

Keeping it REAL

Strategic Marketing Direction

For novices of all levels

MarketingBuddha.com

How to prevent problems hiring an offsite freelance copywriter

Problem

Our company wants to hire a freelance copywriter to work offsite but can't find a writer qualified for the position that will work for us long term.

Short answer: Have a conversation with the writer and be up front about your expectations. Ask about the writer's availability, writing skills and interests and most importantly what gains others experienced from the writer's work.

Step-by-Step Strategy

Advertising agencies, marketing firms, companies and nonprofits of all sizes hire freelance copywriters to work offsite. An offsite arrangement works well if your company doesn't have the extra office space or technology. Or if it's going to ensure your writer's high productivity.

Yes, solid writing skills and experience level are important, but knowledge with your business problem as well as the ability to create and apply a strategic, effective solution to that problem is what's going to tell if you've got the right copywriter for a long term commitment.

Step 1

Specify your marketing goals. Your copywriter should ask you nitty-gritty questions that flesh out the why of things. Be specific about your short and long term goals. If the copywriter doesn't understand what you need to achieve right now VS. 4Q, she can't possibly build a cost-effective content strategy.

Step 2

Set a realistic time line and budget. Some writers only want to focus on writing and that's all they will do. Period. But writers who are well organized and business oriented, typically have the ability to take ownership and drive your copy department without leaking oil. Take advantage of this. Letting your copywriter coordinate with designers, proofreaders and printers. If you're concerned about staying on strategy and budget—these days who *isn't*—then you'll come out ahead by hiring a copywriter with project management skills.

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Step 3

Give your copywriter access to existing marketing materials. Any current marketing collateral will be helpful, . . .

- Brochures
- Newsletters
- Previous ads
- Case studies
- Product specifications
- Email marketing communications

If you're concerned with confidentiality, have the writer sign a non-disclosure. The more marketing pieces your copywriter can use to get up to speed, the faster your return on investment.

Step 4

Set an open-communication standard. If something goes wrong or is not what you expect, call your writer to the table and talk.

Nobody likes to screw up or wants to clean up the mess. A professional writer will appreciate your straightforwardness and work to make things perfect. At the same time you want a writer to be upfront with you. If any issue is detected, you should be notified A.S.A.P. and your copywriter should come to you with a doable solution already in mind.

Step 5

Determine how often you will communicate. If you require on-site meetings, be sure the copywriter knows where meetings will be held, how long they'll last and what deliverable to turn in.

Was there an agreement for extra meeting expenses? Commute and meeting time, mileage, parking and lunch come out of the writer's overhead. A seasoned writer will be sure to talk this over with you, but an inexperienced one might not, so it's better you ask rather than find out from your invoice.

Step 6

Be accessible. Make you or someone in your company a primary contact to answer questions and get appropriate sign-offs. In turn, your copywriter should be responsive to your questions and feedback. This means you get nothing more than a day's wait to your emails and phone calls. Make sure you exchange cell phone and fax numbers as back up.

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Step 7

Pay all invoices on time. Agree on a billing cycle that is acceptable to you both and stick to it. Missing payments or paying late is just bad form. Plus it stalls the project which could impact the effectiveness of your campaign and erode trust you've built with your writer.

Freelance direct marketing copywriter, Sonya Carmichael Jones is committed to generating your hottest sales leads and achieving unprecedented conversions. For effective and economical SEO, direct response copywriting or marketing communication strategy, [contact Sonya now](#). First time consultations are free. No obligations. No strings. Just marketing suggestions that you can use today.

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