

Work-at-Home *Ghostwriters*



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Introduction: Overview-what is a ghostwriter

He knows how to write – wonderfully and creatively. He does the research, the cleaning up or everything from the research to the writing to the polishing. He does the work but he does not get credit for the quality of the work he provides. Sometimes, he might get an occasional thank you, an acknowledgement from the ‘author’ whose name appears on the article’s byline or on the book cover – but most of the time, the reading public never even knows his name. He is read but not read of. He is the ghostwriter.

The Ghostwriter’s Job Description

The name itself says it all. He is a writer who has noteworthy talent but who remains virtually unrecognized and unacknowledged – just as a ghost is supposedly felt but not seen. A ghostwriter is someone who does either one of two things.

On the one hand, he can be one who collects and assimilates information. From such information, he’ll write a story, a blog post, a press release, an article, a book, or whatever copyrighted and published (electronic or otherwise) content.

On the other hand, he can be one who is tasked with transforming a raw manuscript from gibberish (or nearly gibberish) to a brilliant piece of work worthy of publication. In this case, the actual author under whose name the work will appear has the information required or has the bare bones of the book or article but further editing and polishing is required to make the piece become less mediocre, more technically accurate, more readable, or a combination of these and other objectives.

A ghostwriter is tasked with writing many different things. These tasks vary according to the ghostwriter’s specialty, skills, competencies, and clients. Usually though, the services of a ghostwriter is utilized frequently for hardbound and paperback books. These books can be fiction or non-fiction and can be about a wide range of topics.

On the other hand, because of the internet’s popularity and the slant towards internet advertising and marketing, a ghostwriter may also be asked to ghostwrite press releases, news articles, informational copy, e-books, and blog entries. In some cases, a ghostwriter is even asked to write under various pseudonyms to promote a business, a product or a service online.

There are also ghostwriters for academic essays and publications. In such cases, the ghostwriter makes an essay, a research paper, a journal article, a thesis, or a dissertation for a student or an academician willing to pay for the service.

In all cases, though, copyright for whatever the ghostwriter accomplishes belongs to the client who commissioned the work.

Dare to Apply?

It depends. The most important question is: do you have the writing skills that the job requires? You must also have unending patience, so you can deal with demanding clients and the research required. You must also have time and multi tasking skills, so you can deal with the demands of the job and meet your deadlines.

Most importantly, though, before you think about becoming a ghostwriter, you should have your priorities straight. In particular, are you writing for money or for credit?

The ghostwriter gets paid for his efforts, time and writing skills – he does not get credit or public recognition for them. If getting credit for your work is important to you, you should perhaps think of another line of work.

Part 1: Starting your business

Chapter 1: Finding Your Niche

You think you can do it all. After all, how hard can it be to shift from a refinance mortgage handbook to a dog training manual then to a computer malware magazine article? Not hard at all, really, if you have above-average IQ, exceptional reading comprehension skills and are a gifted writer to boot. Unfortunately, not everyone is that blessed. And even if you were, you'd still find it hard to find clients who'd easily believe your claims.

Nobody's Ghostwriter

A universal ghostwriter is nobody's ghostwriter. A ghostwriter who claims he is the ghostwriting industry's "jack-of-all-trades" equivalent does not come across as very credible.

Your customers are experts in their own industry. They are expert publishers, internet marketers, real estate agents, business managers, etc. These are people who know that – as learned as they are – they still have a lot of things to master about their particular field. More than that, they know that they do not have the time or are not good enough to write their own book or copy themselves. Thus, how can they believe someone who claims he can write about ANY given topic? You'd have to be a genius, very established or very old if you are to pull that off.

Small Fish

Would you rather be a small fish in a big pond or a big fish in a small pond? The big pond is comparable to your potential market. Everyone who needs or is going to ever need a ghostwriter is your potential client. However, if you target every one of these potential customers, you're going to be "swimming" in a very large pond, indeed.

The major players always have the upper hand in universal markets. They have a recognized and proven track record – they're the 'establishment', so to speak. If they claim that they can provide ghostwriters in every field imaginable, they have proof and clients would believe them.

You, on the other hand, can only provide your word. Your clients can try you out and you can build a following through word of mouth after that, sure. As it has been mentioned above, though, you're going to find it very hard to convince anyone to try you out if you cultivate a 'ghostwriter-for-all' image.

Big Fish

If you specialize and find your own niche, however, you can build up your reputation in one field much easier. First, you're going to have less competition; that's always good. Second, you will have a narrower market, so you can focus your advertising and marketing efforts; you'll have a much more targeted audience and a targeted (and thereby more effective) marketing campaign. Third, you can prove your expertise on your chosen niche easily – divulge your relevant work experience and education and prepare your targeted portfolio. Since you do know this niche, your expertise will shine and you'll get noticed much more easily.

Finding Your Pond

When it's time to decide about your niche market, try answering the following questions:

- i. What have you formal training in?
- ii. What have you learned and experienced at work?
- iii. What are your interests and hobbies?
- iv. What are you good at?

The answers to the above questions can be your niche market. If the answers to the above are vastly divergent, you should prioritize the last one. It's where you're good at that you will be able to your best job –thereby impressing clients and getting repeat customers and referral business

Chapter 2: Honing Your Skills

Honing Your Skills

You can't cut with a dull blade – and neither can you write with a dull wit. If you are to be an effective and highly sought-after ghostwriter, you should regularly hone your skills.

Train Yourself

A great ghostwriter knows the theory that ties all written words together. Plainly speaking, you should train yourself in the English language – particularly grammar and sentence construction.

Sure, you know how to speak English. You know the vernacular – how can you fail to do so when you were born thinking and speaking it? However, you should know that in the English language, something that is 'commonly used' or something that seems 'instinctively correct' may not be proper English at all.

For instance, when your phone rings and somebody asks for you, what do you usually say? Common practice would induce you to respond with "This is me." That is bad grammar, though. You should instead say "This is I." The latter sentence seems awkward in comparison to the former statement. In fact, the former sounds better than the latter. However, the fact remains that the latter is good grammar and the first one is merely commonly used but still not correct.

