

HOW I BECAME A **SIX-FIGURE** COPYWRITER

THE STORY OF HOW I FIGURED
OUT HOW MONEY IS REALLY
MADE IN THE COPYWRITING
BUSINESS

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How I Became a Six-Figure Freelance Copywriter

Dear **Copywriter**,

As I write this, I am nearing the end of year number one of my freelance copywriting career.

During my first year, I have worked with about 8 real clients... earning fees of about \$100,000. I'm 30 years old, a father of 3, working out of my house in Arizona.

Now most copywriting courses and copywriting gurus will tell you that these results (and a lot more) are quite possible, even your first year in the business. In fact, those claims are often the very headlines they use to sell you their courses.

But the problem is that building a six-figure copywriting career simply isn't a reality for most of the people who set out to achieve something in this business.

My goal is to help change that. Because it really isn't that difficult, provided you keep a few very important things in mind... at all times.

But before I get started... let me be very clear.

I am NOT a Guru

I am NOT a Guru and I have no intention of ever playing that role. (I started a business once and *gave* myself that title... but it just didn't feel right. It just wasn't me.) I am not a millionaire (although I *may* be one by the time you read this), and you won't see me on stage at any marketing seminars. I am simply an entrepreneur who is walking on a path very much like yours.

Maybe I've gotten lucky. Or perhaps my previous lives (as a church musician, car salesman and computer consultant) have somehow prepared me to leap over some of the pitfalls that many new copywriters face.

The bottom line is that I am really no different than you when it comes to becoming a six-figure copywriter right out of the gates. I have access to the very same material you do.

But there **is** one thing that is responsible for my success more than any other. But before I tell you what that is, let me tell you what it *isn't*...

- It **isn't** any copywriting course currently on the market...
- It **isn't** any guru or copywriting coach currently offering their expert training...
- And it **isn't** any network of connections, friends in high places, or membership to the "good ol' boy's network" of copywriting...

The real secret to my success is very simple. It's...

My Ability to Use My Brain AND My Ability to Think for Myself

Believe me, it's not an ability that comes naturally to me. Well, maybe at one time it did. But ever since my first day of kindergarten, it's been slowly beaten out of me. And up until a year ago, I've been very good at taking orders. At listening to what other people want me to do and executing their wishes... almost without question.

Believe it or not, that can get you places in the "real" world. Taking orders can get you a 4.0 grade point average. Taking orders will win the admiration of those around you. Taking orders will even get you a high paying job.

But in business, the ability to take orders from someone else will get you **killed**. You'll go broke in no time flat.

WARNING: This Guide is Not about Copywriting

You read that right. You will not find even one copywriting "tip" on any of these pages. I'm not really interested in that. There are plenty of courses and coaches who are already delivering that type of information. But frankly, most of us are already drowning in more copywriting "tips" than we could ever use. Here's something I heard from a wise man once that you always need to remember...

You Don't Become Wealthy By Buying Things... You Become Wealthy By Selling Them

What interests me isn't the art of writing copy. It's the art of making money writing copy. Because being a good copywriter and being a wealthy copywriter are as different as night and day.

Being a "great" copywriter is often about your own ego—about achieving a worthy goal for yourself. But apart from achieving that as a personal goal (and being able to brag about it to others), it's about as financially useful as learning how to play an instrument.

But knowing how to turn your knowledge and skill into *dollars and cents*... now **that's** important.

Not because money will make you happy. But because money will give you more **choices**. You'll be able to choose to live your life as you want to live it. And to have the free time you need to figure out exactly what that is.

One Last Thing... Before We Get Started

As T. Harv Eker always says, "Don't believe a word I say." What you are about to read is the path **I'm** taking to build a business. This stuff works **for me**. It might *not* work for you.

And that's the entire reason I wrote this guide. To tell you that there **is no one** way to success. Thinking you've got to somehow fit yourself into someone else's path (or someone else's course) is worse than ramming a square peg into a round hole. It's **much** worse because it'll affect your happiness... not to mention your pocketbook. Trying to live someone else's success will keep you from ever finding your own.

That's a belief I had from the beginning. That I had to blaze my own path. But for some reason, no one was very interested in hearing about it before I had any clients... before I was earning what I'm earning today.

Now things are different. I can see my path fairly clearly right before me. And from my perspective, the future is very very bright, not to mention profitable.

Trust me, once you've been on the "other side," the side where creating wealth on demand becomes a reality for **you**... Well, there's no turning back.

It's just like being born. Once it happens, you can't go back. And let me tell you, the view from where I'm sitting now is absolutely priceless.

So let's get started helping you get on **your** path.

Part 1:

Get Clear on Where (and Why) You're Going

Now before you freak out on me and think this section is going to be your run of the mill “set your goals” kind of stuff... just take a deep breath.

It's not.

Truth is, I really don't like setting goals all that much. I've always liked the advice of million dollar consultant, Alan Weiss (<http://www.summitconsulting.com>). He recommends to set *loose* goals. Not out of fear that you might **miss** any specific goals you set, but to protect from setting your goals too low and actually **hitting** them.

Sure, it's great that you made \$100,000 this year... unless you had the potential to make \$400,000.

There's another reason you need to be clear about where you're going and why. You need to have some sort of destination in mind for **your** journey. Just make sure it's more defined than one of those “feel good” type of dreams that everyone has.

What's the problem with dreaming?

Here's the Problem with Dreaming

Remember the last time you were sitting at your computer working and saw an email come in promoting some copywriting or marketing product?

The writing was compelling enough that you gave it a quick read. Seconds later your credit card is sitting in front of you (still smoking from being pulled out of your wallet like lightning) as you press the “SUBMIT” button on the screen.

What just happened?

You stopped working towards **your** goal to help someone **else** achieve their goal. (Your deposit into their bank account is the proof. And you probably won't get a thank you note for it.)

Moral of the story:

People Buy for the Chance to Fulfill Their Dreams...

And if you're caught dreaming, you're gonna become one of those **buyers** many, many more times than is necessary to get you where you want to go.

But if you are focused on achieving a specific something, no matter how small, your decisions become very easy. You simply say to yourself, "I didn't wake up today wanting to buy this product. And right now, I'm working to get to point B. Will this help me get to point B any quicker than I will get there myself?"

Chances are, you don't *need* the product. You simply need to focus on where you're going.

The Anatomy of an Expert

You don't need to be the world's greatest copywriter to make **a lot** of money copywriting. You don't need to own every successful ad from the last century to know what works. And you certainly don't need to spend your days (and money) listening to every story for sale about someone **else's** recipe for **your** success.

Sure it's inspiring. And sure you'll learn a thing or two. But often times, it's simply information. And that won't pay the bills, let alone make you wealthy. Heck, you can **always** learn something from almost **anyone**. The real question is, "**Should** you... right now?"

Never put hearing about someone **else's** success strategies over and above creating your own.

Because in the end, you'll still be left behind... responsible for creating your own success. Only now, you'll be working with less time (and less money) than you should have had.

Believe me, I speak from experience. As a recovering information junkie, it took me a while to discover the difference between **learning** and actually **progressing**.

Now some of the "gurus" reading this right now might look at that last statement and say, "Man, that's not true. I studied every successful promotion I could get my hands on. I copied out ads of the masters by hand until the light from my candle went out."

They might say that. And they'd be missing my point **completely**.

Here's the key to remember.

Why You Deserve MORE than “Guru” Status

We are not aiming at “guru” status here. We’re aiming at you being happy and wealthy. And those two things don’t have to go together.

It’s not my goal to put “gurus” down. My goal is to help **you** see reality. To see that **your** list of possibilities for achieving success is so very much bigger than you probably imagine.

Just be clear. It’s no one else’s responsibility to have your best interest in mind. That goes against the grain of human nature.

The responsibility for your success and happiness falls squarely in your lap. You are in control of creating your happiness and wealth. And most importantly, you are in charge of defining what that means **for you**.

Just in case you think I’ve gone all soft, too deep into the mushy stuff... don’t worry. We’re about to jump into the nitty gritty.

But remember, your copywriting career is about **your** journey. It’s about defining your goals, not based on what you see others achieving, but based on what **you** want to achieve for you. It’s about walking the path, not getting to the end of the path.

Thinking you’ve got to work hard to **get** somewhere is a recipe for frustration.

Because the only place you’re **ever** gonna be is exactly where you are, at this present moment.

Wealth and success come when you figure out how best to enjoy **that**.

Part 2: Get Very Clear About Exactly What Business You Are In

Here's something that might surprise you:

There's No Such Thing as a Well Paid Copywriter

I doubt there's a business owner out there that wakes up in the morning and says, "I'd like to buy some copy." "I'd like to test a new copywriter... I'll ante up between \$5,000 and \$20,000 for the package... risk another \$5,000-\$10,000 on the design fee and then cover the bill for the postage required to test the promotion."

You are **not** in the copywriting business. No one wants copy. They want what the copy will do for them. This is marketing 101 right?

Sure, you hear stories about the big names getting paid big fees and royalties for the promotions they write. But that's NOT where the real money is. Plus, my hunch is that many of them work like dogs day and night.

Take a moment and ask yourself, "Is that *really* what I want?"

Then take another moment and listen... you'll hear your answer.

Think about this: the only reason those business owners can afford to pay the copywriter is because they are making profits many, many times bigger than even the "highest paid" copywriters command.

If all you ever want to do is sit at your desk and write copy day in and day out, then by all means, do it. Maybe that's right for you. But that's **not** what this guide is about. This guide is about learning how to use copywriting skills to make the most amount of money, in the quickest amount of time, with the least amount of risk and effort.

The real key is that you understand that in order to maximize your paydays, you need to position yourself squarely on the **INCOME** side of a client's balance sheet. You have to help your client make money.

And that involves you knowing more than simply how to write.

So I'm going to say this one more time, just to make sure I'm being clear. The quickest and easiest way to make six-figures in the copywriting business (your first year) is to...

Get Out of the Copywriting Business

Now I'm not saying you can't make a ton of money just sitting there for the rest of your life cranking out copy. I did that for the first few months. You've gotta start somewhere after all... But frankly, it's a lot of work. It takes a lot of time.

And when you finish each project, you feel like you just ran a marathon. You need to push back and take a break to recharge. (And the money stops coming in at that point.) Plus... there are much easier ways to make (a lot) more money.

So if you **aren't** going to be in the copywriting business, then what the heck do you tell people that you do?

“You Help Businesses PROFIT”

That pretty much gets right to the point.

It doesn't sound glamorous, and you won't win any awards for your eloquence—but at the end of the day, that's what business owners want: **PROFIT**.

