

Should You Hire a Virtual Assistant for Your Copywriting Business?

By Steve Slaunwhite



One of the things I often struggle with is what I call the last mile on a B2B copywriting project. A perfect example happened just a couple of days ago ...

I was writing a website. I was soaring through getting this website done and I really liked the way the writing was going. I'd finished 95% of the work. But that last 5% ... is a time-consuming drag.

I have to go through it and check for errors and typos. I have to see if it makes sense because I've been so close to the project for so long. I wonder if what I'm saying make sense to the reader.

I'll often take an hour or two out of my day just getting that last 5% done ...

Well, that's how I used to do it.

But now when I'm at that last bit, I send it to my VA or Virtual Assistant.

I simply give her two instructions. I say, "Could you read through it to make sure that it makes sense to you as the reader, and that there's nothing in there that's confusing?"

And I also have her check for spelling errors and typos. Because as you know, when you write something, you are the worst person to do the proofreading. You're just too close to it. And she usually picks up errors I missed.

That saves me anywhere from a half hour to two hours, depending on the project.

Now, why do I bring this up?

It's because there is a real benefit to having a VA. My VA saves me hours each month, hours I can use in any way I want. I can do more client work or I can simply have more personal time.

I'm going to give you some tips on how to find and use a Virtual Assistant and also some criteria you should follow to help you decide whether or not it makes sense for you at this stage in your business.

Now, when I started my business many years ago in the 1990s, I did everything myself. I think most people who start their copywriting business do everything themselves.

You do all your own marketing. You do your own prospecting. You do your own bookkeeping. I had to do everything myself because when I started, I didn't have any money to invest in getting extra help.

And I suspect many freelance copywriters who are just starting in their business are in the same boat.

But there is a point where doing everything yourself doesn't make sense. And I have to admit I waited too long before I realized that I should be looking at hiring an assistant or maybe even a couple of assistants.

But let's take a look at what a Virtual Assistant may be able to do for your business:

- **Research**
- **Editing and proofreading**
- **Bookkeeping**
- **Website updating**
- **Project management**
- **Managing your marketing**
- **Dealing with inquiries**
- **Following up on leads**
- **Graphic design**
- **Social media updates**

That's just a partial list. Now, what are the benefits of using a Virtual Assistant in your B2B copywriting business?

More Time

Well, the main benefit is that you're buying time. When you hire a Virtual Assistant, you are buying the time it takes for you to proofread your copy before you send it to the client.

And believe me, as your business grows, if you can get a good Virtual Assistant to handle the bookkeeping, proofreading, marketing, and administrative stuff, you can buy yourself a lot of extra time.

Now, what can you do with that extra time?

Well, that can be just more personal time for you. But here's where it becomes profitable to use a Virtual Assistant. You can use that time to do more client projects.

Let's say you're able to spend reasonably about 25 to 30 hours a week working on client projects. That's a lot because you need the rest of your time to manage and run other aspects of your business.

If you can get a good Virtual Assistant to save you maybe five hours a week, you can spend the extra five hours a week on more client projects.

By spending more time on client projects, you're making more money.

Let's say your fees turn out to be an average of \$100 an hour. Then you're potentially making an extra \$500 a week.

Now, I know what you might be thinking. Hey, I also have to pay the Virtual Assistant. But Virtual Assistants usually charge much less than you charge clients.

Depending on how you price yourself, you are probably making on average of \$100-plus an hour while working on good copywriting projects for B2B companies.

Most Virtual Assistants don't charge that much. Many of them charge by the hour and the fees can range anywhere from the low end of \$25 an hour to sometimes \$50 or even \$60 an hour for really advanced skills like bookkeeping.

But even at that rate, you are still charging more and making more working on clients. So if you hire a Virtual Assistant to save you 10 or 20 hours a month and you spend that time doing extra client work, well, you've increased your income.

But there are a couple of other reasons why hiring a Virtual Assistant makes sense, at least from my experience ...

Simplify Your Business

When you're starting your business, you have to do everything, and you've got to be good at everything. Your social media and your marketing, your prospecting and bookkeeping and record-keeping and administration.

But if you have a Virtual Assistant who can handle a lot of that nitty-gritty stuff, it makes your business life much simpler.

Improve Your Image as a Successful Professional

When a client finds out you have an assistant, that just makes you look more successful. That's one of the spin-off benefits of having a Virtual Assistant.

For many years, I was resistant to the idea of hiring a Virtual Assistant. A mentor of mine, Bob Bly, many years ago recommended that I get a Virtual Assistant.

Yet, I resisted. I was so used to doing everything myself. But once I got a Virtual Assistant, I never looked back.

Now, How Do You Find a Good Virtual Assistant?

Well, let me give you some tips because I've been through a few Virtual Assistants. I've made the wrong decision a couple of times.

#1. Make a List of All the Tasks You'd Like to Outsource

Be very specific as to exactly what you want done because you can use this as your criteria to find a good Virtual Assistant.

That may be doing your books, but you need to be more specific than that. How do you want your books done? Do you simply want an accurate record of expenses and invoices? Or do you want a balance sheet and proper income statement? Do you want it done in FreshBooks or in QuickBooks?

If you need research, what kind of research do you want done? Be very specific. Is it research for white papers?

