

# FREELANCER'S BUSINESS BULLETIN

April 2005

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**Dear Subscriber,**

Welcome to the April 2005 issue of Chris Marlow's FREELANCERS BUSINESS BULLETIN (FBB).

This month I'll address the biggest lie in copywriting, and that is:

"Come down on price on this one and there'll be More work to come."

This come-on is a favorite of potential new clients who either have no money, or are justifiably trying to keep costs down.

Either way it doesn't matter to the copywriter because both circumstances ask the copywriter to sacrifice his or her income on the promise of more work.

Unfortunately, "more work" rarely materializes. In my opinion, most of these people don't lie with malice, they simply lack the funds to pay a reasonable rate for copywriting.

One thing is clear: they do value copywriting and understand its power to add to THEIR bottom line.

Why is this situation such a dilemma for the freelance copywriter?

I think it's safe to say that every copywriter has experienced tight finances. And for this reason alone it's tempting to talk yourself into saying "yes" to a bad proposition.

In addition, the copywriter might see value in Adding the proposed project to his portfolio...and if It gets a great response, add a powerful case study too.

Plus, the most trusting among us will believe there is more work to come, and will be anxious to land the job and develop a new copywriter/client relationship.

These and other realities of the copywriting life help us talk ourselves into a situation we'll regret...a pattern of accepting low pay from clients we don't want in the first place.

How to say "yes" the PROFITABLE way...

The good news is, you can say "yes" to new clients who promise more work IF you protect yourself.

A couple of years ago a European software company Came to me with the intent of breaking into the U.S. market.

Phil, the CEO of this mid-size company, was a tough negotiator. He wanted a ten percent price break for work he said would come to me over the course of that year. When I priced the work, the total came to about \$12,000.

Obviously, this was a client I wanted to say "yes" to, but knowing the "big lie," I also realized I would be on the line for lost income if he didn't provide me with the promised work.

My solution was to work it into my Fee Agreement, which all clients must sign, date, and fax back to me before work can commence.

I stipulated a ten percent price break (\$1,200) on the \$12,000 job, listed all work to be performed and its respective dollar value, and then added copy to this effect:

"In exchange for a ten percent discount of \$1,200, all of the above work must be assigned by December

31, 2004; if all of the above work is not assigned by December 31, 2004, then the ten percent discount becomes null and void and an invoice will be submitted for immediate payment of \$1,200."

The strategy worked like a charm. In fact, in mid-2004 work slowed from this client, but toward the end of 2004 there was a flurry to complete his obligation for the amount of work contracted for.

WITHOUT the Fee Agreement stipulation, it appears I would have "bought into the lie," cut my pricing by ten percent for the work that I did do, and suffer the "lost income" of expected work that never came.

WITH the Fee Agreement stipulation, I felt good about the ten percent discount because it was a fair negotiation in which both parties fulfilled their obligations. And it brought me a lot of work toward the end of 2004 that may have come to me sometime in 2005...or quite possibly never.

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To your freelance prosperity,

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Veteran freelancer and award-winning copywriter, Chris Marlow has written for the nation's leading Businesses for over 20 years. She also offers Business coaching and master-level copywriting to new and aspiring copywriters and other business freelancers who want to accelerate their success.

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