



Technical Writing

Project	Task Description	Time Estimate	Notes
End User Guide <input type="checkbox"/> (e.g., software user manual)	Research, prepare, interview, write, graphics prep, screen captures, index.	3-5 hours per page	Assumes an average user guide (20-80 pages) of moderate complexity. Availability of existing style guide, SME's and source docs will significantly impact time.
Online Help	Interview, design/layout, write, illustrate/graphics, revise and final link verification.	3-6 hours per page	Consider one page as one help screen. Technical complexity and availability of SME's and source docs are usually the governing factors. Hours per page should be significantly less if help is prepared from an established paper-based user guide.
Technical Reference Material <input type="checkbox"/> (e.g., system documentation)	Interview developers/programmers, write, graphic design, screen captures, flowchart prep, edit, index.	5-9 hours per page	Assumes a standard or established format and outline for the document. Other variables include quantity and quality of printed source materials, availability of SME's and time involved with system or project.
Operator's Manual <input type="checkbox"/> (e.g., equipment/product operation)	Interview users/operators to determine product purpose, functionality, safety considerations, (if applicable) and operating steps. Write, screen capture, graphic design, (photographs, if applicable), edit, index.	<i>New Product:</i> 3-5 hours per page <i>Existing Product Rewrite:</i> 1-4 hours per page	Assumes standard/established boilerplate/template format - factor extra time (10 hours) to design template if none exist. SME's must be available and have advanced familiarity with product.
Procedure Manual <input type="checkbox"/> (e.g., internal company procedures)	Interview users to determine purpose and procedures. Write, screen capture, graphic design, process/procedure flows/ diagrams, edit, and table of contents.	<i>New System:</i> 3-5 hours per page <i>Existing System Rewrite:</i> 1-4 hours per page	Assumes established boilerplate/template format. Factor extra time (10 hours) to design template if none exist. SME's must be available and have advanced familiarity with company policies, processes and procedures.
Business Continuity/ Sarbanes-Oxley Documentation	Attend meetings, determine compliance needs, meet with developers, system engineers/ administrators, DBAs. Create system diagrams, Sarbanes-Oxley compliance documentation, graphic design, screen shots, proofread, edit.	<i>Company Based:</i> 2-5 months for small/ medium company; 5+ months for larger company <i>System Based:</i> 2 weeks - 2 months depending on size and complexity of system	Assumes company has existing backup/recovery policies and procedures, as well as Sarbanes-Oxley based software or auditor. Project proposal required.



Technical Writing, cont.

Project	Task Description	Time Estimate	Notes
Project-based Software Development Life Cycle	Attend project meetings, gather requirements, create, and edit all documentation related to the Software Development Life Cycle.	3-12 months	Assumes standards/established templates. Factor extra time (10-20) hours per template to design template if none exist. Project team and developers/engineers are available for interview/questions.
Statement of Auditing Standards (SAS 70) Certification	Interview IT department personnel, including: all management, system administrators, architects and business continuity liaison, DBAs to create certification documentation.	2-6 months for small/medium company; 5+ months for larger company <i>Rewrite Existing Certification: 1-4 weeks</i>	Assumes company has existing IT backup/recovery policies, procedures; Finance department, policies, procedures and available developers/system engineers, architects, general contractors, and other SME's. Assumes company has enlisted an accounting firm to assist in certification. Project Proposal required.

Instructional Design

Project	Task Description	Time Estimate	Notes
Instructor-Led Training	Research, analysis, design and development.	Traditional estimate is 40 hours per 1 hour of training (40:1); Ratio can vary from 10:1 to 80:1	Consider amount of material, complexity of content, and learning methodologies, (e.g., lecture only, lecture with video, lecture with interactive simulations, case studies, etc.)
Web-Based Training (WBT)	Research, analysis, design and development.	150-250 hours per 1 hour of training (200:1)	Ratio can be as high as 400:1 depending on development tools, expertise of writer/developer, access to SME's, assessments, etc.
Webinar Training	Analyze the audience, determine topics to cover, collect and organize existing information to formulate the online presentation, ensure each attendee has the necessary software to participate.	8-10 hours per one hour of training. Varies significantly with content (8:1)	Usually a Webinar consists of existing presentation materials (PowerPoint slides, Excel spreadsheets, etc.) and one or more pre-planned demonstrations of working software.



Marketing Communications

Project	Task Description	Time Estimate	Notes
Editing <input type="checkbox"/> Complex <input type="checkbox"/> Simplified	Restructure rough document, including rewrite existing copy, verify and cite sources, add new information and format.	4-6 hours per 1000 words	Assumes document submitted is a rough draft.
	Refine and polish a completed document with corrections made to grammar, spelling, punctuation, consistency and coherence.	2-4 hours per 1000 words	Assumes document submitted has been formatted and professionally prepared.
Original Web Content	Research, conceptualize and write original Web content. Edit, proof and revise.	2-5 hours per page	Assumes an average of 350 words per page. Marketing objectives, competitor's information, page descriptions and some source material provided by client.
Existing Web Content Rewrite	Review and rewrite existing content. Add new content if deemed necessary. Edit, proof and revise.	1-3 hours per page	Assumes an average of 350 words per page. Marketing objectives, competitor's information and all subject material provided by client.
Brochure Copy	Research, conceptualize and write original copy. Edit, proof and revise.	3-4 hours per panel	Assumes two-sided, six-panel brochure measuring 8-1/2" x 11" unfolded.
Direct Mail Package	Structure package theme and collaborate with designer. Conceptualize, research, write, edit, proof and revise.	3-4 hours for envelopes and BRC.	Assumes copy written for outer envelope (tease), double-sided business reply card and 1-2 page letter.
		6-8 hrs. for letter.	
Feature Article	Interview, transcribe, research, write, edit, proof and revise. Photography, including file transfer.	10-20 hours	Assumes 500-1000 word article with photos, headings and captions. Some subject material provided by client.
Sales Letters	Collaborate with marketing/sales team. Research, concept, write, edit, proof, revise.	3-4 hours per page	Assumes 1-2 page letter (front and back) with approximately 350-400 words per page.
Newsletters	Meet with marketing team/ designer. Interview, transcribe, research, write, edit proof, revise. Photography, including file transfer.	16-24 hours	Assumes three-four 200-400 word articles with photos and captions. Some subject material provided by client. Does not include distribution.
Ads	Meet with marketing team/designer. Interview, transcribe, research, write, edit proof, revise. Photography, including file transfer.	5-8 hours	Assumes half-page ad with headlines, subheads and 40-80 word body copy.
Press Releases	Research, write, edit, proof and revise.	4-6 hours	Assumes 500-word press release in standard format. Most subject material and contact information provided by client. Does not include release distribution.
Presentations/ Proposals	Coordination with sales/marketing team/designer. Research, write, edit, proof and revise.	3-4 hours per page	Assumes an average 350 words per page.

Note: This document is not intended to address all types and levels of projects. It is a tool for estimating "average" projects in size and complexity. Since every project is unique, we recommend a professional writer be involved in developing the final plan and estimate. Additional time required for meetings, teleconferences, emails, and faxes is unique to each client/project and should be factored into the final estimate as well. © 2006 Copyright by Writing Assistance, Inc. This document may be printed, republished and distributed as long as it is not altered.