

Your Lifestyle Will Have Your Neighbors Thinking You're Retired ... And Wondering, "How Does He Make All That Money?"

By Mark Morgan Ford

As a GKIC member, you've heard Dan preach over and over the importance of good direct-response copywriting.

You're aware of the advantages when you use copy that can persuade prospects, clients, customers, and patients that your business is the *only* logical choice.

At GKIC events, you've heard others ask, "Do you know any good copywriters?" Perhaps you've even asked the question yourself.

A good copywriter can transform a struggling business into one that experiences financial freedom literally with one great sales letter. And they get paid accordingly.

Which is why I'm writing you today. Because as a person who possesses the entrepreneurial spirit and is always looking for new ways to expand both your income and knowledge base, this is right up your alley.

It gives you financial freedom and lets you choose who you work with along with when and where you work. Plus, you can make as much money as you desire.

You see, one of the surest and fastest ways to make this happen is with an income opportunity that is, in many respects, one of the best I know of. I am referring to making extra money as a freelance direct-response copywriter.

Take Paul H., for example. Paul was stocking shelves in a supermarket when I met him. Now he's making \$300,000 per year as a copywriter. This is how Paul describes his life now:

"I spend most of my time in a little historic town in the Vermont countryside and one week per month a short walk from the beach in South Florida.

"I have no bosses, no commute.

"I write from an extra room I set up in my home. Some days, I'll head to the local coffee shop, just for a change of scenery.

"For a break, I'll walk over to the old Equinox Resort for lunch — or take our dogs,

Yukon and Betty, over to Hildene Meadows for a run.

"I absolutely love the freedom of it!

"My neighbors think I've taken early retirement — probably because they never see me working.

"In many ways, I have retired. Because, for the first time in my life, I decide how my days will be spent. Some days, I'll feel like working for a few hours (typically in the morning). Other days, I'll play some golf, tennis, ski — or just hang out with my 13-year-old son.

"But what surprises people most (and may surprise you, too) is the income my 'retirement' lifestyle gives me: around \$300,000 per year."

The income potential from copywriting is significant. If Paul wanted to work fewer hours, he could do so at the drop of a hat. He could work just two hours per day and make \$60,000. Or half days and make \$150,000.

You can see why direct-response copywriting is so high on my list. It's da money! But it's not just the money that makes being a freelance copywriter so appealing. It's the freedom it gives you to create your "ideal" career.

That's what Krista Jones did. After 18 years as an engineer, Krista was ready to find a less stressful, more satisfying career. "It was easy for me to walk away from my career [after I learned the skill of copywriting]. I had all of the work I could handle. I feel like I'm finally leading the life I was meant to live."

Paul began copywriting as a 30-year-old. Krista was in her 30s too. But you can get into the game at any age. Take Starr Daubenmire, who became a copywriter at 58 after she was laid off from her job as a quality control coordinator.

Says Starr:

"I realized I was living the copywriter's life when I became glad I had lost my corporate job. Believe me, I was terribly insulted when it happened, and it was a huge blow to my confidence. But now I know I have the skill and determination to depend on myself — not someone else and especially not a corporation that viewed me as a statistic, rather than a real person. Now I don't worry about the company's bottom line — I take care of my own."

Starr's been a copywriter for several years now, and she says, "The freedom factor just keeps getting better. I can take a two-hour lunch and go for a swim. I can run to the school and pick up a sick grandchild. And I can work from anywhere I like —

home, the bookstore, while traveling. Absolutely nothing beats being your own boss!"

And you don't have to commit yourself to working full-time to enjoy the benefits of copywriting. Many people work part-time as freelance copywriters to supplement their current incomes.

Let's take a closer look at this income opportunity.

How Big is the Direct-Response Marketplace?

