



INFORMATION

FOR

CLIENTS

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1. ABOUT US

- 1.1.1 Fingertips Typing Services provide transcription services to a wide range of businesses and individuals of various professions including surveying, legal, medical and insurance. Our secretaries are fast, accurate typists with a solid secretarial background. We match a client with a secretary who has experience within that client's industry. We aim for this secretary to work for the same client each time to maintain consistency, accuracy and efficiency.
- 1.1.2 Most work is emailed to us from clients using digital dictation, explained more on page 4. Alternatively clients using analogue dictation (tapes) can use our telephone dictation service explained more on Page 5. Work can also be faxed, scanned, couriered or posted and if we are local to you, we could collect it. Other services we offer are detailed on page 7.
- 1.1.3 Fingertips are available 7 days a week including evenings. More about our turnaround times are on page 10.

2. DICTATION

2.1 Digital dictation

2.1.1 With today's advances in technology, dictation can now be recorded and played digitally meaning that dictation can be received from anywhere in the world within minutes. Digital dictation machines can be purchased from a wide range of suppliers and are revolutionising the workplace. See page 13 for an explanation of different types of digital voice files.

2.1.2 Dictation is carried out using the same method as analogue i.e. using a hand held recorder, but instead of recording onto a tape the recorder has a memory chip. This chip is either stored on the recorder or a memory card depending on which recorder you buy. Memory cards are recommended for users who dictate lengthy files. Normal recorders provide approximately 4 hours of recording time on standard play.

2.1.3 To download your dictation you will firstly need to load the CD that comes with the recorder. When you have finished dictating you download the file by connecting your recorder to your PC via the USB port using a lead or cradle. Once the file is on your PC it can be emailed to a transcriptionist for typing. Secretaries transcribe using suitable transcription equipment (foot pedal, headset and software). Fingertips can visit your offices and train on how to install and download files.

2.1.4 Benefits of digital dictation

- Secretaries have more work space as there is no need for bulky analogue transcribing machines.
- Clear sound quality.
- No need to store and archive tapes.
- Digital files lend themselves to work sharing and easy distribution and organisation. Instead of having one tape containing lots of letters, each letter can be its own file.
- Recording time can be several hours.
- Easy editing as dictation can be marked and referred back to.
- Dictation can be emailed immediately to recipient within minutes.
- No need to be tied to the office to get documents done.
- If you are office based, dictate direct to the PC for fast turnaround.
- Workflow improvements.
- As each machine can be given a unique ID, people can send files over a network into a central resource but all files remain easily identifiable.

2.1.5 To find out about the different types of files produced by recorders, please see our technical section.

2.1.6 Dictation tips

- Speak clearly and spell any unusual names or technical terms.
- Avoid background noise.
- Avoid using voice activated recorders as the recorder takes a split second to “wind up” and the beginnings of sentences get cut off.
- If you are recording a meeting, purchase a conference microphone so that all the participants’ contributions can be picked up. Also each time a member in the meeting speaks, if they state their name, this will save time in us deciphering the different persons and therefore the transcription time will be faster.
- If you are particular about punctuation, dictate commas, new paragraphs etc, otherwise we will punctuate your work for you.

2.2 Analogue dictation

2.2.1 Many firms and individuals still use analogue machines whereby dictation is recorded onto a tape and played back through a machine. Fingertips can transcribe mini, micro and standard and steno tapes. The tapes can either be delivered, couriered or posted to us. Alternatively you can download a Sound Recorder and record your tapes into the PC and then upload them to our secure file transfer system for typing. See more about this on page 13.

2.3 Mini disc transcription

2.3.1 We can transcribe from mini discs. The most effective way to do this is to transfer the mini disc audio to the PC using our specialist software. This then becomes a voice file which we can transcribe using our digital dictation software.

2.4 Telephone dictation

2.4.1 This is mainly for the benefit of firms and individuals who do not have any dictating equipment. From a telephone you dial 0870 855 4282 and after the bleep you record your dictation. This will come through to Fingertips as a voice file to be transcribed. This cost of using this service is the price of a normal telephone call.