The above example just goes to show that you have to train yourself in the language even if you speak it. Enroll yourself in an English language course. Conversational English is different from written English; don't forget that it's the latter which should concern you more. It would help even more if you were to enroll in a formal writing course afterwards.

A Pair of Reading Glasses

Don your reading glasses and start using them. Reading would help even more if you truly enjoy this activity. What better way is there to learn about the written word than reading lots of it?

Reading will give you great benefits. It will primarily teach you how to use words to create the desired effect on your reading audience. If a particular reading material touched you, you can analyze it to discover what the author did right. If a reading material bored you to sleep, you should also find out what the author did wrong.

Reading will enrich your vocabulary, too. Rather than giving you dry definitions as the dictionary is wont to do, books and other reading materials demonstrate the nuances of each word. In writing, this is even more important. It is not the denotation but the connotation of words that matter in effective writing.

For instance, if you want to convey the warmth of the hearth and the love of a family, you would learn to use the term “home” rather than the word “domicile.” The dictionary would tell you they denote the same thing, but reading would make you realize that they connote different ideas.

Reading (and other activities like watching movies and news, conversing with people from distinct backgrounds, etc.) will also give you a wealth of information and give you insight on a variety of topics. They will give your writing more depth and range.

Sharpen Your Quill

Finally, the best way to hone your writing skills is to practice them – so get out your quill (or turn on your computer) and start committing thought to paper (or your computer screen). Write everything that comes to mind. The subject does not matter; it can be something very mundane or extraordinary. What matters is the way you play with your words so as to achieve maximum effect.

Chapter 3: Organizing Your Time

Organizing Your Time

It's very funny how home-based or freelance writers think they have a lot of time on their hands when the opposite is usually true. For one, you can't be absent when you work at home. Not only can't you be absent from work, you also can't be absent from all the usual responsibilities that someone staying and working at home normally has.

The Busy, Home-Based Routine

Freelance writers have a false sense of leisure. Every morning, you will be sorely tempted to lie abed late. When you do wake up, you would have to deal with your numerous housekeeping tasks. If you have a family to take care of, moreover, you will have even greater demands on your time.

Once you have your home to yourself or once you have dealt with your housekeeping responsibilities, you won't find it very easy to sit in front of your workstation and begin working. Your favorite TV show may be on air at that particular time. Perhaps, there's a new DVD that you've been longing to watch. Thus, you sit in front of your TV instead and spend two hours 'relaxing' and 'enjoying' yourself.

After that, it would be time to prepare and eat lunch. It would not be practical to eat and work at the same time, so you'd perhaps postpone working and sit in front of the television again while enjoying your meal.

After lunch, you may find it hard to string words together or form coherent thoughts. You want to clear your mind so you walk outside for fresh air and spend time chatting with your neighbors. After everything you have done, you will find out that you have a deadline coming and only a few hours to spend writing before your family comes home again and require your undivided attention.

With all the things you need to do and accomplish aside from your writing, you really need to learn how to manage your time.

Your To-Do List

The first thing you should do is to get your 'to-do' list together. In the context of ghostwriting, this would be comprised of your current project or projects (if you have more than one ongoing).

The projects

List your projects on a clean sheet of paper. Make sure to leave some space between each entry for the individual steps for each project. Beside each project name, write its particular due date. It would be better if you arrange your projects according to urgency – the most urgent should be on top and the least urgent should be at the bottom.

The tasks

Once you have all your projects listed, go through each entry. Under every project, enumerate the steps necessary for completion. For instance, for a consumer insurance manual due 6 months from now, you should list down what you need to do to finish the project – say, read insurance books and literature; get updated on insurance news; interview insurance executives, risk assessors or actuaries, customers, government officials, a lawyer specializing in insurance claims, etc; and do the actual writing. Set a reasonable target date for each task.

The steps

After listing down particular tasks for each project, you should now further subdivide each task into small, tangible steps. For instance, the step “interview insurance executives” would have to be divided into sending a letter of introduction, calling for an appointment, confirming or following up on the appointment, buying a token of appreciation for the executive (if one is needed), etc. Each small step should also have a target date.

At the end of this “to-do list” exercise, you would have a greater grasp of what you need to accomplish when. This is the most important step to getting organized – knowing what needs doing and getting the timing right.

Your Calendar

After you have finished your comprehensive, per-project to-do list, you should now plot your specific steps, tasks and projects on your calendar. This way, you will know what you need to accomplish everyday just by looking at your calendar. You’ll know that as long as you keep to your calendar of activities, you will never miss a deadline or run out of time ever again.

Tread the Straight and Narrow

Finally, follow your schedule. If your calendar indicates that you have to do two things today, you should make sure to do them whatever the temptation to play hooky or do other things instead. Thanks to the previous to-do exercise, you know how crucial finishing each step on time is to the successful completion of your projects. This would motivate you to do what you need to do each day.

On the other hand, knowing exactly what needs to be done everyday enables you to plan your days properly. You can rise early one day and finish up everything on your calendar in the morning. In the afternoon, you can laze

around the pool, guilt-free, since you know you're not spending time you don't have.

Indeed, getting organized will help you finish your projects on time. More importantly, though, organizing your time will help you have some free time.

Chapter 4: Making a business plan

Making a Business Plan

As long as you don't have a clear plan through which you will accomplish your business goals – be it getting new clients, expanding your current operations or retaining your existing customers, you don't have a business. You only have a pipe dream. Ensure your freelance writing business by making a business plan.

What is a Business Plan?

A business person has goals or objectives – what is properly termed as a vision. If this vision is point C and your startup point is point A then, simply speaking, the business plan is the way through which you can get from point A to point C. That is, it is a map with clearly marked landmarks so you'll know exactly how to get to your vision.

Drawing the Map

Vision

The first thing you have to do is state your vision or the primary objective that the business plan will help you attain. What is your plan's purpose? Are you making a business plan to show clients or potential partners? Are you looking for investors in your business? Most likely, your business plan is your guide to expanding your business – that is, gaining clients for whom you can write.

