

EXPLORING JOBS IN THE GIG ECONOMY

# GIG JOBS IN HIGH-TECH

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BrightPoint Press

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# AT A GLANCE

- Gigs are short-term, temporary jobs.
- Gig workers are also known as independent contractors or freelancers.
- The gig economy boomed in the late 2000s and continued to grow after the 2020 COVID-19 pandemic.
- Companies are now relying on gig workers more than before. High-tech gig workers give companies opportunities to innovate and grow.
- High-tech gig jobs include computer programming and website development. Other roles include artificial intelligence (AI) engineers, virtual reality programmers, concert techs, and even drone pilots.

# PROS AND CONS OF GIG JOBS IN HIGH-TECH

**W**orking a high-tech job in the gig economy has its ups and downs.

Gig work isn't for everybody. It can be challenging. Some key parts of traditional work aren't easily available to gig workers. Likewise, the traditional model of work isn't for everybody. Some people don't like the idea of going to the same place for work





***Gig work comes with many benefits. However, workers must balance those against the drawbacks.***

every day. Others want to choose their projects. It's important to understand the advantages and disadvantages of gig work.

## THE PROS OF HIGH-TECH GIG WORK

There are many advantages to being a high-tech gig worker. Flexibility is one. Gig workers have more flexibility in the hours they work and where they work. They also have more flexibility in the jobs they want to take. Erik Kennedy is a computer programmer. He left a traditional job at Microsoft to do gig work as a programmer. Kennedy says, “I wanted a little more freedom and was willing to take a little more risk.”<sup>5</sup>

Gig workers must manage their time to get work done. But they can often choose



***Gig workers can often set their own schedules. Instead of working traditional office hours, a gig worker may choose to work in the evening.***

their location. Some work from home, while on vacation, or at their favorite cafés.

Another perk of gig work is that it can be easier to get into. Many full-time jobs require college degrees. But gig work often

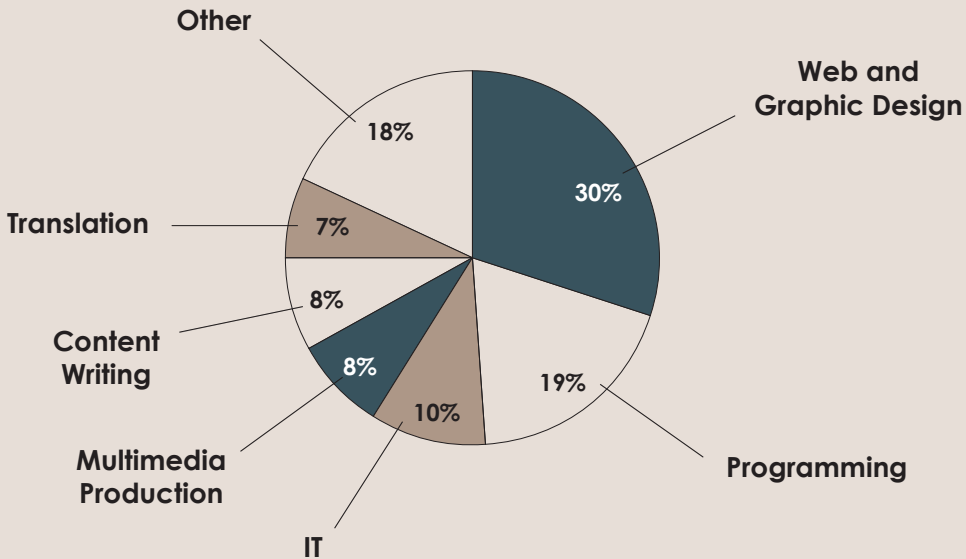
requires only skills and experience. For example, a concert tech should know about musical instruments and how concerts work. He or she may not need a degree. To operate a drone, there are courses to become a drone service provider.

### SKILLS FOR SUCCESS

Besides having technical skills, gig workers need **soft skills**. Self-discipline and initiative keep successful gig workers actively learning, looking for work, and meeting deadlines. Strong communication is key to understanding the needs of employers and reporting back to them. Flexibility and adaptability are important to adjust to new work environments and demands. A successful gig worker is an entrepreneur, manager, and employee all at the same time.



## MOST POPULAR FREELANCE CAREERS



Source: "The 2020 Freelancer Income Report," Payoneer, n.d. <https://pubs.paynoeer.com>.

**A 2020 report from finance site Payoneer broke down the most popular freelance gig jobs. The top three careers were all in the tech industry.**

Project-based work may involve hiring a programmer to write code for a video game. It might be hiring a web developer to create a website. Intel hires gig workers for specific

# GLOSSARY

**benefits**

extra perks given by a company to a worker, besides pay

**bid**

to offer to do work for a job or project

**ethical**

following accepted and morally right rules of behavior

**Internet of Things**

the collection of devices that connect to computers and each other using the internet

**leads**

potential opportunities that gig workers find for new work

**recession**

when a country's economy goes through a difficult period

**soft skills**

personal skills that help someone better communicate with others

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