

barefootWriter

**"This One Habit
Transformed My Life"**

**One-Day Results: Use
These 10 Steps to Get
More YouTube Views**

**How Coworking Solves
Most of Your Pressing
Freelancing Problems**

Barefoot Writer Cindy Youngblood inside the cockpit of the Beechjet simulator at SIMCOM Aviation Training Center in Orlando, Florida

PLUS: "Unschedule" Your Way to Writing Success with Plenty of Playtime • Predictable Writing Income... Right Now! • Flipboard: The Avid Reader's Answer to Easy-to-Get, Personalized Content • What to Do When There's Nothing to Do • 3 Ways to Win \$100

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March 2017

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Building from the Ground Up

That's me in the photo above, taken just a few weeks ago. I'm standing in the window of my future office — the realization of a goal my husband and I made ten years ago when we first bought our house with the intention to expand.

Obviously, it didn't happen right away. Not only did we have to wait until we had the means to renovate, we also needed to figure out what we really wanted. After that came months of drawing and revising plans, securing permits, getting quotes on materials, and laying the foundation.

But now? *It's happening.* And it's better than I ever dreamed it would be, because we're also adding multiple other rooms — an addition that's about five times larger than we initially planned.

You can bet I'm beside myself with excitement.

Jeff Bullas, our Featured Interviewee for the month, followed a similar path as a writer. He began as an amateur blogger. Yet after just a few years of putting his name out there, he became one of the most recognizable social media influencers in the world. Best of all? He built it from the ground up.

A lot of writers are hesitant to start from scratch like that. With no experience, no portfolio, and no contacts, it's easy to think you're eyeing an impossible task. (I was in that same boat when I launched my own Barefoot Writing career.)

But if you do the *Deep Work* Jeff mentions in his interview, it won't take long for an avalanche of paid projects to land in front of you. That's what happened for me and hundreds of other Barefoot Writers I know.

So don't be afraid to start at the bottom and build. Let this issue inspire you. Not only will you read about how Jeff achieved financial security through entrepreneurship, you'll also find out how a writing habit you probably already have can amplify your ability to land clients and earn higher fees. And that's just the beginning...

To your writing success,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mindy".

Mindy McHorse
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challenge question: What are your favorite things about your office/workspace? What makes it most productive?



Mandy Marksteiner ("One Day Results: Use These Ten Steps to Get More YouTube Views") is a content marketer who specializes in video scripts, emails, case studies, and articles.

"I work in a coworking space called 'projectY Los Alamos.' It helps me stay productive because I get to see other people. Also, it gives me privacy as well as a professional environment in which to give classes and have meetings."

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Megan Tyson King ("How Coworking Can Solve Most of Your Pressing Freelancing Problems") dove from a cubicle into *the writer's life* seven years ago and hasn't looked back. In that time, she has focused on writing for heart-centered clients in the cause marketing and travel industries. Megan is based in Washington D.C., and when she's not writing, she's leading workshops that help people step into a bolder, more adventurous version of their lives. She is the co-author of AWAI's *Copywriting for a Cause*.



"My favorite thing about my home office is that it's my little nook of visual inspiration. I have a wall decal over the door that reads 'Do something amazing,' a vision board (which includes two goals that came into fruition after I pasted them up there), and a collage with motivational quotes and pictures of people I admire. In this space, the productivity magic happens when I gaze out the window and let ideas flow while I tap away on my keyboard."



Sheldon Gladstein ("Flipboard: The Avid Reader's Answer to Easy-to-Get, Personalized Content") is on a mission to prove that content does not have to be doze-worthy to be effective. Whether with articles, case studies, white papers or more, he gets a real kick out of writing material that makes you think, enjoy, laugh, share, and take action. No dozing allowed!

"I love having a window to look out of at my workspace. Watching the clouds roll by and the birds fly every few minutes helps my thoughts break free and soar."

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Barefoot Writers Come From All Walks Of Life ...

Barefoot Living with Early Retirement and International Travel

Margot Howard got to do what a lot of people dream of doing when a spouse or partner retires: She joined her husband in staying home. But because of writing, she never had to forego any needed income. Now she enjoys all the flexibility and freedom she could want, balanced with interesting client projects. Find out how she made this happen and read about the "problem" she faced early on in her career.

What was your background before you started freelancing?

I worked in corporate/B2B sales for 28 years. I left because my husband, Wade, was retiring. I wasn't of retirement age and wanted to be able to enjoy his retirement with him.

What kinds of projects do you focus on?

B2B web content such as website copy, blog posts, articles, case studies, white papers, and e-books.

How did you get your very first freelance writing client?

I was very fortunate. A writer friend of mine decided that she didn't want to write anymore. She received a referral from a happy former client who



During their lengthy tour of Nova Scotia last summer, Margot and her husband visited the Glenora Distillery, located on Cape Breton Island

needed a website copy rewrite. She referred them to me. I completed the website rewrite and have been writing articles for their blog ever since.

Can you recall an *a-ha moment* when you knew that you had "made it" as a freelancer?

Yes. It was just before Bootcamp 2016. I negotiated an ongoing contract with a client. This put me over the minimum monetary threshold I needed to hit to pay bills and live my life. At that point, I was looking at ways to take my business to the next level... a great problem!

Are you working on any fun or interesting projects right now?

Yes I am. I am in the process of writing my first e-book for a client in my niche. I'm very excited to have this experience!

For fun: What did you want to be when you grew up?

I went to school to become a registered dietitian and practiced for five years after I graduated.

FACT FILE

Margot Howard

Previous Job: Corporate/B2B Sales

Current Writing Interest: B2B web content

Best Part of Barefoot Living: Flexibility and portability

Top Advice: Select a niche related to your background and have at least one accountability partner or group



Here's Margot kayaking in Aspy Bay near the northern tip of Cape Breton Island, Nova Scotia

What about the freelance lifestyle do you appreciate most?

I'd have to say that my favorite things about the freelance lifestyle are the flexibility and the portability. I'm able to work the days and times I choose. This allows me to spend more time with my husband when we are at home.

We also are able to travel for weeks at a time. I try my best to get ahead on my work when we are going to be traveling and then work a little at a time while we are away. As long as I have my laptop, travel printer, and an internet connection, I'm good to go! Because of this flexibility and portability, we were able to travel around Nova Scotia for 17 days last summer. It was an amazing trip! We're planning a visit to England this year.

We want to hear your story! Tell us about how being a Barefoot Writer has changed your life — and the most important tip you have for those just starting out.

Email: MyStory@thebarefootwriter.com

From High-Tech to High Satisfaction: How Venkat Raman Adapted to The Writer's Life

A lot of Barefoot Writers come into this world with a goldmine of past job experiences. That was the case for Venkat Raman, who's intelligently spent the last several years building the writer's life of his dreams while leveraging the knowledge and skills he got from his first career. Read on to discover what he finds most challenging about writing, and why it's worth every learning curve...

What drew you to *Barefoot Writing*?

I was a software engineer for over 30 years before I took up *Barefoot Writing*. I was an employee in corporate America, and I was ready for a change. But my decision to turn to writing came slowly.

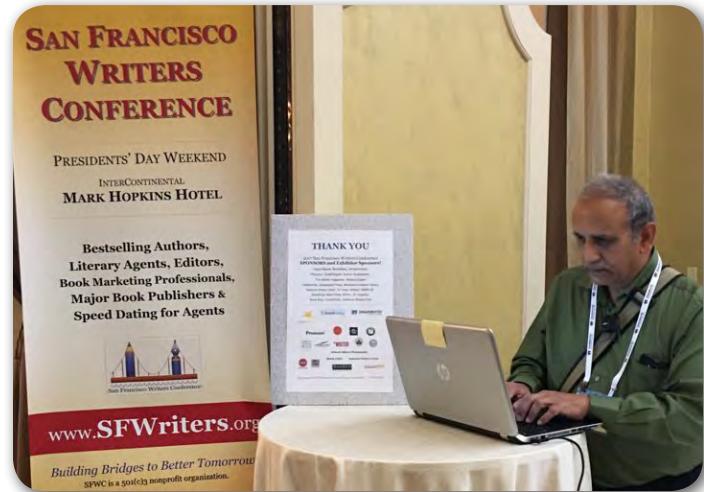
After getting laid off in 2003, I dabbled in freelance web development for a while before deciding that I would try writing as a career — I had always enjoyed writing and had written many technical documents. I finally subscribed to *Writer's Digest*, and that's when things suddenly fell into place.

As soon as my membership for *Writer's Digest* started in 2013, AWAI reached out to me. The very first promotion I received was from Mindy McHorse for a subscription to *Barefoot Writer*. Mindy's words resonated with me so well that I signed on immediately. I must add that the one feature of the promotion that won me over was the money-back guarantee — I had nothing to lose!

The rest is history. I joined the *Circle of Success* program in November 2013, and I have never looked back.

What kind of writing do you do? For whom?

I focus on B2B copywriting, specifically for the Content Marketing market in the software industry. As a software engineer, I had written many documents, mostly capturing design concepts



An internet connection is all it takes for Venkat to stay abreast of work even as he volunteers at the San Francisco Writers Conference

and describing architectural details of software modules. So, now I naturally focus on articles, white papers, and case studies. I currently have a software client in the hospitality industry, and I am actively pursuing additional clients. My ideal clients would be medium to large software producers in the B2B sector.

Tell me about any big success stories you've had.

The biggest success story is finding my first client. Networking outside copywriting circles led to a referral that resulted in my first project coming through. While I didn't have domain knowledge in the hospitality industry, an urgent need for a copywriter for a major website revamping project landed me the gig. My attention to stringent timelines and adherence to deadlines without fail in the month-long project, combined with producing copy that met their expectations, made the client happy. They proposed ongoing work, and we entered into a retainer agreement.

What was your secret behind that big success story?