What you are

Discuss what kind of services you will provide. Are you willing to write books and content from scratch or are you accepting only editing, polishing, rewriting, and polishing work? What kind of topics are you willing to write about? Are you offering a team of ghostwriting services or are you going at it alone? What do you need to start in terms of manpower and equipment?

State your qualifications to handle the service or services which you have decided to offer. It is very important that you be very definite about what you can and cannot offer at this point so that you don't waste your business resources later on looking for projects you can't competently handle.

The need for your business

After describing in great detail what you are and what you are willing to do and offer, provide justification for offering such a service or services. That is, your business plan should address the crucial question: is there a need for your

business? Present facts to support your claim that there is indeed a need for your business.

Your clients

After rationalizing the need for your ghostwriting services, you should now describe your target market. Who are the people who need your services? Your discussion on this part of your business plan will depend on what specific services you are offering.

If for instance you want to write articles about mortgage loans, you should list down your potential clients for such articles. These can be mortgage brokers who need content for their newsletters. These can be financial institutions and banks that need content for their website. These can be affiliate marketers who are promoting mortgage programs. List down every possibility, but don't stop there. After you have made a broad list of potential clients, you should trim your list down to your specific target market.

Your competition

After describing whose patronage you need, you need to look around for whom you need to replace or beat in your target clients' estimation. That is, find out who your competitors are for your target clients' business.

You should study your competition thoroughly. What are their services, their going rates, their competencies, and their weaknesses? What can give you an advantage over them and what can you do to compensate for their advantages over you?

Your strategies

Your business plan should also outline your strategies for getting your target clients' attention and business as well as beating out your competition. In other words, your business plan should clearly lay out your strategies for getting clients. Are you going to offer your services below market prices? Are you going to offer value added services? What are these extras? How will you catch your target clients' attention in the first place?

The Money

Finally, your business plan should talk about money. You should discuss how much starting up would cost. You should discuss how much you need to spend for your marketing strategies. More importantly, you should address where you're going to get your capital. You should also compute how many clients it would take for you to break even or how long your money will last before you have to give everything up.

The above are just the bare bones of a business plan. You can modify it to suit your particular situation. It doesn't really matter how long your business plan is or what form it takes. The important things are: one, you have a business plan and; two, it clearly guides your way to your desired business goal.

Chapter 5: Five strategies to find time to relax as a ghostwriter

It seems absurd to think of a ghostwriter as someone who needs to relax. After all, people hire them in order to get relaxation themselves. Even if they're known as 'ghostwriters,' however, they're also human so they also need some R&R.

So, absurd as it may be, ghostwriters really do need time to relax. The only problem is, there just isn't any time for it. The life of a ghostwriter primarily rotates on articles and deadlines. And as most of you may know, 'deadline' is a very appropriate synonym for 'stress.'

Ghostwriters also experience additional stress from deadlines because they need to have 'inspiration' in order to produce high-quality articles. This is an irony in itself, though, since being under duress greatly reduces a person's creative bent. It's a sick and never-ending cycle that only leads to diminished life spans.

But the thing is, finding time to relax is not impossible, even for a ghostwriter. It's actually quite easy if you know the secrets. Here are five ways to find time to relax as ghostwriter.

Invest in a Laptop

Laptops may seem like an unnecessary and impractical expense for most people, but the truth is that it actually has its own redeeming qualities. Perhaps the best thing about a laptop is that you can bring it anywhere. So, how does this portable quality help? Simple; you just work while you relax. While 'working' and 'relaxing' may seem contradictory, they can actually mix. Here's where all that portability comes in handy.

You can bring your laptop with you while you go on your vacation. Most hotels have their own wireless internet connection. Just imagine; you're sunbathing on the beach, sipping a martini, letting the sea breeze cool you while you write articles to earn money. The change in scenery will do wonders for you and your mind. It's a whole lot better than being cooped up in your office. It's the perfect way to relax.

Stress Balls

Relaxation is automatically equated to 'spending.' Do not be fooled by the pervasive commercial culture. You can actually relax for just a dollar.

Let go of some of your stress by buying your own stress ball. Stress balls practically absorb your stress. Just squeezing on them will help you release your stress. On top of that, stress balls also exercise your digits. Stress ball exercises would feel like heaven for your fingers after you've spent hours typing.

Comfortable Chairs

If you're a ghostwriter, chances are, you sit a lot. Invest in your chair because it's a vital part of your job. Just imagine how hard it would be to work if you're aching all over from that lumpy old chair of yours. Having a comfortable chair will not only help you relax; it will also increase your productivity.

Time Management

Another grossly overlooked task is time management. How often have you found yourself thinking that there's still a lot of time left so you can rest for a while – only to realize that time flies by too quickly and that there's only an hour before your deadline? Manage your time well; don't leave things off for later. Finish what you should finish then spend the rest of your time relaxing – completely and without worries. You can forgo worrying about deadlines if you've done your obligations early on.

Learn to Like your Work

The best thing to do, however, is to learn to love your work. If you love your work, you probably won't even feel the stress. And the next thing you know, your bank account's overflowing with cash. Then you can stop working for a while and splurge on a cruise. Sounds heavenly, doesn't it?

Part 2 Marketing

Chapter 6: 7 Ways to market-online

Many writers are good at their job but really hate to market. In order to be a successful ghostwriter you will need to get over this feeling and make it part of your business. Marketing is the lifeblood of your enterprise and you cannot progress without it. There are many simple and cost effective ways to promote your business.

