

Daring you to spread your wings and soar to new heights

from the editor

Midsummer is upon us

While you are on vacation, your new freelance business will be on your mind. As you relax, it might be the perfect time to contemplate your special niche. Brenda Johnson relates her experience and gives you ideas to help you find your niche. Travel writers will use their vacation as fodder for new articles. Be sure to check out Mike Slagle's tips to make your travel articles sizzle. Among the other articles in the July issue you'll discover insight on how to appeal to your prospect's emotions from Vic Elias. If you are about to dash off on your holiday and don't have time to read Freebird now, print a copy to take with you.

Use the opportunities that traveling presents. Try out your 30-second commercial on the new people you meet. In case you missed it, see Freebird's issue #4, **30-Second Marketing: Creating Your Live-Action Commercial** and get your commercial ready before you pack your bags. Remember when you have a freelance business, there is no holiday for promotions. Have fun and make self-marketing and networking part of your vacation.

Maria Thompson

The (Sometimes) Rocky Road to Success

Chapter 5 - Discover the Obvious: Your Copywriting Niche

By Brenda Johnson

Are you searching for your special copywriter's niche – for that particular market where you can write with power, passion, and knowledge? First, explore within yourself, develop a self-awareness and knowledge to match up possibilities. Often a friend's objectivity can be very valuable in helping you to discover niches. You may discover you already have a niche without being aware of it, like I did!

The motivation and opportunity for finding and pursuing my writing niche came from a different and unexpected turn of events. Just after retirement, my husband was diagnosed with cancer. Treatment eradicated the cancer for a few years. Though it returned, prescription medication keeps it in check. As our medical insurance premiums exploded, we felt we could hold out financially until we each reached that magic age of 65, when Medicare takes over.

OR SO WE THOUGHT! We were alarmed to find that tax paying, reasonably successful, responsible U.S. citizens over age 65 can no longer purchase good prescription medication coverage. The Medicare reform passed by Congress in 2003 is truly reprehensible. It is one of many federal government "shockers" awaiting U.S. citizens who work, save, and succeed in life!

In the midst of these sobering discoveries, a luncheon conversation with a neighbor's daughter, visiting from California revealed two common interests -- a desire to write and a desire to earn more money! The daughter turned out to be Lyn Blair, an AWAI student. She was so excited about a new writing course she was taking - "copywriting" – I'd never even heard of it! My interest, I said, was to write for children. However, the idea of copywriting and earning good money for it was certainly very attractive and tempting.

Within days, I enrolled in AWAI's Six-figure Copywriting course. And after further discussions with Lyn, I discovered my niche had already been created – I just hadn't recognized it. While I desire to write children's stories, I'm also compelled to write and speak out, when I see an injustice being done. I can't stop myself! What a surprise to find that this is a marketable skill! You can write fund raising letters for groups and organizations that share your beliefs. You can affect changes in our society, whether through acts of federal or state legislation or through policies of corporations, businesses, and companies – large or small!

Fortunately, you may not have to limit yourself to one area in looking for your niche. It is likely that you have many interests and areas of knowledge.

- What do you do for fun?
- When you have time to yourself, how do you enjoy spending that time?
- What are your educational, professional, or technical skills?
- What are your hobbies, interests?
- What clubs or groups do you belong to?
- What magazines do you subscribe to?

If you haven't found your niche, community involvement can provide you with contacts for networking. Consider a few local community clubs or organizations. There are so many that it should be easy to find one or two in which you can participate with enthusiasm. For example, get involved with a local civic or service organization: Chamber of Commerce, Rotary Club, Lion's Club, Jaycees, Kiwanis Club, Optimist Club, YMCA.

Join a professional or special interest group: a local chapter of a men's or women's business organization, a local BNI, your high School – college – university alumni association, VFW, American Legion, athletic boosters, art club, community theater, or perhaps a community musical group.

What about a hobby club such as gardening, photography, genealogy, painting, or craft? There are many sports clubs too; i.e., hunting, golf, tennis, softball, soccer, bowling, aerobics or even a fan club for your favorite sport's team.

