

## Lesson 13 Worksheet: Marketing for Creative People

This worksheet will give you a framework to get started building your reputation and or marketing your business online.

As this is a marketing worksheet, it's written primarily with freelancers and business owners in mind, but if you are an employee, you can use the same principles to build your authority and reputation within your industry.

**Important:** You *must* have completed Lesson 12, and defined your USP, before you get started on this lesson. Because if you don't know why people should be paying attention to you, it's hard to persuade them to do it! Conversely, once you are clear about what makes you special (in the eyes of your audience), it becomes much easier to communicate that.

## 1. Publish

### **(a) Get good at writing headlines**

You don't need to be a genius copywriter to succeed online -- but you do need to understand the importance of headlines, and write a good headline for every single piece of content you produce. And by 'good', I mean a headline that will tell readers (a) what the content is about, and (b) why they should stop what they are doing and pay attention to it *right now*.

You have to imagine that your headline is just one of scores of others, in a list your audience is scrolling through -- e.g. in their email inbox, on Twitter or Facebook. So you have to find a way to stand out from the crowd.

It doesn't matter how good your article, video, album or whatever else, no one will experience it if you don't grab their attention first. That's the headline's job: to grab someone's attention, so that they read the first line of your article, or press 'play' on your video or sound file.

Brian Clark has written a superb free guide to writing magnetic headlines.

<http://www.copyblogger.com/magnetic-headlines/>

Read through it and practice using the formulas. If you're anything like me when I first read the series, you'll probably object that a lot of the headline examples seem cheesy and formulaic. You might be tempted to write more 'creative' or intriguing headlines. Don't. This is a mistake. The headline templates are formulaic, but they are formulas that have been *proven to work*.

***(b) Should you start a blog?***

You've probably guessed by now that I'm an enthusiastic blogger. Blogging has worked very well to promote my business, so if you're prepared to put in the time and effort, it could be a great investment. But it does take a lot of time and effort, so think carefully before adding a blog to your business site.

You might also want to consider other options. Here are three of the main ones, with their pros and cons:

**Blog**

**Pros:** excellent for making you visible on the web, establishing your authority, attracting links and boosting your search engine rankings

**Cons:** - take a lot of time. Technical learning curve to begin with. If you stop, it looks as though you've given up or gone out of business.

**E-mail newsletter**

**Pros:** very good for reader engagement, and usually better than blogs for driving sales. Not so obvious if you don't write anything for a few weeks.

**Cons:** not as visible as a blog, and won't help your search engine rankings. If you don't have a prominent public profile, it can be hard to attract subscribers to your newsletter.

**Podcast or video blog**

**Pros:** great for people who don't like writing, or come across better 'live', or who have audiences who don't like to read. If you're a musician or stage performer, some element of audio or video is essential.

**Cons:** search engines don't (yet) search audio and video, so you'll need good headlines, text descriptions and transcripts. Some people are too busy to watch a video or listen to audio, and prefer to scan text quickly.

**(c) If you decide to start a blog...**

Make sure you use WordPress (from [www.WordPress.org](http://www.WordPress.org)), and install it on your own website. This is technically harder than using a free service such as blogger.com or WordPress.com - but it's critical that (a) you host your blog on your own domain, and gain all the benefits of incoming links, search engine rank etc, and (b) you have complete control over the site.

Blogging is a huge subject, which you can't cover here, but if you want to do it well, read Darren Rowse and Chris Garret's book *Prologger*. You should also be reading the following blogs:

[www.copyblogger.com](http://www.copyblogger.com)

[www.prologger.net](http://www.prologger.net)

## **2. Network**

You should already be familiar with online networking from lesson 11. In a marketing context, the main thing to realise is that social networks are designed for socialising rather than selling things, so they aren't the best place for sending out sales offers – at best, they will be less effective than sales messages on your website or to your email list. And at worst, they become annoying and a reason for people to unfollow or block you.

That's not to say you shouldn't mention your latest book launch or gig or workshop or whatever – just make sure you keep this kind of post to a minimum, and don't expect a huge direct response.

What is much more effective from a marketing viewpoint however, is sharing your work with your networks. Your friends and followers will typically be more receptive to a glimpse of your latest artwork, or a link to your latest article or video or podcast episode. So be sure to share your best content on your most important social networks. Sharing good work is a great way to contribute real value to your network and to be a visible and memorable presence in people's lives.

The more great work you share, the more of the right kind of people you will reach, and the more people are likely to check out your website to find out more about you and your work.

### 3. Build lists

#### *i. Setting up an e-mail list*

E-mail marketing is one of the most powerful forms of online marketing -- and consequently the one that is most often abused. **If you want to succeed as a marketer, you should never, ever had someone to your e-mail list without permission.**

I know it's tempting, and 'everyone' seems to do it, but that doesn't mean it's right -- or effective. In the UK, we have a Data Protection Act which means you could be breaking the law if you do this. And the European Union's GDPR legislation means you need to be very careful about gaining permission to contact people before sending them marketing communications.