Here are a few:

1. Website: You can build one or have it designed. This will showcase what you have to offer and include your free newsletter and include an article bank that has articles that visitors can reprint if they want.
2. Blog: You are a writer and can easily go to blogger.com and put short interesting little blogs every 1-2 days. These will link back to your site and bring in visitors and clients for your business.
3. Newsletter: Again as a writer this is no problem, you can easily write a small one article free newsletter on a monthly or bi monthly basis. You can put an ad in here to attract more clients to your service.
4. Articles to distribute: Again as a writer you can produce about 3-4 articles to distribute each month. The bio in these articles will link back to your website and gain more visitors and clients.
5. Submitting to the search engines. Optimize your site with keyword rich content and appropriate Meta tags and you will be able to submit it to the search engines. Make sure you keep adding content every week to keep your website fresh and interesting to visitors. The main 3 search engines are Google, Yahoo and MSN.
6. Linking: you can create back links for your website by article distribution and providing good resources on your website for other web masters to link into. This will increase your ranking with Google.
7. Google AdSense and Pay-Per-Click: you can get highly targeted and cheap traffic from this advertising source. The important thing to remember with this promotion is that not all PPC engines are effective. Google Adwords is very effective but read their tutorials carefully and choose your keywords well before you start.

As you see these promotions are not hard to do and as a writer you have the skills to carry them out successfully. All these promotions will build up traffic and potential clients over time to allow your business to grow and expand without you spending a lot of money and time on marketing. this will allow you to spend time on what you really like doing, ghostwriting.

Chapter 7: 5 tips to help you with Website promotion

Website promotion is one of the easiest and cost effective ways to promote your business. Your website is your virtual storefront and will tell the visitor exactly who you are and how your service can help them. It is important to know a few tips to build and promote your website correctly.

1. **Make a professional design:** it is very important to make a professional design for your website. If you are selling anything, especially a service it is important to be sure your website gives your visitors a good impression about you and your business. In this way you will build credibility in your potential client's eyes and be able to do more business.
2. **Make it uniquely you:** Your website should be unique. Try to use your own ideas and certainly your own original content to brand your website. The more unique and interesting your website is the better your visitors and the search engines will like it. You will also build a website that people will remember and recommend to others. Word of mouth or viral marketing is a very powerful form of promotion that will not cost you anything.
3. **Optimize it:** Be sure that you optimize your website so that you can submit to the search engines and build up a steady stream of visitors, who are interested in your service. Write optimized, keyword rich content and put Meta tags in your website HTML.
4. **Choose the correct domain name.** Your domain name is very important. It should contain 1-2 main keywords or a related key phrase as part of the name. This will help you in 2 ways. One your website will be indexed better by the search engines. Secondly your visitors will know immediately what you are offering them. Your domain name should be short and memorable so that visitors will have no difficulty in returning and telling others about your site.
5. **Update your website and add content on a regular basis.** In order to keep a good page rank and attract as many visitors as possible try to keep your content updated and remember to add some to your site on a regular basis. One of the biggest mistakes web site owners do is to build a great website and then let it gather cyber dust.

With these 5 tips you can promote your business by website promotion and bring many highly targeted visitors to your site. This in turn will lead to increased amounts of business.

Chapter 8: How to Add Value to Your Work as a Ghostwriter

As a ghostwriter, you write and you get paid. It's as simple as that, right? No, it's not. You also need to find projects, find new clients and retain existing clients. To accomplish all these things (especially the last part) you should know how to add value to your work. If you don't, you'll be like just any other ghostwriter – good, but not exceptional. Your clients can just as easily get what services you provide with other ghostwriters. You're nothing special, so you're not something to inspire loyalty in your clients.

If you leave this kind of impression to your clients – you're doomed. You may not run out of clients, but you'll spend a lot of time scrounging up new ones. You'll never have time to plan your business' expansion and improvement when you're always worried about your next source of income.

To differentiate yourself from other ghostwriters and to keep your clients, you should add something extra to your work – an extra value that only you can provide your clients. Here are a few suggestions.

Perfect Output

Quality is something that you should always ensure when you are a ghostwriter. Your articles should always be perfectly constructed. Your content must always be on point. You must not have a single typo mistake, a single grammatical blunder and single syntax error. Your output must always be unique, brilliant and original. You must guarantee perfection, in other words.

Some ghostwriters will say that perfection is not attainable. They are not telling the truth. They must have not given their articles or finished output a second and a third glance. They must not have asked an uninterested party to look the article over to check for errors that they were simply too involved to see.

If you can guarantee perfect quality in your outputs, then you'd be very successful in differentiating yourself from the rest of the ghostwriting pack. You'd have extra value to lure clients back to you.

Perfect Timing

Perfect timing is the perfect complement to perfect output. Plainly speaking, you should always submit your work on time. Freelance writers are independent contractors and as such, your clients have not much control over the way you do your job. However, your clients do expect you to pass your output on the day you agreed to do so.

There are a lot of things that can get you behind on your work – family commitments, other jobs, sickness, etc. However valid these are, these will not excuse you from being late on your promised deadline. It would have been better had you declined the project or negotiated the deadline when the project was first awarded to you rather than pass later than promised.

Submitting on time, always, will definitely give you a unique value that other writers will not find very easy to attain and match.

Unlimited Revision Guarantees

This may be a bit costly in terms of time and effort – but this would definitely make you a valued writer. If you promise your clients an unlimited number of revisions until they're satisfied, then you will be able to win and keep a lot of clients.

Originality Checking

You can also save clients some work by doing your own originality checking on your content. Yes, you know your work is original, but it still wouldn't hurt to check your work using a trustworthy originality-checking program. This would ensure that there's been no inadvertent copying. If you outsource to providers, this step is especially crucial to keeping your clients' trust. Use CopyScape to check for originality. It's one of the best ways to check for plagiarism: <http://www.copyscape.com>

The above are just some of the best ways through which you can become a truly valuable ghostwriter. There are a lot more ways besides these. Keep your eyes open for opportunities to add value to your work as a ghostwriter, and you'll soon be inundated with more work than you can handle.

Chapter 9: Promoting yourself

You know that you're an exceptionally intelligent and witty human being who can produce miracles with the written word. However, your clients don't know any such thing, and it's what clients know that matter. Clients may also be too busy to do a background research on you. Thus, your first step should be to let your target clients know what you are capable of and give them what they need to know. You should promote yourself.

