

State of the Industry Report

# AWAI'S 2023 COPYWRITING PRICING GUIDE





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# 2023 STATE OF THE COPYWRITING INDUSTRY

## Executive Summary

28 years ago, in 1995, the U.S. National Science Foundation allowed Internet use to go beyond a research/nonprofit platform and include commercial enterprise for the first time. This landmark decision opened the door for the first commercial websites to launch that year, including Amazon.com, eBay.com, and PCWorld.com. Google was launched a year later.

1995 was arguably a landmark year for copywriting as well — expanding the field from traditional media (TV and radio as well as direct mail, advertising, and other print materials) to a whole new world of online marketing: websites, emails, blogs, articles, online video, and more.

**Today, the use of quality, results-oriented copywriting is at a peak demand,** with approximately 3.4 billion pages on the Indexed Web today (changing daily),<sup>1</sup> 347.3 billion emails sent/received per day worldwide,<sup>2</sup> and a multitude of other sales and marketing pieces produced and published both online and off daily.

That's because millions upon millions of companies — all jockeying for attention, search-engine traffic (Google processes over 99,000 searches every second<sup>3</sup>), and sales — need to publish a steady stream of stories, how-to information, clear demonstrations, benefit-focused offers, and other copywritten content that performs across a wide variety of marketing channels.

For example, social media channels are being used to reach 206 million monetizable daily active Twitter users,<sup>4</sup> 1.91 billion daily active users on Facebook,<sup>5</sup> 822 million LinkedIn members,<sup>6</sup> over 2 billion monthly active Instagram users worldwide,<sup>7</sup> and 433 million monthly active users on Pinterest.<sup>8</sup>

## **To help you tap into this peak demand for copywriting and make it work wonders for you now ...**

The team here at AWAI (American Writers & Artists Institute) — the world’s leading publisher of direct-response copywriting, content writing, and graphic design home-study programs — dug deep into the latest statistics and trends to uncover the major value of copywriting, as well as how to overcome the challenge of finding skilled writers.

We also reached out to our A-team network of “from the trenches” copywriters and marketers to weigh in on these subjects.

You see, we’re uniquely positioned to give you the inside scoop because we not only use direct-response online and offline copy every day to help thousands of aspiring copywriters find our training programs, learn the craft, and succeed as writers...

We’re continually studying who’s doing what when it comes to marketing, lead generation, and direct sales.

Plus, over the years, marketers, creative directors, business owners, and others have turned to AWAI as a resource for finding the right copywriter to help build opt-in mailing lists, get targets to open those emails, drive organic traffic to a website, convert website visitors to buyers, and increase the response rates on all promotions. We know exactly what today’s marketers want and need in a skilled copywriter.

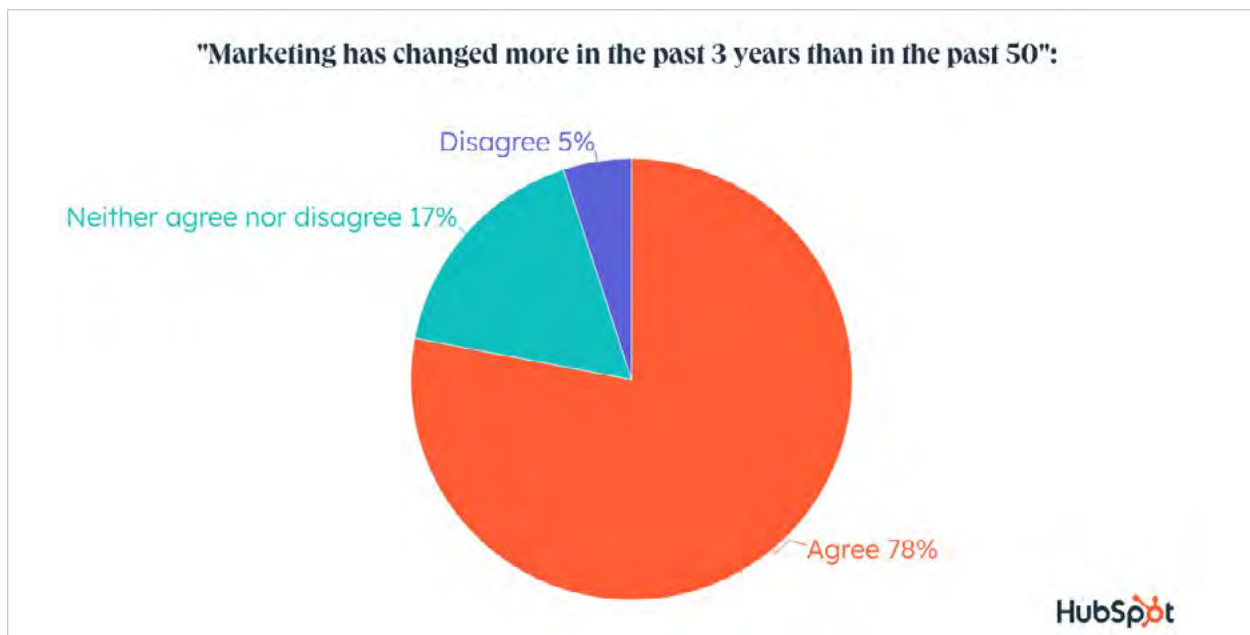
**The result of our exhaustive research is your true INSIDER’S GUIDE to the 2023 State of the Copywriting Industry: what’s making it tick and thrive, and how you can make the most of it.**

Let’s begin by taking a look at the biggest trends and predictions for the year.

# A Brand New and Still Evolving World

Greek philosopher Heraclitus taught that “change is the only constant in life.” And while we may have always known this to be true, the past three years have hammered the lesson home in unprecedented ways.

In fact, nearly four out of five marketers say their industry changed more in the past three years than in the last 50.<sup>9</sup>



A big part of that was “the leap”<sup>10</sup> into a new digital reality in 2020. Along the way, consumer attitudes, behaviors, and expectations have also changed.

Marketers have had to adapt and keep up. They’ve needed more new copy and content to connect with consumers than ever before. And as economic uncertainty continues, they’ll need even more as they continue in their efforts to be responsive and agile.

Because while change can be a challenge, it also brings great opportunity.

***“Those that recognize the inevitability of change stand to benefit the most from it.” – Jay Samit***

**2023 will be even more about putting the customer first.**

Today’s savvy consumers are demanding respect. They’re recognizing the value of their attention. They’re embracing their power of choice.

Google acknowledged this with its Helpful Content Update<sup>11</sup> in late 2022, which “aims to help searchers find high-quality content” that was written to help humans rather than simply to rank well.

To succeed in 2023, companies need to continue to produce high-quality, helpful content while they also meet customer expectations for things like:

- **Personalized content.** 80% of consumers are more likely to make a purchase when brands offer a personalized experience, while 60% say brands that deliver generic, impersonalized content would lose their loyalty.<sup>12</sup>
- **Customer experience**, including all touchpoints across all channels, both digital and physical. 40% of consumers said they have stopped doing business with a brand due to poor customer experience.<sup>12</sup>
- **Connection** through social communities, email, and human interaction.

Effective online sales and marketing is all about the *person* on the other side of the screen.

Now more than ever, effective online sales and marketing is all about the *person* on the other side of the screen.

It’s about being of service. Helping them get the information they need. Solving their problems. Improving their lives.



As best-selling author and expert in modern-day marketing Seth Godin says, marketing done well is “the generous act of helping others become who they seek to become.”

Back in 2021 we started seeing a shift away from “sell, sell, sell” to helping people solve problems and have better lives.

It has worked, and now the expectation for a great customer experience is at an all-time high.<sup>13</sup>

So now, in 2023, companies need copywriters to help them deliver those experiences and conversations that help their prospects and customers at every stage of the customer journey — from letting them know that you have a solution to nurturing and building the relationship long after their first purchase, so they become happy, loyal customers for life.

In fact, 65% of consumers say they would become long-term customers of a brand if they can provide positive experiences throughout the customer journey.<sup>13</sup>

The experiences are happening on websites, in stores, in blogs, newsletters, videos, social media, at virtual and in-person events, live and automated chat messaging, and more.

And good copy and content can support those experiences at every step along the way.

So, in 2023 and beyond, companies will continue to rely on copywriters to help them connect with consumers in a meaningful way that puts the customer first and delivers the customer experience they expect and demand.



customers' needs

# 7 Marketing Trends and Predictions

## for Staying Connected to Your Customers

When you take a closer look at what's working now in Business-to-Business (B2B) and Business-to-Consumer (B2C) marketing, it's easy to see that all signs point to **unique, audience-focused, and engaging communication (aka copywriting)** as the common thread and key ingredient for success in today's online and offline channels.

Before we get to the trends and predictions, consider these thought-provoking stats from HubSpot's **"The Ultimate List of Marketing Statistics for 2022"**:<sup>14</sup>

- 82% of marketers actively use content marketing.
- Marketers who use segmented email campaigns note as much as a 760% increase in revenue.
- Marketers today create content for multiple audience segments — marketing to three audience segments is most common.
- 94% of people report watching explainer videos, with 84% making a purchase.

Now, let's dive into what to expect in 2023...

# 1

## Content marketing continues to be essential.

The top three goals of content marketing are boosting sales, building relationships with customers, and increasing brand awareness.

And it's so effective at achieving these goals that 95% of B2C marketers and 93% of B2B marketers plan to develop a content marketing strategy for 2023.

For the past two years, the top performing content assets for both B2C and B2B have been short articles (under 3,000 words) and videos. That trend is expected to continue in 2023, with a continued emphasis on prioritizing the audience's informational needs over the organization's sales/promotional messages.<sup>15</sup>



### Key Takeaways

The Content Marketing Institute defines content marketing as a strategic marketing approach focused on:

- creating and distributing valuable, relevant, and consistent content
- attracting and retaining a clearly defined audience
- driving profitable customer action

**Important:** Content marketing in 2023 needs to keep Google's Helpful Content Update and the upcoming Google Analytics 4 deadline in mind.<sup>16</sup>

# 2 Email will become even more important.

**Studies show that email marketing is believed to be the marketing channel that will provide the best ROI during a recession or economic downturn due to its ability to target subscribers with personalized and relevant messages.<sup>17</sup>**

**But with 20% of Americans receiving over 50 emails a day, email marketing has to be strategic. It's expected that in 2023:**

- Email tracking metrics will become more reliable and go beyond open rates.
- Hyper-segmentation and hyper-personalization will become the norm.
- Interactivity will drive email engagement.