And legal pitfalls aside, you can hurt yourself in two ways by adding people without their permission:

- i. You damage your reputation with that person. Every time someone adds meat to a list without asking, they go down a little in my estimation. Even if I like them and would have been happy to receive their e-mails. It doesn't hurt to ask.
- ii. If someone is annoyed by receiving unsolicited e-mail from you, they may just delete it. But if they are really annoyed, they could report you as a spammer (many e-mail systems have a 'report spam' button). If too many people report you as a spammer, you could end up on an e-mail blacklist, which means any e-mails sent from your e-mail address are likely to be caught in spam filters. Not what you want!

So resist the temptation to add people to your list because you 'think they'd like it'. Instead, send them an invitation to subscribe to your e-mail list, by signing up via a form on your website, and *give them a good reason to subscribe* (see below).

And every single e-mail you send out should include a link for people to unsubscribe from your list quickly and easily, no questions asked.

The easiest and safest way to manage an e-mail list, especially when it grows to several hundred names, is to use a professional e-mail marketing service. I use Aweber.com and MailChimp.com, both of which have excellent reputations for getting e-mails delivered.

**ii. What kind of list should you build?**

There are several types of e-mail marketing list:

- New products/services announcement
- Regular e-mail newsletter
- Autoresponder series - where everyone who signs up receives a sequence of messages in the same order

Obviously, the bigger the incentive to subscribe, the more subscribers you will get. So you will get fewer subscribers to a new product announcement list than to a regular newsletter.

If you don't have time to write a regular newsletter, then at the bare minimum you should have a signup form on your website for your announcements list. You may not get that many signups, but at least you'll know these are people interested in buying what you are selling.

Common incentives to subscribe include a free report or a series of free lessons. (You may have noticed that The 21<sup>st</sup> Century Creative works like this - the lessons are delivered via an autoresponder sequence powered by Aweber.)

Remember the principles of content marketing - very few people will be interested in just reading sales messages from you. If you deliver a lot of value via free educational or entertaining content, *before* you ask for the sale, you will attract more subscribers, who will be better disposed towards you, and more likely to buy when you make them an offer.

#### 4. Make offers

Publishing, networking and listed building will help you build an audience of potential customers. But you still need to close the sale or your efforts will be for nothing. Remember Sonia Simone's distinction between 'asking for the sale' and 'making an offer', to keep you focused on delivering value to your clients and customers.

##### ***(a) Make your offer great!***

The most important thing about making an offer is that *you deliver a lot of value for the money you are asking* - over and above the solid value you should already have delivered via your free publications.

If you're not confident that you are delivering enough value, get some feedback from existing customers for people whose opinion you trust. If you think you're not there yet, then the best way to improve your offer is to *add more value*, not lower the price. So think hard about what you could build into it to make it more attractive.

##### ***(b) Where and when to make the offer***

The most effective places to make an offer online are via dedicated sales pages on your website, and sending highly targeted messages to your e-mail list, or a combination of both, e.g. e-mailing your list inviting them to visit a sales page.

It's generally not so effective to make an offer on your blog or social networking platform, as people tend to see these as places to go to be entertained and socialise. It's fine to mix it in occasionally, as long as you're delivering plenty of value free. But if you make too many offers in these spaces, people will get annoyed and unsubscribe / start complaining.

### **(c) Copywriting**

When you make an offer, either in an e-mail or on a sales page, you need good sales copy to give yourself the best chance of success. If you have a really great offer, you don't need to be the best copywriter in the world, but you do need a grasp of the fundamentals.

Sales copywriting is an art, and hundreds of books, articles and e-mails have been written on the subject. For a summary of the bare minimum you need to say, I find this outline, quoted by copywriter John Carlton, hard to beat:

1. Tell them what you've got.
2. Tell them what's in it for them.
3. Tell them what you want them to do.

For example: "If you want a website that will bring you customers from around the world without costing the earth, e-mail James@amazingwebsites.com for a free initial consultation."

Here are some articles to help you make offers that will turn visitors into customers:

Does Your Customer Want What You've Got to Offer? by Sonia Simone

<http://www.copyblogger.com/copywriting-offers/>

58 of the World's Greatest Offers by Brian Clark <http://www.copyblogger.com/58-killer-offers/>

How To Stop Being Afraid to Sell by Sonia Simone <http://www.copyblogger.com/fear-of-selling/>

Seven Copywriting Tips for a Well-Staffed Website by James Chartrand

<http://www.copyblogger.com/web-copywriting/>

As well as making the offer, you need to answer the potential objections that will occur to prospects as they read your copy. Think about the conversations you have with customers in the real world. What kind of objections do they typically raise? What questions do they ask before buying? And most importantly, **what do you say to them that answers the objection and leads to a sale?** Make sure you include that in your sales page!

***(d) Be available***

You should also make it easy for (potential) customers and clients to contact you - especially if you use your site to generate business leads rather than online payments. A prominent contact form, email address and/or phone number are essential.