Heck, from a business owner's point of view, a copywriter is an expense to be minimized. How cheaply and how quickly can we get someone to write a competent promotion? Chances are, there will **always** be someone who is willing to step up to the plate for less than you.

But here's something that really surprised me when I figured it out. I always saw these big promotions online and offline doing big numbers... I wondered to myself, “I think this copy looks... just OK. What's the deal?”

And then at some point, once I started running my own promotions, it hit me:

You Can Make a Lot of Money with Less than Stellar Copywriting

You probably won't read this in any copywriting course or hear it from any guru (at least publicly), but you don't *need* to be the world's “highest paid copywriter” or the “world's best living copywriter” to make a ton of money.

Often times, the quality of the copy takes a back seat to the two things that are **much** more important.

Those things are **the offer, and the list.**

Remember Gary Halbert's schtick about wanting "a starving crowd?" How that was what he'd want if he was promoting a hamburger stand? Well, he never said he'd need the world's best copywriter. He just wanted a rabid audience (list) to sell to.

So here's the bottom line: Stop offering a service (copywriting) and start offering a **result**. Stop promoting your copywriting skills and start promoting your **moneymaking** skills.

Believe me, once the word gets out that you can take an idea and turn it into cash, your phone will start ringing. And if moneymaking is a skill you don't have yet, then that's the first place to start. Buy some books. And learn how to do it.

You learn by doing. You learn by trying. You learn by failing more times than the next guy or gal is willing to fail.

(So from this point on, understand that when I use the word **copywriter**, what I *really* mean is **moneymaker**. Instead of focusing on the *doing* you focus on the results created by the doing.)

Part 3:

Preparing for the “Hunt”

Now I’ve bought **several** copywriting books and courses. And without fail, I have yet to come across one that actually shows you how to make money with your copywriting skills.

Most of them don’t mention it. Some tell you how someone *else* made money copywriting. But I haven’t seen the one that really helps **you** do it yourself.

From a strategic, customer retention point of view, maybe that’s a smart strategy—it sets you up really well to “stay tuned” for their next course. But when it comes to trying to figure out how in the world you can put food on the table writing copy, not knowing how to turn that skill into money pretty much sucks.

It’s like having your own Golden Goose that forgot how to lay the eggs.

And that’s the reason I wrote this guide. To help you figure out how to get paid doing what you love.

So how do you get copywriting clients?

A Quick Business Lesson from Willie Sutton

Ever hear of Willie Sutton? Actually, they called him "Slick Willie." He's the bank robber that the FBI chased across the country for years. One of the few thieves known for his fine taste and flawless wardrobe.

When asked why he robbed banks, Sutton explained, "Because that's where the money is." If you plan on pursuing a career in robbery, that seems like a good strategy. Doesn't it?

But what does Willie Sutton have to do with making money copywriting?

Everything. Here’s the reason.

If you plan on making a lot of money in this business, then it makes sense you’d go looking for clients with a lot of money. The money’s got to come from somewhere... and it pays to work with clients that *already* have a real business, real cashflow, real customers (read: not a startup) and are used to writing checks for large amounts.

Remember, you're looking for **clients**. You are not looking for random copywriting jobs. That might keep you alive, but it won't make you wealthy. In any business, acquiring a customer is one of the most expensive things to do.

It works the same way in your business. Except you're working on a fixed timeline as well. Go without a client for too long and you stop eating.

Now before I give you some ideas about where to find clients, here's something very, **very** important you must know. Of course this is my opinion, but again, that opinion was created through a lot of trial and error (mostly error).

So here's the key thing to keep in mind...

Clients are a Lot Like Real Estate—You Make Your Money on the Buy

Savvy real estate investors know that they make their money when they **buy** a property. They don't subscribe to the general tick-tock of "buy and hold"—the wait for the thing to appreciate advice that you hear in the media.

"Buy and hold on for dear life until the darn thing appreciates" is **not** playing to win. It's playing not to lose. And playing that way will actually increase your chances of losing in the long run.

So what **does** a savvy investor do? She goes out looking for hidden opportunities. Undervalued properties she **knows** she can turn into a profit.

And that's what I'd recommend you do when you're looking for clients. Look for the undervalued, hidden opportunity clients that you can help create huge results. The good thing is, they're **everywhere**.

What you're looking for are business owners that have somehow built a business but are working way too hard for the results they are getting. Business owners that have money (meaning they're *already* making sales) but simply aren't getting the biggest bang for their buck.

Business owners that would be more than happy to let you **share** in the success you help them create. That's the key. You need to get a piece of the pie. You need to get compensated based on the results you create **not** only the work you do. That's leverage. Without it, you *might* be well paid, but you'll be working very hard for the rest of your life.

Big name copywriters call "getting a piece of the pie" royalties. If you can get them from the big mailers, good luck. But isn't everyone trying that? There are much easier fish to fry.

Why not eat those? Just put your ego in a bag, stop chasing after the big fish, and go where the pickings are good, plentiful **and** profitable.

So If These Clients Are Everywhere, Why Can't I See Them?

So now to the nitty gritty... You're about to learn where these clients are hiding and how you can find some of them.

But first, let's make sure we're clear on what the goal is.

The goal is for you to make money doing what you love, how **you** want to do it, when **you** want to do it.

The **goal** is to be happy and wealthy.

So don't let someone else tell you (including me) where to get your clients or what they should look like or be like. Don't let someone else tell you that you must "pay your dues" or that you have to "work your way up" or that you need to complete LEVEL 2 of our course before we "set you free" to start your own career.

The only permission you need to succeed is permission from yourself to stand up and take what you want. Not because you're selfish, but because it's **your** responsibility. No one else is going to give it to you.

Your goal here is **not** to fit in someone else's mold or to get approval by the copywriting coaches out there. That might feel good, but it won't put your kids through college. The only approval you need to know you're on the right track is the money in your bank account.

And if your account is empty at this particular point in time, then there's no where to go but up. **MONEY** is the measure. It's how you keep score in this business. And believe me, you won't need help figuring out if it's working or not.

In this business, no one else's opinion matters at all. I could sit here all day and get paid for critiquing copy. The easiest job in the world. To be paid to poke holes in someone else's work.

But can I guarantee that my suggestions will pull in the money? NO. There are no guarantees until the sales show up on the income statement.

Now I **know** you didn't get this guide to hear advice about getting clients like, "You've got to figure it out on your own." So I'm not going to do that (even though I firmly believe that's the best way to do it).

One more thing before we get back to business...

Don't Fall Into the "Specialize" Trap Unless You WANT to Specialize

If you're just getting started in this business, you're probably going to hear advice like, "You've **got** to specialize. Specialists make more than generalists. That's why heart surgeons get paid more than other doctors. Choose a particular copywriting niche and get good at that."

I started that way... but looking back, I think that's a load of (*&%.

Heart surgeons get paid more **not** because they're experts, they get paid more because they save lives. They deliver a **result** that is perceived to be more valuable than other doctors.

Learn how to deliver a **result** that someone cares about and you'll never have to worry about the wealth. It will come.

So why would you limit your possibilities and "specialize?"

The normal response to that would be, you can't market to everyone. You have to focus.

But there's a difference between focusing your **marketing** and focusing your skills.

Focusing your **marketing** is smart, focusing your **skills** will put you in a box, and eventually put a cap on your income... not to mention the possibility of becoming **extremely** bored. Just how many health supplement promotions does it take to kill a copywriter? Becoming a "copywriting factory" and cranking out the same stuff for the next 10 years is no way to live.

Plus... you're going to miss a whole lot of profitable opportunities because you're too busy searching for your "target market prospect."

How to Starve in the World's Biggest Grocery Store

Here's a simple example. Picture this...

You're starving... you're in the jungle and you haven't eaten for days. You decide to go hunting for elephants. After all, if you're going to hunt an animal, you might as well hunt one that will feed you for weeks.

So you go out hunting for elephants. The only problem is, you can't find any. They've all been chased away by the herds of elk that are running around all over the place.

But you press on... those elephants are somewhere darn it. And **you** know exactly how to hunt them. You **specialize in hunting elephants**. If you could just find one... Where are those darn elephants?

Now that's pretty silly. But I think it's accurate. It surely was for me. I'm almost embarrassed to think about how many (HUGE) opportunities I probably missed simply because they didn't fit my target market. I was looking for my elephants when the elk were all around me wondering why I didn't chase them.

Heck, I didn't even **see** them because I was too busy following orders... and looking for something else.

Now it's time to go fishing...

Part 4:

Choosing Your Pond

There are a lot of well stocked ponds out there, just teeming with clients.

But since you can't fish in all of them at once, it pays to limit your focus at first. Either start where you *think* the profit is or with what really interests you.

Just a couple of general rules/observations, that might help you along the way. Especially when you first enter a new market.

- Copywriters who are busy (or at least look busy) tend to stay busy. The perception of success attracts more success.
- Your goal is **not** to please the client. If that's how you feel, it's probably a sign you have a little more work to do on your self-confidence. This isn't school. You don't have to please the teacher. This is business. You have to make money.
- Always be selling. When you first start working with a client (particularly smaller entrepreneurial type businesses) you're going to notice things about their business. You're going to spot areas for improvement. Those are **your** future projects. You need to figure out how to get them.
- You can't learn when you're talking. Early on, I made it a point to educate my client along every step of the way. Basically this came down to me talking **too much** about what I was doing and why. Now every client situation varies, but for the most part, you're **not** a teacher. Your client didn't hire you to "teach" them. They hired you to make them money. Looking back, it was really a mixture of me trying to prove myself (lack of self-confidence) and me being overly excited (lack of professionalism) about doing something that really interested me.
- You never get a second chance to make a first impression. Remember that the **first** time you pick up the phone when a client calls. If you're just starting out, take a breath. Clients can hear when you're needy. Learn how to stop transmitting those clues. They'll hurt your bottom line.

If you're starting out, just choose a market that interests you. Don't take days and months to research your market before you jump in. There are only two things you need to know to evaluate a copywriting market. Especially when you are getting started...

1. You need to be interested in the subject matter. So if you hate alternative health, don't chase the supplement companies just because that letter you got

in the mail told you it was a profitable market. That letter was probably just trying to sell you the copywriting course for the health market.

2. You need to know that copywriters are **already** getting paid in that market. You don't have time or the money to be a pioneer right now. So go where there **is** competition. That will ensure that there is money enough to pay for your services.

One more thing before we jump in...

It pays to get creative with how you define your market. So while most copywriters are "encouraged" to focus on markets like health, financial or business opportunities, don't let those definitions limit your possibilities.

What if you decide to work with million dollar entrepreneurs who own information businesses that market to **other** businesses?

