MemberSonic Membership Site Plugin

How to *S.T.A.R.T.™* a Membership Site by Outsourcing It

http://www.MemberSonic.com

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Introduction

Welcome to the **How to *S.T.A.R.T. a Membership Site™* by Outsourcing It** report!

I'm really excited about this report. And that's because you're about to discover how to quickly and easy *S.T.A.R.T. a Membership Site™*…

☛ Even if you don't know a thing about web design!

☛ Even if you couldn't create a graphic to save your life!

☛ And even if you'd sooner gnaw off your own fingers than write a word of content!

You see, inside these pages you'll find an <u>easy five-step system</u> to help you get your first profitable membership site up and running fast. Here's what you can expect to learn about the *S.T.A.R.T. a Membership Site™* system:

S – <u>**SPECIFY**</u> **Your Needs:** You'll find out what services and products you need to put together a membership site.

T - <u>**TAP**</u> **Into The Best Sources:** In this step you'll discover what types of service providers you'll need to get your site up fast. Plus you'll discover the very best places to find these folks.

A – <u>**ALLOCATE**</u> **Your Funds:** Freelancers are going to throw a dizzying number of quotes and price ranges at you. Here you'll learn how to sort through these offers so you can create a budget for your project.

R – <u>**RECRUIT**</u> **The Best People For The Job:** Here you'll discover the secrets of creating project descriptions that attract the best freelancers.

T – **TAKE TIME To Research:** Finally, you'll learn how to do your due diligence so you can avoid the freelancers who are at best reliable… and at worst con artists.

Let's get jump right in and **get *S.T.A.R.T.*ed!**

S – SPECIFY Your Needs

Your first step is to determine what – exactly – you need in order to put your membership site together. Here's a checklist you can use:

Services

Web Design: You'll need someone to create the overall design for your membership site – most notably the sales page. (And the squeeze page, if you have one.) Most simple sites include a graphical header, graphical footer and basic graphics.

Graphics: Most web designers also include graphic design as part of their services. However, you may have special needs such as eBook cover (ecover) design, "buy now" buttons and similar.

Sales Letter: Your sales letter is the page that persuades your prospects to buy your products. This page is usually the front (index) page of your site, unless you have a squeeze page…

Squeeze Page: A squeeze page is where you collect leads of interested prospects before they see the sales page. Typically you offer a freebie (such as a free report) in exchange for their email address. Once they join your list, they receive a series of emails that help close the sale.

> Note: Having a squeeze page is optional. You'll want to test to see whether you get more customers by putting your sales letter on your site's front page or by having this email-capture page as the index page.

Also note that even if you don't use a squeeze page, you can
include an exit pop-up on your sales page that encourages people
to join your list. (In other words, a pop-up window appears only
if the prospect leaves your sales page without buying.)

Autoresponder Emails: This is the series of emails your autoresponder sends
out automatically to help build trust with your prospects and close the sale.

Your Product: Finally, you'll obviously need a product. This may be a text-based
product (such as eBooks or reports), a software product, a video product or audio
product. Since you're running a membership site, you have a recurring monthly
need for these products (so budget accordingly).

Note: You'll also need a "freebie" product (such a free report)
in order to entice prospects to join your free newsletter. You
may also want to create bonus products to help persuade
prospects to join your membership site.

Products

Domain Name: You can register your domain name at **Namecheap.com** or
GoDaddy.com. Choose something that's memorable and descriptive. If you
expect to ever say the name out loud (such as on a radio program), don't use
words or numbers that can be confused for one another (e.g., 4, for, four). Also,
choose a .com whenever possible (as that's what most people will remember).

Example: DeafDogTraining.com is a good name because it's
descriptive. DeafDogTraining4U.com is a less than ideal name
since you'd have to explain the "4" and the "U" if you ever said
the name out loud (e.g., "deaf dog training… the number 4… the
letter U…").

Web Hosting: You can host your site at **Hostgator.com**. DO NOT USE GODADDY
FOR HOSTING!!!

Note: Please note that even though many domain registrars
provide hosting (and many hosts also provide domain registration
as a secondary service), you should use two separate companies
for these services. If something should ever happen to the

company, you don't want one company will full control of your domain name and site.

Payment Processor: You'll want to choose a payment processor that allows recurring billing, such as **PayPal.com**, **ClickBank.com** or alternatively **1shoppingcart.com**.

Membership Software: I'm a huge advocate of using WordPress for any online business, and running your membership site is no exception. There are some fabulous membership site plugins on the market that make it so easy for you to start and run your membership site on your own. And that means no need for a webmaster or web designer after you launch your site.

A WordPress Membership Site Plugin is a plugin that helps you automate the management of your site, including tasks like collecting payments, creating accounts for new customers, dealing with cancellations and the like. The most popular ones are;

- **MemberSonic**
- **Wishlist Member**
- **DAP – Digital Access Pass**

Quick Recap

Now you know what pieces you need to create your membership site. Next you'll find out who can take care of those pieces for you…

T - <u>TAP</u> Into the Best Sources

You just learned all the pieces you need to put together to get your membership site running.

The next step is to find out what types of service providers (freelancers) you need for which jobs and where you can find these specialists.

