for the future, and something akin to pride. I realised that this was not only my first EMWA conference, but the first conference I attended representing myself. The first time that being with potential colleagues and clients would directly reflect on just me and not on the company I work for. I am a strong believer of an opinion that was also expressed in one of the freelancer workshops, that essentially people buy people, that you know which clients you like working with and the same goes for them. Being at a conference representing yourself is a start, a first step, in promoting your own brand without really trying.

Needless to say, I would recommend attending the EMWA conference to those considering it. I would also advise completing your pre-workshop assignments if you want credits and saying a firm 'I am at the EMWA conference' to your clients so you get more sleep time than I did!

Tania Kotsokechagia
tania@lexiscommms.co.uk

A day in the life of a freelancer

Wendy Kingdom, Monday 13 January 2014

9.00 am: Mondays usually get off to a slow start because of emails accumulated over the weekend. Today is no exception. My email account deposits 27 new emails into my inbox: 16 trying to sell me something, 7 personal ones (including school governors) and 4 to do with work (including EMWA emails about post-workshop assignments). Quick check of the SPAM box – all correctly identified as junk. Window cleaners have arrived! This would not be much of a distraction except that the dog (Rosie) barks at them, loudly and frequently.

10 am: Still dealing with e-mails. One of my long-standing clients wants my updated CV signed and dated. So I have to check, tweak, print, sign, and scan it before I send it back. This takes a surprisingly long time to do. I also send my updated CV to a potential client. The associated e-mail took a while to compose. Time to make a cup of green tea. I have a lot of hot drinks during the day. It's a good way of getting away from the computer screen, if only for a couple of minutes.

11 am: Coffee and yet more e-mails. I have accounts for three clients that have web-based

login procedures, one of which requires four steps after which I am likely to find that I have no new mail. However, I do have new mail so have to deal with that too. Side-tracked by a tweet from EMWA to a blog post on why drugs are expensive.

12 noon: Finally get started on chargeable work. One of the emails provides an answer I was waiting for to a question on a protocol. I finalise the draft protocol (11th draft and aiming for a record) and send it off.

1 pm: Time for a break and to take Rosie out for a walk. It was a beautiful, sunny morning until about a quarter of an hour ago. Now it's raining and it looks as though the rain has settled in for the day.

2 pm: Back in the warm and dry, with lunch at my side and a soggy dog at my feet. Quick check of e-mails and a couple of quick responses. This is now my 'time management' slot in the day for reviewing a few more post-workshop assignments from the EMWA Autumn conference. Reviewing each post-workshop assignment individually is rather time-consuming but the workshop participants appreciate the feedback so I think it's worth

it. In reality, I find that the same comments apply to several assignments so I can copy over a few of my comments and just tweak them a bit. Today I review only four assignments because I've had so many interruptions and really need to get on with something else. Still, that's four closer to finishing them all.

3 to 5.30 pm: Get back to working on the methods section of a study report that isn't due until the end of next month. No deadlines pressing at the moment so I have the rare luxury of getting ahead with this one. This is not a project that I like to dip in and out of because it involves a lot of different files simultaneously – five Word files and one pdf.

5.30 to 6.30 pm: Multitasking between cooking dinner and doing a bit more work – probably about half an hour's work within the hour. Then time to pack up, eat and go out to choir practice. Hope to get more chargeable work done tomorrow.

Wendy Kingdom

info@wendykingdom.com

A day in the life of a freelancer

Ingrid Edsman, Tuesday, 11 February 2014

1 am: Back home in Stockholm after a full day in London. Attended an interesting seminar about the clinical overview and clinical summary. Time to go to bed.

7 am: Rrrrrriinnnggg. Snooze for another half hour. Breakfast, check emails and then off to work. Work = client's office or home office. Today it's client's office.

9 am: Arrive at the office after a brisk walk. Two meetings scheduled before noon, both about the summary document I'm presently writing. At the first meeting, we go through comments on the draft that has been out for review with the writing team. The agreed document content will probably be changed, which means rewriting already finished sections. Not what I had expected, but the reasons given are convincing, and the work is manageable with input of extra hours.