The point is, there are many, many profitable markets out there for your services. Don't get fooled into thinking you only have a choice between 2 or 3.

And don't really worry about competition. There is so much opportunity in this business, it's amazing.

So let's go fishing...

Part 5:

Fish with a Net, not a Hook

When professional fishermen go out to reel in a catch, they aren't armed with 100s of fishing rods and little hooks. They go out with the biggest and strongest frickin' net they can find.

If you're going to catch profitable clients, then you've got to cast your net wide enough to give yourself a fighting chance. And that means your net has to help you build value and relationships slowly, on a high volume basis.

Remember what you're looking for: not just clients who want a copywriter (although you can start that way), you want **clients who want to boost their bottom line**.

A lot of times, I hear about newer copywriters sending out a self-promotion and getting zero calls. When the real details come out, you find out they only sent to 300 prospects... **one time**.

That's not marketing. And that's not gonna cut it. Always remember, marketing is **not** an event. **Marketing is a process**. (Thanks Dan Kennedy!) Sure you'll hear stories about the copywriter who launched his entire career with one mailing of a few hundred pieces. But I'm not talking about the one hit wonders, I'm talking about you.

If your first self-promotion mailing brings back enough clients to make you a millionaire the first year, CONGRATS!... My point is, what's your plan for success if that doesn't happen?

What Do Your "Fish" Eat Anyway?

If we're going fishing, we're going to need some bait. And the better your bait, the easier your job is going to be. As I write this, the internet hype is still raging strong. The general population online is finally getting the gist of the "give away free content in exchange for contact info" idea. At this point, there are so many free eZines out there, a guy could spend the rest of his life reading them.

And that's the problem.

My mantra is always, look at what "everyone" is doing... and **do something else**. Once you get "in," **then** you can start broadening out—and doing some of the things that every else is doing. It won't hurt you, because you've already gotten the attention of the prospects you want to attract.

So how can **you** be different? How can you develop a “net” that will deliver value **and** get the attention of your prospect?

Chew on that for a moment, because there’s something else (even *more* important than the bait) that you’ve got to consider.

What Type of Fish are You Hungry For?

When I first got into this business, I was hungry for just about any fish that swam my way. If you’re just starting out, then I imagine you might feel the same way. **Any** client is a good client.

And when you’ve got to pay the bills, that’s a fine way **to start**. But pretty soon, you won’t feel that way. And you’ll probably be surprised at how soon that happens for you.

Here’s the thing: not all clients are good clients. Not all clients are profitable clients. And some of them are downright annoying. So if you want to actually enjoy your life, then you’ll have to go out searching for the clients that **you** really want to work with.

So which clients are those?

Answering that question takes some time. In fact if you have a clear answer too early in your career, give it some more thought. Because you’re probably not even aware of some of the more lucrative areas that clients can come from.

This is one of the most important things you can answer. In marketing terms, you’re selecting your list. And if you’ve ever done a promotion, you know that **the list** alone can make or break your success.

Once you select your list, you’ll know where to cast your net.

One Type of Fish to Stay Away From

As you’re thinking of the different clients you could work with, there is one area I’d stay away from. At least while you’re getting started.

That area is startup companies. Or clients with nothing more than an idea. The ones that don’t have a business... yet.

So no startups. Why? After all, those folks might be more likely to give a new copywriter a chance. The problem is, there are two things that most startups are missing that could really limit your chances of hitting six-figures.

They rarely have **customers**... and they rarely have **cashflow**. Customers pay your fee. Cashflow makes sure you actually get your fee. **YOU** need both to be present to make sure you're working with a client, not just doing a copywriting job.

Plus, most startup owners have something extra that can make them less than desirable clients. What they have is **enormous** pressure to "make it work." It could be their 9th business... started with a list of now maxed-out credit cards... with a marriage on the rocks.

That's a lot of stuff that is going to trickle down to you. And if you step in to help them, there's a good chance that the results of your work could mean the difference between profit and bankruptcy.

Who wants to be in a position like that? Especially when you're just getting going?

Later on, as you gain more experience and learn how to spot profit potential when a client comes to you with a product, then things might be different.

Startups **can** offer huge rewards, provided you structure your agreement properly to make sure you actually get paid for the results of your work. As time goes by, you'll get better and better at spotting the good opportunities quickly. There are no guarantees, of course.

Here's the next step. You need to think about...

How to Put Your Net Together

Once you select your list, then you need to build your net. But remember, you don't have to limit yourself to a particular **niche**. Think different. You could target your clients by revenue level, by type of product (hard product vs. information), or even the personality of the owner.

Maybe you prefer to work with entrepreneurs. You want to work with the guy who's signing your check and calling **all** of the shots. Or maybe, you prefer to search out the larger operations. You'll probably deal with a creative director, a few committees and all of the red tape (read: lack of freedom) that comes with a corporation.

So beginning on the next page, you'll find a short list of some of the building blocks you can use to build **your** net. The system that's going to attract clients right to you. You'll see I've put some pros and cons of using each method. In my business today I focus on only 1 or 2 of these methods. See what works for you, that's all that matters.

| Tool | Description | Pro | Con |
|---|---|---|---|
| Printed Newsletter | •Old school printed newsletter (4-8 pages) delivered by U.S. mail at least monthly. | •Delivers consistent value to prospect and soft sells your service. | •Actually takes work to create/print/mail. |
| Google AdWords Paid Search | •Paid keyword triggered search ads. Pay-per-click. | •While the internet is hot, the prospect pool is far larger offline. | •Easy of entry. Too easy for competition to enter the space. •You have NO idea if you're dealing with searchers who are actually buyers. High potential for waste. |
| PR | •Submitting traditional press releases to media contacts in newspaper, radio and TV. | •Limited competition. Most copywriters have no clue about how to leverage traditional PR. | No guarantees... can take a little while before you get how the system works. |
| Free eZine | •Free email subscription to regular email publication sent from you to prospect list. | •Simple, easy, quick and very inexpensive. | Pretty common. Harder to stick out. Email deliverability rates can be a problem. Consistency and value is key here. |
| Traditional Direct Mail Pitch Letter | •Letter to marketing director telling them how smart you are. | •Direct •You get a chance at (brief) undivided attention of prospect. | •Fairly common. •Chances are, your letter (and your claims) will blend in... or never even get opened. |
| Postcards | Cardstock postcard... small or large. | •No opening required. •Sales message is delivered quickly and does not require much attention of prospect. | •Not too much room for a complete sales message. Need to be used in conjunction with another step to close the deal. |
| Face to Face Networking | •Actually meeting real people that qualify to be quality prospects for your business. | Forming relationships (which tend to lower fee resistance and make it more difficult for a client to "work with someone else") can happen quickly. | •Certain free/low-cost networking groups (i.e. BNI) tend to attract needy business owners. •Can be a lot more expensive (in terms of time invested) than large volume mailing promotion. |

| Tool | Description | Pro | Con |
|---|--|---|--|
| Telephone | •Use the old fashioned telephone to create a relationship directly with buyer | •Not much competition. Many copywriters are comfortable selling in print not face to face or over the phone. | Need to combine with other steps in the funnel to make sure calls aren't perceived as hard sell, "cold-calls." |
| Video Letter | Similar to the printed newsletter, but using video. Prospects will actually get a feel for who you are through all of your nonverbal cues. | •Definitely not as much competition. Your piece should get noticed. | •Need basic video editing skills and equipment. •Depending on method of delivery (web, vs DVD or other) view rate could be low. |
| The Back Door Approach | •Develop low cost/high value product or service to sell directly to prospect which also pre-sells copywriting/marketing service. | •Prospect will already know, like and trust you. •Guard is down for you to deliver additional sales messages any-time you like. | •Takes time and some money to develop. Not necessarily best for the beginner. |
| The 3rd Party "Look at What I Can Do" Letter | •Similar to a case/study or extended testimonial. The letter simply displays the results you help your clients create, along with a response device. | A more sophisticated alternative to the hard-sell promo letter. By telling stories, prospects are more likely to see situations similar to their own where you've created good results. | •Takes longer to build enough hard proof to push the prospect to action. |

And then there's what I call the Platform Spiral Client Attraction System. I didn't have this when I started, but I do now. And in my experience, it's far superior to just about everything I just listed. It's based on something called a "media platform." That's a regularly recurring email newsletter, or podcast or something that cements your position as THE expert in your space. The price you pay for superior results is TIME.

Becoming a "one-of-a-kind" service provider is one of those exciting business topics everyone *tells* you you should pursue without actually telling you how to do it.

The whole idea of having a "Unique Selling Proposition" (USP) as a service provider is quite exciting... until you actually try to create one. Technically speaking, *creating* a USP is actually pretty simple. Having that creation actually resonate with the marketplace, however, is much more difficult. Just because you're the only photographer that takes wedding pictures while hopping on your left foot just isn't going to bring the clients running now is it?

You can actually waste quite a bit of time and energy “uniquely positioning” your business in ways that no one (but you) actually cares about. It feels like you’re getting somewhere because you’re busy, but really, nothing is happening.

And so most business owners, when faced with the market’s indifference to their Unique Selling Proposition, simply give up and move the whole task **way** down on their todo list.

Sometimes the solution to a complicated problem is to realize that searching for the answer you think you need is in fact your big mistake. And so it is with the creation of a Unique Selling Proposition.

You could spend a long time trying to “think” your way to that solution. But I’ve discovered something that’s much more effective, not to mention easier. And it actually ends up delivering a superior result.

The process starts with something called, The Platform.

The Magic of The Media Platform

Look around at just about anyone with influence and you’ll most likely find, not too far away, a Platform of sorts that is powering that force.

Oprah had her TV show. Rush Limbaugh has the radio show. You can think of countless examples.

A Platform, very simply, is some sort of vehicle that distributes specific value to a specific group of people, consistently, over time. A Platform might be as simple as an email newsletter, or a podcast, or a print newsletter, or even a video series.

Now if the word “Platform” is new to you, don’t worry. I didn’t make up the concept. No one in this century (or the last few) did. It’s been around forever.

But in a day and age where trust and attention (some of the most important business assets you can have) are harder than ever to acquire and keep, one has to resort to “drastic” measures. Drastic includes actually working to “earn” your future success.

That’s what a Platform does. It shows up. Over and over and over again in the lives of your future clients.

The format isn’t the defining component, the consistency and the intent **are** the defining components.

Platforms produce value for a select group of people consistently. In fact, that is one of the things that makes them so powerful. When a prospect engages with a Platform, there is actually an implied promise made as to how often that thing is going to show up in their life.