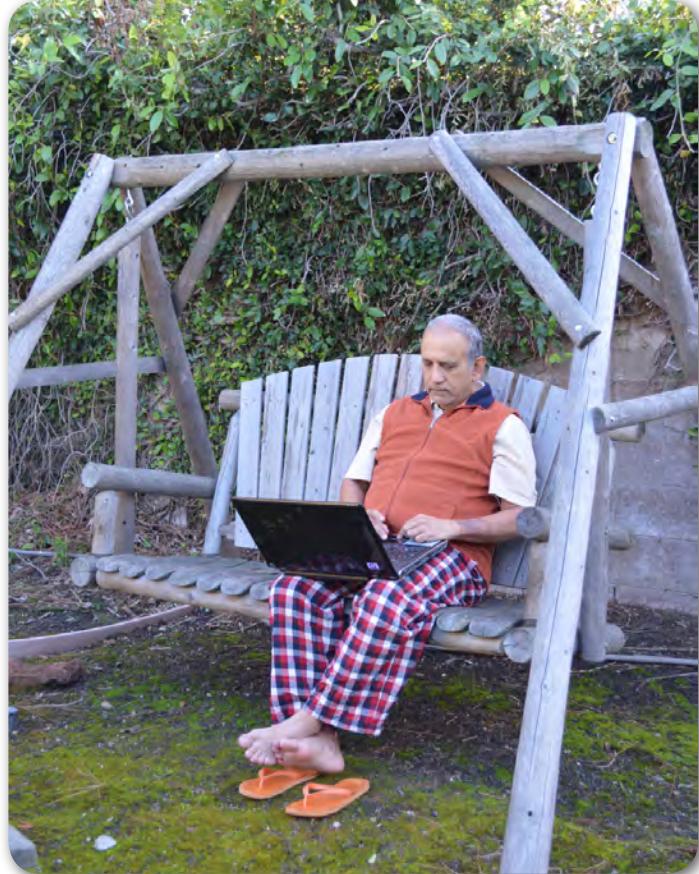
Many factors aligned well to make my success story real. My networking generated the referral. Though this was my first negotiation, podcasts by Steve Slaunwhite on AWAI's *B2B Writing Success* website gave me valuable tips to pitch and win professional rates for my contract. Being a newbie to the hospitality domain, I relied on quick learning and proactive communication to come up to speed and land ongoing work.

Have you faced any challenges as a freelancer?

The biggest challenge to success with freelancing is self-discipline. Also, I am still working on finding more clients. I need to find that sweet spot of keeping busy with the right mix of paid and unpaid projects to increase earnings while contributing to volunteer projects. AWAI has excellent resources offering techniques for achieving this balance. It is a bigger challenge than I had imagined.

How do you measure your own success?

As I am still ramping up my freelance business, my measure of success is year-over-year increase in my earnings through copywriting. My goal is to



Venkat takes advantage of gorgeous weather by doing his writing work from his backyard

FACT FILE

Venkat Raman

Previous Job: Software Engineer, Web Developer

Current Writing Interest: B2B Content Marketing — Articles, White Papers, Case Studies

Best Part of Barefoot Living: Control of one's own projects and schedule and the world's best commute

Top Advice: Keep an open mind, never ignore any path to success. And take action.

double my 2016 earnings in 2017. However, in the long run, I would equate my success to the number of people for whom I have made a positive difference through my writing.

What's your favorite book or movie about writing or writers?

Stephen King's *On Writing* is my choice. As much as it is a study on the craft of writing, it also offers a memoir of the craftsman. It's packed with tips for better writing — illustrated with examples — that will transform anyone into a great writer. I just came across *Sin and Syntax* by Constance Hale, another book dedicated to powerful writing techniques. Ask me again in a couple of months — we'll see if my answer changes! ■

..... interview with a barefoot writer



“The reality is you can pick yourself. You don’t need to beg permission; you don’t need to beg the gatekeepers, the media, the publishers of the world, you just pick yourself and go.”

— Jeff Bullas, Marketing Blogger, Best Selling Author and Social Media Influencer

By Mindy McHorse

It’s always a treat to connect with one of social media’s most prominent players, especially when that person is from Australia (I named two of my dogs Sydney and Adelaide — a testament to my adoration of the world Down Under).

But when that person is Jeff Bullas, it’s an absolute honor. Because not only does Jeff play hard and rank high in the world of social media and content marketing, he’s also a completely self-made success story.

As a blogger, author, marketer, and speaker, Jeff encompasses the best type of entrepreneurial spirit: motivated, inspiring, and a life-long learner. It shows — just this year, *Forbes* named him as one of the Top 20 Influencers of CMOs, and in 2012 *Forbes* ranked him as number 14 in their list of Top 50 Social Media Power Influencers. Onalytica ranked him number one as a global Digital Marketing Influencer, and according to

Appinions, he was the number one Content Marketing Influencer in 2015. (That’s really just the tip of the iceberg for his many breakout titles.) Jeff also has published with *The New York Times* and on *Huffington Post*, hit several bestselling lists on Amazon, and averages over five million page views on his blog per year.

Born in Adelaide, Jeff now calls Sydney home. We connected over Skype while it was still morning for him, a time when he said cockatoos and pink galahs fly past his window as they start their day. I was blown away by Jeff’s enthusiasm about space for new voices in the busy online world, especially if they follow a few basic strategies (which he outlines). It’s advice you’ll want to take if you’re serious about getting your writing career noticed this year. And the best news? You don’t have to be a terrific writer to get noticed — just a few hours each day can get the ball rolling. Read on to discover how...

Let's cut right to the chase — how did you become such a power blogger?

It started in between jobs, I suppose, so I was unemployed. I'd just read a book by David Meerman Scott called *The New Rules of Marketing and PR*. It talked about the power of content to attract an audience, and I thought, "Wow, that's really cool to actually attract an audience by creating great content online." I'd been doing a lot of selling and marketing in the digital technology industry. I originally was a teacher for six years, but then got into the technology industry and did a lot of psy opps in marketing.



Jeff's home office in Sydney, Australia

Then I read Tim Ferriss' *4-Hour Workweek*, which sort of inspired me to create a lifestyle around whatever happened if I did something online. That was part of the inspiration, and then finally there was a blog post from Hubspot, which mentioned that if you have an inkling of what you want to start a business on or write about, start a blog.

I very tentatively, with a bit of help, started a blog for \$10 using my own name. Luckily, I had a strange name instead of Jim Clark or John Smith, so I've got my personal brand name as a domain, which was great.

I started writing. I wrote quite poorly, but I've never done a writing course. Yes, I've gone to school, and I've done a degree, but I never saw myself as a writer. I discovered that I actually loved the crafting of words, the rambling of words, and then people seemed to enjoy what I wrote. I just wrote about things that fascinated me, and that seemed to interest other people.

Readers noticed, and SocialMedia Examiner included me on their list as one of the top social media blogs after one of my readers nominated me. Then it started to roll. I was invited to speak in Italy and New Zealand, and I got paid for it, so I was like, "Okay, there's something going on here."

That's how I got into it. I discovered that I love writing by accident, not by any grand purpose or grand plan. That passion project actually turned into a serious six-figure business. That's the reality of a passionate purpose, which sometimes is a journey of discovery where you find things along the way.

That really busts a lot of the myths our readers struggle with like, "You have to be born a superior writer if you're going to excel." Or, "You need to have gone to college to study writing." It's nice to hear a successful writer like you say, "Not really. You can take a different avenue."

Exactly. There are a lot of misconceptions about, say, waiting to write a big blockbuster or for a publisher to choose you. The reality is you can pick yourself. You don't need to beg permission; you don't need to beg the gatekeepers, the media, the publishers of the world. You just pick yourself and go. That's the real power of the social web now.

That's what excited me, and that's why I write about social media because it's democratized marketing, it's democratized publishing. Guess what? Those are the two most powerful things you need to do if you want to make money through writing or to write a book. That's it.

Had you always wanted to be a writer? I know you said you didn't pursue it professionally.

Not at all. It wasn't even on the radar. Today, if I don't write during the day, I feel like I haven't had a good day. Generally, I get up about 5:30 a.m. and write from about 6 a.m. to 9 a.m. Then I do the business and marketing, product development, and collaboration and joint venture projects during the day.

I devote basically two to three hours a day to actual writing. If you do that, you can write quite a good-sized book in just a few months. That was the habit I followed when I started the blog, too. I got up at 4:30 a.m. for four years and wrote from about 5:00 or 5:30 a.m. through until 9:00 a.m., and published my blog around 8:30 a.m. to 9:00 a.m. I did that religiously, essentially, for four years while I had a day job. The world is certainly showing up thanks to that deep work.

The Cal Newport kind?

Exactly. I'd read the great book by Cal Newport called *Deep Work*. The book is about the art of not just doing "busyness," like emails and other normal things that we do in business. He says you've got to do deep work and actually build something of consequence that will leave a legacy and create something that's worth sharing with the world. We can have shallow work, or we can have deep work. For me, devoting that time every day to doing deep work where I research, create, and then publish is incredibly empowering for me. When I do that at the start of every day, I feel like I've actually achieved something. It was a revelation to me to discover all these things by just starting and creating.

You mentioned that you've traveled to the U.S., you spoke in Italy, and you network with people around the world through your blog and through social media topics. Do you notice any different cultural strategies regarding social media?

I try and act as a global citizen. I see myself as such, but the differences in cultures can be significant. I've spoken in Turkey, I've spoken in Norway, I've spoken in different places. Some places are much more formal in their writing. English as a second language is a barrier because, as you know, essentially English is the business language of the world. Those different people who actually have English as a second language, it's harder for them, and I get that.



Jeff is a popular international speaker and has presented at conferences in Italy, Turkey, Kuwait, the United States, India, Australia, New Zealand, and (shown here) in Finland

I've spoken in India quite a few times, and noticed that instructors teach English much more formally in countries like India that have English as an active second language. Consequently, although the type of writing that most of us seem to enjoy now is casual writing or conversational writing, that's much more embraced on the Web. So, the cultural differences quite often stem from language.

Interesting.

Also, I think what I love about the American culture, what I greatly love about it, is the entrepreneurial spirit and the belief that you can achieve anything as long as you have the freedom to do that. I'm always inspired when I spend time in the

U.S.A., just to join the creative entrepreneurial spirit of the Americans.

Whereas in Australia, there are cultural differences. Americans are much happier to self-promote; in Australia people aren't. If you do self-promotion, you are seen as a little bit of, really, a guy who is not that good or a woman who is not that good. You're seen as being superficial, and people wonder why you're bragging about yourself. We have the *tall poppy syndrome* in Australia, and that exists in countries like New Zealand, as well.

[Editor's note: *Tall poppy syndrome* is Australian slang for the tendency to discredit or disparage

people who've achieved notable wealth or are highly successful.]

Self-promotion in Australia is not embraced, it's shied away from. I think Australians suffer from being unwilling to share their success with the world; however, the reality is that if you don't promote yourself, who's going to do it for you? Sometimes you need shameless self-promotion, and the Americans do that very well.

[Laughter] We do like to toot our own horns.

I've stolen that idea, that cultural aspect, and I've made it my own. I'm much happier sharing my successes than I ever was, because I realized that to get your message out as a writer, or as anything, you've got to understand marketing. I think that's one of the biggest challenges as content providers — many see marketing as this superficial activity that creative people don't touch — it's just gloss. Writers need to get past that, I believe, if they actually want to reach the world.

