

Copywriting UNIVERSITY

Michael Senoff Copywriting Interview Series



Brian Keith Voiles On Copywriting

Michael Senoff Interviews Master Copywriter: Brian Keith Voiles

Dear Student,

I'm Michael Senoff, founder and CEO of HardToFindSeminars.com.

For the last five years, I've interviewed the world's best business and marketing minds.

And along the way, I've created a successful home-based publishing business all from my two-car garage.

When my first child was born, he was very sick, and it was then that I knew I had to have a business that I could operate from home.

Now, my challenge is to build the world's largest free resource for online, downloadable audio business interviews.

I knew that I needed a site that contained strategies, solutions, and inside information to help you operate more efficiently

I've learned a lot in the last five years, and today I'm going to show you the skills that you need to survive.

It is my mission, to assist those that are very busy with their careers

And to really make my site different from every other audio content site on the web, I have decided to give you access to this information in a downloadable format.

Now, let's get going.

Michael Senoff

Michael Senoff

Founder & CEO: www.hardtofindseminars.com

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From sweaty brick-yard brick stacker, to part-time janitor, to professional magician, to brain tumor survivor, to world's most expensive copywriter...

**"This the most
compelling 150 minute
interview with Brian
Keith Voiles about his
copywriting secrets
ever..."**

This is your lucky day because I have created for you what I think is one of the most compelling interviews on my site. It's with Brian Keith Voiles. Brian is the world's most expensive copywriter and in the next two and one half hours you'll know why.

In this first time tell all interview you'll learn how Brian Keith Voiles would come home dripping wet with sweat every day in overalls from stacking bricks for a living to becoming one the world's most expensive copywriters.

Brian's ad writing techniques work – and his track record of "top-dog" clients speaks for itself. Brian has written for:

Ted Nicholas, author of "How To Form Your Own Corporation For Under \$75"

Gary Halbert, author of "How To Make Maximum Money In Minimum Time"

Jay Abraham, marketing consultant and author

Dr. Stephen R. Covey, N.Y. Time's best-selling author of "The Seven Habits Of Highly Effective People"

Robert Allen, Best-selling author of "No Money Down Real Estate "

You'll be super-glued to your seat as you hear in Brian's own voice

- How Amway was the pivotal turning point in his thinking even though he

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- never made a dime in the MLM business.
- **You'll be amazed at to hear how Brian describes in detail how he was making \$3200 a month working only three hours a day as a part-time janitor.**
 - Learn what Brian did to support his wife and three young boys in the early days living in a mobile home.
 - **You'll chuckle when you hear about the make and model of the nicest car Brian has ever owned.**
 - Get inside Brian's head as he describes what guided him to being a copywriter heavyweight.
 - **Hear his personal story of how a five dollar magic set changed the direction of his life and turned him into one of the best copywriters on the planet.**
 - \$90,000 in 90 days, learn how a chance chain letter started a sequence of events that would introduce Brian to the world of copywriting.
 - **Feast your ears on the story about one letter that was pulling right about 36% and getting phenomenal results. And learn how to get it for your own swipe file.**
 - Hear Brian's true story of how he survived a deadly softball size brain tumor in the middle of his head.
 - **Hear exactly how Brian sold 3000 copywriting courses on his first major direct mail campaign.**
 - Find why Brian thinks going offline with your product may be the best way to rake in the money.
 - **Learn why Brian cuts and tapes hundreds of headlines to his wall before he picks “the one” for his client’s letter.**
 - Learn how if your loaded with great testimonials and a risk free proposition, you can sell anything with the write copywriting skills.
 - **Hear what Brian does first before he writes one word of copy in any letter.**
 - Learn who to talk to in your research phase and who to record twice..
 - **Learn why recording your conversations will get you mouth watering sales copy.**
 - You'll hear specific results and success stories Brian has generated for world-class marketers like Jay Abraham, Gary Halbert, Ted Nicholas, Yanik Silver and more.
 - **Hear what to do when a client gets too lazy to mail your letter.**
 - Learn one legal clause to place in your contract to protect you before you write one word of copy for a client.
 - **Learn Brian's secret for generating headlines that smash controls and how to get them to pop into your subconscious at will.**

Look, I could go on and on, but I don't have to because it's all right here for you in this five part interview transcript below. This interview was recording in May 2004. If you

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have any questions for Brian or you would like consider and copywriting project, you may e-mail him at brian@hardtofindseminars.com

PS. There is an additional bonus interview with Brian after this first one and a bonus report on how to negotiate better advertising rates for your advertising.

Michael Senoff Interviews Brian Keith Voiles Vol. 1

Brian: I can sell anything. The truth is, I can sell anything that I—first of all, I have to want to sell it; I have to believe in it. Second of all, if they’ve got testimonials that are decent, they don’t even have to be great and if they a risk free proposition, I can sell anything. Guaranteed, I can sell anything.

[MUSIC]

Brian: I hate calling anything that I do a gift because I have worked hard to master everything I have mastered. But I do think there was a piece of me that was to be a writer. My grandmother was a writer and she was a copywriter, too. She wrote radio commercials. Michael, if I had to sum in a nutshell what’s unique about Brian and in my copywriting is this deep compassionate empathy that’s truly heart felt for other people. And I think that’s what I took away from the brain tumor experience.

Michael: Had you ever had a job working for somebody?

Brian: Yes, I did. I had two jobs before that. One was in my teenaged years. I worked at a Mexican restaurant.

Michael: Bussing tables, cooking, what?

Brian: I was called a disher. I would take the food, put it on the plate, make it look pretty, and the people would eat it. But there was a little bit of cooking involved, but no recipes. It was just fry the taco.

Michael: How long were you at that job, the Mexican food one?

Brian: Six years. I started when I was 13.

Michael: That’s a long time.

Brian: Yes, I worked hard. All my other friends were out playing for the most part and they were all pretty rich. I come from a real poor, country background. I grew up in the back woods of Okalahoma. We just never

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had much. For me to get a five-dollar magic set for Christmas was a dream come true.

Michael: How many brothers and sisters do you have?

Brian: I had one older brother that beat the holy living crap out of me all the time.

Michael: I'm sorry to hear that.

Brian: It's funny now, but it wasn't fun at the time. My dad basically ignored me and my mom was sweet, but she was always in a lot of emotional pain. It was just kind of...I'm not here to whine, just rough. My mom and dad divorced. I think I was 11 or so. A year and a half later, my mom moved out here to Utah just on a whim.

Michael: Take the boys with her?

Brian: She took me with her and my older brother was really...he was just angry at the world, angry at everything. He stayed there and he actually was renting a house on his own and he was about 16, 17 years old. But anyway, I worked real hard to try to have some money. And then I got a really great experience. I served as a missionary for the Mormon Church over in Japan.

Michael: Really? How did you get that deal?

Brian: Well, you know, it's a choice you make. When you're 19, it's not a requirement. It's up to you whether or not you go on a mission and if you do, they'll support you.

Michael: So, did you move out to Japan at 19?

Brian: Yes, I went to Japan and lived there for 18 months.

Michael: Were you with other guys doing the same thing?

Brian: Yes.

Michael: Was it fun?

Brian: It was. It was more fun than anything. It was more fun that it was missionary work...for me, anyway.

Michael: Now were you Mormon?

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Brian: Yes.

Michael: So, is that the guy you see like they go out two by two on bicycles in the white shirts and kind of...

Brian: That's right.

Michael: You were doing that in Japan?

Brian: Yes. And they have a language training center in Provo, Utah where you spend about six weeks doing your best to learn the language. And Japanese is not the simplest language, and the six weeks isn't the longest amount of time you need. But what they found is they just throw you into it and you just tend to pick it up after about or four or five months once you understand the fundamentals and you keep studying your vocabulary. You look up words as people say them if you don't understand them. It's a great experience. It was really wonderful. To this day, I cherish those memories. I absolutely love Japanese food.

Michael: So, you came back and you were 20 1/2. And then did you come right back to Utah?

Brian: Yes, I came back and met a gal and got married right away—probably too soon. But, hey, we fell in love and I fell head over heels and we got married.

Michael: When you got married, what was your financial situation?

Brian: We lived in a mobile home. We had just shopped around for apartments and we just couldn't see dumping money into something like that where the money's just going down the drain. And so, somehow or other, we came up with the idea, well let's find a mobile home. And we did, and we found an inexpensive mobile home park to put it in. And we did that. I got a job at Interstate Brick. And what I did, along with about six other guys, all day long was take brick off the kiln cars and stack them onto pallets.

Michael: Wow. And they were a brick manufacturer?

Brian: Yes.

Michael: So, these were like hot bricks coming out of the oven?

Brian: Exactly. Yes, and sometimes they were definitely were hot.

Michael: And how long did you do that for?

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Brian: Let’s see I started in probably in ’83 and I quit in April of ’87.

Michael: What kind of money did that pay?

Brian: They paid some piecework rate, but it was the base of \$6.50 an hour. And the piecework allowed me to usually make about \$100 a day. But at the same time, first of all, I just knew I didn’t belong there. It just wasn’t the space for me. But I had a family to support. A friend of mine had introduced me to Amway. Now, I’m bringing this up. Amway was the pivotal turning point in my thinking.

Michael: Who introduced you to Amway?

Brian: A high school friend of mine. Here’s what appealed to me most Michael. They said that I could work 20 hours a week and make \$5,000 a month. And that meant if I only had to work 20 hours a week to make \$5,000 a month, I’m financially free. In my mind...please understand, I’m 22, 23 years old making \$6.50 an hour; \$5,000 seemed like a goldmine. And I only had to work 20 hours a week to do it. That is what sold me on doing it. And number two was the chance to get out the brickyard and to be my own boss and run my own show and make residual, permanent income working 20 hours a week for \$5,000 a month.

Michael: I bet you couldn’t sleep that night.

Brian: I was so excited; I couldn’t believe it. I went out over the next year and I personally sponsored 36 people—two down-line legs—that I had driven down about six levels deep. But more importantly, I was listening to the Worldwide Dream Builders tape. There’s a gentleman by the name Bill Britt. I think Bill Britt started the Worldwide Dream Builders Association. And anyway, it was like a tape of the week club and there were all these Amway, successful Amway people telling their story on these tapes and how they do the business, etc. And I would go to work with a tape player and a headphone and I would listen to those tapes over and over, all day long. I was getting sales training over and over, all day long. I was getting inspiration over and over, all day long. And it just made my days slide by. It was wonderful. You know, I never made a dime in the Amway and the key mistake I made is I didn’t sponsor people who were at my ambition level or above. I sponsored people who were easy to sponsor because they were so inspired by my enthusiasm that they just lined up. But they had no drive or ambition of their own. That was one of the principles of the training that they taught. Sponsor at your ambition level or above, which is really a brilliant concept when it comes to network marketing because if you’re sponsoring people as ambitious as you are; well, if you’re ambitious then you know you’re going to have success. But more importantly, I

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thank God for Amway because I would not have started down this path of working for myself. I wouldn’t even have occurred to me that I could be a business owner. I didn’t picture me ever being a business owner at that age. I had no clue what I was doing. I was just having a family and paying the bills. I mean we were happy. I mean we were happy, we weren’t rolling in the dough, but we had a lot of joy in our little home; a lot of happy memories in my life comes from that time period. And I worked hard. I came home dripping wet with sweat ever day in my overalls. But, those are some of the really treasured memories. One thing, when I was working at the brickyard, a friend approached me—a different friend—and he said, hey Brian, you know what. I’ve been cleaning carpets. I got this carpet cleaning machine and people have been paying me to clean some carpets. Do you want to come out on some jobs? I’ll pay you \$10 an hour. I was like, wow, okay. So, I went out on some jobs with him in the evening and did some carpet cleaning. He paid me \$10 an hour. And we did that...it wasn’t very often, maybe a couple of times a month. We did that on and off for like six months. Then six months into it he goes hey Brian, you know, I’ve got these office building that I’m cleaning these carpets for, but they also asked me if I could like empty the trash and clean off the desks and vacuum and things like that. So, we started up a little janitorial service. We got too many people; too many clients, do you want to take over...I’ll pay you \$12 an hour to go at night and clean this place and that place. I was like yes I’ll do that. And so, I went and he trained me and showed me what to do with this office and don’t do this at that office. It’s just whatever the people wanted is what we did. And they were pretty big buildings. None of them were just little onesy, twosy; like an accountant’s office or something like that. And I got thinking about it and I thought...well, I didn’t consciously think this, but I had all this sales training from Amway. I thought about it and thought I bet I could go out and bet you anything I could get some of these deals for myself. And so, I asked my buddy if it was all right with him and he’s like, yes, sure, go for it. So, I did. I took one of the busiest streets in Salt Lake Valley. And I’m so proud of this Michael. I’ve got to...I am so proud of this. I had some business cards. I printed up 1,000 business cards for \$15, Voiles Cleaning Service, it said on there. Put my wife’s name on there and put my name on there. And I went to 33rd South and 3rd West. I went all the way up to 23rd East. Now, we’re talking probably five miles, maybe eight miles. I walked on the north side of 33rd South and I knocked on every stinking door there was to knock on. Went in, suit and tie, introduced myself and said, who is in charge of your janitorial service? And I tell you; I went up the north side, crossed the street, after eight miles of door knocking, went down the south side, eight miles of door knocking. It took me about three and a half weeks to do this, and by the time I was done, I had \$3,200 worth of janitorial services; little teeny offices that all the big companies wouldn’t even touch. Little teeny offices that were happy to pay me, oh yes, we

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need it so bad. The bathroom and we hate taking out the garbage and everything. I had \$3,200 and they were all like little \$60 a month deals.

Michael: That was \$3,200 a month.