What Type of Service Providers Do You Need?

Ghostwriters: Ghostwriters write regular content, such as eBooks, articles and reports. Those with specialized skills may write scripts for videos.

Copywriters: Copywriters write sales materials, such as sales letters, squeeze page copy, ads, autoresponder emails, one time offers and similar.

Proofreader / Editor: A proofreader or editor is a useful addition to your team if you want to put out highly polished eBooks, reports, articles and other content. (While ghostwriters usually proof their own work, they won't catch many of their mistakes just because they're too close to the work.)

EBook Designer: Most people simply convert their Word documents straight into PDF files. However, you can make a good first impression on your customers by hiring an eBook designer to format your document to make it look crisp and professional.

Web/Graphics Designers: As the name implies, these folks design your site and create your graphics.

Software Architect / Designer: If you're creating software products, then you may need a software architect to help you turn your idea into functional software. This person can help you design the features, the graphics user interface and so on. Then you give this spec sheet (brief) to your coder...

Programmers (Coders): This is the person who actually codes your software as specified in your brief.

Script Installation: If you're going to be installing any script (such as a membership site script), a script installer can help you install and customize the script. (Do note that many scripts include installation service for a small additional fee.)

Voiceover Artists: If you're creating audio or video content and you'd rather not lend your voice to the project, you can hire a professional voiceover artist.

Video Producer: If you have any video content, you may someone else to create and edit the video for you. Full-service video producers can offer you models, voiceovers, music, editing and everything else you need to create a video.

Where Can You Find these Service Providers?

Now that you know what tasks you need completed and what type of service provider is the best person to complete these tasks, your next step is to find these freelancers. Here's how:

Finding Freelancers Online

One of the most popular places to find a freelancer is by visiting some of the top freelance boards online. Here you post your projects and let freelancers bid on them. Then you choose the freelancer who best meets your needs.

Here are the top ten freelancing sites online in alphabetical order:

Codelance.com: As the name implies, this is a useful site if you need a coder (such as a software or script programmer).

Elance.com: This is perhaps one of the best known freelancing sites, which means it's a great place to start no matter what your project. You can post projects for coders, ghostwriters, copywriters, designers… and anything else you need.

> Note: This is the site where I recommend you start your freelancer search.

Freelance.com: This is another general freelancing site, but right now it's only available to those living in France, Spain, Morocco, Germany and Switzerland. They have plans to open a United States subsidiary soon.

Getafreelancer.com: Here's another large, general freelancing site. You can post almost any type of project you want, from audio services to website design. This is a good place to find a writer (since the site isn't focused on programming like so many others).

Guru.com: This is a site that accepts projects in many categories, from advertising to writing. However, you'll find this site works best if you're looking for freelancers for large projects.

Ifreelance.com: This is a general freelancing site. There seems to be a lot of writers on the site, so you may have some competitive bids coming in if you post a writing project.

Odesk.com: This general freelancing site is different from the others in that the focus is on hourly jobs rather than fixed-fee jobs. However, in most cases you're better off placing fixed-fee project ads (so that you know up front how much the project will cost).

Projectlance.com: While you can post a variety of projects on this board, this site is best for programming and web design jobs.

Rentacoder.com: This site has a focus on programming as well as website design and development. They also focus on safety, since transactions must go through their escrow service. This is a good place to post small to mid-size coding projects.

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Note: If you need programming work, start your search on
this site.
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Scriptlance.com: Last but not least, here's another site that focuses on more technical projects such as software coding and web development.

Other Places to Find Freelancers Online

While the freelancing boards are popular, they're not the only places to find freelancers online. Here are a few more options for you to consider:

➔ **Post an ad on CraigsList.org.** This is a free classified ads site. If you're interested in working with someone locally, this is a good place to start your search.

➔ **Search Google.** Naturally, you can track down a freelancer simply by searching for service providers in Google.

> Example: You can search for "ghostwriters," "copywriters," "web designers" and so on. You may want to use words like "freelance" alongside your description (e.g., "freelance ghostwriters" and "freelance web designers").

➔ **Ask your colleagues.** If you know anyone else who's outsourcing, ask for his or her recommendations. You can also ask on business and marketing forums (like **WarriorForum.com**, **SitePoint.com** and **DigitalPoint.com**). Finally, ask your network for recommendations if you're a member of sites like **Twitter.com** or **LinkedIn.com**.

➔ **Go to Voices.com**. If you need voiceover work, stop over at this site first.

Finding Freelancers Offline

There may be good, reliable and professional freelancers right in your own backyard. Here's how to find them:

➔ **Search the phone book.** Check the "yellow pages" or business listings for service providers. You're most likely to find web development and advertising providers here (e.g., copywriters).

➔ **Place an ad.** You can place an ad in the classified section of your newspaper. Be sure to read the "work wanted" sections as well.

➔ **Check local universities.** You may be willing to find a student willing to do tasks such as writing or web development. You can place ads in the college newspaper as well as flyers on targeted campus bulletin boards. You may even talk to department heads to see if they have any recommendations for attracting top talent.

➔ **Ask offline colleagues.** Ask around your offline network for recommendations.