## Key Takeaways

**Copywriters and marketers who can harness the power of email marketing will position themselves for success in 2023.**

**Some best practices will include:**

- **email verification at signup to keep lists clean and improve deliverability**
- **first names in the “From Name” field to make emails more personal, show authenticity, and build trust**
- **segmentation and personalization to build stronger connection and relevance**

# 3 Video will dominate both B2C and B2B.

Content Marketing Institute calls video the “It” content format for 2023.<sup>18</sup>

In fact, additional research shows that 80% of people prefer video over written text, and 88% of consumers have purchased products and services after watching a marketing video.

81% of marketers have increased sales with video. And 87% of businesses are using video as a marketing tool.<sup>19</sup>



## Key Takeaways

Video has become a meaningful part of content marketing strategies and direct-response marketing campaigns. Trends for 2023 include:

- Live video
- Video email marketing
- Smartphone video production
- Search-optimized video
- Vlogs
- Social media stories
- Silent videos

Videos should be professional but not overly produced so that they feel genuine and authentic. Strategic scripting is important, though, to ensure consistent and compelling content.

# 4 SEO continues to evolve.

As long as consumers continue to search the internet for solutions to their problems, search engine optimization (SEO) will be an important part of a company's marketing strategy.

Just as in every year, Google will continue in 2023 to make updates to the search algorithm to ensure it's delivering genuinely helpful and relevant results.



## Key Takeaways<sup>17</sup>

Some of the top SEO trends for 2023 that you'll want to include in your SEO strategy include:<sup>20</sup>

- Shopping Graph to enhance online shopping
- Conversational queries
- Video... specifically, clip markup and seek markup
- Reinforced E-A-T (Expertise, Authoritativeness, Trustworthiness) signals
- Featured snippets
- Semantically related keywords
- Comprehensive content to satisfy complex queries

Companies need good copywriters and content writers to help them write the high-quality content they need to rank well in search results.

# 5 AI is becoming a valuable tool.

**Artificial Intelligence (AI) can perform complex data analysis and provide meaningful audience insights that can help inform better marketing decisions.**

**And in some cases, it can even speed up copy and content creation.**

**Experts agree, though, that it still doesn't replace the human copywriter in producing emotionally compelling, persuasive copy and content that connects with the reader.**



## Key Takeaways

**There are multiple ways to use AI technology in marketing. Some of these include:**

- **Content creation**
- **Predictive analytics**
- **Targeted/personalized ads**
- **Product recommendations**
- **Email optimization**
- **Voice search**

**The number of businesses adopting AI tools has grown by over 270% since 2019, and the global AI market is set to reach \$267 billion by 2027.<sup>21</sup>**

# 6 Doing more on social media.

Companies are doing more than marketing on social media these days. While still in the early stages, social commerce and social customer service can yield big results for early adopters who persevere and play the long game.

**Social commerce:** *the process of selling products and services directly through social media.*

**Social customer service:** *the process of delivering proactive customer service (finding and responding to brand conversations with the aim of satisfying customer needs before they ask) and reactive customer service (responding to customer-initiated transactions or service inquiries) over social networks.*

When it comes to social media marketing, companies are becoming increasingly confident in their investment. 87% of marketers are confident or extremely confident that social media delivers a positive ROI when it comes to marketing and engaging with their audience.<sup>22</sup>



## Key Takeaways

- Growth in the number of social buyers is leveling out, but the amount of social sales is still rising, with annual social commerce spend per buyer expected to increase by an additional 80% over the next 3 years.
- Social customer service is a way for companies to stand out and deliver an exceptional customer experience.



# 7 Finding skilled copywriters is a challenge for most.

From Content Marketing Institute's "*B2B Content Marketing Benchmarks, Budgets, and Trends... Insights for 2023*":<sup>23</sup>

*"Marketers struggle with creating content for the buyer's journey and aligning content efforts across sales and marketing."*

**46% said just one person (or group) in their organization is responsible for all types of content. But help may be on the way.**

**47% expect their organization will hire or contract with additional content producers (writers, designers, photographers, videographers) in 2023.**



## Key Takeaways

**If you're a marketer, this guide helps you:**

- Understand how to identify the right, qualified copywriters for your needs
- Hire them at a mutually beneficial price
- Bring out their best work for the best results

**Great copywriters are out there! This guide will show you how to find them.**

**If you're a copywriter, this guide helps you:**

- Understand what marketers need now
- Position yourself as the ideal solution in specific niche market



# What's Working the Best Right Now When It Comes to Copywriting

What is the value of copywriting? Why is it a critical tool in marketing success?

The following benchmarks may provide answers.  
You'll see that ...

**Copywriting is the foundation of a strategic marketing mix. The right messages — presented in the right way — will be the key to successful content marketing in today's competitive climate.**

As you consider the marketing channels listed, keep in mind that copywriting is the common thread, whether it's email, blogs, SEO, social media, or paid advertising.

According to the Content Marketing Institute's, "*B2B Content Marketing Benchmarks, Budgets, and Trends — Insights for 2023*".<sup>23</sup>

**73%**

of B2B marketers have a content marketing strategy.

**50%**

of B2B content marketers expect their budget to increase in 2023. 38% expect it to stay the same.

**78%**

of B2B marketers expect to invest/continue to invest in video in 2023.

And Ahrefs reports in their "*63 Content Marketing Statistics for 2023*".<sup>24</sup>

**67%**

of marketers report that content marketing generates demand/leads.

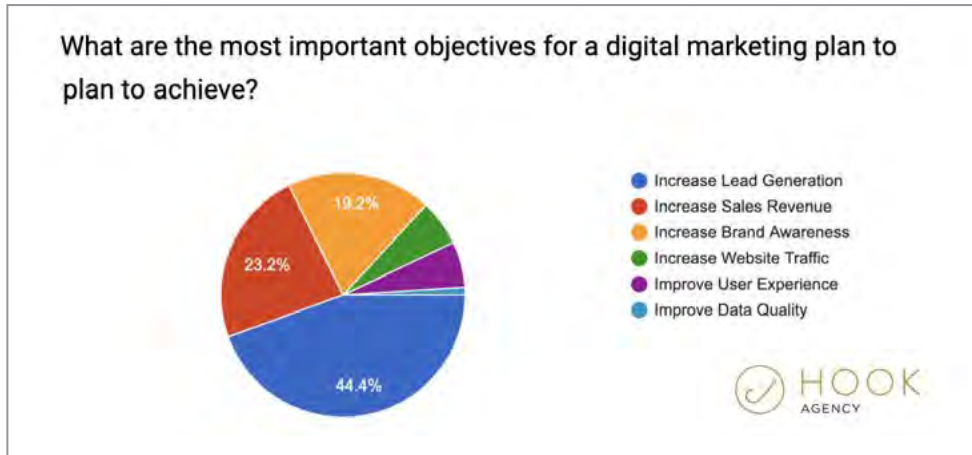
**81%**

of marketers view content as a core business strategy.

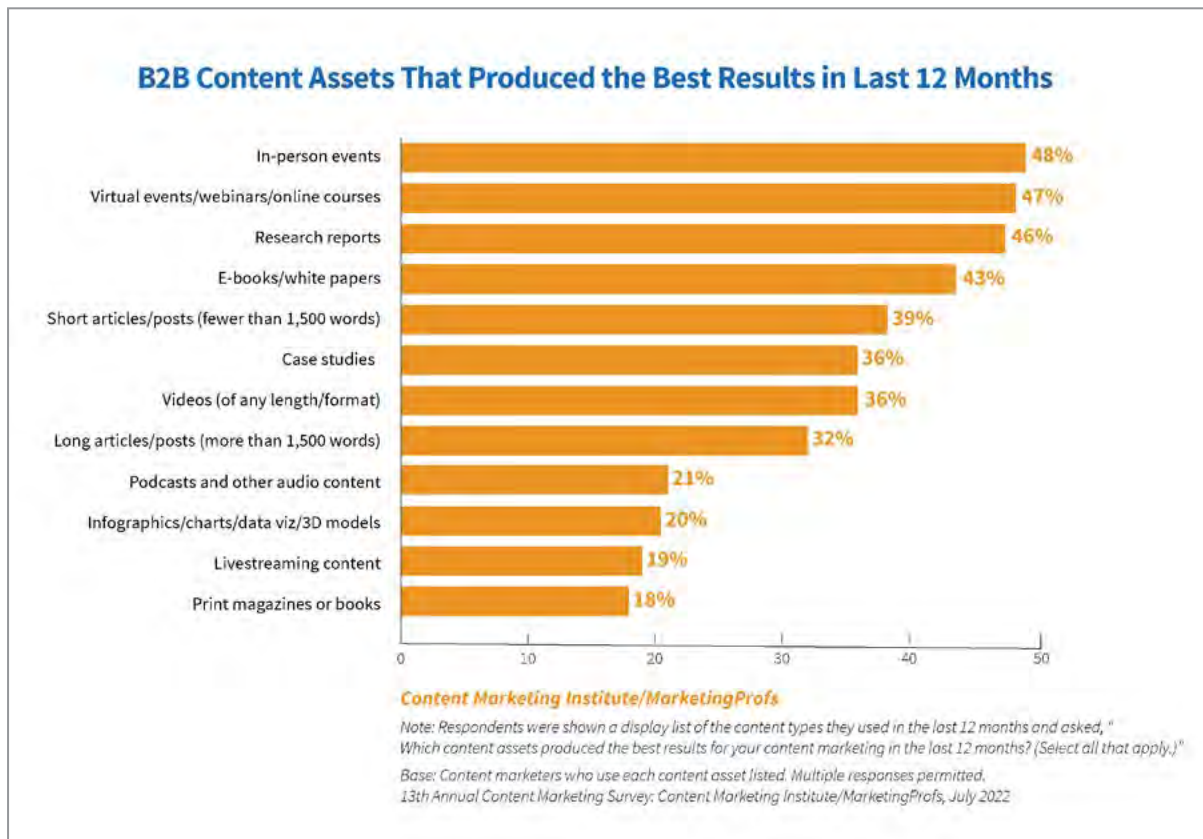
**3x**

more leads generated by content marketing, while costing 62% less.