That's the genius of something like a daily email newsletter, by the way. From the very beginning of the relationship, your prospect is not only agreeing but **expecting** to hear from you on a daily basis. The agreement has been made that you will show up and they will allow you in. But it's even better than that. Because if you do it right, your audience actually looks *forward* to receiving it.

Next is the **intent** of the Platform. The intent is not to get, it is to give. More specifically, the intent is to transform you or your business into a valuable part of your prospect's life IN ADVANCE of them becoming a client. Actually, the intent is to do that regardless of whether or not money is ever exchanged.

The Platform can very easily become the central force that powers your business. It works. I know because I've been living it for the past few years.

One of the most effective ways to sell anything is by demonstration. If you provide an effective demonstration in front of the right people, you tend to have a far easier time of it than the guy who doesn't know how to demonstrate.

That's what a Platform does: it demonstrates what you DO. It doesn't demonstrate by telling, it demonstrates by showing, which is far more effective.

Why Build One Unique Selling Proposition When You Can Build Tens of Thousands With Less Effort?

So let's get back to the task at hand: showing you a new way to deal with your need for a Unique Selling Proposition. A way that clearly sets you apart from every other option your clients have.

Something that transforms you into an Incomparable Expert.

In business, part of winning is figuring out how to make you or your business the **only** source for a certain thing. In other words, clients have to come to you if they want X.

That's really it in a nutshell right there. If you can achieve that goal, you can pretty much write your own ticket.

So ask yourself, what's the **only** thing that your prospective clients can't get anywhere else unless they do business with you?

The only thing they can't get anywhere else is **you** or **your** company's involvement in providing the service. If they want **you** to be involved, they have to come to **you**. Duh.

This might sound drop dead simple, but it's extremely powerful if you know what to do with it. And it's absolutely transformative if you have some sort of lever (like a Platform) so you can use this idea to your advantage.

What this means is that we have to engineer a situation where your prospect is less interested in "getting the service done" and more interested in **you** being the one that provides the service. Unless your business is at the low end of the vendor scale (where buying decisions are made on price and speed), your clients don't buy a "service," they buy **YOU**.

Marketing experts like Dan Kennedy have talked about this for a long time, but the Platform is the tool that can create a scenario like this for just about anyone.

The Platform demonstrates you. It demonstrates you over and over and over again.

Stepping Into the World of the Incomparable Expert

And it's at that point when the magic truly begins. I don't care what kind of marketing genius you think you might be, the results that come from following through on this process long enough are beyond the capabilities of any human mind to consciously plan.

Because what you end up with after you've allowed your Platform to do its thing is not a single USP, but TONS of them. Each of your subscribers custom tailors your USP on their own!

You provide enough of a demonstration that "selling" your prospects isn't really required. You don't have to do it, because they've already done it. Each prospect has collected a unique mixture of your "demonstrations" they found valuable and put them together in a way where they actually sell themselves on you!

They know what makes you uniquely valuable to them even though you might not know it.

Your true USPs exist in each of the minds and hearts of your future clients. You might have a rough idea about what those are, but really, you don't even need to know. You just have to keep your Platform running and attracting through demonstration.

So you can rest easy about coming up with your "Unique Selling Proposition" and simply commit to the process that will bring a superior answer to you, slowly, over time.

It's a very sure path to becoming an Incomparable Expert.

The bottom line here is that your copywriting (moneymaking) business **must** have a client attraction **system**. And two things must be true about it for maximum (and speedy) results: it must be consistent, and it must be multi-step. Your marketing system must **have** more than one step.

Without it, all you've got is a promotion. A promotion is **not** a business. (hat tip to Rich Schefren) And if you haven't looked at the stats, most promotions **fail**.

Attracting clients isn't something you do when you need business. It's something you do **ALL** the time. That is the **surest** way to guarantee that you never **have** to go out searching for clients... ever.

I've made the mistake of stopping my marketing machine when things were going well. **Please** don't make the same mistake.

So, hopefully the list you just read is helpful. But in that form, it's really not a system... yet. It's just a bunch of blocks. How can you put them together to actually create some results and get the clients calling?

All you have to do is look at some of the big mailers out there to get plenty of proven ideas. Your business isn't that much different. You need a **front end**... something that creates a client or a reader. Then you need a **backend**... something that leverages your initial marketing expense to acquire that client and increases the lifetime value of that client.

It's a simple system.

Part 6:

What to Do When Clients Call

Eventually, you're going to figure out how to make your marketing system work. And when that happens, the calls and emails from clients will start flowing.

That's a good thing... now the **real** work begins. The good news is that the better you get at this step, the more money you'll make. Often very easily. The bad news is that you can also really lose some good opportunities if you screw it up.

So you should really concentrate on developing **this** part of your game.

Your first response will set the tone for the entire transaction... and it will take a long time to reposition you and your business in the mind of your prospect once it's set. So you **need** to work this part out in advance.

Here's something to print out in large letters and hang on your wall:

“When the Clients Call, My Goal is Just to Get Some INFORMATION”

I'll explain what that means in a minute. But for now, just remember, your goal is **not** to try to sell yourself. Stop thinking about “selling yourself.” If you don't, you'll spend your time bouncing around from client to client. Sales might come easily if you try to sell yourself to every prospect that calls. But **your** goals will get pushed to the back burner. You'll have a lot of work to do after all.

To mold yourself into the product/service that you *think* the client wants—to maneuver yourself into making the sale **just** to get the sale? That's weak... and you'll eventually resent the clients you attract by doing that.

This is your business. You make the rules. When the client calls, your goal is to get INFORMATION. And that is the information you need to **decide** whether or not this is a viable client for YOU. You need to make a decision about whether or not this client will help you reach **your business goals, your income goals, and your goals for how you want your business to look.**

Even if you're starting out, this pretty much flips things around. You're not proving yourself to the client. Many of the times I've tried that, it just makes them run away. You're gathering information for the case they have to prove to you.

Now you don't have to deliver this with attitude. Being a gruff know-it-all has its place in the market. But last time I checked, most of those available spots were already taken :)

So the phone rings, it's a potential client. You get past the normal small-talk chit chat part of the conversation and they move right into things. That's when they usually ask **the** question.

So What Do You Charge?

Answer this question at your own peril. Not because it's a bad question. But because it's the wrong question at the wrong time, for the wrong reason.

I can *almost* guarantee you that if you provide an answer at this point—**no...** Let's rephrase that: I **can** guarantee you that if you provide even the *vaguest* answer to that question this early on, **you alone** will be responsible for limiting your own income if the prospect becomes a client.

And it really stinks when you realize **you're** the reason that a six-figure income never materializes.

Clients are busy. They have things to do. And finding a new copywriter might not be something they enjoy. Especially if the last copywriter disappeared into the night or just didn't deliver.

So answering the price question too early just gives your prospects a reason to cross **you** off their list and get one step closer to ending their journey for a copywriter. Plus, it groups you in with every other copywriter who answered the same question.

If the price is "wrong," they move on. So what's a smarter strategy? You've got to ask questions.

The Better Question Asker Wins

Okay... so you're **not** going to answer the price question. But what **are** you going to say? The phone line can't just go dead every time someone asks you a question you don't want to answer.

There's only one (smart) way to deal with a question like price. And that is...

Keep Asking the Questions YOU Need to Ask!

Really. I'm not recommending this so that you can play a little game with your client. I'm recommending this because asking questions has more benefits than I can even list here.

Here are just a few of them:

1. You actually get the information you need to make a smart decision about whether this client is the right one for you.
2. You can use questions to “show ‘em what you know.” Your questions will communicate that you know your stuff (or don't) **without** you having to come out and say it.
3. Questions help you identify their real problems. Not so you can stick a knife into it and twist (although a little agitation of the problem never hurt), but so you can understand how to position the value proposition you will make. Being able to end someone's problem means a transfer of value. And value is how you get paid.
4. When you are talking with a prospect, **you** need to be in control of the conversation at all times. How do you do that? The only way I know is to ask questions.
5. Questions help you get to the INFO you need to make smart decisions. You can maybe get the sale without asking questions. But it's right information that you need to decide whether this will be a profitable client or just a pain in the neck.

So you see why I'm big on asking questions. I'll give you a bunch of example questions in a moment. But first, here's a tip:

The focus of your questions **shouldn't** be about what they want you to **do**. The focus needs to be about where they're trying to go in their business.

Set the Tone with Your Clients From the Beginning... BEFORE They're Even Clients

Clients need direction. They have a goal to achieve and they need help to get there. So to the extent that **you** take control to make sure that goal is reached, the happier everyone will probably be.

And that control begins right when the phone rings. A lot of copywriters will tell you that they close deals via email. I think that's an income limiting strategy.

It's not that you can't do it. It's just that usually by doing it you're leaving a lot of money on the table. I know I would be.

One of my biggest and most profitable clients contacted me for some help rewriting the copy on his website.

Had I given him what he "wanted," the work would have probably been your run-of-the-mill, bread and butter copywriting job.

But you don't help clients by giving them what they *want*, you create big results by discovering what they really *need* and then **selling it to them**.

So let's take a look at this client through two scenarios. In the first scenario, I close the deal by email.

It would have been pretty straightforward. A few questions back and forth about how he wanted the site to go, what his goal was, and some sort of question to figure out the general range of the fee.

A few more emails about the exact price and it would have been done. The fee would be wired to my bank account and we'd be done.

Using the Phone to Double and Triple Your Income

But let's go back and find out what *really* happened.

The inquiry came in via my website. So I picked up the phone and called. And in less than five minutes, the prospect told me what he **wanted** (copy for his website) and asked **the** question: **So what do you charge?**

Remember, this is the stage where you either do something smart or do something stupid.

I chose the former and asked him, "What makes you think that rewriting your website is going to do anything for your bottom line?"

He didn't have a good answer.

Long story short, the project quickly turned from me being an **order taker**, delivering what the client *wanted*, to being a professional, selling what the client really **needed**.

If I had done that through email, I'd be out of a marketing job, a large fee **and** the agreement to get paid a percentage of future sales I helped to generate.

That one phone call eventually ended up being worth many thousands of dollars to me.

When Your Prospect Pushes You, Don't Forget That You Can Push Back

This isn't about showing them who's boss, or putting them in their place. This is about taking control of the situation enough to get what you need out of the conversation. Again, your goal is the **INFORMATION**. You need information to decide whether this prospect is a prospect for you.

I'm not really into conflict, but in this case, a little bit is necessary. It's necessary because you **learn** more. But you've got to take control from the start.

So how do you get control of a conversation? Questions.

Again, my goal isn't to give you an attitude that you're better than your clients. But remember, this is **your** business. It's no different than owning a dog. You train a dog because they **need** to be trained. If there is no one in sight they recognize as the obvious pack leader, they're going to do their best to assume that position.