Quick Recap

You've just discovered over a dozen places to find freelancers both online and offline.

Next, you'll discover how to set your budget…

A - <u>ALLOCATE</u> Your Funds

Many business folks who're new to outsourcing find that the whole pricing issue leaves them dizzy. That's because you're likely to get a wide range of prices and quotes for any project.

> <u>Example</u>: Let's say you want to find someone to create a 10,000 word eBook for you. You may find people charging one penny per word ($100) all the way up to those charging thousands of dollars for the same project… and everything in between. And actually, these wide-ranging prices aren't all that unusual…
>
> Let's suppose for a moment that you want a hamburger. How much will it cost you? You may pay anywhere from a buck at a fast food joint all the way to $100 if you're eating Kobe beef in a fancy restaurant.
>
> That's because the price is determined not only by the quality of the beef but also other factors such as service and ambiance.

Likewise, freelancers charge varying rates not only because of the quality of their work, but also other factors such as their reputation for good work, their professionalism, their ability to meet deadlines and the level of customer service they provide.

**And that means you need to take into consideration
all these factors when you're finding your freelancer.**

> <u>Tip</u>: Do NOT shop around based on price alone.
>
> Low-price doesn't always mean poor quality. That's because you can sometimes find good freelancers at low prices, perhaps because they're establishing their business, running a special or even because they live someplace where the cost of living is low.

```
Likewise, don't assume that a high-priced service provider is
your best option. Some people charge above market rates (but
they aren't necessarily worth the price).
```

All of this brings us to the question:

What should you do when you get wildly varying rates? How do you decide who to hire?

Here's a two-step process for dealing with wildly-divergent quotes:

Step 1: Filter out the outliers. In many cases, you'll have extreme low and high price quotes.

You can take a few minutes to check out the people offering these quotes to see if there is any justification for their prices (e.g., perhaps someone offering a low bid is very qualified, but needs to build his portfolio). In most cases, however, you can just skip over these outliers.

Step 2: Filter the remaining list by quality and customer service. At this point you need to do your due diligence.

This means you need to first determine which freelancers can produce the quality of work you're interested in. Then you need to further narrow your list by determining who'll be able to deliver the project on time.

