

How to Build Wealth as an "Alt-Copywriter"

By Ben Settle



Not long ago, I got an SOS email from a copywriter who was in the proverbial "catch 22" with his client.

The "too long; didn't read" version is this:

1. He secured a copywriting job for a company that was emailing their list maybe twice per month (if that often).
2. After he learned my email methodology (which involves using personality, plain text to make it look more personal and not commercial at a glance, and mailing once per day — minimum) he convinced his boss to test mailing three times per week.
3. Predictably, sales almost doubled after that, while creating a much stronger bond with the list he writes to — in fact, he said there were people who had been on the list for almost a year who suddenly started signing up for the service they sold.
4. The company hired a new Marketing Director, who not only wanted to go back to fewer emails, but also wanted him to go back to writing boring, unoriginal, HTML (i.e., obvious commercial at a glance, easy to ignore) emails like all their competition uses.
5. Not wanting to rock the boat (and lose his job), this copywriter did an A/B test — testing what had doubled sales vs. what the new Marketing Director insisted on using, with the boring way losing handily.

6. Despite these results, his company still insists on doing the safe, boring emails, and he wanted to know if there was a way to convince his boss to go back to the way that was doubling sales?

My advice to him?

"Unfortunately, you can't fix stupid. My advice: warn your boss (via email, in writing, to cover yourself, and get his acknowledgement for when they inevitably blame you) sales will drop based on current results. They will probably still blame you anyway, but at least you have something to back up your case to use."

More:

I also told him it's time to hang up his freelance and employee copywriter hat, and don the hat of what I call:

"The Alt-Copywriter"

What is an Alt-Copywriter?

An Alt-Copywriter is a copywriter who doesn't rely on clients. Unlike strict freelance copywriters or corporate copywriters employed by a company, Alt-Copywriters might still do client work on the side for extra money or because they simply enjoy the variety of writing for multiple products. But, they don't need those clients or a job. And the reason they don't need them is because they have their own product lines that more than make enough to live on. And, in many cases, those income streams dwarf what they make working for anyone else.

Some of the benefits of being an Alt-Copywriter include:

- **You can curate the clients you want to work with** — not having to take anything you can get just to pay the bills, because you have your own product line you are your own client for
- **You can charge a lot more** — since you don't need a client or company's fee or salary, you will automatically conduct yourself in a "take it or leave it" way that is like catnip to anyone you wish to persuade about anything in life
- **You won't have to put up with any disrespect, flack, or payment shenanigans** — nor will you ever worry about being fired or let go, having your own income streams to fall back on
- **You can build wealth and not just an income** — the old adage, "you can't get rich working for anyone else" is 100% true, but as an Alt-Copywriter you can grow your income as big as you want
- **You have your own list(s) to mail** — which means, not only can you be a client (for yourself or hire your own writers), but there are many other opportunities: such as renting your mailing list, doing joint ventures, or (like the late, great Gene Schwartz did) work for access to your client's mailing list names instead of working for a fee

- **You can be as eccentric, weird, goofy, obnoxious, or quirky as you want** — and you will very likely find your personality's unique peculiarities work for you, when they may have worked against you as a mere freelancer or employee
- **Your confidence levels will soar higher than any other traditional copywriter you know** — because, again, you don't need anyone's fee, paycheck, or job, it's all optional and done at your pleasure, nobody else's
- **Your ability to secure clients will skyrocket** — not only because of the charisma and confidence you'll naturally have from not needing client work, but also because you will have already proven you can write copy that converts (i.e., for your own product line)

Those are just a handful of the advantages Alt-Copywriters have over traditional freelance copywriters or employees.

And so, here's the exact four-step game plan I gave the guy above to become one:

Step One: Starting today, make the decision to start your own Alt-Copywriting business — it all begins with a simple decision to do it, and then stick with it

Step Two: Map out a business plan — take a single sheet of paper, write down what market you want to sell to, what product you want to sell, and what products you will sell to the buyers of the first product

Step 3: Dedicate two hours per day to your new Alt-Copywriter venture — if you are short on time, simply wake up an hour earlier and go to bed an hour later

Step 4: During these two hours work exclusively on two things: (1) finding or creating a product to sell and (2) building an email list that you mail each day selling that product

Do these four steps and you will officially be an Alt-Copywriter.

After that, the sky will be the limit as far as how much money you want to make.

And, I can tell you from firsthand experience (as someone who used to be a freelance copywriter and made the switch), life gets a lot more fun, interesting, and exciting when you don't have to rely on a client or boss. When you control your time and schedule. And, when you can take a vacation with your family on a whim, donate copious amounts of money to a cause you believe in, or simply have the peace of mind and security of having more than enough money in the bank to live on if the economy takes a bizarre turn the wrong way.

This is what happens when you become a successful Alt-Copywriter.

And, all it takes is a decision to do it and then work towards it each day.

If you need help with the ins and outs of how to set such a business up, check out my [10-Minute Workday program](#) — which is specifically designed for writers and copywriters who want this kind of lifestyle.

Do you have any questions about how to get started with a clientless business? Share with us in the comments below.

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