Don't forget your church, religious, and fraternal organizations, which are often active in fund raising. While many of these groups may use volunteer services, through the people you meet, you will be steered toward the businesses, the companies, the larger state or national organizations that use a copywriter for sales, advertisement, and publicity.

Especially while learning your copywriting skills or just starting your business volunteer to write for local organizations. You will gain experience and practice while advertising yourself at the same time.

The most important thing is to join one or two organizations that you will enjoy so that it will be fun for you! That and the common interest you share with the group will add to your confidence and credibility. Networking – schmoozing – whether it occurs at an organizational event or in casual conversation – lets people know what you do. You may be amazed at the opportunities you find.

Below are examples of other AWAI students who have used personal interests and abilities to find and create their own individual copywriting niches and to use their copywriting skills in imaginative ways. As Bonnie Lowe stated, "Although my site's theme is NOT copywriting, I certainly used what I learned in the AWAI Copywriting Course to craft my site's sales letters for my ebook and newsletter sign-up!"

April Morelock at www.foxhawke.com

Diane Barnum at <http://movingaheadcommunications.com/yes.html>

Bonnie Lowe at www.best-interview-strategies.com

Carolyn Warren at www.mortgage-helper.com

As for me and my niche, a little self-analysis, input from a friend and the AWAI copywriting course are enabling me to become a "one woman crusader" as my daughter has always described me. By adding community involvement and interaction, I will find more copywriting niches, and you will too!

Getting into Your Prospect's Mind

By Victor M. Elias

It's amazing to see the enthusiasm and energy that children have for life.

Unfortunately, it's a quality that fades in many people as they age. By the time they reach middle age a hardened conservative outlook replaces youthful enthusiasm.

So what does all of this have to do with marketing, and selling your product?

Everything.

A person responds best to someone who is on the same emotional level as they are. So, if you're selling to an elderly, conservative-minded prospect, your promotion must likewise speak in a conservative voice.

If it was written in a cheerful, enthusiastic tone, the prospect wouldn't relate, and the promotion will have no effect.

The range of emotions and feelings has long ago been charted on a scale. It has positive emotions (like enthusiasm) on the top end, with emotions becoming more and more negative as they go towards the bottom end.

And most people descend this scale as they go through life. Which is why determining your exact market is so crucial. By being aware of your prospect's emotional tone, it's possible to produce a promotion that strikes the same emotional chord – and delivers your message to the prospect in a way that's real to him or her.

These emotions have been plotted on a chart called The Emotional Tone Scale. A partial list of which goes in this order:

- Enthusiasm
- Cheerfulness
- Strong Interest
- Conservatism
- Boredom
- Antagonism
- Anger
- Resentment
- Fear

And although we all fluctuate up and down this-scale throughout a day - everyone has a level that most describes his personality. Likewise, every market segment will have an emotional tone that best describes it.

For example...

A promotion for a surfing magazine subscription would succeed best when written in an enthusiastic voice - to match the feeling of its audience, and their attitude towards the sport and towards life in general.

A financial advisory subscription targeting older investors would have to reflect the conservative attitude this demographic group feels toward investing and life as well. If you used an overly enthusiastic voice to this market, those readers wouldn't relate. It would sound too 'hyped up' to them. And your results would suffer.

The application of the Emotional Tonal Scale is so amazing. It works universally on all emotional tones, in every type of promotion imaginable. For instance...

When recruiting for their cause, world terrorists use the lower emotions of fear and anger to gain their fanatical recruits.

And on the other end of the spectrum, an enthusiastic self-improvement guru with his energetic tone will sell countless betterment courses to like-minded audience.

Matching the exact emotional tone of the intended prospect creates a common feeling that carries your sales message with agreement and reality.

Learn how to step into your prospect's shoes. Get into his mind and understand his emotion and how to match it. After all, emotion is what moves your prospect into action. Emotion motivates him to pull out his credit card or check book and buy. Zooming in on the right emotion has everything to do with marketing and selling your product.

