

# GET GREAT CLIENTS

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**Dear Subscriber,**

When you're trying to attract the high-quality, high-value clients, how important is DESIGN to your website?

Good design is crucial, and in this month's Get Great Clients, I'll share with you design "deal killers" and tips on what you must know and do in order to make a favorable impression on a prospective client who is sophisticated about marketing.

\* I'll also tell you about Roger C. Parker's "Design to Sell," a 266-page softcover book published by Microsoft, that inspired this month's topic...

\* And I'll answer a recent question from past student Pam, who wants to know if she's facing an unethical situation as copywriter for competing businesses...

\* Another reminded to sign up for my "Sail in L.A. in May" sailing excursion out of L.A., especially if you're a gal (we have lots of "mateys" so come on gals!)

\* PLUS info on an upcoming White Paper teleclass put on by two copywriters I have great respect for (it's happening in 4 days);

One note: Keep this issue of Get Great Clients handy because it's PART 1 of two parts. Next month we'll talk about your home page content!

So let's get started with this month's featured article...

**Three Horrible Home Page Design Mistakes That Send Potential Clients Scurrying, and How to Avoid Them!**

Did you know that a good direct response designer can add as much as 20 percent to a lead or order-generating mailing?

I don't remember where I saw that statistic, but I sure do believe it. When I'm writing copy for campaigns, I often insist on using my own designers, design is that important.

So what are the big mistakes I see when I help new copywriters and other freelancers build an effective site?

One of the most common mistakes is using a reversed out background. That is, a dark background and white or light-colored type.

It's the mark of an amateur if used the wrong way. For instance, designers know that reversed-out type can work very well, but it IS hard to read, so its use is limited to small bits of space. NEVER would they make reversed-out type the "main theme."

So design tip #1 is use reversed-out type judiciously, if at all!

Next up:

Another very common design mistake is using too many colors, or colors that don't work together, or that trigger the wrong "emotions."

Freelancers who build their own sites often get caught up in the excitement of creativity...so many colors! So many fonts! So many graphics and photo options! What fun!

But designers know how powerful color is, and so do sophisticated companies. In fact, if you do marketing work for a sophisticate, you may get handed a Style Guide.

This Guide is heavy on "dos" and "don'ts" for the designer, and also usually has a few hand slapping "no nos " for the copywriter as well.

Style Guides protect the brand from inconsistencies, and if

you haven't seen one, you'd be surprised at how picayune they can be!

I remember a Style Guide for the technology company, Network Solutions. There had to be a red border on everything. It had to be exactly this size, that PMS color, and this far from the outer edge of the paper. And there were PAGES devoted to proper logo treatment. I'm sure creativity-loving designers just hate Style Guides!

The point is, high-quality, high-value clients are picky about design, and if your Home Page violates basic rules, you'll get passed over in an instant.

So design tip #2 is use restraint in your colors, fonts, and images. Create your own Style Guide so you too can be consistent in your marketing materials.

And finally, create a primary focal point for your Home Page.

To quickly clarify this common design error, all I have to do is ask you if you've ever gone to a website Home Page and had no idea where to go? You got there and it's such a jumble of things that your brain becomes confused and you wonder if you are wasting your time.

Now of course there ARE sites that are portals, their purposes are other than lead-generating. But this is not you. You are a freelancer, and you want to generate leads. Therefore your site needs a focal point that starts your visitor on a very calculated path. Most often, that focal point is a great headline. (More on this next month when we talk about Home Page content.)

So design tip #3 is step back from your Home Page and view it like you'd view a large Monet painting in a museum...from a distance.

Can you tell where the "artist" (you) wants the viewer to start? If not, you have no focal point and your visitor will be frustrated, not knowing where to begin.

So this ends this month's feature article, but don't quite

reading just yet...scroll down for info on Roger C. Parker's very cool book, "Design to Sell," which can be had for as little as \$7.97 USD (used).

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<http://www.GetGreatClients.com/signup>

### **This Month's Announcements**

\* All coaching time slots are currently taken...get your name on the wait list!