Somebody's got to be in charge. It may as well be you.

10 Questions: A Quick and Painless Way to Get the INFORMATION You Need with a Prospect

So here's that list of questions I promised you. Not all of these will work for you. So please don't consider this as an assignment—something you **have** to do. Remember, I'm not the teacher here. And you're not the student. We're all adults with brains and big potential.

This is your life, your business... **your** responsibility. So take what you can use. The point is you need to have some sort of a plan. This is **your** system for leveraging your marketing dollar. To make sure you extract every bit of value out of the money you pay to attract prospects to your front door.

Here are some ideas for questions to ask when those prospects start to call:

1. Please explain to me what your goal is?
2. How will reaching your goal affect your business? What are some of the specific benefits of reaching this goal?
3. What do you think I bring to the table that can help you reach your goal?
4. How valuable would it be to your business to reach your goal?

5. Tell me about your market. What makes you think this product is well positioned, well-timed and has a good chance of selling?
6. What type of marketing do you have in place already?
7. Who else is involved in the decision making process for this?
8. Tell me a little bit about who you perceive to be your competition. What's their main selling point? How did you arrive at your conclusion? What competitive analysis have you done?
9. What would you say is your biggest challenge right now in your business?
10. Talk to me a little bit about how you've worked with copywriters in the past? Which kinds of situations were most successful for you?

You're not asking questions just to get answers. You're asking questions to spot opportunity and get the information you need to make the most of that opportunity.

You may have noticed that my idea of a copywriting business is starting to stray from the traditional definition of a "freelance copywriter." And there's a reason I'm straying... It's because once you start straying, you quickly realize that there's **a lot** of money that most freelance copywriters are leaving on the table.

Being a traditional freelance copywriter is a fine choice for a career, but make sure you know what you're getting into. Becoming a traditional freelance copywriter is really like having a very well paid commissioned sales job.

But don't for a minute think you have a business.

Need proof? Just stop writing and see how long the checks keep coming in. Of course royalties could keep you going for a while, but that's just commission. And you're not really in control of how long it keeps going. If the client decides to stop mailing your promotion for any reason, your royalties stop.

But you still are working very hard for the money you get.

Part 7: And Don't Forget to... GET PAID!

If you're going to be a six-figure copywriter, you'll have to know more than just how to attract clients. At the end of the day, being the best marketer in the world is useless to you unless you actually **get paid**.

So let's talk about how you actually get the money transferred from the pocketbook of your client to your own bank account.

Here's the simplest (and best) way...

Always Get Paid First... in Full

What was the first thought that went through your mind when you read that? If it was something like, "You can't do that..." or "No one will go for that..." then you're not alone. But just for a moment, imagine what your business (and your cashflow) would look like if you **did** get paid 100% of your fee **before** you even started the project.

It's a nice picture isn't it?

The truth is, you **can** do that. Clients **do** go for it. And you should make it a policy of yours right away.

Heck, you can't buy much these days by promising to pay 50% before and 50% after. Could you even buy a candy bar that way?

So you might scare a few potential clients away. But you'll more than make up for it by reducing your money worries, your collection headaches and a whole bunch of other junk that can go wrong when you are waiting for money.

Plus, it really builds your confidence. You just have to practice asking for the money, upfront. Actually, you're not *asking*. You're simply telling them how you do business.

Do I do this **every** time? No. And that's for many different reasons. At the very least, get most of the money upfront. 50% or more. Just make sure you're satisfied with that first payment... because it might be all you get. Here's the reason...

Some projects never launch. Sometimes clients go out of business. Sometimes you turn in your copy and your client takes weeks to get back to you with revisions (**and** your money). Heck, sometimes clients disappear into thin air. And of course, sometimes you find out your client is a liar, a cheater and a crook.

But that doesn't mean **your** business needs to suffer.

The Client Who Vanished into Thin Air

When I was first getting started copywriting, I littered the country with promo letters to anybody I could find to put on my list. Believe it or not, clients started calling.

One client liked my letter and gave me a project right away... for \$4,4000. (Remember, I was just getting started and I didn't have a book like this). A simple 8 page letter.

30 minutes after I turned in the copy, he asked about another project. He said we'd do probably about 1 project per month. So that was a lot of potential money for me in the coming year...

Next up, a full 6X9 direct mail package... \$9,200.

Just so you know, this guy spends hundreds of thousands of dollars per year on copy. A good client. Except for one thing...

He disappeared.

He even paid me in full (see... I take my own medicine) for a project before he disappeared. Paid me but never even told me what product he wanted a promotion for. I've called, I've written... No response.

There are a ton of reasons this could happen. At first, when my confidence level resembled more of a soupy jello mold, I thought it was something I did. Maybe my copy sucked? Maybe he just didn't like me. Maybe all of the above.

But now, I don't think that way. I realize that all of those reasons are bogus. Because they all go against what I now call my Client Rule #1. It's very simple. Here it is...

It's NOT About You Clients Don't Care About You

Boy that sounds cynical doesn't it? It's not. It's simply reality. And you've **got** to make your plans with this in mind. I learned two very important things from this experience that you need to have etched into your brain.

1. Never, ever put all your eggs in one basket... unless they're in your own basket (your own business, your own products). No matter how flattered you are that your client loves you, always be on the lookout for ways to increase the number of sources from which you get paid.
2. Your client may be the nicest guy in the world. But at the end of the day, he doesn't care about you. He doesn't care about your business. He cares about himself. He cares about his own business. Again, this isn't cynical. It's just human nature.

And now a quick note to my "mystery" client (just in case you're reading this): Man if you're out there, I owe you some work. Call me. :)

Just Sign on the Dotted Line... Please?

Didn't I have a contract with my mystery client? Yes and no.

Let's talk about contracts for a second. If you get your client to sign one of those, then everything will work out just fine right?

Wrong.

Think about it this way. If you sign a contract with a client and he skips town before you get paid, who do you think has to fund the lawsuit?

Do you think that's a good use of your time and money?

It's not that contracts are worthless. They help to get expectations out on paper and make the nature of the agreement a little bit clearer. But as for having any teeth or being legally binding (practically speaking for a small business)... they're pretty much useless.

Which is why I don't bother.

If a client is going to screw you, they're gonna screw you. And unless you're really desperate or there are millions of dollars on the line, it's usually smarter just to move on. After all, the goal here is to make **you** wealthy, not your lawyers.

And that's why choosing your clients right is key.

If I can't trust a client without a contract, then they don't become a client. Period.

I'm not giving you legal advice here, I'm just speaking from experience.

But the bottom line is this:

When it comes down to it, if you don't get paid, you won't be in the copywriting business very long.

Part 8:

The Most Important Part of Your Copywriting Business

Most copywriters don't have an "offer." Not a real one anyway. Their offer is pretty much... you pay me and I'll write for you.

They depend on referrals and their reputation to supply the rest of the "offer."

That might work for you. But it's kinda hard to get noticed with an offer like that... especially when you're starting out.

But this is the **first** rule of marketing. Your offer and your list are a whole lot more important than your copy.

So what could **your** offer be?

You can offer faster, cheaper, better... or your offer could just be **different**. Your offer could include a market psychology analysis that you've created to really dig into why your client's customers buy.

Your analysis is proprietary. They only get it if they hire you.

That's just a quick and simple idea. The point is, you **need** to have a strong offer.

You need to have something that your clients can't get anywhere else. Once that's the case, you can pretty much charge what you want.

Your offer is part of your positioning. And the strength of your positioning in your marketplace will determine how much money you make.

Buying a Honda vs. Buying a Mercedes®

People don't buy a Mercedes because it drives any better than the Honda. They buy it because buying a Mercedes **means** something to them. And the meaning doesn't have a whole lot to do with money. It has to do with **value**. It has to do with **prestige**. It has to do with the "see what I accomplished..." part of human nature.

My suggestion, no matter what your offer is and what market/niche/focus/group you pursue: **be the Mercedes®**

Position yourself in the market so that your clients search **you** out. Not just for the privilege of working with you, but more for what that privilege means to them. That requires good marketing skills... a good story... and a very good offer.

Don't think you have what it takes to be the Mercedes? Then get to work and change that. You **must** believe in what you're doing. Your prospects and clients will pick up on that. The best way to believe you're awesome is to actually **BE** awesome. That means you work at it. Plus, you don't do anyone a favor by playing small. Trust me, I've tried it. It doesn't work.

A Honda or a Chevy or a Ford is a commodity. Commodities have prices on them. Commodities are not rare, they're not special, and they don't provide a whole lot of value beyond what they cost.

Part 9: How to Get (More/Better) Clients

While you can have too many clients, I don't believe you can ever have too many prospects. Or too many leads.

A steady flow of well qualified client leads will give you choices. And the more choices you have about which clients you actually want to work with, the more profitable your business will become.

Let's start with the best place to find the big hitters.

The SRDS... the Miracle Book of Direct Marketing

Let's start with SRDS. Standard Rate and Data Service. For the direct marketer, it's a golden bible. You get the names of real direct mail buyers... what they bought and a whole bunch of other valuable information. It's a very big treasure chest sitting there... wide open.

But many beginning copywriters simply don't want to plunk down the dollars for an annual subscription.

Here's something you can try. There are no guarantees, but this was available when I tried it. Try calling and asking them for a trial. Again, at the time of this writing, they offer one, but I can't guarantee that's the case by the time you read this.

How to Find Prospects in the SRDS

I didn't come up with this strategy (I learned it from copywriter John Angelache) and I have no reason to take credit for it. So I won't.

But I'll still share it with you, because it's probably one of the easiest way to find **real** copywriting prospects. Real clients that spend thousands and thousands of dollars each year on **someone** to write their copy.

That someone could be you.

Here's how it works.

Login to SRDS and start pulling up lists in any niche you want to work for. Find the contact name of the list broker and email them. Ask them for the usage report (Some of the lists have links to the usage reports, but they rarely seem to work for me.).

In less than a day you'll get a response. Remember, these people you are writing to want you to rent their list. So they're gonna give you the information you need.

The part of the usage report you want to focus on is the section that has the list of the businesses who have recently rented the list.

They've rented the permission to mail that list.... **copy**... that they **paid** someone write.

Those are your future clients on that list.

Now granted, some of them are big names. Mailers that you really shouldn't even bother pursuing. But many of them aren't so big.

And most marketing directors are always on the lookout for the next great copywriter. That's their job. To find new people that can help them make money... and help them look like a genius.

So give them a call, get their name and start mailing.

How many lists do you think there are just like this one? A lot...