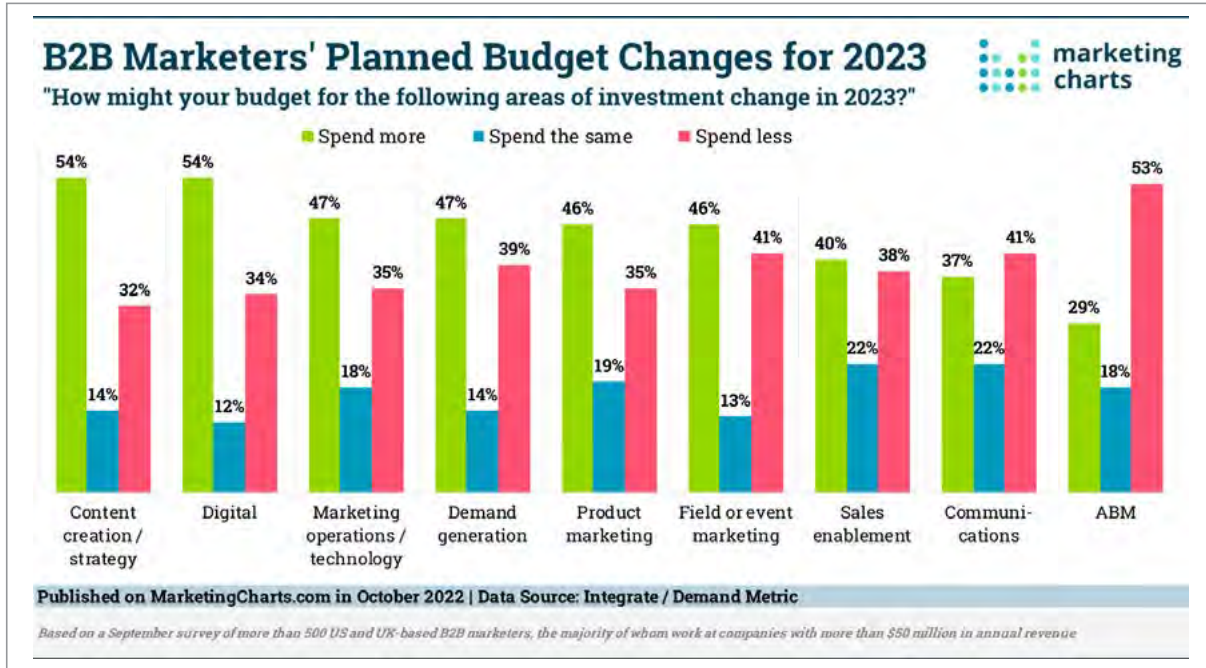
When it comes to objectives behind their digital marketing plans, a survey by the Hook Agency revealed two-thirds of companies said to “Increase Lead Generation” and “Increase Sales Revenue” were most important.<sup>25</sup>



So, what kind of content is getting the best results? 48% of B2B marketers say in-person events produced the best results in 2022, with virtual events/webinars/online courses (47%) and research reports (46%) close behind. This chart from Content Marketing Institute shows how other content assets performed:<sup>26</sup>



## And moving forward, this is how B2B marketers plan to invest their budgets for 2023:<sup>27</sup>



## More of what's working today:<sup>28</sup>

- **SEO:** 69% of marketers actively invest in SEO, and 78% of B2B marketers employ keyword research for SEO while creating content.
- **Content:** 51% of the businesses that invest in content marketing publish content every day.
- **Blogging:** How-to articles are the most popular content formats (77%), followed by news and trends (49%), and guides and e-books (47%).
- **Video:** Video was the primary form of content created in 2022. 86% of businesses use video as a marketing tool, and 96% of people have watched an explainer video to learn more about a product or service.

Companies continue to use both online and offline marketing strategies, but online spending has outpaced offline budgets.

## Key Statistics<sup>27</sup>

- **Video is highly effective.** 83% of video marketers say video has helped them generate leads, and 88% of video marketers reported that video gives them a positive ROI.
- **SEO is still relevant.** 69% of marketers invest in SEO, and 71% say that using strategic keywords was their number one SEO strategy.
- **Facebook is still the social media leader.** 69% of U.S. adults use Facebook, and it's the primary content distribution channel for marketers today.
- **Email shouldn't be ignored.** Roughly 80% of marketers have reported an increase in email engagement over the past 12 months, and email marketing has the highest ROI for small businesses.

## Content Types

While in-person events have returned, B2B buyers also rely on written content to research their major buying decisions.

Buyers find the following types of content most useful:<sup>30</sup>

- Product specifications and functionality (67%)
- Product comparisons (65%)
- Product success stories (60%)
- Content to show value to internal stakeholders (54%)
- Product tutorials (49%)
- How-to guides (48%)

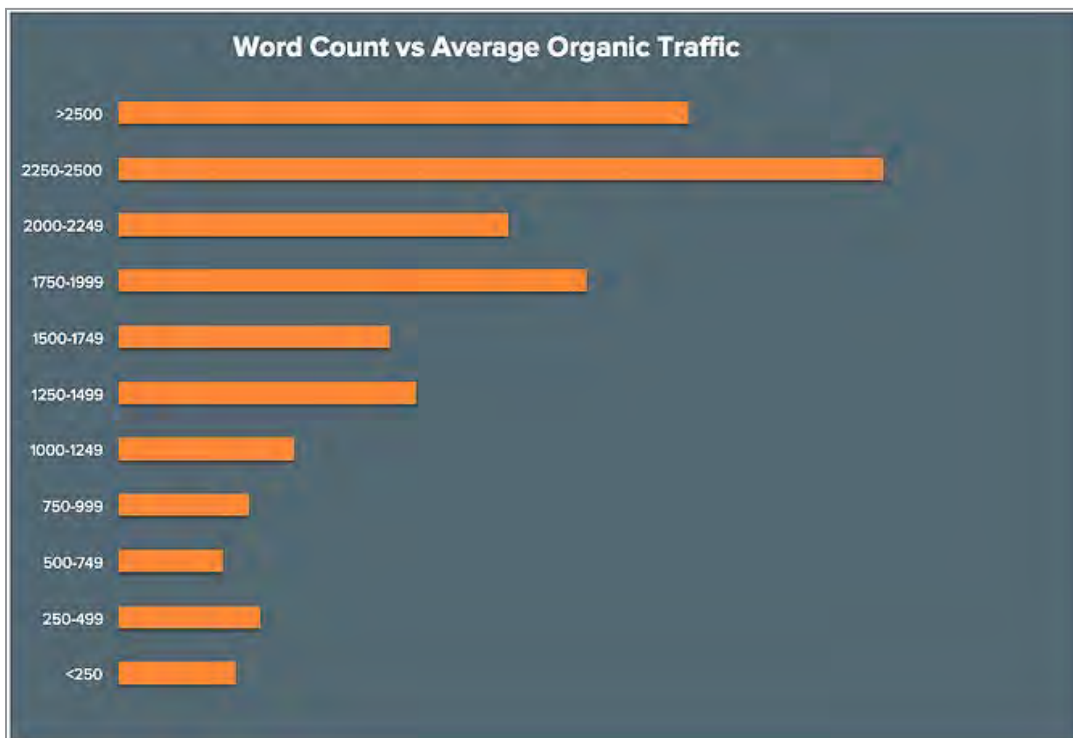
This content is published in the form of webinars, e-books, white papers, research and survey reports, blogs, case studies, and podcasts.

In HubSpot's State of *Inbound Marketing Trends 2022*<sup>31</sup> report, the **Top Media Formats** marketers used in 2022 were:

- Videos (59%)
- Blogs (48%)
- Images (46%)
- Infographics (45%)
- Case Studies (42%)

HubSpot also collected statistics on **content length and frequency**:

They found that the ideal blog post length is 2,100 words, based on an average reading time of 7 minutes capturing the most attention. While a blog post of 2,250-2,500 words gets the highest average organic search traffic.<sup>32</sup>



The recommended frequency of blog posts depends on both the size of your company and your goals.<sup>33</sup>

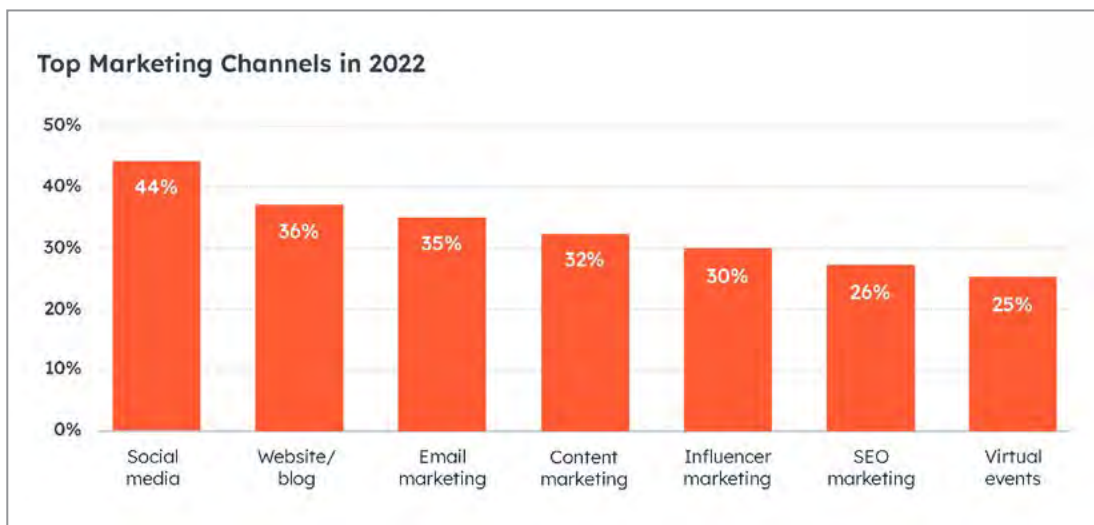
- **For organic traffic**, small blogs should publish 3-4 times per week, while larger companies should publish 4-5 times per week.
- **For brand awareness**, small blogs should publish 1-2 times per week, and larger companies should publish 3-4 times per week.

