



# Stop Optimizing What You Hate

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My coaching clients come to me often with questions like these:

"I spent two solid weeks writing this query letter and it didn't get a response. I'd like a session to talk about why, and to figure out how to make my queries better."

"I hate writing those highly researched letters of introduction with a list of ideas, so I got out only three last week. Can we talk about how I can motivate myself and make more time to send out more of these?"

"I know I should have a blog to attract writing clients, but I'm not sure what to blog about."

"I'm not really into LinkedIn, and I don't normally get clients through there, but I know I need to use it. Can you help me perfect my LinkedIn profile and tell me how I can use all the extras on there to attract more clients?"

I totally get it. Every marketing guru out there is pushing their particular technique or platform as must-do, and we freelance writers feel we need to do all of it or be relegated to that dreary netherworld of no assignments, no cash, and no hope.

## MARKETING'S LIKE THE DIET DU JOUR

This all reminds me of those forums for people who are following the trendy diet-du-jour (I'm looking at you, Paleo). Someone will post, "I've been following this meal plan to the letter for the past two months and I feel like crap. Why?" And everyone else will say, "Are you sure you cut out *every last molecule* of gluten? Did you sniff the birthday cake at that party you went to last weekend?" and "Your diet was so bad before that your body doesn't recognize wholesome food, so that's why you're feeling like hell even though you're eating the perfect diet."

In other words, it's not that we're all different and this diet simply doesn't happen to work well for your particular physiology – it's that you're not doing it exactly right and you need to optimize even further if you want to see results.

It's the same with your marketing. These marketing techniques pushed by various gurus are presented as iron clad – and if they're not working for you, it's because you're not doing it right. Confounding the issue further is that the experts can always point to anecdotal examples of their pet technique or platform actually working for tons of writers.

So we turn to these same experts to optimize our Facebook posts, figure out the perfect clickable size for our Pinterest photos, make sure our email newsletters have subject lines that push the right pain points, and write the best possible calls-to-action in our pitches.

## **BACK IN THE GOOD OL' DAYS...**

I started out as a freelance writer in 1997, and newer writers often ask whether it was more difficult without all the resources writers have today, like business and magazine directories, writers' forums, bidding sites, job boards, the ability to email pitches, productivity apps, and blogs full of free expert information.

Nope. *It was easier.*

With no one telling you what to do, you had the freedom to decide what worked best for you. There were no experts who were invested in your following their plan or using their platform of choice (so they can sell you classes in Facebook marketing or SEO or how to build a sales funnel)...

...no social media platforms telling you if you weren't on there six hours per day, you were hopelessly behind the times (so they would have more eyeballs for their advertisers' posts)...

...no gurus telling you that blogging/vlogging/podcasting is the best – nay, the only – way to get freelance writing jobs and attract new readers (so you'll buy their book on blogging/vlogging/podcasting your way to success)...

...no job boards shouting that theirs was the only place to land good gigs (so you'd pay to join).

It was just you doing what you do best, with no one to tell you that you should be doing X instead even though you suck at it and/or hate it.

## STOP SHOULDING ON YOURSELF

The beauty of freelance writing is that *you* decide how you run your business – notwithstanding the desperate exhortations of gurus looking to profit from your confusion – and some marketing tactics will work better for you than others, depending on your personality, strengths, and preferences.

The form of marketing that will work for you is the one you enjoy doing so much that no one could stop you from doing it even if they tried. The one you love so much you're willing to do it a hundred times (or more) in a week. This perfect-for-you form of marketing won't need "optimizing" because *it will already be just right.*

Maybe you hate writing pitches but love-love-love Twitter. Then drop the pitching and work the hell out of Twitter! Curate and write the most compelling posts; source or create the most eyeball-grabbing images; connect with prospects through DM and @replies; take the time to learn about and take advantage of Twitter's newest features. And do this x100, every single week.



Or maybe you're one of the few freelance writers who are perfectly comfortable calling prospects on the phone. Ditch Twitter and Facebook, stop agonizing over written pitches, and let your email list and blog lie fallow. Write a simple script, compile a list of prospects, and start calling. Call, talk (or leave voicemail), hang up, repeat – like 50 times a day.

Or perhaps you, like me, love writing pitches and query letters. Forget the rest and focus your time and energy on writing as many pitches as you can.

*Volume is way, way more important than the particular technique or platform you're using.* Fifty cold calls you enjoy doing will beat out a handful of tweets, a smattering of Facebook posts, and a couple of pitches, all of which you struggle through because you dislike doing them. Six hours per day on LinkedIn will give you better results than one hour on LinkedIn, one on Twitter, one on blogging, one on your email newsletter, one on creating a podcast, and one on emailed pitches.

The more you love it, the more you'll do it. The more you do it, the better you'll get at it. The more you do it and the better you get at it, the more freelance writing jobs you'll score.

Isn't that why you got into freelancing in the first place? To do what you love and earn well from it?

## HOW TO KNOW IF YOU SECRETLY HATE A MARKETING TECHNIQUE

I know...it's almost blasphemous to say you hate writing pitches (a writer who hates writing? Gasp!), or dislike social media, or are 100% totally not interested in blogging, email newsletters, or networking. Maybe you're even hiding that fact from yourself, and blaming yourself when these methods don't work for you.

Here's how to know that you actually hate a marketing tactic. Pick one and check off the statements below that are true for you.

\_\_\_ You complain that you have no time for it, even though you manage to spend several hours per workday watching Netflix/talking on the phone/snacking.



- \_\_\_ You keep putting it off and feeling bad about yourself for doing so.
- \_\_\_ You feel guilty and embarrassed to tell your freelancing friends that you prefer a less-highly touted form of marketing to method X.
- \_\_\_ Whenever you finally sit down to do it, something else more important comes up.
- \_\_\_ It's a huge struggle for you.

If you checked any of the above statements, chances are you hate that form of marketing. ***I hereby give you permission to remove it from your business and your life.***

Keep it simple, get out of your own way, do what you do best...and do a lot of it.

Your Freelance Writing Success Coach,

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P.S. Tired of the overwhelm, and just want to know what steps you can take right now to earn more money faster as a freelance writer? Looking for support, accountability, critiques, and advice from a veteran freelancer? Contact me to set up a [Freelance Writing Success Coaching](#) session today!