And now you have an instant prospect list.

How to Get Past the Gatekeeper

This little secret takes a little bit of elbow grease. Especially if you're starting out. But I had I **not** done this, I'd probably be out thousands and thousands of dollars...

Because my letters never would have reached the person who could actually sign a check for my services.

What's the secret?

Hand addressed envelopes.

Remember that client of mine a few pages back that disappeared? Well he came from a \$.41 letter I sent... with the name and address **handwritten** by yours truly.

I still remember the first time we talked on the phone he said, “Yeah, my secretary usually throws out all of the promos we get, but she saved this one because it looked different.”

Cha-ching!

So don't cut corners. The goal isn't to get your mailing done... the goal is to generate clients. And if your stuff doesn't get read, it's no different than if you had never sent anything.

The “C” Word and Why You Need It

Whoever said that copywriters *shouldn't* be creative—that they should just stick to “what works” was either crazy or on some heavy medication.

I think that's a load of bull. People who hire copywriters (the ones you'd actually want to work with) aren't looking for someone whose idea of writing headlines is simply stealing another “successful” headline and ramming it to fit the new product.

Anybody can do that.

But it takes a creative person to analyze the problem and come up with a solution that completely redefines the playing field. That's what the great copywriters do.

“But that's risky...” they'll say...

Part of copywriting **is** taking risks. That's the only way you hit homeruns. And if you're not in this game to do that, then you should probably be playing another game.

PLUS... creativity is absolutely necessary when you're out looking for prospects. Creativity will get you noticed.

Here's why.

How to Get Agora's Attention

A few months ago, I sent out a promotion to all of the big mailers. I had some successes under my belt and it was time to take 'em out for a spin and see what they could do.

So I created a “big box” promo. If you've never done something like that, the real point is to get their attention. After all, who's gonna throw away a huge box that shows up on their doorstep.

It's not important exactly what was inside (**you** can be creative), but let's just say it was compelling... and it leveraged a key secret about human nature.

And in came the calls... It even got calls (and an immediate project) from two companies within the Agora umbrella.

Total investment to mail the 20 pieces: \$212.00. ROI? Thousands and thousands of dollars.

Where did I get the idea? *Creatively* adapting it from another industry. The point is... it worked. It was different enough to get noticed. I got the attention of the big names.

...And if I can do it, so can you. Here's another idea:

Getting Craigslist to Work for You... No Effort Required

You've probably been on Craigslist at one time or another. And if you've looked, you've found a bunch of ads for copywriters.

But it's always been a pain to go around to each of the cities and check for new postings. Well it doesn't need to be that way. And thanks to the power of RSS, you can get each and every one of those ads, from every city on Craigslist, delivered right to your computer.

It's as easy as reading your email. Actually, it's easier. Because you don't have to wade through any SPAM.

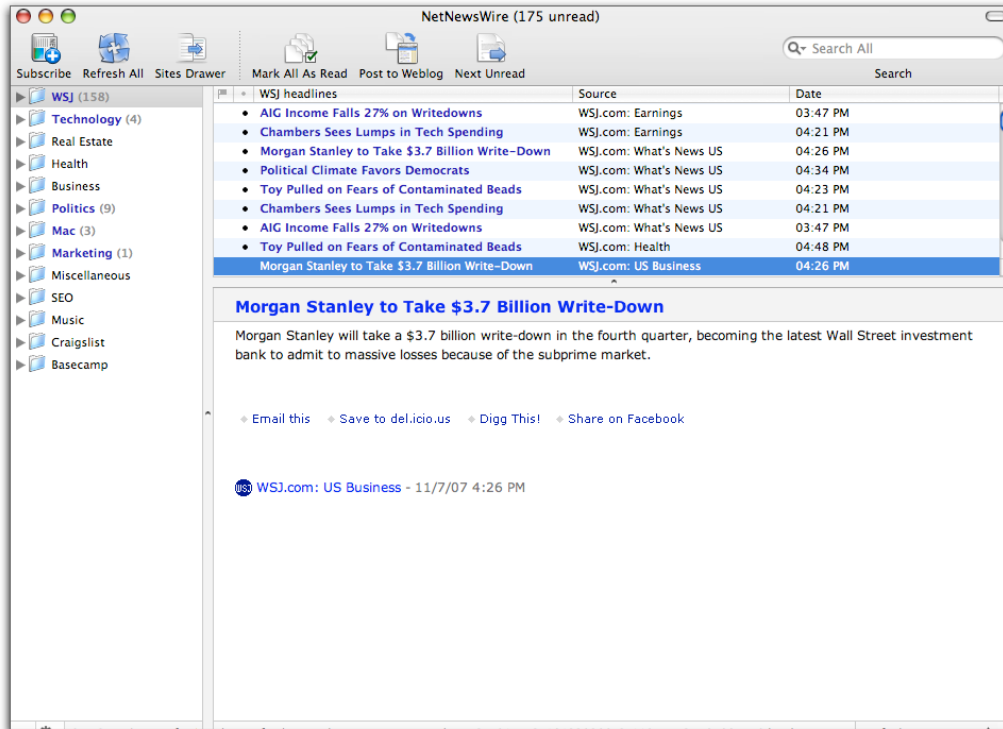
Here's how you do it.

Step 1: Go to Craigslist. Pick any city. Do a search for "copywriter." Just make sure you choose "Jobs" right under the spot you type in "copywriter."

Step 2: Find the "RSS" link at the bottom of the search results page and copy it.

Step 3: Paste the RSS link into your RSS Feed Reader (just Google that if you're not sure what it is)... and VOILA! Each time you fire up your Feed Reader, you'll get all of the new Craigslist Listings.

Here's my RSS Feed Reader. You're looking at headlines from the Wall Street Journal.



But it'll look the same when you pull down the Craigslist ads. Now remember... you've got to go through each city on Craigslist and get the RSS feed. But the good news is, you only have to do it ONCE. After that, it'll run on autopilot.

The **BIGGEST** Secret to Getting Clients

So here's the biggest secret I learned about how to get copywriting and marketing clients. Woody Allen said, "Eighty percent of success is showing up."

While that may be true, the secret I've learned is a bit different. It's more like, "Eighty percent of success in copywriting is **sticking around.**"

And with the current glut of copywriters coming online, it's a bit harder to get noticed... at first. But if you simply stick around and keep mailing, it'll happen.

Because most of your competition will either get frustrated, bored or mesmerized into chasing another dream. And you'll be left to clean up...

I might not believe it if I hadn't lived it... more than once.

Some of the best clients I work with today, I started out talking to **almost a year ago**. That's almost 12 months of me "talking" and no one responding. Then all of a sudden, the phone started ringing.

Here's just one example:

One prospect, whose name I found online, went into the database I used for my very first mailing. I got their name online and started mailing offline. About 9 months went by... nothing but dead silence.

All of a sudden, the phone rang one day and we started working together.

Was my total investment of \$14.42 in paper, postage and printing over those twelve months worth it? Well, so far it's been worth over \$20,000... and the client's only been with me for a few months.

I'll take those returns any day...

Okay, so now you've got some ideas about how to get clients. What do you do then?

The most profitable thing is to turn them into...

Part 10: Clients for Life

It can be **very** expensive to find a new client. And it can take a little while to develop the relationship to the point where they're willing to send you thousands and thousands of dollars.

So once you get a new client, the key is to keep 'em... for a long time.

You'll notice, I hit the six-figure mark working with **only 8 clients**. But that's only half of the story. The thing is, the bulk of the income came from less than 4 of those clients.

This is why it's so important to work with clients who actually have a real business. That means money is coming in the door, from multiple sources, products or services.

Once you have 'em, here's how you keep those clients:

You Continue to Provide Value: Far More Than Your Fees

But just because you say that's what you're doing doesn't mean they perceive it that way.

Every client I've lost (meaning the ones that I wanted to work with, but they chose not to work with me) has been because of a communication issue.

Sometimes it was my fault. Sometimes it was theirs. But that hardly matters, because in every case, the responsibility was **mine**.

And the responsibility is yours.

What responsibility?

To continue to communicate the value that you are providing to your client. You can do that with the phone... with a newsletter... with face-to-face visits.

Communication is key. Without it, the only voice your client will hear is the one in his head. And that's **not** who you want speaking on your behalf.

And communication starts at the very beginning of the relationship. It starts with knowing how to...

Manage Expectations from the Very First Contact

Here's an example. A story from one of my "former" clients.

This guy was sitting on a goldmine. So much potential to rake in big bucks it would make any marketer's mouth water.

But he was clueless. **Really** clueless. Now sometimes that's a good thing. Because it makes you look really good.

Other times, it sucks... because you need to do a lot of extra work to communicate the value that your client is receiving. Because they have no concept or ability to really understand it. They simply don't have the experience to value what they're getting.

And that's what happened in this case...

You see, I became this client's marketing department. Sales letters were flying out the door. Audio programs... a multi-step marketing sequence was put into action in the very first week. Autoresponders... publicity... everything.

A whole lot of value... way too much, too fast for my client to keep track of or comprehend. Heck, my stuff was generating 800% more qualified leads than before I showed up.

Now you'd think that providing service like this would be good for the relationship.

But it wasn't. And here's the reason:

I didn't clearly articulate the immense value he was getting. And I hadn't done a very good job of managing his expectations.

Particularly this one:

Great Marketing Won't Fix a Bad Business... Guaranteed

This is business. There **are** no guarantees. If you want a guaranteed return for a specific investment, the best thing to do is get a job.

Marketing isn't magic. It's hard work. And it's work that has to happen. But in the end, it's all an educated guess... based on expertise and experience.

And often times, it doesn't *work* as quickly as you'd like.

Which brings me to **expectation #1** that you need to make sure your clients understand:

You are Not the Messiah

If your client has a terrible business, chances are, you're not gonna be able to turn that around.

The problem in this case was that my client was a salesman. He made a lot of money. But his income was dependent on him going out and wrangling in a sale.

In this case, my client really didn't **have** a business. He had a high paying job. And it took me two months to convince him to redefine his business. To sell him on the idea of building something he could actually walk away from without interrupting the flow of money into his pocket.

After a while, you realize that type of arrangement sucks. Deep down, I know he realized it.

So we set the new course... to reinvent his business and turn it into an info business, not a work for money business. Out went the sales letters, up went the marketing funnel. And 30 days later, he asked me why he wasn't rolling in money from new clients. "Where are the results?" he asked.

I tried to be practical. To explain that it's not often you can turn a business around 180 degrees in thirty days or less... **and** bring in millions at the same time. To tell him that it takes more than one sales letter to get someone to send you \$50,000-\$100,000.