Brian: Yes, and my biggest job was \$120 a month. Man, I couldn't believe I had landed a \$120 a month job.

Michael: That's great, and it's a residual, too.

Brian: Yes, and most of them were once a week. And so, I said well, do you mind if I come on a Tuesday night instead of on the weekend? And what I did is I got them all...they were all happy just to have me come. I had my whole week divided up. And what I did is I got up at 4:30-5:00 in the morning and I would go and I would clean the offices for that day and I was home by seven in time to help with breakfast and getting the kids off to school. So, I was working two and a half, maybe three hours every early morning doing janitorial. And I came home. And you know what, I was free the rest of the day.

Michael: That's great.

Brian: Yes. Oh part of the story was, I got laid off. I got laid off about four months after I started this janitorial thing.

Michael: From the brick place?

Brian: Yes, the brick place had laid me off and they offered me the job back later, but I said no thank you. So anyway, they were really great. They paid their unemployment and they were a good company.

Michael: Do a comparison; the brick laying with your hard labor; how much were making a month and then let's compare it to what you had going with your own business.

Brian: Oh, I was really happy to make \$2,000 or \$2,200 month in brick laying.

Michael: And that was from what time to what time?

Brian: I started at seven, so I had to leave at 6:30 and the work ended at 3:30.

Michael: And then the janitorial work, you were doing two and half hours in the morning...

Brian: Yes.

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Michael: ...and you were making around \$3,200 a month?

Brian: Yes. Well now, on the weekends, I would have to put in a good three hours, maybe four—just on Saturday. I never worked Sunday.

Michael: And you got that all from hustling?

Brian: Yes. It was just a no brainer. When I look at it now, I just think well anybody can do that. Just pick a busy street and look for these little businesses that the big boys aren't even going to go after. Don't worry about window cleaning. I just did the basic stuff people didn't want to do. They didn't want to take out the garbage. They didn't want to clean the toilet. They didn't want to scrub the bathroom floor. They didn't want to vacuum. They didn't want to dust. And you know what, that's all I ever did—common, ordinary housekeeping stuff that took no specialized training whatsoever. It was just no brainer stuff. Guess what...people don't want to do it.

Michael: So, how long did you do the janitorial stuff?

Brian: I did that for...I was still doing it when I started my copywriting. What I realized after doing the janitorial for a month or two, I've got the rest of the day and I can't handle any more janitorial work unless I want to start getting into employees and stuff like that. That was something in Amway that they shunned because they tell you; you don't need employees. You don't want employees because then you become a slave to the business. And so, that was something I knew I wanted to stay away from. So, I thought, okay we're clipping along here pretty good. I got the trailer paid off. Bought a new car for my wife. A Honda Accel. It really was the nicest car I had ever owned. And I thought, well okay what am I going to do. And my wife one day said, well didn't you make money with your magic before doing magic shows? I said well yes, I did five or six shows and made some money. She says, well why don't you do that during the day. I'm like who is going to hire a magician during the day. And then it occurred to me that the elementary schools would. So, I just wasn't afraid to get on the phone, Michael, because I did it with Amway. And I just got on the phone and I started calling daycare centers. I started calling, actually the elementary schools. I dressed up in a suit and a tie and I went to every elementary school in the Salt Lake Valley. Something...any professional magician would be either too elitist about...too good to do, or they're just too freaking lazy, which most people are. I went to every school. And by the time I was done, I had gone to like 40 schools and out of 40 schools, I had booked like 18 shows. Admittedly, I wasn't charging much because I didn't know what to charge. I'd charge \$50 for most of them and then later on as I was seeing success, maybe I should charge

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more. And it wasn’t a matter of market thinking. I wasn’t thinking about the market or marketing at all. I was just thinking well maybe I could get more money. I wasn’t thinking what the demand was or what the competition was charging. It was just a matter of hey maybe I could get more. So I just decided...I charged a few of those \$85. I thought, man I’m making...I’m going to go to the school, I’m going to spend a half hour; I’m going to get \$50 or \$85. Do you know how much that is an hour? Holy crap, that’s \$170 an hour. I was so excited I couldn’t stand it.

Michael: That’s great. And had you practiced magic when you were younger?

Brian: Oh yes. I friend gave me a magic kit when I was ten and from that point on, man, I was just hooked on magic; still am to this day. I don’t do shows anymore. When I speak at a seminar, I almost always do magic, but I’ll still buy the latest videos and some of the newest tricks and things like that. It’s just that addiction. Where I’m leading, though, is the magic is ultimately—I mean Amway was the paradox shift for me. It just changed everything from having a job to just—I had this programmed drive to be self-employed and that was the crux of everything that guided me to where I am. And then magic is what turned me on to marketing because I just wanted to succeed at it. And I thought how can I get more business? I just need more business. Again, I wasn’t afraid to get on the phone, but I was getting too many shows that was taking up phone time. So, I couldn’t be on the phone because you could only phone during certain hours. And if I’m not doing shows during those hours, guess what...can’t be on the phone generating business. So, I thought maybe I’ll advertise. Well, actually what made me think of that was from the pre-school shows I was getting birthday parties. Mom’s would call and say hi, my son saw you today and he just loved you. He said you were hilarious and do you do birthday parties? And, of course, I wasn’t going to say no, even though I’d never done one. And so, I said sure, I can do birthday parties. So, that’s what got me thinking well gee maybe there are other people out there that would like to have magician at their birthday. See, I’d never even heard of that. I’d never even heard of that...of having a magic show at your birthday party. I was really naïve about life in general. So anyway, I thought well maybe I’ll advertise, but where can I advertise for pre-schools. There’s nowhere. I can’t advertise for elementary schools. I don’t know what to do. And I thought, well I’ll just advertise for birthday parties. This is really the key turning point for me. There’s an advertising newspaper here in town called *The Mailbox Shopper*—really nice. It’s a good publication. People do get results from it now. It was a lot younger when I looked at it, but anyway, I had the guy come out—the owner—and he was selling me on this ad. And I said, well okay, I’ll think about it. But you know, I don’t know what to say in my ad. And he goes here’s some examples. And he shows me what everyone else is doing; here’s the name

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of the restaurant and they’ve got a little coupon here, buy one get one half off and their address and their phone number. So, I just thought, okay well I’ll do an ad that says magic shows. Put my phone number in there. Well, ultimately, I spent hours on this ad and I was so confused about what to do, what to do. I went to the Yellow Pages and looked at all the ads in there. And I looked at all the ads in all *Mailbox Shoppers* I could get my hands on. I even called several of the advertisers in *Mailbox Shopper*; hey does this thing work for you. Well, you know, sometimes it does, sometimes it doesn’t. That was just such a confusing deal for me. Ultimately, I decided not to do, but then the guy said, well how about this, how about if I let run this ad for half off and you come and do a magic show for my church. I was like okay, wow, there’s a deal. And so I did it. I did get two birthday parties out of the ad.

Michael: Do you remember how much the ad was for?

Brian: It couldn’t have been more than \$100 because I was a tightwad. I wouldn’t have spent more than \$100 on it. That’s two whole magic shows. That was my mindset at the time. I got two parties out of it, but I thought about it. Now, this is the one brilliant thing I did. I thought, now wait a minute, I spent \$225 on this ad and I only got two birthday parties. Wow...that wasn’t a very good deal even though I had paid for half of my ad with a magic show. It still wasn’t a very good deal. That’s how I looked at it. I didn’t say I didn’t break even. And so, I just didn’t know what to do. Now, here’s what happened. This is fun to even think about for me. My wife and I did this chain letter thing. You’ve probably seen it—\$90,000 in 90 days. We decided, oh let’s just give this a try. And so we rented a mailing list of opportunity seekers for \$15 for a thousand. So, we mailed out all these chain letters and, of course, it was just dismal what happened. But what it did is it got my name on same mailing lists. I’ll be ever grateful for that doggoned chain letter. So, here comes this newsprint magazine chucked full of...

Michael: Money making opportunities?

Brian: And I was paging through that sucker. I saw an ad and it said, make more money in your business. Learn how to advertise and get results. Learn how to mail and get results. I was just blown away. I spoke to me, Michael, it really did. And it was an ad by Jeffrey Lant for his *Money Making Marketing* book.

Michael: Wow.

Brian: And right underneath it was an ad that spoke to me just as well for his *Cash Copy* book, and if you buy them both together, you save \$10. So, I

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bit the bullet and I told my wife, I said honey—I went to her with everything, she controlled the money—and I said I have got to get these. I really think I can do something with my magic business if I get these books. So, we did; we got them. And I did not put those books down except to go do a magic show and go do my cleaning route. And I studied them. I devoured them. I took notes. I mapped out a marketing plan. I didn’t even know about direct mail—oh wow what a cool idea—except for our chain letters. I was oh that’s a neat...I could do a postcard. Oh that’s cool. I should just send a postcard instead of knocking on all these doors or phoning all these places. I could mail them a letter. Wow, what a concept. But for me, this was amazing. And those books really are good. They’re two of his finer work and the other books, I really love his *How To Make A Million Dollars Publishing, Commissioning, and Writing How To Information*. That’s the best, in my opinion, step by step how to create an information product book on the planet. In fact, I’ve got a funny little side story. I had bought...well this was a few years later...but I had bought Ted Nicholas’ how to publish how to book. I don’t remember what he called it.

Michael: *How To Publish A Book and Sell A Million Copies?*

Brian: Yes, that was it. I had bought that and it was expensive and love Ted. This is before I’d gotten to know him. But it was just terrible compared to Jeffrey Lant’s book. Jeffrey Lant was so precise and detailed in every little step. And I actually wrote...I sent Ted’s product back, and I actually wrote him a letter that said; hey I’m sorry I had to ask for a refund. But this just isn’t really very good. I don’t know if you know about this work by Jeffrey Lant, but it’s called How To Make A...blah, blah, blah. I said you really ought to check it out because it’s a lot better than yours.

Michael: That’s hilarious.

Brian: I said that to Ted Nicholas. Well, anyway, I mean really, Michael, I hardly slept for two weeks, and those books are thick. They are copy dense and they took a while to read and understand. I ended up buying every single thing I could from that guy.

Michael: That’s exactly what you needed. You had the answers in front of you in those books for your magic business. And did you start applying them to your magic business?

Brian: Oh, did I ever. One thing led to another. I got introduced to this guy—I don’t even remember how I found this...it must have been on some magic list and they rented my name or something. There’s a gentleman by the name of Brian Flora in Albuquerque, New Mexico and he has since passed

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away. Bless his heart. He had his second heart attack. He was pretty young. He put on this annual conference for magicians on how to market your business. And somehow I got an invitation to it. I was just bouncing off the walls with excitement to go. Before that, I had already been having success from using the Jeffrey Lant stuff. And what I was doing, I was just mailing elementary schools and the pre-schools. And I was having really good success with it. I believe in gifts, but I hate to call anything that I do a gift because I have worked hard to master everything I have mastered. But I do think there was piece of me that was to be a writer. I wrote stories as a little boy. I wrote stories about the Cherry family—I called them. And I had poems and things. My grandmother was a writer and she was a copywriter, too. She wrote radio commercials. Iva Simpson is her name and she...believe it or not Michael; this is so cool to tell. She was the lady that came up with word scrump-dilly-icious for Dairy Queen.

Michael: She was writing radio commercials during what year? Back in the 30s or 20s?

Brian: Oh yes, 30s and 40s, probably into the 50s.

Michael: Where was she living?

Brian: Back woods Oklahoma, Miami, Oklahoma.

Michael: That's interesting. I had a guy on my list who just sent me...he was so gracious for all the audio recordings I had on my site...and he just sent me the CD of all these old radio commercials from the 1920s and 1930s.

Brian: No way.

Michael: I swear. Just last week and I'm going to put them all up on my www.hardtfindads.com site. They're public domain. And you've got Puff Grain and Wheatberry; the same concept that Claude Hopkins wrote. And I was reading some research in a book called, Taken At The Flood. It's the story of Albert Lasker with Lord & Thomas. That's who Claude Hopkins worked for. And Albert Lasker...he wasn't real sold on radio until he was introduced to it by a friend of his, and he saw Pepsodent sales, which was one of their accounts triple by sponsoring it with some of the soap operas that they had on the early radio stations. And he ended up owning and bought almost 30% of all the radio during that time. Lord & Thomas was one of the largest advertising agencies next to Jay Walter Thompson. They had Quaker Oats. They had...I'd have to look at this list, which are some of the companies Hopkins developed when he was working with Lord & Thomas. And some of these radio commercials match the same written

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campaigns that Hopkins established when he was working for Lord & Thomas. It’s fascinating. And to listen...

Brian: Yes, it is fascinating.

Michael: They’re all going to be up on that www.hardtfindads.com site for everyone to listen to. You’re so creative. I think your child-like and you’ve got that great imagination. The imagination is a gift.

Brian: Well, I work hard at it.

Michael: But you know how to channel it. You know what to do with it. Let’s continue.

Brian: All right. So, I was mailing these letters. I was getting good results, and I didn’t look at it in terms of percentages or anything. I just knew that if I mailed out 100 letters to 100 different pre-schools that I was going to book 15 or 16 shows. That’s the only way I looked at it. Some of this just occurred to me logically, you know what, I mailed them a month ago, but they didn’t call me back. I think I’ll just send them another letter and say hey what’s the deal. I didn’t hear back from you. I’ve got a spring special going on. And I thought you guys would jump all over this, but you didn’t. And you really ought to take advantage of it. Look at some of the quotes I got from some of these other pre-schools.

Michael: And so, what happened when you mailed them again?