We've seen that with people who've had great talent, but flopped because they don't want to put their names out there. I think it's due to the misconception that if your writing is truly great, then it will shine for itself. But that can't happen if nobody knows about it.

I have seen so many *New York Times* bestsellers where I would describe the content as very average.

Yet they were marketed well.

The marketing process is awesome. End of story. I'm sorry, but that is the reality. The wordsmiths of this world, and I'm one of them as well, they've got to understand that. You've got to let that go, that aspect of "create great content, and the world will show up." That could happen. Readers might stumble upon you, but I am not prepared to actually be discovered by accident. You've got to market and hustle.

Especially if you have goals like achieving your freedom. Tell me, what are your favorite



Jeff was a featured speaker at the Entrepreneurship Summit 2015 in Bombay, India

social media platforms? What type of promotion is best for each?

Twitter is my favorite, by far. The reason I like it: one, it's simple. 140 characters, so it's still quite organic. People notice you on Twitter; you're not buried in an algorithm like on Facebook. Organic rates on Facebook are almost zero. You create a Facebook page basically to reach your audience, and then you have to pull out the credit card and do Facebook targeted advertising. I get that, but it's a tough gig to go viral on Facebook. Twitter, number one, is great. Another one, if you want a bit of gravitas — it's not good for traffic, but it's good for credibility — is LinkedIn.

Then there are other platforms I play on as well, which aren't really social networks. Flipboard is good, and Medium is also a great place for writers to actually author posts and publish them. It's almost like a writer's platform.

That's the one developed by Twitter cofounder Evan Williams, right?

Yes. But for the top three, Twitter is at number one. Of course you need to be on Facebook, so I am on Facebook. Number three, after those two I suppose, is LinkedIn.

What do you think is the next frontier for internet communications, especially now that the world is so saturated with people who are blogging or doing content marketing? Or is there still plenty of room for new voices?

There's still room for new voices. Even though it's a crowd and there's been a content explosion, and it's maybe harder than it was when I started because it wasn't as crowded. Though it was still very crowded back then, there were already hundreds of millions of websites.

One of the new frontiers that's going to be interesting to watch is artificial intelligence. We're seeing that with the rise of things like chat bots that answer questions driven by the curated intelligence of the machine. It provides customer

service, and that's going to creep a lot into marketing as well. Artificial intelligence is important.

The other one that some people might've heard of, yet is not embraced by a lot of small businesses, is marketing automation. Some writers might not have heard of that, but there's a whole range of different marketing automation platforms out there. I use Infusionsoft, there's Marketo — there's a bunch of them out there. The price point for a lot of those now has dropped, yet the power they have actually is increasing. If you're going to be doing marketing properly at scale and controlled, you need to learn the art and science of marketing automation.

 If you solely rely on social media as your only form of marketing, it's a dangerous place to play.

While we're talking about the supernatural... what superpower would you choose if you could?

To transport myself to anywhere in the world, just like that.

Not a fan of traveling?

No, I love traveling, and I do enjoy watching a movie on the long-haul flights from here to San Francisco or L.A. or to London — I get to watch maybe five or six movies in that time. But to be able to be spontaneous and say, "I would just love to be in Yosemite," that would be great. Or, "I want to be in San Francisco," or "Gee, I want to go to Sweden or London." It's a superpower. In other words, just to be able to transport myself anywhere.

When you launched your blog, it grew rapidly in terms of followers and popularity. You've since been honored with quite a few awards. What sets your blog apart from the rest?

There are two parts to being noticed online and



Jeff's Twitter Selfie

creating influence. Number one is great content, so create the best content you can within your current capabilities. Number two, you've got to deal with distribution from day one and also know about marketing.

I used Twitter very early, when I started realizing the power of human nature to reciprocate. If you follow someone on social media, they all want you to follow them back or check them out. Early on, I realized that growing my Twitter following would be useful, and it has proven to be because that leads to getting discovered. Today I have about 510,000 Twitter followers, which gives me my reach to the world. It's all about building distribution of your content, your ideas, because you have to get it out there.

A big part of what I do, 50 percent, is crafting and

structuring content, meaning bringing to readers content like online courses, or books, or blog posts. The other part is then just hustling it out to the world and being relentless. Getting noticed in a noisy world requires relentless marketing and sometimes shameless self-promotion.

You definitely have the right combination down. I've read about your work with individuals and companies and how you help them create and grow their businesses. What do you commonly see them do wrong that you help them address?

I really think, when it comes down to it, they don't pursue a multichannel approach to marketing. That's maybe the biggest thing I notice. They might be relying only on Facebook or on Pinterest. The reality is that you must work on a whole range of different channels.

What happens is, those channels keep morphing, evolving, and changing. Facebook changed its algorithm for organic reach. Twitter has done the same, so has LinkedIn, and Instagram as well. If you solely rely on social media as your only form of marketing, it's a dangerous place to play.

The other change you need to focus on as part of that is building search engine authority so you turn up in search results for your niche or your industry. If you're writing about horse training, you should be ranking for "horse training tips," "horse training," "horse education," or whatever. There's a whole range of key phrases around each niche and brand in industries.

The other thing you need to do from day one that gives you as much control to reach your audience as possible is build your email list. I neglected doing that early on, and I've put a lot more focus on it these last few years. Building an email list should be one of your primary marketing focuses.

Is that also true for freelance writers?

Absolutely. When someone turns up at your writing blog, you should be offering something for free, like eBooks, which work brilliantly. You can

do even a free PDF that can be like, "The five tools you use to craft your writing," or "What you use to make yourself more productive as a writer," or "These are the five tools I use," and give that away in a free eBook, maybe make it a pop-up. Some people don't like pop-ups because they're intrusive. Guess what? You have to be slightly intrusive to get attention; you have to sort of insert yourself into the conversation.

Then online, as people turn up, you have to basically give them something of real value and have an exchange where they give you their email for that value and free content. That is one of the tactics. There are many others, but it is vital to use that technology. It's quite cheap, and there are a number of easy-to-use tools like Opt-In Monster — there's a bunch of them. Part of the marketing process is building your email list. That's one of the boxes you need to tick.

Would you recommend a different social media strategy for a writer who wants to write for B2B companies, as opposed to somebody who wants to write for B2C?

The principles are much the same. With B2B, you kind of focus more on marketing or distribution points like LinkedIn, so it's important to understand that. Like you wouldn't be doing necessarily Pinterest too much, but Twitter sort of goes right across those lines — you get discovered in B2B and B2C because Twitter is general.

I don't know if there's much difference between B2B and B2C. I think a lot of B2B players are in the B2C platforms like Twitter. There are a lot of people saying, "B2B is different." It is, in a sense, to a lot of people. Email is the business communication tool that we still use, despite everyone who's saying it's going to disappear.

Facebook is trying to use Messenger to be the platform of choice for every part of the communication process. I don't see that happening. I just see it as being another part of how you communicate. Multichannel communication is crucial in

marketing. You have to start at the big end of the funnel, the top end of the awareness, and then the messaging might change as you move down.

What kinds of things do you do to unwind when you're not writing and marketing?

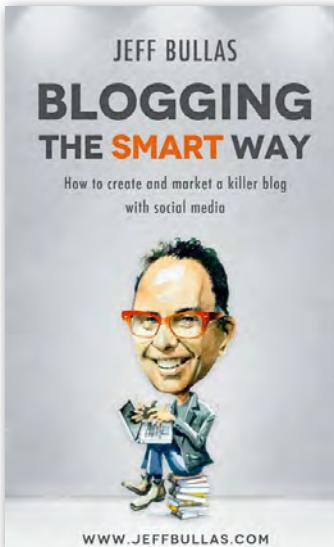
I read a lot; I'm a passionate reader. I love Stephen King's quote, "If you want to write a lot, you need to read a lot. There's no other way." Luckily, I was born with that gift to actually love reading. I meditate, so I do meditation quite regularly. That's really good for centering and gaining clarity. On the exercise side, I'm an avid bicyclist. I do 100 km to 200 km bike rides. We do training rides most weeks, so that's one of my breaks from the mind stuff.

Travel is also an important part that feeds my soul — seeing different people's cultures, understanding the different cultures, and just observing what works and how people communicate



Jeff is an avid bicyclist and trains for 100 km to 200 km bike rides

in different countries. I sort of sit back and just watch and think, "That's interesting," or, "I didn't know that," and weave that into what I create as well. It's really important to get that understanding of the human condition, in many ways.



Jeff's book, *Blogging the Smart Way*, shares the secrets to creating a highly-ranked blog powered by social media

Be a student of the world, so to speak.

Yeah. Continuous learning is another important thing, and I have adopted it. Especially in this fast-moving digital world of technology we live in today. You always have to be willing to try new things, to evolve, and be flexible. That's something that's really important, rather than just be calcified and never change from what you were when you were a teenager or young adult. I see a lot of people who are wearing almost the same clothes they had in their 20s or have the

same habits they had back then. It's really important to be flexible and to look at how you develop as a person as the world changes.

That's a much more enjoyable way to live, too.

It is. Being irrelevant is a very dangerous place to be.

Where do you love to travel?

London is one of my favorite places, as it's a city of many layers with old buildings and a lot of history. I love that. Paris also ticks another box that's just fascinating; I want to spend more time there. San Francisco is another one. New York is

an enigma, a fascinating place, like the cultures of the world sort of showed up there. It's full of so much opportunity. And my town, Sydney, it's one of my favorites.

I agree with you on that one. Is there anywhere you haven't been that you would love to visit?

South America I haven't done yet. I've done Africa, but only Cape Town, South Africa. Russia is a fascinating country, and I want to do more in the Middle East and Asia. I've done parts of those, but not enough. Life is too short, and there's too much to do.

What's your top advice for somebody looking to get started as a writer in the online and entrepreneurial world?

Just start and don't be afraid to get it wrong. Don't be afraid of failure. Be prepared to be vulnerable and put yourself out there; that is the only way you will learn. You can read all the books you like and do all the courses you want, but the reality is that the most powerful learning is experiential. Just getting in, starting a blog, building your site out, building distribution — it can seem overwhelming. Just take baby steps, small steps, but just start.

I ran a blog post recently about the five steps to become an influencer. As a writer, it's the same deal. You are becoming an influencer in your space. You might have expertise in writing, you might have expertise in photography, but you have to put yourself out there. That's one of the essential core things you need to understand, embrace, and start to learn. The only way you learn is that *done* is better than *perfect*. That's it. ■

Click here for an EXCLUSIVE Member Bonus:

Jeff Bullas shares the seven excuses we use to "crush our dreams"





This One Habit Transformed My Life

By Jeff Bullas

Financial security can be achieved in two ways. Get a job or become an entrepreneur.

