



The Killer & the Poet

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If You Are Both Killer and Poet ... You Get Rich

You know the story about killers and poets, right?

It's from a section of David Ogilvy's classic book *Ogilvy on Advertising*. Even if you've heard the saying, you may not realize that Ogilvy made his famous point by first quoting another "Mad Man" of the era.

That would be William Maynard, creative director at Ted Bates & Company, which at the time was the 10th largest advertising agency in the United States. Maynard shared this observation about the writers he had worked with during his career:

"Most good copywriters fall into two categories. Poets. And killers. Poets see an ad as an end. Killers as a means to an end."

And then Ogilvy famously added:

"If you are both killer and poet, you get rich."

He would know. Ogilvy was responsible for some of the most creative and innovative advertisements of the "golden age" of advertising.

Ads like The Man in the Hathaway Shirt, the classic gin-and-tonic ad for Schweppes, and this brilliant headline (Ogilvy's personal favorite):

At 60 miles an hour the loudest noise in the new Rolls-Royce comes from the electric clock.

And yet, Ogilvy famously didn't believe in creativity for its own sake, at least not when it came to business. He had no patience for advertising that won awards and praise, but made no sales.

When I write an advertisement, I don't want you to tell me that you find it 'creative.' I want you to find it so interesting that you *buy the product*.

David Ogilvy was the epitome of a marketer and business person who was both a killer and a poet. And he got very rich indeed -- rich enough to retire to Château de Touffou, his honest to goodness *castle* in France.

So when we talk about being a poet and a killer, what does that mean? It's simple -- we're talking about a person who is both creative and strategic.

This rubs some writers the wrong way. They're interested in writing as an end to itself.

The clever turn of phrase, the intricate word choice, the literary reference that will certainly impress ... well, other writers. It's easy to lose sight of the broader objective.

On the other hand, this is what tends to annoy business people about writers. They're not interested in art, at least not when it comes to marketing. They're interested in results, which means *sales*.

They've got a plan, and they only deal with writers or content because they know that's

the means to the end they have in mind. After all, what does strategy mean?

According to the trusty dictionary, it's "a plan of action designed to achieve an overall aim." It makes sense that when it comes to content *marketing*, you have a business objective in mind, right?

Let's cut to the chase -- the objective for any marketing strategy should be to increase sales. Will this approach result in more revenue and profit than some other approach?

It absolutely should. Otherwise, why do it?

In my two decades of experience with digital marketing, content is the key to attracting an audience. And it's the *audience* that provides the winning difference that leads to more sales and profits.

Not just any ol' content, though, or even any ol' audience. And that's why creative writers -- the *poets* -- are indispensable to digital marketing that works.

But you need the strategic element as well. You (or your client) must become a leader in a relevant movement, where the marketer guides the audience to advance shared ideas and aspirations.

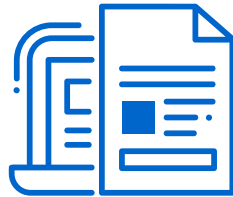
Some people call that thought leadership, and whether you like the term or not, it's definitely an exercise in *leading* your prospects toward success.

And these days it takes the intersection of creativity, strategy, and technology -- a hybrid of poet, killer, and machine -- to pull it off. Now even more so than in Ogilvy's day, that's how you get rich in the realm of digital marketing.

I've often said I can't make a killer into a poet. It's just not within my control.

The way you become a writer, and eventually a great writer, it to *write*. If the desire to write isn't there, you're going to have to learn to work well with creative writers to execute on your strategic vision.

But I can absolutely help poets become killers. In many ways, that's what Copyblogger has been doing for the last 14 years.



The Content Creator as Hybrid Marketer

When I launched Copyblogger in January of 2006, the goal was to teach other writers what I had learned over the previous seven years as an entrepreneurial writer. I had built three successful businesses by that point using what later became known as *content marketing*.

