



Growing Your Business

Strategies for Independent Contractors

STC 1998 Region 7 Conference
October 17, 1998

Nancy Shepard
InfoClear
303-421-7656
nshepard@ecentral.com

Linda G. Gallagher
TechCom Plus
303-450-9076
lindag@techcomplus.com



Books

- *The Consultant's Calling: Bringing Who You Are to What You Do* by Geoffrey Bellman.
- *The Contract and Fee-Setting Guide for Consultants and Professionals* by Howard L. Shenson.
- *Delivering Knock Your Socks Off Service* by Kristin Anderson and Ron Zemke.
- *Fast Forward: How to Win a Lot More Business in a Lot Less Time* by Michael LeBoeuf.
- *Finding Your Niche: . . . Marketing Your Professional Service* by Bart Brodsky and Janet Geis.
- *Getting Business to Come to You* by Paul and Sarah Edwards and Laura Clampitt Douglas.
- *Growing a Business* by Paul Hawken.
- *Guerilla Marketing with Technology* by Jay Conrad Levinson.
- *How to Set Your Fees and Get Them* by Kate Kelly.
- *Inner Excellence: Spiritual Principles of Life-Driven Business* by Carol Orsborn.
- *Making Money in Technical Writing* by Peter Kent.
- *The Secrets of Savvy Networking and How to Work a Room* by Susan RoAne.
- *Selling the Invisible: A Field Guide to Modern Marketing* by Harry Beckwith.
- *Selling Your Services* by Robert W. Bly.
- *Small Decencies; Reflections and Meditations on Being Human at Work* by John Cowan.
- *Soar With Your Strengths* by Donald Clifton and Paula Nelson.
- *True Work: The Sacred Dimension of Earning a Living* by Justine Willis Toms and Michael Toms.
- *Working from Home and Secrets of Self- Employment* by Paul and Sarah Edwards.



Organizations

American Medical Writers Association

Address: 9650 Rockville Pike, Bethesda, MD
20814-3998
Phone/Fax: 301.493.0003
Web site: <http://www.amwa.org>

American Society for Information Science (ASIS)

Address: 8720 Georgia Ave., Suite 501,
Silver Spring, MD 20910
Phone/Fax: 301.495.0900
301.495.0810
Web site: <http://www.asis.org>

American Society for Training and Development (ASTD)

Address: 1640 King St., Box 1443, Alexandria, VA
22313-2043
Phone/Fax: 703.683.8100
Web site: <http://www.astd.org>

American Society of Indexers (ASI)

Address: PO Box 48267, Seattle, WA 98148-0267
Phone/Fax: 206.241.9196 / 206.727.6430
Web site: <http://www.ASIndexing.org>

Association for Business Communication (ABC)

Address: Speech Dept./Baruch College, 17
Lexington Ave., New York, NY 10010
Phone/Fax: 212.387.1340 / 212.387.1406
Web site: <http://www.cohums.ohio-state.edu/english/facstf/kol/abc/>

Association for Computing Machinery's Special Interest Group on Documentation (ACM/SIGDOC)

Address: ACM, P.O. Box 11315, New York, NY
10286-1315
Phone/Fax: 212.626.0500 / 212.944.1318
Web site: <http://www.acm.org/sigdoc>

Association for Quality and Participation (AQP)

Address: Milwaukee, WI

Phone/Fax: 800.248.1946
414.272.8575
Web site: <http://www.asqc.org/>

Association of Teachers of Technical Writing (ATTW)

Address: Billie J. Wahlstrom, Dept. of Rhetoric,
64 Classroom Office Bldg., 1994 Buford
Ave., University of Minnesota, St. Paul,
MN 55108
Web site: <http://english.ttu.edu/ATTW/>

Association of Proposal Management Professionals

Address: P.O. Box 1172, Idyllwild, CA 92549-
1172
Phone/Fax: 909.659.0789
Web site: <http://www.apmp.org/>

Boulder Writers Alliance

Address: PO Box 18342, Boulder, CO
80308-1342
Web site: <http://www.bwa.org>

Council of Biology Editors (CBE)

Address: 11250 Roger Bacon Dr., Suite 8, Reston,
VA 20190-5202
Phone/Fax: 703.437.4377 / 703.435.4390
Web site: <http://www.cbe.org/cbe>

HTML Writer's Guild

Web site: <http://www.hwg.org/>

Human Factors and Ergonomics Society

Address: P.O. Box 1369, Santa Monica, CA
90406-1369
Phone/Fax: 310.394.1811 / 310.394.2410
Web Site: <http://hfes.org>