## Content Channels

The top marketing channels for both B2B and B2C marketers going into 2023 are social media, website/blog, and email.<sup>34</sup>

### 2022 Benchmarks of the Top Marketing Channels:

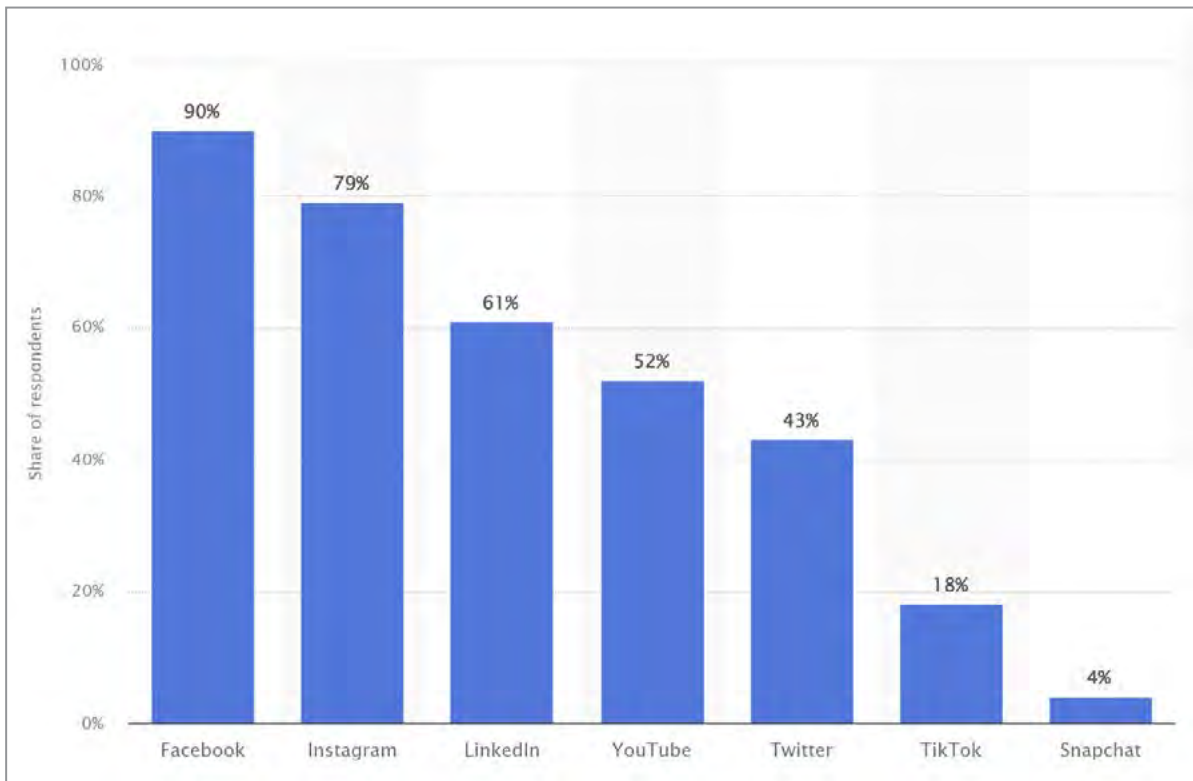
- Social Media (44%)
- Website/Blog (36%)
- Email Marketing (35%)
- Content Marketing (32%)
- Influencer Marketing (30%)
- SEO Marketing (26%)
- Virtual Events (25%)





**For social media** in particular, each platform appeals to a different audience so the most effective choice varies depending on the business. Statista reports the following leading social media platforms used by marketers worldwide:<sup>35</sup>

- Facebook (90%)
- Instagram (79%)
- LinkedIn (61%)
- YouTube (52%)
- Twitter (43%)
- TikTok (18%)
- Snapchat (4%)



And finally, let's look at traditional direct mail. **“Direct Mail Trends and Predictions for 2023”** from the experts at Who's Mailing What! include:<sup>36</sup>

- **Larger postcards.** Anywhere from 6"x9" up to a full flat size let you stand out and give you more room for your message, headlines, images, and response channels like QR codes.
- **Triggered programs.** Timing direct mail based on online experiences increases your ability to deliver the right message at the right time. Mailing in this kind of personalized and timely manner also drives higher response and ROI.
- **Informed Delivery.** This USPS program that lets residential consumers digitally preview their incoming mail and manage package delivery now has over 52 million users. The 4% discount on registered ID campaigns will continue in 2023.
- **Multichannel/omnichannel.** Like with other marketing trends, using direct mail in conjunction with other channels is good for the bottom line

That's a lot of data to absorb, but did you notice how the various survey findings revealed a pattern in the top channels working today?

**They all involve COPYWRITING.**

**Overall, it appears that content marketing, company websites, SEO, email, blogging, social media, and direct mail top the list of channels that are the most effective for surveyed marketers across the board.**

Now, let's think about that for a moment ...

... Does content marketing need skilled copywriting? You bet.

... How about company websites? Absolutely! Good copy will keep visitors on your site longer.

... Certainly SEO content is all about copywriting in a specialized way to increase traffic.

... What about email and blogging? Yes, and yes — quality copywriting is critical there, too.

... And social media? All of the networks require engaging and share-worthy copy.

... Finally, does direct mail get higher response rates when the copy is more persuasive? Of course it does!

It's a plain fact that copywriting matters a great deal in all marketing channels. They all require a constant feed of engaging content, written by a copywriter who knows how to grab attention, connect with prospects, and build long-lasting relationships.

The ideal formula includes:

- a documented strategy,
- a mix of proven channels, and
- excellent copywriting that provides helpful information to the right audiences, in the right ways.



“As time has evolved and different practices have come and gone, the thing that really works is using engaging content as a way to draw people to your business.

It's less of a pitch and more about being helpful and educating people. We're educating people enough to do business with us.”

— *Brian Clark, founder of Copyblogger, in an interview for Experian.com*<sup>37</sup>

## Proof from the Marketing Trenches

We asked our network of copywriters and marketers to chime in with real-world proof on just how powerful copywriting can be.

### From Copywriters:

“I started blogging for a B2B client two years ago, writing two posts a month. The cumulative effort has been so effective in bringing in quality leads, the company decided to stop producing an expensive and time-consuming print catalog. Their blogging investment has paid off and continues to do so!” — *Pam Foster*

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“After handing over the Video Sales Letter I wrote, my client sent it out to her list for her seminar. **She filled all the seats plus she added 10 more!**” — *Dawna Brown*

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“I took on a new client about three years ago. I still write for her weekly. In her words, ‘ ... **his writing has been the cornerstone of my revenue and has driven thousands of dollars in sales revenue** for the company. I was able to give my daughter a beautiful wedding reception thanks to the dramatic increase in sales which occurred when he came on board.’” — *John Decker*

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“I recently did a two-page promo with envelope teaser copy for a client in Philadelphia. The client said he’d never worked with a professional copywriter and was so excited, he offered to write a testimonial for me.” — *Steve Maurer*

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“I work as the PR & Marketing person for a national chain of lifeboat service companies. How do I know the copy is working? **I can tell by the names of vessels scheduled for service that my letters have been effective.**” — *Janis Vasquez*

“About eight months ago, we completely revamped the website design, copy, and SEO for a family dentist. Her results have grown every month. [During our] last call, **February of this year was 400% more profitable than February of last year.**” — *Christina Auck*

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“One of my clients reported that my new copy generated a **64% increase in conversions**. Another reported an average **open rate of 45.1%** and a **14% click-through-rate** for my email campaigns. Copywriting is certainly the key factor in these results.” — *Steve Coombes*

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“For the Ziglar Corporation, I worked on a membership campaign for a paid subscription program that yielded a 13% increase in prospects, 28% increase in members, **a 100% increase in conversions of prospects to members**, and a 27% increase in retention rate. For another client, my email autoresponders for their weekly featured products have been continually doubling their open rates and tripling responses nearly every week consistently for almost four years now over the previous copy they used.” — *Cindy Cyr*

### **From Marketers:**

“Without good copywriters, we don't have a business.”  
— *Julia Guth, The Oxford Club*

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“You might think of L.L. Bean as a company that sells high quality outdoor equipment and clothes. But L.L. Bean is a direct-marketing company that uses direct-response techniques ... **including direct-response copywriting.**” — *CrazyEgg Blog*

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“We don't sell newsletters ... advisories ... trading services, etc.  
— we sell desires: An early retirement ... the ability to live well in retirement ... the security of having enough money to last throughout

their lifespan ... independent living ... the best medical care ... an inheritance for their children and grandchildren. The newsletter sale is very indirect and very emotionally charged. If one element is weak, the entire promotion is weak. **Strong copy has to agitate, tug at the heartstrings, and hit one or more desires of the prospect.** It then has to be packaged in a compelling concept ... prove that concept ... overcome all objections that may be in a prospect's mind ... and give the prospect an easy way to order the product. All of these stages are needed to fulfill those desires, and this is why we need strong copy.” — *Vicki Moffitt, CEO, StreetAuthority*

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“It’s amazing to me... I’ve been in this business for more than 20 years, and I thought at some point, the supply of copywriters would catch up with demand. But it hasn’t—not even close. Still, today, the #1 thing holding most businesses back in our industry is the lack of good copywriters. With the explosion of video, ad networks, and platforms like Facebook, the demand for good copy far exceeds supply. I tell people in my business all the time, if our business was shut down overnight, only one group of people would have job offers within 24 hours—the copywriters!” — *Mike Palmer, Founding Partner and Copywriter, Stansberry Holdings*

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“Original, winning copy goes straight to our bottom line.”  
— *Paul Elliott, The Motley Fool*