#2. Find a VA Who Understands Copywriting as a Business

Ideally, you want a Virtual Assistant who understands the copywriting business so they know what they're doing. You don't want to get into a situation where you need to train a Virtual Assistant.

Obviously, you need to brief them and they need to learn your business. But you don't want to train them in a skill. So you want to be very specific as to what you want done so you can find a VA who already has those skills or has experience in that area.

Believe me, it will make your life a lot easier if you do that.

#3. Work with a Solo Professional

If you do some searching on the internet for Virtual Assistants, you'll find that there are two categories. One category is Virtual Assistant firms that have several different types of assistants working with them, and the other is solo professionals.

I haven't had a good experience with Virtual Assistant firms because I find that they usually farm the work out to people I don't even know. And it just doesn't work out well for me.

I've had my best experiences with Virtual Assistants who are dedicated solo professionals. They're in their own business just like you. They're very good at what they do. They're at it full time. If you find someone like that, it's golden.

I recommend going with the solo professional rather than any type of firm.

Do a Live Interview

Before hiring a Virtual Assistant, you want to talk to them personally in a live interview. The interview may be on the phone because they may be in a different city.

Have a conversation with them. Ask them how long they've been in the business. Ask them what they do for other clients. Ask them what they're really good at. Ask them what they don't do.

There might be some things they just don't do. I know one VA who doesn't do anything sales related. She doesn't follow up on prospecting calls and things like that.

But have a long conversation and get to know them. You want a good fit with what they do, their skill sets, and the services they provide you.

But you also want a good fit with their personality because they're going to be working rather intimately with your business. And you want to make sure you get along well with them.

Talk to Their Clients

In addition to a live interview, I recommend you ask the VA if they can give you a couple of client references you can call.

Now sometimes, a VA is unable to do that. Their clients may be confidential or they just may not feel comfortable with someone talking to their clients for a variety of good reasons. They're not trying to hide anything.

So you may not be able to do that, but at least ask the question. Simply say, "Would you mind if I got a client reference from you that I can call to get a client's perspective on your work?" and see what they say.

If you can talk to an actual client and get their perspective on what it's like to work with that particular VA, that's a bonus.

Ask About Future Availability

Here's a very important question that I've missed a couple of times. Ask about their future availability and schedule. You want to know if they are going on maternity leave anytime soon or are they retiring next year. Are they going on an extended vacation or are they starting a new business in the fall?

It takes two or three months to really get up to speed with a Virtual Assistant and for them to really learn your business and how best they can help. It takes that long for you to get clicking with each other.

What you don't want is to hire a Virtual Assistant and then find out six months later that they're on a European trip of a lifetime for three months. And they won't be able to help with your business.

Where Do You Find a Virtual Assistant?

Of course, you can just Google "Virtual Assistant" and perhaps also add some search terms for your industry. You might add copywriting or your local city. That's one way to start.

But let me give you some more suggestions ...

First of all, avoid those cheap job sites you find online where everybody bids on projects. I don't recommend starting there because you want to work with a professional who's going to really help you in your business. You don't want to work with some fly-by-night person.

I've had a lot of luck finding Virtual Assistants through professional associations.

In Canada, there's the [Canadian Association of Virtual Assistants](#). In the United States, there's [vanetworking.com](#). There's also the [International Virtual Assistants Association](#).

If you Google "Virtual Assistant associations," you'll find more VA associations. Many of these association websites will have a matchmaking tool where you can type in your criteria and they'll match you up with Virtual Assistants you may be interested in talking to.

When Should You Consider Hiring a Virtual Assistant?

If you're just starting out in your business and you're not making any money yet, then it really doesn't make sense to have a Virtual Assistant. You're going to have to do your own books and your own marketing because you really can't afford it. And even if you have some money to invest, you want to invest it in getting clients, not in a VA doing your books.

But once you start to get clients, there is a point where it makes sense to start looking for a Virtual Assistant.

That point is when you have so much client work that other parts of your business are suffering. Your bookkeeping is falling behind. And your marketing to build your business is falling behind. And your website is falling behind. And you're no longer able to be active on social media and that's falling behind.

At that point, then it makes sense to get a Virtual Assistant. That will buy you time to take on more clients and make more money. It will also make things less stressful for you because other parts of your business are not falling behind. You have a Virtual Assistant covering that.

You have a more efficient business. Frankly, it makes your business more enjoyable. You can spend more time doing the things you want to do and less time doing the things you don't want to do.

This article, [Should You Hire a Virtual Assistant?](#), was originally published by [B2B Writing Success](#).

Published: May 31, 2018

Related Content:

- [Copywriting Makeovers: Tips and Tricks](#)
- [How to Pitch Articles to B2B Trade Publications](#)
- [When Should You Charge for B2B Copywriting Revisions?](#)
- [Writing Radio Commercials for Fun and Money \(Part 1\)](#)
- More by [Steve Slaunwhite](#)
- More from [B2B Writing Success](#)

1 Response to "Should You Hire a Virtual Assistant for Your Copywriting Business?"

Wonderful collection of information. I really like it. It will be very helpful for me. Thanks for sharing such insights.

Guest (John Tyle) – over a year ago

Copyright © American Writers & Artists Institute(www.awai.com)

American Writers & Artists Institute

220 George Bush Blvd, Suite D

Delray Beach, FL 33444

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