Institute of Electrical & Electronics Engineers/Professional Communication Society (IEEE/PCS)

Address: IEEE Operations Center, Admission and
Advancement, 444 Hoes Lane, PO Box
459, Piscataway, NJ 08855-0459
Web site: <http://www.ieee.org/pcs/pesindex.html>

**International Association of Business
Communicators (IABC)**

Address: One Hallidie Plaza, Suite 600,
San Francisco, CA 94102-2818
Phone/Fax: 800.776.4222 or 415.433.3400
Web site: <http://www.iabc.com>

International Communication Association

Address: Box 9589, Austin, TX 78766-9589
Phone/Fax: 512.454.8299 / 512.451.6270
Web site: <http://www.icahdq.org>

International Interactive Communications Society

Address: 39355 California St., Suite 307,
Fremont, CA 94538
Phone/Fax: 510.608.5930 / 510.608.5917
Web site: <http://www.iics.org>

**International Society for Performance and
Instruction (ISPI)**

Address: 1300 L St. NW, Suite. 1250,
Washington, DC 20005
Phone/Fax: 202.408.7969
202.408.7972
Web site: <http://www.ispi.org>

Information Systems Security Association (ISSA)

Address: 704 South 13th St., Oak Creek, WI
53154
Phone/Fax: 414.768.8000 / 414.768.8001
Web site: <http://www.issa-intl.org>

Information Systems Trainers (IST)

Address: P.O. Box 4095, Englewood, CO 80155
Phone/Fax: 303.215.3250
Web site: <http://www.istrn.org>

National Association of Government

Communicators

Address: 526 King St., Suite 423, Alexandria, VA
22314-3143
Phone/Fax: 703.518.4369 / 703.706.9583
Web site: <http://www.nagc.com>

National Association of Science Writers

Address: PO Box 61-8352, Chicago IL 60661-
8352
Phone/Fax: 312.661.1721
Web site: <http://www.nasw.org/>

Public Relations Society of America (PRSA)

Address: 33 Irving Pl., New York, NY 10003-
2376
Phone/Fax: 212.995.2230 / 212.995.0757
Web site: <http://www.prsa.org>

Society for Technical Communication

Address: 901 N. Stuart St., #904, Arlington, VA
22203-1864
Phone/Fax: 703.522.4114 / 703.522.2075
Web site: <http://www.stc-va.org/>

Your State's Software Association (if one exists)

Web site: <http://www.ita.org/> For state
organizations in the US, click the
CRITA Members link. For organizations
from other countries, click the WITSA
link and then the associations link.

Usability Professionals' Association

Address: 414 Plaza Drive, Suite 209, Westmont,
IL 60559
Phone/Fax: 630.655.1647 / 630.655.0391
Web site: <http://www.upassoc.org/>

- For additional associations, go the international STC web site (www.stc-va.org) and click the Professional Development link and then Related Organizations.

Web sites

- Archive for several e-mail lists - www.documentation.com/info.htm
- CIC SIG online book - english.ttu.edu/gscic/
- CIC SIG online training web site - english.ttu.edu/ed_ind/
- Guerilla Marketing Online - gmarketing.com/main.html
- Rocky Mountain Chapter Freelance FAQ - www.stcrmc.org/freefaqs.htm
- Small Business Administration marketing shareware and files - www.sba.gov/shareware/markfile.html
- Quicken and Excite's small business marketing. The section referenced here is specifically about marketing a consulting business. Explore other parts of this site for more marketing information. - http://www.quicken.excite.com/small_business/answers/?channel=0&topic=5&subtopic=31

Training Companies

- Citation Computer Training - 800-413-7131 (voice mail), davidv@connectnet.com
- Help University - 800-801-HELP, www.helpuniversity.com
- Influent - 888-333-9088, www.influent.com
- Langevin - 888-526-4384, www.langevin.com
- PubsNet Incorporated - (978) 649-8555, www.pubsnet.com
- Solutions - 800-448-4230, solutions@sol-sems.com, www.sol-sems.com

E-Mail Lists

Please note that e-mail lists come, go, and move. These addresses may no longer be accurate.