But that didn't work. Because the real problem was a mistake I had made months before. It wasn't the results that were the problem, it was my management of his expectations that was the problem.

I didn't take the time to really understand what he expected. And to make sure I amended those expectations as we decided to retool his business.

I know what he **said** he expected. But what he said didn't match up with his actions.

So I cut the cord and went on my way.

I tell you all of this so you can learn at my expense. I've already paid the price. And there's a lot of value in here for anyone who wants to avoid a situation like this.

The Secret to Getting Clients for Life

Creating clients for life is not easy. But it is fairly simple. Provided you're good at what you do, all it takes is communication... and a steady flow of a huge amount of value from you to your client.

And that value should keep flowing even in between projects. That'll do more good for your bottom line than just about anything else.

Remember, if you're not actively **managing and growing** your relationship with your client, then your future income is really at risk.

Strong relationships are where the results come. They are really the secret key to creating a huge amount of money in this business.

Part 11:

How to Find the Perfect Copywriting Client

There **is** such a thing as a perfect copywriting client. And right now, I'm going to tell you exactly how to find him or her. Ready?

It's **you**.

A few pages ago, I mentioned that the only reason business owners can afford to pay copywriters huge fees is because they're making a whole lot more money than that...

So why don't you become one of those business owners and hire yourself to write the copy?

Don't discount this idea because it sounds simple. Every seven figure copywriter I've ever heard of works like a dog. And while that's admirable, it's not really the type of life I'm aiming for.

Don't fall into the trap of believing that you have to work hard for money. It's just not true.

You don't have to go out and build a business empire overnight. But I'd recommend you keep it in mind... and start small.

Because once your copywriting skills are good enough that you can turn words into money for your clients, then it's time to become your own client.

There is a **huge** weakness to the traditional freelance copywriting business model. You need clients. And while your marketing funnel could be tweaked to deliver those clients with relatively little effort, you still have to do the work. You can choose to outsource your copy or work with copy cubs, but creating and selling your own products is far easier and more profitable.

So just keep that in mind as you start doing projects for clients.

Listen, you're getting paid to learn... on someone else's dime. There are few businesses in the world that are better than that. And if you know what you're doing, you will be exposed to some of the most profitable businesses in the world. Don't plow through your work with your eyes shut.

Look up and learn from the millionaires you'll be working with.

When it's time to go out and create a product on your own (I'd recommend you start right away), you'll have a clue about what works and what doesn't work.

Part 12:

How to Double Your Income in 30 Days... or Less

Let's talk about money...

Newish copywriters are always asking what to charge. "What do you charge when you're just starting out?" "What's the going rate?"

Those aren't dumb questions, they're just the *wrong* questions. Because they are focused on **you**. The problem is, your client doesn't care about you, your wants or your needs.

Start with your client and create your fees from there based on what they want to achieve and how valuable that goal is to them.

The client doesn't care what you charge, he cares what he **gets** for what you charge. This is marketing 101, but when a person's ego (**your** ego) gets involved, it can often muddy the pricing waters. Don't let that happen to you, cause it's not about you. **AND** you'll shortchange yourself **every** time.

Think about how publishers price information products.

... They **don't** price them based on how much they cost to produce. How much *does* it cost to produce a PDF or print a perfect-bound book?

... They **don't** price them by taking the cost of production and adding a percentage for profit.

... And they **don't** price them by figuring out how much it costs to acquire a customer or sale and then adding a profit percentage to that either.

They price information products based on the VALUE of the information to the customer.

That's why you can pay \$1,000 for a business course and actually feel like **you** got a deal.

This is **NOT** a new concept.

So why not try the same thing?

Please Flip to the Resources Section

for My Best Recommendation on Getting Paid What You're WORTH as a Professional

There are several great books about value based billing (getting paid for value delivered, not for what you actually DO)... one of which is listed at the end of this guide.

I highly recommend you read it.

Just a word of warning. While you're reading, you might begin to feel like you've just come across the Holy Grail. **THE** Silver Bullet that will completely revolutionize your business.

I remember that's **exactly** how I felt the first time I read it. After all, who *wouldn't* want to get paid **more** for doing about the same amount of work you're already doing?

My experience is that the **implementing** of this idea takes a lot more work than you might think. Because it involves educating your client about a different way of perceiving **what you bring to the table**. And if you've ever tried to do that, you probably know that it's often an uphill battle.

This is where your ability to **sell** with confidence will come into play.

Now let's move on to what was, by far, the biggest obstacle I faced when I first set out to hit the six-figure mark. That obstacle was...

Asking for the MONEY

In my experience, asking for money comes down to **confidence**. How did I earn six-figures? I **ASKED** for it. But if you don't believe you should be charging \$5,000, \$10,000 or \$30,000 for your clients to work with you, then you probably won't be too convincing in making **them** believe it either. I know I wasn't.

If you don't think your "product" is worth fees like that, then that's where you start. Create a product, or somehow package up your services to warrant fees that high.

In my experience, it takes as much effort to sell a client on a \$4,000 project as it does a \$20,000 one. Often times, it's actually easier to sell the \$20,000 one.

Price is not set in stone. It's pretty much completely **subjective**. It's something someone came up with based on the competition, the market and the buyer. For every business charging X in a market, there's somebody charging double that... and probably someone charging half that.

It's your business. You get to choose.

But I've never once had a client say to me, "Jason, your fee is just too low, I think I'll pay you double." Never happened... And I'm not holding my breath either.

Without getting all gooey and metaphysical on you, your income as a copywriter is directly tied to your self worth as a person. The more valuable you feel, the more valuable you become.

If you need to practice ASKING for the money (like I did) then practice it. Just look yourself in the mirror and get used to saying, "That'll be \$30,000."

The reason I'm telling you this isn't because I think it's smart to squeeze every last cent you can out of your client. That's not what I'm saying. Plus, if your product doesn't deliver, then that's not such a smart long term strategy.

The real reason is because charging high fees will **force** you to turn your business into something that's different. It will **force** you to make an offer to your clients that is unlike anything else on the market place.

Just to give you an example, let's go to the other end of the spectrum.

The copywriter who somehow believes it's a smart idea to charge by the hour... or the page.

Getting paid by the hour sucks. I don't care what anyone's copywriting fee survey says. If you're gonna do that for the bulk of your income, just get a job.

But there is something far worse about charging for your time than simply leaving a lot of money on the table.

Because when your prospect sticks you on a shelf beside copywriter B who also charges for her time—and then tries to make a decision about which person to hire... How do you think the client will make his decision?

If you make it easy for your prospect to do an apples to apples comparison... well, more times than not the cheaper apple's gonna get the deal.

Charging by time or the volume of work produced will ensure one thing: It's only a matter of time before your client finds...

**Someone Who Is Willing to Do
Even More for Even Less**

Game. Set. Match. No six-figure copywriting career for you.

When I started out at the beginning of the year, I started writing sales letters for \$3,000 and \$4,000 each. But then it occurred to me: If I'm gonna hit six-figures **and** have time to be a dad to my three kids, then something's got to change.

So when the next client called... I doubled the price.

Now back then, I had some real trouble actually spitting out numbers with so many zeros. I'm just glad it was over the phone, because had I been face to face, my client could have seen my knees shaking. And I don't think that would have inspired any confidence on their part.

It's frustrating when you have trouble finding clients. It's more frustrating when you have clients and can't get them to pay you (on time).

But if you really want to drive yourself crazy, just undercharge for your services. That'll annoy you more than anything I can think of.

One more thing...

Some copywriters just have a flat fee. They charge XX to work with a client. You can either pay it or pass...

I think that's a lazy strategy. Sure, you'll probably make some money... but you'll also leave a bunch of **your** money on the table. And all you had to do to get it was ask.

So swing for the fences... and be **creative about how you choose to get paid!!**

Part 13:

Don't You Dare Put This Guide On Your Shelf...

I'm speaking figuratively here when I say, "Don't you dare put this guide on your shelf." What I mean is that **now** (*right now*) is the time to take even one strategy from the previous pages and **use it**.

Right now...

By doing that simple action, I guarantee that you'll just have put yourself in a very select group of people.

A lot of people like to talk. They like to talk about what they **will** do... what they **will** accomplish... the money they **will** make.

But you don't hear a lot of people who are actually **doing** those things talking all that much. That's because they're too busy making money to tell other people about it.

It took me a while to write this guide. Not because I had trouble coming up with what to say. Heck, that's the easy part. The challenge was just making the time to do it.

If you really need me to break down how I went from a copywriting income of \$0 to well over six figures in less than one year, then here are the steps:

1. Choose a target...
2. Send out promo letters (lots of promo letters)...
3. Close them on the phone...
4. Serve your clients well...
5. Keep building the relationship... even **after** the sale is made...
6. Keep raising your prices...
7. Take 100% responsibility for your results.
8. Repeat.

It doesn't sound all that glamorous. But here's a secret most gurus won't bother telling you...

**Creating Success
Isn't Glamorous**

And that's why so few people ever really do it. So the end of this guide is really just the beginning of your journey. There are a few more goodies for you in the bonus sections coming in the following pages.

The only thing I ask is that once you're done reading, you take action... right away.

BONUS 1:

Less Than Flattering Flops From My Past To Keep Your Spirits High

(Please refer to these anytime you hit a challenge and need proof—or a good laugh—that there is someone else out there who is in the same boat... or worse.)

Even most of the gurus started out clueless and broke. When I started, I considered it an honor to start out on the very same path. :)

But just because I decided to become a freelance copywriter, that didn't automatically bring clients knocking at the door. And just because I could write winning letters didn't mean that they'd be standing in line to hire me.

How I Hired and Fired a Copywriting “Guru”

A few months in, things were going really, really well. I said to myself, “Boy, I need to get a coach. I need some help to keep things growing.”

So I hired one.

Then I came to my senses and fired him.

Nothing personal. It was my fault for getting involved in the first place. He has plenty of people paying him. It's not his responsibility to tell them to wake up, smell the coffee and create their own success. Heck, if people want to fork over \$500-\$1000 bucks a month to be told what to do (with no guarantee it'll work), that's their choice.

You see, I thought I *needed* a coach. Someone to “help” me reach success.

Turns out, I didn't. And chances are, neither do you.

Because success in copywriting isn't rocket science... And there **are** no secrets... All it takes is waking up each morning, and putting one foot in front of the other again and again. Sometimes you step in (*&^... other times it works out better. It's all part of the journey. Your journey.

Sure a coach can give you advice, he or she can critique your copy. But if you're there just to be told what to do, then you haven't yet shed the "I'm not good enough to make it," mindset that is holding you back.