(The Emotional Tone Scale was developed in 1950 by L. Ron Hubbard)

About the author Victor M. Elias, completed AWAI's Master's Program and works full-time as a copywriter in Kelowna, BC. He specializes in direct response copy for the publishing industry. His clients include Phillips Publishing, Agora Publishing and The World Bank. For more information visit: www.resultswriter.com

The Tool Box

Award winning print utility

Now you can gain more printing control with **Fine Print**. Eliminate annoying print problems. You can save paper, save ink and toner, delete unwanted pages, save as JPEG, TIF or BMP.

When you must print a document with many pages, but don't need full size pages, Fine Print will allow you to print multiple pages on one 8-1/2 11 sheet of paper and print on both sides, too.

If you are printing web pages you can decide if you want to remove advertising bitmaps. Often web pages have little on them. The **Fine Print** preview will show that an extra page exists and allow you to get rid of it before it prints!

Suppose you want to print a seminar, airline or other schedule from a web page. If the schedule pages are inconveniently truncated, **Fine Print** enables you to scale pages to fit on a single sheet.

If you travel, you need to print out your itinerary, hotel and car reservations, city maps and perhaps a list of restaurants and attractions. Instead of printing a lot of web pages and carrying them with you, use **Fine Print**, to easily assemble your pages, save them and rearrange them in the order you want. Then print your set of pages as a convenient booklet. You can email the whole formatted "booklet" to any travel companions who can also print it in any desired format.

Fine Print works with all printers and all Windows applications. Download this versatile printing utility at www.fineprint.com

A Professional Web Site – Made Easy

By Frauke Nonnenmacher

Part 5 – Linking to Other Sites

(If you've missed parts 1, 2, 3 or 4, you can get them from the Freebird archives [here](#))

In the last part of this tutorial you learned how to link to different pages on your own web site. In this installment you'll learn how to link to other web sites on the Internet.

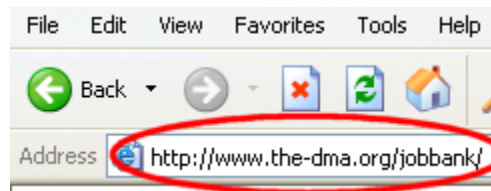
The principle is very much the same. You use the same `<a>` tag, only with a few differences. For starters, you need to specify the hyperlink reference for your link using a full URL, rather than a file location. For example, if you wanted to link to my site, you would use the following hyperlink tag:

```
<a href="http://www.creativecats.com">Creative Cats</a>
```

Or, if you wanted to link to the Recommended Reading page at Freebird, you would use this:

```
<a href="http://www.freebird-zine.com/reading.html">Freebird's Recommended Reading</a>
```

The best way to get the URL you need is to visit the page you want to link to. Once you're there, the correct URL will be displayed in the address field of your web browser. Simply highlight it and copy and paste it into your web document.



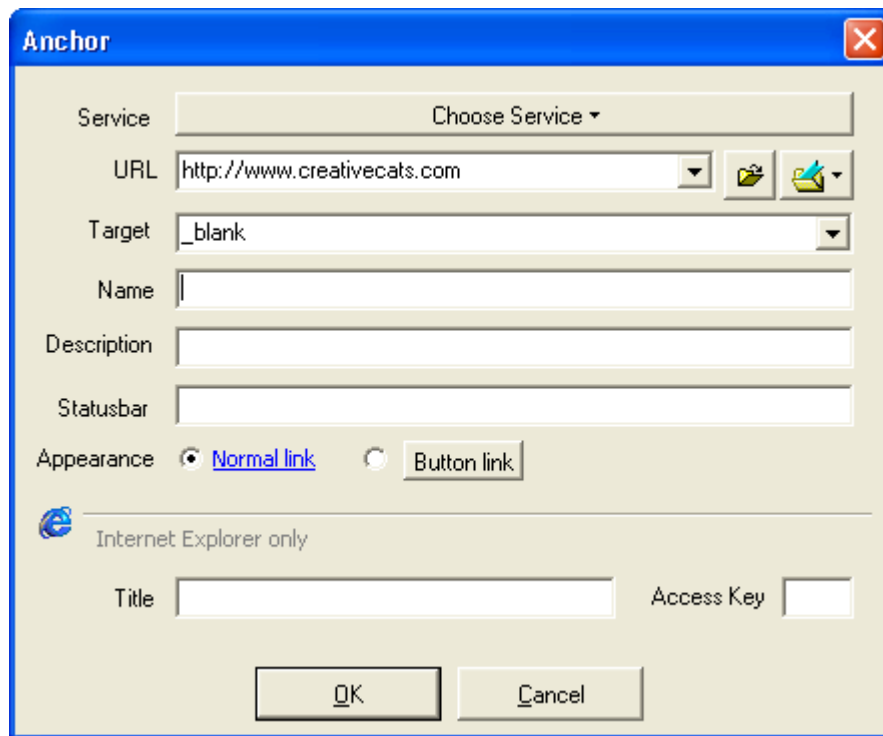
Note: There are web pages you can't link to this way, if they have a URL keeper enabled, such as my Creative Cats site. If you go there and visit different pages, you'll see that the URL displayed in the address bar of your browser still remains at `www.creativecats.com`, rather than change to `www.creativecats.com/portfolio.html`, for example. Another time when you shouldn't link to a particular page is one that has content that is generated as you view it, such as results from search engines. Because the results can change quickly, these pages may not have the same content two times in a row.