10 am: Next meeting, a teleconference, is about data interpretation. The results will go into the summary document. With only anticipated findings in the data, the relevant sections can be completed. A quick coffee and then back to the meeting room. We go on with discussing analysis of exploratory data. A few additional tables and figures are required, and the output specification is updated accordingly.

12 noon: Lunch at a nearby cafeteria. It's good to get some fresh air and have a meal with colleagues. I really appreciate the social side of working at clients' offices.

1 to 6 pm: Back at the office for more work on the summary. I start planning how to rewrite the document, but I won't start until there is a final decision – hopefully within a couple of days. Instead I busy myself with preparing in-text and appendix tables, which involves a lot of formatting and takes an unexpectedly long time. Breaks for coffee and walks to the printer during the afternoon. When I go home, I've done a day of full-time billable work.

7 pm: Arrive home and dinner is ready. I'm lucky to have a husband who is an excellent chef!

8 pm: Finalise a proposal for an article, check emails and catch up on accounting. Download pre-workshop assignments for the EMWA workshops in Budapest. I think the conferences are great for networking and for the learning experience.

9.30 pm: Private time.

11.30 pm: Good night! Tomorrow will be a writing day at the home office.

Ingrid Edsman

ingrid.edsman@edmedica.se

Your own limited company: When it makes sense and how to do it

In the last issue of Out On Our Own we looked at some of the legal structures that freelance medical writers around Europe use to run their businesses.

Many freelancers are happy to remain 'self-employed', in other words, an unincorporated business such as a sole trader or autonomous worker. However, there can be sound business reasons to go one step further by adopting a corporate form – the limited company.

In some countries the advantages of doing so are greater than in others.

Let's examine this in more detail.

Why do freelancers 'go limited'?

1. *It creates a line in the sand*

Forming a limited company is an excellent way to create a division between 'you' and 'your business'. As a sole trader, you can create that division in your mind, but with a limited company, the division becomes a legal one. The company is a separate legal entity, almost as if it were another person. It has rights and responsibilities and can own property or equipment.

Many freelancers feel that the corporate form conveys a more professional image to clients. It also helps to protect your personal assets, because liability is limited to the company's assets. So if your company couldn't pay its debts, the creditors wouldn't be able to take your home.

However, do bear in mind that this 'limited liability' only works as long as you haven't committed fraud or acted negligently – there are cases in which the authorities have been known to 'pierce the corporate veil' and go after company owners who have deliberately flouted the rules.

Furthermore, the company shouldn't be your only line of defence – ultimately, you need your company to stay afloat so that you can make a living, and you have a duty to ensure it remains solvent. As a medical writer you might think that your company is unlikely to incur debt, but you could still encounter unforeseen situations, such as a law suit, a client going bankrupt, or perhaps even the tax authorities disputing your company's tax return and applying penalties.

Therefore it is advisable to assess potential risks and protect the company with the appropriate insurances.¹ Professional indemnity insurance is one example – this is particularly advisable if you provide expert input or advice. Some medical writers whose work is 'signed off' by the client choose not to have professional indemnity insurance because the client effectively takes responsibility for the content. However, if you do choose to forgo insurance, it is important to check that the wording in your contract provides your company with the acceptable level of indemnity.

2. *In some countries it can be more cost effective to have a company*

Companies are subject to more rules, regulations, and paperwork than unincorporated businesses. Inevitably this means that you incur additional costs to run the company, such as accountancy fees to prepare your annual accounts.

However, it also allows you more control over how and when you pay yourself. In some countries this can mean that a limited company is the most tax efficient route available. If you are based in the UK, for example, the tax treatment on dividends enables you to make legitimate savings by combining salary with dividends. There is no minimum capital required to start the company and set-up fees are low – you can be up and running in 24 hours. These factors offset the administrative costs and the savings can help you build a financial buffer to weather the ups and downs of running your own business.