Resume or Business Proposal

To accomplish this, you should prepare a resume that you will use to drum up business. This resume is not the usual resume that you use when applying for a regular job. It should be in paragraph form – just like a cover letter. However it also should have the look of a business proposal. This resume or proposal will be used whenever you are bidding for a project or prospecting for clients in any other way.

In your resume, you should be frank about your capabilities and accomplishments. It is true that humility has its rewards, but in this case, it's not going to help you. State what you know to be true; give yourself what's due you.

However, don't be abrasively boastful. Clients don't like arrogant writers, either. Thus in your proposal, do not use unnecessary embellishments and incredible statements. Nor should you make any derogatory comments about your competition. Just state your accomplishments in a matter of fact way. Connect these accomplishments to what you can do for the client. Then give supporting statements to your assertions.

Sample Work or Portfolio

If you have done the previous step correctly, then you must have been able to rouse your target clients' interest. In some cases, that would be enough to land you projects. In most cases, however, a client whose interest you have piqued is not going to give you the project unless he's convinced that you're perfect for it. To this end, you should prepare a portfolio of your sample work for the client to peruse.

Each of the writing samples in your portfolio should be excellently written and you should have a sample for every one of your niche topics. For instance, if your interests are technology and finance, then each of these two topics must be well-represented in your writing portfolio. Moreover, if you're claiming that you're capable of ghostwriting books, articles, press releases, sales copy, student essays, and other types of content, you should be willing to prove this by proving a sample for each format you say you're good at.

It would be to your advantage if your writing samples are all published materials. That is, they should have been used in newsletters, magazines, websites, or wherever. This will simply tell prospective clients that your writing is good enough for publication.

However, do not use content which you have written for another client in your writing portfolio – unless you have a letter from said past client saying that you are permitted to use such content for self promotion. It is grossly unethical to use content which you have ghostwritten to promote yourself since you're not the copyright owner of such content. What you should do instead is use content which you were able to publish under your own name.

Testimonials

Finally, you should have ready testimonials from past clients. These are the ultimate proof of your capabilities as a writer. What you should do is request that your clients give you a review after every project's completion. Compile your testimonials in a single page of your website. Don't forget to include your clients' names and contact information (with their permission, of course) to facilitate verification.

Chapter 10: Analyzing your most wanted customers

Analyzing Your Most Wanted Customers

As with any other business, being in the ghostwriting business means that you have to constantly analyze your customers and tag the best ones. Fail to do this and you just might find yourself swamped with unwanted work, unpaid projects and looming project deadlines.

To analyze your most wanted customers, you have to have a clear idea on what you want and what you need for your business. This means that you need to have clear goals, clear targets and clear parameters on what you expect from your business and what you need to do in order to achieve it.

Why Do You Need to Analyze Your Best Customers?

The ability to pinpoint which among your customers are your best customers gives you one very important piece of information. It gives you a definite idea on who among your clients are more important than others.

This may seem quite obvious. However, a formal analysis is still required so that you'll be acting on facts and not mere suppositions. Thus, you'll not make wrong decisions. You'll know exactly who among your customers you need to pamper and who among them you can afford to say no to when needed. Given multiple project deadlines, this information will also give you the means to prioritize your schedule. This way, your business will not be greatly affected in case some projects do get delayed; you know that preferred clients always get their output on time so you'll retain your biggest clients.

Knowing your best customers also gives you the ability to control the direction of your business. Through this tack, you can ensure the satisfaction of those customers who can help you a lot in the future. Simply speaking, your best customers will be able to refer your services to other great customers. Thus, if you've tagged customers that pay promptly as your best customers, they will probably refer your business to those who do the same. If your best customers are those that require write ups for a specific field you're interested in or good at, they can refer you to those needing the same services.

Having an idea who your best customers are also forces you to pay more attention to their needs and anticipate problems or other needs that they might have in the future. This means that you can position yourself so that you will be more valuable to them in the future. Moreover, this will also give you an idea on where to branch out later on.

Who Are Your Most Wanted Customers?

After learning how important it is to analyze your most wanted customers, you must now proceed to identify which among your clients fit the description. Of course, the most wanted customers vary from writer to writer.

If you're a writer who prioritizes growth, your best customers may be those who have the biggest clout or influence in your business. This may include publishers of well known magazines, webmasters of popular sites or popular authors. You might not get much freedom to choose what you're going to specialize in, but having such customers gives you the best chance of finding high-paying customers and important projects.

Some ghostwriters, on the other hand, have low tolerance for taking risks especially when they are still quite new to the business. Thus, they place higher emphasis on security rather than growth. In this scenario, the best customers are middlemen or ghostwriters who have direct contact to publishers. Such middlemen are not big spenders but they usually pay on time.

For some ghostwriters, however, the best customers are those that can offer projects in their field of interest or specialization. Such writers value new information that they learn about their own field; such updates may be applied to their regular jobs. On the other hand, some belong to this category because they simply find these projects easy to handle.

Chapter 11: Finding your customers

For most ghostwriters, especially the ones new to the field, this is one of the greatest hurdles they have to overcome. No matter how extensive their writing skills, no matter how extensive their qualifications, they will not be able to find new clients if they know not one whit about marketing. So how do you let the right people know that you exist?

Bidding Sites

For the newbie, the bidding sites are probably the first ones to show up in the search engines. This can be expected, as bidding sites are where most writing projects are posted and where most clients actively looking for writers can be found. The advantage of bidding sites for the newbie is the availability of escrow services that can at least give them the peace of mind when it comes to being paid.

However, bidding sites rarely offer high rates for projects; this is due to the fact that most of the project creators (the clients in bidding sites) are usually middlemen and not the actual publishers, authors, or webmasters themselves. Regardless of this, bidding sites offer newcomers a chance to start earning with considerably less risk. Bidding sites also offers newcomers an opportunity to build their reputation through the feedback or review system.