3. EQUIPMENT NEEDED TO OUTSOURCE

3.1 Digital recording

3.1.1 The higher quality recording device you buy the more effective and efficient for both of us. It will provide a clear rerecording enabling us to transcribe it accurately and efficiently, thus saving you time and money. Our advice is to buy from recommended suppliers who provide ongoing help and technical support. Some companies will come to install your software and show you how to use the equipment. Ensure you explain to the suppliers what you will need your recorder for in order that they provide you with the correct model. We do not recommend that you buy a note taker as the sound quality is poor and they do not have the same specification and facilities as digital recorders. They are what they say they are, note takers, and are not for recording long dictations.

3.1.2 Recorders that record into DSS files are the ones you should go for as DSS (Digital Speech Standard) files are compressed. They are designed for dictations. They are small and take up the least space. They email and upload and download quickly. Most recorders will record in WAV format, although WAV files are the largest and therefore take a long time to upload and download. If you have a recorder that records in other formats, we can still transcribe it for you. Fingertips have the necessary transcription software to transcribe from most formats. These are just recommendations for new purchases.

Single person recordings

- i) Olympus DS-230 £132.99.
- ii) Philips 9350. £155 + VAT.

One to one interviews:

- i) Olympus DM-20 recorder. £134.99
- ii) Olympus DS2220 recorder. £200.00

Conferences

- i) Olympus DM-20 £318 excluding VAT.
- ii) Olympus DS2200 conference kit £354.00

These can be purchased from the majority of high street stores or alternatively on-line. We recommend:

http://www.speakit.info/index_graphics.php
<http://www.ndeva.co.uk>
http://www.olympus.co.uk/consumer/2581_2618.htm

The above companies provide technical advice.

3.1.3 There are recorders specifically for telephone dictation, police and legal transcribers etc. It really depends on your requirements. Contact one of our recommended suppliers for more advice.

PC

- 3.1.4 You will need a standard PC with windows 98, 2000, ME or XP with broadband internet connection.

4. OUR SERVICE

4.1 Types of work covered

- Audio transcription including surveying, legal, medical, students, academic and research.
- Copy typing.
- Presentations using Microsoft Powerpoint.
- Data entry and spreadsheets using Excel and Access.
- Mailmerges.
- Word processing.

4.2 Templates

4.2.1 We require copies of your in-house templates to undertake your work and produce it to your company standard. Fingertips will discuss with you how you like your documents laid out and correct spacings etc prior to work commencing.

4.3 Typing

4.3.1 During transcription, we complete the dictation to the best of our ability and if we come across dictation that is unclear, we find it beneficial if we do not leave gaps, but to type what we thought the word sounded like and highlight this in yellow. If we really cannot make out the word, then we type a few asterisks and highlight these in yellow. The secretary will put a marker on the dictation file so that her team leader can listen to the word and try to interpret it. If the word is still unclear, the client can easily edit and correct the word.

4.4 Quality Control

4.4.1 Our work is subject to a quality control check. This ensures that minutes and rate details are taken, the time required back is taken, a quality dictation form is sent and received back from the secretary, the dictation is proof read, and finally emailed back to the client.

4.5 Quality dictation

4.5.1 After a secretary has completed a dictation, she is required to report on the quality of the dictation highlighting areas of clear and poor dictation. Digital dictation is aimed at helping secretaries as well as dictators and the purpose of these reports is to encourage dictators to dictate clearly and effectively, ensuring efficiency for both the dictator and transcriptionist.

4.6 Service Level Agreement

4.6.1 Our Service Level Agreement outlines our levels of service, dates and turnaround times and who carries out certain duties. A copy can be seen upon request.

