

3 Steps to an "Unfair Advantage" as an Online Copywriter

By Brian Clark

Want to attract more clients as an online copywriter?

For most of you, that's a silly question. Of course you do.

And it all comes down to a few "unfair" advantages.

The first unfair advantage you have is that you can write. Most people can't, and that's why they need you.

Online, it's [content](#) that works when it comes to attracting targeted prospects. And it's persuasive [landing page](#) copy that leads to the sale, lead, or other business-oriented action.

You are uniquely qualified to market yourself with content and persuasive copy. The skills that make you in demand are the same skills you'll use to land clients.

In other words, you get to demonstrate your skills instead of just boasting about them, like most bad marketing does. Clients will think because it worked on them, it'll work *for* them.

So how do you develop an unfair advantage over your fellow online copywriters?

Here's a hint: it has nothing to do with writing. But it does have to do with other skills every great copywriter *must also have*.

Step 1: Dare to Be Different

One thing every copywriter needs to understand is how to develop and communicate a [unique selling proposition](#). A big part of your job is [differentiating](#) the client's offer in a unique and valuable way, right?

Shouldn't you do the same for your own business?

Maybe guys like Clayton Makepeace can position themselves as simply "copywriter" because, let's face it ... he's a well-established copy ninja. Clayton commands premium fees and likely turns away more business than he accepts.

If you're not at that point yet, a little unique positioning is exactly what you need. And if you're just starting out, here's your opportunity to start out right.

Ever since I began my entrepreneurial path back in 1998, I've been an initial "nobody" in a succession of fields filled with well-established players. Law, real estate, online education, software ... each time, I started from scratch competing against those who were already succeeding.

My success in each instance came because I focused intensely on providing a solution in a different way, and then effectively communicating and *demonstrating* that difference. And I did it each time with nothing more than the right *words*.

Dare to be different, and you'll be a player in a league of your own.

Step 2: Writing is a Feature, Not a Benefit

Another thing every copywriter must know is that [brains crave benefits](#). And yet, when it comes to marketing themselves, many freelance copywriters seem to focus only on talking about their writing skills, which like it or not, is a *feature* of your service, not the [desired benefit](#).

It's no secret that writing tends to be undervalued by many of the people looking to hire you.

Maybe it's because any literate person can put words on paper, so perhaps they think it's simply an hour or two of stringing some nouns and verbs together. What's so hard about that?

We writers know that's not true.

Good writing is hard. Great writing is even tougher.

The answer, however, is not to change how the client thinks because that rarely works. At least, not at the initial stage of the relationship.

The key is to start emphasizing the benefits clients are *really* after, not the *feature* that brings about the benefits. Because if a client could achieve his desired benefit without your writing, he would.

What are you *really* selling?

Step 3: Sell Solutions, Not Writing

It's time to face the hard truth ... no one wants to hire you.

If business owners and marketing executives could achieve their goals without you, they would ... in a heartbeat. No one wakes up in the morning and thinks, "Today, I think I'd like to spend money on a copywriter!"

But the fact is, they can't achieve their goals without your help. Again, content that attracts attention, and copy that converts prospects into customers and clients, is what works when it comes to online marketing.

The thing is, people *do* wake up in the morning from dreams about the things they really want – money, freedom, prestige, social status, market dominance ... the list goes on.

This is what you're really selling. Not writing, *dreams*.

Now, these particular dreams can only be achieved through marketing and sales results, right? So position yourself as the solution that can deliver those results.

When you dare to be different and realize that your writing skills are a means to the client's end, you also realize that your own marketing messages need to be reframed. Focus on the worldview (and dreams) of your ideal prospects, and your own dreams may come true as well.

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1 Response to "3 Steps to an "Unfair Advantage" as an Online Copywriter"

I appreciate the bulls-eye approach you took making me focus on three bottom line facts that could make or break my career. The tone is just right for getting your point across, particularly since this is a refresher and it required me to assess what I'm doing. Thank you!!

Travonda Green Thomas – over a year ago

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