Are you struggling to attract quality clients? My coaching program shows you step-by-step how to "dress yourself for success." If you're a copywriter, designer, or other marketing freelancer, and would like more information on my coaching, visit:

<http://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:

<http://www.FreelancersCoach.com>

Sail in L.A. in May!

It's coming up fast...a 4-hour day sail on a Saturday in late May (if the weather is good, otherwise we'll push to June).

This is your chance to meet other "local" freelancers, enjoy some time off, drink, eat, laugh, and make new friends. We'll have 8 or 10 people on a Catalina, and it's my treat.

We've got lots of guys but only two gals...so step up to the plate ladies...reply to this email and put "sail" in the subject line. I'll put you on my list for sailing information updates.

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## **Chris Recommends**

Roger C. Parker's "Design to Sell"

To thank me for a presentation I did for the Guerrilla Marketing Association some time ago, Roger sent me his "Design to Sell" book published by Microsoft(R), and which pushes Microsoft Publisher.

Although Roger doesn't treat the subject of Home Pages, there is a lot of information on how to design other marketing pieces, like newsletters, postcards, and ads, and all the info is applicable to web site design.

But what I really love about this book is that it has a full page of professionally selected color schemes you can use to support your branding! In fact, there are 29 color schemes, all consisting of five colors each. If you buy new, Amazon is selling the book at \$19.79.

if you suspect your colors, layout, and typefaces are out of whack, I recommend getting this book. It covers everything you need to know about design that sells...and it's a real bargain if you implement changes that attract rather than repel prospective clients!

Check it out at:

<http://www.tinyurl.com/2eozpp>

The world's most comprehensive resource for pricing copy

Every month I get emails from copywriters telling me that the Copywriter Fee and Compensation Survey Reports help them price right land business.

You'll enjoy this one, from Katie A.:

"I landed the client.... There were some direct mail pieces I wanted to price for this project and your copywriting fees guide really clarified everything, leaving me feel confident in my proposal.

"My client said I was the highest priced of everyone she contacted, but she liked my approach the best."

So if you write copy and you don't have pricing guidelines, you'll want to visit two sites:

<http://www.FreelancersBusinessStore.com/Volume2>

This is where you'll find my NEW Freelance Copywriter Fee & Compensation Survey(tm) Volume II, PLUS the new Bonus Report, "Marketing and Time Management for Copywriters"

It contains 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!

<http://www.FreelancersBusinessStore.com>

This is where you'll find the Freelance Copywriter Fee & Compensation Survey Volume I, PLUS the ever-popular "How to Set Your Copywriting Rates" Bonus Report

This 2005 report offers 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). Contents are NOT the same as Volume II.

Spend a little to save a lot, and take the stress out of pricing!

### **Quick Q&A**

Pam M. recently asked if it was ethical to write copy for one seller of "joint-health" products on the heels of

writing copy for another seller of "joint-health" products.

My answer: If the client you've just finished writing for is a "real" client, in other words, they give you work on a regular basis and you have a true business relationship, then yes, it would be unethical to write for a competitor.

But if the project is just "a job" and there isn't any solid evidence that more work is coming soon from the first client, then absolutely DO take the second job.

If you're tightly niched, as Pam is (in Nutraceuticals and Supplements), you'll find high concentrations of competitors in the most profitable parts of that niche, and you don't want to spend time becoming an expert in a niche, only to say "no" to the benefits.

In the agency world, when we found ourselves courted by two competing clients, we'd generally let the least profitable client go, and focus on the one with most promise.

Warmly,

Chris

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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:

<http://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

<http://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

<http://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

<http://www.thecopywriterscoach.com/taa.html> Trusted Advisors Alliance; individuals who have proven themselves as trustworthy and principled in business

<http://www.ChrisMarlow.com> Control-busting concepts, copy, offers, and strategies

<http://www.TheCopywritersCoach.com> Marketing Coaching for Marketing Professionals

<http://www.FreelancersCoach.com> Marketing Coaching for Service Professionals

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