Brian: On any mailing that I would do again, I’d get another 10 shows like that. It was just...well, part of it was naturally, but then there was the lesson I learned from Jeffrey Lant was you’ve got to follow up seven times with these people; seven times is ideal. I didn’t just naturally occur to me, but the way I thought about it wasn’t from a marketing point of view other than seven times. All I knew is I’ve got to contact them at least seven times before I take them off the list.

Michael: Did you do all seven?

Brian: Oh yes. I mailed them seven times.

Michael: So, give me an idea. The first maybe pull in how many shows, second time, third time, fourth time, fifth time, sixth time...just to give me an idea from your experience just for the magic shows?

Brian: Well, the magic business is a wonderful thing because if a pre-school likes you, they’ve had you and they like you and they get a letter in the mail

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two months later...guess what...they’ll just call you and book you again because they have bad magicians come in—oh gee that was horrible. And they’re hesitant to hire another magician. But then once they saw me, they’re like oh that was awesome, that was great. And they were happy to have me back, but I needed to contact them. Sometimes they would call me and say yes, we have this special fair going on. Do you want to come and put on a show? But very rarely would people just call out of the blue in the beginning and schedule a show. I just did what Jeffrey Lant said. I just did it. I put it into action. And then anyway, I had this other magician friend in Atlanta that I had met. His name is John Cooper. He told me about this idea...well, actually before that, I’m giving you all the scoop. I’m just filling you in on all the details. Somehow I had met John when he was in Atlanta and he was a children’s entertainer and magician, too. And he said you know, Brian, I’ve been thinking about starting a fan club. I’m like oh come on, John. Fan clubs are for TV stars and fan clubs are for rock stars. They’re not for magicians like mucked magicians like me and you. He said, oh no, I’m really thinking about doing it. And so, we both put our thinking caps together. Well anyway, he ended up coming out with a product called *How To Build Your Birthday Business*. And it was six months later and I heard about this product. And I said, now wait a minute. Is that the same John Cooper? And it was. What he had done, he had come up with this idea of doing a fan club and he started selling it to other magicians. And I’m sure it wasn’t much of an income stream for him at the time. So, I called him up and said, hey dude, you’re doing that fan club thing and you’re selling it. And he’s like, yes, let me send you one over. And this was just beautiful. What I learned from John was to give away a color sheet at every magic show to every kid gets a coloring sheet. And it’s a picture of the magician and his bunny or whatever it is. But they get to color it, right. And on the bottom, John said put your phone number and offer them a free magic trick and you can just photocopy these little magic tricks that they could make out of paper somehow. And they’ll call you and they’ll sign up for the free magic club. And when they call, you’ve got to get their name and address; you might as well get the birthday. And the parents will call and they’ll sign them up and the kids will be excited about it. They want to get the magic trick. So, I thought about it and I thought, well I don’t know if that would work or not, but maybe I’ll try it. Well, in the meantime, I had gone over to friend’s house. She’d asked me hey will you come over Brian and make some balloon animals. My nephews and nieces are in from out of town. And it would just be fun. Well I go over there and start making balloon animals and she introduces me to her nieces and nephews and she says hey guys this is Uncle Brian. And they’re all like, Uncle Brian, hi Uncle Brian. Can you make me a sword? Can you make me a hat? Can you make me a puppy dog? And man it just knocked me on the floor. They kept saying this, Uncle Brian. And...

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Michael: I remember this in your letters in your *Advertising Magic*.

Brian: And I became Uncle Brian that day. And it was a branding and I had a cartoonist put together a logo and a caricature of me. I became Uncle Brian. And that is when my magic business started to overtake—profit wise—the janitorial business. And I had a sister-in-law and a brother-in-law who would go out and do the cleaning for me on some of the bigger jobs and I would just keep the weekend routine. When I became Uncle Brian, I started using that. That was just magical. And what happened with the birthday fan club...here’s what happened. After I became Uncle Brian, I decided, you know what, I think I will do this fan club deal. But I’m not going to make them call me. I’m going to put a fan club application at the bottom of this coloring sheet. It’s a legal sized paper with cut-off application. And at the bottom of the coloring sheet portion, above the application, it said hey Mom or Dad, got a birthday party coming up for your son or daughter? Uncle Brian makes a great hassle free birthday party for you, and tons and tons for the kids.

Michael: That’s great.

Brian: Call today and gave my number. I was doing these pre-schools and elementary schools and I was giving out coloring sheets by the thousands. Every time I’d do an elementary school show, I’d get home and there would be six birthday party messages waiting.

Michael: Wow.

Brian: We’ve got a birthday party next weekend, can you make it, can you do it. And, of course, urgency creates demand, so I get to charge more. And anytime I do a pre-school show, I’d almost always get one birthday party from a pre-school show, too. Now, the other thing that happened is my mailbox got jammed with fan club applications. I started my own database, my own mailing list. I had the parents name, I had the kid’s names, I had their age, I had their birth date, and I would mail the hard hitting, but warm hard sell sales letter to the parent. And that letter was pulling right about 36%. I was mailing these out. I would even...this is so funny Michael, I even have kids send me their coloring sheets that they colored, write a note on the back...Uncle Brian you’re so funny. Oh and I’d even...and this was classic...I even had this little girl call me the week before Thanksgiving...Uncle Brian are you coming to Thanksgiving dinner? Can you believe that?

Michael: Yes, I believe it.

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Brian: They loved me. It was good. I mean I really, really was. You have to be good to get that kind of passionate response from the kids.

Michael: That's great. I bet you were having a great time with it.

Brian: I really was. It was a lot of fun. It was a lot of work. On Saturdays, I was doing 14 to 20 birthday parties all day and I was driving 90 miles an hour on the freeway to get around the Valley to these shows. Then I had this restaurant gig on the weekend where I'd go and I'd do magic at the tables. Patrons would get me corporate shows. I started selling myself as a trade show magician. And I had to do that by phone because I couldn't figure out a way to do that...

Michael: Good money in that?

Brian: Oh yes. I did really good. I did probably 20 trade shows over two years. And I was getting at least \$1,000 a day and each show is about...it was two to three days. So, those were God sent for my family.

Michael: So, you were always looking for bigger and better and more?

Brian: Yes. But I had to keep the elementary schools going because that's how I got the message out. You'd pass out a thousand coloring sheets at a single show. What a great opportunity for marketing. But it's disguised as a free coloring sheet. Plus the free gift, the \$10 value when you sign up for the fan club. So, there was lots of incentive there. So anyway, somehow, I found out about this marketing seminar for magicians. So, I spend \$395, which was a lot of money for me to spend, and I took a plane down to Albuquerque. And I want to tell you this because this is the turning point from brick stacking to janitorial to magic, and now we're going into copywriting. And I was at the seminar and I had brought my birthday letters and my school letters. And the school letters had consistently pulled 15-20% return. Like I said, for every 100 letters I'd mail, I'd get 15 shows at least. And I brought the birthday party letters that were just blowing the doors off. I was booking so many birthday parties with that letter. I'd send it out about three weeks before the child's birthday for the birthdays of April, or what have you, and man that was just phenomenal results. So, I took these letters down, and we're talking, we're talking. You've got to understand, I was like the class clown of the seminar. And I just loved it. It just all clicked. It went really well.

Michael: How many people were down there?

Brian: There were probably about 50, but some of them were couples.

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Michael: How old were you now? Do you remember that?

Brian: I was about 28 or 29. At first I sat at the very front row, very center. I'm here to learn. And I started to realize that except for the guys that were explaining well here's what I did to get business and here's how it works and blah, blah, blah; I pretty much knew more than these people—other than Brian. I'm sure Brian Flora knew a lot more. He was brilliant, but anyway, I was way up front. Well anyway, I ended up in the back row making wise cracks, right. And I'll never forget this and this is why it's so...I just want to explain the details. We had an aisle down the center and to the left and right of this aisle were tables with about four chairs, five chairs per table. And I was sitting in the back on the inside chair to the right of the aisle; see a clear view of the speaker. There was another gentleman sitting in the front row on the opposite side of the aisle on the inside, just as I was—just the exact opposite. Now, this guy we all had a lot of respect for. His name, I think it was Thomas Alexander. This guy was well connected. We all knew it. We could all sense it. He lived in Hollywood. He knew Gene Roddenberry. In fact, he wrote Gene Roddenberry's biography.

Michael: Who is Gene Roddenberry?

Brian: Oh he's the guy that created Star Trek.

Michael: Okay.

Brian: So, we were like wow, this is the guy. This guy knows stuff. He knows people. He's amazing. We just held him in this high esteem as a group. Well anyway, I shared these letters. Mr. Flora was talking about copywriting and I just raised my hand and said, you know what, I've got something here that I'd like to share with the group. And I held up my letters. And he goes, yes go ahead, Brian. And I held up these letters and I explained to them what was going on, you know, I was pulling 36% response, 15-20% response. And there was this silence because I said is that pretty good? And their jaws were just on the floor. And Brian goes, hell yeah, and everybody just erupted with laughter and cheering. There was like. You've got to be kidding me. I was just excited. Anyway, this Gene Roddenberry dude, right, forgot his name, I think it's Thomas Alexander. Finally after all had kind of settled down and everybody's like can we get copies of those and blah, blah, blah, and all that. We were all sitting back down. He looks straight back down the row at me and I could see this as plain as day and he says, well get out of the magic business and get into the copywriting business. There's a hell of a lot more money you could make. And everybody laughed and laughed and laughed. And I didn't laugh. I just went what...what are they talking about. So, I talked to

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him and he explained it. Yes, people will pay you to write their radio ads and their TV and well, obviously, you're good at letters. People pay a fortune for you to write a letter for them. And so, my eyes lit up, and that's the point that I really decided, okay I'm going to start selling this copywriting stuff.

Michael: What was the first thing you did when you got back?

Brian: I thought about it. I went through the *Money Making Marketing* book from a copywriter's point of view instead of a magician's point of view. And I tried to make a plan. I tried to come up with who is going to hire me. And it was tough. It wasn't as easy as magic. I just couldn't see. And I thought well maybe with ad agencies at first. They don't want my kind of copy. It ended up being a really, really tough way to go. An interesting thing happened. It was November '91, I went to that seminar. And so I struggled to build a copywriting business on the side. By the time the next November rolled around, it was time for another seminar, which I did go to. I was doing okay. I was a copywriter. I probably brought in \$800 a month more, but I was still doing magic shows. Let me backup two months—September I did a card deck card in one of Jeffrey Lant's card decks. Now card decks were getting kind of stale at that point, but I thought—I didn't know that first of all—but second of all, I thought what the heck. It's going to business people.

Michael: And this is a card deck that Jeffrey Lant put together?

Brian: Yes. And I actually did a few other card decks, too. I did like two other ones. And had I done it a year earlier, I think it would have been wildly successful, but by then, card decks were just over used and people just didn't have any attraction to them anymore. You used to find really killer ideas and deals in a card deck. Anyway, it got me some leads and it did close me some deals. On the cards—as a side note—I just put learn the ten most common marketing mistakes and how you can avoid them. I kind of touted myself as a copywriter/marketing expert, and the secrets we'll share with you. And it did.

Michael: Had you heard of Abraham by that time?

Brian: Yes I had actually. Well, that was the other thing. At the seminar, I met a gentleman by the name of Millard Grub.

Michael: Oh yes. I know Millard.

Brian: And he introduced me to Jay. He was hesitant to, but he introduced me to Gary Halbert.

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Michael: Was he a magician at that time? Was he doing magic?

Brian: I think he was a hypnotist. But he was at the seminar.

Michael: So, that's where you first learned about Halbert and Abraham?

Brian: Yes.

Michael: At that seminar?

Brian: Well, it was from meeting Millard at the seminar.

Michael: Did you buy any of their stuff?

Brian: I bought everything.

Michael: So, you got all of Jay Abraham's stuff?

Brian: I became a lifetime subscriber to Gary Halbert based on what Millard told me. I'll never forget. He was just dying with excitement. He says, Brian, I'm not going to tell you this guy's name, but every month his letter comes in my mailbox and I just fall all over myself to get to the mailbox and rip that thing open. And I just devour it from the moment I get it. This guy is a genius. And so I said sign me up. What was it...I think \$2,400 on a credit card just to be part of that. Yes, so I kind of got introduced to that and I did the card deck. I had some copy business and I went to the next magic seminar and we had a good time. But by the time January had rolled around, the magic business had just fallen off. I don't know why. I was mailing the same mailers, but it was just fading off and the copy business was magically picking up. Now, please understand, I was doing \$350 copy job, \$500. The most I had ever gotten was \$850 for like a six-page sales letter.

Michael: Tell me a couple of them that stick out in your mind? The products or some of the jobs you were doing in the real early days.

Brian: One of them was for Joe Castro. I think it was InfoLink and it was long distance service. And that letter kicked butt. I wish that I could find it, but I can't. He did incredible with that. And then there was a David Saunders who hired me to sell this software bundle. And I used the opening...I'm going to give you two pieces of software as a shameless bribe. Now, these aren't pieces of junk software, blah, blah, blah. But I just want to give them to you as your gift for trying...and I think it was called Auto Map software. And it was a penny letter and it did great.