Generally, to subscribe send a message to the Listserv address. In the message body enter:
subscribe [list name] [your name]

Topic	Listserv address (subscribe or unsubscribe)	List Name
Adobe Acrobat	acrobat-request@blueworld.com	pdf
Copyediting	listserv@cornell.edu	copyediting-l
Fonts and typography	LISTSERV@listserv.hea.ie	TYPO-L
FrameMaker	majordomo@FrameUsers.com	framers
HTML	listserv@netcentral.net	html-list
ISO 9000	listserv@vm1.nodak.edu	iso9000
MS Word (Mac)	listproc@scu.edu.au	word-mac
MS Word (PC)	MXSERVER@ufobi2.uni-fortst.gwdg.de	word-pc
PageMaker	LISTSERV@INDYCMS.IUPUI.EDU	pagemakr
SGML	LISTSERV%DHDURZ1.BITNET@CUNYVM.CU NY.EDU	sgml-l
Technical communication	listserv@listserv.okstate.edu	techwr-l
Training and Development	Go to http://train.ed.psu.edu/TRDEV-L for subscription information.	TRDEV-L
Translating	listserv@segate.sunet.se	lantra-l
Web design	webdesign-request@list.webmonster.net	Webdesign
Windows help development	listserv@admin.humberc.on.ca	winhlp-l

For more mailing lists, go to: <http://www.prc.dk/user-friendly-manuals/ufm/maillist.htm>

Prioritizing Grid

Use the grid below to compare and rank a list of up to ten items. To use the grid:

1. Make a list of items and number them.
2. Using the grid as your guide, compare the numbered items by row.
 - For example, using the first row, compare items 1 and 2.
3. Ask yourself which item is more important to you or which item you like better.
4. Circle the number of the item you liked.
5. Move to the next row of the grid and compare the pairs of items and circle the one you liked better in each pair.
6. After completing the grid, count how many times you circled each number and put the total in the row at the bottom of the page.

Now you can rank your original list based on the totals. If you need to compare a list with more than ten items, just keep adding new rows to the bottom of the grid following the same numbering pattern.

1 2
1 3 2 3
1 4 2 4 3 4
1 5 2 5 3 5 4 5
1 6 2 6 3 6 4 6 5 6
1 7 2 7 3 7 4 7 5 7 6 7
1 8 2 8 3 8 4 8 5 8 6 8 7 8
1 9 2 9 3 9 4 9 5 9 6 9 7 9 8 9
1 10 2 10 3 10 4 10 5 10 6 10 7 10 8 10 9 10

Totals

1 ___ 2 ___ 3 ___ 4 ___ 5 ___ 6 ___ 7 ___ 8 ___ 9 ___ 10 ___

Adapted from *What Color Is Your Parachute?* by Richard Nelson Bolles, Ten Speed Press, 1984.

Some Marketing Tips

(taken from *Persuading on Paper: The Complete Guide to Writing Copy that Pulls in Business* by Marcia Yudkin)

Credibility

Do:

- Name clients or customers and describe the results and value achieved.
- Give enough detail about your service that it comes across as distinctive and remarkable.
- Provide endorsements from trusted authorities/experts/leaders in the field.
- Name awards, degrees, licenses, number of sales, years of experience.
- Offer guarantees, free samples, offers to corroborate reliability.
- Read your marketing materials and ask “Says who?”. If the answer is “Says me,” or “Says no one,” you have more work to do.

Don't:

- Rely on boasts and promises rather than evidence.
- Give a price that strikes the audience as either too high or low for the value described.
- Make mistakes in terminology, spelling, facts. And don't be perceived as sexist, racist, ignorant, or amateur.
- Give any evidence in aesthetics or execution of the marketing piece that your company may not practice what it preaches (look at contractor marketing materials as examples; the client will ask, “If this person can't create a decent brochure for himself, how can he create a decent online help system or user guide for me?”)

Multiple Audiences

Consider doing more than one version of your marketing materials, depending on the type of client you are approaching. Slick and expensive materials may impress the larger companies, but the small client might think, “I can't afford this company. They look expensive.”

Shuffle the order in your bio of your achievements, putting the ones most relevant to a client at the top of the list.

Know Your Competition

What are your competitors doing to attract attention? Collect a file of their ads, etc.

Get help from a friend to pose as a potential client and receive their marketing materials and prices.

Then ask, do you want to parallel the competition’s marketing materials only do it better? Or do you want to offer an unmistakable alternative and look very different? Can you substitute another selling point to bypass their advantage?

If you are inexperienced, you might pitch your fresh approaches or the fact that you handle only proposals, or only white papers. You’re better off staking out a defensible niche that no one occupies.

Can you turn an apparent competitive disadvantage into an advantage? For example, suppose your main competitor in the pizza business stressed speedy service. Instead of trying to run neck and neck with their speed, you could turn your slowness into a virtue by being a “leisurely” dining room with Old World atmosphere.

