

FREELANCER'S BUSINESS BULLETIN

March 2004

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Dear Subscriber,

Welcome to Chris Marlow's FREELANCER'S BUSINESS BULLETIN. In this issue you'll learn the #1 reason projects fail...and how to make sure YOU don't get the blame!

It all boils down to a simple but very powerful planning tool...the Project Brief.

In advertising and marketing agencies they're called Creative Briefs, and a job doesn't move forward without one. Sophisticated marketers have learned that certain core questions MUST be answered if the project is to succeed.

Creative Briefs are as individual as the agencies that use them, but they all have points in common. Their goal is to define the project, clearly state the objectives, and provide critical information to the team charged with executing the marketing campaign.

Some of the most important questions to be answered include:

- Who is our audience?
- What lists are we using?
- What is the product's unique selling proposition (USP)?
- What are the key "pains" of our audience?
- What is our offer?
- What are the objections we'll need to overcome?
- Who is our competition?

My business-to-business Creative Brief has 33 such questions, and my business-to-consumer has 44. What's more, I have a Creative Brief specific to my copywriting specialty, the software industry.

I don't write a word until the Creative Brief is complete

and I have all the information I need to write a powerful direct mail package, online promotion, website, or what-have-you. With a properly completed Creative Brief, you the writer will be able to write strong copy that's supported by other essential elements for success, such as quality lists, a great offer, and a smart strategy.

WHAT IF YOU DON'T USE A CREATIVE BRIEF?

Be prepared for trouble. Not only have I lived it, but I often help my coaching students out of "hot spots." Writing without a plan practically ensures you'll fall into one or more of these traps:

- Your concepts and ideas are off the mark
- You lose money and time in heavy revisions
- You hand in unacceptable work
- Your client's promotion fails
- You miss that all-important deadline

The benefit of using a Creative Brief for every writing project has been proven thousands of times with successful results. Using a Creative Brief dramatically increases a promotion's chance for success because both parties (copywriter and client) have crafted a plan that has considered all of the elements required for success.

A strong Creative Brief also gives the copywriter an opportunity to assess the project's strengths and weaknesses and make changes. For instance, the writer might argue that the offer needs beefing up. Now's the time to craft a good offer...not later, when it costs time and money to make the change!

Best of all, a Creative Brief gets the "grunt work" out of the way. With a well-conceived Creative Brief in hand, you can:

- Tackle the project with confidence
- Work quickly, without starts and stops, and earn more
- Enjoy the process instead of stressing out

The Creative Brief is so important to the business freelancer that I usually introduce it to my students within the first two or three coaching sessions. If you're

interested in learning how you can take advantage of master-level knowledge, documents, and processes for the business freelancer, you're invited to visit my Coaching site and ask for a free consultation at <http://TheCopywritersCoach.com>

QUICK NOTE: DISCOVER HOW TO LEVERAGE YOUR WRITING INTO BIG \$\$\$ New York copywriter Don Hauptman is a legend in the newsletter publishing world. He'll be sharing his considerable expertise at Newsletter Day, sponsored by the National Electronic Publishers Association (NEPA), on Monday, March 29, in San Francisco.

If you can attend, be sure to put Don on your schedule. His presentation, "A Powerful Selling Tool: Repurposing Your Editorial Content Into Promotional Copy" will show you how to leverage the work of one project into many others — and much higher earnings!

The cost to attend for NEPA members is \$129; for non-members it's just \$179 (tax deductible of course).

To see the full Newsletter Day program and register online, go to: <http://www.newsletters.org/page.cfm?name=nlday>.

THE END...ALMOST • Send this valuable newsletter on to your freelancer friends! **THE FREELANCER'S BUSINESS BULLETIN** was conceived for copywriters, but contains the same information any business freelancer can use to build their business. And it's **FREE!**

- Become part of the Survey Team for **THE FREELANCER'S BUSINESS BULLETIN**. Whenever I conduct a survey for **THE FREELANCER'S BUSINESS BULLETIN**, you'll be among the first to know the results of business intelligence that exists nowhere else! Send an email to chris@chrismarlow.com and put "survey" in the subject line. In the body, state what kind of business freelancing you do (e.g., "copywriter," "designer", "white paper writer").

- Got a burning question about freelancer marketing? Send it to chris@chrismarlow.com and it may become a Survey topic!

- Did a friend send THE FREELANCER'S BUSINESS BULLETIN to you? Get your own subscription at <http://www.chrismarlow.com>

- Be sure to put chris@chrismarlow.com on your "allowed email" list so you can receive every issue of THE FREELANCER'S BUSINESS BULLETIN...

See you next month!

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