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Note: In Step 5 of the "S.T.A.R.T. a Membership Site™"
system, you'll find out how in more detail to do this type
of filtering and research.
```

Creating Your Budget

Below you'll find a list of nine common projects and an approximate price you might expect to pay for each of these projects.

As you just discovered, however, prices certainly do vary. Depending on your needs, you may find freelancers who charge more or less.

This list, however, will give you a good starting point for creating your budget and allocating your funds…

> **Graphics (if done separately from web design):** If you need just a single graphic like an ecover, you can expect to pay around $60-$100 per graphic. If you need a mini-site graphics bundle (header, footer and ecover), budget around $120-$250.

> **Copywriting, sales letter**: Most of the great copywriters charge in the neighborhood of $1000 to $3000 for a sales letter. But do note that better writers tend to charge considerably more – $5000, $7500, $10,000… even upwards of $20,000. (You'll also find those charging considerably less, but many of the lower priced copywriters turn out lower converting sales pieces.)
>
> The reason some copywriters charge so much more is because they have a proven track record with results. Obviously, the better your letter converts, the more money you make – so it's worth investing in a good copywriter.

> **Product creation, eBooks or reports**: Many ghostwriters charge in the neighborhood of five cents to fifteen cents per word. If you need specialized content or advanced-level content that requires more research and/or expertise, expect to pay more.
>
> > Tip: You can find those charging less, but research their quality of work and their delivery history carefully.

> **Product creation, eBook editor**: Editors and proofreaders charge varying rates depending on whether you want them to merely clean up typos or whether you need them to do "deep editing" which may include rewriting the content. Light proofreading usually starts at around one to three cents per word, while heavy editing runs from three cents to six cents per word.
>
> > Note: Do NOT hire an editor to tweak your sales materials, as doing so may ruin the conversion rate.

➤ **Product creation, audio book**: If you need to create an audio book, keep in mind that you'll first need to hire a ghostwriter to create the text. Then you'll need to hire a voiceover artist.

Some artists charge by the number of pages in your eBook, while others charge according to how many minutes the final product ends up being. Obviously, it's better for you to find someone who charges per-page (that way you know up front the cost for the entire project). For non sales materials, expect to pay at least $5 to $10 per page.

➤ **Product creation, software**. You'll find that most coders charge at least $25 to $50 per hour to develop software. Obviously, the more complex your software, the bigger your per-project fee.

You'll need to get estimates and bids for your particular software in order to budget for this task properly.

> Tip: You may be able to find good coders at low prices, simply because they live in a part of the world where the cost of living is low. (North America and Europe based coders and companies tend to charge a lot more – while usually creating better quality results while sticking to the timeline.)
>
> Just be sure there isn't a language barrier that prevents them from understanding the form and function of your software.

➤ **Product creation, video**: Video creation prices vary largely depending on what all you need from the producer.

For example, do you need them to create the script? Do you need them to provide models (talking heads), voiceover artists, or are you just looking for a simple power-point presentation? Also, the content will affect the price. An advertisement (that they create) will cost more than an informational video.

Some producers charge per hour of their time, some per minute of video (with some of the additions – like models – being extra). Always be sure to ask to make sure you know what's included in the price.

Expect to pay at least $100 for a one or two minute video. Higher-end filming and editing can run into the thousands for a video that's five minutes. You'll pay less if your video doesn't require extras (like models), if it isn't promotional, and if you provide a script.

➢ **Script installation**: You can get simple scripts installed for as low as $25. Those that are more complex or require customization may require $100 or more. (If you need something coded or created from scratch, then you'll need to hire a coder, not an installer.)

➢ **Web design (with graphics):** If you have a simple website, you can find designers for as low as $300 to $500 per site. Expect to pay more for more complex sites, bigger sites or those requiring extensive graphics and design.

Quick Recap

Now that you've created your project budget, it's time to find good service providers who can meet your needs…

R - <u>RECRUIT</u> the Best People for the Job

Now it's time to write a good project description that will attract good talent. The more details you provide in your project description, the more qualified candidates you'll have stepping forward to bid on your job.

> Note: For the purposes of this discussion we'll focus on placing an ad on a freelancing board like elance.com. If you've found your freelancers elsewhere, then just focus on the "project description" part of this chapter.

Below we'll quickly go through the steps needed to post your project on a site like Elance, and then you'll get six project description templates you can modify and use to post your projects.

1) Open an account

Your first step is to open an account on those freelancing boards where you want to post job descriptions.

Generally this means you'll choose a *username* and *password*, fill in your *contact information* and verify your *email address*.

Some sites (like Elance.com) will require that you verify your phone number and take an "admissions test" first (this test simply shows that you've familiar with how the site works).

Once you're verified, you can move on to the next step...

2) Decide on the details of your project posting

Before you can post your job description on a freelancing site, there are several details you need to decide on (no matter what type of project you're submitting).

These details include:

➔ **Category**. Look over the categories carefully and choose those that best match your project description. The better category you choose the more qualified candidates who'll find you.

For example, while copywriting technically is "nonfiction writing," you're better off sticking to more descriptive categories such as "sales writing." That way you'll get more qualified and experienced bidders.

> Note: Most sites allow you to choose more than one category – this is a good idea, as it boosts the number of people who'll see your ad. But again, do stick to the most relevant categories.

➔ **Keywords**. Keywords are those words your potential service provider will use to find your project on a freelancing site.

Some freelancing sites allow you to enter keywords into your post. In other cases, you just need to include your keywords in your project title, project description and "desired skills" field.

You should include as many variations on your keywords as possible to increase your visibility.

> Example:
>
> If you're looking for a ghostwriter, then you might include keywords like: writer, ghostwriter, eBook creation, and eBook writer.
>
> If you're looking for a voiceover artist, then you might include keywords like: voiceover artist, voice over, voiceover talent, voice talent, narration, audio book.
>
> If you're looking for a programmer, you might include keywords like: programmer, software programmer, coder, software development, PHP coder, C++ coder, etc.

```
If you're looking for a copywriter, you might include
words like: copywriter, ad writer, sales letter writer,
copy writer, sales writer, direct response writer.
```

➔ **Budget**. You have the option of submitting an open budget (where you don't set any guidelines) or offer a price range (e.g., "$1500 to $3000).

If you offer an open budget, you're likely going to have to sort through a lot more proposals – and that includes plenty of outliers that you'll likely filter out anyway. It's better to offer a price range within your budget (and close to the market average).

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Note: Sometimes you'll see advice that you should post
cheap price ranges and justify it by including the line,
"This project should be easy for anyone who knows what
they're doing."
```

<u>My advice</u>: Don't bother. The experienced professionals know whether a project is truly easy or difficult, and they'll bid accordingly no matter what you say on the matter.

It's only the inexperienced person who'll trust your judgment on a project over his or her own professional judgment and experience. And since you're looking for a professional, this inexperienced beginner isn't the type of person you want bidding on your project.

➔ **Fixed fee vs. hourly fee**. Choose fixed fees over hourly fees. That way you know EXACTLY how much you're paying for a project.

```
Note: Hourly fees rarely go under the estimate – they're
more likely to go over, meaning you'll need to cough up
more money.
```

➔ **Escrow**. Many freelancing sites offer the option of escrow (while some require it). Whenever possible, use it. It protects your money. And since the service provider doesn't know you, most will be happy to use escrow since it protects them too.

➔ **Start date / delivery deadline**. You're likely to get more proposals if you offer some flexibility in the delivery deadline. However, if you are on a strict timeline, then be sure to emphasize that in your description so that you don't get bids from those who can't deliver on time.

➔ **Sealed vs. non-sealed bids**. Most people who submit project descriptions on freelance boards solicit sealed bids (meaning others can't see their bid amounts).

If you offer open bidding, then you'll get people who are undercutting each other and selling themselves mainly on price. This may discourage those with higher prices from bidding.

As such, I suggest you seal your bids so that only you can see them.

3) Create your project descriptions

Now that you've sorted out all the details, it's time to create your project descriptions.

