

GET GREAT CLIENTS

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A free monthly coaching email newsletter for copywriters and other freelancers who want to land the high-value, high-quality clients!

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What kind of response rate should you expect from your marketing mailer?

There are lots of ways to market your business, and some are more powerful than others. But the only way to build the business you want is to go after the clients you want, so you don't have to take what comes to you, if what comes to you is not good.

That's why one component of my marketing system for myself and my coaching students is a mailer. You can cherry-pick your list, and pre-qualify those who see your message. In this month's article I'll share with you "response rate" realities of sending a mailer to your hand-selected audience.

Also in this month's issue of Get Great Clients...

* You're invited to go sailing with me and other business friends in May!

* Details on Volume II of the Freelance Copywriter Fee & Compensation Survey where 358 copywriters reveal their pricing for 40 common copywriting jobs...

* Quick Q & A: "Should I create an information product to sell?"

Featured Article:

"Response Rate Realities for the Freelancer"

The marketer's rule of thumb for mailer response rates is generally 1.0%. In 2003 the Direct Marketing Association published statistics that showed the business-to-business direct mail response rate to a prospect list averaging a measly .61%.

Of course, much will depend on how good a marketer you are. Direct response agency CEO Russell Kern, for whom I have much respect, places the average at 0.5% to 3.0%.

Response rate depends on many factors, chief among them the list you mail to. If you have a poor list, you'll get poor results. But if your list is strong — and it should be if you personally hand-picked who you want on it and they fit your niche perfectly — then of course your chance of success is higher.

The next most important factor is your offer to this list. Do you know your target market intimately? Do you really know what their problems are? People are looking for solutions and they're looking for the right person to provide those solutions.

It's not uncommon for my coaching students to get a 5.0% response on their first mailings, and sometimes even higher. Why are they getting such high response rates?

Number one, because they target a strong niche. Number two, because they understand the psychology of their prospects, and have matched their prospect's needs and desires with a solution they can provide (presented in the form of an offer).

And number three, their marketing materials support their message; the recipient receives an introductory sales letter that stands out in the mailbox in some way, via smart copy, design or format, a clever and relevant concept, or perhaps a "bulky item" to drive curiosity for a high open rate.

Other marketing materials carry the same message, the same branding, and target the same audience (e.g., the Web site,

Bio, etc.).

When all is said and done, it goes back to the old 40-40-20 Rule: 40% of your marketing success will come from the quality of your list; 40% will come from the relevance of your offer; and 20% will come from the quality of your marketing materials.

Subscribers and business friends: you can use this article and any other GGC content in your own ezine, on your Website, blog, etc., as long as this resource box accompanies:

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This Month's Announcements

Coaching slots are open

Stop taking whatever comes to you and go after what you want! There are slots open for our successful Get Great Clients coaching programs ...

If you're a copywriter, designer, or other marketing freelancer, and would like more information on my coaching service, visit: www.TheCopywritersCoach.com

If you're a professional service provider who needs to start off the right way, or who needs better clients, please visit: www.FreelancersCoach.com

Work work work...work work work...

Hey, let's have some FUN! If you live in southern California and live in (or can make it to) Los Angeles, I'm planning a sailing day for my marketing buddies, coaching students — past and present — and my subscriber friends! We'll sail out of Marina del Rey under gorgeous weather (cross fingers), dine on sailboat food, imbibe the appropriate libations, reconnect with old friends, make new friends, and who knows what else!

Yes, the rest of the world is freezing right now. But it takes time to plan a great outing, and May will be here before you know it. Plus I have to find out how big the sailboat needs to be, based on how many marketing, copywriting, and subscriber friends show up.

More importantly, this gives us something really fun to look forward to, don't you think? (This picture of me is San Diego bay, but most of my friends are close to L.A., so that's where we'll sail from.)

So if you're interested in getting onto my "Sail in L.A.in May" list to keep informed of developments (no obligation), let me know. Simply reply to the text email I sent you (the one that says, "Your Feb. issue of Get Great Clients is ready"), and put "sail" in the subject line. I'll put you on my list for sailing updates. Chris Recommends

The new Freelance Copywriter Fee & Compensation Survey™ Volume II PLUS the new Bonus Report, Marketing and Time Management for Copywriters

Check out this quote...

"I just ordered your new Writer's Compensation Survey and it has already helped with a client who said my brochure quote was 'too pricey.' Your survey gave me the authority to insist on getting paid appropriately, and he accepted my offer. This alone is worth many times the price of the survey, and I just bought it a few hours ago! Thanks again!" — Jacob Bear, Alternative Health Copywriter, Los Angeles, CA

What more can I say? ... Hundreds of copywriters took a big chunk of their time to share their most valuable business information, answering dozens of questions about their job pricing, marketing, and time management.

Now we have 40 new pricing benchmarks for common copywriting jobs such as copy for autoresponders, press releases, ezines, SEO Web copy, postcards, articles, large order-gen sites, ghostwriting, phone scripts, and much, much more! So if you need to know what the going rates are,

be sure to check out the world's most accurate and comprehensive resource for copy job pricing! Visit:

www.FreelancersBusinessStore.com/Volume2

* The Freelance Copywriter Fee & Compensation Survey Volume I PLUS the popular How to Set Your Copywriting Rates Bonus Report

In 2005 I came out with Volume I of the Freelance Copywriter Fee & Compensation Survey. It's the world's first and only statistical pricing benchmark for 20 of the most common copywriting jobs, including direct mail packages, Web copy, self-mailers, and more — including information on the different pay conventions (flat rate, bonuses, and royalties). This Survey Report is literally responsible for saving copywriters tens of thousands of dollars in pricing mistakes.