At the base of what I taught was the intersection of audience-focused content and direct response copywriting techniques. Now, in 2020, this style of writing and marketing is so much the norm that it may seem strange to think that there was a time when it wasn't.

Along with those two writing topics, though, was also another range of "cornerstone"

topics that made up Copyblogger's editorial focus. Related disciplines such as email marketing, search engine optimization, social media, landing pages, and conversion optimization had to be a part of a successful writer's toolbox.

Nine years later in 2015, my friend Jason Miller coined the term "hybrid marketer" to represent this bundle of skills. Jason had become head of content marketing at LinkedIn, and wrote a report called *The Hybrid Marketer* that explained his reasoning:

Yesterday's marketers could get away with being creative powerhouses, but today's successful marketers aren't just good at one thing -- we are hybrid marketers. We are truly Renaissance marketers for the new age.

You can see the reference to the pure "poets" of yesteryear. Back then in the offline world, you might not have achieved the upper realm of success as a purely creative writer, but you could still have a solid career.

Digital marketing is different in that it's inherently multidisciplinary. While content and the people who create it are at the core of what succeeds, there are very few people who succeed by *just* writing.

Plus, it's an unfortunate fact that strategic business people tend to undervalue what it takes to create great content. They're dead wrong, but it's still smart to expand your skill set and position yourself differently in order to maximize your perceived value.

In other words, become a killer *and* a poet. Put another way, become a marketing generalist with a specialization in content creation, rather than just a "writer."

Research supports the fact that being a generalist will make you a stronger writer and content creator. And the broad complexity of digital marketing is actually a blessing to your career.

In the bestselling book *Range: Why Generalists Triumph in a Specialized World*, author David Epstein explains research that explores whether being a specialist or a generalist is better for developing mastery of a skill. Turns out, it depends.

In so-called “kind” environments, patterns repeat over and over, and feedback is extremely accurate and usually very rapid. So if you’re trying to master chess or golf, you practice that one thing exclusively.

But in “wicked” environments, the rules of the game are often unclear or incomplete. There may or may not be obvious repetitive patterns, and feedback is often delayed, inaccurate, or both. In this case, generalists thrive by drawing on a broad range of experience and knowledge.

Digital marketing is definitely a wicked environment. The context is constantly changing, and that change is accelerating. And if you work with clients, even your project environment changes constantly.

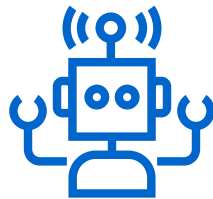
Now, this is not to say that you don’t have a core specialization, which is communicating with other human beings. And it doesn’t mean that you don’t choose a niche or specific industry so that you can develop true domain expertise.

It means that when dealing with a “wicked” arena such as digital marketing, you need a broad range of competence and knowledge to succeed. And this has been true for writers of all types for generations, in that the more you live and the more you read, the better you write.

But there’s more to it than that. While it may sound like a downside, it’s actually something that will protect your livelihood. Take, for instance, the prospect of being replaced by artificial intelligence.

As I mentioned, chess is a “kind” environment with predictable patterns. It’s been 23 years since Garry Kasparov lost to IBM’s supercomputer Deep Blue. In 2020, a free chess app on your phone could beat Kasparov ... no exaggeration.

“Anything we can do, and we know how to do it, machines will do it better,” Kasparov said at a recent lecture. “If we can codify it, and pass it to computers, they will do it better.”



Here Comes the Robots

Automation has become an indispensable aspect of content marketing, specifically when it comes to email and sales funnels. This has been a lucrative boon for writers who looked ahead and became comfortable with the technology.

What’s amazing is how inexpensive this powerful automation technology has become. It’s the same phenomenon that makes the affordable phone in your pocket more powerful than the computers that once sent men to the moon.

When we first started working with marketing automation at Copyblogger, the *base* price was \$5,000 a month and went up from there. Now I run sophisticated email sequences at Unemployable with a ConvertKit account that’s incredibly affordable.

Automation, like machine learning, is a subset of artificial intelligence. And we’ve been

hearing for years how AI is about to disrupt society and put people out of work.