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- Michael: It sounds like a Halbert letter.
- Brian: I copied it almost word for word on the intro.
- Michael: So, you were devouring Halbert stuff and using some of the copy stuff that you were learning from him.
- Brian: Yes.
- Michael: They attached a penny to it?
- Brian: Yes. They put a penny on it and everything. We decided to mail it in a window...the name showing through. And we thought between the window looking, it’s going to go in the “A” pile more than likely. It’s got a window and they feel the penny...they got to be really curious about this. So, and it worked like crazy. It worked like gangbusters.
- Michael: Now, at this time in your copywriting career, you were just getting money up front. You had no idea about a backend or a residual or a piece of the action on any of that?
- Brian: Well, I had heard it from Jay, but I didn’t see how to implement it. It wasn’t a concept that I understood. I didn’t get it. So, really if you look in the dedication in Ad Magic, Millard’s name is like right there up front because—only after my family—because really I wouldn’t be anywhere if it weren’t for Millard. He’s a wonderful, wonderful guy, too, on top of that—just a real blessing in my life. Well anyway, I was getting some copy business and the magic business had just shutoff like a faucet almost. It blew my mind.
- Michael: What was it, the economy?
- Brian: Yes, I can only assume that that’s what it was. But here’s what happened. I was still doing shows, magic show, but I was getting...probably most of my money was coming from these small little copy jobs. I became a copywriter in the Jeffrey Lant copywriting service thing that he offered for a while. I was getting a few small jobs from there. About that time, I decided I needed to get some new glasses because I had this spot on my eye. It’s kind of weird. It’s was like there was a booger on my eye and I couldn’t get it off...wipe it off...but I could see it and it was just weird. And it got to the point where if I was standing two or three feet of somebody, looking face on, having a conversation with them, the left side of their face would become invisible. I could see through it. It was really weird. So, I thought, man, I need some glasses. So, I went into the eye doctor and he checked my eyes. He gave me a new prescription. Just as I

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was walking out this little dark room they have, I said by the way, I got this little thing going on here. It’s like I got a booger on my eye and I can’t get rid of it. And he’s like oh really. Let’s have a look. So, he looks a little closer. He doesn’t see anything. He says, you know Brian; you ought to have that checked out. I’m going to schedule you an appointment at...oh what’s a medical eye doctor?

Michael: Ophthalmologist?

Brian: Yes, thank you. I couldn’t think of the word. So, he schedules me an appointment. So, I go over there and they do all these tests on my eyes, and they blow air in them and they shoot lasers and they test my peripheral vision; all these tests and stuff. They shoot this dye in my blood. Anyway, it was really weird. Finally, I came back three days later to meet with the doctor to see what his findings were. And he goes, well there’s nothing wrong with your eye, nothing at all. You have really good eyes, actually. I said well what’s going on then? He goes; well we’re really not sure. We’re probably going to have you take an MRI. I said, well what’s that? And he explained it to me. I said okay. I didn’t ask why. So, he goes, we’ll let you know. We’ll call you and let you know when that’s going to be. So, as I’m walking out his door and I start walking down the long hallway, he peeks his head of out the office and he said, oh by the way, most of the time when we see this, it’s a brain tumor.

Michael: Wow.

Brian: And he jumps back in his office.

Michael: Oh my God.

Brian: Thanks buddy. What a tactful way to deal with that.

Michael: So, you were pretty freaked out?

Brian: I was like, what? Okay, I don’t have a brain tumor. There’s something wrong with my eye, buddy. I didn’t say that to him, but that’s what I was thinking to myself. So, I went home and sure enough, I had an MRI done and they actually had me drive the pictures from the MRI up to the brain surgeon and have him look at them. They felt that it was that urgent. And as I was driving, I looked at the picture and said I wonder what that big old white thing is. And I could see it. It really didn’t occur to me that that was the tumor. But sure enough, I had a brain tumor the size of a softball in the middle of my head. And it had started to push on the optic nerve. They just said I had to have surgery immediately. And I did. That was rough, I tell you. I ended up canceling three or four dozen shows just to

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get through all that. And that's not something you want to do when you're self-employed, cancel business.

Michael: Absolutely not. Did you have insurance at that time?

Brian: I did, but they fought tooth and nail because I had just barely gotten it four months earlier.

Michael: Did the insurance cover most of it?

Brian: Actually, they hardly covered anything. They covered about 10% of the bill and I ended up having to pay...well, it was over \$100,000; let's put it that way. I was in the hospital for three weeks, 18 hours of surgery, and they said I actually died once. So, I have no recollection of it. I gained 120 pounds in the hospital.

Michael: Wow.

Brian: It was because the doctors had damaged the pituitary gland while removing what tumor they could. They got about 60% of the tumor. Overall, it was just a horrible experience to go through.

Michael: I'm sure.

Brian: What it did...to apply it to copywriting, it made me extremely empathetic for others. Michael, if I had to sum in a nutshell what's unique about Brian and in my copywriting is this deep compassionate empathy that's truly heart felt for other people. And I think that's what I took away from the brain tumor experience. I mean I had on a certain level, a notoriety before the brain tumor, but I just think I gained so much depth and breadth, virtually, from going through that experience. At least that's what I thought at the time. And looking back on it, I see that it has taught me a lot. It's been a blessing to me spiritually and mentally; that whole experience. Physically, it's still somewhat of a challenge, but I'm actively pursuing things to deal with that, as well.

Michael: So, your surgery was in 1990 what?

Brian: 1992.

Michael: '92. Before that surgery, you said that you were experiencing some notoriety. Had you done some copy for any of the bigger names out there yet?

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Brian: No, I hadn’t gotten any notoriety. What happened was, Gary wrote a little bit about me in his newsletter. And he was cursing the doctors because the doctor, the brain surgeon told me that I probably had about a year to live. He was just mad because he doesn’t like doctors playing God. The other side of the story is, I looked the doctor right in the eye and I said well you don’t know me very well, do you? A little pride there, sorry. So, Gary wrote about me. Obviously, that generated some business, bless his heart. Really what *Advertising Magic*...what started it was me seeking a procedure to follow for my copywriting clients. And so, I had my own little notebook...okay, here’s what I’m going to do first and here’s what I need to remember about that. For example, okay now I’m going to write the headline. Now remember, when you’re writing headlines—and I took every nugget that I had pulled from Dan Kennedy’s book, from Gary Halbert’s newsletter, I mean every last stinking one of them from every source, every book I had ever read. I mean I kept meticulous notes as I was learning copywriting and I put them into a form of a checklist so that when I was writing headlines, I knew to follow these rules. And these rules had come from ____, and Kennedy, and etc. And I had that same type of thing for an offer; when you’re writing your offer, testimonials, of course. Everything...everything you could imagine about a sales letter in particular was delineated out with rules of thumb by all the experts. I would read everything from anybody.

Michael: Was there any one guy who really...any favorite out of all the old guys—dead or alive—that you learned, or just little bits of everybody?

Brian: I just have to say Gary Halbert is my favorite because he has been so kind to me. I wouldn’t say it’s because I learned more from him. But if I had a favorite in terms of who I like the most...definitely Gary. I have absolutely nothing bad to say about Gary. He’s been...I call him the Santa Clause from the South in my life. And that’s just my experience of him. I absolutely love Gary Halbert. But in terms of copy and what I’ve learned, who I’ve learned the most from...I would really say my own experience.

Michael: Yes, that’s a good answer. This process, these checklists that you’re using for your own copywriting business and for your own personal notes was what would soon become *Ad Magic*.

Brian: Yes. I decided...you know what, this is neat. I had each page in a plastic cover that protected it. And I took the time to refine...if there was a change to be, I would change it immediately. And it became this 150-page process. What was going on, Michael was the assimilation of all the learning. I had knack for writing copy, but to me, if I wanted to play in the big league, I had to write like the big leaguers write. And their advice...every time I sat down and wrote copy, I couldn’t grab all their

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books, pile them in a pile, and make sure I had everything. So, that's why I created this pre Ad Magic thing for me to use. It was a great blessing in my life. And I took it to seminars and somebody saw it, and they're like gee can I get a copy of that. And that just immediately I thought wow, I think I need to flesh this out a little. But some of my experience into it and put it into something that people would want.

Michael: Did you do that all on your own, or did you have someone helping you, or did someone approach you and say let's do this as an information product, or was it...?

Brian: No, it was entirely on my own.

Michael: You wrote a sales letter for it?

Brian: Do you remember the first Las Vegas Ted Thomas seminar?

Michael: I've heard of his seminars. I don't remember his first one. I may have it on tape somewhere or on video.

Brian: Well, if you do, it's probably not worth watching it. It was just a big sell-a-thon. But they had big players coming. Dan Kennedy came. Well anyway, Ted had hired me to write the sales letter to fill the room, and they did. It was filled to overflowing. And he brought me up in front of the group and said I want you to know why you're all here today. It's because of the words that this man wrote on the paper that got you to write out a check and show up today. So, you can blame him for all the money you spent. I got a standing ovation. It was just jammed, wall-to-wall. And as I recall, people were constantly peeking in the back door at the main session. Then they had breakout rooms. You could choose to Dan Kennedy or go to Robert Allen.

Michael: At that time, did you have the confidence that you know that it was you? You were the person who got all these people there.

Brian: No.

Michael: You didn't understand that you were the reason?

Brian: I just figured...well, hey it's words on paper. But people are here because Dan Kennedy is here. They want to hear Dan. Mark Victor Hansen was there, I believe. People are here to hear him. That was before *Chicken Soup*. I'm not sure what he had accomplished at that point.

Michael: You had your course already developed at that time?

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Brian: No, but what I did, I got some copy jobs from it and I pre-sold *Ad Magic*. People would approach me, in conversations, well good job on the letter. My goodness that was amazing. Are you for hire, dah, dah? And I would introduce myself and yes I'm also writing this book. Well, how much is it? And I said, well it's going to be \$300, but I'm doing a seminar deal, a pre-publication deal for \$177. I was so tickled pink. I sold 22 copies at that seminar at \$177. I came home and I threw a party. I couldn't believe I had made that much money. I brought home \$3,800 for something like that and I was just tickled pink. I couldn't believe it.

Michael: At the same time, you were selling seats at a seminar in the thousands.

Brian: I didn't see that, though.

Michael: So, you had to get the product together now that you had some sales. And you put it together. Then did you write the sales letter for the actual product?

Brian: Yes, I wrote two or three sales letter for *Ad Magic*. I didn't have anybody to mail them to and I just wasn't adventurous enough to rent a list. Then there was a guy, doggone it; I wish I could remember his name. He was in Colorado, Michael something. And he had started this skimpy little four-page newsletter and he had like 12,000 subscribers to this thing in no time flat.

Michael: What was the newsletter on?

Brian: Marketing, it was like a marketing tidbit. I just was in awe of this guy. And somehow he called me. He was writing copy and I said well how are you getting work because I really hadn't cracked the nut on how to get work. But he kind of explained what he did. He had this letter...he'd see a guy's mailer and ad. He'd cut the ad out, tape it to a piece of paper, fold it up with this letter and mail it to the company and say hi dear sir, your letter sucks. You're open to it, so it was good to learn that. But he said, yes I've got this list. I've got about 12,000 who are interested in marketing and I'm getting ready to sell this off. And I'm like well gee can I rent that list. So, I did. I was just too scared and I just didn't have the confidence that I have now, Michael. I would mail ten letters at a time. You can imagine...

Michael: You didn't want to spend the 28-cents.

Brian: No, it was crazy. I just didn't see doing it.

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Michael: Ten at a time, and what happened?

Brian: I'd mail like ten at a time. I just wasn't seeing the results that I wanted when in actuality, I was probably getting about 10% conversion. But it was so little money that I just thought, oh this isn't worth it. I look and I just laugh now. I was such a tightwad. Then I tried postcards to people.

Michael: So, you never used this 12,000 names?

Brian: I never really. Anyway, *Ad Magic* had some success by word of mouth and I had several hundred copies just through...I attended a few seminars here and there and people, they just loved it. They loved the book. And the testimonials came pouring in. One gentleman made \$700,000 in the last three years since he had purchased *Ad Magic*. He became a copywriter for himself in his own business. And I don't if I'm at liberty to tell you who it is, but he's really active on the Web now and making a lot of money. What happened next was this great...

Michael: You had had your brain surgery already. How was your thinking and everything? Did it affect you after the surgery as far as thinking or writing? Did you have to work through any of that during that time?

Brian: Well, kind of a funny side story to answer your question is ___ was trying to convince me for the longest time that that's my unique competitive advantage. Surgery made me a copywriting genius.

Michael: That's funny.

Brian: He tried to convince me for the longest time to do that. But to answer your question, I'd say no. But that's just based on my experience and how do I know. My former wife would say it affected me in every way. She'd basically say I'm a completely different person, and I probably am in terms of how I think. I just look for peace and joy at every corner. And if that means going with flow, then it means going with the flow and not fighting it. Anyway, what happened is I had this kid calling me. He's going to BYU and he was in his last year and he had to do an apprenticeship in his MBA. And he had to do an apprenticeship, and he's like dude, I bought your book and I'm reading it. And he talks like that too. I bought your book, dude, it's awesome. It's so freaking awesome and you're in Sandy and I'm in Provo. I just wondered, dude, if you thought I could just apprenticeship with you because I don't want to go through some corporate flap where you don't learn anything about marketing. These classes are bad enough if you know anything about marketing...blah, blah, blah. I'm like sure, why not. He's like you don't have to pay me anything or anything. It's not that kind of deal. I'm like I'll

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pay you. He's like no, no, dude. I just want to do it for the experience. Anyway, this guy became just a great friend to this day. Jason Perry is his name and he's a genius—really beyond genius, if you ask me. He's like dude, why don't you rent a list? Why don't you rent a list and mail? I like are you crazy. That would cost money. And he's like dude you've got to. This book is so good. You could bless so many people's lives with this. It's like you're sitting here hoarding. All this gold and you're not sharing with people. That was a paradigm shift for me. I hadn't looked at it like that. It was laws of abundance kind of thing. I hadn't really considered it in that way. He's like look I'll tell you what I'll do. I'll pay for the mailing. I'll pay for the list. I'll pay to get it printed if you'll agree to do it. I'm like no way, that's not fair. You've got to get something out of the pie. He's like no I don't want anything. I just want you to do this, that's what I want. That's all I want out of it. So anyway, he cajoles me into it. We rented a list and we mailed...