Getting a job is pretty straightforward. Starting a business, however, often is seen as a big bang approach. High risk and a big financial commitment. Find a brick-and-mortar premise, commit to an expensive lease, hire staff, and start marketing and selling your products and services.

Today, though, all you need is a laptop, an internet connection, and just one idea.

Which one do I prefer?

I have done both. One trapped me, and the other gave me the financial, lifestyle, and mental freedom I had been seeking for decades.

It came out of the one habit I committed to every day.

False Security

Finding "that" job often provides a false sense of security.

A corporate takeover or the cruel game of office politics can destroy that craved-for career. A job for life has been replaced by a 12-month contract or by hiring freelancers.

But in a world that is mostly a knowledge economy, the opportunities to reach the audience thirsting for your experience and expertise — and to get paid for it — are vast. Working as a freelancer or entrepreneur has become a solution.

Now I can hear you saying, "I have a day job and don't have the time." A day job is just 8 hours. The raw reality? There are another 16 hours available.

Over 100 years ago, Arnold Bennett highlighted this in his small 33-page book, *How to Live on*

24 Hours a Day. He encouraged us to live a day within a day that can take us from ordinary to extraordinary.

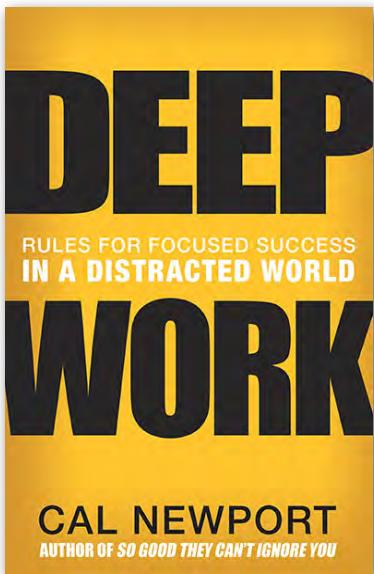
Many of us go to work, then come home and engage in trivial activities. This includes television, reading a glossy magazine, sending text messages, or even playing video games.

Investing in your own creation, production, and distribution of your experience, expertise, and passion while holding down a day job can transform your life.

How do I know?

That is what happened to me when I stumbled into a social web that offered a promise of freedom to create and reach the world one word at a time.

Work that Makes a Difference



In his book, *Deep Work: Rules for Focused Success in a Distracted World*, Cal Newport dives into the difference between *deep work* and shallow work. Those of us trapped in the never-ending cycles of responding to emails and attending meetings know the feeling.

At the end of the day, you are asking the question: "What have I done or created today that is of any consequence."

But there is a solution to that nagging question. It doesn't matter if you are a knowledge worker within the corporate machine, an entrepreneur, or a creative.

An Approach

According to Cal Newport, there are several options to doing *deep work*. It is not a "one size fits

all." It depends on how you like working and living and also depends on your particular life circumstance.

- **Monastic Approach:** Cutting yourself off from the world to focus and remove distraction.
- **Bimodal Approach:** This is where you might work and perform the day-to-day work in one location and do your *deep work* at another. You then dive in and out of each space.
- **Journalist Approach:** This is an approach where you seize the opportunity to perform *deep work* at random, as your time and schedule allow.
- **Rhythmic Approach:** This is where you set apart a certain time of day to create, block it out every day, and commit to that ritual.

These are not the only ways to create *deep work*, but they provide some ideas for a habit that could change your life.

The Habit

I started my blog in 2009, and my approach was more like that of a journalist. I often created late at night and on weekends. But as the journey continued, the ritual changed to a rhythmic habit.

Five days a week, I rose early, at 4:30 a.m., turning off all email, social networks, and other distractions. The ritual included making a coffee or a mug of lemon and ginger tea and sitting down and strapping myself in.

I researched, wrote, and published. The last step was pushing that content out to the waiting world.

When you do that one day at a time for four years, things start to happen. My passion project became a serious business. Done part time before most people were awake.

That habit was an investment in me. But when I started, I didn't understand its far-reaching consequences.

The Power of Validation

In 1998, journalist David Isay decided to capture the stories of ordinary people. He visited the flop-houses of New York and sat down with men who had been living and surviving for decades in rundown buildings.

After publishing their interviews, he went back and showed them their one-page stories in print. On seeing his name in black and white, one man seized the book out of David's hand and ran down the corridor shouting, "I exist...I exist...I exist!"

These men had to wait for someone else to discover them...to share their stories with the world. The visibility also had provided a validation — something we as humans crave.

To be acknowledged is a powerful thing.

Choose to Be Discovered

But on today's social and mobile web, we don't have to wait for discovery or for permission.

We can create, publish, and showcase our own existence without waiting for permission or to be "discovered."



DISCOVER
YOURSELF

We can choose to start something of consequence. We can choose to create. When you start sharing that with the planet, the magic of that distillation of your thoughts and genius is a place to grow and which can validate you.

The social web with its platforms and networks is

a feedback loop that will give you the information you need to evolve and grow.

I pose a new mantra. "I create, I publish, I exist."

Block out Your Time for Your Creation

So plan your day for making sure you have focused creative space. Block out time for *deep work*. Don't make success an accident. Design your life and share your expertise, experience, and passion.

We all have the opportunity to be craftsmen. To be creators and producers of content and media that belongs to us and not the corporation.

The habit of doing the *deep work* is not just about productivity. It goes beyond that.

It is a place where your learning goes to a new level one day at a time. Block out some hours for you. For your work. But...don't keep your creation hidden from the world. Share it. That is where the magic happens.

It will fill the hole that will gnaw at you every day if you ignore that opportunity to create..

Soul Food

You will feel a sense of accomplishment as a work that started as raw and rough becomes a piece of art that is yours. It will feed your soul.

That's your life, your work, and your creation.

You will look back in a year and wonder why you didn't start the habit earlier.

But you must commit to making it happen and to investing in yourself. Responding to other people's emails and attending meetings is not investing in your work.

It is just busyness.

One of the biggest challenges in life can be the habits that trap us in mediocrity or stop us growing and moving forward.

It's your choice. ■

reader poll



Here are your February Poll Results! We asked:

How do you typically express gratitude to writing clients when you want to say thank you for a project?

60%

A grateful email

54%

A handwritten note sent through the mail

25%

A phone call to say thank you

8%

A gift sent annually or around the holidays

6%

A gift card or gift certificate

2%

A gift sent through the mail

Additional Responses:

- I say thank you with a personal, face-to-face visit when possible.
- Every correspondence I send to my clients includes a "Thank you in advance" comment.
- If I've done all I can do for them, I give them referrals or a roadmap on how to finish their project, e.g. a self-publishing manual.
- The first writing I did as a child, was thank you notes. I had a sick spell and my Auntie taught me the art of gratitude. I always send a note in the mail. Now I also send an email.
- I send an email with a graphic that says, "You are awesome."

CONGRATULATIONS to Elizabeth Garvey, winner of the February drawing for a \$100 Amazon.com Gift Card!



Answer this month's Reader Poll question for your chance to win a \$100 Amazon.com Gift Card!

If you were to create your own Flipboard magazine (see page 35), what topics, hobbies, or interests would you list besides writing?

Here are some ideas from Flipboard to get you started: News, technology, sports, business, politics, celebrities, recipes, science, design, weather, photography, computer science, travel, healthy eating, fashion, beauty, mindfulness, music, TV, movies, workouts, home, classical music, gaming, autos, books, architecture, dogs, cycling, green living, coffee, outdoors, gardening, crafting... the sky's the limit!

Click here to let us know your choice.

[Vote Today](#)

..... barefoot writing opportunity



Predictable Writing Income... Right Now!

By **Rebecca Matter**

There are now over 3.5 billion internet users worldwide. And thanks to our 24/7, always-tuned-in culture of online access, social media is the fuel that feeds the information fire.

It's no longer the "frivolous time-waster" it once was... where people went to relax, chat with friends, and of course, watch kitten videos.

Today people use social media today to *get things done*.

And that simple transition... from passive use to active use... has solidified social media into a multibillion-dollar opportunity for companies.

Social media is no longer an "optional" marketing channel...

That's where their customers are reachable... where their customers are spending their time... and where their customers are making their buying decisions.

That's also why clients need your writing help ASAP. Because even though they *know* they need to be taking advantage of it...

They don't know how... don't want to learn... don't consider themselves writers... or just don't have time to take care of it themselves.

And the longer they spend *without* an effective social media presence, the more money they're leaving on the table... day in, day out.

So what's in it for you?

Besides getting paid well to do it, the biggest benefit of all is the stability.

You see, you don't just write a few posts, send an invoice, and call it a day.

When a client hires you, it's for the long-term... and they often want to put you on a flat fee that covers everything, month after month.

Yes — that means, as a social media writer, you can pitch a monthly retainer.

If you're not familiar with how it works, a retainer is money you're paid at the beginning of every month, regardless of how much or how little work you do.

And standard rates for social media start at \$2,000 *per month*. How's that for security?

So today, I want to dig into the social media opportunity, and show you how you can get started quickly — whether you're brand new or have been getting paid to write for a while.



A Variety of Opportunity: Social Media Services for Clients

Being a social media writer is much like being a content writer. You have an audience, and you write relevant content to engage them, build trust between them and your client, and reinforce how your client's products or services can help solve a problem they're having.

But what does a social media writer actually DO? Here are a few of the activities you might do in any given month...

- Set up social media profiles
- Manage the communities and engage members in conversation
- Write messages and updates
- Answer questions

- Write advertisements to build followers
- Write content that can be shared

And you'll do this every month... which as I mentioned, means you can expect to get paid month after month, simply by using your writing skills to help a company stay connected with its audience.

Capitalizing on Social Media for Your Own Interests

Along with being a great retainer deal, you can use social media to land clients, too.

You can use it to research potential clients and connect with them. You can use it to drive traffic to your website. You can use it to attract new clients to your own profiles/pages and demonstrate your own expertise and knowledge about your niche. And, you can use it to connect with potential clients by participating in groups where your clients are likely to be.

As a bonus, using social media to land clients is the ultimate training ground...

The more you practice using social media tactics for your own freelancing needs, the more value — due to your growing knowledge — you'll be able to offer clients.

The "Best" Social Media Platform Is...

One of the daunting things about social media opportunities is that there are simply so many to choose from. But you don't have to know them all...

Just pick one or two you'd like to focus on and start there.