PLUS it comes with the industry's most popular rate setting guide, How to Structure Your Copywriting Rates — for FREE!

Find out how to use simple business math and an online tool to calculate the hourly rate that's right for you. Get more info on both Reports at: www.FreelancersBusinessStore.com

Bob Bly's Do-It Yourself Public Relations 3-Disc CD Set

I don't talk much about my P/R background, but I was very successful in my early freelance career getting other people top media placement on TV, the radio, on the front page of the Seattle Times Sunday section for "home," and write ups with famous columnists in The Oregonian.

Honestly, I didn't enjoy it that much but back then it looked like an easy way into the copywriting business. My main problem was the lack of control I felt. Having been published (and arts editor of my university newspaper), I understood the media well.

Not wanting someone between me and success (the editor, the reporter), I steered my business toward direct response. But I've always known that for the small business, free publicity is a boon, and I have special respect for my

friends who work this beat 100%.

That said, I want to wholeheartedly recommend Bob Bly's recent piece of first-class work, his Do-It Yourself Public Relations set of CDs.

I'm no dummy when it comes to P/R, but I have four pages of detailed notes, and I thought I could listen to this set of CDs and water plants, wrap gifts, and do other things at the same time.

Not hardly. After repeatedly trying to "rewind" (which doesn't work for CDs), I realized I had to stop everything, focus, and take notes. It's a rich piece of work, and you need it...even if you've been "at it" for two decades like me. Go ahead and buy it. The price should be higher than it is. Info is at:

<http://tinyurl.com/33xvq9>

Quick Q&A

"Should I create an information product to sell?"

I had a customer service issue the other day with a product purchaser. While Ron and I talked on the phone as I dealt with shopping cart issues, I found myself spilling some beans about the information product business. Since they're top of mind, I'll share some of it here.

A few things I've learned that will help you if you're excited about creating information product to sell:

* This is not as simple and easy (and cheap) as it looks. There are lots of costs, even with a purely digital product: bank fees, credit card fees, online processing fees, shopping cart fees, state tax, graphic design fees, and so on. What's more, it's not easy to figure out exactly what you're netting with a product.

* If you want to "get rich," make sure your product is for a wide audience. It also helps if you have your own very large list (otherwise you'll be dependent on others, and they may not have the time or space for your product).

* Yes, you wake up with money in your in-box, but there is a significant time cost. What does it cost to create your Web site? (Don't forget "tiny" things like cost of domain name and hosting.) There are customer service time costs, your time in creating the product, time costs in signing up and paying affiliates, time costs associated with tax paperwork, accounting time costs, endless opportunities for marketing (this takes time and sometimes money), Webmaster costs, and more.

Can it be lucrative? Yes, it surely can...but as my financial advisor pointed out, at the end of the year you need to determine your net profit and compare it to what you could have earned had you spent the time another way, and banked the money you spent on creating your product.

One very important caveat: a good information product can bring you other kinds of business (copywriting and coaching, in my case). If you create an info product for this purpose, just make sure you don't spend more time (or money) than you need in order to reach your financial goal. Information products can be "fun" and steal time from other important business efforts.

Achieving Goals Through Trusted Advice™ Veteran copywriter Chris Marlow has written for the nation's leading direct response agencies, Fortune 500 companies, and large and small businesses for more than two decades. Today she devotes considerable time to coaching copywriters, designers, coaches, and other service professionals on how to land the high-quality, high-value clients.

An expert at niche development and job pricing, Chris also creates information products that are based on facts, interviews, and research, that freelancers can trust in and rely on. A member of the Trusted Advisor's Alliance, Chris puts honesty and integrity first in every business exchange.

You're invited to visit these Chris Marlow sites:

www.GetGreatClients.com/signup - Sign up for this newsletter

www.CopywritersPricing.com - Copywriter's 5-part Pricing Toolkit: A PROVEN 9-year system for successful negotiation, including the questions to ask for pricing right and the forms to protect your interests

www.FreelancersBusinessStore.com - Statistical Copywriter's Pricing Survey (Volume I) offers pricing benchmarks for 10 of the most common copywriting jobs, insight into the different pay conventions, and an unprecedented peek into hourly rate norms, gross income, and other hidden economic and psychographic data of nearly 300 copywriters

www.FreelancersBusinessStore.com/volume2 - Statistical Copywriter's Pricing Survey (Volume II) offers an additional 40 pricing benchmarks not covered in Volume I, in addition to job descriptions and revealing survey information on how over 300 copywriters market and manage their time

Trusted Advisors Alliance - Trusted Advisors Alliance
www.ChrisMarlow.com - Control-busting concepts, copy, offers, and strategies

www.TheCopywritersCoach.com - Marketing Coaching for Marketing Professionals

www.FreelancersCoach.com - Marketing Coaching for Service Professionals

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