In the UK it is also more cost-effective to have your own company if you work via a recruitment agency, a business model adopted by some freelance medical writers who provide their services to one company for a fixed term. This is because the agency is allowed to pay your company's invoice in full, which gives you the control over how you take the money out via salary and dividends. This is not the case for sole traders – UK agencies are legally obliged to pay unincorporated businesses via 'pay as you earn' (PAYE),² meaning that all the tax would be deducted at source, as if you were an employee. So you would end up paying the higher rate of tax

that employees pay, without actually receiving any of the rights or benefits that employees get. In Ireland, the low rate of corporation tax can also make 'going limited' an attractive option. In Germany on the other hand it is generally more cost-effective for a medical writer to apply for 'liberal profession' status than to set up a company. As a liberal professional your bureaucratic obligations are considerably reduced and you are not subject to the trade tax (Gewerbesteuer).³

In other countries, the picture is mixed and the decision may depend on your projected revenues. In many countries you need to inject a minimum amount of working capital into the company bank account in order to set up the company. There can also be additional costs, such as notary fees, and varying rates of tax on dividends. Often these can nullify the cost advantages of having a company.

For example, in Spain, having a company is unlikely to lead to savings until your business profits exceed 90 000 euros. France offers a simplified regime for 'auto-entrepreneurs' whose turnover does not exceed 32 900 euros. This can be a more attractive alternative to setting up a French company or société, as it allows you to benefit from a favourable rate of tax and spares you a great deal of paperwork.⁴

3. Sometimes, you don't have a choice

If you work in the UK, you might come across prospective clients who refuse to work with sole traders. This is due to the 'employment status' rules in the UK, through which the tax authorities can reclassify a relationship that they think is more akin to employer/employee than client/freelancer. As a sole trader, if your employment status were to be challenged by the authorities, your client would be liable for any additional taxes due. As a limited company, your client is protected because your company would shoulder the liability – this is known as being 'IR35 caught'.⁵

Your role as a company director

When you set up your company you become the director and shareholder of that company. Some freelancers also split the shares 50/50 with their spouse or partner.

As a company director you are legally responsible for making sure the company is run properly, according to the law and in the interests of the

shareholders. The latter shouldn't be too hard if you are the only shareholder!

Your responsibilities include ensuring all the relevant paperwork is submitted, taxes paid, and that you keep the appropriate records for your business. In the UK there are a number of forms to be filed throughout the year, such as the corporation tax return, VAT returns, Companies House return, and real-time payroll reports.

Don't forget the contract

Remember how we said that your company is a separate legal entity, almost like another person?

That concept extends to the contractual relationship between your client and your business. Whenever you take on a substantial piece of work, you should draw up a contract between the client and your company, not between the client and you personally.

In the UK, the contract should be a *contract for services* and not an employment contract. A contract for services makes it absolutely clear that this is a business-to-business relationship. As long as the real-life situation reflects what it says in the contract, the tax authorities should have no cause to challenge your employment status or deem you to be 'IR35 caught'. In medical writing, it is usual for the draft text of a contract for medical writing services to be generated by the client company's legal department, and finalised with your input as the medical writing services provider. It makes sense to have the draft reviewed by a qualified professional to ensure that the clauses address any considerations relating to IR35.⁶

If generating your own contract, ensure the text you use has been professionally drafted by a lawyer. Members of PCG, the UK association representing independent professionals, can download a professionally drafted contract from the website, www.pcg.org.uk.

You can also find more detailed guidance on setting up and running a UK limited company in PCG's Guide to Freelancing available at www.pcg.org.uk/guide.

Finally, please note that individual circumstances vary and laws can change from one year to the next. It is therefore important to work with qualified professional advisers such as an accountancy firm or tax lawyer to guide you on the current requirements relating to the country, or countries, where you work.