Instagram and Pinterest are ideal for images. YouTube is best for step-by-step videos. LinkedIn provides a ready base for expert and authority-based articles. Facebook offers you the ability to combine different kinds of messages, whether that means posts and images, short videos, or links to articles and blogs.

If you have a niche already, you might check out which social media platforms are used most frequently by companies in that industry.

Or, you might make the decision by the type of audience you'd like to work with...

Snapchat is quickly becoming a powerful tool for the under-25 crowd. Whereas Facebook is steadily growing its reach among the over-60 crowd.



Add On Social Media to Amplify Your Income

While you can specialize in social media as a writing opportunity, you can also use it to increase the value of projects.

For example, if you're hired to write blogs or editorial for a client...

You can offer social media services to drive traffic to that content on your client's website. When your social media posts bring in more readers, everyone wins.

Or if you're hired to write web copy...

You might offer to also convert campaigns into social media promotions to maximize the revenue potential.

Either way, you get your original fee, and in many cases might be able to turn that into a retainer deal that gives you reliable income from month to month.

If you're ready to get started in social media, I recommend looking at social media expert Nick Usborne's program, [How to Make Money as a Social Media Expert](#). He's written it in a way that helps you understand how social media fits into web-content creation as well as an overall online marketing campaign. You'll learn how to use social media to promote your own writing services along with how to offer it to your clients. Most importantly, you'll get a grasp on the foundational concepts of social media — a key skill that will help you stay on top of trends as social media platforms alter and adapt to our ever-changing online world.

How to Make Money as a Social Media Marketing Expert

The Definitive Guide to Using Social Media Marketing to Generate Multiple Streams of Revenue for Yourself and Your Clients



How to Break in to Social Media

The best way to get started in social media is to get involved in it...

Identify the platforms you want to focus on, and then pick companies/industries you want to service. From there, get involved in their social networks...

Post comments, participate in discussions, answer questions... demonstrate your expertise in a public setting before even reaching out. That way, they'll know who you are when you contact them and will be excited to hear from you.

Next, determine how they're using the various platforms:

1. Are they regularly engaging with customers (having conversations with), or are they simply pushing sales messages?
2. Do they use direct-response marketing tactics to spark interest, attract customers, and drive sales?

3. Do they have content written in a way that makes it shareable?

Look for opportunities where you can provide additional value... or support their objectives.

Then, research and join similar groups. (All the social media platforms are great at showing you “related” groups that you can join.) Not only will this open you up to more potential clients, it will also give you some information on your clients’ competition that you can use to provide even more value.

And finally, reach out directly and be specific with your proposal. “It looks like your social media goals are _____. I can help you accomplish those goals.”

When you’re ready to talk fees, here are some price guides to go by:

- **Brand management and customer relations:** **\$250 to \$2,000/month** (varies based on goals)
- **Community creation:** **\$500 to \$1,000/month** (includes discussion moderation and membership management)
- **Account setup (Facebook page, Twitter account, etc.):** **\$500 to \$1,500** (beginner), **\$500 to \$2,500** (more experienced social media writer)
- **Training or consulting:** **\$50 to \$500/hour** (may include consultation about social media campaign, training of in-house staff, and tactics on how best to pull off a successful campaign)
- **Ongoing account management and training:** **\$500 to \$3,000** (the more content you provide, the higher your fees go)
- **Short-term event promotion:** **\$1,500 to \$20,000** (creation of a 1 – 3 month promotion or contest for Facebook and possibly other channels, includes branding, posting, and promotion)
- **Long-term event promotion:** **\$25,000 to \$75,000** (creation of a 3 – 6 month promotion or contest for Facebook and possibly other channels, includes branding, posting, and promotion)

5 Steps to Successful Relationships with Social Media Clients

Before you accept a social media project, it’s a good idea to do your research first. Nick Usborne recommends asking any potential client the following five questions:

1. **What is their primary purpose for using social media?** In other words, what do they hope to gain? It could be a greater reach, more engagement with prospects and customers, more credibility for their brand, a solid platform for customer service, or greater exposure, among other things.

2. **What is their current experience level?** Find out whether the client already has an established social media presence, or whether they’re starting from scratch. The latter situation will mean more work for you, but also a higher fee.



3. **What is their overall level of commitment?**

Not only is it smart to get potential clients talking about their goals, it’s also important to get it in writing and make sure they’re committed to the same goals on paper. Everyone will be on the same page, and have clarity about how success will be measured.

4. **What resources do they have available?**

Along with making sure the client commits on paper to your agreed-upon fee, you’ll also want to know what else they’re committing to their social media goals. Talk to them

about the tools they have available, such as tracking and scheduling services, or resources that measure their social media metrics. Ask whether they have any employees dedicated to working with you on social media goals.

5. What process works best for them? Here's where you'll want to outline the details of your plan on a practical level. Find out whom you'll report to, what types of posts need formal approval (if at all), and where you'll get topics for your posts (if that hasn't already

been stated). In addition, make sure you talk details when it comes to the frequency of posting, whether it's daily, weekly, monthly, or something else.

Remember, all companies need a presence on social media... it's where their prospects and clients are getting things done. As a writer, you can help them get set up, build relationships, and continue the conversation month after month...

And in return, get the stability of predictable writing income! ■

Want to write for *Barefoot Writer Magazine*... or any other publication? Here's what you need to know...

1. Follow Directions.

It might seem obvious, but it's not uncommon to skip details in the excitement of submitting work to a publication or writing contest. Before you submit your final copy, always go back and check for submission guidelines. Pay close attention to word count limits and formatting requirements.



2. Submit Your Copy as an Attachment in Microsoft Word.

Unless otherwise specified, this is the industry standard.

3. Name Your File Appropriately.

Include the name of the publication or contest in your file name, and include your own name as well. If you're short on space, at least include your last name.

4. Put Your Name and Contact Information on Your Actual Copy Submission.

Even if you're submitting by email, where your name and contact information are obvious, you can't assume your copy submission will stay linked to your email. Staff members for a magazine may save your Word attachment to a separate folder for the editor to review at a later date. If your name and contact information aren't on that Word document, you might be sacrificing your shot at getting published.

5. Review Your Submission for Typos and Errors — at Least Twice!

Even the most glaring typos sneak by the best writers. Here are two tips to avoid embarrassing typos: Read your submission aloud, slowly. This is a great way to pick up errors your eyes otherwise miss while reading. Or, try reading your submission one sentence at a time, starting at the end. By reading "backwards," you're more likely to notice errors that otherwise sneak by when read normally.

did you know?



4 Smash-Hit Books **Deliberately Blocked** from Becoming Blockbuster Films

By Katie Yeakle

Everyone loves a blockbuster movie and we can't seem to get enough of them. Last year a whopping 171,697, 260 tickets were sold here in the U.S. Fortunately, some of the greatest movies in the history of cinema were based on great books. Classics like *Gone with the Wind*, *To Kill a Mockingbird* or, more recently, *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy, gave screenwriters and directors splendid source material.

But not all great books have been made into movies, such as:

***The Catcher in the Rye* (J.D. Salinger)**

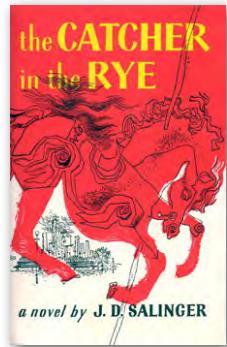
The movie industry is salivating for the rights to make this 1951 classic into a movie. Hollywood heavyweights expressing interest in adapting the book for film include Martin Scorsese, Sophia Coppola, and Stephen Spielberg, among others.

The story of Holden Caulfield, a disillusioned teenager coming of age, *The Catcher in the Rye* is considered by many to be the greatest American novel of all time. Yet, for years it's been a literary hot potato. In fact, the American Library Association ranked *Catcher* as America's 13th most controversial book.

Salinger, who died in 2010, refused to sign over the rights to *Catcher*. And if you read the book, you'll see why.

Caulfield, the novel's central character, complains a lot about Hollywood phonies and how the movies are unrealistic. He declares, "If there's one thing I hate, it's the movies."

That might explain Salinger's remark, "I would like to see it done, but Holden wouldn't approve."



***The Stand* (Stephen King)**



Considered to be King's masterwork, *The Stand* is a postapocalyptic sci-fi/fantasy novel about a group of people who survive a supervirus that kills 99 percent of the population. The survivors split into two groups, and the novel ends in a battle of good versus evil.

It was made into a TV miniseries in 1994, which critics panned. Since then, many attempts have been made to put *The Stand* on the big screen, but at 823 pages, the task seems daunting.

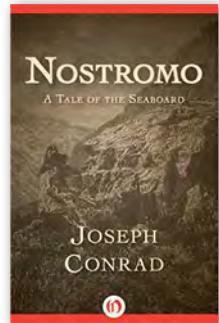
First released in 1978, King further complicated matters by rereleasing the book in 1990, when he added over 350 pages and updated the setting to the 1990s. While *The Stand* has a script, director, and King's blessing, studios appear unwilling to put up the big bucks needed to make the film a reality.

***Nostromo* (Joseph Conrad)**

This 1904 novel about revolution and warfare in a fictional South American country once received a ringing endorsement from F. Scott Fitzgerald who said, "I'd rather have written Conrad's *Nostromo* than any other novel."

Adapted for television in 1996, *Nostromo* has never made it to the big screen. It almost happened in 1991. However, one month before legendary director David Lean was scheduled to begin filming, he died.

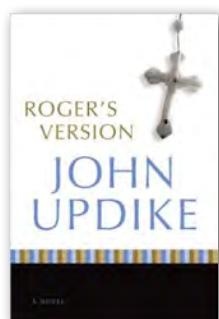
Some say others balked at taking on the film out of respect for Lean. And while Lean's estate announced in 2002 that Martin Scorsese had agreed to direct the project, nothing more has happened.



***Roger's Version* (John Updike)**

While Updike's novel *The Witches of Eastwick*, starring Jack Nicholson, was a smash hit, *Roger's Version* (published in 1986) has yet to be given the cinematic green light.

With its themes of middle-aged disillusionment, sexual attraction to a younger woman, and questions about the existence of God, critics say the novel would make a fantastic movie. In fact, many think it has the potential to be an Oscar-caliber film.



But like the other three books above, it appears *Roger's Version* WON'T be coming to a screen near you anytime soon. ■

Get Involved with Barefoot Writer!

4 Ways to Make the Most of Your Membership:

1. Want to call yourself a published writer?

Then write an essay for this month's Barefoot Writing Challenge contest. *Plus*, you could win \$100 ... and if your writing style impresses us, you might even be asked to write for *The Barefoot Writer!*

2. Are you living the writer's life?

Show us! Submit a photo of your life as a Barefoot Writer. You could win a \$100 Amazon gift card for snapping a

simple photo. And, you'll get to call yourself a cover model.