As you know, companies use direct response to sell everything from mattresses to financial newsletters ... from health supplements to fruit baskets. Nonprofits — from political candidates to environmental organizations, to children's aid groups — raise billions using direct-response techniques, too. And let's not forget the multibillion-dollar Business-to-Business market, one of the most lucrative and in-demand niches of the direct-response industry for copywriters.

All of them use direct response because a well-written letter can bring in millions of dollars — for a fraction of the cost of opening a storefront or selling wholesale to retailers.

Direct-response marketing allows companies to reach the people and businesses most likely to buy their products ... simply by sending letters and emails to those who have shown an interest in similar products in the past.

But a direct-response promotion is nothing without the right words. It needs to convey the right message ... say the right things ... be structured in the right way ... and be written to make the prospective buyer take action.

And these days, more and more selling is done online. Through websites, emails, landing pages, discussion boards, and forums — even through the pages of well-known social media sites like LinkedIn, Facebook, and Twitter, and newer sites like Google+ and others.

That's where the copywriter comes in.

Income Potential

Advertising copywriters typically make from \$50-\$500 per hour. (That's \$100,000-\$1 million per year, working 40 hours per week.) How much you can make per hour depends on two factors: how good you are and what kind of businesses you work for.

Competent copywriters can find plenty of work writing sales brochures and letters for local businesses. Writing copy for a six-page brochure, for example, will take between two and five hours — depending on the skill of the copywriter. At the local level, businesses would be happy to pay \$500 for a brochure.

Good copywriters tend to work for larger companies with national or international reach. Such companies spend millions of dollars on advertising every year, so their budgets for copywriting are much larger. Writing a sales package for a new product might take the copywriter 40-60 hours. The compensation for such a package would typically range between \$4,000 and \$10,000.

The best copywriters (and there are hundreds of them) charge \$10,000 to \$50,000 per package and then demand royalties on the sales their letters generate — which can easily double or triple their base fees. Sometimes royalties can bring them hundreds of thousands of dollars in commissions while the advertisement is running.

I know this essay seems like sales copy. But I can tell you from having spent more than 30 years teaching ordinary people how to write sales letters that copywriting is a seriously good way to earn extra income.

When Monica Day first heard about the income potential of copywriting about 10 years ago, she was skeptical. But she was "desperate" and "broke," so she decided to give it a try. Three years after making the decision to become a copywriter, she claimed \$134,408 on her income tax return. And it was all from copywriting!

Make \$206,000 Writing One Letter per Month!

Get paid \$206,000 to write 12 letters? It can (and does) happen.

A writer with an established track record can command \$8,000 per letter. So 12 letters pays \$96,000 in writing fees alone.

Now, let's say six of those letters become "controls" — which means they bring in the most money and keep mailing time after time. If, over the course of a year, each of those six letters mails five or six times, your royalties can add up to another \$120,000.

That's over \$206,000 per year, writing one letter a month!

More letters equal more writing fees. More controls equal more royalties!

The Size of the Opportunity

One of the best-kept secrets in the advertising world is how large the direct-response industry is. When you think of advertising, you typically think of Madison Avenue executives designing magazine ads and television commercials. But the big market for copywriters is the direct-response industry — with yearly sales of \$2.3 trillion worldwide.

In fact, direct-response advertising is larger than magazines, television, and radio advertising put together. And it is fast becoming the dominant form of advertising on the Internet, as well.

- Direct-response marketing represents 54.2% of all ad spending in the U.S.
- 30% of the \$55 billion spent on direct marketing in the U.S. is for online campaigns
- There are more than 3,500 companies in the direct-marketing services industry
- Every \$1 spent on direct-marketing ads brings in an average of \$11.65 in sales
- Direct marketing generated 8.3% of the total U.S. gross domestic product in 2010

The leading industry organization, the Direct Marketing Association, cites that there are 1.4 million employees working with direct-marketing companies in the U.S. Because of its immense size, the direct-response advertising industry employs hundreds of thousands of freelance copywriters and is always looking for more.