5. BENEFITS OF OUTSOURCING

5.1 The benefits

5.1.1 Outsourcing is a familiar concept to many entrepreneurs. Small companies routinely outsource various types of work as there are not enough staff in-house to carry out the duties and large companies turn to outsourcing to cut costs. Outsourcing can provide a number of long and short term benefits:

Cutting Costs

- Releases capital for investment elsewhere in your business.
- No PAYE costs.
- No National Insurance costs.
- No holiday and sickness costs.
- No pension costs.
- Savings on office overheads and computer maintenance.
- No costs on employing temporary staff.
- You only pay for the time used whereas in the office costs are incurred for idle time spent by employees.
- Companies can expand without taking on extra staff.
- No costs on training staff.
- Companies that carry out everything themselves have much higher expenses, all of which must be passed to the customer.

Increase efficiency:

- Fast turnaround in your specified timeframe.
- More office space.
- Total flexibility.
- Guaranteed availability 7 days a week, days and evenings.
- We use the latest technology giving you a competitive advantage with your competitors.
- Dictation transferred via email from anywhere in the world within minutes.
- Have your completed documents sent back to you wherever you wish, your office, your home, abroad!
- Secretaries trained in your industry/profession.
- More time to focus on other aspects of your business and work that serves the customer.
- Gives staff more time to manage their priorities more effectively and clearly.
- Time saved on training new staff and temps.
- Temps do not always live up to your expectations.
- Fingertips use the same typists for your company just as though we were secretaries in your office.
- Some companies have work that fluctuates and do not need a secretary permanently in the office.
- Emergency cover for absent typists.
- Fingertips staff highly trained in secretarial and word processing skills.
- Your office secretary will have more time to concentrate on PA duties rather than typing.

5.2 Compare in-house secretary with Fingertips secretary

	ANNUAL COST (£)
Salary, say	25,000.00
Employer's NI contribution	3,252.00
4 weeks holiday	1,923.00
Compute depreciation, software and maintenance costs	700.00
Sickness leave, say 5 days	480.00
Office space, lighting, heating, consumables	750.00
Accountancy/payroll administration	100.00
Training, induction and appraisal expenses	100.00
Recruitment and redundancy related costs	350.00
Other employment related costs including furniture and cleaning	100.00
Bonuses, say 1 weeks pay	480.00
TOTAL ANNUAL ESTIMATED COST, PER TYPIST	£33,235.00

This does not take account of costs such as:

Perks (insurances, healthcare etc)

Maternity/paternity entitlement

Employer's liability insurance

Total hours worked (8 hrs x 228 days/year (261 working days per year less 25 days annual leave and 8 public holidays)	1824 hours
60% of work time spent typing	1094 hours
Average cost of secretary per hour	£30.38
Fingertips Secretary standard service	£15.00 per hour
1094 hours typing time x £15.00	£16,410.00
TOTAL SAVING PER SECRETARY	£16,825.00

6. PRICES AND TURNAROUND TIMES

6.1 Prices

6.1.1 We charge per audio minute and not per hour. This means you know exactly how much each dictation will cost regardless of how long it has taken to type. Prices vary depending the service you require. There is a minimum charge of £5.00.

Audio transcription:

Standard 24 hour service:	£0.85 per audio minute.
Sameday service:	£0.95 per audio minute.
Overnight service:	£0.95 per audio minute.
Weekend service:	£0.95 per audio minute.
4 hour service:	£1.00 per audio minute.

Interviews - Verbatim

One to one interviews:	£0.90 per audio minute.
One to five persons:	£1.00 per audio minute.
Five to ten persons:	£1.10 per audio minute.

Interviews – Intelligent verbatim

One to one interviews:	£1.00 per audio minute.
One to five persons:	£1.10 per audio minute.
Five to ten persons:	£1.20 per audio minute.

Copy typing:

£3.50 per page for full page of printed text. This can vary dependent upon amount of text on page.

Amendments:

If typos or errors are made by Fingertips they will be amended free of charge provided the work is returned to us within 48 hours of the client receiving it. Extra amendments or additions made by the client will be charged at £15.00 per hour.

Powerpoint:

£3.50 per slide. This may vary depending on complexity.

Data entry:

To be discussed and agreed with Fingertips.