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“In the simplest terms, strong copy is what sets us apart. As the Editorial Director, my mission is to force readers to understand that we think and invest differently at the Club. The most efficient way to do that is with strong copy that is chock-full of unique ideas — or new spins on old ideas. Those unique ideas are what eventually morph into strong sales copy and make our business viable. **Bottom line, without strong copy, our readers would never hear our message. It’s what gives us a winning business.**”  
— *Andrew Snyder, Oxford Club*

“Copy is critical to the success of Eagle Financial Publications in that it’s what sells our products — period. Good, effective copy rings true in the ears (eyes?) of the reader/viewer, identifies with that person’s feelings on the subject, then offers a clear-cut way to benefit the reader. It doesn’t matter how the technology evolves for delivering copy, whether it’s typewritten words on a page, beautifully laid-out documents for online delivery, video landing pages, or whatever’s next — even holographic promos ... the bottom line is **the promo will succeed or not, based on how effective the copy is.**”

— *Wayne Ellis, Eagle Publications*

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“Obviously, making money is really important. But that is a given. To me, strong copy can also bring on the right customer with the right mindset. So ... strong copy will be well researched, it will be quality, it will be emotional, it will be reflect the newsletter and the editor ... so it will bring on the right people and will set them up to know what to expect from the product. And in the end, **strong copy leads to long-term money.**” — *Aaron DeHoog, Banyan Hill*

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“I can’t imagine why anyone would NOT want to hire a great copywriter to their staff. **A great copywriter will bring both the skill of writing winning copy and great marketing strategy to the table to help them get ahead.** Great strategy and winning copy are like ‘sharpening the axe’ before you go out to chop down a tree ... because you may only get a few swings at that tree ... and they better get the job done!” — *Sean Greeley, NPE, LLC*

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“Great copy is the lifeblood of our business. Without talented copywriters, we simply couldn’t exist. Period.” — *Angela Salerno Jirau, Publisher/President, The Institute for Natural Healing*



# Copywriting Essentials for Marketing Success

## **Winning Marketing Campaigns Boil Down to One Main Thing: COPYWRITING THAT WORKS**

It's easy to be swayed by trendy online designs or “cool” programming tricks, but fundamentally, “Content — or Copy — is King,” more than ever!

You'll have the greatest success if you stick with copy essentials that resonate with targeted prospects and make a product or service irresistible to them.



These essentials include:

- **Headlines** that uniquely promise a benefit, solve a problem, or deliver a desired outcome.
- **Customer-focused messages** that speak to prospects one-on-one through stories, testimonials, examples, painting a picture, etc.
- **Helpful, scannable information** that guides readers through a user-friendly structure/easy-to-read format.
- **Unique positioning** that sets the company or product apart from all the rest, answering for the reader, “Why should I choose THIS option?”
- **Calls-to-action** that guide visitors to take the next steps (convert), such as signing up for a subscription, downloading a report, watching a video, posting a comment, or making a purchase.
- **Search Engine Optimization** — weaving the most relevant SEO keywords and sales messages into helpful sales copy, tags, captions, links, etc.
- **Design that *supports* all of these essentials** (not overshadows them).

Copywriters who understand and work with these essentials are the “secret ingredient” to profitable marketing. And they are worth every penny they charge.

Which brings us to the **AWAI 2023 Copywriting Pricing Guide** — a comprehensive list of fee ranges for the top 80 copywriting projects, along with budget tips.

To create this guide, we conducted extensive research on today’s fees for all the top projects mentioned previously in this guide, as well as others that are commonly used today. We compiled prices from copywriting leaders, national resources, marketers for all types of companies, and our own experience.

You can use this guide as a reference when pricing individual projects or entire campaigns.

# AWAI 2023 COPYWRITING PRICING GUIDE

## **Overview: Evaluating Your Return on a Copywriting Investment**

A copywriter is one of the most important investments a company can make when the mission is to sell products, generate qualified leads, bring in more subscribers, raise money for nonprofit organizations, and more.

According to Ryan Markish of Legacy Research Group, copywriting is vital to a business' success ...

“We’re publishers, so we’re always on the lookout for skilled and experienced writers who can effectively engage and inform our readers. In fact, we’ll probably pay our writers over \$20 million this year... and we’re happy to do it because it means our readers are happy and our company is growing.” — *Ryan Markish, Managing Partner, Legacy Research Group*

And Master Financial Copywriter, Paul Hollingshead, has talked about the sales generated by copywriters as well ...

“Companies use copywriting to sell everything from mattresses to financial newsletters ... from health supplements to fruit baskets. Nonprofits raise billions using copywriting techniques, too — from political candidates to environmental organizations to children’s aid groups. 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 copywriters 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 copywriting 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.” — *Paul Hollingshead, Co-Founder AWAJ and Master Copywriter*

With this in mind, the following fee ranges reflect an investment in professional, high-quality copy, written by trained experts.

## Fee Ranges for the Top 80 Copywriting Projects

COPYWRITING SERVICE	FEE RANGE
<p>Web Content And Other Online Copywriting</p>	
<p><b>1. Site Content Audit and Report</b> Boost search rankings and conversions by finding gaps, opportunities.</p>	<p><b>\$1,000-\$2,500</b></p>
<p><b>2. Keyword Research</b> Identify top keyword opportunities in Google, etc. on specific topics.</p>	<p><b>\$500-\$1,500+</b></p>
<p><b>3. Key Message Copy Platform</b> Get top results in all channels with a “master messaging roadmap.”</p>	<p><b>\$3,000-\$7,500</b></p>
<p><b>4. Home Page Content: SEO and Sales-conversion Copywriting</b> Set the stage for a great site experience that prompts conversions.</p>	<p><b>\$1,500-\$3,000</b></p>
<p><b>5. Category Page Update: SEO and Sales-conversion Copywriting</b> Rewrite the main web pages, such as About, Services, Subscribe.</p>	<p><b>\$250-\$1,000/page</b></p>
<p><b>6. Product Page Update: SEO and Sales-conversion Copy</b> Generate more traffic and sales for each specific product or service.</p>	<p><b>\$100-\$250/page</b></p>
<p><b>7. Order Page/Shopping Cart Sequence</b> Reduce abandon rates due to confusion or too many steps.</p>	<p><b>\$400-\$800</b></p>
<p><b>8. New Page: SEO and Sales-conversion Copy</b> Use professional, compelling copy for all new products and services.</p>	<p><b>\$500-\$1,250/page</b></p>

COPYWRITING SERVICE	FEE RANGE
<p><b>9. Banner Ad or Text Ad</b> Drive the most visitors to specific discounts or other promotion pages.</p>	<p><b>\$250-\$1,000</b></p>
<p><b>10. Online Sales Page for Single Promotion</b> Generate sales online with a long-form full sales promotion, which can often be dozens of pages long.</p>	<p><b>\$3,500-\$5,000+ for beginners</b> <b>\$7,500-\$12,500+ for intermediate</b> <b>Up to \$25,000+ for highly skilled</b> <i>(plus royalties at all skill levels)</i></p>
<p><b>11. Lead-Gen Landing Page</b> This short-copy “squeeze” page can bring in massive leads and sales.</p>	<p><b>\$500-\$1,500</b></p>
<p><b>12. Microsite</b> Boost sales on a super-specific website containing 2-5 pages.</p>	<p><b>\$3,000-\$7,000</b></p>
<p><b>13. Article</b> Bring in SEO traffic with helpful content. (1,200-2,000 words)</p>	<p><b>\$250-\$1,000</b></p>
<p><b>14. Editorial Piece for Newsletter</b> Engage newsletter subscribers with helpful content. (600-800 words)</p>	<p><b>\$200-\$500</b></p>
<p><b>15. Blog Post</b> Single, topic-specific blog posts, written for readers and SEO. (300-1,000 words)</p>	<p><b>\$250-\$800/post</b></p>
<p><b>16. Blog Editorial Calendar and Post Series</b> Continuously generate new traffic with ongoing, strategic posts.</p>	<p><b>\$500-\$800/ calendar</b> <b>\$250-\$800/post</b></p>
<p><b>17. Pillar Post</b> Establish your brand as the authority with an all-encompassing guide on your specific subject, written for readers and SEO. (4,000 words or more).</p>	<p><b>\$500-\$2,500/post</b></p>

COPYWRITING SERVICE	FEE RANGE
<b>18. “How-to” Guide or Tour</b> Provide helpful guides explaining how a product, service, or site works.	<b>\$500-\$1,000</b>
<b>19. Press Release</b> Get attention from the media and drive additional site visits.	<b>\$500-\$1,000/ release</b>
<b>20. Long-Form Video Sales Letter (VSL)</b> This long-form online sales video may be 20 or even 45 minutes long.	<b>\$5,000+ based on length/VSL</b>
<b>21. Short Online Video Script</b> 1-5 minute “explainer,” demo, how-to, case study, testimonial, or short VSL.	<b>\$500-\$1,500+</b>
<b>22. Podcast Script</b> Make the most of this medium with captivating scripts/copywriting.	<b>\$500-\$1,000/ minute</b>
<b>23. FAQs</b> Answer common questions asked by customers (great for SEO).	<b>\$500-\$1,000</b>
<b>24. Case Study / Customer Success Story</b> Offer problem-solution-outcome stories featuring a product or service (usually 2-3 pages, 800-1,200 words).	<b>\$1,200-\$2,000</b>
<b>25. White Paper (Special Report)</b> Attract email sign-ups/new leads with valuable, downloadable reports (usually 5-10 pages).	<b>\$2,000-\$10,000</b>
<b>26. E-book</b> Provide highly useful information to customers via electronic guides.	<b>\$2,000-\$7,000</b>
<b>27. Testimonial</b> Generate strong, “real-world” credibility for products or services.	<b>\$500-\$800</b>
<b>28. Autoresponder/Funnel Emails (Series)</b> Deepen customer relationships and/or drive follow-up purchases.	<b>\$100-\$1,000/email</b>