We've been hearing that for so long that it almost seemed overblown -- some elaborate vaporware that's nothing but hype. If you've felt that way, I'm afraid AI has officially arrived.

In Ernest Hemingway's *The Sun Also Rises*, drunken war veteran Mike Campbell is asked how he went bankrupt. "Two ways," he answers. "Gradually, then suddenly."

That's where we're at with AI. The gradual happened for a long time, but now the changes are happening suddenly, and accelerating.

For example, in the short period of time since I started writing this report and the point that you're now reading it, I had to extensively revise this section. That was due to the release of GPT-3 from the OpenAI project.

If you haven't heard about it, GPT-3 is a mega machine learning model that can write its own op-eds, poems, articles, and even working code. This AI is still an early-stage attempt, but it strikes right at the heart of the poet -- *language*.

GPT-3 is a language model powered by a neural network. Language models predict the likelihood of a sentence existing in the world, and with 175 billion parameters, GPT-3 is the largest language model ever created.

Here's what Dale Markowitz, an Applied AI Engineer at Google, had to say:

But here's the really magical part. As a result of its humongous size, GPT-3 can do what no other model can do (well): perform specific tasks without any special tuning. You can ask GPT-3 to be a translator, a programmer, a poet, or a famous author, and it can do it with its user (you) providing fewer than 10 training examples. *Damn*.

In other words, this AI specifically creates *content*. And while it's nowhere near perfect, it gives any aloof "poet" a reason for pause. Stringing words together is not enough for a human to have a defensible career any longer.

You may have seen the news recently about a college kid who created a fake blog that was completely generated by the GPT-3 AI. No big deal, right?

After all, software has been "spinning" up crap content on spammy websites for years.

But then one of these AI generated posts reached the top spot on *Hacker News*. And then people actually subscribed!

GPT-3 was going to happen this year no matter what. But what you should really think about when it comes to AI is the COVID-19 pandemic.

Because it's become the perfect catalyst for implementation of AI, automation, and robotics by companies that had been putting it off. The acceleration accelerates.

The most powerful firms in the world -- Amazon, Apple, Google, Facebook, and Microsoft -- are all algorithmically driven. And they are taking market share away from other businesses at an alarming rate. Plus, you've got an array of startups using AI to disrupt entire industries.

But the biggest mainstream change is coming because "normal" companies are taking this disruption to "business as usual" to also implement these technologies. And you can bet that they're going to eliminate human jobs in the process.

On the flip side, you're about to be using artificial intelligence and machine learning in the tools you use everyday. That's because just like the massive price drop in technology such as marketing automation, artificial intelligence itself is becoming "off the shelf" for developers.

In addition to Open AI's partnership with Microsoft's Azure, platforms such as Amazon SageMaker, H2O, DataRobot, and Google Cloud Platform (to name a few) aim to provide smaller organizations with productized access to machine learning.

Combine this with the companies leading the "no code" movement that allows new apps to be created without traditional programming, and it's not hard to imagine "plug and play" AI right around the corner. In fact, GPT-3 demonstrates that it will be AI that does the coding!

Artificial intelligence is here. And it's those with so-called "soft skills" like creativity, empathy, and communication that will continue to thrive.

In other words, the "poet" who learns to strategically work with artificial intelligence and automation becomes a killer. But why is that, exactly?

What will this technology allow you to do that you can't do alone? For that, let's return to chess grandmaster Garry Kasparov.

As a "kind" environment of repeated patterns, chess is 99% tactics -- short combinations of moves that players use to get an immediate advantage on the board. And no human can beat a computer at tactics.

So Kasparov, after losing to Deep Blue, began to wonder what would happen if computer tactical prowess were combined with human big-picture, strategic thinking. As a result, Kasparov organized a chess tournament the next year where each human player was paired with a machine.

"Human creativity was even more paramount under these conditions, not less," according to Kasparov, because his "advantage in calculating tactics had been nullified by the machine."