Mailshots:

£0.25 per letter.

Printing (black and white):

£0.10 per page.

Faxing:

£0.25 per page.

Scanning:

£0.25 per page.

6.2 Invoice terms

6.2.1 Payment terms are 14 days from the date of invoice. Fingertips reserve the right to charge 4% above the Bank of England base rate on late payment. Payments are to be made by cheque to Fingertips. Payment for couriers and postage of materials will be borne by the client.

6.3 After 6pm

6.3.1 Our receptionists answer calls from 8.30am until 6pm. If you need to contact us after this time for evening or urgent work, please call 01322 351190 or 07985 111281.

7. CONFIDENTIALITY

7.1 Confidentiality Agreement

7.1.1 Our secretaries are required to sign a Confidentiality Agreement agreeing not to disclose clients' confidential information to third parties.

7.1.2 The client is provided with a Confidentiality Agreement signed by the Proprietor of Fingertips.

7.2 File transfer / uploading of files

7.2.1 Fingertips use My Docs Online's Transcription Edition for file sharing and uploading. The client has their own username and password to access their own page. You can enter as many folders and sub folders as you wish for storing documents and for uploading files to. We provide a shortcut for uploading your files which you store on your desktop. Then whenever you need to upload a file to us you go to this icon, select what files you need to upload from your directory and drag and drop them into your Dictations to Do folder. When we have finished the transcription we will place them in your Transcriptions Done folder. We get an automatic email each time you upload files and you get an automatic email when your files are ready. All the files are then encrypted whilst they are in transit.

7.3 Security

7.3.1 Some client's work is of a sensitive/confidential nature and therefore they require confidence that their work will not be opened by anybody other than the recipient. Fingertips can encrypt your work and attachments in order that the recipient is the only person who can open it. A username and password is set up with the client and us. Our file transfer system encrypts information to ensure that it cannot be read during or after transmission. Whilst a file is in transit, it passes through numerous servers where administrators and hackers can access it. Encryption eliminates this threat and guarantees safe transit and delivery. Your files are 128 bit SSL encrypted and HIPAA compliant.

8. TECHNICAL INFORMATION

8.1 Digital audio file formats explained

DSS

- 8.1.1 Digital Speech Standard. Highly compressed file format enabling files to be recorded, downloaded and emailed. DSS is currently the industry standard for digital dictation. DSS can be converted to WAV format but the file will be much larger so therefore not recommended. DSS files are usually only 1/12th – 1/20th the size of a WAV file and there is no reduction in playback quality. DSS compression occurs at the time of recording so other files cannot be converted to DSS.

WAV

- 8.1.2 Uncompressed audio file format originally developed and built into Windows 95. These files are large due to being uncompressed.

MP3

- 8.1.3 MP3 files are compressed and filter out sounds the human ear cannot hear, reducing the file size. Can be played by most portable digital audio players and many DVD players. About 1/12th the size of conventional WAV format.

WMA

- 8.1.4 Windows Media Audio. Similar to MP3. Supported on fewer devices and DVDS than MP3, but noticeably better quality.

8.2 Technical helplines

Olympus European	00800 67 10 83 00
Ndeava	01769 560 620
Speak-It	0870 700 9080
Sanyo	0800 328 7060
Philips	01206 755903
Grundig	01277 725129
Dictaphone	0121 433 4848

8.3 Standard Play and Long Play with Philips recorders

- 8.3.1 The DSS Standard Play (SP) mode is the compatible format for professional mobile dictation devices. The Long Play (LP) modes are not a mandatory format and are implemented differently by different manufacturers. To achieve best sound quality, Philips recommends the use of SP recording mode only. The LP mode recording format is recommended to extend the recording time if needed.

8.4 Voice activated recording

- 8.4.1 Avoid using this if your recorder has this feature as the recorder takes a split second to wind up and the beginnings of sentences are generally cut off.

9. **FAQS**

How long does it take to transcribe a recording?