COPYWRITING SERVICE	FEE RANGE
<b>29. Stand-alone Email</b> Reach out and grow sales with special promotions, invitations, more.	<b>\$250-\$2,000</b>
<b>30. E-newsletter/E-zine</b> Maintain customer loyalty with regular issues filled with tips and offers.	<b>\$800-\$2,000 (writing and/or consulting)</b>
<b>31. Pay-Per-Click (PPC) / Adwords Campaign</b> Break through search clutter and drive traffic to specific online sales / landing pages.	<b>\$75-\$350/ad</b>
<b>32. Complete Site Re-Design w/Copywriter Overseeing Content Flow</b> Ensure excellent usability, SEO, and messages in a site re-design. (Separate from page writing.)	<b>\$2,000-\$5,000 for Copywriter role</b>
<b>33. In-Person Training for Staff Writers</b> Coach the team on the best copy/SEO practices, one-on-one.	<b>\$1,500-\$5,000/day plus travel &amp; lodging</b>
<b>34. Presenting to Other Company Employees</b> Make sure they understand how to add customer-friendly copywriting to the company's messaging.	<b>\$1,500/day plus travel &amp; lodging</b>
<b>35. Training Script / Copywriting</b> Help customers use a website service or complete a task.	<b>\$500-\$3,000</b>
<b>36. Teleseminar / Webinar Script</b> Ensure a smooth, successful presentation with a great script and slides. Content only. Design not included.	<b>\$1,500-\$3,000</b>
<b>37. Survey Wording</b> Get the most useful feedback from customers through great questions.	<b>\$500-\$1,000</b>
<b>38. Competitive Analysis — more in-depth</b> Set the company apart from competitors with a detailed copy review.	<b>\$1,000-\$2,000</b>
<b>39. Social Media Setup</b> Create an inviting page with robust ABOUT content, etc.	<b>\$500/network</b>

COPYWRITING SERVICE	FEE RANGE
<b>40. Social Media Management: Facebook, Twitter, and More</b> Consistently grow with posting/monitoring 1-2 hours/day, 5 days/week.	<b>\$1,000-\$3,000 per month</b>
<b>41. Social Media Ad Campaign</b> Attract Likes, Shares, and conversions with super-targeted social ads on Facebook, LinkedIn, etc.	<b>\$500</b>
<b>42. Company Description: Google My Business, Other Review Sites, Directories</b> Make sure customers choose you in Google, Yelp, Angie's List, others.	<b>\$25-\$500</b>
<b>43. Chatbot</b> Develop scripts for automated customer service chatbots to respond to common inquiries.	<b>\$2,000</b>
<b>44. User Experience (UX) Copywriting</b> Help users navigate a site or app while making every touchpoint with the user (from product and order pages to transactional emails) purposeful and user-focused.	<b>\$150-\$1,000/page</b> <b>\$100-\$500/email</b>
<h2 style="color: #4CAF50;">Offline Copywriting Services</h2>	
<b>45. Direct Mail: Sales Letter Package</b> Letter, envelope, order device for subscription/information/product promo, backend promotion, acquisition list.	<b>\$1,500-\$5,000+</b>
<b>46. Direct Mail: Lead-Generation Package</b> Usually includes a letter, envelope, order device, buck slip for the offer.	<b>\$1,500-\$5,000+</b>
<b>47. Direct Mail: Renewal Series</b> Renewal letter/blanket renewal insert to retain or upgrade subscribers, members, product buyers.	<b>\$1,500-\$2,500+</b>
<b>48. Direct Mail: Magalog</b> This multi-page sales letter is presented in the form of a magazine or tabloid.	<b>\$9,000-\$15,000</b>
<b>49. Direct Mail Newsletter-Style Self-Mailer</b> Grow leads, sales, registrants, etc. with an engaging piece.	<b>\$750-\$2,500</b>



COPYWRITING SERVICE	FEE RANGE
<b>50. Direct Mail: Postcard or Double Postcard</b> Stay in the “keep” pile of mail and prompt action.	<b>\$750-\$1,500</b>
<b>51. Telemarketing Script</b> Make calls that are “welcomed,” leading to conversions.	<b>\$500-\$2,000</b>
<b>52. Brochure (3+ panels)</b> Succinctly and clearly explain how a product/service benefits prospects.	<b>\$750-\$1,500/page</b>
<b>53. Sales Enablement: One-Sheet or Sell Sheet</b> Content for a standard, two-sided sheet to give sales reps excellent product detailers to use with prospects.	<b>\$500-\$1,000</b>
<b>54. Sales Enablement: Battlecard</b> Single sheet containing all the key points a salesperson might need when on the phone or face-to-face with a prospect.	<b>\$1,000-\$2,000</b>
<b>55. Sales Enablement: Call Script</b> (5 versions)	<b>\$2,000-\$2,500</b>
<b>56. Sales Enablement: Cold Prospecting Email Templates</b> (Package of 10)	<b>\$1,500-\$2,500</b>
<b>57. Sales Enablement: Follow-Up Sales Email Templates</b> (Package of 10)	<b>\$1,500-\$2,500</b>
<b>58. Sales Enablement: Sales Deck</b> (20 slides. Content only. Design not included.)	<b>\$2,000-\$3,500</b>
<b>59. Sales Enablement: Sales Proposals</b>	<b>\$500-\$750 per page</b>
<b>60. Print/Space Ad</b> Captivate prospects with a strong, small-space ad.	<b>\$800-\$2,000</b>
<b>61. Advertorial</b> Position a product/service as THE solution via a magazine-style article.	<b>\$800-\$1,500+</b>

COPYWRITING SERVICE	FEE RANGE
<b>62. Trade Show Materials</b> Grab attention at busy shows with bold, customer-focused materials.	<b>\$1,000-\$3,000+</b>
<b>63. Radio Commercial</b> Stand out with a clever concept and copy for a 30 or 60-second spot to increase brand awareness.	<b>\$1,200-\$1,500</b>
<b>64. Radio Direct-Response Commercial</b> Generate orders with an appealing direct-sale spot.	<b>\$1,500-\$2,000 each</b>
<b>65. TV Commercial</b> Make a big impression with a strong 30 or 60-second spot.	<b>\$1,000-\$1,800</b>
<b>66. Store Sign / Poster</b> Get in-person shoppers excited with store signs and posters with short, powerful messages about special sale offers, trial offers, etc.	<b>\$250-\$500 per sign or poster</b>
<b>67. Annual Report</b> Make sure the Company Overview is uniquely appealing to investors.	<b>\$5,000-\$10,000</b>
<b>68. Resumes and Personal Branding Profiles</b> Help professionals make their best impression to prospective employers and other opportunities.	<b>\$2,000 for bundled services</b>
<b>69. Copyediting</b> This valuable skill of revising written material to improve both readability and style helps companies avoid errors before publishing content.	<b>\$31-\$75/hour OR 3-5 cents/word</b>
<b>70. Event Materials</b> Make an impression at sales meetings, awards banquets, etc.	<b>\$1,000-\$3,000+</b>
<b>71. Speech Writing</b> Get a standing ovation at business gatherings, fundraising dinners, etc.	<b>\$3,000-\$5,000+</b>

COPYWRITING SERVICE	FEE RANGE
<b>72. Ghostwriting a Book</b> Have a writer prepare an excellent memoir or business book.	<b>\$5,000-\$10,000+</b>
<b>73. How-to Guide (such as a Buying Guide) or “Tips” Booklet</b> Hand out helpful printed guides and booklets to customers.	<b>\$500-\$1,000+</b>
<b>74. Product or Program Naming</b> Develop a pipeline of excellent product name ideas and taglines.	<b>\$1,000-\$3,000</b>
<b>75. Training Manuals (non-software / technical)</b> Provide effective employee training for call centers, processes, etc.	<b>\$2,000-\$5,000+</b>
<b>76. Employee / Human Resources Materials</b> Explain employee benefits info/guidelines to workers at all levels.	<b>\$2,000-\$5,000+</b>
<b>77. Welcome Packet</b> Help members/subscribers understand all the benefits and how-to's.	<b>\$2,000-\$5,000+</b>
<b>78. Copy Critique</b> Strengthen results with a professional review and recommendations.	<b>\$400-\$1,200</b>
<b>79. Collateral Audit</b> Review company materials (all channels) to drive consistent results.	<b>\$100-\$200/hour</b>
<b>80. Marketing Strategy, Planning, Consulting</b> Improve outcomes with a fresh look at various marketing approaches.	<b>\$100-\$200/hour</b>



# Budget

## How to Create the Right Copywriting Budget

The fee range chart can serve as your professional copywriting budget tool for estimating marketing campaigns, whether they're online, offline, or both.

To prepare a realistic budget, start with the ranges shown in the chart and then consider which of the following payment models work best for you.

The practice of paying copywriters by the word or even the hour has fallen by the wayside for most companies and copywriters. This is because:

- **Copy length or word count shouldn't dictate copy effectiveness.** Sometimes a short email can outperform a long one, but not always. As noted in our section on What's Working, longer copy improved search-engine rankings over short copy. We encourage you to test copy variables to see which perform the best for you, instead of focusing on a specific word count limit

- **Great copywriters work to meet project deadlines, not an hourly rate.** With project rates, everyone eliminates clock-watching. Meetings, phone calls, research, and other aspects are factored into project estimates, freeing up the writer to focus on excellent work

It's much more common to plan copywriting budgets in the following three ways:

## Project Based

This is a very common budget approach and it's quite simply based on the project scope, the number of items to be included, fee ranges listed in this report, and so forth. With this arrangement, copywriters often invoice 50% of the total budget as a deposit before work begins, and 50% upon delivery of the final copy. Some copywriters invoice 100% of the project up front.

## Monthly Retainer

For ongoing copywriting, such as monthly blog posts or e-newsletters, it's often smart to budget a retainer arrangement. This type of arrangement spells out the deliverables and monthly rate, usually for a 6-month or 12-month period (such as 4 blog posts per month at XXX per post), and the copywriter sends an invoice at the beginning of each month for the upcoming month's work. A "trial period" may be included, such as 3 months. And, quite often, there's a 30-day written cancellation clause on the part of the marketer and the copywriter, unless a slight discount was provided for locking in a 12-month agreement (or a similar commitment).