The result? A player that Kasparov had trounced a month earlier played the master to a 3-3 draw. The primary benefit of the Grandmaster's years of experience with specialized tactical training was outsourced to the computer, and the contest became about *strategy*.

In other words, *tactics* are for *technology*. But you must pair humans with the tech to add in creativity, empathy, communication, and strategic execution.

The killer *and* the poet. It's still how you get rich -- now more than ever.



You Need “Killer” Strategy Skills

To the extent I've taught content marketing at all over the last few years, it's been all about strategy. I've done multiple sold out training programs with a price tag of \$3,000 to \$5,000 per person.

The reason is simple. It's *strategy* that's typically missing from content marketing efforts, and the reason why content fails to convert as well as it should.

According to the Content Marketing Institute, only 41% of companies already doing content marketing have a documented strategy. Add to that the rush to digital marketing that the pandemic is causing for companies that have been slow to switch, and a lot of people need a lot of help.

That's a big opportunity for you. But creative writers need to ensure that they've got the right "killer" skills as well.

I don't consider myself the best writer in the world, but I'm really good at strategy. And while I haven't retired to a castle in France yet, things have gone pretty well.

Here's the thing ... put me up against a better writer, and I'll still win with a better strategy. That's because a smart content marketing strategy forces you to truly understand the audience so that you can help them become who they want to be.

When you're able to guide your prospects on the journey to success with content and ultimately with your product or service, you're great as far as they're concerned. And that's all that matters.

But don't get me wrong. Without my artistic side, I wouldn't be in the position I'm in today.

Being a pure "killer" too often leads to bland content and copy that panders to the audience. Not to mention using automation and personalization technology in a way that creeps people out instead of adding value.

You need to guide the prospect along the buyer's journey in a strategic fashion, absolutely. But it has to be done in a creative, even *unexpected* way so that you surprise and even delight the audience along the way.

Again, a killer *and* a poet. You need both strategy and art in your marketing.

With that combination, just think about how valuable you'll be in the marketplace. Remember, about 60% of companies currently doing content marketing have no documented strategy, so they need way more than words.

What they need is a killer who can write.

And they're willing to pay you exceedingly well for it, if you position yourself correctly. This isn't even counting the rush of digital marketing newbies who don't have the first clue of how to use content for strategic digital marketing.

Now, add in the *empathetic* use of technology, and you're an even more valuable asset in the marketplace. Artificial intelligence won't replace you; it will *enhance* you.

When you can strategically put automation and personalization technology to work in a way that enhances the experience of the audience, you'll have all the clients you want. Or better yet, ditch the clients and create your own products and business model.

We've talked about AI, but there's a whole host of powerful emerging technologies that are converging this decade. It's going to be a wild ride in general, but I want to discuss one other technology that will be an asset to content creators soon.

I'm talking about augmented reality (AR) and virtual reality (VR). We were already on the cusp of it as we entered 2020, and then the pandemic accelerated the "virtualization" of not only business, but life in general.

Take Zoom for example. For many of us, it's just the way our meetings get done. Then the pandemic hit, and all of a sudden, everyone's on Zoom. The stock took off, big time.

Thing is, Zoom was a good investment before the pandemic. That's because what looks like a simple video conferencing service is primed to be an augmented reality platform.

All it will need is the right hardware on the user end. Where will that hardware come from?

Those who follow the space might say Facebook, after the acquisition of Oculus, a nerdy VR headset. But no ... it will come from Apple, and it will eventually be what replaces the iPhone.

Apple has been quietly priming outside developers for AR applications with a suite of tools. Plus, they acquired Akonia Holographics, a company that makes thin, transparent lenses for smart glasses.

Those glasses were set to arrive as early as this fall, but now it looks like 2021. One can easily imagine the combination of the Apple Watch, AirPods, and stylish AR glasses (unlike Glass, Google's exceptionally non-stylish attempt back in 2014) becoming a smarter interface for information and communication.