We speak seven times faster than we write and four times faster than we type. Generally you should allow four times the length of a recording. There are factors which could alter the time it takes to transcribe a recording i.e. audio quality, clearness of dictator, number of people speaking, background noise, speed of conversation, foreign accents etc.

What happens if you cannot hear certain words in my transcription?

If dialogue cannot be deciphered, we will either put what we thought was said and then highlight it in yellow or if the word is totally inaudible, we will put asterisks highlighted in yellow. If you have transcription software in the office, we can mark the audio time next to the word in order that you can listen to it. It should be noted however that most dictations are clear, and with secretaries experienced in the client's field mean inaudible words are few.

Do you give volume discounts?

A discount can be given if we are given a guaranteed amount of work each month.

How do we work together?

Email, phone, fax, post and courier.

What happens if my secretary at Fingertips is absent?

Your work will be passed to the most suitable secretary for your needs.

What are your opening hours?

The receptionists take calls from 8.30-6pm but we transcribe in evenings and weekends as well. If you need to contact us after 6pm, we still pick up voicemails and emails, but we will happily give you mobile numbers for extra means of contact.

When will my work be ready?

We have four different turnaround times, but if you need work returned, say within 2 hours, we will endeavour to meet this requirement.

How will my work be delivered?

Most work can be suitably emailed back, but it can be faxed, posted or couriered. A copy can be put on floppy disk or CD as well.

What if I find errors in my work?

If typos or errors are made by us, they will be amended free of charge provided the work is returned to us within 48 hours of the client receiving it. If you wish to make extra amendments or if errors are made due to the client's incomplete instructions, we will charge at our standard hourly rate of £15.00 per hour. Any amendments and additions to be made can be faxed.

How do you charge?

Dictation is charged per audio minute and other types of work charged per page. Data entry and mailshots are charged per entry. All other work is charged at £15.00 per hour.

How is payment made and how often?

Generally by cheque to Fingertips, we invoice fortnightly and require payment fortnightly after the date of invoice.

How can I ensure nobody else opens my emailed document?

If your work is of a confidential nature, we can protect it with a password only known to you and therefore you will be the only recipient who can open it. The email is encrypted and will only be legible when you open it.

How long do you keep my files on your computer?

For a minimum of one year. When archived, they will be transferred to CD.

How often do you keep my dictation files?

If you have not made any changes within 48 hours of us sending your document, we will delete the file.

10. TESTIMONIALS

Fingertips has provided work of excellent quality and met tight deadlines. We would definitely recommend this efficient and friendly service."

Graham Macklin - University Lecturer

"I use Fingertips to type various documentation that I often need in a hurry, and I can rely on Fingertips to provide these documents quickly and accurately. Fingertips staff always work on their own initiative and are in regular liaison with me. Other duties I require carrying out include updating my document templates and letterheads, and I am amazed at the professionalism and presentation. I often need other secretarial duties such as emailing and faxing on my behalf. I have sent clients round to Fingertips' office in the evening to collect documentation, and also to carry out work while the client waited. This is never a problem and Fingertips are always happy to co-operate. I would recommend Fingertips to anybody who needs an accurate and efficient typing service with a fast response, along with professional secretarial duties carried out at any time of the day".

D.M Harris - Adept Roofing

Fingertips always provide a fast, accurate and efficient service at reasonable rates. We continue to have a successful and happy relationship with Fingertips to date.

**Patrick Cloakley BSc(Hons) MRICS MBEEng – Chartered Surveyor
Cloakley and Co**

We approached Fingertips recently for help in an emergency situation due to staff difficulties. The service has been prompt, efficient and friendly with a high degree of accuracy. We will be using Fingertips in the future without doubt.

**Brenda Brady MRICS – Chartered Surveyor
Director
Prospect Surveyors**

Many thanks again for the great job done. Fingertips Typing Services is a great company to do business with. They are very reliable, highly efficient and very confidential. I have made a poster in the name of Fingertips Typing Services the best for student research, reports, transcripts and all secretarial jobs at the university.

Mabel Agbakoba - Student