IC-1: Feast and Famine for Freelance Translators
by Catherine Christaki
Agenda

• Feast and famine, what are they exactly?
• To-dos during both
• How to deal with famine periods
• How to deal with feast periods
Famine = Bad
Or maybe not

Photo source: http://freelancem.ag/freelancing-basics/freelancer-feast-or-famine-cycle/
Feast = Great
Or maybe not

Photo source: http://creativeoverflow.net/6-reasons-why-freelancing-is-the-hardest-job-in-the-world/
Mox experiences feast & famine too

**FEAST**

I have so much work, can't stand it any more. I'm so good that clients keep coming. I must raise my rates!

**FAMINE**

No work in one week! Is it the economic crisis? I must reduce my rates!

Photo source: http://mox.ingenierotraductor.com/2012/11/feast-or-famine.html
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To-dos at all times

Marketing is king

Daily or weekly routine, set promotion time
Website, blog and social media profiles up-to-date
Avoid “panic” marketing
Targeted approach is best

Photo source: http://www.theknowledgepartnership.com/uk/universities/how-to-improve-your-marketing-performance/
To-dos at all times

Networking
Online: Use social media, connect with potential clients
Offline: Attend events, then follow up

Self-improvement & CPD
Books, webinars, seminars and brainstorming

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http://ecpdwebinars.co.uk/
http://www.entrepreneuriallinguist.com/entrepreneurial-linguist-workshops/
http://wantwords.co.uk/school/business-school/
To-dos at all times

**Existing clients**
One of your best marketing resources
Keep them happy and ask for feedback
They provide future work, referrals, testimonials

Photo source: http://blog.shoeboxed.com/how-to-keep-clients-happy/9008/2/
To-dos at all times

Seasonal work
Plan around your busier and slower times
Christmas is usually a good time for a vacation
August is good for a quick buck or finding new clients
Avoid urgent projects split to many translators

High-paying? For translators? Not really...

To-dos at all times

Positive attitude
Believe in your capabilities and don’t panic!
Create a translation support system
Don’t be the nagging colleague everybody wants to avoid
Spend less time complaining and more time acting

Photo source: http://iwillassistyou.wordpress.com/2012/05/16/10-things-a-positive-attitude-in-the-workplace-can-do/
To-dos at all times

KEEP CALM and HAVE A BREAK

Photo source: http://vranescs2013.blogspot.gr/
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To-dos during famine

Money

Plan ahead, have an emergency fund and save!

Photo source: http://www.journeytomillions.com/emergency-fund
To-dos during famine

Enjoy the break

After investing time in marketing, take a vacation, spend quality time your family

You can find this gorgeous beach in Crete, Greece, come visit us!
To-dos during famine

Be proactive
Follow the news in your markets, local or abroad

Let your availability be known
Tell your existing clients
FREELANCE FREEDOM

When under deadline, everyone needs work.

And when you finally get done...

No one’s around.

When it rains, it pours. When it stops raining, it’s a damn drought.

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To-dos during feast

Time management
Plan ahead to make the rollercoaster ride more fun
Schedule planning time
Prioritize: deadlines, marketing, sleep
Leave time for the unexpected
To-dos during feast

Time management

- Double the time for each project
- Allow time for other activities during the day
- Never forget to sleep well
- Stop taking on more than you can handle
To-dos during feast

Calendars and notes
Keep track of everything

Use technology
Outlook, Google Calendar, Evernote

Or, simply
Notebooks, post-it notes whiteboard
Choose wisely, 
don’t be like this guy!

Photo source: http://skylightit.com/2013/03/running-a-small-business-or-freelancing-isnt-an-easy-task-here-are-some-of-the-excuses-for-not-getting-things-done-on-time/
To-dos during feast

Money management
Be the ant, not the grasshopper
Budgeting is very important
Invest windfalls wisely
To-dos during feast

Say no, gracefully
Freelancer = one-(wo)man team
Choice is yours
Be polite, explain why not
Recommend colleagues

Photo source: http://thlog.com/have-you-met-ted-magnet/

Photo source: http://cargocollective.com/ojanendesign/No-thank-you-cards
To-dos during feast

Manage your deadlines
Ask for an extension **before** the deadline
No stupid excuses
Don’t overload your schedule
Negotiate deadlines

Photo source: http://moduscooperandi.com/blog/three-questions-on-deadlinesasking-the-industry/
To-dos during feast

Outsourcing
Focus on translation and business tasks

Collaborate with colleagues

Always check with your clients first

To-dos during feast

Raise your rates
Start with the lowest-paying clients
Offer higher rates to new clients

Photo source: http://blog.spreadshirt.net/uk/2010/10/13/product-prices-to-increase-a-look-at-the-textile-industry/
To-dos during feast

Fire a few clients
Rates
Projects
Payment terms
Communication

Photo source: http://www.reverbnation.com/thankyougoodbye
To-dos during feast

The unmissable jobs
Subject is right up your alley
Money is good, client is awesome
Find a way to squeeze it in!

Think of the money
Reward yourself for the hard work

Photo source: http://habituallearner.wordpress.com/tag/save-money/
Thank you for attending

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