Finally, let's look at a useful attribute for hyperlinks, the `target`. This attribute is used mainly with framed sites, but frames are beyond the scope of this tutorial. Nevertheless, one of the possible target types is very useful for a non-framed web site, like the one you're developing. The `target` attribute is used the following way:

```
<a href=http://www.creativecats.com target="_blank">Creative Cats</a>
```

A hyperlink with the `target` specified as `"_blank"` (the underscore in front is important!) will open the page in a new browser window. Using the `"_blank"` target attribute is ideal if you want to show your visitors something elsewhere on the web, but don't want them to leave your site.

1st Page lets you insert external hyperlinks easily. Click on the external anchor button on the standard toolbar (next to the local anchor you used in the last chapter). The following window will open:



Don't worry about all the fields. The only two you need at the moment are the ones you see completed in the image above – but if you're feeling adventurous, feel free to experiment with the others.

Homework:

Add to your web site some links to other sites your clients will find useful. For example include the web site of another company you're partnering with – if you're a copywriter, you could add a link to a designer you often work with, or vice versa.

Keep Up with the Times

In marketing, statistics "rule". If you don't get the statistical feedback, how do you measure your success? Exposure and sales go hand in hand. The best sales letter or ad is the one that produces results—has the most viewers and results in the most sales. Part of your education in marketing should be to keep up with what is "working". What marketing techniques excite your readers and get them to buy? Wouldn't it be great if someone gathered up the statistics for you, so all you had to do was soak up the successful guidelines? Well someone has. Ad Age. See <http://www.adage.com/images/random/FactPack2004.pdf> to catch up on the latest in advertising successes. Find out what companies and agencies are hitting the mark and what ads people love. Discover and take advantage of a great resource everyone in sales and marketing should have in his back pocket.

From the Travel Journal

This issue brings you travel tips from a seasoned AWAI travel writing graduate and a postcard from a beginning travel writer awed by the splendor of New Zealand's North Island.

Two Sure-Fire Ways to Make Your Travel Articles Sizzle

By Mike Slagle

You've returned from your trip. Your notebook is swollen with scribbled observations – the sights, sounds, and so forth, to add color and detail to your next travel article or two. But, have you captured the sorts of details that will make your article stand out from all the others about that particular place?

Here are two tips you can use to give your travel articles the “sizzle” editors are eager to share with their readers.

#1 – Throw away your guidebook!

OK, maybe not literally. But learn to embellish your travel experiences by doing a bit of exploring beyond the highlighted “must-sees” of the guidebook pages. For starters, most of these places have been written about so much that you'll be hard-pressed to offer an editor a new slant on them. Not impossible (as you'll see in Tip #2, below), but very difficult...particularly if you're relatively new to travel writing. Instead, look for places most tourists don't know about ...but would love to!