Websites and Search Engines

You may also come across several websites offering ghostwriting jobs. Most of these websites are owned by companies that offer ghostwriting services themselves. The rates that they offer are usually higher than those offered at the bidding sites. Moreover, you'll have relatively regular work when you land a position as a ghostwriter with ghostwriting services. Thus, you can expect more or less regular income.

Ghostwriting companies, however, will not be able to help you much with increasing your visibility to big clients and boosting your credibility. Be careful with this option, too, for you will not have the security of having an escrow for payments. Thus, be sure to check out the credibility of the site first.

Forums

There are many forums that are looking for writers. Go to a forum that has the same niche as you have. Participate in the forum, make posts and help others in the forum. Leave a signature in every post of yours that you offer writing

services. You'll be surprised how many people will contact you for writing jobs, if you have been providing helpful posts.

Sell Articles

Many writers did this to gather their initial list of customers. Go to forums.digitalpoint.com, go to the sub-forum: "Content". Write a set of 10 articles; offer to sell them for a low price like \$15 to \$20. You'll generate a list of interest that wants to buy your articles. Offer a set of articles once every 2-3 days, you should be able to make some sales and gather some clients who may be interested in hiring you again.

Passive Marketing

Ghostwriters who are really determined to make this venture into a full time business usually invest time in creating a passive marketing program. Through a passive marketing program, ghostwriters can make themselves visible to their target clients. Here are some ways for you to be "passively visible."

Article Directories: Article directories are perhaps one of the most popular ways of marketing ghostwriting services online. This is mainly because these sites attract a lot of people and have high rankings in the search engines.

Blogs: Blog marketing is also another popular form of marketing. In fact, some major companies have already incorporated this marketing method into their programs. With blog marketing, you can easily update your entries, add new ones and lay-out your pages for maximum effect.

Website: Of course, you can also create your own website to market your services. This may take some time, effort or money as websites are more complicated than blogs. With websites however, you can integrate and use a lot of other functions such as a newsletters, traffic statistics, membership, etc. making it a lot more appealing to your target costumers.

Part 3 Expanding your business

Chapter 12: Retaining customers

After overcoming the initial difficulties in setting up a ghostwriting business, retaining the important customers is probably one of the challenges that you will have to face. After all, the number of good and high paying customers is not limitless and continuously adjusting to the particular needs and specifications of new clients can be very stressful.

Retaining Your Best Customers

Continuous Improvement: Sometimes the inability to retain some of your best customers is not because of any fault on your part. Once a project is over, a customer may simply have no other projects to give you.

You can avoid this situation to a certain degree by continuously improving your abilities and learning new things. This will increase the range of services that you can offer. For example, if you usually write articles about marketing, you can read and learn about related topics such as sales, customer service and advertising. This way, your customer wouldn't have to look for another writer when he has a new project on a different topic.

Ensuring Maximum Usability of Articles: Knowing the exact purpose of the articles assigned to you will also help you make yourself more valuable to your customer.

For example, the client may have mentioned that the articles will be used to market a certain site or to improve the site's ranking in the search engine. You can then help your client achieve his goal by submitting not only a quality write-up but also one that is appealing to search engines; you can perhaps optimize the articles by using relevant keywords. For articles that will become a part of e-books, you can also make sure to make the articles very interesting and informative.

Having the ability to write articles that can generate your clients' desired results will definitely make you a very valuable writer.

Adherence to Deadlines: Keeping your word when it comes to deadlines is also a very big factor in increasing your worth as a writer. Not meeting your deadlines can have very disastrous effects on your clients' business. By letting your client know that you are a dependable writer who knows how to keep his or her word, you sometimes gain an edge over some writers who may be better than you, technique-wise, but cannot be trusted when it comes to beating deadlines.

Flexibility in Writing Style: Your customers can also have several projects requiring different writing styles. Depending upon the type of book, the purpose of the article and the target audience, having a flexible writing style can also give you an edge over the other writers as well as make you more attractive to clients.

Honesty and Originality: One thing that takes time to build and greatly helps your business in the long run will be your honesty and reliability. This is manifested not just by making the deadlines but through making original articles as well. Plagiarism has a very negative impact on any individual and can lead to monetary loss, loss of credibility and sometimes loss of a site.

Chapter 13: Expanding services

Expanding the services that you can offer as a ghostwriter can make you a more attractive option to customers. It also gives you more opportunities to earn money as a freelancer; this can make your venture a lot more profitable. If you're interested in making such a move and expanding the range of services that you can offer your clients, check out the following alternatives.

SEO Ghostwriter

Perhaps one of the easiest upgrades you can give yourself as a ghostwriter is becoming an SEO ghostwriter. Simply put, an SEO writer is a writer who keeps an eye out on the attractiveness of a certain content to search engine spiders. Search engine optimized articles are very useful for raising a website's search engine rankings. To optimize articles for search engine spiders, you must learn to include in your articles certain keywords that are relevant to the particular article which you are writing about.

Topic-Wise Service Expansion

You can also expand your business by expanding the range of topics that you can offer your services on. This may mean learning new things as you go along but this will greatly increase your competitiveness among other writers. An example of a topic-wise service expansion is adding software topics to your field of expertise when, previously, you accepted only computer and technology topics. This move may involve some intensive research on your part, but to your potential customers it would seem very natural that you expand into this field. To them, computers, technology and software are three closely related topics.

On this note, remember one thing. Topic-wise expansion should be done systematically and gradually. Expand to related topics; jumping quickly from one field to another seemingly unrelated field (i.e. making a jump from computers to financial matters) may confuse your potential customers and decrease your credibility as an expert on one field. If you have taken courses for this purpose, be sure to include a copy of your certificate or the details in your online resume.

Medium-Wise Service Expansion

Medium wise service expansion involves learning to adapt your writing style to other media formats such as blogs, newsletters, Ebooks, magazines, newspapers, etc. Each medium has a different way of imparting information.

Blogs, for example, need content that are not only informative but entertaining as well. Blogs usually call for a rather informal writing style. On the other hand, newspaper or newsletter content needs to be a bit more formal in style.

