

Interview with the Founder of American Writers & Artists Institute, Katie Yeakle, Starting a Copywriting Company

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Tell me about your current business. What are you doing exactly?

We publish and market home-study programs that offer people freelance job opportunities. Our flagship program, AWAI's Accelerated Program for Six-Figure Copywriting, shows people how to write winning sales letters. And, as with all our programs, we offer insider tips and strategies for getting started and succeeding in the industry.

When did you start the business?

1997

What were you doing before this, and is this your first business?

I was a direct-mail marketer for a large international publishing company.

Where did you get the startup money?

We were very lucky in that we didn't need much money to get started. My partners and I created the copywriting program and promotion ourselves. And, we made deals with publishers to promote our product on a revenue-split basis. Those early sales were our initial cash flow.

Who are your main competitors? How do you compete against them?

We were one of the first companies to offer the type of training we do. In the last 11 years, established copywriters have since started marketing programs based on the experience and expertise. As far as competing ... we were the first and we are the most established. I think the support we offer our members is what makes us stand above the growing crowd. But, here's a secret. Competition is good in our industry. As soon as someone understands the tremendous opportunity copywriting offers ... and wants to become a copywriter ... They want to learn as much as possible.

How has your experience in running the business been different from what you expected?

More people management than I care for.

Is there anything you wish you had done differently?

No ... The business has grown organically. Even mistakes have been useful in helping us improve our products.

What have you done that has been very effective in helping to grow the business?

Hired the best people I can find ... incentivize them ... give them plenty of room to shine.

What advice would you give to somebody else who wanted to start a similar business?

Ready, Fire, Aim is the mantra we live by. My mentor, Michael Masterson, recently wrote a book on the topic. Don't wait until everything's perfect ... the stars are aligned just so. Test your idea as quickly and inexpensively as possible ... Because you aren't in business until you make your first sale.

About American Writers & Artists Institute

American Writers and Artists Institute (AWAI), www.awai.com, has been publishing direct-response copywriting and graphic design home-study programs since 1997. Their mission is to help people develop the critical skills to acquire financial security, independence and freedom. AWAI equips members with the tools and connections necessary to land clients, start working professionally, and earn money fast. And through their free DirectResponseJobs.com site, businesses can find and hire skilled AWAI members quickly and easily. For a complete list of programs and more information about AWAI, please visit the site or call (866) 879-2924.

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