



Australian Society of Authors

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AN OPEN LETTER TO AUSTRALIAN COMICS CREATORS

Dear Australian Comics Creator,

I am writing to you as a member of the Australian Society of Authors, representing the recently established Comics/Graphic Novels Portfolio. I am currently undertaking research to create a Rates Card for you and other professional and emerging Australian comics creators for the purposes of commissioned works (otherwise known as work-for-hire) agreements. By “comics” I mean anyone who is writing and illustrating comic books, graphic novels, comic/cartoon strips, digital (web) comics and zines (that contain comics/sequential art content). By “professional” I mean anybody who has been paid page rates by a publisher or other entity who has commissioned the work.

We are asking you to fill in a simple survey, which will only take you 10 minutes, and to provide information based upon your own professional experiences. This raw data will remain strictly confidential and will be used with the intention of formulating minimum page rates and to get an understanding of the makeup and profile of the working (and emerging) comics community in Australia. The specific minimum rates we want to develop for the Rates Card are for:

- Concept art sketches (per sketch)
- Comics page/panel/shot design (layout)
- Thumbnails/Roughs
- Pencilling
- Inking
- Colouring (computer or hand)
- Cover Art
- Lettering
- Writing (story synopsis, page breakdown, script)
- Editing (story or art)
- Cartoon/comic strip (print)
- Webcomic strip (digital)
- Zines (with comics – sequential art – content)
- Convention sketches (black and white only)
- Commissioned artwork (one-character piece or landscape or object sourced from comics properties) in black and white
- Commissioned artwork (one-character piece or landscape or object sourced from comics properties) in colour.

Please note that we will be cross-referencing the rates information with those issued by organisations such as the Society of Book Illustrators, Australian Cartoonist Association, and the Media Entertainment and Arts Alliance to ensure consistency.

The purpose of this exercise is to chart a course, lay out a roadmap for those of you who want to make comics your career. The hardest thing in this country is being able to set down a value for the different services that are required in the production of comics. By gathering raw data from as many sources as possible we're hoping to change that so that in the event a publisher commissions you for a project, you will have access to minimum pay guidelines and negotiate a reasonable fee in keeping with your talents and the time, energy and commitment you put into creating scripts or artwork.

Given my background of having worked 20+ years in the Australian comics world and having been involved in every step of the storytelling process, I was asked to facilitate this project. I would like to think that through co-operation and consultation we might be better prepared for the future of storytelling in the Australian comics landscape.

You can help the ASA to help you by clicking onto the following link and completing the survey: <http://tinyurl.com/pwz2wn>

The closing date is: Friday 31 July 2009.

Kind regards

Tad Pietrzykowski

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