

The Benefits of Being an AWAI Member

By Katie Yeakle

Yesterday I gave you my take on why becoming a copywriter is the best path to living *the writer's life*. (And, I should know ... I've seen it happen for AWAI members every day for the last 19 years!)

And, by choosing AWAI as your writing coach and partner, you're that much closer to fulfilling your dream of living *the writer's life*. That's because as an AWAI member, you're entitled to a long list of additional perks and benefits ... many of which you may not even realize you're eligible to receive.

So today I'm going to go through them so that you can take full advantage.

But first, meet Richard Armstrong.

Richard is one of the nation's leading freelance direct-mail copywriters. He's been living *the writer's life* for over 30 years now ... and loving every minute of it.



Katie Yeakle

Living *the writer's life* comes in many forms

Some people I talk with have this impression that to be a successful copywriter, you have to get up at the crack of dawn and start writing. Or they've heard tales of working 14 hours a day tied to their keyboards.

While it's true that some writers are "early to risers" and others like to work long hours, the good news is you don't have to do any of that to be successful.

Don't get me wrong — if you can do those things, you'll never lack for work or money.

But my recent interview with Richard Armstrong for the [Professional Writers' Alliance](#) reinforced what we've been saying for a long time now here at AWAI — *the writer's life* comes in many different forms.

How to earn fat five-figure project deals without working 70 hours a week

Richard Armstrong got his start in the mailroom as a summer college intern. He parlayed that experience into gigs with *Prevention*, *Men's Health*, *The Smithsonian*, *National Review*, and many other top publications. He's won the "Oscar of Direct Mail" twice, written three books, and has even acted in his own infomercials!

Richard puts a high value on long, leisurely lunches and lots of golf. He also happens to be one of the leading direct mail copywriters in the business, specializing in circulation promotion for magazines and newsletters. And he's one of the most down-to-earth, straight-shooting, and humorous guys you'll ever meet.

In my interview with Richard, he dissected a magalog he did a while back for American Cellars', *The Wine Lover's Handbook*. We got to sit with Richard in his office as he took us step by step from research to end result, explaining why he did things the way he did. It's easy to see why he commands as much as \$25,000 per project and is usually booked six months in advance.

Here are a few takeaways from my interview:

1. **Study the masters!** Copy winning controls by hand for sure. But dig into them much more than that. Study them. Really study them. Think about why the copywriter did what he did.
2. **There's nothing like *listening* to copywriters talk about their methods.** It's an intimate, one-on-one, in-depth conversation. Kind of like being able to grab a superstar at Bootcamp and pick their brain for an hour at the bar.
3. **Don't be afraid to do spec pieces,** even as your career gets rolling (the magalog project for American Cellars actually started as a "warm" spec. He had an idea for beating the control, and pitched it to the client). As a copywriter, you are paid for your ideas — but only if you use them!
4. **Get good at "stealing smart."** Richard's lead for the *Wine Lover's Handbook* actually came from John Caples' classic headline, "They laughed when I sat down at the piano ... " The more you read, study, analyze, and thoroughly understand great pieces of copy, the more you'll be able to weave elements of these into your own unique style.

Why NOW is a perfect time to be starting as a copywriter

One of the final questions I asked Richard was, "If you were entering copywriting today, what would you do?"

Without hesitation, he said, "The Internet. Email. It's a great time to be starting, like back when Sears started his catalog. We're right there now with the internet!"

Richard's niche has always been magalogs and circulation promotion for magazines and newsletters. But these days, he's even branching into infomercials.

Here's the thing: direct response copywriting is never going away. Businesses will always need to sell their products and services. Traditional formats like direct mail will remain, but the Internet opens up a whole "Wild West" environment for enterprising new copywriters. One area that's been popping up a lot in the news lately ...

Getting insider access to pros like Richard is just one of the many benefits available to you as an AWAI member. You get these benefits too:

• **Our history, connections, and standing in the industry.** You'll learn all there is to know about this huge and ever-growing industry ... where a single letter can produce millions of dollars in sales — and reward the copywriter who wrote it very handsomely ... from the men and women who are doing it every day.

You'll learn who all the players in the industry are ... who's looking for writers (practically everyone!) ... who pays top dollar ... and who the best companies to write for are.

The *Accelerated Program for Six-Figure Copywriting* is based on selling principles that have sold billions of dollars' worth of products and services. It's divided into two categories: "Core" elements every successful letter needs to have, and "Master" secrets you can use to ratchet up the effectiveness of any letter you sit down to write.

But besides cramming the program full of the most powerful copywriting techniques on earth, we also made sure the material was easy to learn and fun to do. Most important, though, we worked extra hard to create a program that anyone with even the most basic writing skills could succeed with.

• **AWAI's Advisory Board.** No matter what program you join, AWAI gives you step-by-step guidance that breaks down the entire process into small, easy-to-do steps. Our career programs are unique because they're designed and written by masters of the trade ... people who are living the life that you aspire to ... people whose livelihood depends on the very craft you will be learning.

AWAI's Advisory Board members rank as some of the world's best and highest-paid professionals. [Click here](#) to learn more about each of them.

• **Learn at your own pace.** Once an AWAI member, you gain access to myAWAI – a members-only website that gives you online, 24/7 access to the programs you've invested in. Are you working a full-time job and don't have much time? No problem. Just a few minutes each day, and before you know it, you'll be living *the writer's life*. Got plenty of time? Excellent. You could be up and running in a few weeks. It's up to you. Go as fast or as slow as you want. It doesn't matter if it's 2 a.m. or 10 p.m. – you'll have access to your training materials anywhere, anytime.

• **Got questions? We've got answers!** Our Member Services team is here to help you (M-F 8:30 a.m. – 5:30 p.m. ET). Call us up any time you have questions, concerns, or just want to let us know how great things are going for you!