Overall, your job is to create as detailed of a description as possible. The more details that you provide, the more likely it is you'll get the highest-qualified candidates stepping forward.

```
Example: If you post that you're just looking for a copywriter,
you'll get loads of sales writers sending proposals. But if you
ask for a copywriter for a specific niche, you'll get more
qualified people bidding on the job.
```

Below are six examples of typical project descriptions. Please feel free to use these descriptions as templates when you start posting projects on freelancing sites…

Example "Sales Letter" Project Description

```
Title: Sales letter needed for fitness membership site.

Description: Do you have a proven track record writing high-
converting sales letters? Do you write for the bodybuilding
markets? If so, this job might be for you.

Here are the details…
```

Target market: Young men age 18-35 who are interested in bodybuilding to strip the fat and pack on muscle.

Product: Recurring monthly membership in a site that delivers new fitness eBooks and videos each month. For the sales letter you'll only need to review one 50 page eBook and one ten minute video. You'll also get access to the tools as offered as bonuses, such as calorie counters, an online exercise journal and a spreadsheet that tracks progress.

The letter: Your job is to create a traditional sales letter that turns my targeted browsers into buyers. Please include in your bid the cost to write the letter, two headline alternatives and one revision (if we need to tweak to improve conversions).

Note: I'm more interested in you creating a persuasive letter rather than a letter of a certain length.
What I need from you: Please send me your sample sales letters for bodybuilding products (or similar). Please also send me information about the conversion rates you've generated in the past (and whether these results were for bodybuilding products).

I look forward to working with you!

Example "Autoresponder Email" Project Description

Title: Copywriter needed for "Learn French" autoresponder series.

Description: I'm looking for a copywriter who has experience and results writing persuasive autoresponder email sequences.

Target market: Mainly middle-age and retired people from the United States, Canada and England who want to learn a little French so they can spend time in France.

Product: I'm looking for three (3) emails ranging in length from 250 to 500 words each (you decide which is best) that will persuade people to join my "Learn French" site. You'll get access to the complete site as well as the current sales letter to help you write the emails.

Knowledge of French not required.

What I need from you: Please send me your samples of autoresponder sequences you've created in the past (along with the results these sequences generated). If you've worked in any language niches before, please let me know.

I look forward to working with you!

Example "Web Design" Project Description

Title: Simple web mini-design needed (plus graphics) for my gardening niche membership site.

Description: I'm looking for someone who can create a simple yet professional looking mini-site for the gardening market based on one of three color schemes that I provide to you (your choice, you use the one you think works best).

Mini-site design should include:

- Header graphic.
- Footer graphic.
- Background graphic.
- Membership card cover graphic (in 2 sizes).
- "Sign Up" button.
- Matching checkmark graphics (for a sales letter).

Turnaround time is two weeks after I accept your proposal and bid. Please don't bid if you can't complete the site within two weeks.

Please send me your portfolio samples. In particular, show me any gardening samples and member card designs you've created.

Thanks for your proposals!

Example "Membership Content Creation" Project Description

Title: Ghostwriter needed to create 10 affiliate marketing membership lessons.

Description: I'm looking for a 20,000 word content (in total, in the form of "10 lessons") on the topic of affiliate marketing. The best candidate will have personal experience with internet marketing, affiliate marketing as well as Google AdSense, WordPress blogs and search engine optimization. At a minimum, you should have written about these topics before.

I'll provide a complete outline (that includes chapters and subtopics within these chapters) for all 10 lessons.

I'm looking for a content that's packed with information for the beginner affiliate marketer… yet the lessons shouldn't read like a textbook. Can you take a serious topic and create an engaging yet informative lesson? Then you might be perfect for this job.

Send me your proposal that includes delivery deadline and price. Also include samples of your writing – especially those samples related to affiliate marketing, internet marketing, AdSense, blogging or SEO. Do let me know of any personal "hands on" experience you have with these topics.

I look forward to hearing from you!

Example "Voiceover" Project Description

Title: Female voiceover artist needed to create audio book.

Description: I'm looking for female voice talent to narrate a 20,000 word (about 50 page) eBook on the topic of parenting an autistic child.

This eBook was written by a nurse – so your narration should be in a confident, trustworthy and authoritative voice… yet approachable, soothing and friendly. I want readers to get the sense that their healthcare provider is talking to them personally.

You'll also need to be able to send the finished product to me as a downloadable MP3 file. The file should be ready to give directly to my customers.

Does this sound like something you can do? If so, send me a few samples of your voiceover work along with your bid for the project and expected delivery date. I look forward to hearing from you!

Example "Proofreader" Project Description

Title: Proofreader needed for a monthly membership site.

Description: Are you a grammar nut? Do typos drive you nuts? Do you have a strong urge to correct people who end their sentences with prepositions? If so, you might be perfect for this project!

What I need is a proofreader who can do "light" proofing of a "monthly" membership site (on the topic of dog training). By light proofing, I mean that you look for typos like:

- Spelling errors that the spellchecker can't catch ("be" instead of "bee").
- Wrong word usage ("their" instead of "there").
- And problems with punctuation.

Heavy editing such as rewriting or otherwise restructuring sentences will NOT be needed for this project.

