

FREELANCER'S BUSINESS BULLETIN

May 2005

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Dear Subscriber,

Welcome to the May 2005 issue of Chris Marlow's Freelancer's Business Bulletin (FBB).

This month I'll address a question I'm occasionally asked by freelancers who are trying to build their portfolios...

"What to do with good work that was never used."

The good news is, you should use it in your portfolio, if it's work you're proud of. Marketing professionals are used to seeing work in all of its stages, and as long as your sample is "perfect," your prospect will see its potential and value.

In an ad agency, the copywriter's work is called a "copy deck" and when printed out, it builds thicker with each revision. When most of the changes are made, it then goes to the art director, and the work become a "copy proof." At this stage there are final copy edits, art direction edits, and refinements from others such as the creative director and production.

If your work sample got to this stage, it should be as impressive as any work that actually did get published. Most likely, at this stage, you're working in PDFs.

If you have PDFs of art-finished work, so much the better. But if your work did not get to the art direction stage, and all you have is a copy deck, that's fine too.

Whereas the PDF samples mask the fact that the work was not used, the copy deck reveals it. In either case you would want to explain to your prospective client that the work did not mail (or go "live," or get printed), and explain the reason why, if you know what it is.

There's no shame in good work that never saw the light of day, because there are many reasons why good work gets "killed."

Not long ago I wrote a fundraising letter for the YMCA. It was targeting the wealthy "snowbirds" who come to the Palm Springs resort areas to play during the Bob Hope Classic golf tournament, and the tennis stadium events as well.

Like the many people who live in this area, where the temperature gets up to 120 in the summer, our target audience would be at their winter homes for only a few months.

Well, due to no fault of my own, the YMCA missed its window for mailing. So the project was shelved for "next year."

But by the time next year rolled around, the old marketing director was gone, and so was the possibility that my work would ever get printed and mailed.

Do I list the YMCA on my web site as a client? You bet!

I did other paid work for them, but I'm most proud of the piece that didn't mail because they gave me full reign to create the piece I wanted; it shows what I can do when the client backs off.

If a potential fundraising client came my way, I would not hesitate to show my work for the YMCA, and tell them a more entertaining story about why it didn't mail than the one I've told you. The lesson here is to turn lemons into lemonade...

Jobs get killed all the time (clients run out of money, new competitive information pulls the plug on an idea, a national disaster changes the marketing landscape)...

And a seasoned creative director or marketing director knows this. Tell them why it didn't mail, unabashedly. Be confident, even a little conspiratorial. Everyone loves a good story. And the story about the mailing that didn't mail, or the brochure that didn't get published, or the web site that didn't go up, has power.

Use it to your advantage, rather than your disadvantage.

Important Announcement: Don't risk losing your free subscription to the Freelancers Business Bulletin

In June we'll be moving the Freelancer's Business Bulletin to a content management system designed to better serve you, our valuable reader, and facilitate better content management at our end as well.

This move will require you to re-subscribe if you wish to continue receiving this free newsletter.

Please watch for a special message from Chris Marlow in June, which will tell you where to re-subscribe so you don't miss any upcoming issues of the Freelancer's Business Bulletin.

Still available at a low introductory price...

The 2005 FREELANCE COPYWRITER FEE & COMPENSATION SURVEY

Nearly 300 copywriters reveal their pricing for 20 common copywriting jobs, and share intimate details on hourly rate, yearly income, marketing methods, and much more, in the world's first and only comprehensive survey on copywriter fees and economics.

Purchase today and save...cover price will go up!

For more information, go to:

<http://www.FreelancersBusinessStore.com>

Other Important Stuff:

*** Finn Communications is looking for a direct-response copywriter with at least 2 years experience selling natural/organic food products or natural skin-care products through the mail. You must have a solid track record in one of these areas, with samples of packages or magalogs to show you are familiar with audiences who buy healthy, natural products. Online experience a plus. Email an inquiry with a brief bio to Adriana at: adriana@johnfinn.com

*** Send this newsletter to your freelance friends! The Freelancer's Business Bulletin was conceived for copywriters, but contains the same information any business freelancer can use to build their business.

*** Got a burning question about some aspect of building your freelance business? Send it to chris@chrismarlow.com and it may become a newsletter topic!

*** Did a friend send you this newsletter? Get your own subscription at <http://www.TheCopywritersCoach.com> where you'll also get the valuable complimentary Report, "The Secret to Successful Projects Every Time - Guaranteed!"

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.

Check out the benefits of coaching at:
<http://www.TheCopywritersCoach.com>