Medium-wise service expansion gives you the opportunity to increase the potential amount that you can earn in a specific time-frame. The earning potential of each medium differs vastly from one another. Books may give you the highest earning potential, followed by e-books, magazine content, blogs, newsletter articles, and so on.

On the other hand, you can start with ghostwriting and carefully ease your way into the publishing business and slowly acquire your own name and fame. In this case, you should accept jobs where you will be acknowledged as a collaborator by the author. You can also request references from authors you have worked with and for, so you will be able to build your credibility and gain the attention of a publisher.

Chapter 14: Outsourcing – How to Find Good Providers

If you have worked hard on being a really good ghostwriter and has taken steps to market your services, chances are you will be getting more referrals and business than you can handle yourself. One way that this could benefit you is the increase in rates that you can expect for your excellent services.

Of course, even if you increase your rates, there is still a limit on how much you can earn from this business. After all, there are only 24 hours in one day and there are other things you have to do besides sit in front of your computer and pound away on the keys of your keyboard.

Outsourcing Pros and Cons

Outsourcing some of the extra work is definitely an attractive option for those ghostwriters who have reached this point in their business. For one, by outsourcing, you will have another source of income without stretching yourself to the limit. Secondly, you'll have a lot more clients to choose from as you don't have to stop looking for new customers after you have reached your limit.

Outsourcing however has its own disadvantages – and some can be quite disastrous for your business. Perhaps the greatest of these disadvantages is the fact that you'll be ultimately responsible for the work of your people. What if one of your writers has plagiarized another writer's work? This can have a significant adverse effect on your credibility. This can also lead to monetary loss on your part.

One way to avoid this is to proofread, edit and check the originality of every article that you pass on to your providers. Another way is to carefully screen your writers and protect yourself by letting them sign some legal documents before letting them join your team. Other problems that may arise are adherence to deadlines, quality control and monetary risks.

In any case, outsourcing projects and handling other people involve skills that are far beyond writing, so don't venture in this unprepared. Here are some tips to finding the right people to outsource your extra projects to.

Website and Blogs

Browsing websites and blogs for good writers is a great way to find possible candidates for project outsourcing. From his blog or website, you can immediately assess the candidate's writing skills, style and strengths. This means that you won't have to spend as much time screening possible writers for your team.

Article Directories

Article directories also provide the same advantages as those mentioned above. Moreover, you may save some time looking for possible writers here because of the fact that a lot of writers can be found within one site. Also, some article directories screen the articles they accept. This will save you some time from having to browse through every article just to see if one writer qualifies.

Social Networking Sites

Social networking sites offer the advantage of having a database where you can search for possible candidates using search fields such as interests, current jobs, location and many others. Here, you can immediately limit your searches to people who have the attributes that you are looking for in your writers.

Of course, you can also try looking for other possible writers through posting ads at your local university, bidding sites, etc. One thing you are sure to notice in the process is that you'll basically be looking for people who have done what you have when you were still marketing your services. Happy Hunting!

Chapter 15: Pitfalls to avoid

Pitfalls to Avoid

Freelance writing is an exciting way to earn money. You dictate your own time, you drum up your own clients and you have ultimate control over your work. You can earn as much money as you want to earn as long as you have the stamina and the discipline to stick to your working schedule.

Just as there was a snake in paradise, however, there are inherent pitfalls in ghostwriting. These pitfalls are scary, but you need not let them stop you from venturing into freelance writing. Read about some of these pitfalls so you will know what you need to avoid.

Clients Who Don't Pay

The most grievous pitfall in ghostwriting is working for a client who does not pay. As much as you like to work only for clients with whom you have had personal dealings or for clients who come highly recommended by your friends, you cannot always do so. What happens when your regular clients have no project to give you? In that case, you may have to work for other clients; if you don't, you would lose potential income.

Unfortunately, new clients represent great risks. After all, you don't know whether they are reliable or not. You don't know whether they will pay you what they owe you or vanish after they got what they have asked you to write.

There are also clients that have an ingenious way of cheating ghostwriters. Sometimes, they will ask multiple writers to bid for a certain project that they have and ask each individual writer to write a sample for him. After all the samples are in, the client quietly disappears, defrauding the poor writers of their written samples. Then, the client will make simple revisions to the content – or ask another writer to revise them, thereby paying a much lower amount than he would have paid for original content.

Biting Off More than You Can Chew

As much as you like to accept more work so you can gain more clients and earn a bigger income, you should not do this. One of the major pitfalls you must avoid in ghostwriting is taking on more work than you can actually manage.

Biting off more than you can chew can take two major forms in the ghostwriting business. The first one is accepting more projects or rush work than you can actually manage to finish on time, and accepting projects which you or your

independent contractors don't really know anything about. In either case, you will disappoint your clients and ruin your good image.

Under-Pricing then Getting Stuck

Since you may be relatively unknown in the ghostwriting industry, you may yield to the temptation of cutting your normal rates and offering your services at an extremely low price. This is fine. What's not fine, however, is getting stuck at these low rates.

Unfortunately some writers do get stuck at very low rates. They sometimes keep on accepting projects from their regular clients – at least they're sure that these clients pay. Since such clients regularly supply them with work, they run out of free time during which they can look for alternative projects and new clients who can give them better rates. For fear of offending and driving away existing clients, moreover, such writers also refrain from negotiating their current rates.

Chapter 16: Easy Ways For Making Money as a Ghost Writer

You may simply enjoy writing. Perhaps, you need to keep “flexing your writing muscles” so you don’t lose them altogether. Perhaps, you simply want the satisfaction of seeing your work published, regardless of who receives the credit. These may be just some of your reasons for venturing into ghostwriting.

Admit it though. Greenbacks also played a big part in your decision to become a ghostwriter – you’re also in it for the money. So how exactly can you make ghostwriting profitable?

1. Royalty versus Upfront Fee

If you’re a startup, you’re unlikely to be given this choice. However, do keep this in mind if you are planning on becoming a big-name ghostwriter someday. Ghostwriters who are in high demand can insist on royalties rather than an upfront payment for their work.