Michelle Storm Lane

PCG, London, UK
michelle.lane@pcg.org.uk

References

1. For more guidance on insurance please visit www.pcg.org.uk/advice/recommended-freelance-insurance.
2. Pay as you earn (PAYE) is the system used by the UK tax authorities (Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs [HMRC]) for collecting income tax from the pay of employees, including company directors, as they earn it. For more information please visit www.pcg.org.uk/advice/personal-taxation-directors.
3. Please see the following article (in German) for an explanation of the German trade tax, with illustrative examples: www.gruendungszuschuss.de/unternehmenwissen/geld-steuern/news/blog/neuordnung-der-gewerbesteuer-an-jeder-schraubegedreht.html.
4. For more information visit www.federation-autoentrepreneur.fr.
5. IR35 is a tax law which allows the UK tax authorities (HMRC) to treat fees paid to a limited company as if they were an individual's salary. For more information visit www.pcg.org.uk/policy/IR35.
6. For a list of UK specialists providing contract review services, please visit www.pcg.org.uk/supplier-directory and select 'Contract Review'.

Further reading in this issue of MEW

Reeves' and Hamilton's feature article 'Cost comparison of salaried and freelance medical writers working in Europe' is the first and only known

comprehensive systematic and reasoned cost comparison, building on the 2012 surveys of earnings of these two groups of medical writers. Happy reading!

Out of hours: A blogging vet

Describe the type of writing you do 'out of hours'

As my fiction-writing alter-ego, Stevie Carroll, I contribute to various group blogs related to reading and writing different genres of fiction, often as the lone Brit amongst North American bloggers. My regular slots are a monthly column for *Women and Words* (<http://lesbianauthors.wordpress.com/>), and once- or twice-weekly book reviews for *The Good, The Bad, & The Unread* (<http://goodbadandunread.com/>) depending on how rapidly I can read the new releases they send me and whether I've read any other new releases that I want to share with the blog's followers. I also plan to contribute to a new feature on the blog of publishers *Candlemark and Gleam* (who published my short story collection last year) where authors rave about recent reads and favourite beverages.

Do you have a favourite topic or preferred writing style?

For *Women and Words*, I focus on UK-based happenings over the past month: either a writing event I've attended or a historic location I've visited that is associated with at least one remarkable woman. I want readers to consider following in my footsteps, so I concentrate on what I found most interesting, and illustrate the posts with photographs I've taken, as well as including links to where people can find out more about my topic.

The Good, The Bad, & The Unread tends to focus on romance novels and women's fiction, although my review selections include Young Adult and Middle

Grade books as well as lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans* ('trans*' is a term many people prefer to use to denote transgender and transsexual people as well as all other people with gender non-conforming identities – see http://vaden.stanford.edu/health_library/transgendertermsglossary.html) fiction. My reviews are aimed at explaining why I liked or disliked a particular book, picking out any outstanding examples supporting either viewpoint, as well as ruthlessly pointing out the glaring errors North American writers can make about British history and social customs.

Describe a recent assignment or assignments

What was the topic?

One of my recent reviews, for which I awarded an 'A', was for *The Road to Her* by KE Payne (post at <http://goodbadandunread.com/2013/08/21/review-the-road-to-her-by-ke-payne/>). This was a book I'd spotted on the publisher's list of upcoming releases, and I was able to get an advance copy.

What did the assignment involve?

Getting a free book in return for writing a review, which puts a degree of obligation on bloggers to actually finish the book, although we have a grading system that includes DNF ('Did Not Finish') for books that we really couldn't manage to read all the way through. This book was a real pleasure, which meant that I had to force myself to slow down my reading and concentrate on why I liked the story so much and what particular aspects of the author's writing style made it such an easy read.

Describe how this type of writing helps you with your technical work

Blogging for pleasure has definitely helped me hone my style of communication when writing technical content for online publication. In addition to the blog posts for regular clients, I write weekly posts on my website (<http://jasmine-writing.com/>). With blogging, a lot of emphasis is placed on producing a good 'teaser' paragraph at the beginning to encourage readers to click on the 'Read More' tag, as well as on a good summarising final paragraph.

Some of the rules of blogging can be used when creating static webpage content: when I was writing copy for a new website recently, I invested time into making sure the first paragraph of each page made people want to read down to the end.

