



## Event Organizer Trades Cold Winters and Tiring Commutes for Life By the Caribbean Sea

When Jen Phillips April lost her job due to the recession, she didn't skip a beat. She had been studying copywriting in her spare time and knew this was her opportunity to create a life as a full-time freelance writer.

Jen has loved words and books as far back as she can remember. A passion for history led her to work in historic houses, where she juggled organizing events, running their websites and writing newsletters.

While she enjoyed her work, Jen didn't enjoy the grind of the daily commute or the cold Pennsylvania winters. Her dream had always been to live abroad, somewhere warm by the ocean.

"My museum work wasn't portable," Jen says. "I couldn't pack up and work somewhere else for a week. Plus, I hated the pressure of commuting and having to be at work at a specific time. My workdays left me feeling really tired."

### Investing in Herself

While Jen was working at the historic houses, she started a website in her spare time that offered recipes for dog treats, a project that combined two of her passions — writing and dogs.

"I've always wanted to write for a living," Jen says. "When you get in the flow and it's all coming together, it just feels so satisfying."

She wanted to improve her writing for her website, so when she came across American Writers and Artists Institute

#### CASE STUDY:

### Jen Phillips April

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#### MEMBER:

Jen Phillips April

#### LOCATION:

Playa Del Carmen, Mexico

#### OTHER JOBS:

Writer, event organizer for historic houses

#### HOW SHE GOT HER FIRST CLIENT:

She landed her first freelance client by telling her network she was starting her own business.

#### TOP AWAI PROGRAMS:

- *The Accelerated Program for Seven-Figure Copywriting*
- *How To Make Money as a Social Media Marketing Expert*
- *Circle of Success*

(AWAI) online, she was all in. She signed up for *The Accelerated Program for Six-Figure Copywriting* (now *The Accelerated Program for Seven-Figure Copywriting*).

“I liked the longevity of AWAI,” Jen says. “They have been around since 1997. And the wide range of programs on offer was appealing. I could see they were professional and reputable.”

As Jen incorporated the lessons from *The Accelerated Program* into her website content, not only did her confidence grow in her writing abilities, but her website expanded to 200 pages, with an impressive 87,000 visitors a month.

### **Opening Doors with AWAI**

With the knowledge she gained from another AWAI program, *How to Make Money as a Social Media Marketing Expert*, Jen offered workshops to local small businesses, teaching them how to use social media to attract more awareness and customers to their ventures.

She was onto a winner and was soon helping them set up their own social media, and rewriting their websites in her spare time. Again, she drew on AWAI for support in these first business interactions.

“AWAI helped me with the mechanics of working with a client,” Jen says. “Learning how to write a proposal, how to create an invoice, and even how to have a conversation with the client about those. I didn’t have any of those nailed down starting out, and AWAI helped me get comfortable with them.”

When Jen was laid off from her full-time job, she wasted no time in spreading the word among her network that she was now a full-time freelance copywriter. A fellow member of a pet industry forum reached out and asked her to create a

website for her dog training company. Jen was on her way in her new career.

Looking for a strong support system to take her copywriting to the next level, Jen invested in *Circle of Success (COS)*. Through COS, Jen had access to a wealth of resources including the full library of AWAI programs and AWAI’s flagship annual conference, *FastTrack to Copywriting Success Bootcamp* and Job Fair, featuring leading experts in copywriting and marketing.

As a COS member, Jen also had access to experienced mentors to guide her along her copywriting journey, and specialized training events addressing the latest opportunities in the copywriting world.

“COS really helped me refine what I was doing and grow my business,” says Jen. “I’ve been a member a long time, and even now I still refer back to materials in the programs to get inspiration on how to write something better. We’re always learning.”

Jen also values the support the COS writing community has given her over the years.

“I met a lot of people through COS who I’m still in contact with now,” Jen says. “It’s invaluable to meet other people and grow with them throughout your journey. They understand the freelance world and copywriting when others maybe don’t.”

### **Zero Commute — and a Beachside Life**

These days, Jen works with small businesses and companies that need a continuous supply of content, including AWAI. As a result, she enjoys the stability of monthly retainers, allowing for a



reliable pipeline of work.

As for Jen's love of dogs, they continue to play a big role in her working life. One of the specialty areas she writes for is the pet industry, focusing on blogs, newsletters, e-books and case studies.

From that small website offering dog treat recipes, her hard work and passion have led her to the life of her dreams, writing for a living about something she loves.

She enjoys a full-time income while working only 30 hours a week, and has the flexibility to structure her day however she wants, working

from wherever she likes.

Having made the decision to move to Playa Del Carmen, Mexico, she realized her lifelong dream of living in a warm climate overseas. She lives in a beachside community by the Caribbean Sea and those freezing winter commutes are a thing of the past.

More than anything else, Jen values the freedom of her life now.

"I have the flexibility to put my entire office in my backpack and the freedom to do what I want," says Jen. "That's really meaningful to me."

### *Jen's Tips for Copywriters*

- **Follow your dream** – If there's something you want to do, go after it. Time is going to pass anyway so you might as well try," Jen says.
- **Act now** – Don't wait until you feel ready to get clients. Knowing the basics of persuasive writing is more than enough to get started. Go for it *now*.
- **Always have a marketing plan** – Make a realistic plan and be aware of what type of outreach fits your personality. For Jen, marketing on LinkedIn and Twitter works best.

## Ready to pursue *the writer's life*?

Learn more about the program that launched Jen's career,  
***The Accelerated Program for Seven-Figure Copywriting.***

