

Time is a Screenwriter's Best Friend

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Coining the term 'leisure', the industrialisation structured our perception of everyday life. Most of us experience a division between private and professional spheres. And so does the screenwriter. But, if not employed by someone or the owner of a production company, he experiences the overlap between these two zones in the hardest way.

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Even if the temptation is huge, sometimes it is just better to say no. Silence your phone, don't even open the door, or take too many coffees too often. Daily writing is an indispensable requirement of every screenwriter. It does not matter if it takes place at night or during the day. The amount of hours spent on writing also varies with each writer between one and maybe ten hours or more. But friends are not the only source of disturbances.

If you want to make a living of your writing, you have to get into marketing. And that can lead to weeks or months of writing query letters and loglines. Constantly searching for new writing gigs, many screenwriters do not find any time for writing on a big project. It is hard to know which step to take in the next place, marketing a finished script or starting a new one.

Obviously, some people actually manage to separate the professional from the private while finding enough time for both marketing and development of a new script. But even those people get caught between the fronts when the friend who calls also is the friend of a former roommate of a new producer, and the tickets in question are for a grand premiere of a special film.

Spare time and work are so interwoven in the screenwriter's world that one often gets the impression of screenwriting being no work at all. But this definitely contradicts with the agenda of a professional or semi professional screenwriter. You need a post industrial or 'post leisure' way of thinking in order to combine work, marketing, and, still, a bit of friends and living.