And let's not forget that you are a member of GKIC — a target-rich environment with entrepreneurs always looking for good direct-response copywriters.

That means plenty of opportunities for you and the ability to pick and choose where you work.

Copywriting is the Perfect Transitional Income Opportunity

Most GKIC members like you may have part- or full-time jobs or businesses. That means you may not have the ability to jump into copywriting full-time. You need to continue making money while you learn a new trade.

Copywriting offers you the chance to do just that. You can learn the skills you need in the evenings, on your lunch breaks, after dinner, or on the weekends. And you can begin your own freelance career working odd hours too.

As Ed Gandia of Marietta, Georgia, says:

"In 2003, I had advanced to a point in my sales career where weekly travel was

inevitable. I was at the top of my field, earning a great living. But as a new dad, I didn't want to be away from home all the time. Plus, I was getting tired of continually rising quotas — an inevitable reality when you're in sales. Eleven years of chasing numbers had worn me out. I was ready for a change. Yet I didn't want to sacrifice my high income and my family's financial future.

"Copywriting allowed me to develop the skills I needed to transition away from a six-figure sales career and into a six-figure copywriting business. In my first full year as a freelance copywriter, I earned \$163,481."

Copywriting is the Perfect Part-Time Retirement Business

If you are retired and dread going back to work full-time, copywriting can offer you the opportunity to enjoy a good secondary income without working 40 hours per week. Many copywriters do that, especially after they have achieved their financial goals. They keep writing because they love to and because it brings in extra income — which is always welcome.

Take Kelly Richardson, for example. He wrote to me a while back to thank me for introducing him to the copywriting opportunity. He says, "Working VERY part-time (I'm still a full-time high school English teacher), I've just cleared over \$40,000 in project fees in the past year."

Copywriting is the Perfect Work From Anywhere Business

Since you can write from anywhere, you can work and travel anywhere — while getting paid. As Paul H. says, "I've been on dozens of trips over the years: Barbados, France, Spain, and beautiful five-star resorts throughout Canada and the States. My last trip was a seven-day cruise aboard a Crystal Cruise ship. And since I actually worked on these trips, I paid for none of them."

I've said that direct-response copywriting is one of my favorite extra income opportunities because of the flexibility it offers and also because of the extraordinary income potential. But there are many other benefits, as well.

For example: You don't have to dress in business clothes. You can work in your underwear. By working at home, communicating with your clients by phone or email, nobody will ever know the difference.

"I don't even have to get out of my PJs," says copywriter Penny Thomas, who discovered copywriting after being laid off from her investment-banking job right before Christmas 2002.

Fringe Benefits

Like Dan, you don't have to work with people you don't like. Once you develop expertise in some market, it won't be hard to find as much work as you want. With more potential clients wanting you than you can afford to service, you'll be able to "fire" those who don't value your services (i.e., pay you enough) or are disagreeable in any way.

By learning the skill of copywriting, you can derive all sorts of "fringe" benefits.

You will find that you are a more persuasive thinker and talker. You will better understand advertising as a consumer. And you will become a better thinker simply through the practice of writing copy every day.

If you like to write fiction or essays, learning copywriting can only improve your skills. As Steve Sjuggerud, editor of the investment newsletter *True Wealth*, says, "My success in investing has come from learning and applying the secrets of the investment masters — Soros, Buffett, Templeton, etc. My success as a writer has come from learning and applying the secrets of [copywriting]."

Perhaps the greatest benefit is peace of mind. As Cheryl Malcham, a "retired" freelance copywriter from Mercer Island, Washington, says, "The ability to pay my bills no longer worries me, even in these rough times. I know I can always market my skills to an endless list of clients and keep enough copywriting projects rolling in."