And the best way to find these places is by talking to the locals. Most are great ambassadors when it comes to showing off their city or country. For example, when an Italian acquaintance recently offered to give me a guided tour of his native Genoa, I asked him to show me that city's “hidden personality” – his favorite places that tourists don't likely know about. The result was a thoroughly enjoyable afternoon exploring the back streets of Genoa ... and a journal filled with the seeds of a unique look at this often-written-about city.

Don't be afraid to strike up conversations with the locals. They'll recommend restaurants that aren't in your guidebook. Direct you to little-known local curiosities. They may even point you to the next “hot” tourist destination an editor is dying to share with her readers!

#2 – Look for the unusual among the common!

This one's a real gem when it comes to selling your travel articles. When you travel you should train your “creative eye” to pick up on new or unusual ways of looking at a place. Often, by juxtaposing two seemingly unrelated things, you'll be able to create a



Capella della Brunate located near the town of La Morra was restored and decorated by two contemporary artists, David Tremlett and Sol LeWitt.

fresh perspective on an otherwise over-done subject. In other words, you're looking for a new "story" to tell about a place.

Sometimes that unique story can be extremely subtle – like the irony that Mount Vernon, the home of General Washington who led our revolutionary army against the British, was named *in honor of a British admiral*.

Or, the story might be about an unusual event going on at a popular destination – like the gathering of international amateur aviators at a campground outside Orlando. Even better, for this event the Italian delegation arranged to have a cargo ship container of pasta and other cooking ingredients delivered to the site – they were the group's volunteer cooks for the week! Not your usual Disney World crowd ...and a couple of unique stories begging to be written.

Then there are those times when the unusual jumps right out at you – like the small chapel I "discovered" in the middle of an Italian vineyard. It's exterior was a colorful work of abstract art that seemed starkly out of place among the vines. Now...there had to be a story in that!

And, indeed, there was. A bit of post-trip research and an interview with the owner of the vineyard surrounding the chapel produced the facts behind the story. One so unique that the first editor I approached purchased it ...*two hours after receiving my emailed query*. (Mike Slagle's article about *Capella della Brunate* will appear in the July/August issue of *Dream Of Italy*.)

Become intimate with the places you travel to. Get to know the locals. Leave your guidebook in your hotel room and spend a day or two just meandering through the city or the surrounding countryside. Discover something unique about a place – whether it's your first visit or your hundredth – by looking at it with what Marcel Proust called "new eyes" each time.

And then return home and start adding to your published clips.

About the Author

Mike Slagle is a freelance writer and copywriter residing in Ft. Wayne, Indiana. His recently published clips include non-fiction articles in [Freebird](#), [The Traveler](#), [Latitudes and Attitudes](#), and [Dream of Italy](#), as well as fiction in the literary journal [Rosebud](#).

Greetings from God's Country—The North Island of New Zealand

By Teresa Widla

Under misty overcast skies on a fall day, I drove through New Zealand's beautiful North Island. The Island's rolling hills and green pastures with tall fences looked like peace on earth. With deer roaming the edges of the tree line and herds of sheep grazing in pastures, I was as close to nature as one could imagine.

In Auckland I rented a small compact car and traveled southward to Palmerston North, just God and myself. As I traveled south I reached an area where the terrain flattened and distant mountains surrounded me like a cloak. I was hoping for a glimpse of sun as I drove along the meandering two-lane paved highway.

Suddenly a prism of colors appeared, extending far into the sky, arching gracefully to touch the ground—a magnificent rainbow. It seemed close enough to touch. I had a feeling of being able to drive right into it. For miles and miles on the curving road, I was one with the rainbow before it vanished.

The rainbow was a picture perfect opportunity, but I had no camera to capture the beautiful image. Nevertheless, those tranquil moments remain a fond memory for future meditation.

I've seen many rainbows in the United States, but none stirred my heart or compared to New Zealand's spectacular rendition. New Zealand and particularly its North Island are breathtaking. On my next visit to God's country, I won't forget my camera!

Teresa Widla, Georgia, USA, AWAI Travel Writing student

Simple Steps to Avoid PC Problems

By Maria Thompson

These days most freelance businesses revolve around a personal computer. As your most important tool you'll find a properly functioning PC critical for communication with clients, managing the financial end of your business, research and producing your projects. Both new and old computers have occasional problems: crashes, driver conflicts, application errors, software incompatibilities, hardware failure, or worse.

