

## **Marketing Yourself Successfully**

Marketing yourself successfully comes down to two things: persistence and working smarter. If you want to make a good living as a copywriter, you need both. It's easy to get started once you know how, and it doesn't need to cost a fortune either. This is particularly useful if you have only just started out.

When you first begin marketing yourself, you need to do so practically on a daily basis. As a general rule of thumb, you should spend around 5 hours a week at best to get the ball rolling. There are lots of things you can do to get the word out, and once you start building your business and getting a steady stream of clients, you probably won't have to work as hard to get yourself noticed.

One thing you should do immediately is to develop your unique selling point. What is it about you that differentiates you from everyone else? Perhaps you work in a specific niche, or have very specialist knowledge? Whatever it is, ensure you make this obvious on your website and your mailing materials.

Remember, you are a copywriter and you should sell yourself with the best benefits to your customers.

### **Starting With The Basics – Your Marketing Plan**

Every good business needs a solid business plan. This is vital to your success. Without it, you would undoubtedly fail. Mine is stuck to my wall, and is a simple list of tasks that I repeat each week. When I find business slow, I simply re-assess my plan and look at what else I can do in addition to what I am doing to help things pick up.

Ideally, you need to pick a handful of ideas which you can EASILY implement week in, week out. This is the crux of any successful business. They never stop marketing. Think of it like this – Coke is a world famous brand, yet they still market themselves so that they remain in front of their customers at all times.

Set aside either some time daily, or perhaps an afternoon to go over your plan and execute it. Your marketing arsenal should be varied – this way you are not relying on any one method to bring in business.

Before you can implement a solid marketing plan, you need a great portfolio of your sales letters and copywriting samples – preferably online on your own website. Use a Wordpress site which is easy to maintain and upgrade. Get client testimonials on there, samples and a list of clients. Ensure your home page sells you and delivers your USP.

In the following sections I have given you a variety of no cost, low cost and other ways in which to market yourself. You should ideally pick as many as you can comfortably get through each week. Make a list of these things and ensure you are doing these things consistently. Stick to these things religiously, adding in something different once in a while when business is slow, and you should have no problems at all.

### **Marketing on a Budget**

One of the most common problems with newbie copywriters is that money is an issue when starting out. Typically, you not only have your own daily running costs of the business and a home to run, but you also have additional costs such as training materials and resources (which can be very expensive) as well as software and hardware etc that needs buying.

Some of the best marketing out there is very low cost indeed. Some things cost virtually nothing more than your time. So let's get stuck in.

### ***Referrals and Word of Mouth***

Don't underestimate the power of referrals and word of mouth. Start with your family and friends and anyone who owns a business that you know really well. Approach them and offer a discount on your services.

Take it one step further and partner up with a local graphic designer to sell each others' service. You can have a referral scheme and look for JV's who are willing to send you customers in need of a sales letter in return for a 10% fee of the total project cost as an incentive.

### ***Email Campaigns***

I would always recommend EVERYONE to start with email campaigns as these are the easiest to do and require little time or effort compared to other methods. If you already have a list, great, if not, you can buy one. Building up a list can take a while, and you should have a database of all new prospects. Each time you get a new client, make a note of their details so that if business is slow, you can shoot off an email with your latest offers.

You can buy lists of local businesses from none other than Ebay! Believe it or not, I bought a database of 400,000 local business owners in England for less than \$10 from ebay, and these had been compiled very recently – so I knew the information was accurate. Simply type in 'Email lists' into the Ebay search criteria and away you go.

The information in these databases contains email addresses, direct mail addresses, their names and numbers as well as the type of business they do. My advice when creating an email campaign is to pick one niche at a time. Start with professional services and healthcare professionals, since these people understand the value of a good copywriter and are not shy to pay your fees.

I strongly suggest you use an autoresponder to send out, track and manage your email campaigns. Mailchimp has a free facility for up to 1000 subscribers. For paid services, use Imnicamail which is very cheap compared to others.

The secret of a successful email campaign is offering something valuable to the customer. This could be a free report or free 30 minute marketing consultation. An example email sent out might be something like this:

Subject: Free 30 Minute Marketing Consultation

Dear (insert name)

My name is Arfa Iqbal and I am a direct response copywriter based in Huddersfield. I understand that you are busy, so will keep this email very brief.