Michael: What kind of list did you rent, do you remember?

Brian: I can tell you exactly what the list was.

Michael: All right, tell me. Where did you find it first of all?

Brian: Somebody had told us that Jay Abraham had started a newsletter with Philips. One of us found out about it. And so, we just got in touch with Philips and said hey, are you guys doing a Jay Abraham newsletter. And they're like yes; do you want to subscribe? And I'm like yes, sure, sign me up, but I want to find out if the list is for rent? And it was, and it was for rent. So, true to his word, Jason rented the list.

Michael: Five thousand names?

Brian: Yes, he paid for mailing.

Michael: Do you know how big the list was at that time?

Brian: Yes, there was like 12,000 names on the list. And he said let's just test 1,000; see how it goes. If it goes dude, we're going to mail these and we're going to mail them hard. And sure enough, the letter pulled \$17 for every dollar we invested.

Michael: Wow. So, you mailed that first thousand...

Brian: We did them all. We did them all in-house. I paid my kids to stuff and stamp...

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Michael: A plain number ten with a hand address or how did you address the envelopes?

Brian: They were...have you seen that Jay Abraham label that he does. It's about four inches...

Michael: Yes, it's like a white...were you mailing the letter in a number ten or?

Brian: No, it was a number nine...no...or a...

Michael: Like a legal 8.5 x 11 size?

Brian: There you go, thank you.

Michael: With Abraham's...it's like a mailing label...a white...

Brian: Yes, it's like...it's just like three inches. Yes, we were using those and laser printing those and slapping them on the envelope.

Michael: So, you're mailing like an 8.5 x 11 envelope?

Brian: Yes.

Michael: Just like Abraham does when he promotes his seminar?

Brian: Yes and it says Michael Senoff - Important, or Michael Senoff -- Private. Important was the word we used. And, yes, \$17 for every dollar is the worst we did. And I must have mailed out...we looked at that entire 12,000 names about 12 times.

Michael: Wow, and every time it still produced...

Brian: Every time I made money—every time up until the very last time.

Michael: So, this was really your first major direct mail experience?

Brian: Yes, well for my...

Michael: For yourself.

Brian: With my money on the line, you bet, yes.

Michael: So, how many courses or how many dollars did you pull in after you finished that campaign?

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Brian: Well, because I never did go to a mailing house, we did them all in-house, we did like 1,000 every other week. And we mailed for 18 months. We mailed that list for 18 months.

Michael: But when you re-mailed to the list, did you pay a rental fee?

Brian: Well, here's what happened. We finished mailing all the names. You know, we mailed once a week. I'm sorry, I told you every other week. But we mailed once a week. We mailed every Friday afternoon to get it on Tuesday or Wednesday. I called John Philips after I'd gone through the names and I said I want to mail these names again. And he said okay, go ahead. I was like don't I need to like rent them again? He's like oh no, don't worry about it. Mail it again. So, we did. We just mailed and mailed. I got through the names and I called him back and said hey, I got through all the names again, we want to mail again. He's like well dude you don't have to...I was just like what the heck. This is weird. I think what had happened is they cancelled the newsletter and they just didn't care anymore.

Michael: Wow. Did you ever quantify what you did over those 18 months—the number of courses or dollar amount?

Brian: Essentially, we ended up selling...I think it was about 25% of the 12,000 names. It was just over...going five percent. That's like what...3,000-3,200 copies.

Michael: Thirty-two hundred copies. Now, was this some of the most money you ever made?

Brian: Oh yes.

Michael: That couldn't touch your fees for copywriting or magic?

Brian: Well, I was getting all kinds of copywriting from *Ad Magic*. The best business card I've ever had. That's when people read it, they're blown away...let's face it, it's a great book. It's amazing. And people will read it and they'll think man this guy knows his stuff. Any successful person, they don't have the time to sit down and write their copy unless they love doing it. There are exceptions and those exceptions are the people who really do love writing copy no matter how much money they make; they still do it. And there are people like that, which I think is great. But, any other guy who finds it a struggle, he reads the book and says oh my gosh, this guy wrote the bible on this topic. I think I'll just call him. That's really been how I've gotten most of my business. And since then it's all...

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Michael: Now, at that time when you were doing copywriting jobs, did you have the confidence to ask for a piece of the action on the backend; gross sales?

Brian: It's all a mystery to me.

Michael: It was a mystery still?

Brian: Yes.

Michael: You were only getting fees just for writing?

Brian: Yes, I had one gentleman offer to me and it was an interesting story. But anyway, he ended up making about \$5 million in five months and did not pay me the royalty that he agreed to pay. I always just did hand shakes and I just trust people. I feel I trust people too much, now, but at least I always have an agreement now.

Michael: Would you feel comfortable naming just some of the clients that you got copywriting jobs from directly through the success of your *Advertising Magic* course?

Brian: Yes, sure. I wrote for Jay Abraham.

Michael: Did he call you personally?

Brian: Yes. He called me from his beach house. That was kind of an interesting project. He paid me some high compliments and that was nice to hear. And Gary Halbert has hired me. Paid me my full wage for stock market sales copy he had me write.

Michael: Did you write his piece for his stock market system?

Brian: Oh no. Scott Hames wrote that piece. I wrote the follow up to that that went to leads that hadn't bought yet. I wrote the follow up letter. It converted really well. I'm trying to remember what the numbers were...just recently, too.

Michael: Was that stock market course of Halbert's...was that being mailed pretty big time?

Brian: Yes, they rented a lot of lists. They rented the Philips publishing master file. They rented the whole thing. But it does indicate continuation from Gary's company.

Michael: Let's talk about some stories. What I've got here...I've pulled off my shelf a book called, *A Big Fat Beefy Book Full of Nothing But Winning*

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Ads and Sales Letters. Tell me about this book. Where did this come from?

Brian: It was just sort of my own personal swipe file. At first, that's how it started out. And that's how *Ad Magic* started out. It was just my own little checklist to see that I keep up on things with. It was sort of the same thing. I had done all this copywriting. I had done all this work and I just wanted to have it near by, in front of me, just to refer to for inspiration purposes. And the other thing was, I had a potential client ask for some samples. They were just really skeptical. And I just got a little ticked off. I was like...okay this guy...my ego...my big head being “famous,” this guy wants to see samples. I never have anybody ask for samples. What I did was I said okay fine. This guy wants samples; I'll give him samples. I literally did. It's about an inch thick, probably a little more and I put a cover on it and I said here you go. Here's a big, fat book full of nothing but winning ads and sales letters. I got to thinking about it. I thought, wow, I bet a few other people would like to see that.

Michael: I remember who I got this from and I only had one and it's something I never want to resell. It says, please return after seven days to Brian Keith Voiles. What's that all about?

Brian: Yes, that's what I ended up doing. I ended up using them as sample books. I started offering this sample book to potential clients. I mean it's a pretty hefty book. I haven't seen one in years and I need to get a copy of it from you. It's a substantial investment to send out to a prospective client.

Michael: So, there's nothing but winning ads in this book. Can we talk about some of these in here?

Brian: Sure, I'd love to.

Michael: “What your banker won't tell you about your mortgage is costing you a fortune. Your mortgage lender is taking you for a ride and their grubby little hands are in both your pockets slowly sucking out your retirement, your savings, your entire financial future.” What's the story with this client?

Brian: I couldn't tell you.

Michael: You don't remember?

Brian: I don't remember in the slightest.

Michael: It was signed by John Avery, Mage Enterprises, Inc.

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Brian: I recognize that name.

Michael: All right. Let’s move on. How about this one, “How to master the art and science of writing killer ads and sales letters.” Now, I know this is for your *Ad Magic*. You had mentioned earlier that you wrote three or four different versions of your *Ad Magic* sales letter.

Brian: That’s right.

Michael: Did you figure out which one pulled best?

Brian: Yes, the one you’ve got in front of you, I’m pretty sure the first letter and made money and it did all right. But I just kept tweaking and refining and ultimately I ended up with a really great sales letter. That’s just kind of what you’ve got to do if you’re serious about making it profitable. Now, back then, all there was, was direct mail.

Michael: Can you remember difference in the results from your first letter to the time you revised it four times?

Brian: I think that letter you’re looking at there Michael, was...I think it pulled in \$6.52 for every dollar invested.

Michael: And then the last one you had mentioned earlier pulled in...what was it \$17?

Brian: Yes, \$17 average. It hit up to 36, as low as about 12 or so.

Michael: And were you still testing this letter out to the same Philips list?

Brian: Yes.

Michael: When you’re testing against a control per and you only want to change one element at a time, what’s your philosophy on that?

Brian: Well, that’s great. You can do that, but I didn’t do that. I re-wrote the letter all four times. There were minor tweaks on the last letter. Now, that maybe where some really refined testing comes in because what I did is I changed the opening page. That’s pretty much all the tweaking I did on that final letter. So, if you’ve got a control that’s working, it’s dangerous to do what I did. It’s dangerous to just come up with...I wouldn’t say it was entirely new because I guarantee I used the same bullets, I used different elements of each letter in the other letter. It is dangerous to just flat out come out with a new opening, a new letter. But that was a risk I

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was willing to take. It was a calculated, educated risk. I wasn’t being...I knew what I was doing.

Michael: And you’ve heard how one headline, being the only change in a sales letter, can make a difference five, ten times in the results. Would you agree with that and if you agree with it, can you reference any kind of personal examples from your experience as a copywriter?

Brian: Oh absolutely. First of all yes, the answer is absolutely. There’s no question about it. A headline can change the results on a massive scale. One example that comes to mind...a story that keeps bounding in my head...Terry Dean hired me. He’s a big, or was certainly if not still, a big Internet guy. He paid me to work for him for a year. He told me the story of how he had written this letter, a ___ on Carlton’s wonderful course and he sent it to John. And all John did was changed the headline. Terry said just that change in the headline was like a 1300% increase in response. And that’s all John did for the critique. And Terry was like a little disappointed, but that’s all the critique was at first. Then he said okay I trust this guy. I’m going to go with it. That’s what he told me to do and I’m going to trust his professional advice. So, he did and the results were just staggering.

Michael: I want to ask you two things. You mentioned that he had paid you to work with you for a whole year. Is that something that you offer to clients to work with you for an entire year and how does that work?

Brian: Yes, that is an option. I charge \$45,000, and really that just gets you essentially all the copy that you and I determine that you need for a full 12 months. So, \$45,000 plus five percent of the gross receipts that come in from my copywriting. And the gross receipts can work against the \$45,000.

Michael: So, for example, let’s say I wanted to hire you for a year. We would predetermine what you’re going to do for me within the year what projects up front, right?

Brian: Yes, and things are going to happen. Other things are going to unfold. Like, for example, I had another gentleman who did this. His arena was the soft market. So, that’s the arena I was working with him in. And he came up with this new divorce product and he said hey can we include this as part of the deal and I said no because that’s a whole new project for me. That’s a whole new level of research. That’s a whole new level of figuring out what’s going on in that market place. So, it has to be related to it other than saying you get up to ten sales letters, there’s no real limit. I give people up to ten sales letters. The sales letter can be 36 pages and that’s a

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lot of work in other words. So, it's a steal of a deal considering really we're just barely doubling my fee. My normal fee is \$24,500.

Michael: For one project?

Brian: Yes, for a project. Now, that's not just one letter. That would be getting lead generation we had to do, a sales letter, a follow up letter, second, third, fourth follow up letter. It's the how shebang; whatever the client and I determine that they need, they get.

Michael: How much time do you spend on just the headline for a letter?

Brian: Well, I like to brag about how many gigabytes of headlines I have on my computer, Michael.

Michael: How many?

Brian: I spend forever on headlines and I write and I write and I write. I save them, too. I made these cuttings of a few, but until the creative process has stopped, when I get into the zone on writing headlines, I can go for two, three, four hours straight, and the typical headline session for me will end up with 300/400 headlines.

Michael: Just for one project?

Brian: Yes, just for one project. What I try to teach people is that you have to push yourself because so many people settle for that. I don't even think most people write a dozen—maybe 20. I think 20 is probably the most people ever sit down and write. What I just see people settling for headlines that are wimpy and gutless and they lack any sort of passion for empathy for the prospect. And what happens is by pushing yourself like that; you'll find the headline number three combines with headline number 94. And then you take the tagline, the end of number 253 and that's your headline. So, those last 100 headlines are actually almost always little bits and pieces of the previous 200 that I've already written. Do you see what I mean? Ninety-five percent of the time, I just do it all on the computer. But there are times when I'll start to get lost and start to feel confused. And so, this is a little technique that I do and I think it equates to Gary Halbert's index cards that he loves to do—spread them out on the table. Well, what I do is I'll print them out on my laser printer. I'll end up with 30-40 pages. And then I will literally cut and paste with scissors. And I will cut and paste and what it does is it sort of takes me out of this virtual mindset of these things virtually existing on the computer. I love the textileness of the paper and the cutting and sound and the taping and the...it just puts me

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into a whole different side of my creative mind. It’s almost like my right brain has a left and right brain to it.

Michael: Have you read the Eugene Schwartz Philips publishing speech?

Brian: Yes.

Michael: It’s very similar what he talks about when Mozart was composing...remember that part?

Brian: No, I don’t.

Michael: He talked about how Mozart, when Mozart would compose his music, he would only write it one time. And he said there’s a very realistic movie called Amadeus, which is a realistic account of how Mozart composed. And when he composed, he composed at a billiard table. And he took the billiard ball and he’s standing at the front of the table and he had his music sheet and an ink well and a pen in the other hand. And he would throw the billiard ball down against the pool table, and of course, it would bounce back different every time and that left hand would have to pay attention to where the billiard ball come so he would catch it. And every time he did that, a note of the music slip into the back of his mind and he would write it down. And this is exactly what you’re talking about when you’re creating headlines. You’re focused in on a past, but at the same time it allows your subconscious to open up and for ideas to slip through.