I'm not trying to devalue the importance of knowledge. But just reading or hearing about something doesn't compare to the knowledge you gain from doing.

And it's by doing that the Guru probably learned what he's now telling you... and charging you for.

Here's another one...

A story for you to turn to when you think you're lost or clueless. Remember, I started out both of those things.

I call this one...

But the Copy Sucks!

Believe it or not, I didn't pop out of the womb with a dream to become a copywriter. Actually, I spent most of my life training for a far more glamorous position.

I Paid \$100,000 to Learn to Be a Church Musician

I had a lot of talent and the training I got was top notch. So at age 18, I found myself climbing quickly to the top of that little world.

At age 19, I won a national music competition... beating out players twice my age (and more). It was a completely stressful situation. Nothing I'd recommend to my worst enemy...

But you'd think that would have catapulted me to success.

Except for two things...

1. I didn't want to do it.
2. It simply didn't work out that way.

Sure, I got the well paying job right out of school. Sure, I got the nods from the gurus, who said things like, "He's got *such* potential. Just wait to see what **he** does."

I soon noticed that it really wasn't the most talented player who achieved success. In fact, the most talented player often ended up broke, jobless...

And the same is really true in business. It's not the best product that wins. It's not the best copywriter that makes the most money.

Here's what you need to know to win...

**The Better Business Person
Wins... EVERY TIME**

Sure you have to write well. And your copy has to pull results. But don't forget to focus on the real target: the **business of writing copy**.

BONUS 2:

What I Would Do If I Was Starting Over... From Scratch

Clients talk. And once you get a few under your belt, the phone will start ringing from the most unlikely sources. Even this soon into my copywriting/marketing career, the question is no longer “how do I get clients,” it’s more like, “exactly what type of clients do I **want** to work with?”

But it wasn’t always that way...

So what would I do if I had to start over? With no prospects, no clients and no money?

Let’s turn back the clock to day 1. If I was a brand new freelance copywriter, with no clients, no samples, nothing but a dream—what would I do?

Here’s the simple answer...

I’d Work My ^{^&*#} Off to Get Some Clients

The first thing I would do (despite the slight panic that I’d probably be feeling) is take a deep breath... then decide exactly what I wanted.

There are really two ways to get started... you can either be **different**, offering a service your clients just can’t get anywhere else, or you can just offer the same things other copywriters offer... but you’ll do it faster, better, cheaper than everyone else.

I’d suggest you be different. It will make it easier to communicate your value.

But in order to communicate, you need to have someone who’s willing to listen. Which leads us to step two:

You Need a List of Prospects Who Already Hire Copywriters

The clock’s ticking here, so you don’t really have time to educate your prospects that what you offer is valuable. So you’ve got to make sure you’re talking to people who already are in the right frame of mind: they already know they need good copywriters.

Where do you get the list?

Here's one possibility.

I'd run (not walk) to www.majormailers.com They used to have a free trial, but it doesn't look that way anymore. You have to pay these days. Think of it as an investment in your future clients.

Now Major Mailers is a little bit of a pain because, when I used it, you had to manually extract the information from their system. They won't let you export it into a spreadsheet or database. Which means you need to cut and paste it from each screen. It takes time. But remember, I have plenty of time. I don't have any work or any clients.

That leads to step three...

You Need to Make Them an Offer Only an Idiot Would Refuse

This is where some of the copywriting gurus are simply plain shortsighted. They let their egos get in the way and teach their students to do the same thing.

Working on SPEC (which means you write for free and get paid if the client uses your promotion... aka you *might* get paid) isn't inherently good or bad. It has nothing to do with ego. And the folks who get all worked up about it usually are just suffering from money or self-worth issues.

Some of the "gurus" will say, never write for free.

Let me clear this up: there **is** no such thing as writing for free. Value is always being exchanged ... it just doesn't always involve money. Maybe it's experience you'll get... maybe it's a chance to develop a relationship for the future... or maybe you just need to add a sample to your portfolio and don't have a product to write about.

The point is, if the value exchange makes it worth **your** investment of time and effort, then what's the reason **not** to do it? **You** decide whether or not writing on spec is a strategy you want to use. Don't let someone else decide for you.

For the record, the only time I've written for free is my first project. The one I told you about a few pages back. And that's only because I forgot to **ask** for the money...

So if I've never written on spec, then why would I recommend it? The only reason I never did it, is because I always managed to find a paying client. But that's not the situation here.

I'm starting from scratch in this scenario. And that means I'll do just about anything to get started... fast.

Writing on spec is a valid way to go, provided you can actually write and you know how to leverage the experience.

You Create Your Offer from the World of Your Reader

You don't create your offer to your clients based on what **you** do. You create your offer from the perspective of "what would my prospect want?"

So let's step into the shoes of the marketing director or company owner that you are writing to.

Here are the things you know:

- They've worked with good copywriters and bad copywriters.
- Their goal is to sell their stuff. It makes them look good and it makes a lot of money at the same time.
- They didn't get where they are by risking their own money on every new copywriter who knocked on their door. It costs a lot to hire a copywriter, do the design and test the mailing. It can make them a lot if it's a winner. But most of them aren't winners.
- They don't care about you.

So that's where you're starting from. You're writing to someone who doesn't know you like you or trust you.

Your offer needs to do a few things. It needs to **get their attention, minimize their risk, and set you apart from every other copywriter on the planet.**

Don't be surprised if the perfect "offer" doesn't just jump into your head. This part can take some work. Just make sure your offer is squarely focused on what they get. It shouldn't say a whole lot about what you do. Remember, they don't care about what you do.

You've Got to Get Your Message Read

You've got a good list and a killer offer. Now you actually have to get someone to look at it.

Depending on your list, you'll need to put together more than one promo letter. You want to make sure that your letter really speaks to the exact situation of the reader.

Here's what I would do:

- **Hand address your envelopes.** Your unique style of handwriting will help your letter get noticed. Plus, most of your competition will be **way** too lazy to ever do this on a consistent basis.
- **Write 3, 6, 10... letters.** Remember, you've got time. And getting a copywriting client isn't always an event. It's usually more of a process. Sometimes a long one. So you need to send more than one letter. In my opinion, your consistency is just as important as the quality of your copy.
- **Do something crazy.** This includes sending lumpy mail (putting something that relates to your offer in the envelope to bulk it up), sending oversized packages or something even more creative.

The Final Step (That's Usually Left Out)

In your average direct mail promotion, you send it out and wait for the orders to come in. Sometimes they come in droves, sometimes a trickle... and sometimes all you hear is a deafening silence.

Seeing as though you need clients to eat and pay your bills, I don't recommend waiting for **anything**. So a few days (maybe a week) after you send your package, I'd recommend you...

Pick Up the Phone and Call Your Prospect

Just because you're a copywriter doesn't mean you shouldn't use a powerful sales tool like the telephone. So just pick up the phone and call them.

Here are just a few things to remember:

- You need to be a welcomed guest (that means you **don't** talk about you).
- You need to offer value.
- You need to get a **clear** plan for followup.
- You don't ask Yes or No questions...

So that means you **don't** get your prospect on the phone and say, "Hi this is _____. I'm writing to see if you got the package I sent last week?"

You get them on the phone and say something like... “Hi, this is _____. Last week I sent you a package about my copywriting services. I’m not sure if you got it, but I’m calling to see when you would have some time for me to share some ideas that could help you boost your results. The thing is, I’ve been studying your promotions and I have some ideas to share with you.”

And then you **SHUT YOUR MOUTH... Really.**

Trust me on this one. The next person to speak (if it’s you) loses the first mini-battle. What’s the battle? The battle for control of the conversation. You want to control the conversation.

As you already know, the way you do that is to keep asking intelligent questions. That will show you know what you’re doing and that you actually know something about your prospect’s business.

Now if I was *really* starting over, I wouldn’t be sitting around for the results of one promotion. I’d have multiple promos running at once.

Of course, you can go looking on the internet for clients. Copywriting online is a whole lot easier... mainly because there’s less risk for your prospect. No mailing costs and the ability to quickly make changes to a dud promotion make your job of getting in the door much easier...

But there’s a problem with the internet business world at this point in time:

**If It’s Easier for YOU to Market Online...
It’s Also Easier for Your Competition to Do the Same**

There’s a lot of noise online. Everyone’s shouting at the top of their lungs, “Buy MY Stuff!” After all, you can reach almost anyone with an email. And when **everyone** can do something, it really loses its effectiveness.

The goal is to create **multiple** ways for you to get clients. My advice is simple: **be different**. If everyone is online, go offline. If everyone is sending out postcards with bags of candy attached to them, don’t do that. Use your head to think up something different.

Be different.

It works for me... it will work for you.

Just do it all FAST. **The faster you are... the more you will fail... the faster you are... the more you will turn those failures into successes.**

Bonus 3:

The Ultimate Six-Figure Copywriting Secret

So what's the biggest secret I have to tell you from my first year as a freelance copywriter. It's something I call...

The Simple Secret of a Six-Figure Copywriter

Here it is:

You don't wait around for success to come to you. You don't wait around for clients to come to you. You take action... you fail... you take action... you fail. Rinse and repeat.

You don't have to "put in your time." You don't have to "work your way up."

All you need to do is get clear about where you're going (and why) and then keep taking steps (even small ones) to get there.

What you really need is **confidence**. And the quickest way to get that is to fall flat on your face and realize... that you're **still** alive.

Here's the bottom line: To blaze a path to success in the shortest amount of time, you need to blaze your own path.

Because if you follow the guru's path, or the copywriting course's path to success... well let me tell you, that's not the path to success, that's just another step in someone ELSE's sales funnel.

Because if you become a buyer at level one, then the promos for level two show up. It's a great education, but don't get hooked. You've got better things to do... like create your own success and make a lot of money.

Good luck!

Recommended Reading (WARNING: These Books Aren't About Copywriting)

Mastery: The Keys to Success and Long-Term Fulfillment - George Leonard

Books by Alan Weiss (buy them all)

- Million Dollar Consulting: The Professional's Guide to Growing a Practice
- Value-Based Fees: How to Charge and Get What You're Worth
- How to Acquire Clients: Powerful Techniques for the Successful Practitioner
- How to Establish a Unique Brand in the Consulting Profession: Powerful Techniques for the Successful Practitioner
- How to Write a Proposal That's Accepted Every Time: The Practitioner's Guide

The 48 Laws of Power - Robert Greene

Atlas Shrugged - Ayn Rand

Books by Robert Ringer

- Restoring the American Dream
- To Be or Not to Be Intimidated?: That is the Question
- Looking Out for #1
- Action!: Nothing Happens Until Something Moves