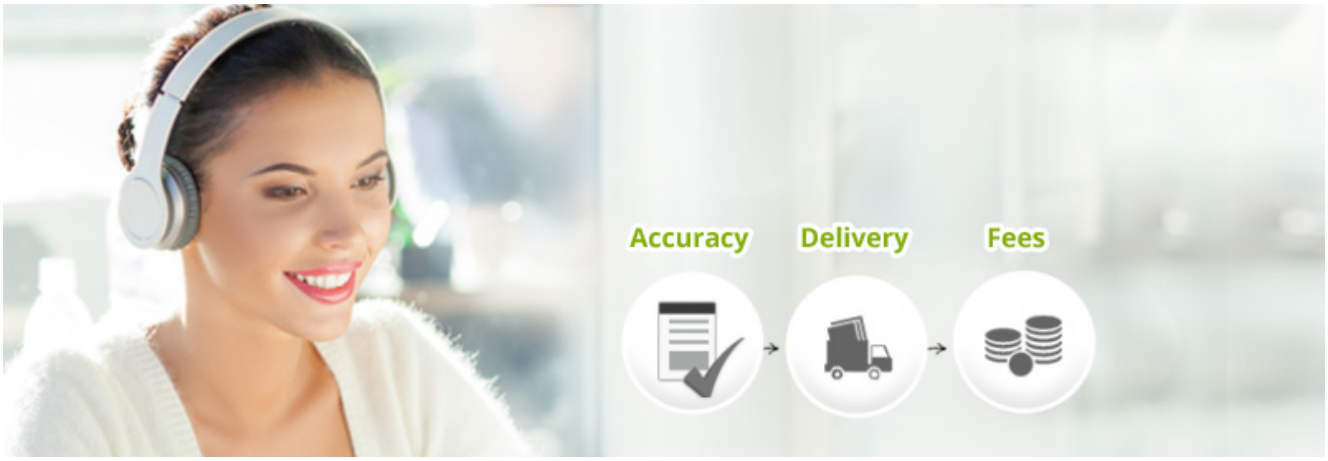
Know the Competitive Price for a Transcription



Since professional transcriptionists charge by the hour, it is important for your budget and your sanity to be able to convert your source file into the same metric. Whether you have a short podcast, a complex medical file, or a legal deposition full of critical case information, any misjudgment in the amount of work involved in transforming those files into accurate transcripts can result in lengthy project delays and budget-busting cost overruns.

Here are some important points to bear in mind when preparing your transcription rate estimates:

- **All minutes of speech are not equal:**

The average rate of speech is between 150 and 170 words per minute, which adds up to as much as 10,000 words per hour. If you compare that to the current world record holder at 653 words per minute, that may not seem fast, but if those words are poorly recorded, heavily accented, or full of complex terminology and jargon, the difference can be significant.

- **Faster is not always better:**

Transcriptionists typically type between 80 and 100 words per minute, but that should not prompt you to just double your

recorded hours to calculate transcribed hours.

Depending on the content and type of transcription, a 1-hour interview can take between four and 6 hours to transcribe if you are looking for accurate transcription. Stoppages to verify acronyms, terminology, or vernacular jargon can extend that time even further. In this context, a hungry freelancer promising 200 words per minute should be avoided at all costs.

- **Don't skip the quality control:**

Assuming that the transcription is achieved in only one pass will result in a highly inaccurate end product. Professional transcription services will usually do a second review of the material to check for spelling and grammatical errors. The really good ones will do a third quality control review by a subject matter expert in order to deliver the most accurate product possible.

- **The software saves accuracy not time:**

Technology has certainly brought us further along from starting and stopping cassette tapes in old transcription machines, but the capabilities of modern transcription software continue to be overestimated. Yes, you can transcribe straight into a word processing file and stop-start with a foot pedal or assigned hotkeys on your keyboard, but the process of getting the spoken word onto the page (or screen) remains as challenging as ever. Digital files can sound just as bad as tape files if the wrong recording equipment is used.

The ease with which interviews and presentations can be recorded these days has a tendency to offer a disservice to the transcription profession. With a good microphone, quality recording equipment, and a speaker who uses clear and well-paced diction, you can create an audio file at the push of a button.

Expecting a professional transcription service to deliver an

accurately written document of that same presentation in the same amount of time is unrealistic and is likely to generate confusion as to what is really involved in delivering a high-quality product at a competitive price. Having a clear sense of what you are working with in terms of a source file, and what you would like to receive will make the project much easier to manage.