I can already hear my own Gen Z kids telling their own kids about how they had this ridiculous rectangle they had to carry around:

"It was called a phone, even though no one used it for calls except for when your grandpa was looking for me. And instead of just seeing what you need right in front of you like now, you had to stare down at the rectangle -- which was really dangerous and made you look like an idiot!"

Augmented reality will be a \$133 billion industry by next year. And it will pave the way for another technology that has been long promised but slow to arrive -- virtual reality.

At this point, you may be asking yourself, why do I care?

You care because AR and VR will completely change the way digital marketing is done, not to mention online education, conferences, and sales presentations. And the time to start thinking about what role you might play in this is *now*.

What kind of change am I talking about? Well, think of the website.

The WebVR project started as a technology standard to transform the web to its next stage. It's now morphed into the powerful [WebXR](#) API that is capable of representing both virtual reality and augmented reality in a web browser.

In other words, the website isn't dead. It's about to grow up into something truly powerful -- a content and teaching environment with immense potential compared with what we've been dealing with as marketers and content creators.

The tech right now is on the fringe, as it always starts. But as soon as Apple releases its glasses, look out ... the world will change drastically again, just as it did because of the iPhone, except *more*.

The time to get involved with this technology is now, before it breaks big. If you think you missed out on something, like the start of blogging, or podcasting, or whatever ... you haven't missed *anything* in reality (no pun intended).

We're on the cusp of one of the biggest revolutions in digital marketing, online education, and virtual events in the history of the internet. And you will be an indispensable part of it all, as long as you start paying attention and taking action now.

But before you can take advantage of something like augmented reality, you need to take another step first ...

You need to start augmenting *yourself*.



The Augmented Human Brand

When you think of an augmented human, images of cyborgs come to mind. Or maybe some kind of neural interface that gives you instant knowledge, like Neo in *The Matrix* (“I know kung fu”).

We’re not quite there yet. But the truth is, you’re already augmented by technology in pretty magnificent ways. It’s just that we’ve become accustomed to it through gradual change.

The smartphone has been the biggest human enhancer in a long history of technology dating back to primitive tools chipped from rocks. But it’s now such an integral aspect of our lives that we take it for granted.

For writers, think of the dark ages before word processing software. Frightening, huh? Now we’re stressed when we can’t “word process” from any device in any location via the cloud.

Going forward, the level of augmentation will increase in wondrous ways for content creators. And I want to stress that this is something to embrace, not fear -- because it’s happening whether we like it or not.

The only downside is that the change is going to start coming at a furious pace. So instead of taking it for granted, we might experience overwhelm and even downright fear of advancing technology.

Let's turn back to AI, as this is the bundle of exponential technologies that most threatens to make humans obsolete. That won't happen any time soon, if ever -- but the fear is already there.

And no wonder. For years the media has focused on AI taking as many as 50 percent of all jobs this decade. And now with the pandemic and the acceleration of investment in automation, AI, and robotics, some lost jobs may never come back.

Artificial intelligence has both a branding and public relations problem. Science fiction has AI and robots becoming sentient, taking over, and destroying us one way or another. But that's not what we're dealing with any time soon, if ever.

While it's true that today's machines can perform many tasks that only humans could do previously, that doesn't mean that the machines have true intelligence or grand plans for world domination.

Our machines do what we build them to do. Just like factories, and the printing press, and the textile machinery that the Luddites destroyed out of fear and anger.

Advancing humanity has been replacing skilled workers for centuries, but it's not like the machines are the ones trying to steal your job. Humans create technology that displaces other humans, and then those people go do other uniquely human things that machines can't.

Put another way, technological revolutions have always eliminated certain professions, while creating more new jobs overall. The current thinking is that is what will happen this decade as well.

By 2022, the World Economic Forum predicts that automation will displace 75 million jobs worldwide while creating 133 million new ones. This was pre-pandemic, so it

remains to be seen how these numbers shake out.

The question is, what will the quality of these jobs be, and which roles will be eliminated?