## Royalties

If the company is set up to track sales and pay royalties for each campaign, this can also be a beneficial arrangement for marketers and copywriters because everyone wins when the copy is successful. Copywriters typically get paid anywhere from 2% to 4% of every sale. That's on top of an up-front writing fee. It's like a commission... or a bonus. Here's an example of a newsletter subscription service sending 100,000 mailed letters and getting a 1% response. The copywriter got a \$10,000 writing fee, up front, and a 3% royalty. The letter helped

sell \$1,000,000 worth of subscriptions. At a 3% royalty — that's an extra \$30,000 paid to the copywriter. Altogether, that's \$40,000. If the letter does even better, the copywriter makes much more in royalties. Everyone reaps the rewards.

Here's something else to consider. Copywriting for one project is rarely a "stand-alone" effort or a one-and-done deliverable.

As we mentioned earlier in this report, effective marketing involves a steady stream of customer-focused copywriting, delivered to targeted audiences through a thoughtful mix of channels.

In addition, usually one piece of copywriting connects to another... such as an email offer linking to a landing page where the target prospect can download a special report. All three of those items (email, landing page, and report) need to be connected with consistent, valuable messages and calls-to-action.

Therefore, when developing a copywriting budget, **think in terms of an ongoing, highly valuable investment in brand success.** You can certainly roll out projects in phases, but ultimately, you should develop an effective "marathon" marketing plan, not a short sprint

# SUCCESS TIPS FOR MARKETERS

## How to Recognize and Hire Skilled Copywriters

We all know Copy is King. But how do you find a skilled copywriter to do the job right?

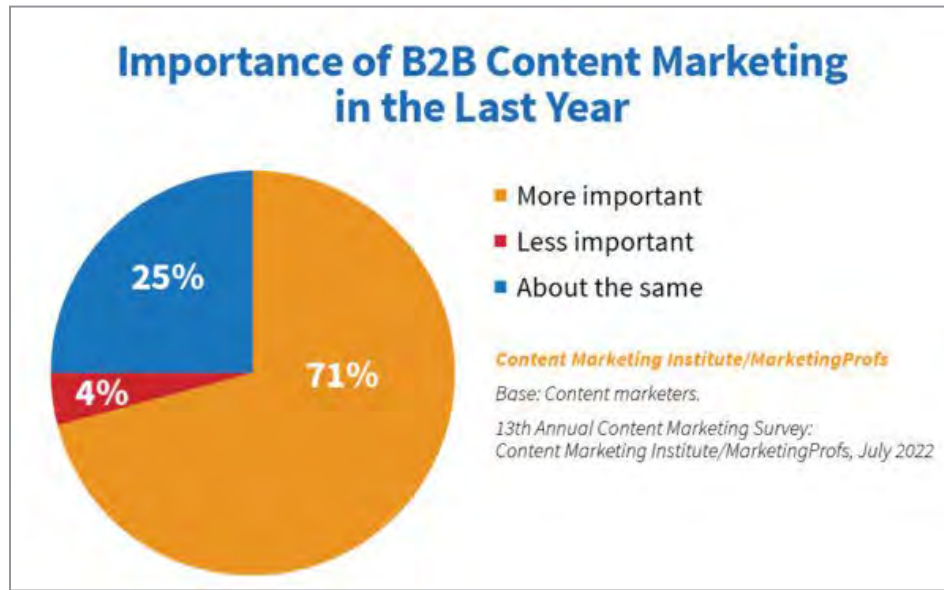
If you've ever worried about this, you're not alone. Recent surveys have shown that companies struggle to find enough skilled writing resources to satisfy their ongoing copy needs.

In the blog post *"13 Biggest Content Marketing Challenges in 2022"* by Marketing Insiders Group,<sup>38</sup> content marketers list the following among their top challenges:

- Determining content marketing ROI
- Mastering video content marketing virality
- Figuring out how to feed the content beast
- Maintaining volume, quality, and speed

And yet, marketers need to find the resources to overcome these challenges because publishing high-quality, high-value content is what is proven to get results.

In fact, according to a survey run by Content Marketing Institute and Marketing Profs, B2B content marketing has become even more important than it has been in the past.<sup>39</sup>



So, since content marketing is so integral for a company's success, where can you turn to create that quality content?

The first step is to recognize a skilled copywriter when you're on the hunt

## Recognizing a Great Copywriter

There are thousands of copywriters out there, and many of them are not qualified to write direct-response copy or content that WORKS, even though they claim to know how! As we mentioned before, very few copywriters deeply understand how to write engaging, persuasive, and action-oriented copy.

Your goal is to recognize the real deal, and we'll show you how in a moment

**But first, consider finding a skilled writer with experience in your niche industry.**

The value of your copywriter investment — and the ongoing return — will be much higher if the writer not only understands great copywriting, but also has experience in your niche market. He or she already knows your prospects and their needs; the industry language; the business climate; industry trends and



products; competitive considerations; industry challenges; and much more. The copywriter’s learning curve would be very short! It would be very easy for the writer to focus on understanding your unique products/services and what makes them the best options out there.

Therefore, we recommend starting with a narrow niche-focused copywriter search and then broadening it if you don’t find an industry-specific resource.

## Finding a Skilled Copywriter

Curious where to start your search? Try these four strategies ...

### 1. Use Google and other search engines to look for industry-specific writers.

Type in a search phrase that reflects your precise need, such as the following examples:

- “[niche] copywriter” (“fitness copywriter”)
- “[niche] content writer” (“industrial content writer”)
- “[niche] B2B copywriter” (“utilities B2B copywriter”)
- “[niche] blog writer or blogger” (“wedding blog writer”)
- “[niche] SEO copywriter” (“food and wine SEO copywriter”)
- “[niche] case study writer” (“financial case study writer”)
- “[niche] direct mail copywriter” or “direct response copywriter” (“fundraising direct mail copywriter”)

### 2. Browse through the AWAI Directory of Professional Freelance Writers.

This resource includes members of AWAI’s *The Professional Writers’ Alliance* — the first ever professional organization dedicated to helping writers in the direct-response industry improve their skills, network with writers and marketers, and find exciting projects. [In this Directory](#), you’ll find an alphabetical listing of copywriters. Click on any profile to learn more.

### **3. Post your project or overall need on WritersWanted.com.**

This resource, managed by AWAI, is the only online job board that's tied to SKILLED copywriters who have AWAI training. Simply visit the free [WritersWanted.com](http://WritersWanted.com) website and post your freelance or full-time/part-time job or copywriting need. You'll receive inquiries from qualified copywriters, and then you can take it from there.

### **Once you identify a copywriter you'd like to consider ... here are some insider tips for evaluating his or her suitability for your needs.**

- First, reach out to the writer(s) by email or phone, telling them what you're looking for. Have them write you a letter in response, explaining why they're a good fit. You want to find out if they have experience in the type of writing you need, as well as any experience or connections to your niche industry. You can ask to see writing samples too, of course, but this first letter will tell you a LOT about each writer's skills, professionalism, communication style, and ability to write persuasive copy, convincing you to choose them!
- Request work samples/PDFs and ask for links to websites the copywriter has written (if applicable). See what you think when you receive the samples. Do they excite you or leave you flat? These are telltale signs of whether or not the writer is right for you.
- Offer a Spec Assignment to the copywriter; something similar to the project you need. This could be a simple "headline and lead" assignment to see how the copywriter handles the spec: the questions the writer asks, the copy ideas he or she presents to you, and the way they're presented to you.
- Review the copywriter's LinkedIn profile or website to get a greater sense of the writing style, approach, methods, professionalism, and other attributes that demonstrate whether this is a writer you'd like to work with.
- If you're looking for a copywriter who understands SEO, you'll definitely want to pay close attention to the writer's website. Is it optimized with keywords and great sales copywriting? Did you find the copywriter because the website showed up high on page one of Google results when

typing in “[niche] copywriter”? These are very good signs. Next, look at client work samples as mentioned (the writer’s website should list at least a few links). Then, do a Google search for the products or services offered by those clients. Do they rank well in Google results? This is a fabulous sign that the copywriter does great work.

- Interview the writer and ask about his or her process. For instance, how does the copywriter provide proposals, drafts, and schedules? How will the copywriter go about working with your designer or web team?
- Talk about your needs and see what happens. Does the copywriter immediately talk about rates, or does he or she ask about your business goals and obstacles? Is the copywriter genuinely interested in helping you succeed? Does he or she follow a professional process that gives you the confidence to think, “This person can help me?”

This research can reveal a great deal about the copywriter’s “fit” for you.

“Copy is the **MAIN ELEMENT** in your ability to attract prospects and close them as customers ... ” and  
“This [relationship with your copywriter] is gonna be one of the most time-and-money intensive relationships you have in your business.”

— *John Carlton, legendary copywriter and author*<sup>40</sup>



# Planning Your Copywriting Process

Once you've hired a copywriter, expect him or her to play a role in seeing the project all the way through to completion. The copy isn't just a Word document. It comes to life in an email, landing page, website, or mailed piece. To ensure success, make sure the copywriter is able to collaborate with your marketing team (designer, programmer, etc.). This increases the chances that everyone's hard work is going to pay off when your campaign or website is launched!

When you begin working with a copywriter, you may be asked to complete a questionnaire such as a Creative Brief to outline the business mission, competitive climate, unique positioning, etc. This information will help your copywriter do the best work for you.

In addition, you'll want to provide the following materials and data to bring your copywriter up to speed

- Links to all your online materials: all current websites, landing pages, online articles
- Samples of any online marketing efforts: emails, e-newsletters, promotions, special reports, white papers, etc.
- Samples of printed materials: company brochures, direct-mail campaigns, sell sheets, ads, packaging, printed newsletters, trade show materials, etc.
- Testimonials, endorsements, and case studies
- Branding stylebook or guidelines if available (for direction on phrases, logos, and colors that must be used on the site — also any photos or branding logo images)
- Email performance, such as Open Rates and Click-Through Rates
- Direct-mail response rates such as conversion to leads or sales

- Website traffic reports, either from your host company or from Google Analytics. These monthly reports give your copywriter a wealth of statistics about site performance, such as
  - page hits (total number of page views, requests for images, downloadable files)
  - page visits (how many unique visitors landed on the site)
  - pages visited most often (indicating which pages are more popular)
  - abandon statistics (which pages were last seen before visitors left the site)
  - search engine traffic (which search engines referred the site to visitors)
  - keywords entered (keywords used by visitors that month — especially valuable)
  - browser traffic (which browsers visitors are using — Chrome, Firefox, Safari, etc. as well as sources of traffic, keywords used, and more)

### **Expected Deliverables, Timetable, and Approval Process**

The copywriter should clearly outline in a formal agreement the specific services being provided. For example: an email and landing page series; Search Engine Optimization for 10 web pages; 4 blog posts a month; a direct-mail package including an envelope, 4-page sales letter, and order form; etc. And, this agreement will include the agreed-upon fees for each project element. This eliminates surprises.