I'm happy with the content my ghostwriter is creating as it is – I just need your eagle eye to catch the errors so we can put a little spit and polish on the final product.
They keyword of this project is "monthly"; and I need someone who can work on this project on a monthly basis.

If this looks like your perfect job, send me a description of your past work, the reason why I should choose you and your references. I look forward to hearing from you!

Quick Recap

You just discovered how to create job descriptions that will attract dozens of qualified service providers.

Who should you hire? How do you sort through these applicants?

The answers to those questions coming up next...

T - <u>TAKE TIME</u> to Research

In a perfect world everyone would be honest, professional, provide impeccable customer service and delivery finished projects before deadlines.

Unfortunately, that's NOT how it works.

If you're online long enough, you'll run into service providers who are sloppy and unprofessional. They miss deadlines and don't communicate with you.

In a few cases, they may be out to deliberately scam you.

That's why you should NOT shop around based on price alone.

You also need to take into consideration these other important factors, such as quality of the work, customer service, history, ability to meet deadlines, professionalism and so on.

Doing Your Due Diligence

Fortunately, it's pretty easy to weed out those who deliver sloppy results (or no results) from those professionals who deliver high quality work on time.
Just follow my simple C4 system to explode those non-professionals out of your way:

```
C - CONSIDER samples
C - CONTACT references
C - CHECK feedback
C - COLLECT information
```

Let's look at these four points in detail…

1) CONSIDER Samples

Your first step is to ask for samples. (Which is why sample requests were included in the project descriptions above.)

In particular, you'll want to ask for samples that are related to the project you're working on.

```
Example: So if you need a sales letter for a health product, ask
to see samples from other health products. If you need graphics
for a gamer site, ask for similar samples from their portfolio.
And so on.
```

If someone refuses to give you samples, run to the nearest exit. Even if they tell you that they're new and haven't built a portfolio yet, run. That's because even someone who's never had a client before will provide some type of sample – even if it's something they created just for the purpose of showing to potential clients.

Point is, don't let price or anything else sway you on this point. If you can't see any samples, then you have no way of judging whether this person is capable of turning out the work you require.

Note: At the same time, be cautious of freelancers (especially ghostwriters) who are showing everything that they did for their clients. Usually these "written materials" are exclusive property of the client, and this may be a sign that they won't care about YOUR intellectual property even after you get the exclusive rights of the content that they'll be providing you.

```
--------------------
Side Note: Sometimes you'll hear business folks advising that
you ask service providers to create something specific for you
for free so that you can judge their work.
```

```
This is NOT a good idea.
While a few inexperienced or desperate beginners may accept
this, the most qualified freelancers won't accept that offer (in
part because some scammers put together their projects by
getting "freebies" from various sources).

The professionals respect their time and expect you to respect
their time too. (Plus they usually have plenty of samples you
can gauge.)

If you want specific examples from the BEST candidates, then pay
for these small samples. For example, if you are looking to hire
a ghostwriter for a big project, then hire a few ghostwriters to
write 1000 words for you. Then award the big project to the
writer who turned out the best work.
-------------------
```

2) CONTACT References

If you like the quality of a freelancer's work, move that person to your short list and take this next step: Contact their references (i.e., the people who gave testimonials).

That's right; you need to actually contact them.

Just reading their testimonials isn't quite enough. If the person who gave the testimonial or reference has their contact information – even if it's just a website – then you're within your rights to contact them.

Since the person you're contacting doesn't get anything out of answering you, he or she is going to be answering out of the goodness of his/her own heart. And that means you can't weigh this person down with questions. Instead, get straight to the point and ask a simple question (one that only takes a minute or two to answer).

Here's a simple email you can use for this purpose…

```
-------------------
Subject: [name], do you still recommend [name of freelancer]?

Dear [name],

You're listed as a reference on [name of freelancer's] website
here: [enter page where testimonial appears].

As I'm considering using [name of freelancer's] services, I just
have one quick question for you: Do you still recommend
[his/her] services? If not, why not?

If you'd rather get in touch via phone, you can call me at
[phone number]. Otherwise, just hit reply to email me.

Thank you in advance for your time!

Sincerely,

[your name]

P.S. Your [type of project – such as "graphics" or "sales
letter"] looks great!
-------------------
```

You won't get feedback from everyone you contact, but don't make any assumptions one way or another if someone doesn't reply back to you.

3) CHECK Feedback

If you're hiring someone from a freelance board, check their onsite ratings and reviews (i.e., feedback from other users).

You're looking for someone who has a long, good history.

If someone has a long history and lots of ratings, you can expect to see a couple poor ratings mixed in. That's normal, as someone who's been in business for a long time occasionally will get a disgruntled customer.

Just make sure any negative ratings are the rare exception rather than a pattern.

Be wary of someone who's new (even if they have good ratings). People who are new don't have much of reputation to protect, so it's easier for them to ruin that reputation (since they can just rebuild it later or start under a new name).

> Note: DON'T assume that all new service providers are scammers. Rather, my point here is to make sure that you don't jump in headfirst just because someone has good ratings. Be sure to complete all the steps of this due diligence process before making a final decision.