Stanford professor Andrew Ng offers this rule of thumb for determining which types of work will be better handled by automation:

“If a typical person can do a mental task with less than one second of thought, we can probably automate it using AI either now or in the near future.”

Does that sound like writing or content creation to you? Not if you’re doing it well. Actually, even if you’re doing it *badly* it takes more thought and life experience than that.

So, there’s a particular kind of person that will remain in demand. You guessed it ... the poets, as long as they’ve got a healthy dose of killer in them.

For example, Amazon is one of the more algorithmically driven companies on the planet, with an unrivaled ecommerce platform. And yet the company employs more than 700 people in its communications department.

Why?

Because beyond the increasingly sophisticated AI that drives the Amazon platform, and the robots that work in the warehouses, Amazon needs to communicate with *humans* to ultimately succeed. Customers, but also investors, regulators, politicians, and the general public.

No matter how many words GPT-3 can string together, it lacks the uniquely human skills that are necessary to communicate effectively. It’s not just about words and coherent paragraphs -- it’s the right words for the right people at the right time.

And that's the heart of content marketing. It's the "soft skills" that only humans have, and will continue to *only* have for the foreseeable future. These include:

- Creativity
- Strategy
- Empathy
- Imagination
- Communication

With those traits, you've basically just described a top-tier professional writer. But the same skills power any form of content creation, and are certainly the ingredients for an entrepreneur with a "thought leader" approach (aka content marketing).

But we're all going to have to adapt. A *lot*.

Kumar Krishnamurthy, an IT strategist at PricewaterhouseCoopers, uses a basketball analogy:

In 1979, the three-point line was introduced to the game. From this point on, the same players on the court had to change their strategy in order to shoot from longer distances more accurately. The players had to learn new skill sets in order to operate within the new rules of the game. Fast forward to today, the three-pointer has become a critical component of the game.

"And that's the thing [about AI]—it's not going to reduce the number of people that work," Krishnamurthy says. "It's going to require people to retool their skill set."

Two things about this useful sports analogy bear elaboration.

First, you're going to have to retool or augment your primary skill set. But the key point about the addition of the three-point line to the NBA was that it required a change in

strategy for otherwise talented players who had an existing way of doing things to succeed.

Let's go back to Garry Kasparov.

Once his mastery of tactics was taken away by the computer, Kasparov had to rely on strategy alone. And it turned out that other chess players were a match for him once the playing field changed, much like the three-point line allows Steph Curry to be a prolific scorer in the NBA at only 6'3".

When's the last time you've seen a chess + basketball analogy for writers? At minimum, this report has delivered you that novelty in exchange for your time. :-)

But I hope you take away much more than that. Because there is so much opportunity to be had for writers who also develop other talents.

Technology is for tactics, and anyone can augment themselves with technology. But if you also bring creativity, empathy, imagination, and communication skills, plus a healthy dose of strategic thinking, you win.

A killer poet with the right tech tools can achieve outsized success in the coming years. A pure killer who focuses exclusively on tactics, though, may be out of luck faster than expected.

Keep this in mind, though. Deep Blue, the computer that defeated Garry Kasparov, was an example of symbolic AI, which has faded into the background.

Deep Blue's successor is Alphabet's DeepMind, and there's a whole lot of difference. With vastly more computing power and data at its disposal, DeepMind *learns*.

And so must you.



True Learning for Lifelong Success

For 20 years -- kindergarten through law school -- I learned. That was my job.

Once I began practicing law, however, I learned something incredibly important about myself. I understood what I wanted out of life, and more importantly, what I didn't want. So I became an entrepreneur.

Then the *real* learning started for the next 22 years.

And yet, I'm just getting started. And so are you. We all are, because as long as you're in business, it never ends.

Some people groan at the thought of it. But I love it, and it's one of the main drivers behind my success and my favorite catch phrase -- *keep going*. From my first business all the way up to the new ones I have now, it's been one incredible learning experience after another.