3. Care to help other writers?

Chime in on our Reader Poll. Each month's poll results help you understand your fellow writers. They also help us better tailor our content to your needs.

4. Have something to share?

Submit any thoughts, questions, opinions, or stories about your own writer's life to info@thebarefootwriter.com.

Get Paid To Travel The World



What if in a matter of months — weeks, even — you could be traveling the world, writing about your adventures, and getting paid to do it?

Imagine the possibilities. Maybe you want to swim the sapphire waters of the Caribbean ... or sip steaming coffee as snow falls outside your Aspen mountain lodge ... or enjoy a quick getaway at a cozy Bed and Breakfast (B&B) not far from where you live ...

Then, imagine returning home, writing about your experience, and getting paid for your efforts. Even better, picture yourself on all those vacations without having to pay a dime upfront — all because you agreed to share your adventure in an article.

**Get stories of real people who are
enjoying the travel writer's life
and find out how you can too here.**



One-day Results: Use These Ten Steps to Get More YouTube Views

By Mandy Marksteiner

Looking to promote your writing business through YouTube? It's a smart move that can pay huge dividends. That's because YouTube is the second largest search engine.

It gets more traffic than Bing and Yahoo! combined. So, posting videos on YouTube can make a profound difference in your business's search engine optimization (SEO) ranking. But you have to act swiftly to get the most of out the videos you post.

If you wait a week to promote your YouTube video, it might be too late.

Waiting even a day can seriously hinder your video's potential to rank high on YouTube, according to Mike LeMoine, owner of Maverick Web Marketing in Albuquerque, New Mexico.

LeMoine helps businesses increase their credibility and exposure by making informational videos that go up on YouTube and on his clients' web

sites. His goal is to get as many views as possible within the first week.

Why the rush to get your video posted?

The number of views a video gets is one of the biggest factors that affect the ranking, and it makes a difference how soon you get those views.

Your Video Release Needs to Have *Tempo* and *Momentum*

"The amount of views you get within 24 hours affects the tempo," said LeMoine. "YouTube can tell if your video release has momentum. If you wait a week, it makes it harder to rank on Google."

SEO ranking aside, if you don't get views right away, you also might sabotage your efforts to gain credibility.

Would you bother watching a how-to video that was only viewed by 12 people? Of course not!

Even if you were willing to watch, it probably wouldn't show up in the search results.

Quickly Get Those Crucial Early Views with This 10-Step Plan

Before you make the video...

- 1. Do your keyword research** and decide which keywords will attract your audience.
- 2. Think in terms of a campaign.** "Some people make the mistake of only doing one video," said LeMoine. "But if you make several videos and organize them into a playlist, people can go from one video to the next, which will increase the views of all the videos."

As you write the script...

- 3. Answer the questions your customers and prospects are asking.** Make a list of 10 questions that people ask you. Make another list of 10 questions you *wish* people would ask you. Develop a series of videos around those Q&As.
- 4. Find an online community of ideal prospects — and listen before you post.** Instead of making a video and then posting it to an online forum (which may come off as spammy), do this: Hang out in the forum and find out what questions members are asking, what people are trying to do, and what problems they are trying to solve. Plan your videos around that.

- 5. Use your SEO keywords** in the headline of your video and mention that keyword in the first sentence of the script. YouTube uses software to transcribe the videos and to ensure that the content of each video matches the title and the description.

Once you upload the video ...

- 6. Share the video on Facebook and other social media platforms.** Do a boosted post right away to get more views.
- 7. Send the video to your email contacts.** Having a large email list can help immensely.

8. Develop relationships with other marketers and business owners who have lists, so you can promote one another's videos. Ask them to share their videos in advance.

9. Place the videos on specific pages of your website, embedded from YouTube, and set them on autoplay so that every time someone sees that website page, it will count as a view.

10. Buy pre-roll ads. Using Google AdWords, you can select pre-roll advertising — the ads that appear before another YouTube video plays. "Every time those ads play, it counts as a view, even if it only plays for three seconds," explained LeMoine, who routinely uses this method to quickly get views for his clients. "This brings the views up quickly for pennies on the dollar."



Avoid spammy practices...

Even though LeMoine stresses the importance of getting views as quickly as possible, he offers this warning, "Don't ever go to Fiverr or to another service and buy views. It is dangerous because YouTube will notice it and might shut down the YouTube account. A YouTube account is too valuable to risk. Getting it shut down can be devastating to any business."

YouTube videos are relatively simple to make, but can bring a huge payoff. Follow these best practices to get your videos noticed, and watch your writing business take off from there. ■



How Coworking Can Solve Most of Your Pressing Freelancing Problems

By Megan Tyson King

In my six years as a freelance writer, I've worked from and in a variety of settings. Most of the time, I frequent the ones available on my home turf — my home office, the library, and my five nearest coffee shops.

But there's one place I've discovered that beats out all the rest. It's where I go most to get solid work done, and I have a sneaking suspicion it might be a good fit for you, too.

So what's the one place that solves a lot of my most pressing problems as a freelancer? I work out of a shared coworking space.

How Coworking Combines Freedom with Community

A coworking space is a shared office that serves as a collaborative community for freelancers, entrepreneurs, and anyone else looking for a work

environment away from home, and with other people.

It provides office needs like printers, high-speed Wi-Fi, conference rooms, and an endless supply of coffee. Plus, it's designed for connection among members, providing a sense of community.

Access to these coworking spaces typically is based on a monthly membership, similar to a gym membership. It's a good alternative if you seek something more than your home office, but don't want the long-term lease commitment and higher price tag that comes with renting your own office space.

Here are a few scenarios that can help you decide if coworking makes sense for you:

1. If you work from home...

Ever have those days when you're just too lonely

at home? I'm talking about the times when it's too quiet and talking on the phone or Skype doesn't satisfy your need for human interaction.

Loneliness aside, let's not forget home-based distractions. The laundry, the dishes, the oh-so-comfy bed, or the tasty snacks in the pantry. If these beckon when you most need to get work done, it might be time for a change of scenery.

A coworking space provides you the opportunity to connect with other people. You don't need to chat too long with them. Just being among others who are getting their work done might be all the fuel you need to be focused and productive yourself.

I still work from home part time — especially for writing projects when I want pure silence. But the balance is nice. I get my people-to-people time *and* the conveniences of working from home.

2. If you work from coffee shops...

When at cafés, you've solved the problem of getting away from home distractions and have positioned yourself among other people. But in exchange, there's the loud talker on the phone next

to you, the clinking of glass, and the frequent grinding of coffee beans.

Another challenge is the, ahem, dilemma of the restroom. If you need to go, you have to lug your laptop with you. Or, seek out a kind-looking stranger to guard your valuable belongings. Or just trust that nothing will happen in the few minutes you're gone. Sometimes that works fine... but there's a certain level of risk that goes with leaving your things unattended in public, and the alternative is inconvenience.

A coworking space, in contrast, is a safe, secured area to leave your belongings when you step away for any reason.

Meaning you can take your lunch break, sans heavy laptop, and stay worry free.

3. If you rent an office space...

Renting is a long-term commitment, typically for a multiyear term. Decorating and furniture is your responsibility, as are utilities like internet and phone.

If you don't come in regularly, the office becomes a pricey dust collector. If you skip town for a couple months, you've still got the bills to pay.

Many coworking spaces provide private offices, so you still can have a dedicated quiet space away from home, but for a fraction of the price. Also, you get it for a shorter-term lease that fits your schedule.

How Much Cospace Costs

Prices vary for each space, but at a minimum, you'll likely pay upward of \$70 per month. And that would get you no more than a couple of monthly visits to the space.

Also, there's no guarantee the people you'll work with at the coworking space are a good fit for you. They might be too chatty or bring a smelly fish lunch to the office each day. Or, the space could be just as quiet and empty as your home office.

Keep in mind that finding a coworking space to fit



your needs might take a few tries. And if money is tight, you might want to delay using coworking until your budget allows.

Unexpected Perks of the Shared Lifestyle

If you do find your ideal coworking space, you could enjoy a plethora of opportunities, depending on the space and the people you meet.

Coworking amenities vary based on location, but you could enjoy the following:

- Ability to use their business mailing address
- In-house childcare services
- The space will promote your events/announcements/services
- A platform to engage fellow members to ask business questions
- Hosted social events like happy hours and hikes
- Free snacks, coffee, tea, beer
- Cheap use of pricey software (like the full version of Adobe Creative Suite)
- Business growth workshops
- Members-only discounts around town
- 24/7 office access (for the writer with that 3:00 a.m. moment of inspiration)
- Conference rooms with presentation equipment

I even know of a space that has scented candles and calming music. It's almost like working out of a day spa.

All these bonuses aside, the ultimate perk of joining a coworking space could simply be getting to be part of a community. In my experience, freelancing members often seek ways to support one another. I've landed a handful of client projects from fellow members. Plus, I often get free advice and helpful brainstorming as I shape my business ideas.



If this sounds right for you, check out what types of coworking options are available in your area. You just might get hooked, like I did. ■



DirectResponseJobs.com

Where to Find Your First (or Next) Copywriting Assignment

Wondering where you'll find paid freelance writing work as a copywriter? Visit this job board run by AWAI, packed with tons of high-quality job posts from companies that value individuals who've studied the craft of persuasive writing. Full-time, part-time, freelance, and spec opportunities are all available in a range of topics.

To gain access to DirectResponseJobs.com, you must first complete [The Accelerated Program for Six-Figure Copywriting](#). From there, you'll have access to the jobs board for life.

the barefoot writing challenge

Congratulations to the Winner of the February Barefoot Writing Challenge!



Last month's Challenge was to write an essay on this topic:

Name the three things you love most about yourself.

We were overwhelmed by the number of essays submitted, and pleased to see so many Barefoot Writers embrace this topic. Many of the essays were poignant; all were pleasantly vulnerable.

Though it was a challenge to narrow down the finalists and choose a winner, we honed in on an honest account of one writer's search for self-love.

Go to our [Barefoot Writing Challenge Winners Page](#) to see who won!

Win \$100 if Your Essay is Chosen in Our March 2017 Challenge:

What are your favorite things about your office/workspace? Or, what is it about the setup or design of your office/workspace that makes you most productive?

Send your entries to Contest@TheBarefootWriter.com by midnight ET on **March 18th**.

The Barefoot Writer team will award the winning entry \$100! Please submit entries as a **Microsoft Word attachment** and limit your essay to **500 words or less**.