Next, you'll want to work out a specific schedule with the copywriter, indicating how long each step will take. For example, a web copywriting project may include:

- strategic planning: 3 weeks
- content mapping/copy message platform: 2 weeks
- copywriting complete drafts: 2 weeks
- coordinating with the web team: 2 weeks+ depending on turnaround times

However, having said that, many proposals do not include a specific timetable because the copywriter may need to work it out with you and your team. This happens more often than not to balance everyone's schedules, but it's worth mentioning timetables in case you want them spelled out as much as possible in the proposal.

A word about approval stages: It's always good to plan on being available and flexible as the copywriting project progresses, so you can provide feedback and approvals in a timely manner and keep things on schedule.

## What Trained Copywriters Mean for Your Business

Throughout this report, we've mentioned AWAI as a training resource for copywriters. Our programs — including the foundational program, [\*The AWAI Method™ for Becoming a Skilled, In-Demand Copywriter\*](#) — encompass nearly every type of writing project listed in the **Fee Ranges for the Top 80 Copywriting Projects**, plus we train copywriters on how to work effectively with clients as independent freelancers or on-staff writers, employ best practices, and deliver effective copy that will help you meet your goals.

Thousands of copywriters have completed our various programs, and a huge number of them are providing exceptional results to clients today.

Major companies and marketing associations know about our programs and actively seek out trained AWAI writers. “AWAI-trained” is a big draw and many marketers eagerly participate in our annual virtual Marketer Spotlight Roundtables where marketers, business owners, and copy chiefs have the opportunity to speak directly to a large group of copywriters about what they do, their current copy needs, and what they're looking for in a writer.

The following companies — from niches as varied as financial, health, and fundraising — were among those who participated last year looking for copywriters: Banyan Hill Publishing, Eagle Financial, Hay House, International Living, Investor Place, Lurn, Rocky Mountain Oil, The Oxford Group, Plural Inc., Stansberry Research, Tradesmith, and more over three days.

They know that AWAI-trained writers have the chops to do great work.

“I can’t run my business without copywriters. They are the lifeblood of my success.”

— *Paul Romano, President, Uniscience Group/Healthier You*

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**“We were very impressed with the AWAI writers’ understanding of what we wanted and of direct marketing fundamentals.** These writers are well trained! We had a really hard time selecting writers to test from it, but a few really stood out. We’re now working with one writer and will potentially hire a second one as well. Thanks, AWAI!”

— *Julie Broad, Rev N You With Real Estate*

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“There is no difference between great editorial and great marketing in this business. You’re just trying to convince people to take an action with words. That’s what both of those things are. On the one hand, you’re trying to get them to invest with you, on the other hand, you’re trying to get them to buy something you’re selling them.”

— *Cindy Butehorn, NetEffect Marketing*

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“I’ve hired and worked with copywriters for over five years. In fact, it’s the single most important part of our business... finding copywriters who can write compelling, high-converting copy. And, I’ve found, copywriters who know and study AWAI’s programs always know their stuff. They consistently rise right to the “A pile” of copywriters I consider to write copy for me.”

— *Tom Adolph, Acquisitions Creative Director, NewMarket Group*

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“I believe freelance copywriters bring new energy and new lifeblood and new ideas to the process. I have actively been trying to bring copywriters from AWAI back to Eagle and I succeeded last year at Bootcamp. I brought back three copywriters who we gave a shot and two of which are still with us.”

— *Wayne Ellis, Senior Editor, Eagle Financial Publications*

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# SUCCESS TIPS FOR COPYWRITERS

## Be the Solution for a Growing Demand

Copywriting demand is at an all-time high. Marketers are actively searching for professionals that know what you know. And... YOU'RE poised to be an incredible partner to them.

In the **Success Tips for Marketers** section, we made note of a recent Marketing Insiders Group blog post, *"13 Biggest Content Marketing Challenges in 2022."* In it, content marketers list the following among their top challenges:

- creating enough content on a regular basis
- finding sources to create amazing content
- promoting content
- measuring the impact of content

This is all good news for you because ...

- Content marketers need content produced regularly. You can do that.
- They need sources to create amazing content... that's YOU!
- Promotion and distribution are part of being a great content marketer... you can help with that, too.
- Measuring the impact starts with a good strategy... which you can help develop.

It's a perfect combination in your favor.

Now that you're seeing the needs, how you can solve them, and the fees you can charge — let's make sure you're connecting with the right clients.



# Where to Find Clients That Value You

You've worked hard to become an effective copywriter, and you're committed to a path of continuous expertise and growth. Now you just need to find clients who appreciate the value of your skills and dedication. Together, you both will thrive.

Here are some clues to recognizing smart marketers with healthy budgets versus companies who want everything for nothing and treat copywriting as a commodity, not as an investment.

## **Smart marketers continuously invest in quality copywriting that works.**

Let's say you join a trade association in your niche market. Which companies advertise on the association's website and the association journal? Which companies invest in top-quality trade show booths at the annual conference? And which have a robust website loaded with fresh, interesting content, such as case studies, e-newsletters, videos, and other materials?

These are clues into the companies that spend money on skilled copywriting because they value it. There's a very good chance they'll value your work, as well.

## **Smart marketers look for quality resources to round out their team.**

Yes, many companies have in-house creative teams, but the teams might be stretched beyond their capacities. They don't have enough bandwidth to handle the ongoing need for marketing materials or specialized types of copywriting required today. That's why they bring in specialized freelancers like you to provide SEO copywriting, email autoresponders, direct-mail expertise, and other knowledge.

## **Smart marketers get excited when they find writers who understand their niche industry.**

These days, there are so many copywriters to choose from (and many are not highly skilled), it's easy for marketers to get discouraged. But when they type into Google: "[specific industry] copywriter" and your website shows up at the top of page one, they think, "Here's someone who already knows our industry's landscape, audiences, language, and community!" It's a major benefit to them, and a huge win for you.

We recommend immersing yourself in a specific niche community of marketers and making sure they FIND YOU. It's the fastest and easiest way to establish your unique value and find the right clients.

## Presenting Proposals That Get a YES!

After discussing a copywriting project or campaign with your prospective client, recap everything in a thoughtful proposal. This proposal should include:

- **Goals:** What you'll help the marketer achieve through your work (increased leads, sales, etc.). This is first and foremost because the **OUTCOME** is what your client truly needs.
- **Scope and Deliverables:** A recap of the specific project elements you'll deliver (SEO copy for eight pages, three case studies, etc.) as well as an outline of the process you'll follow. Most companies will be delighted to see the process spelled out so they know what to expect. In some cases, this is even required if the company is large enough to have an internal team who approves freelance consultants.
- **Fees:** Position your fee as the investment that pays for itself many times over through immediate sales and/or long-term traffic that leads to more and more sales, etc.
- **Clear Terms:** Such as getting a 50% deposit up front, cancellation fee, deadlines, etc.
- **A Presumptive Close:** Thank the client and assume you'll both proceed with the project: "I can begin (next Tuesday)."

At this point, there shouldn't be any surprises for your client because he or she will have already discussed the project scope, deadlines, and fees with you. This proposal is simply a professional follow-up that drives the project forward with a big YES.

# I SUMMARY

## Important Next Steps to Harness the Power of Copywriting

### If you're a marketer ...

- Use this information to take a fresh look at your marketing strategy, copywriting needs, and budget for the rest of this year.
- Identify any opportunities you may be missing (such as the power of optimizing your web content for organic search or testing emails to improve click-through rates and orders) and adjust your plan accordingly.
- Then, try the steps we outlined in this report to find a skilled copywriter who will help you achieve your goals.

### If you're a copywriter ...

- Take a look at your fees to see if they align with the ranges outlined in this program.
- Set up your LinkedIn profile to start attracting marketers to you and so you can reach out and connect with them.
- Also, make sure your website reflects your best work and the value you bring to marketers.
- Finally, if you provide services in a niche industry, make sure your profile, website, and other business materials project this! It's the key to attracting more clients who appreciate your knowledge.

# About AWAI Copywriter Training



In 1997, just two years after the launch of the “commercial Internet,” American Writers & Artists Institute (AWAI) opened its doors to provide programs that equip copywriters with the critical skills for writing effective marketing copywriting, both online and off.

Today, we offer hundreds of in-depth training programs, books, events, membership sites, and other resources to help copywriters and marketers thrive.

For further assistance, the following resources are provided by AWAI for marketers and copywriters.

## Resources

### For Marketers:

The following links will bring you to resources that can help you find skilled copywriters:

- [AWAI Directory of Professional Freelance Writers](#)
- [WritersWanted.com](#)

“I love the idea of having first crack at all the top copywriting talent as they make their way into the market. It’s like being able to grab up all the top draft picks in football before the NFL teams have a chance to sign them.” — *Louis Hart, Best Life Herbals*

## For Copywriters:

If you're eager to advance your copywriting skills and career, we invite you to explore everything AWAI offers you, including our [Product Catalog](#), [Calendar of Live Events](#), [Free Article Archives](#), and the following additional resources:

- [The AWAI Method™ for Becoming a Skilled, In-Demand Copywriter](#) — the gold standard in copywriter and content writer training.
- [B2BWritersInternational.com](#)
- [TheBarefootWriter.com](#)
- [ProfessionalWritersAlliance.com](#)
- [DigitalCopywriter.com](#)

“Yes, you can make a very good living as a writer.  
Follow the steps in the AWAI programs, study, work  
hard, and you can create the lifestyle you want.”  
— *Rich Silver, Copywriter, Georgia*



# RESEARCH SOURCES

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