There are things we learn the hard way. Other lessons come from deliberately seeking out answers to hard questions.

And this should always include learning more about what makes people tick, so you can use that knowledge to help people while creating a business or career for yourself.

I plan to keep going until I no longer can. Not for the money, but because this is what I do. In the words of our man Ogilvy, the secret to a long life is double careers -- one to about age sixty, then another for the next thirty years. :-)

You may feel the same way.

Frankly, I could stop working now. Once both kids are off to college in a couple of years, I'll be free to travel the world.

And I *will* do that, but I'll still be doing the work that I love from wherever I happen to be.

That means I have to keep learning, even at the age of 53. To embrace new technology that may be out of my comfort zone. To keep digging deeper into the enduring aspects of human nature so I can continue to bring value to people.

Plus, it's damn good for my brain. The last thing I want is to be 65, mentally declining, and out of touch with the world. And I can guarantee you that the world will look radically different in the 12 years it takes me to get there.

But enough about me. Let's get back to you, and what you'll need to succeed. So you can travel the world and do work that you love from wherever you happen to be.

More specifically, let's talk about the skills and mindset required to become a poet *and* a killer so you can get rich (however you personally define that). That's why you're reading, right?

So, what should you focus on learning? Do you have to master every aspect of digital marketing to succeed?

No, I don't think so.

You need a general familiarity with it all, but your core competency is content creation. That's not enough alone, but it's still the vital creative element that sets you apart from those who can't write as well.

But you need to add expertise from three crucial related disciplines that also sets you apart from *other* writers. Those areas are:

1. Strategy
2. Traffic
3. Audience

Content is at the core of effective digital marketing, but without the addition of *all* of the above, it doesn't work. You should have a working knowledge of all three, plus a specialty in at least one of them.

Let's dive into each a little deeper.

1. Strategy

Adding strategic thinking to the creative process has been the key to supplementing a poetic nature with killer instincts for centuries. And it's one area where anyone can improve; it just requires focused attention on the right resources.

- **Marketing strategy:** Being able to formulate a documented content marketing strategy should be a skill that any content marketer should have. Especially those who later create the content to execute on the strategy. It makes sense that the person or team who leads the buyer's journey should be the ones who map it out in the first place.
- **Systems strategy:** Separate and distinct from a content marketing strategy is a

content strategy, or a systematic approach to content creation and management. Add to that various strategic productivity, workflow, and technology systems to create truly effective marketing initiatives, and you've got a well-oiled machine.

- **Strategic partnerships:** From finding co-founders to entering marketing partnerships, strategic collaboration has been one of my secret weapons for two decades. And when you're doing it right, the very marketing strategy that attracts an audience also produces perfect partners and affiliates.

2. Traffic

If there's one topic that bedevils content creators and digital marketers of all kinds, it's traffic. And while content and copy power site visits and opt-ins, it takes a special expertise to get people to join an audience and eventually convert to a customer or client.

- **Online advertising:** The golden age of free organic social media traffic has long passed us by, replaced with the juggernaut advertising programs of Facebook and Google. On the other hand, the tools for precisely targeted traffic make this affordable form of advertising more effective than ever before.
- **Search engine optimization:** While well-placed ads can get you qualified prospects in a matter of days, SEO is a long-term game that can eventually provide a steady stream of organic traffic. It's no surprise that search is more competitive than ever, and that's why creativity plus technical skill is the key to attracting links and ranking well.
- **Analytics and conversion:** An effective traffic strategy uses data to make decisions and adjustments, and that means getting comfortable with website analytics. And mastering the copywriting art of converting cold traffic into leads via landing pages and content upgrades means the traffic doesn't go to waste.

3. Audience

When it comes down to it, audience is king, not content or traffic ... and yet you need the other two first to attract an engaged group of viable prospects. Specializing in growing, engaging, and deeply understanding an audience makes you much more than a "content writer."