4) COLLECT Information

If everything else checks out, then your last step is to collect addition history and reputation information on your potential freelancer. And you can do this via a simple search in Google. Here's how…

→ **Plug the freelancer's name into Google.** You can also search for variations on a person's name (such as "Joseph Johnson" and "Joe Johnson"). Just be sure that references to the person are referencing your potential freelancer and not someone with the same name.

→ **Read forum posts.** If you found the person on a forum – or if you know his username on other forums – read some of his past posts.

→ **Search for the freelancer's known email addresses.** While you may find people with the same name online, it's extremely rare to find more than one person with the same email address (the exception is if someone sells their domain name). As such, you can usually trust that the email address is referencing your potential freelancer.

→ **Search for the freelancer's other contact information.** If you know his phone number, plug it into a Google search and see what pops up.

→ **Plug in other information.** When you do the above searches, you may uncover usernames, phone numbers, email addresses and so on that you didn't know about before. Run Google searches for this new information as well.

So what are you looking for?

Basically, you're looking for a good history, professionalism, courteous discussions with others, good testimonials from others and other signs of good business practices.

In addition, you want to find that this person has not only a good reputation, but a long, established history online.

Red flags include (but are not limited to) things like:

- ✖ Getting banned from forums or other sites.
- ✖ A pattern of customer (or affiliate) complaints.
- ✖ Disrespectful, unprofessional or otherwise poor attitude on forums.

`Tip`: If you get red flags and bad feeling about someone, move on. There are plenty of other service providers who'd be happy to meet your needs.

Quick Recap

If you followed the four simple steps above, you should now have at least one (if not several) potential freelancers that you can award your project to. But not so fast – you need to take a few precautions when you start working together…

Getting Off to a Good Start

Even if you've found the perfect freelancer who has a great track record, your project can get derailed.

Usually that sort of thing happens due to some form of lack of communication. At other times, the two of you might just not work well together (and that's ok).

Here are <u>six simple steps</u> to make sure a bump on the outsourcing road doesn't turn into a disaster...

<u>Set Up Escrow</u>

I've mentioned this a few times but it's worth repeating: Use escrow.

Not only does it protect you in the event that a project isn't delivered, it also makes the freelancer feel at ease since he's guaranteed payment if he completes and delivers the project.

If you found the freelancer through another channel, you can still use an escrow service.

One way to do that is by going to a freelancing board (like **Elance.com**, which is known for its escrow service), posting your project... and hiring the freelancer officially through the site. Then you can use their escrow service for the project.

> <u>Note</u>: As these freelancing sites get a commission from the freelancer, you may need to add that extra (commission fee) to the project budget.

Send Detailed Briefs

Sending detailed briefs and specifications to your freelancer is one of the most important steps you can take. And that's because a freelancer isn't a mind reader.

Even a good service provider can't guess what you want if you don't give as much information as possible.

Here are a few examples:

➢ **Web design:** Tell the designer what color schemes you had in mind, what types of graphics and what overall "mood" you'd like your site to convey. Let him know who you target market is (e.g., who'll use the site). Then show your designer samples of sites and graphics that you like (being sure to tell him what, specifically, you like about the samples).

 Be sure to tell your designer if there is anything you don't want included in your design.

> Example: "My visitors are middle-age folks, so please don't use 10 point font that requires squinting to read."

➢ **Copywriting:** Most copywriters will give you a questionnaire to fill out, which will ask questions about your target market, your product, your competitor's product, your unique selling proposition, your offer, your guarantee and so on.

 If your copywriter doesn't ask this information, consider finding one who does. Simply put, you don't want to work with a copywriter who's so inexperienced that he doesn't realize he needs to ask you for this information.

➢ **Ghostwriting:** Here you need to be as specific as possible about what topics you want included (and excluded – if any) in your membership site content, the length of each lesson, and who your target market is.

 Simply saying, "I want a 3,000 word lesson on dog training" isn't enough. You need to outline to show your ghostwriter what topics you want covered.

> <u>Example</u>: "Lesson 1 of this membership site should cover
> the pros and cons of different styles of training, such as
> clicker training, treat training and praise training. It
> should also cover when to start training a puppy, how long
> the sessions should be, how many sessions per day, how
> many sessions per week, and what to do if a puppy can't
> hold his attention…"
>
> <u>Note</u>: It's helpful if you let your writer know about your
> opinions and how you'd like to approach a topic.
>
> For example, if all dog trainers are praising clicker
> training, then your writer will lean towards emphasizing
> clicker training in your lessons too… UNLESS you tell him
> differently. Remember, he's NOT a mind reader.

You may also point to writing styles and samples that you like (if you tell the writer what, specifically, you like about the samples).

Sign Contracts

Signing contracts is especially important if you're not using an escrow service through a freelancing board, as a contract protects both parties.

Some freelances will have their own contracts for you to sign. If not, you should contact a lawyer to draft up an agreement you can use.

Below are the main <u>five things</u> to include in your contract (your attorney can add in the other "standard contract" items):

- **Payment terms.** If you're using escrow, mention this in the contract – and state who pays for the escrow fees. If you're not using escrow (which I don't recommend), then lay out the payment terms.