How do aspects of your technical work help with your writing 'out of hours'?

Reading abstracts to decide which papers to request and read in full, should help me decide which

novels to request for review from author or publisher summaries. However, just as some abstracts fail to accurately reflect the content of a paper, many summaries fail to explain what the book is really about!

With technical writing, I was taught to ensure that each paragraph flows from the previous one, and this rule is vital with online publication, especially with blogging, where readers may skim read many blogs over their morning coffee or evening glass of wine. The style and content must be pitched in a way that ensures they return regularly to read your content in preference to that of similar blogs.

Gina Dungworth

gina.dungworth@vetsurgeon.org

Tool box

Evernote®

Write notes anytime, anywhere

As freelancers and writers, many of us are probably guilty of amassing half-used, dog-eared notebooks around our homes, offices, cars – and bits of paper on which we write down those wonderful ideas when they arise – or that (whoops – missed!) appointment.

If this sounds familiar, then Evernote® may be a helpful tool for you to consider. It is a basic word processor that acts as an electronic note-taking tool thus enabling you to write and save notes on your computer (PC or Mac), phone, and tablet. Your notes can also be synchronised across your electronic devices. Not only that but you can add relevant attachments, images and videos, or drag and drop items such as pdfs, and audiofiles. The web-clipper extension can be added to enable you to save information from any websites too – so any articles of interest or products are stored – which is much less fiddly than trying to paperclip or glue relevant magazine cuttings into a notebook. A reminder function can be helpful for time-critical information thus ensuring you don't miss that appointment. Furthermore, you can use Evernote to store contacts separately to your email account which is a great back-up.

Notes can be organised by storing them in Notebooks and information stored within can be tagged to aid searching.

Evernote, like Dropbox featured before,¹ is a cloud-based application which means that the information is stored online, in a designated space in the internet, rather than on your computer's hard drive.² This gives data portability, so, in theory, you can access information stored within your Evernote account anywhere. It also means that notebooks and their contents can be shared with other people who don't need to have Evernote installed if they have 'read-only' permission. However, as for anything stored online, security is paramount and Evernote has experienced a well-publicised breach of security, with some salutary lessons learned.³

The useful basic Evernote application is free to download and allows up to 2 Gb per month to be stored (which is equivalent to 3 hours of video so you are unlikely to reach this limit). Evernote Premium is available for a monthly subscription.

As a relative newcomer to Evernote, but an avid notetaker, I can see the advantages of this tool. You can use Evernote just like a traditional notebook, whenever and wherever inspiration may strike and without the need to then manually transfer handwritten notes onto your computer. I don't think an electronic note taker will ever replace that

thrill of handwriting in ink on a crisp blank page of a new notebook, especially if the notebook is of a particular fine quality, but it is certainly a time-saving note-taking device worthy of consideration. For top tips on how to use Evernote, go to: <http://readwrite.com/2012/02/21/10-tips-for-using-evernote-eff#awesm=~oA6AV6n2jqoB4z>

Disclaimer

The information contained within this article represents the opinion of the author based on limited experience of EverNote. The information should not be used as the only resource for choosing an online note producing service and readers are recommended to seek advice and other information available. The

author has no affiliation to EverNote.com and does not recommend this product above any others.

Kathryn White
Kathryn@cathean.co.uk

References

1. White K. The Toolbox. Document storage in the cloud. Medical Writing 2014;23(2):online.
2. The cloud is a metaphor for the Internet, and storing information in the 'cloud' means storing and accessing data and programs over the Internet instead of your computer's hard drive.
3. Schwartz MJ. Evernote Breach: 7 Security Lessons. Information Week 2013. Available from: <http://www.informationweek.com/attacks/evernote-breach-7-security-lessons/d/d-id/1108909>.

Freelance foraging



Germans love to complain about English cuisine. This restaurant and café near Hamburg, Germany tries to reinvent a famous English delicacy in their

lunch menu ('daily from 11:00') – guaranteed to be more substantial than what you get in the British Isles! Thank you to Raquel Billiones for this one.