- **Email automation:** Once you truly understand an audience and have a viable strategy, implementing smart automation adds value both to the audience and to you (or your client). The tools are not only more affordable than ever, they're easier to use than ever. It takes some time to master, but your value in today's marketplace will pay you back.
- **Email analytics:** The data produced from the email environment is amazing for gleaning further insights about the audience, such as what content they prefer, and what products and services they desire. Again, it starts with understanding the audience at a strategic level, and from there you'll seem like a marketing superhero simply by paying attention.
- **Personalization:** Even beyond email automation, the days of one-size-fits-all broadcast marketing are over. Learning how to segment an otherwise unified audience allows you to use powerful technology to deliver personalized content experiences that people have come to expect from dealing with Amazon and Netflix.

Truth is, these three areas are everything when it comes to digital marketing. Sure, you still need strong copy to close the deal, but many of you have that skill already (and if not, you're working on it, right?).

Of course, you can name other specialties. But "social media expert," for example, is meaningless if it's just someone showing you how to use TikTok. Today, social media is

an advertising channel, and that's because marketers use it as a *traffic* source.

I'm known for content marketing and copywriting. But the reality is that strategy, traffic, and audience are what's powered my success with 10 successful companies and counting.

And even at this point, when I can outsource pretty much everything other than strategy, I'm still hands on with new technology.

I'm a firm believer that delegation is not about handing off something you can't do. It's handing off something that someone else does better or just as well, so you can focus on things that are more important.

And that something else is ... you guessed it, strategy. You have to be mindful of the details and the technology even as you relentlessly focus on your big-picture objective.

So, in my new businesses, I don't feel like I have to write everything. As long as I can share my strategy with talented writers like Trudi Roth and Kat Ambrose (two of our Copyblogger Certified Content Marketing writers who I've hired), I know that I'm constantly moving toward my business objectives.

But as I continue to ramp up Further and Unemployable, imagine how delighted I'd be to have a great writer who can also run Facebook ad campaigns from start to finish.

And how much would I value a content creator who gets SEO, or knows ConvertKit automation cold, or can find the patterns in audience data?

Rhetorical questions, right? Of course I would hire those people in a millisecond, and I'm not easy to impress. Now imagine how well you'd do in the marketplace in general.

You'd absolutely own it.

And you'd end up succeeding so much that you'd end up without a job, or any clients ... because you'll soon understand that you have the keys to any entrepreneurial success you desire.

Sound tough?

Well, if it were easy, everyone would be at the level of success they dream about. But -- and this is important -- it's not about talent or some unreachable personal trait that only certain people possess.

This is all in the realm of the *learnable*.

And yes, you guessed it ... I'm about to invite you to come learn from us, but also learn *with* us and others in this rapidly changing wicked environment called digital marketing.



A Community of Learning Tailored to You

You have to learn for life to survive and thrive in the coming decades. You know this, and you didn't hear it from me for the first time. You hear it *everywhere*.

No one tells you, though, how this is supposed to happen. Go forth and learn, as if that's any easier than simply choosing not to.

It's a sad fact ... most people will choose not to learn and adapt. They'll cling to the past and hope for the best. And it won't work at all.

So please, one way or another, don't make this mistake. If you don't choose to learn with us, you've got to invest somewhere.

But I'd like to make the case that Copyblogger will be an indispensable asset to your educational and networking toolbox. It's difficult enough to find a marketing program that focuses specifically on writers, much less one that offers "killer" skills from people with proven track records.

Our new community could be called the Killer Poets Society (that's what I call it internally). But no, that's just a little too precious, isn't it? Of course, if you want to call it that, that's fine with me.

We're simply calling it **Copyblogger Pro**, because "pro" is the emphasis. We want to accelerate your professional development and business network, so that you do the work and live the life you want.

And if you've been around these parts for a while, you know we always offer our charter members the best deal up front. This time is no different in that regard.

We feel confident that once you experience Copyblogger Pro for yourself, you'll absolutely want to stay involved. With that said, are you ready to find out more?

[You'll find all the details right here.](#)