



## Big Risk Pays Off for Nebraska Copywriter

In February 2010, Roy Furr had a wife, mortgage and newborn son all counting on his income. Most would say it's certainly not the time to take big chances in your career. But Roy isn't like most people.

At the time, he led marketing at a small publishing company. When his boss arrived the morning of Feb. 1, Roy asked him to join him in the conference room. With shaking hands, he said he was quitting to pursue his freelance copywriting career.

Roy was leaving the security of a job he'd held for five years, a position with good pay and benefits for the unknown of freelancing.

Yet Roy was ready. He had the skills, game plan, and most importantly, a few clients already.

"I had set a date for when I wanted to launch my business, but the freelance opportunities were coming so fast that I quit my job even sooner than I planned," he said.

### Copywriting CAN Pay the Bills

Roy had written all his life. As an English minor in college, he'd even self-published a book of poetry. But when he had considered a writing career, he couldn't see how it would pay the bills.

"I thought there was no such thing as making a living as a writer unless you're one of the big shots," he said. "I was resigned to finding whatever work I could."

After a stint in customer service at his local gas company, he fortuitously landed the marketing job, despite having no experience. He convinced his boss that he would work harder than anyone else.

### CASE STUDY: Roy Furr

*"There absolutely are real people who are making a living – a good living – with copywriting. I've been working essentially part time since 2010, and it has done more than paid the bills. I have a lot of fun and a lot of flexibility."*

**MEMBER:**  
Roy Furr

**LOCATION:**  
Lincoln, NE

**OTHER CAREERS:**  
Marketing, call center rep

**HOW HE GOT HIS FIRST CLIENT:**  
Roy approached a prospective client with the offer to beat the company's direct-response "control." The client would only pay if the copywriting performed – and it did.

**TOP AWAI PROGRAMS:**

- The Masters Program for Six-Figure Copywriting
- FastTrack to Copywriting Success Bootcamp and Job Fair

During that marketing job, he voraciously consumed books on marketing, business and copywriting. That knowledge helped him grow the publishing company where he was employed and prepare him for what he saw as an eventual career in copywriting.

It's through American Writers & Artists Inc. (AWAI) that Roy found inspiration, in-demand copywriting skills and his first clients. AWAI offered training for the type of in-demand copywriting that can bring in a very healthy income to sustain him and his family.

He began with AWAI's *Masters Program for Six-Figure Copywriting*, where he learned direct-response copywriting and marketing knowledge to take on the bigger, higher-paying projects. Then he attended AWAI's legendary annual event, *FastTrack to Copywriting Success Bootcamp* and Job Fair, AKA *Bootcamp*.

*Bootcamp* was the spark Roy needed. There, he picked up copywriting tips from some of the biggest names in the industry, including a career-changing direct-response tactic from Michael Masterson and a 20-point outline for writing sales letters from Clayton and Wendy Makepeace – which he still uses today.

"AWAI *Bootcamps* have been hugely transformational for me," Roy said. "The quality of these resources and how they've changed my thinking has been a source of nonstop inspiration and growth in my career. I have not found any group of teachers that both know what they're doing and are as dedicated to student success as the people at AWAI. Everyone exists to see you succeed in copywriting. When you win, they win."

## Taking Chances and Landing Clients

When it was time to get his freelance career off the ground, Roy took chances. He landed his

first client by approaching the prospect with an offer he couldn't refuse.

"I said, 'I'd like to beat your control,'" Roy said. "'Only pay me if you like it, think it's worth testing and it actually performs.' I made it impossible to say no, and as a result, I got my first client. We've stayed in touch over the years and tomorrow we have a call together with a potential client for joint work."

Through AWAI, Roy connected with several well-known clients. "*Bootcamps* are also an incredible opportunity to connect with new clients," he said. "Three months after I went to my first *Bootcamp*, I had enough clients to leave my full-time job."

He wrote a successful promotion for the first seminar put on by noted entrepreneur and public speaker, Brian Tracy. He approached the information products publisher, Nightingale-Conant, with a simple question about who was in charge of direct response and landed their business. And he wrote an e-book for Bob Bly, one of America's best known and most successful copywriters.

Roy even won AWAI's 2010 \$10K Challenge, an annual competition where writers submit spec assignments for the chance to win \$10,000 worth of project work from AWAI.

## In-Demand, Direct-Response Writer

Today, Roy is a sought-after direct response copywriter who primarily works with major financial publishers, including Casey Research, Mauldin Economics, StreetAuthority, InvestorPlace



Media and Money Map Press. But he's regularly approached by other industries for his skills.

"I've learned to write direct response copy that gets conversions," he said. "My skills can be moved from one industry to another, so when the opportunity is right, I'll write for any business I believe in. Having the skills and marketing know-how has opened a ton of doors."

More recently, he wrote the promotion for what was considered the biggest direct response event of the decade, "The Titans of Direct Response" Seminar for Brian Kurtz at Boardroom, Inc. VIP spots sold out in 21 days and regular registrations filled faster than most seminars in the industry.

### *A Healthy Income, Working Part Time*

When Roy quit his job in 2010, he was motivated. He and his wife had set a date

a few months in the future to move back to their hometown of Lincoln, NE after she had completed her Ph.D. program in Oregon.

From the start, he maintained a livable income with copywriting. While his income dipped temporarily, it soon matched his old income and then grew to six figures annually.

Now Roy takes on the projects he wants while balancing family life. He and his wife, both self-employed, work part-time schedules so they can share care for their three children, with a little help from family. With adept balancing of work and childcare, he also has the time to spend several hours every week working on his hobby, electronic music.

"There absolutely are real people who are making a living – a good living – with copywriting," Roy said. "I've been working essentially part time since 2010, and it has done more than paid the bills. I have a lot of fun and a lot of flexibility."

### *Roy's Tips For Copywriters*

- **Throw yourself in** – You can wait until you think you know everything there is to know, or you can learn while getting paid as Roy did in that first marketing job and with copywriting projects. "A big secret of my success is to get a job and then figure out how to complete it," he said. "I don't climb ladders very well. I jump to the top of them."
- **Be bold** – Feel the fear and do it anyway. "You just have to go out and start developing client relationships. It's as easy as approaching people and saying, 'How can I serve you?'"
- **Go to AWAI Bootcamp** – Roy found both knowledge and clients at *Bootcamps*. "When you go to your first *Bootcamp*, you think, 'Are there really people making a living at this?' There absolutely are real people who are making a living – a good living – with copywriting," Roy said.

## Ready to pursue *the Writer's Life*?

Learn more about the program that launched Roy's career, [\*The FastTrack to Copywriting Success Bootcamp & Job Fair\*](#).