• **Become part of the family.** Once an AWAI member, you'll also get special access to AWAI's Member Forum. This forum lets you "talk" with other members. Bounce ideas off one another, share your success stories, ask questions, give help, you name it – the forum is where you can share and connect with other like-minded folks.

• **Daily motivation and insights.** In addition to your daily issues of *The Writer's Life*, which are full of motivational articles, success stories from our members, tips and insights on writing and succeeding, and a WHOLE lot more ... you have full access to the over 1,500 articles archived on our website, www.awai.com. You name the topic — copywriting

techniques, writing for the web, writing for B2B or any of the lucrative niches available to you, building your business, achieving your goals, working at home, getting published, changing careers — you can find proven, useful advice in the AWAI archives.

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Access to clients looking to hire — NOW! As an AWAI member, you'll also get the opportunity to land your first paid assignment right away. Our job board, DirectResponseJobs.com, is your link to marketers looking to hire writers, designers, and researchers both on a project and full-time basis.

While AWAI isn't an agency, we make it a priority not only to prepare you for real-world work, but to help you get paying jobs. We created DirectResponseJobs.com to facilitate that process, to give you a way to connect directly with the many marketers eager to hire — and pay — you.

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\$10K Challenge. Another perk of being an AWAI member? AWAI's \$10K Challenge. You can participate at any time and there's no limit to how many times you can enter. Once you're a member, you'll be given all the details on how to enter and have YOUR chance to win \$10,000 in paid copywriting assignments over the next year! Past winners include Krista Jones, Joshua Boswell, Pat McCord, Pam Foster, and Roy Furr.

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AWAI programs are "alive." The world of copywriting is ever-changing. And as new technologies and mediums are developed and created, the demands for copy change, too. So we're continually updating our programs. For example, web copywriting is changing, *fast*. And every change we spot, we make sure to update our web copywriting program, *Copywriting 2.0*, by Nick Usborne.

Put simply, our programs are "living products" in that they grow and evolve at the same pace that technologies, markets, and techniques do. So you're never getting outdated information. With AWAI's programs, you'll always have the most cutting-edge information available right at your fingertips.

Plus, we're adding even more benefits every day. So keep tuned in to *The Writer's Life* so you never miss out!

I asked *Circle of Success* mentor, and professional writer Pam Foster to share her thoughts on being an AWAI member. Since joining AWAI, Pam has had incredible success in her writing career and she gives full credit to our programs:

"Since I became involved with AWAI in 2005, my life has changed completely for the better in three distinct ways."

1. *I learned new writing and marketing skills at a level that most copywriters don't have here in Maine and even across the country. And not only am I a stronger copywriter, I've become a marketing and Web consultant, offering services my clients truly appreciate and value.*
2. *I've met incredible people who have encouraged me and provided generous guidance along the way: the wonderful staff at AWAI; highly successful writers and mentors including Bob Bly, Paul Hollingshead, and others; and an important circle of fellow copywriters who are eager to keep learning and growing, just like me. They fuel my success!*
3. *Then there's the money. I finally discovered ways to make a GREAT, independent living and earn much more than I ever imagined. I grossed \$120,000 last year, and I'm just starting! I recently landed a fantastic job as a Content Director and Managing Editor, and I still can earn additional income as a freelance writer and eBook publisher on the side.*

"My life is much richer literally and figuratively as a member of AWAI!"

See you tomorrow!

If you'd like to comment on this issue or ask me any questions, please add it to the comment section below.

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6 Responses to "The Benefits of Being an AWAI Member"

In Email Copy Made Easy by Jay Whiten how do I land you as my first client. Next program on my list is web 2.0 by Nick but it seems I can't manage the full payment-no installments involved?

wycliff – over a year ago

Greetings Katie,

As the 'New Kid on the Block' I am stunned you do not Highlight the Crucible of all professional & personal accomplishment: Research. A thank-you to Sandy Ferguson for birthing the Internet Research Specialist. It is time for AWAI to birth two equally weighted platforms: Research & Writing. Your website AWAI represents the 'Arts side of the Coin'. You must equally present the 'Business side of the Coin' which is Research. AWAI's website presentation is Writing Only. Please invite the 'other side of the Coin' Research into you website format & presentation. Katie, by doing this you will double your community membership.

New Friends, Morningstar

Morningstar – over a year ago

Hi Katie, I was AWAI member since 11/18/2014.

This career is so new to me.Sometimes I am struggled and I need some support from you or Rebecca.

I sent many emails to you and to Rebecca, but since now, I never get any reply.

I do not know whether you are too busy or my emails never get to your attentions.

This is the new year, I hope I can get better support from AWAI experts Happy New Year to you and to All jennie

jennie – over a year ago

wycliff - we always welcome spec submissions. Best to send to copysubmission@awaionline.com. More details can be found at www.awaionline.com/10k Morningstar - No argument here. We stress the value of good research in all our programs.

Jennie - Not sure where your emails are going, but Rebecca and I answer all that come to us. Best addresses for us are AskKatie@awaionline.com and AskRebecca@awaionline.com. And, of course, our fantastic Member Services team is always available to help you in any way they can.

Guest (Katie Yeakle) – over a year ago

Hi Katie,

I am new to copywriting. I just want to understand what you mean by "do spec pieces"?

Thanks

Mohsin.

Mohsin – over a year ago

Sunrise our moments whence the day is staid

Till hopefully what the sunset bent shan't ever waive

Save the wave without which particles can't count.

Guest (Chris Morris) – over a year ago

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American Writers & Artists Institute

220 George Bush Blvd, Suite D

Delray Beach, FL 33444

(561) 278-5557 or (866) 879-2924