

Working from anywhere in the world

Some people are lucky enough to be able to run their business from most places on this glorious planet. Tim Footsdale does, this is his story.

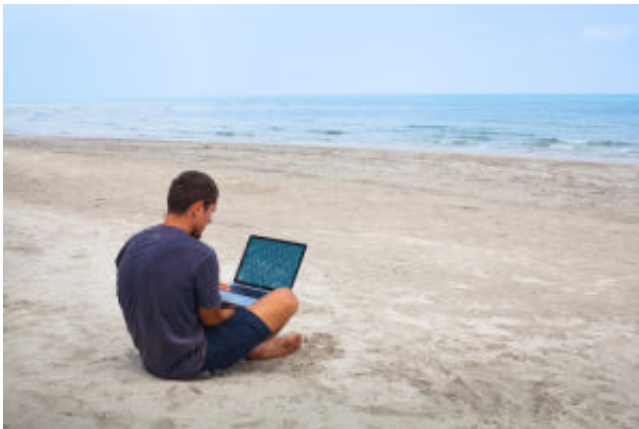
Tim Footsdale arrives back to his hostel after an afternoon's surfing when the group of backpackers he's with invite him to go for a few drinks.

Some in the group are fresh out of university while the majority are in our mid to late twenties, taking breaks from careers in finance, IT, and teaching, to enjoy some time in the Southern Hemisphere.

The sun is beaming in Raglan, the quiet seaside town hidden away on New Zealand's North Island, and it feels like a world away from the busy lives left behind in places like Dublin, London and Berlin. The group is baffled, therefore, when Tim says that rather than join us for a beer while the sun is still up, he's got to catch up on a couple of hour's work.

Raglan has a population of roughly three thousand and not a lot to do besides surf and chill out; what business could he possibly have to conduct here?

Footsdale is part of a new generation of an entrepreneur who, instead of renting office space or working from his apartment, chooses to take his laptop and work from anywhere in the world that sparks his interest. The nature of his business - e-commerce consultancy - means that as long as he has an Internet connection, he's as equipped to serve his clients from a beachside hotel as we would be from a desk in an industrial park.



'Trading time for money'

Originally from California, Footsdale always wanted to travel the world but had felt that his career

constrained him from doing so. Shortly after turning 30 he had his light bulb moment; go into business for himself, and work when, and from where, he wants.

“Trading money for time is an outdated system”, he says. “The benefit of doing things this way is being able to make your own schedule and define your definition of work/life balance”.

This sounds good, but surely running a business while jet-setting around the world has its drawbacks? Doesn't having a job to do distract from the sightseeing, and vice versa? For people like Footsdale, this is apparently not a problem. “Being a non-stop tourist can become dull so I like that I'm still being challenged with my work while travelling”.

In fact, the only negative he can find is that he doesn't meet more people like him. “The main drawback is that most people you travel with are on holiday and don't need to keep part of their attention on work. Another drawback is my best friends and family aren't living this lifestyle.”

Staying productive

For anyone who's used to working from within the confines of an office cubicle and a carefully regimented nine to five schedule, the idea of running a serious business from an exotic location on their terms might sound a little too good to be true.

Indeed, many business people would say they need the structure of a typical workplace to get things done, and would worry the distractions of travel would hamper productivity. However, with the right discipline and attitude, it can be done. For Footsdale, the key is finding an appropriate workspace.

Once he's got somewhere he feels he can concentrate on his work; then he's happy to stay there for as long as feels right.

“I restructured my company in the Sydney State Library; I simply love working there. The longer I stay in one place, the more productive I become. There's a delicate balance between staying too long and always being on the go.”

Getting the balance right between business and leisure, then, is crucial. “Freedom doesn't mean you need to see a new waterfall every day ... the balance is different for everyone”.

Keeping your options open

The financial potential of this kind of business will, of course, vary depending on its nature and how many hours you are willing to put in.

A highly skilled programmer is likely to command larger fees than a translator. However, a translator earning €500 per week in Dublin may find that they can make the equivalent amount doing their job from

somewhere in South East Asia or Central America, with the cost of living substantially cheaper in these places.

Indeed, the well-paid programmer may find he/she only needs to do a handful of hours work per week to fund their lifestyle abroad. Nevertheless, there are risks involved so it's important to do the research before leaving your cushy job in the city and becoming a poolside entrepreneur.

"Validate that you can make money and travel at the same time before quitting your job," advises Footsdale. "Leave on good terms so there's a spot to go back to."

READ: [How do your customers experience you?](#)



Six businesses you can run from anywhere

Consultancy

Whatever your discipline, consultancy is a role which can easily be done from anywhere as long as you've got an Internet connection and workspace.

Graphic design

Creating a great graphic doesn't demand the designer be situated in one place; with the right set-up, it can be done from any location.

SEO specialist

The Search Engine Optimisation landscape is ever changing, but there's plenty of work in it and decent money for someone with the right skills and the right connections.

Copywriting

An established copywriter might find he or she can do their job just as effectively from a more exotic destination. Freelance writing jobs can be found online on outsourcing sites like Freelancer.com. While freelancing is not always the best-paid job in the world, writers with skills in SEO or translation will be able to charge more.

Programming / coding

Computer programming is a highly skilled job that requires long hours and a lot of discipline, but again jobs can be tendered for online and the work is done remotely.

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