Brian: Yes, okay, wonderful.

Michael: Is that wild?

Brian: It’s so cool.

Michael: You have to re-listen to that.

Brian: I’ve got to watch that movie, too. I’m a musician, so I would love that.

Michael: Are you taping them onto index card?

Brian: No, I’m just cutting them and maybe I’ll like a phrase out of one, but I don’t like the rest of the headline. So, I’ll just cur that phrase and set it aside. I’m literally just cutting the page into different headlines and then I’ll take the headlines and take snippets of them and paste them together.

Michael: How do you boil it down to the one or two or three headlines that you’re going to put on this client’s copy?

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Brian: Oh, you know, that is such an intuitive thing. I don’t know. Some of them are just obvious. Some of them are actually nonsensical. Sometimes I’ll start out by typing the big fat lady decided to buy my product. And that’s my first headline. And it makes me chuckle a little and the zip bopping teenager decided not to buy this products. And when I say this product, I spell it out. And it’s kind of just to get me going. So, some of them are nonsensical. Some of them are just your...they laughed when I sat down at the piano. They laughed when I said I was going to blah, blah, blah. If I’m having a really hard time starting, I have this little killer headline checklist that I go through and it’s got lots of examples in it. I’ll just take those examples and apply them to the business that I’m writing for. And that just kind of gets me flowing. That just kind of gets me going. But those are the first to go. They’re purpose was to get the creative juices flowing. So, they weren’t part of it. So, that’s kind of the first level of let’s get rid of those. And then the second level or the dispassionate ones, I guess you could say they’re the ones that really don’t tend to make any kind of connection. They may say the benefit. They may not. But those would be the next ones to go. Michael, other than that, I think putting into words is practically impossible.

Michael: Here’s another letter. Tell me if you remember this one? “Mail order business in a box. How you can easily earn \$6,408 in the next 30 days with this turnkey mail order business...Michael Kimble.”

Brian: Yes, I remember that. I don’t remember anything about the results, but I remember that Michael mailed that for a long time and he may still mail it.

Michael: Looks like Michael Kimble bought the rights to all of Bill Meyers’ products.

Brian: Bill Meyers started Group M. Then Pat McAllister bought it from Bill Meyers. And then Michael bought Group M from Patrick McAllister, and to this day, Michael still has it. And he does really well. I’m going to say mid to late 90s, I was writing all of Michael’s Group M copy. And I know he still mails some of it or portions of it today. So, he’s done really well.

Michael: Here’s another Group M one. “Easiest way in the world for you to cash in on the exploding CD-Rom market without touching a computer.”

Brian: I’ve got to get a copy of that book. Sounds like there’s some hot copy in there.

Michael: What kind of client was he? Would he pay you on a per project bases?

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Brian: As I recall, yes, we kind of did it like that and even for a while, he did like a monthly deal with me. I never did do a percentage deal with Michael. We talked about this earlier. I’m just way too nice of a businessperson to be managing my own affairs. I should have. I really should have, but that’s okay. I’ve learned and grown from all of my experiences. All you can do is your best, point in time, given the resources you have. And if you do that, you’re going great.

Michael: All right. Here’s another one. See if this jogs your memory. This is from 1995, “In this letter, I’ll show you how to protect yourself, your family, and your estate from the thieves, sharks, and government bureaucrats who want a healthy slice of your money, your real estate, and any other assets.”

Brian: Wow, that sounds pretty good.

Michael: “I’ll show you how to set up a bullet proof, living trust perfectly legal so that you can control your estate while you are living and only your loved ones get it should you die.” This was from Warren Stafford.

Brian: Oh yes, Warren Stafford.

Michael: Stafford Living Trust Protection Society. I remember we talked earlier and this is almost...it’s not the dark...well it kind of maybe the dark side of a copywriter’s life. You told me a lot of your clients will spend and invest a lot of money with you and you’ll put together the copy and the promotions for their pieces and they’ll never do anything with it.

Brian: Right.

Michael: What percent from your work ends up never doing anything with the work you’ve done and why do you think that is?

Brian: I would probably say 50%. I really think that’s accurate.

Michael: And does it frustrate you?

Brian: Oh yes, it’s discouraging to want to even take another client. To this day...you’ve probably heard Gary Howard say, oh clients suck, a thousand times and I can’t really say I agree with him totally. Not every client sucks, but a good majority of them they do because they don’t do...they don’t keep their end of the agreement. Not just financially, but I’m talking just in other ways. If your income is based and relies on a guy doing the mailing in order for you to really get your share of what you want, which is a percentage and then they just don’t mail, well guess what. The pittance they paid to hire me...that’s why my fee has gone up because

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people hire me and they don’t mail. I figure, well okay, if they’re not using what they pay me for, they must not be paying enough.

Michael: Exactly because when you do work, you’re counting on most of your money is going to come from the results of your copy. And those results are only going to come if they mail.

Brian: Right. I figure by raising the fee, I’m going to get a more serious player—someone who really does mail.

Michael: Do you work that now into your agreement to try and get them to follow through? Is there any kind of thing in your agreements, or now that you only want to work with serious people, what would you say to them before you took them as a client to make sure that or give yourself the best possibility that that is going to happen so you can get your percentage?

Brian: Basically what I would do is I would want to see other mailers that they’ve done, the numbers they have mailed, or...and a lot of my clients are Web based now...I want to see a website that’s making money. I don’t care if they’ve mailed or not if they’re Web based. I just want to know that they’ve got a site and the site is making money. If they’ve got a site that is making money, then they know what they’re doing and they’re going to use the copy. That’s one thing with the Internet clients, Michael. They tend to use the copy a little bit more than back in the 90s when I would get people who would hire me and then never even mail. That’s such a gold mine that people are missing out on by not taking things offline. So, that’s one of the first things I tell a new Internet client is I’ll say, get offline. Take it offline. Go rent a list. Go do a mailing. Let’s take this Web copy and turn it into a sales letter. It’s easily done. Most of the people get mad at me. Then they say are you kidding. That’s crazy. I’ve got a cash cow here. I’ll say, exactly, you do have a cash cow that could be so much easier you wouldn’t believe it. So, now I’ve got this stock client and we are taking things offline. It’s really, really cool. It’s really cool. We’re doing postcards. He didn’t want to do the whole full sales letter. Well, actually we did. That’s what we started with.

Michael: What’s he selling, a stock course?

Brian: A stock training system. And he had 16,000 prospects sitting in a database who responded to the *Investors Business Daily* ad. They’re all just sitting there and it was like if they didn’t buy the initial process, he didn’t want to sell them.

Michael: So, he ran an ad in the *Investors Business Daily*?

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Brian: Yes.

Michael: Did it direct them to online?

Brian: Yes, it took them online where they got a CD mailed to them. We did take them offline a little bit there. He would mail the CD and then people would either call him back or he never just got in touch with them again. I said, okay well that’s your gold mine. That’s the first thing we do. We mail to the 16,000 people. Well anyway, my point was we started mailing. We just kicked butt.

Michael: What kind of ad was running in the *Investors Business Daily*—a display or classified or what?

Brian: It’s a display ad. It runs every week.

Michael: And what’s the purpose of that ad? What does it say basically?

Brian: It says, “A magic, little know piece of news that practically guarantees a stock is going to run up.” And then it goes on and has a little description. And then it say, “You can find out more about this at this free website.” It tells you all the information you need to know and it does. It really does deliver. And it educates them. And they go there and what happens then is they call and they request a free audio seminar CD.

Michael: They call from a number on the website?

Brian: Yes, that’s right.

Michael: There’s no form to fill out where the names are taken automatically?

Brian: Right, no form.

Michael: So, it’s just a letter and then a phone number for them to call to get their free CD? Is it a long letter?

Brian: Yes, it’s fairly lengthy. You bet.

Michael: And they call for their CD. The CD was sent out. And now are you mailing that same letter that was on the site in hardcopy to them?

Brian: He wasn’t at the time. But, I suggested that we do that. But see what happened is, he had those 16,000 names and I said well that’s great. The lead campaign is going great. The ad is pulling like gangbusters. So, that’s great, but you’ve got 16,000 leads in here from his own ad that he had

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written. That's your gold mine. All we have to do is mail them because he hadn't done any follow ups with it. I wrote a little cover letter and reworked his website sales letter. Turned it into a sales letter and it just kicked butt. Gee, the numbers are just eluding me today.

Michael: That's okay.

Brian: It's not a pretty site. It's not pretty at all. That's what's so crazy about it.

Michael: Do you think there's some psychology there, having a site that's not pretty compared to pretty?

Brian: I do. I liked it. I think it's awesome.

Michael: So, what was on the CD? Was it just audio?

Brian: It was just a seminar that he did in Park City and it delivered value, but it also closed them on getting this system. And we got some great positioning with it, too. We just did great with that. But he got tired. He got tired of mailing. It was such a pain in the butt to mail. And I said well let's get a mailing house to do it. And he says, I don't know. I'm just tired of mailing. It's a pain in the butt, basically is what he's saying.

Michael: And that's why clients suck.

Brian: Well, this is probably the most fun, most enjoyable client I've had.

Michael: What he's just saying to you, though, is Brian I'm tired of making you money.

Brian: Yes, in a way and it's really discouraging because that's a gold mine. We ended up mailing only 12,000 of the names. I was ready to mail and mail again.

Michael: Yes, 12 times just like you did with *Ad Magic*.

Brian: Yes, you just keep mailing until you get a response that drops below break even. That just makes sense, right?

Michael: Well, if he's tired, why don't you buy the damn thing from him? Why don't you say, look if you're tired of mailing...I did this work for you because I'm hoping to get a percentage on your sales and if you're tired of mailing, I'm not tired of mailing. Let me do all the mailing and let's work something out. And you don't have to deal with any of that hassle.

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Brian: Hey, that's a great idea.

Michael: Approach him. Let me do it. Pay me X percent. Make him an offer.

Brian: Yes, maybe I will.

Michael: Yes, you should. An idea for you, just think about this. In your agreement, what you could do is because so many clients are like this, let's say you're doing a copywriting job. You could say that until the conditions are met, that we both own the rights to the copy. Let's say a client pays you. Who is the copy write holder? He is, right?

Brian: Yes, work for hire.

Michael: It maybe something you could consider to put some leverage on them following through is in the agreement...the agreement is you're going to hire me for my services. I'm going to write the copy. We're going to share the rights to this copy until and if you follow through. So, let's say the guy never follows through with the mailing, you could work something in where you have the rights to use that to recoup what would have missed out because he never mailed it.

Brian: Yes, that's really...

Michael: By you holding those rights, you've got some real leverage. But the rights revert back to him as soon as he's met all the conditions of the agreement or the contract.

Brian: That's wonderful.

Michael: You should do something like that. If I do consulting with clients, for instance, let's say I don't get all their money up front and let's say I design a website. Well, I go ahead and register the domain in my name. But autoresponders are all under my control where I control all the leads if I'm getting a percentage of the sales. All that's in my control until they're paid up and then that all goes over to them once they agree to pay everything. So, I have total control of all the leads that come in, the website. They have no control. I own the system.

Brian: Wow.

Michael: It is your intellectual property until they fulfill their part of the contract. You should retain those rights. And that will really give you some leverage because if they don't mail, you could use...like this guy who is tired of making you money. He doesn't want to mail to those 12,000

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people. You could even make that as part of the agreement. Just model it for each client saying look if you're not willing to mail it X amount of times to this 12,000, I reserve the right to recoup what I would have mailed if you mailed it. And I reserve the rights to mail it five times to your list and you pay me X amount.

Brian: That's great.

Michael: Here's one. “1994 was a year of surprise for most investors. Interest rates were raised six times making it harder and harder to know what to invest and when buy/sell signs are getting more difficult to interpret. But now here's a proven method for knowing when to buy or sell and how to protect your investment in these uncertain times.” This is...

Brian: So, I wrote a stock system before.

Michael: ...John McGee, Incorporated.

Brian: Oh okay, yes they wrote the bible on technical analysis. I'm really familiar with stock trading now because I've been trading the market since '98. So, I'm like way into it now. McGee, that's like those guys wrote the bible, seriously, on the technical analysis. I can't believe I wrote this.

Michael: Do you know if they mailed offline their thing?

Brian: Yes, they did. They went on the Internet. Yes, I know they mailed that. I know they did good with it. It was a really tough one for me because I didn't know a thing about the stock market. I didn't know anything at all about the stock market, so that was really, really difficult.

Michael: So, let's talk about that. A client comes to you. He's got something that you know nothing about and you take on the job. Well, what do you do?

Brian: You have to research. You have to do your best to get to know what they are, who they are, who they're selling to; all that stuff.

Michael: Let's say I come to you with a subject that you know nothing about and I want to hire you. I've decided I want to use you to write my offline copy. What's the first thing you're going to do in this whole process? Let's say I'm ready to go. What do I need to do first? What are you going to tell me?

Brian: I'm going to ask some very basic questions. What's the name of your product?

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Michael: I've got to pay you money first, right?

Brian: Yes.

Michael: I've got to sign an agreement with you, right?

Brian: Right.

Michael: You're going to determine whether I'm worthy of your services, first. You're going to set an interview up?

Brian: Yes, exactly.

Michael: Are you going to record the call?

Brian: That's right.

Michael: So, what are you going to do first with me? We're recording the call and you're going to ask me...