Brochures and Flyers

- Most people who don’t know you WILL NOT actually read your brochure! They’ll unfold it, scan the interior, glance at the back: all of about six seconds worth. If they have searching for a service like yours, they might give it 30 seconds. Thus, the brochure needs to make use of those 6-30 seconds and grab their interest before it’s tossed.
- Make it “scannable” or capable of being glanced at briefly and answer the question: “What do we do and why should you hire us?”
- Most people emphasize too much “who” with me, me, me or us, us, us. Prospects want to know in this order: What can you do for me? Why should I hire you? How can I find you?

Other

Try doing a monthly or quarterly newsletter to clients. Or do white papers, tip sheets, or columns/articles in professional journals. Do handwritten notes to current clients once in awhile.

Words that produce positive responses:	Words that produce negative responses:
Free	Buy
New	Failure
You	Bad
Sale	Sell
Introducing	Loss
Save	Difficult
Discover	Decision
Results	Death
Proven	Cost
Guaranteed	Order

Choose emotional words over intellectual words. Clients would rather have you <i>explain</i> something and <i>help</i> them than <i>disclose</i> something and <i>aid</i> them.	
Intellectual Word	Emotional Word
accelerate	speed up
completed	finished
for	because
intelligent	bright
learn	find out
reply	answer
wealthy	rich



Some Marketing Tips

(taken from *Persuading on Paper: The Complete Guide to Writing Copy that Pulls in Business* by Marcia Yudkin)

Credibility

Do:

- Name clients or customers and describe the results and value achieved.
- Give enough detail about your service that it comes across as distinctive and remarkable.
- Provide endorsements from trusted authorities/experts/leaders in the field.
- Name awards, degrees, licenses, number of sales, years of experience.
- Offer guarantees, free samples, offers to corroborate reliability.
- Read your marketing materials and ask “Says who?”. If the answer is “Says me,” or “Says no one,” you have more work to do.

Don't:

- Rely on boasts and promises rather than evidence.
- Give a price that strikes the audience as either too high or low for the value described.
- Make mistakes in terminology, spelling, facts. And don't be perceived as sexist, racist, ignorant, or amateur.
- Give any evidence in aesthetics or execution of the marketing piece that your company may not practice what it preaches (look at contractor marketing materials as examples; the client will ask, “If this person can't create a decent brochure for himself, how can he create a decent online help system or user guide for me?”)

Multiple Audiences

Consider doing more than one version of your marketing materials, depending on the type of client you are approaching. Slick and expensive materials may impress the larger companies, but the small client might think, “I can't afford this company. They look expensive.”

Shuffle the order in your bio of your achievements, putting the ones most relevant to a client at the top of the list.

Know Your Competition

What are your competitors doing to attract attention? Collect a file of their ads, etc.

Get help from a friend to pose as a potential client and receive their marketing materials and prices.

Then ask, do you want to parallel the competition’s marketing materials only do it better? Or do you want to offer an unmistakable alternative and look very different? Can you substitute another selling point to bypass their advantage?

If you are inexperienced, you might pitch your fresh approaches or the fact that you handle only proposals, or only white papers. You’re better off staking out a defensible niche that no one occupies.

Can you turn an apparent competitive disadvantage into an advantage? For example, suppose your main competitor in the pizza business stressed speedy service. Instead of trying to run neck and neck with their speed, you could turn your slowness into a virtue by being a “leisurely” dining room with Old World atmosphere.

Brochures and Flyers

- Most people who don’t know you WILL NOT actually read your brochure! They’ll unfold it, scan the interior, glance at the back: all of about six seconds worth. If they have searching for a service like yours, they might give it 30 seconds. Thus, the brochure needs to make use of those 6-30 seconds and grab their interest before it’s tossed.
- Make it “scannable” or capable of being glanced at briefly and answer the question: “What do we do and why should you hire us?”
- Most people emphasize too much “who” with me, me, me or us, us, us. Prospects want to know in this order: What can you do for me? Why should I hire you? How can I find you?

Other

Try doing a monthly or quarterly newsletter to clients. Or do white papers, tip sheets, or columns/articles in professional journals. Do handwritten notes to current clients once in awhile.

Words that produce positive responses:	Words that produce negative responses:
Free	Buy
New	Failure
You	Bad
Sale	Sell
Introducing	Loss
Save	Difficult
Discover	Decision
Results	Death
Proven	Cost
Guaranteed	Order

Choose emotional words over intellectual words. Clients would rather have you <i>explain</i> something and <i>help</i> them than <i>disclose</i> something and <i>aid</i> them.	
Intellectual Word	Emotional Word
accelerate	speed up
completed	finished
for	because
intelligent	bright
learn	find out
reply	answer
wealthy	rich