What it Takes to Succeed

When most people think of writing professionally, they assume that it takes a great deal of natural talent to succeed. And some professional copywriters like to keep this idea alive because it is flattering to them. (I make six-figures as a writer. Therefore, I am a creative genius.) The truth is that having a natural talent for writing, though helpful, is not at all necessary. Some of the best writers in the business have no formal writing background at all. They just like to write and have learned the skill of copywriting. If you can write a simple letter or tell a simple story you have the fundamental writing skills you need.

How could this be? Writing novels and poems and essays requires skill and creativity. But writing sales copy is simpler. The reason for that is the most basic principle of the sales process: At the emotional level, most people are the same. We tend to respond the same way to exciting stories, to big promises, to hidden secrets, to personal invitations, etc., in a predictable way. Successful salespeople understand those patterns. As a student of direct-response advertising, you can learn those patterns and employ them to write letters that sell.

In my experience, it takes about six months of guided practice to attain competency

as a copywriter. At that point, you should be able to begin soliciting clients at the \$50-per-hour range. If you continue to practice your trade diligently, you can become relatively expert at copywriting in another 18-24 months. By that time, you should be able to take on larger clients who will be happy to pay you \$100-\$500 per hour. (You normally don't charge by the hour. You charge by the job. These hourly figures are estimates based on average productivity.)

Joshua Boswell was \$200,000 in debt when he discovered copywriting. Within a few years, his life, and that of his family, had completely turned around.

"This year, we took a 16-day vacation, touring the Southern states. We toured old Southern mansions and plantations, visited a couple of amusement parks, chartered a private boat, and went snorkeling down in the Florida Keys, spent a day touring the mangrove forests and swamps, hunting down alligators and gigantic spiders, and relaxed, talked, learned, experienced, and built incredible memories together.

"My income grew while on the trip. I picked up a couple of more clients. I did very little writing. It was magical and wonderful.

"When you consider that we could afford doing this with 10 children, it's a wonder we have any money or sanity left! But actually, we have both in spades and mountains of joy to go with it."

How to Get Started Now

If you think you'd like to become a freelance copywriter and make extra income that way, you can get started immediately.

The first thing I recommend is that you read the manual that American Writers & Artists Inc. (AWAI) has prepared. It's called *Copywriting 101: Secrets for Launching Your Million-Dollar Writing Career*. It will give you a more detailed idea of the benefits and advantages of this line of work. It will also give you more examples of how copywriting has changed the lives of many AWAI members.

You can [click here](#) to read the manual.

If, after reading that special report, you are still excited about the opportunity, AWAI has agreed to offer you a major savings of 60% off its flagship program, the *Accelerated Program for Six-Figure Copywriting*.

Or if you have questions about whether copywriting is a good fit for you, call Cameron, Debbie, or Pat at AWAI directly at 866-879-2924. (It's a toll-free call.) They'd be happy to speak to you.

I recommend AWAI's program enthusiastically. It was based on my original teachings and has been revised and improved a dozen times in the past 15-odd years with the help of the insights of many of today's best copywriters. If you want to learn this amazingly valuable skill at home, there is no better way than to enroll in this program.

[Mark Morgan Ford is the editor of *The Palm Beach Letter*, a general circulation publication that aims to provide its subscribers with useful advice about building wealth, living well, and investing.

Mark started his first business when he was 11 years old. In the decades since then, he's started hundreds more.

In 1982, Mark moved to Palm Beach County, Florida, and took a job with a small publishing company. He worked as an apprentice to a well-known businessman in South Florida. He helped that company grow to \$135 million in annual revenues, became a multimillionaire himself, and retired at age 39.

After a year of writing poetry, he became a consultant to the health and investment publishing industry. He was involved in the development of dozens of multimillion-dollar businesses, including one whose revenues recently exceeded the \$400-million mark.

He has also written a dozen books on entrepreneurship, personal productivity, and wealth building. Three of these were *New York Times* and *Wall Street Journal* best-sellers.

Mark recently turned 60 years old and "retired" again. He now focuses on growing his investments and writing in *The Palm Beach Letter*.]