My aim as a copywriter is to help businesses boost their bottom line by helping them attract more profitable customers. I do this through a variety of ways, but primarily by analyzing existing sales and promotional material and identifying weaknesses in them.

I would like the opportunity to offer you a free 30 minute marketing consultation either by Skype, phone or in person.

If you are interested in this opportunity, please email me at [info@arfawrites.com](mailto:info@arfawrites.com) or call me on xxxxxxxxxx and I will book you an appointment.

Places are limited and are available up until the end of January 2011.

To learn more about how I can help you, I am offering all businesses a free report which can be downloaded from my website called: Successful Offline Marketing. This FREE report will outline some great ways you can attract more customers.

Get your business off to a flying start in the new year and book your appointment now. It costs nothing and could be the best marketing decision you have made all year!

I look forward to hearing from you!

Thanks for your time,

Kind regards

Arfa

[www.arfawrites.com](http://www.arfawrites.com)

By offering a free consultation, you have a hook to get your prospects to open your email. You also have a further hook to get them to call you – you are offering a free report! Adding a time limit encourages business owners who have a habit of procrastinating to take action.

I strongly recommend all serious copywriters do this. Write a simple report of at least 10 pages long on how businesses can benefit in increased sales from a variety of tactics. Just make sure that the report sells your services in the best light – and always have your personal information in the back of your report.

When businesses call you, don't ever try to pitch to them – you need to discuss their needs and how you can help them. If your conversation is more pitch than anything else, you will have lost a potential lead. If this leads to work – great! If not, make sure you keep the customer on file and send out special deals and offers their way.

### ***Classified Ads***

Sounds a bit simple, but it can work wonders. Ensure you use an attention grabbing headline and a call to action. Again, you can offer a free consultation or a free report or both. Some papers have a premium advertising listing – these can cost a fair bit, so make sure you test the waters with free ads or low paid ads first.

### ***Cold Calling***

The bane of many, cold calling is something that can deliver great results as long as you are persistent and focused. Never give up after a few dozen calls. The success rate of cold calling is around 2-4%, so you need to make at least 100 calls a week to score a couple of gigs.

BUT! Traditional cold calling seems fruitless and mundane. So, here, I am going to share a secret with you that is going to knock your call frequency down, and your gig rate UP! I call it smart warm calling.

First things first, sign up to all your local and national recruitment agency email alerts. Make sure you add 'copywriter', 'copywriting' etc to your alert preferences. When you get your daily reports, scan through and pick out the gigs you would like to do. Do a quick search on the Internet for the company and the name of the marketing manager. You can always ring and ask to speak to them if you can't find this information online.

When you get this information, give them a ring and casually mention you are a copywriter making contact with businesses to ask if they have a need for a skilled copywriter for any projects. Now, you and I both know that they do need a copywriter – that’s why they advertised for one in the first place 😊.

When they say yes, great! Be professional and polite and discuss their needs. Always offer to send them a direct email with a URL to your website and online portfolio, plus specific samples relevant to their needs.

In your email, mention you will follow up a week later, and ensure that you do. A simple call saying that you are calling up to ask if they had had a chance to look through your samples and if they were interested in working with you on any projects they had in mind is all that’s needed.

This is a great way to make your cold calling more effective, and should provide plenty of working opportunities for you.

### ***Postcard Marketing***

Postcard marketing is a very lucrative form of marketing right now, and can bring great results on a low budget. The trick is to work smart, not hard. This way, you save on postal costs too. Firstly, you need postcards. Now, I use [Vistaprint](#), who are always offering great deals. I bought 100 premium quality postcards for around \$20. I put an attention grabbing headline on the front, and my details and a free consultation and free report offer on the back.

When posting out, you need to target specific people. Think who is most likely going to not only use your services, but can afford them too? The average high street business and small business owner may not. But, private health practices, law firms, accountants, educational services etc and corporate businesses do. You should ideally target these people.

Get the business information from [www.yell.com](http://www.yell.com) or local Google listings or from local business lists which you can buy from the Chambers of Commerce. Then post out.

If this is too much hassle for you, you can automate the whole process for a large campaign. You can contact postcard marketing sites such as [www.modernpostcard.com](http://www.modernpostcard.com) and [www.amazingmail.com](http://www.amazingmail.com) for more ideas.

