

Could a side hustle bring creative fulfilment?

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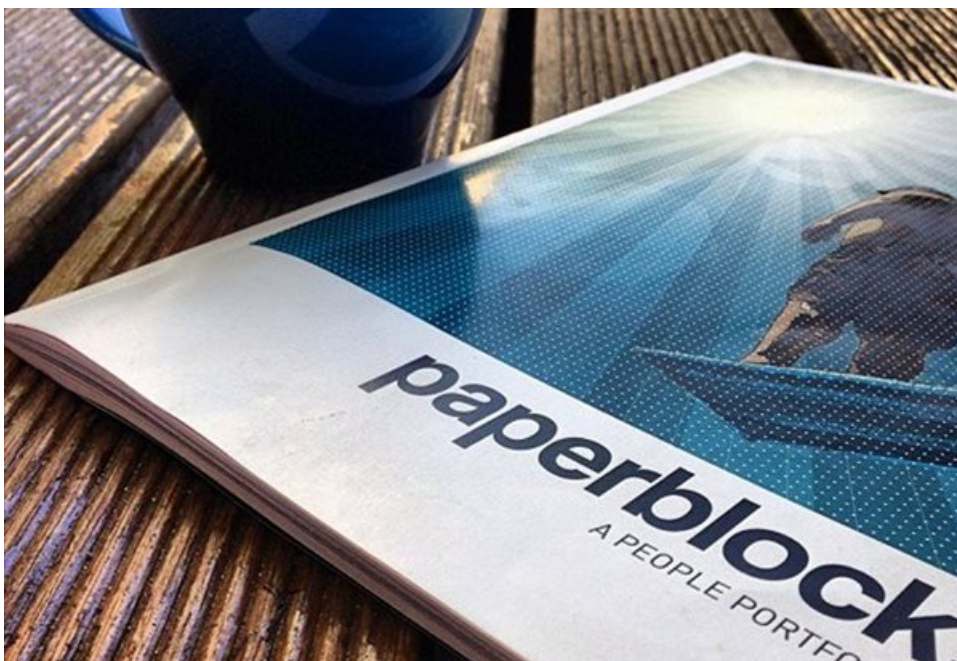
Side gigs are a great way to earn extra money, but they can also boost creativity and add value to your day job. Four DAN SSA staff share their inspiring stories.



The media industry puts a high price on people who are passionate, creative and filled with enthusiasm, but when your creative tank is running a little low and you feel you need more balance, a side hustle might just be the answer. Whether you're sneaking off to a comedy club after work to try out your jokes at open mic or you're spinning the decks on the weekend, an exciting 'B' side can help you process the stresses of the day, learn new skills and expand your contact list, and it can also provide a different context to showcase your strengths.

Some even argue that the freedom of being able to fail without the scrutiny of a line manager allows you to take greater risks, grow your confidence and use your newfound chutzpah at your next team brainstorm. We asked four DAN SSA staff to share their side hustle and how it boosts their overall creativity.

Graham Deneys, group strategy director, [Carat](#) SA/SSA



I have my own independent magazine called *Paperblock*. I've always been interested in where people come from, why they are here and what makes them tick, and I wanted to showcase those stories and celebrate all the characters I meet that make up the human race. I started *Paperblock* 15 years ago, and work on it on and off – depending on how much money I have in the bank and how creative I'm feeling at the time. I've published two issues – only one made it onto the shelf – but it was never about making money. I learnt copywriting, photography, design and interviewing skills, and I have really been able to connect with people. Sadly, the gentleman diving into the pool on the cover of my first edition passed away, but just as illustrated by that image, the most important lesson I've learnt is to live life to the fullest.

Vuyo Ngindane, IT support technician, [John Brown Media SA](#)



I have been a DJ for 14 years and it has taken years to build my brand, Bravodeep. A few years ago, I expanded to include a clothing line, selling branded tees and caps. It has been amazing to see how support for my work has grown and it gives me a real boost when I see people wearing my merch. It's entirely a passion project. If it was solely about money, I would've given up a long time ago. The music industry is challenging, so I've had to network and invest in sound financial planning. While it sometimes takes me away from my family – especially on the weekends – they are proud of my work ethic. One of the most important learnings has been to never quit: every mistake is a learning curve and that's a lesson I use in my work life too.

Robyn MacLarty, deputy editor, *Fresh Living* magazine, [John Brown Media SA](#)



I offer a transformational process called 'art magic' that uses art as a medium to connect with your inner compass and inspiration. Through a process of questioning, I guide participants to hone in on what they want to create in their life. This is followed by a guided meditation to connect with the inner wellspring of creativity and inspiration that lies within us all. The final step is an artwork based on the treasure unearthed from that journey. It's an amazing process if you're feeling stuck or uninspired. The answers are always within us. Creativity doesn't happen in isolation, so my workshops have really helped me access more inspiration when it comes to content solutions at work, and the skills I've learnt from workshop facilitation have only enhanced my ability to act as an anchor for the team.

Marian Ogaziechi, media and associate director, [DAN SSA](#), Nigeria



I use the stage to educate, inform and positively impact society, using storytelling. The overarching aim of what I do is to motivate and challenge women to be better than their best in everything they do – from career and relationships to mentorship and lifestyle. My workshops cover a range of topics and areas in a woman's life – we even do fashion demonstrations. I am happy to spend my weekends working with other writers and actors to change the perception of women in Nigeria and highlight their daily struggles. There has been a direct impact on my job because I have grown in confidence, decision-making and taking ownership of my life and responsibilities. The sense of purpose and fulfilment cannot be quantified.

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