  For smaller projects, it's common for the business person (that's you) to pay half the fee up front and half upon delivery. For larger projects, you may pay in thirds. For even bigger projects, you can pay 25% at a time (as the freelancer delivers 25% of the project). If it's an ongoing project, then you'll likely pay weekly.

> Tip: If you're not sure of what terms to set up, talk to
> the freelancer to come to a mutual agreement that's fair
> to both of you.

Be sure to also lay out how you'll pay (e.g., PayPal? Bank wire? Personal check? 2Checkout? Something else?).

- **Delivery deadlines.** Your agreement should state the beginning and end date of the project. If it's a project that will take more than a couple weeks, you may ask for smaller pieces of the project to be delivered on certain dates.

- **Project specifications.** This is the heart of the contract. Here you list exactly what the project is and how much money you're paying for the project. Be specific and detailed.

- **Copyrights.** Be sure to include in your contract who owns copyright to the work when it's completed (and paid for).

- **Contract terminations and kill fees.** If something happens that you need to terminate the project midway through, usually you'll need to pay a "kill fee" (to compensate the freelancer for the time he's put in as well as any opportunities lost). Ask your freelancer what his kill fee is.

Share Expectations

The contract you sign will go a long ways towards setting expectations, as you both know what you're expected to do and when.

However, it's also helpful to talk about non-contractual expectations. By this I mean things that you'd like or expect to happen (but you won't enforce by contract).

These expectations are mainly a matter of personal preference.

> Example #1: You may let it be known that you like an update on
> projects every 72 hours.

Example #2: Perhaps you prefer to talk on the phone once per week (or have a face to face weekly meeting if you're working with someone locally).

Your freelancer may have his own expectations (which he should likewise share with you).

Example: Perhaps he prefers you contact him via instant messenger rather than email.

Start Small

At last, it's time to get started on your first project together.

Here's the key: Start slow and start small.

You see, you don't want to give your new freelancer a big job until you've first had a chance to see if you work well together on smaller jobs.

It might sting to lose a couple hundred bucks if you don't share the same vision on a project. But it would sting a whole lot more if you poured thousands of dollars and weeks or months of time into a project that's not turning out the way you envisioned. It's much better to start small and give your freelancer more responsibility and bigger projects as time goes on.

For example:

- Ask a copywriter to write a short ad or squeeze page first before asking him to write a full sales letter.

- Put the ghostwriter in charge of various short reports before putting him in charge of your 50,000 word eBook.

- Ask a web and graphic designer to create an ecover before asking him to be in charge of your ongoing graphics needs.

And so on.

Tip: Don't depend on new people on your team to work under tight deadlines. For example, don't ask a copywriter to complete a

```
sales letter fast because you're launching the product in five
days. If something happens that you can't keep your promises to
your customers, it's YOUR reputation on the line.

In other words, don't make promises to customers and partners
that you're not absolutely sure you can keep. And that means not
depending on others to fulfill your promises.
```

<u>Stimulate Good Work</u>

Finally, stimulate good work and motivate your team by being generous with your rewards. Kind words go a long way… but cash bonuses won't soon be forgotten. ☺

Quick Recap

In this section you discovered how to start building a good business relationship with your new service providers.

Now let's wrap things up…

Conclusion: Get S.T.A.R.T.ed!

Congratulations! You now know how to get your membership site off the ground quickly and easily… and you don't even have to break a sweat.

That's because you now put the entire project in someone else's capable hands using the ***S.T.A.R.T. a Membership Site™*** system!

Let's quickly recap the system's five steps:

S – <u>SPECIFY</u> Your Needs: In this first step you discovered what you needed to get your membership site up, such as a sales letter, product. membership script site and more.

T - <u>TAP</u> Into The Best Sources: Here you found out which freelancers provide what types of service. You also discovered more than a dozen places (online and offline) where you could find your freelancer.

A – <u>ALLOCATE</u> Your Funds: In this step you put together a rough estimate of your total project cost (while being keenly aware that freelancers charge wildly divergent rates).

R – <u>RECRUIT</u> The Best People For The Job: In this step you learned how to write post projects and write project descriptions in such a way that you attract the most highly qualified candidates for the job.

T – <u>TAKE TIME</u> To Research: Finally, you discovered how to avoid getting burned by doing your due diligence and starting small (and slow) when you hire a new freelancer.

Now I realize your mind might be spinning a bit because you've just read a ton of incredibly useful and profitable information. And maybe you just want to close this report and let all that information "digest" for a while.
But here's the thing…

It's too easy to forget to come back. It's too easy to say, "I'll do this later" – and later turns into four months later. (Not exactly what you had in mind, right?)

Listen, you've just learned a fast and easy way to set up a membership site.

If you want to turn this information into actual dollars in your bank, you need to <u>take action</u> *immediately*.

As you've already seen, this report lays out the complete step-by-step plan for you – all you have to do is return to the first chapter and start working your way through the steps!

Simple, right?

So go ahead and get S.T.A.R.T.ed right now by figuring out what freelancers you need to get your membership site up and running.

Then commit to working yourself through the rest of the steps within the next week.

Get to it... and enjoy! ☺

Andrew Hunter
MemberSonic.com