Tip: Partner up with a printing service – ask them to slip one of your postcards into each of their business customers’ orders. You could do this in exchange for writing their marketing materials.

## ***Direct Mail***

Relatively simple in thinking, and very easy to put together. The only issue here is cost. For a small and highly targeted mailing, you can get great results, if you follow these rules:

- Make your packet interesting – I put a sticker on mine which reads: ‘DON’T open this letter unless you want more customers for your business and want to make more money.’
- Put a low cost item in your packet. Now think carefully about who you are targeting. If it is garden stores, you may add a packet of seeds and have the tagline: Grow your business; if it’s a healthcare professional, you could attach an aspirin with the tagline: ‘Getting customers giving you a headache?’ etc. The idea is to be creative and make it relevant to your chosen niche
- Always include a business card, a letter/postcard/leaflet explaining your services. Again, offer a free consultation and free report
- Try out various offers and do direct mailings around calendar events e.g. new year special, thanksgiving special etc
- Ensure you follow up at all times

### ***Business Networking Events***

These are a great way to introduce yourself to prospective clients. Your local Chambers of Commerce will hold regular networking events where you get to deliver your elevator pitch to warm contacts. Ensure you have lots of business cards or even better, postcards with your free report and consultation offer on them.

Always ask for each client's business card. Anyone who seems keen on your services, mark their card. When you get home, shoot them an email thanking them for taking the time to meet with you. Get to know them and follow up a week later with your free offers plus an additional 10% off your services.

Another idea – educate your prospects first. The Chambers of Commerce will allow you to book their facilities so you can hold a presentation there. Pick a relevant theme to tie in with your copywriting, e.g. growing your business using direct response methods.

When you attend a networking event, tell prospects about your presentation and have a report ready to hand out with basic notes from your presentation. The idea here is to enlighten them and perhaps reveal some secrets that they were unaware of.

When you hand out your report – ensure you have your details in the back and although it may cost you a bit more, get these professionally printed. Once you have a fair idea of numbers, you will know how many to have printed up front.

### ***Internet Marketing Conventions***

The IM crowd is usually very savvy when it comes to the business side of things. That's why they make a lot of money and know how to get and keep customers. It's also the reason why they are willing to pay top dollars for great copywriting skills.

Get your foot in the door and get to one – your local business centre and events centre will have details of all upcoming events. You should get onto as many internet marketing lists as possible and go where the high-paying clients will be.

The idea is to network like crazy – don't be shy and introduce yourself to everyone. Take lots of business cards with you. Alternatively, you could put together a small pack that sells your services and may even include a pen or key ring. As long as what you have is good quality and sells your services well, you have no problem.

When you meet potential clients, get their business card and ensure you email them ASAP, or even the same day, otherwise, you may as well blend in a keep quiet, because they will forget you!

Always follow up and take it from there. You should sell yourself and not your desperation to win a client – no one likes a pushy salesman.

You can do the same thing at industry trade shows and target new companies who probably need all the help they can get. Perhaps offer them a special deal only for those people who are start-ups.

### ***PPC and Paid Advertising***

Using PPC methods are a great way to get noticed. Google Adwords is easy and you can have a campaign up and running within minutes. I suggest having a daily bid total of say \$5 and running the ad for two weeks to see what happens.

If you want to run the ad longer, you can always lower the amount, but either way, it's a great way to get targeted customers to your site.

### ***Google Alerts***

Google alerts (<http://www.google.com/alerts>) service is great – what this does is scour the web for anything relevant to your search terms. So, you may wish to put 'hire copywriter' in the keyword section or 'sales letter needed' here. When a relevant search term is found, Google will email the alert to you.

### ***Ad Magazines***

Your local ad magazine is a great way of getting the word out and costs less than you might think. A direct response ad will certainly capture attention and get some leads your way. If you have a local niche ad magazine, even better.

### ***Social Media***

Using Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn are great ways of attracting attention. Just be sure of one thing – keep it professional with professional pages. Make your profiles scream copywriter and attach samples of your best work.

A word about Twitter – no one will see your tweets unless you have followers. Follow people relevant to your niche and usually, people will follow you back. As long as you post relevant and intelligent posts, you should be able to attract quite a following. Make the

most of Twitter by linking to your blog – you can get a free one from blogger.com which integrates seamlessly with Twitter.