Brian: I'm going to ask some very, very basics. And then I'm going... what's the price point, what are the payment options, what's the product called or service called; things like that. And then, if they have a sales crew—a lot of my clients do—I'll want to interview their top sales guy. And then maybe I'll want to interview their next top sales guy. And I'll certainly want to interview the guy that came up with the company because he's the one who has the passion. He's the guy that has the fire almost... almost all the time he's the one. He's the one who has it and he may have 20 guys working for him as underlings. And all these guys think they know, okay, all these guys think they know what the heck they're doing—hey I'm Executive Vice President, I'm Vice President of Marketing and you're doing marketing so I know what to tell you to do. It's goes on and on like that. But really the truth of the matter is, there's no one better than the proprietor. There's no one better than the creator. That's the guy I love to talk first.

Michael: Is it because you want to capture his passion, his words and translate that into the letter?

Brian: Absolutely. You nailed it on the head. That's exactly what my intension is. There will be no one in the company with his kind of fire.

Michael: And fire is what sells product.

Brian: You bet. And then what I'm going to do is I'm going to dig for testimonial. And trust me, it's usually a dig.

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Michael: Why do you say that?

Brian: Most companies just don't have them. If they do, they've got a few really, really generalized quotes. They don't talk any specific benefit. For a testimonial for me, for example, for my *Ad Magic* product would be, “before we got your product, we were pulling three percent response and now we've been using *Ad Magic* and we're getting consistent 8.5-8.325% specific to me.” Most companies don't have specific results oriented testimonials. That's the next thing. If I'm loaded with great testimonials and a risk free proposition guarantee, in other words, I can sell anything. The truth is I can sell anything.

Michael: Is that something you want to make sure you get up front from your client; that's he's willing to back his product up with a risk free? Is that something you've discussed before you take them on?

Brian: No, but that's a great idea. That is a great idea. That would set me up for success and I thank you for the idea because really that sets me up for success. If they have a risk free proposition, that's just unbeatable.

Michael: So, how long does this interview process take between the founder of the company, the salesmen, digging for testimonials...this happens over a week, two weeks, or what?

Brian: I've got a tough job right now. They don't have testimonials. The guy's got a track record like just incredible, but they don't have any. And I told him, give me names, give me numbers; I will call. We need this. You need this to sell. You need it to make the sale.

Michael: You should put that as a requirement, too. Look, if we're going to work together, I'm going to require testimonials. It's just part of the process, otherwise, we're not going to be doing business. You've got to lay all these things out up front so they know exactly what they're getting into.

Brian: Thank you for your wonderful ideas. It seems so obvious now that we're talking about it because really, and this is just great truth coming out from the innocence of an interview. I can sell anything. The truth is I can sell anything. First of all I have to want to sell it. I have to believe in it. Second of all, if they've got testimonials that are decent...they don't even have to be great, and if they have a risk free proposition, I can sell anything.

Michael: What do you think is more important, the risk free proposition or the testimonials?

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Brian: I really think the testimonials are more important because we’re all just so skeptical, it’s unbelievable. Testimonials coupled with a risk free proposition is the best way to overcome any level of skepticism in any prospect. I guarantee you I can sell anything.

Michael: To put that right up front in the beginning of your letter to let them know up front before they even have time to dump it.

Brian: Most of the time what I’ll do Michael, is I’ll mention the guarantee. I’ll make mention of it like this will work for you or you get your money back. So, I don’t go into the specifics of the guarantee, but I always make mention of it in almost every letter I write unless it’s going to come across as too hypie for that target market.

Michael: You’ve got the interview process done, is most of your research all done through the interviewing over the phone, or do you do additional outside research; maybe go to the library, do some research on the Internet, look at competition? Do you look at their competition for your research?

Brian: Oh absolutely, you have to do that. Yes, you have to. You have to be positioned. Like a software company recently hired me to write their box copy for a product that’s going into Office Max and Office Depot. I told them; look you guys aren’t even considering the competition here. What’s up with that? You guys are oldest in the business. You’ve got the best reputation. You don’t have the biggest name, but you’ve been doing this longer than anyone and you know what you’re doing. It’s the most complete package, but you’re not even bringing up the competition. You’re not even mentioning it. He’s like, wow, I never even thought of that. I’m like, wow, you really ought to. That’s just marketing 101. But it’s not 101 to most businesses. It’s really not. But to you and I, it’s no brainer stuff. You have to consider the competition.

Michael: You’ve done your interviews on the phone. You’ve done outside research. Now what do we do?

Brian: Well, if they’ve got a killer sales guy, like I mentioned—and I do want to point this out again because it really is a big deal—it’s the old concept Gary Halbert introduced eons ago and probably someone did before him to record your sales calls and that gives you your best copy. And so what I do is I get the sales guy on the phone...ideally he doesn’t know that it’s me. Ideally he thinks I’m a regular Joe prospect.

Michael: So, you call him up as if you’re interested.

Brian: Right.

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Michael: And you’re acting.

Brian: Absolutely.

Michael: That’s great.

Brian: And I just say, hey and I just go through all the crap. I give him a hard time. All the toughest objections he could ever think of I have to get answers. I tell you, you get gold, copywriting gold from...

Michael: He doesn’t have a governor on his thought...

Brian: Right.

Michael: ...and he’s just doing it subconsciously and that’s why he’s the best. He’s just rolling.

Brian: Exactly.

Michael: Sometimes salesmen can have an off day. Have you ever had maybe one of those days when you’re trying to elicit that stuff and you’ll call back again?

Brian: Oh yes. I’ll call and I’ll talk to the next best guy. Then maybe I’ll call a week later...hey I have some more questions for you about that. I’m going to put them through the ringer. I want to make them go through their process to get me closed. And a lot of times it’s really fun because a lot of time I really am interested enough to the point where I would consider buying this.

Michael: What do you do with those recordings? Do you have someone transcribe them out or do you do it yourself?

Brian: I do it myself. I just go through them.

Michael: You record them on a digital thing, or a tape player, or what?

Brian: I’ve just been doing a tape player, but I’d be interested to find out how you’re doing it. I just do a tape player. And what happens when I’m transcribing that...sometimes it’s very boring and tedious.

Michael: You’re integrating everything, though.

Brian: Yes, but I’m going through and feeding the subconscious, and sometimes, and this is always really exciting, sometimes I’ll just get flashes of

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headlines, flashes of copy pieces, closers; things like that. I love it when that happens and it happens fairly consistently. I've been avoiding working on this current client that I told you was going to be difficult because they don't have testimonials. I've been avoiding doing the transcripts.

Michael: It's real work,

Brian: It's not that enjoyable transcribing like that, but...

Michael: But it's an important process.

Brian: Yes.

Michael: Well, what you can do is you can get a transcriber to transcribe it and then just like Eugene Schwartz talks about his systems. He's got it all typed up. He has it transcribed and then he goes through it and highlights those important words or flashes or if you get a headline idea, you write that down. Just do a read through, line by line. That may be less tedious and still somewhat the same thing.

Brian: Yes, that's a great idea.

Michael: That's impressive to know that you transcribe these things out word for word yourself. I pay a transcriptionist to do my recordings and I know an hours worth of recording can be 30-40 pages of text. That's an incredible amount of work, but that's all part of the process that your clients are getting.

Brian: Yes, it's a lot of work, but it just really helps me find that zone when it's time to create.

Michael: All right, so you've got all this transcribed. Now, as you're getting headline flash ideas, are you typing those in or are you writing them down...?

Brian: Yes, I type them in right along side the transcript. And usually what I'll do is I'll do a quick format to make it look like a headline if it's a headline idea. I'll just highlight it and make it a larger font size.

Michael: You've got a series of three or four interviews all typed in, then what do you do?

Brian: I'm usually able to identify as I'm transcribing what's the killer stuff. So, I'll bold that. I'm just typing and the key point, the hot point is obvious.

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They're just totally and completely obvious to me; the key points that need to be brought out. What I'm looking for is things about the prospects pain. I'm looking for big benefits. I'm looking for maybe you might call hidden benefits; things that aren't so obvious to the company that are probably a big deal to the client. Do you see what I'm saying—to their customer?

Michael: Let me interrupt you because that brings me to a point. We've talked about interviewing the salesman. Is this part of your research in asking for customers and interviewing a buyer of the client's product?

Brian: Yes, I do that. Not every time, but on a difficult project like the one I'm on right now, I would, yes, absolutely. And I do.

Michael: You learn the points of pain and things right there from the interview, also.

Brian: Oh yes. And this is a great point and this is a good time to bring it up. Sometimes when they do have testimonials, it's just killer to go through those testimonials because those customers write some of the best doggoned headlines on the planet. It's amazing. I'll pull out a headline. It may not be the headline, but sometimes it is.

Michael: Right from a testimonial?

Brian: Right from the testimonial. I really love the pain and I know a lot of guys like to...oh that's too...you shouldn't open a letter with a negative...you shouldn't be negative in your letter. No, no, no—I love prying into the prospect's pain. Sign me up. I'm all over that.

Michael: Pain is a larger motivator than...

Brian: That's right. Pain is a bigger motivator than the benefit.

Michael: So, what are you going to do—a benefit point headline or a pain related headline?

Brian: The majority of the time, I'm doing pain...unless there's just this really huge benefit that is really obvious, I'm focusing on the pain.

Michael: So, you're looking for pain, you're bolding, you're looking for headlines. Are you writing the letter now?

Brian: Oh sure. I wouldn't separate the two. It's part of the deal. Its just part of what I do.

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Michael: Do you do a headline at one, the opening at one, the closing at one time, the order card at one time, the body...how do you work that out into this whole process?

Brian: After the interview and transcription—and some brainstorming obviously goes on there—if I hit on a headline during the interview, I might stop and brainstorm for more headlines based on that same theme. But the first thing I do is I get the offer in writing. I want to say it perfectly clear what the offer is because that's my target; that's my goal. That's where I'm taking them and I have to be perfectly clear about what the deal is so that I can sell the deal. Does that make sense?

Michael: Yes.

Brian: I'm going to write the offer first. And it may evolve, it may unfold, it may add payments, we may add bonuses, we may this that and the other. But the offer is essentially...here's what you get, here's the guarantee behind it, and here's how you pay for it.

Michael: Do your clients give you some flexibility in that, or do the clients...?

Brian: I don't care if they do or not. I just assume it and I say here's what I'd recommend.

Michael: Are you recommending price point, too?

Brian: Yes, I do. Based on my experience, I would recommend that you do this, consider that, not do this, not say it that way. Most of the time, I tell them to change the guarantee—extend it, make it longer. Almost always, always have to do that.

Michael: If you get the headline, you'll handle that and you start with the offer, and then what?

Brian: Then I'll really get serious about brainstorming the headline. I'll just buckle down because it's all there. It's all in the subconscious. It's already...I've listened to it. I've done the research. I've listened to the interview two or three times. Transcribed the doggoned thing. Took notes, etc., etc. It's all in there. It's all upstairs. It's just a matter of creatively slitting those wrists and letting it all flow. So, the first thing I'd like to have let flow is the headline. Headlines are easy for me I guess you could say. Are they ever really easy...I don't know. I don't know...I just have fun thinking about it. If it's a product I like, I do, I just have fun. It's just fun.

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Michael: You’re talking about some hesitancy with the product because you’re not really into the product. Is that something you think about before you take on a product because you’re investing so much time in it and maybe not to take something on that you’re not into?

Brian: Yes, I’m really hesitant. This one is stock market related. So, I just thought, hey I can do that. I can do this. But they’re just weird. It’s the Air Circle Club. Newsletter subscriber based. So, in that respect, it’s going to be pretty easy because I know how to sell these inner circle clubs. But it’s just that come on man I need some evidence. What they’re doing is they’re just assuming that these people love this guy and they’re just automatically going to sign up. And I’m saying, look, no, no, no, it doesn’t work that way. We need testimonials from half of these people who made money following your advice and we’re going to put those in the letter and that way we have price justification when we say it’s \$1,000 or \$5,000 or whatever it is. We have some price justification. Look, this guy made \$5,000 in one trade. Now, that’s price justification. And here’s his testimonial telling you exactly what he did and how he did it using my advice.

Michael: Do you think that’s one of the most effective ways to get price justification in your offers through testimonials?

Brian: I think it’s a very clever way.

Michael: Yes, it is. It’s a great point.

Brian: It’s unstated. You’re not coming out and just having to prove the price. You’re letting your past customers prove it for you. There’s nothing wrong with coming right out with price justification, don’t get me wrong. I’m just saying why not use the implied endorsement.

Michael: Let’s talk about some price justification for your copywriting services. Do you have some specific examples you can tell me about, some results?

Brian: Sure. Back in my earlier years, Mike ___ hired me to sell his Atom Bomb Internet Marketing Course.

Michael: I’ve got a couple of the Atom Bomb seminars here on my shelf.

Brian: Well, I wrote a 16 page sales letter and brought in over \$2.5 million for Michael.

Michael: Two point five million dollars with that sales letter?

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Brian: Yes, and he paid me \$3,500 for it.

Michael: Oh my God. That's incredible. How long ago was that? That must have been back in the early 90s?

Brian: Yes, exactly.

Michael: Who did he mail that out to? Was that his list?

Brian: He did endorsements I think with Abraham and Halbert and Nicholas. He did JVs with those gentlemen, I do believe.

Michael: That's incredible. That's really incredible.

Brian: And then another one of my success I really enjoyed was with Robert Allen, the *New York Times* best selling author. He made \$52,682 in 30 days. Filled the seminar to overflowing. And, of course, you know him. He's the sales master on stage. So, that's just what he made to sell the seats and then, of course, he sold a truckload of stuff at the seminar.

Michael: So, you filled the seats for him with your direct mail letter?