Many people treat their computer like a TV. They feel once their computer is up and running they should not change anything. They expect to turn it on and have it work properly. However, a computer is more like a car. To run smoothly a computer needs periodic maintenance.

Neglecting pesky little PC problems can ultimately turn a small annoyance into a giant headache. If your computer suddenly malfunctions, you could be out of business for hours or even days at a time. Schedule regular maintenance on your personal computer to prevent needless frustration, loss of project documents or a major task like reformatting your hard drive.

Simple Preventative Measures

Follow these steps to prevent the most common personal computer problems.

1. Get the latest Microsoft Windows updates available for your computer's operating system, software, and hardware. Keeping Windows updated is a task necessary to prevent viruses, worms, and hacker attacks. The easiest way to access the updates is to open an Internet Explorer Window. Click on Tools. Then click on Windows Update. The Windows Update screen will open. Microsoft automatically scans your computer and provides you with a selection of updates tailored for your operating system. From the list of updates always install the Critical Updates. The other updates on the list may be installed at your discretion.

Along with Windows Updates, Microsoft will notify you of any new security patches. Patches are like band-aids that are issued when the company finds holes in the software. Be sure to keep these patches updated to repair inefficiencies in your operating system.

2. Install an anti-virus program. There are a variety of anti-virus programs on the market. Norton and McAfee sell two of the most popular programs. Grisoft offers their AVG Anti-Virus Free Edition to home users worldwide. Click here to download [Grisoft](#). Once you're done with the download, be sure to use their handy tool to create back up disks of your major programs in case of a virus attack. Schedule the automatic updates that Grisoft offers. Most anti-virus manufacturers have automatic update scheduling. It is imperative that you schedule automatic updates, or check manually every week to get the latest virus databases.
3. When your computer problems aren't solved by a Windows update or performing an anti-virus scan look for parasites with anti-spyware. Many applications like freeware, shareware, cookies, media players, interactive content, and file sharing may contain code that can track your surfing habits, profile your shopping preferences, and hijack your browser start page. Spyware applications may have parasites that are mining data from your system as you use the WEB. Use anti-spyware to search for and eradicate data mining parasites. [Lavasoft](#) is one provider of anti-trackware solutions. Their Ad-Aware Standard Edition is available as a free download. Click here to download: [Lavasoft](#) Another anti-spyware application [Spybot](#) can detect and remove a multitude of adware files and modules from your computer. Spybot can also clean program and Web usage tracks from your system, which is especially useful, if you share your computer with other users.
4. Periodically, use a program like [Clean Center](#), a user-friendly application developed to free up disk space by deleting junk files that are no longer used by any software on your system. Win-Optimizer is another utility application that also does a similar clean-up job.

Just as your car may break down if you don't keep up with proper maintenance, so may your computer. You wouldn't risk not having a car to drive to work. With your PC as your main "work vehicle" in a freelance business, why risk having it break down? Your business relies on your PC. Although computer maintenance may not be your favorite task, it's time to gather up some maintenance tools. When it comes to your computer, you're the "driver" and the responsibility falls on your shoulders.

The World of Graphic Design

With aesthetics and simplicity you can create a logo that makes your business stand out. See how Mike Klassen used basic layout and design to create a logo for his business.



About the Logo:

Mike explains, "It's always tempting to throw every trick you know into a design. However, simplicity is often just as effective. I created the two circles and the oval, then played around with the transparency settings to blend them together. For the text, tracking was applied to the word *klassen*. Tracking is the process of loosening or tightening a block of text. In this case, I wanted the word *klassen* to be the same width as the word *communications*. The most difficult part of the project was simply choosing a font — so many options! Originally, the colors on the logo were lighter, giving it a softer look. The colors have been darkened in this case for easier viewing. The design was created using Adobe InDesign CS."

About the Designer:

Mike works primarily as a writer. Last year he started Klassen Communications (www.mikeklassen.com) and quickly realized that an understanding of design and layout would increase his value to clients. Currently Mike is enrolled in AWAI's Graphic Design Course.