LinkedIn is THE place to be as a professional copywriter. You should get as many people to endorse you as possible. Take advantage of the paid monthly membership which allows you to email people for around \$50 a month.

### ***Keep a Blog***

Write a blog that is relevant to your business and niche, and ensure you post at least once weekly. You can create your blog on the Wordpress platform or use blogger.com as well. Either way, it's a great way to entertain, educate and inform and do SOFT pitches for your products and services. People will read and follow your blog because they want to learn something new. NOT because they want to be sold to!

### ***Sign Up With Local Ad Agencies***

Local advertising and marketing agencies are always in need of good copywriters, and you can easily get on their books. Write them a letter, selling you in your best possible light and why you would be good for their business. Add samples in or point them to your website (or do both!).

Ring them a week later and follow up – if your samples are good enough, they may take you on a trial basis to start with. Niche marketing agencies are a great way to work with some big brands – but they are tough to get into. Make sure you write to persuade them why you are the best and why they should hire you.

### ***Bidding on Auction Sites***

Auction sites like Elance.com, guru.com, odesk.com and scripplance.com are great ways to find work and can provide you with a steady income. You need to create a profile and sell yourself on the profile. When writing bids, make sure you write the best bid possible, think benefits to the client at all times. I have three accounts including a paid account at [www.ifreelance.com](http://www.ifreelance.com) , and two free accounts with Elance and Guru.

AVOID freelancer.com which is notorious for low budget work. Elance especially has some great projects posted here. What I also suggest is you create an ideal proposal that you can copy and paste for each bid you submit and then tweak as necessary. This will save you time when posting bids.

### ***What Next?***

In this chapter we have discussed some ways to market your business. There are literally hundreds of techniques you can implement to market yourself, but these are some of the most effective ways to do so.

I strongly suggest you put together a simple and actionable market plan. To get you started, here is my current plan – broken down into my dedicated weekly plan, with monthly targets.

### ***Weekly Plan:***

Thursday afternoon – cold calling – minimum 20 calls, follow up next Tuesday

Everyday – check for copywriting jobs on auction sites and submit bid

Monday – warm call for agency copywriting gigs. Follow up on Friday if needed

Tuesday - Email marketing to one group of prospects

Wednesday – request a JV/paid referral from an Internet Marketer

### ***Monthly Plan:***

Postcard marketing to at least one group of targets

Networking event from Chambers of Commerce

Direct Mail campaign to one group of targets

### ***Seasonal Plan:***

Attend trade shows of interest

Huge email and direct mail campaign targeting larger niche e.g. lawyers or healthcare etc

As you can see, it's nothing elaborate or fancy, but I stick to it and it serves me well. Because I work part-time, this plan is fine for me. If you are intending to make copywriting a full time thing, you should be marketing a lot harder and spending longer on this when you start up.

Typically, you should set aside more time in the beginning of your career. Once business builds up (and it will), you can start to relax, but not too much. You should aim to get all

your clients on your list so that when business is slow, you can email them and offer a discount on your services.

For more ideas on marketing yourself, I recommend you get 'No B.S. Marketing to the Affluent: The No Holds Barred, Kick Butt, Take No Prisoners Guide to Getting Really Rich' by Dan Kennedy.

**Written by Arfa S Iqbal**

## **Arfa Saira Iqbal**

**Arfa Saira Iqbal** is the founder of Freelance Writing Services which specializes in helping local businesses build a meaningful online and offline presence.

Arfa is a professionally trained direct response copywriter and commercial freelance writer. She writes for local businesses and has clients from all over the UK, USA and the Far East.

She works in conjunction with:

- A graphic designer and printer to offer complete solutions from initial copy to final print version
- A proofreader
- A web developer to create lead generation websites for local businesses
- An SEO consultant to improve Google rankings and online presence

Arfa consults with businesses on how to develop and market their business to improve customer retention and increase their leads and sales. She writes high-impact marketing materials such as corporate brochures, newsletters, promotional material and just about anything that requires the use of a skilled writer.

Arfa specializes in sales letters, autoresponders (email campaigns) and other forms of copy to increase sales and conversions.

When not marketing a local business, she enjoys spending time with her family and cooking delicious food!

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