

>>Snapshot

David Pinching

Musician

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Can you tell us a bit about your career to date?

I've been playing in bands since the late '80s, one of which 'The Chosen', won a Battle of the Bands competition in Portsmouth. The band split up after three years after which I moved more into recording, studio work and writing music. A friend asked me to write music for some corporate videos, which I really enjoyed. I love to make music fit the images on the screen.

In 2016, I gave up my career in the civil service to earn my living from music. One of the advantages of working in the civil service was that I did a lot of training, which gave me good transferable skills. It was also at this point that I started to attend FEU Training workshops.

My current focus is mainly orchestral/soundtrack. I've done collaborations with other artists adding orchestral scores to cover visuals. I've written a few pieces recently and had great feedback from music supervisors in Los Angeles.

I also play in a couple of local bands 'Cover Girl' and 'Coco Loco' as well as doing their music production.

What do you like most about your work?

I love music, that goes without saying. I also enjoy my own company and the freedom that comes with being in complete control when composing. You can write something and change it without having to check with anyone else.

I also love the impact music has - how it creates emotions. When adding music to film you realise how it has an immense power to transform the visual experience.

What are the biggest challenges of maintaining a freelance career?

My challenge is getting a foot in the door. I'm happy with creating music, it's just getting those commissions when there is so much competition. There are also many different job titles in this industry and it's not always clear as to their actual role.

Something that stuck in my head from the recent FEU

workshop on Digital Marketing I attended was that we don't have unique selling points anymore, we have a comparative advantage." I find that a useful distinction.

Have you added new skills to your portfolio over time?

I listen to more classical music now as I need to understand the orchestral theory and the ranges of instruments.

I used to work with GarageBand until I did a music technology course at college after which I started using Logic Pro X. The course really helped me learn how to use this to more effectively record and mix, and write to film.

There is always new technology coming out and the question you have to ask is, do I need it? If you are not selective, it can take over your life, so you have to find the balance. I've done a lot of FEU Training workshops to help me get up to speed with the business side of freelancing.

What is the biggest challenge of learning the skills that you need?

Time management is one of the biggest challenges for me. You can't learn everything, so you have to pick carefully. At the moment, I'm inundated with offers of training and it's hard to decide which one to go for to make best use of my



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time and money. In respect to managing my time, I need to kill Facebook!

I also have an issue with impatience. I want to get there fast, so I can get a bit infuriated with myself when I can't absorb all the information as quickly as I would like to. Online courses can also be expensive so you have to manage that too.

What FEU Training courses have you attended?

- Time Management
- Finance for Freelancers
- Presentation Skills
- How to Shoot and Edit Video on an iPhone
- Goal Setting webinar
- Stop Procrastinating webinar
- Strategies for Success webinar

What are the most important things that you've learned?

I have found all the FEU Training courses really useful. I've separated my private social media from business so now use it more professionally. Also, I have a YouTube page now where I make regular posts.

Since the finance course, I now use a spreadsheet to track my expenses. I've found the tax elements in that course invaluable as well as now tracking what I need to earn and using my spreadsheet to see what's happening in real time.

After the time management workshop, I started to use my phone for my to-do list to better organise my time. I now give myself deadlines, which I find really helpful.

The marketing aspects that I have learned have helped me improve my website. It makes me look so professional and I know I've had approaches directly from that I wouldn't have had otherwise. The workshops have given me more confidence to approach other people.

What has encouraged you to attend FEU Training sessions?

When I started as a freelance in 2016, I needed all the help

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I could get. The Musicians' Union suggested FEU Training, which has been really great. The skills that are shared at the workshops are relevant and apply across everything we do. They provide the life skills you need to know in order to run a successful business not just a creative business. It's been so useful to learn so much in such a great environment.

The networking aspects of the workshops are very important too. It's so nice to talk to other creative people and not always musicians. You can find yourself talking to an actor, a writer or a clown – all dealing with similar problems. Everything we learn covers all the creative aspects and perspectives, which is great.

Do you know any other organisation that offers business skills courses for creatives?

No.