Brian: Yes, in 30 days.

Michael: Was he mailing that out to his list?

Brian: Yes. He mailed it to his list. That's correct.

Michael: And that's Robert Allen, the *Nothing Down* guy.

Brian: That's right.

Michael: That's a pretty big client there.

Brian: He's a great guy.

Michael: Did you make a percentage on that backend on that one?

Brian: No, back in the early days, I really didn't think I was worth it. That's the bottom line on that. I didn't think I was good enough yet to ask for that.

Michael: How about now? Do you think you're good enough to ask for that now?

Brian: Yes. Let's just say I ask a lot.

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Michael: That’s great. What’s another one?

Brian: Well, a couple of recent examples, one would be Frank Kern. Frank’s an Internet marketing genius. He really is into the niche marketing arena quite a bit. But he made \$98,838.35 in 83 days with a letter I did for him, and that’s not counting backend revenue, and repeat business.

Michael: What was he selling?

Brian: A \$97 course. So, that’s a lot of sales.

Michael: Wow, and was that one of your Internet clients?

Brian: Yes. He said that the letter actually brought in more, but that that’s all he could account for. That’s all he knew; that he’s got concrete proof for.

Michael: Will Internet sales copy work just as well as letter copy on paper?

Brian: Absolutely. Why, because human nature is human nature is human nature, as Jay Abraham is fond of saying. People are people and they buy the same way. In fact, I found it easier to get sales on the Internet, as long as you’ve covered your credibility issues and proven that what you’re offering really—proven as well as you can—what you’re offering really can benefit the prospect’s life.

Michael: What’s another story?

Brian: Yanik Silver had me write a 24-page letter to sell a \$15,000 apprenticeship program. He’s on the third go around. He’s doing his third apprenticeship program using the same exact letter. And I have a testimonial just from the first time he used it.

Michael: Do you have it in front of you?

Brian: Yes, I just have an excerpt of it here. “First before Brian and I personally met, I studied and devoured his *Ad Magic* course, one of the bibles of copywriting. But I know Brian first hand because I’ve hired him and he has made me over \$100,000 on a single letter.” That’s when a copywriter is really...even if you paid \$25,000, all of these people at least doubled their money.

Michael: You’re not going to take a sure loser. You’re only looking for those sure winners. So, when you look at your odds, there’s no 100% guarantee, but the odds from your experience and by looking for a “on” setup, the odds sure are better than the stock market.

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Brian: Oh yes. Now, I know Yanik is very conservative. He doesn't like to hyperbole things. But the fact of the matter is I think he took 15 people in each apprenticeship deal. So if he did that, and you add up those numbers, there's actually quite a bit more than that. I don't know that I have permission to talk in great deal about that because Yanik is a copywriter. I think he wants to be a little more tight lipped about it.

Michael: Any other ones you can think of?

Brian: I've got a current client. Put together a sales letter for him that was 24 pages. We mailed it to 16,000 of his non-buyers. And out of 16,000, price point being \$864; we sold \$1.52 million worth.

Michael: And that was to people who chose not to buy.

Brian: Yes, this was like a follow up mailing saying hey what's going on. You said you were interested. What's the deal? How come you haven't bought yet? And, of course, for 24 more pages, we justified and...

Michael: Was that from one follow up? What about a second or third?

Brian: One mailing, one follow up, and believe it or not, the client got tired of mailing. He didn't want the hassles of mailing any more.

Michael: Brian, you've got to get with your attorney and redo your contract and put what we talked about in there. You can re-listen to it when we talked about it in the interview. And that's fair. They'll sign it at the beginning because they want your services.

Brian: And it is fair.

Michael: You should have the rights to do those mailings if they get tired. That's unbelievable. Look, you've got the letter written. You've got your offer written. What are you going to do? Are you going to send me a rough draft before the final draft, or are you going to send me a draft that you think is ready to mail first? What's the process?

Brian: If they're in a hurry, in a rush, and I can sense that they're getting impatient, I'll just send them a draft. I'll say first draft. Look it over and make sure it's the direction you want me to take.

Michael: You send it hardcopy or electronically?

Brian: No, I just email.

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Michael: And you wait to hear back from them?

Brian: And then they’ll come back and they’ll say well we just think it’s too harsh. We just think you need to calm down. There’s too much energy. It’s too hypie. I hear that a lot. And you know what...I don’t change a thing. If they think it’s too hypie and it’s really not, I don’t change a thing. I just say okay well good. That’s good feedback. That’s good to hear. That’s good feedback. And then what I do is I just count on the final draft as being so kick butt that they just couldn’t possibly say anything about it.

Michael: That’s something I thought when I read some of Halbert’s letters or stuff. It does sound hypie, but let’s talk about that. Hypie work...what would you say?

Brian: Well, to me there is a fine line and you risk loosing readership when you get too hypie. But there’s a difference in my mind. If it’s the right prospect reading it, you know what, he’s not going to feel that this is hype. He’s going to feel that this is passion. Really what you’ve got to do is know your prospect and know what their limits are in terms of what you might consider hype.

Michael: Someone who says its hype is probably not an interested party in the product.

Brian: Exactly, right.

Michael: But to a guy who is passionate about it, you couldn’t talk too hypie about a subject that he’s passionate about.

Brian: Yes.

Michael: That’s a great point and that’s putting yourself in the shoes of the prospect.

Brian: You bet. We talked a lot about that, having the empathy and the heart felt compassion for your prospect. That’s all part of it. You’ve got to speak their language and that’s what I really think where your passion should flow out of is from your prospect’s passion. They’re super duper passionate about whatever it is they’re interested in. Look at me and my music. I probably spent tens of thousands of dollars on gear and equipment for recording and writing songs. I’ve got bookshelves full of books and courses on recording technique and audio processing and how to write lyrics and how to write melodies. Have I ever once sold a song? No. Now, I have done some radio jingles and videotape music for corporate videos and things like that. But all in all, I’ve probably made \$3,000 with my music, okay. But, I’m just so enamored with the idea and I just love creation of the music so much. You’d think after spending tens of

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thousands of dollars a guy would think well it’s time to get serious and start to make some money with this. No, it’s not about the money. It’s about fulfilling a passionate desire, which is just to create music. And by the way, if I sell some, I’ll be tickled pink. But my greatest satisfaction comes from just doing it. And I can’t read enough on the subject. I cannot read enough. So, if someone wants to sell me anything that has to do with writing songs, playing the guitar, playing the keyboard, playing the drums, recording music, processing the music, mixing the music; I’m all ears. Every time I go into Barnes and Noble or Borders, that’s the first section I check. Any new books? At least twice a week I’m on the Internet...any new courses, any new books, and new things. That’s what a really passionate prospect is like. They want to be sold. Now, there is a line that you cannot cross and that’s called honesty. To me, hyperbole is lying. And another part of hyperbole is yelling and screaming at the prospect. And how do you yell and scream from the paper or from the screen? Well, you use consistently uppercase letters with exclamation points after each sentence. If you’ve got three lines worth of sentences of nothing but uppercase and you’ve got exclamation points, you’re yelling at me. Nobody likes to be yelled at. It may not even be perceived as hyperbole, but it’s perceived as, hey this guy’s getting a little intense with me here.

Michael: It’s going to push the prospect, the reader back.

Brian: Yes.

Michael: So, based on their feedback, you will make additional changes or work on it more?

Brian: Yes. I’m looking at factual things. I’m looking to hear factuals mostly, and I tell them that. Did I get a fact wrong here? Did I get a statistic wrong there? I just want to make sure that what we’re saying is honest truth.

Michael: Let’s talk about that real quick. Is there any liability on your part if you’re creating a letter, they’ve hired you, but even though you’re the force behind the sale with the sales letter, is there anything that you’re concerned about liability wise to keep you out of trouble?

Brian: I never have been concerned. I never have, no. In my contract it does mention things that I...

Michael: You want to make sure that the facts are correct.

Brian: And some of the statistics, I’ll just throw in there and I’ll say hey I need this statistic. Can you get me this fact? Do you see what I’m saying? Others make up a statistic, but I’ll put in a little note that says hey we need

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this. We need this and that, and I can’t find it anywhere, and you guys probably have access to industry journals; things that I don’t have access to.

Michael: Are you mainly dealing with the founder of the company or...?

Brian: Yes. I hate it when I don’t to be honest with you. I would rather not do the deal if I can’t have direct access. I just rather say no, never mind.

Michael: You don’t want to be dealing with some marketing manager?

Brian: No, I really don’t. First of all, the marketing manager just doesn’t have the passion.

Michael: You’ve got your feedback. You present them with the final letter. You send it hardcopy or email...the final one?

Brian: I email it, yes.

Michael: What happens then? You’re pretty much finished until they do their job, right?

Brian: I may have to do some rewrites or rewrite this section or rewrite that section. Yes, for the most part.

Michael: This is great that we’ve gone through the whole process, and so now I would know if I hired you pretty much the process that you’re going to do for me. Tell me about one of the biggest screw-ups on one of your copywriting jobs—a failure?

Brian: The one that bugs me the most...how about that. The one that bugs me to this day was the *Mother’s At Home Magazine*. Somebody was trying to launch _____. And to this day, I wish I could to talk to the guy...

Michael: What was it a magazine?

Brian: Yes, for mothers at home.

Michael: You were going to launch this magazine?

Brian: Yes, and a launch is pretty tough. And it was just rough all the way around. I never should have taken the project. I just wanted to help so much. They had such a noble cause.

Michael: What do you think went wrong with the whole project?

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- Brian: I think because they didn’t have that much money, they didn’t have enough trust in me as a profession to just...I’m not too egotistical.
- Michael: You’ll make changes for the client even though you know inside it’s not going to benefit them?
- Brian: Yes. I won’t now, but I was, I certainly was that way.
- Michael: How many did they mail?
- Brian: Not a lot. And I’m sure the Internet’s been a real blessing to their, I guess you’d called it a mission that they’re on. But all I know is, it bombed because they just got so controlling. They wanted to change this, they wanted to change that, and they wanted to...they didn’t like the way that talked about this subject or this or that. It was just way too persnickety about every little thing. It was really annoying. And like I said, they just didn’t have the faith that it takes to just trust a professional to do his job and to do it right.
- Michael: I want you to tell me who you’re willing to work with and give me some idea of what conditions...meaning I’m willing to work with you if this, this, this and this. But if you’re this, this, and this and this, I’m not interested.
- Brian: Well, first of all, if you’re spending grocery money, don’t call me. That’s just not wise. Or if you’re putting it on a credit card...I turned a guy down...it wasn’t just less than a month ago. I said look, I’d love to help you out. Well how did it go? How did it unfold? The guy just said well what’s your fee? I know you’re well worth it. I’ve heard just nothing but wonderful things about you. I told him my fee and he goes is there anyway I can break that into payments? I said sure, I’m flexible on that. No problem. So, the next day he calls me back and he says do you take credit cards? I said well I could. I could take credit cards in my PayPal account, but I don’t want to take your credit card. I don’t think it’s a wise gamble for you to put this on a credit card. So anyway, he saw the wisdom eventually. It didn’t take him long.
- Michael: And that’s because of his specific idea and project, or because you knew this guy couldn’t really afford it and it was almost like a gamble and you know that there’s no guarantees in anything?
- Brian: Yes, it was just straight ahead, I’m not going to put you into debt over something that’s at the level of risk such as that. I’m just not willing to. It was really a value call on my part. It had nothing else to do with the

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opportunity, the size of the project, where it could go, how successful it could be. It was just I'm not going to put you in debt.

Michael: So, what did you recommend to him?

Brian: I said save up your money and what I would do if I were you, you can write this copy my friend. You can do it yourself. Get *Ad Magic*. Study the ba-jeezees out of it and you can write it.

Michael: So, don't come to me if you're on your last dollar because I'm going to turn you down. Don't come to me if...

Brian: You don't have good testimonials or any testimonials. If you don't have testimonials, in my mind you don't have a business.

Michael: So, that's basically don't come to me if you're a startup?

Brian: Yes, you could say that.

Michael: Come to me if you've got an existing business with customers is really something you want to work with.

Brian: Yes, and are you making sales already. If so, I don't care how. Are you bringing in consistent income for your business, even if you've got sales guys out in the field, if you've got a website that's making money...how are you doing it. Is there relevance?

Michael: Let's say I am a startup and you do decide to do a whole letter campaign package for me for the \$24,500. But let's say I am an existing business. I've got sales copy or a letter that I'm mailing that's producing X amount of dollars in sales. Is the fee the same or is it structured differently because you have something to work with?

Brian: Think of it like this. What kind of client does Jay Abraham take? He takes set-ups. He takes deals that are sure fired, no brainer; this is going to work. It's like the stock guy. He already had 16,000 leads, right. That's a no brainer. That's called a set-up. They're set up to succeed. That's really what I'm looking for. And a guy that's got a great product, but just doesn't have a sales process, which is really what copywriting gives you, they ought to come to me because I guarantee if you've got testimonials, great proposition; I could sell anything.

Michael: Don't you have a guarantee?

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Brian: My guarantee is...see, it's conditioned upon you doing what I say, first of all. Second of all, I guarantee to rewrite your copy as much as it takes to make it a success if you're actually going to do what I recommend. You've got to do it.

Michael: If someone's not willing to do it, don't even bother calling.

Brian: Yes, if you're not going to take action, if you're not going to mail the copy, if you're not going to run the website, if you're not going to run the ad; don't bother.

Michael: If you have a copywriting project, or a direct response or direct mail campaign that you'd like to discuss with Brian, please email your name, your phone number, and a short description of your project to Brian at www.hardtfindseminars.com. That's brian@hardtfindseminars.com, and Brian will get back to you shortly.

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