TWO WAYS ON THIS PAGE TO WIN \$100!

cover photo contest

You Could Be On The Cover Of The Next Issue Of Barefoot Writer Magazine... PLUS Win \$100!

**What does your Barefoot Writer lifestyle look like?
WE WANT TO KNOW!**

Send us a photo of you living your dream as a Barefoot Writer. It just might be chosen as the cover shot of an upcoming issue. If it is... we'll send you a check for \$100.

Here are some tips for submitting a winning photo:

- Please make sure your shot is vertical, not horizontal.
- Make sure your camera is set to its highest resolution setting.
- Be sure the subject of your photo does not fill the whole frame so there is room for copy on all sides. We need room at the top for the name of the magazine and along the sides for the cover blurbs.

Just email your submission here: Contest@thebarefootwriter.com.





Flipboard: The Avid Reader's Answer to Easy-to-Get Personalized Content

By Sheldon Gladstein

Remember when you first really understood what the internet was? How it felt like you had instant access to the public library, the Louvre, the movie multiplex, and the biggest jukebox in the universe?

That's kind of what it feels like when you discover Flipboard.

With the Flipboard app, you have an instant magazine for every interest your heart desires. You dictate the subject; the app does the rest. It wraps your content up in sleek little packages and delivers it to your digital screen door, ready for you to marvel at, enjoy, and dig in.

Prepare for a digital wow.

What Is Flipboard?

Flipboard is an app that aggregates content from news sites, social media, photo sites, and a host of other websites. It gathers data based on user preferences — topics of interest, preferred sources, recommendations, etc. The app presents material in a segmented magazine-style format, with users being able to swipe or click their screens to "flip" between stories. Further, users can select content of interest to them and create their own magazines, which are available for sharing with other viewers.

Flipboard currently has content in 21 languages, and per the company, over 28 million magazines created by users. It is available on multiple

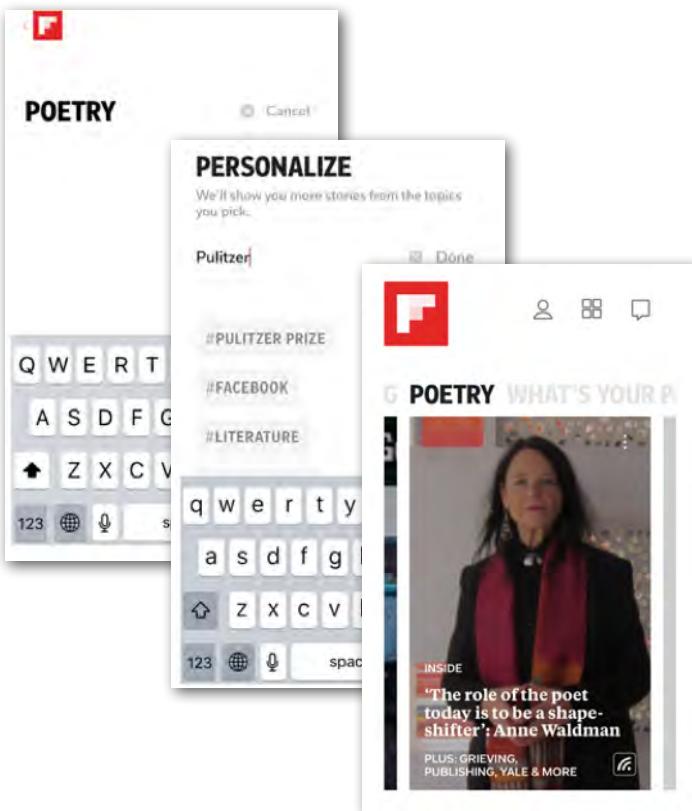
platforms, including web browsers, tablet apps, smartphone apps, and Kindle apps. The application is free across all platforms.

Using Flipboard

When you sign up for Flipboard, the app presents you with the opportunity to select topics of interest. These become your personal mini magazines, with aggregated content automatically delivered.

For example, *Barefoot Writers* might enjoy digging their toes into their own, say, poetry-focused content.

When the app first opens, it prompts you to select an area of passion. Type in *Poetry*. Then the app asks for additional personalization. So, for example, type in *Pulitzer*, to get the most prize-worthy content. The app then builds your personal flipboard, and in the time it takes to rhyme, you're ready to start discovering.



Building your own poetry Flipboard

From there, you can explore away. Swipe up between stories, samples, poems, articles, you name it. Your own poetry magazine is ready for you, with fresh poetic content just a click away.

Let's say from there you find some content you particularly like. Click the Heart symbol to give that material even greater weight, so that other poetically minded individuals will enjoy similar thought-provoking stanzas.

Or, maybe you want to create your very own magazine of your curated content. Click the Plus button next to material you come across that you particularly enjoy. This automatically puts it in your magazine. Give that magazine a name and share it with other like-minded flipboarders.

If you prefer, you can browse magazines from others or browse content from the many Flipboard categories out there.

Be careful, though. Once you start flipping, you'll see hours and days start to flip away. You'll wonder why you aren't getting your writing projects done.

Is it perfect? No...

There are some things the app designers could improve. For example, the interface looks and feels somewhat different between devices. The iPhone app appears unlike the Windows app, for example, which looks different from the browser version.

Additionally, it can be challenging to intuitively understand all the options and available configurations. Reading the tutorials and watching YouTube explanations come in handy.

Is it really good? Oh yes!

Barefoot Writers are typically voracious readers, as well. Flipboard feeds that need by offering great aggregated content, a slick interface, and the ability to have a magazine instantly crafted to feed your each and every passion. Given that, I'd say Flipboard definitely is worth flipping for! ■



What to Do When There's Nothing to Do

By Will Newman

You've finally finished and sent off that big project. You've worked hard, and you're ready to kick back and veg out for a while.

Resist the urge. Certainly you're entitled to a break. But it's tempting to let a break grow and expand until it has taken over most or all the time you should be working. So instead of earning money, you're cruising the Net, canning peaches, or watching TV.

Okay. So maybe you don't have any work waiting for you. What should you do, fake it? Well, that's one of the things we'll get to in a moment. For now, let's look at a few — very important — activities for when there's nothing to do.

1. Go Client Hunting

In *Secrets of a Freelance Writer*, Bob Bly advises that if you're not doing something that makes you money directly, you should be doing something

that will help you make money. "Promoting yourself" has to be at the top of that agenda.

Use downtime to generate a list of your dream clients. Call them or research the internet to find out key contact names. This might not be a group of people you feel comfortable contacting... yet. But by developing the list *now*, you'll have information you easily can update and add to as you build your career.

In a similar vein, make a list of clients who are probably ready for your services right now. Research their contact information. People respond better when you contact them by name... even product managers.

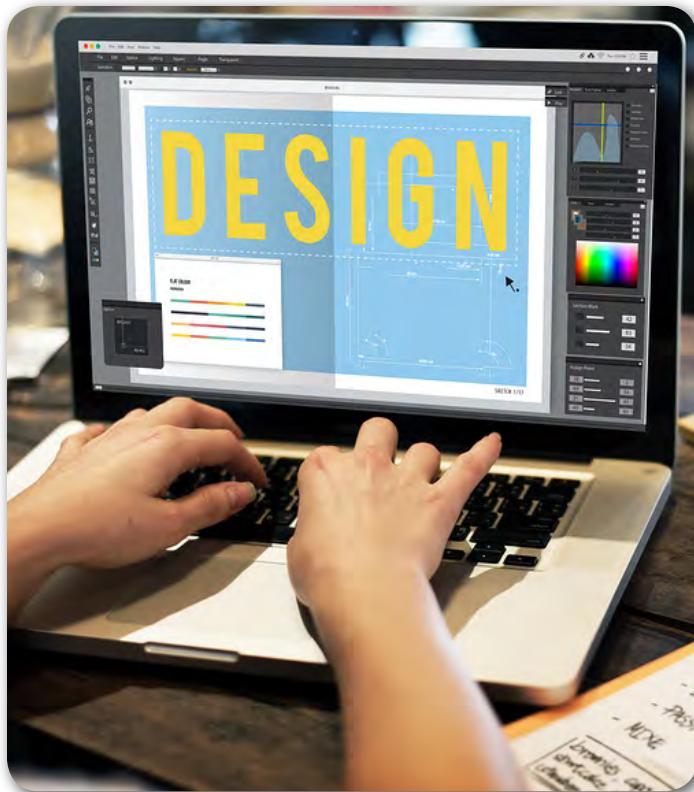
2. Develop Your Portfolio and Self-Promo Package

This is where "faking it" comes in. If you don't have a thick portfolio, work on putting together

one that shows off your skills. Develop a stunning DM package for real or made-up products in a number of different niches (health, financial, etc.) in a number of different formats (web content, emails, etc.).

These are samples of what you can do, not “real” work — so label them as such. And work as hard on them as you would on a real assignment that pays \$5,000... because, some day, this work will pay off accordingly.

But don’t stop at developing a strong portfolio. Expand it into a compelling self-promotion package that includes an introductory letter, resume, list of clients (if you’ve had any), testimonials (if you have any), and your self-designed business card.



3. Master Photoshop, InDesign, or Other Software

The worst possible time to master new software is when you’re working under a deadline. If you have a good instruction book in one hand and your laptop or iPad in the other, you can turn out some pretty good results. But, guaranteed, you won’t remember how you did it.

Take advantage of your downtime to perfect your software skills. And learning new software systematically can be fun... so it seems like you’re playing while you’re really working.

4. “Hose Out” Your Computer

Use some of your “there’s nothing to do” time to perform some needed computer system maintenance. Like defragmenting your hard drive. Or reorganizing files and folders into a logical order.

Keeping on top of this crucial aspect of being a computer owner can save you grief down the road by preventing a computer crash.

And while we’re on the subject of crashes, do *not* wait until you have some downtime to back up important files. You should do this on a regular schedule — preferably every day. Don’t rely on your memory, either. Invest in good, reliable software or a subscription backup service on the cloud that does it automatically.

5. One More Suggestion...

If the above recommendations don’t keep you busy during those times when it seems like there’s nothing to do, consider doing volunteer work. Pick an organization that does work you admire and offer to do some writing work for them... free of charge.

You’ll not only be building your portfolio, you’ll also be improving the world around you. ■



“Unschedule” Your Way to Writing Success with Plenty of Playtime

By Charlotte Crockett

There's no doubt about it. Achieving success as a writer is very rewarding. But a few of the reasons we pursue *the writer's life* is because we value freedom and the time to enjoy family, friends, and leisure activities.

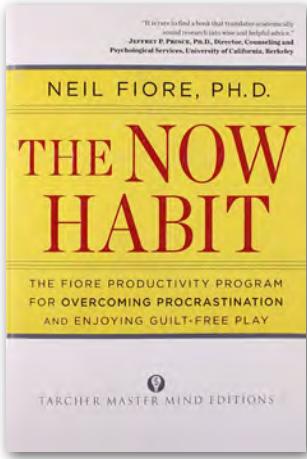
Those leisure activities include “play time”—which, if you don't get enough it, could actually stop you from being successful. I was raised with a very strict work ethic: No play until your work is finished. Unfortunately, what I found was that the work didn't get finished, and the play rarely happened. Day after day, I'd slave away at my desk while the warm ocean and bright sunshine called.

Over time, I became resentful of my work. I watched others enjoy their time off, while I sat and punished myself for not getting it all done. I read dozens of books about procrastination and

tried just about every strategy to overcome it without success.

Then a colleague shared a book with me that radically changed my thinking. It presented the concept that playtime was critical to overcoming procrastination and achieving success. Wow!

Neil Fiore's book, *The Now Habit: A Strategic Program for Overcoming Procrastination and Enjoying Guilt-Free Play*, was a game changer for me. If overcoming procrastination has ever been a challenge for you, I encourage you to read it.



In the book, Fiore argues that playtime isn't just nice, it's critical to a healthy mindset. He explains few people have difficulty finishing a project, but many struggle getting started. Scheduling playtime is the key.

I realize it's counterintuitive. So does Fiore, calling the practice the *unschedule*.

Here's how it works...

Take out a planner or calendar. Block out any commitments you already have for appointments, meetings, etc. Then, before you schedule your work for the week, schedule some time for fun



and relaxation. That's your reward for your work. Now, schedule your work within the remaining time blocks.

For example, I've decided that on Monday, I'm going to have lunch with my friend Susie as a reward for my work that morning. Then in the evening, I'll schedule a 30-minute walk on the beach as a reward for what I accomplished that afternoon.

It's important to see those activities as rewards, so when you sit down to work you can say, "I'm choosing to do this now so I can enjoy my reward afterward."

It's much easier to get started on your work when you know there's a reward waiting. It's a bit like the day before vacation. You just get it done.

See, the writers who are successful don't do monumental things every day. They just consistently execute. Little by little, they build their writing business until they achieve the success they envisioned.

Give the *unschedule* a try — go ahead and schedule out your next week, allotting designated rewards throughout. You'll be pleasantly surprised at how much more efficiently you work. ■

You Can Make a Very Good Living as a Writer Free!!! One-Hour Training Program

The \$2.3 trillion direct-response industry is *desperately looking for new writers*. You just need to learn how to write the copy companies need most. This 60-minute video gives you the secrets, essential tips, checklists and techniques necessary to succeed.

Get Instant Access to the
Copywriting Crash Course Now!

www.AWAIONline.com/60-minute-crash-course





As managing partners of AWAI, Katie Yeakle and Rebecca Matter have guided, motivated, and celebrated thousands of Barefoot Writers over the years. Got a question for them? Send it here: info@thebarefootwriter.com

Q: Is it ever a good idea to team up with another writer to launch a single writing business?

Katie Yeakle: It's certainly something that can be and has been done. Celebrated health copywriter Marcella Allison has a partner she jointly works on projects with. She says it works because the setup lets her and the other writer focus on their strengths; she's also found that two heads are better than one. Marcella is also careful to point out that she keeps things transparent with her writing partner when it comes to scope of project, timeline, and pay. I recommend doing the same if you want to be part of an ongoing writer team.

Other "team approaches" you might consider are to outsource some of your writing work, such as hiring an internet researcher to do the initial legwork on a project for you. Or, turn to a fellow writer or group of writers to review your copy before you submit it to clients (remember to offer to do the same for them). It's always a good idea to get feedback, and no matter how many times you review your own copy, your writing will be improved by the suggestions and feedback of

others — and that's true even for veteran writers. But your own needs and connections dictate whether or not you share clients, pay, or just exchange feedback. Do what works for you.

Q: Is it possible to get professionally certified as a copywriter?

Rebecca Matter: At AWAI, we've always felt copy is subjective... what one person thinks is good, another may think is bad. And ultimately, the market decides by either responding or not.

But over the years, we've had numerous companies ask us for something like this to make it easier to find copywriters who have taken professional-grade training, and studied proven persuasive writing techniques.

The answer — which has proven to be an incredibly successful tool — was to create the [AWAI Verified® Program](#). You become "verified" after passing a test based on [AWAI's Accelerated Program for Six-Figure Copywriting](#). You're then given the official AWAI Verified® seal to put on your freelance website, business cards, email signature, or anywhere else you want to promote yourself. ■

the glicken

What is "Glicken"? It's a Yiddish word referring to the icing on the cake. That extra reward on top of the regular benefits you get as a Barefoot Writer. Every month, we'll showcase a Barefoot Writer we know who's enjoying a little Glicken. Have a Glicken story of your own? Send it to: MyStory@thebarefootwriter.com.



The Sky's the Limit with High-Flying Glicken

By Cindy Youngblood

In my previous life as a corporate pilot, I was accustomed to getting a few perks — or Glicken — here and there. When you're responsible for flying the boss and executives around, it's customary to eat well and stay at nice hotels. Even visit exclusive destinations you'd never travel to on your own. When I hung up my wings in 2005 to stay home and be a mom, I thought that perk-laden life was all behind me. And it was... until I stumbled into writing and AWAI.

I started flying in high school and worked my way to my dream job as chief pilot of a corporate flight department. I flew great equipment and traveled the world with a spectacular office view. The only problem was, I had to go where the executives needed to go, when they needed to go, and stay as long as they needed to stay. I was on call 24/7, and my suitcase stayed packed and ready.

My husband also flew, so we had a nanny to help with our daughter. When my second child was born, my desire to be home with my children overrode my desire to fly. I love being a mom and didn't want to miss a moment with my kids, so in 2005 I traded my wings for diapers, playdates, and potty training.

Once a mom, I felt torn between the adventurer and the homebody in me.

One called me to the sky to explore and push boundaries, while the other called me home to raise and cherish time with my children.

After a few years, I explored opportunities to earn an income from home and learned about internet marketing and website development. That's when I met copywriter Cindy Cyr, who introduced me to AWAI. I enrolled in the initial *Six-Figure Copywriting Course with Companion Series*

followed by Jay White's *Email Copy Made Easy*. I didn't know what niche I wanted to specialize in until Jay said something that altered my course and set my destination. He pointed out that because of my 20-plus years of experience, aviation companies would hire me — even as a new writer — over him any day.

That was both exciting and scary. I'd been out of the industry for eight years. Could I really go back as a writer? My life no longer consisted of flight plans, aircraft systems, and greased landings. Rather... laundry, school, and greasy fingers. But I was determined to become a successful writer, so I took Jay's advice and focused on learning how to write for business aviation companies.



Cindy got recertified to fly a BeechJet 400A thanks to the free training she received (worth thousands of dollars in flight hours)

I began by attending an industry conference for the first time in years. While I felt uncomfortable and out of place pulling up in my old mommy van, parking amongst the Lexuses, Audis, and Mercedes, the event officially launched me as an aviation copywriter. The date was November 2014. It was there that I also met the publisher of a well-known aviation magazine and accidentally became a journalist, too. Writing for the magazine has

given me access to industry professionals and helped me learn what's new and important.

Soon, my passion for aviation was rekindled, and I dreamed about flying again. However, I was more than rusty. Even though nonflying pilots don't lose their licenses, we lose currency. To fly again required attending recurrent training on an aircraft I was type-rated in. That training costs tens of thousands of dollars. Something I could not afford.

Then on July 26, 2016, I received an email that fired up my engines. The marketing director for a well-known flight training facility wanted me to write an article about their company. In exchange, she offered me recurrent training FREE! I couldn't believe what I was reading. I had contacted her a few months earlier to see if they used freelance writers, and I thought she'd misunderstood my message.

We talked on the phone and discussed the possibilities, story line, and publication, etc. I contacted a publisher and pitched a story idea about my journey back to the cockpit after a 10-year sabbatical. She loved it! Suddenly I was transported back in time to my previous life flying airplanes. I still would be writing, but this time it would be about me and my journey. One that would begin with my first flight in 11 years and culminate with a check ride in a corporate jet I hadn't flown in over 15 years.

The process took two months and felt like drinking from a fire hose. I passed my check ride on January 8, 2017, and with a huge sense of accomplishment, I headed home to conclude my article. The full story of my "Journey Back to the Cockpit" will run in the May issue of *Women in Aviation*.

Years ago, when I read about Glicken in *Barefoot Writer* and the benefits writers often receive, I never imagined this. I'm looking forward to adding freelance flying to my freelance writing, and I know the sky's the limit having received this high-flying Glicken! ■

Finally...

A Professional Organization for the Benefit of All Direct Response Industry Ad and Content Writers. (Best of all, membership needn't cost you one single penny!)

The Professional Writers' Alliance is dedicated to helping you improve your persuasive-writing skills, network with writers and marketers, and find exciting projects.

You'll learn all that's new and happening within our exciting and fast-paced industry – including the latest opportunities to emerge from web writing, e-commerce, and traditional direct mail.

You'll enjoy full and unfettered access to a long line of benefits, including:

- Concrete ways to quickly elevate your writing and marketing skills
- Regular invitations to free marketing and writing webinars and teleconferences
- News on what's working now in the world of direct response
- Access to industry experts and unlimited networking opportunities
- Access to the latest jobs and freelance assignments
- Discounts on resources all writers need
- And much, much more

Whether you are (or aim to be) an ad writer, web writer, website owner, content writer, newsletter writer, desktop publisher, grant writer, researcher, marketer, or even a graphic artist, *The Professional Writers' Alliance* is the best way to stay in touch with what's happening in the industry – and gain the “persuasion” skills you need to prosper from it.

Click below to see everything that's available to you – get a feel for the enormous impact it can have on your financial and professional success ... and don't forget – membership in this organization *needn't cost you one red cent!*



The Professional Writers' Alliance is a great resource for additional training from top-level experts, and the Premium Access to DirectResponseJobs.com is outstanding as well. But the biggest benefit of membership, for me, has been the added credibility I've gained by listing PWA as one of my professional associations and displaying the logo on my website and marketing materials. Thanks, AWAI!

– Michele Peterson



[**Click Here Now for All the Details on PWA Membership
\(Including a FREE GIFT We've Set Aside for You!\)**](#)