Demanding royalties instead of a one-time payment would give you a secure source of income for a long time to come. Some clients can give you royalty payments from 25 to 50 percent of the published materials’ sales receipts. If you are going to try this payment scheme, be sure to get a good lawyer to assist you in your ghostwriting contract.

Asking for a royalty interest is not always a wise move, however. It’s only worth doing if you’re writing for a highly marketable author or a celebrity writer. Otherwise, you would do better to ask for an upfront payment.

2. Referral Fees

After gaining a reputable name in the industry of ghostwriting, you can activate another income stream through referrals. What you will do is get a pool of good ghostwriters together and give them projects which you can’t handle yourself. In exchange for doing this, you can collect a small referral fee from your writers.

Be careful about rushing into this, though. You don’t want to ruin your good name over an incompetent writer in your writing pool. You should therefore carefully screen the writers to whom you’ll be outsourcing. If you have the time or resources, you should also try to oversee the quality of your writing pool’s output. Furthermore, you should not forget to obtain your clients’ consent before passing off projects to other writers in your network.

3. Set Up a Private Label Content Database

This is another good way to earn a regular income from ghostwriting. What you should do is write a lot of articles on your niche topic; collect these articles in a secure database; then sell memberships to your private label rights site or sell article packages.

Private label rights content or articles are quality articles that are available only to members. Usage guidelines permit the members to make changes to the articles as well as use them in any way they deem fit.

Setting up a private label rights content site will give you a regular income stream from membership fees. You may also earn money from per-article fees (if membership fees don't come with free articles). Though you are charging a significantly low amount per article in this scheme, the cumulative per-article fees from your hundreds of site members can conceivably make ghostwriting even more lucrative.

Chapter 17: 7 Tactics To Become a Better Writer

In a world where men like Shakespeare and Dickens might just have easily fallen into the category of 'fan fiction writers.' It is not enough to just be 'good.' One must be 'great' in order to rise above the stifling confines of mediocrity.

Being great is such a tough challenge, though, that sometimes things seem a bit too hopeless. There is always hope, however. The following are seven steps to becoming a better writer.

Practice, Practice, Practice

Clichéd as this may sound, practice really does make perfect. You may start out as a good writer, always having top marks in your English classes but really, there is such a thing as wasting. Talents are like iron gates which rust and become creaky with disuse. Hone your talents by using it more often. Keep a journal or a diary so that no day goes by without you practicing your writing.

Don't Stop Learning

It's annoying but here's another cliché: Learning is a life-long process. And indeed, learning doesn't have to stop the moment you receive that college diploma. The mind, like your stomach, must be fed continually or it will become emaciated. Depriving it of new information is like depriving yourself of food.

Reading is a perfect way to nourish your mind. It provides you with new material to write about. And you know what they say; a good writer is a good reader.

Learn to Accept Criticism

All the best writers know how to accept criticism. While it may be painful to hear about all your flaws, if you just learn to take things positively, then you could use criticisms to your advantage.

Look for people who know how to give constructive criticism and learn from them. Don't take criticism negatively. If someone tells you that your work needs improvement, it probably does. Ask him to explain further and you might just find out which areas you need to work on. Of course, along with accepting criticism comes accepting praise. Everybody loves a humble writer, but false humility is also off putting.

Be Patient

Of course, you can't expect to become a prodigy after just a few tries. Be patient and let your mind work at a pace you're comfortable with. Don't push yourself

too hard. Remember that forced compositions are usually of low quality. Thus, if you can avoid rushing through your writing projects, then please do so.

Find Inspiration

Great work usually results from inspired moments. However, inspiration may be a little hard to come by. While others may say that inspiration will just 'come to you,' this is not entirely true.

If you need inspiration, don't confine yourself to your house or your office. Go out and see the world; it just might bring you the inspiration you need. Your mind needs stimuli to get stimulated.

Be Dynamic

Don't just write about one topic. Be dynamic; be diverse. People have different strengths. In philosophy, it would be called Arete. In order to find your arête or excellence, you have to explore a bit. Who knows, you might be writing romance right now when your forte is actually writing science fiction. If you find your particular strength, you will definitely be at your best.

Believe in Yourself

If you have poor self esteem, chances are, you won't be able to get a word out. Believing in yourself is a must if you want to be a good writer. Be confident; however, never forget that there's always room for improvement.

Chapter 18: 7 Steps To Help You Write a Better Article

For your articles to sell, they actually need to be good. Nonetheless, writing an article that actually draws people's attention can be inexplicably hard sometimes. Writing doesn't have to be as hard as rocket science, however. You can actually write with ease and still come out with decent-quality articles. Here are seven tactics to help you write a better article:

Spelling and Grammar

Always keep in mind that people will read your articles because they believe that you're an authority on the matter you're discoursing on. While it may be shallow to judge the content of an article based on a few grammatical errors and a few wrong spellings, people still do it.

It's infuriating but true; people judge the worth of your articles based on spelling and grammar. Face it, a person who can spell and speak right is a lot more credible than the person who can't.

An article about the cure for cancer may be excellently researched, but the moment the readers find a sentence that goes like "*The cur for canser is...*" the credibility of the author would just go flying out the window – and all that genius writing will just go to waste. The author would also have to suffer through snickers and taunts instead of well-deserved applause.

Checking your output's spelling and grammar might cost you a bit more effort but the results will certainly be worth it. Grab a grammar book and study it. Also, type your articles in a program that has an auto-correct feature. Avoid all those shortcuts for common words like "bcoz", "u", "juz", and "fyn." Not only will they give your articles an unprofessional look, they're also very annoying.

Layout

An article should have a good layout in order for it to be a 'good read'. Divide your article into three parts: the introduction, the body, and the conclusion. The introduction should be geared into gaining your readers' interest and introducing the topic. To catch your readers' attention, the first sentence should be catchy. You can start with a question, an interesting phrase or an anecdote.

The body is the part where the readers' interest should be justified. This is the part which contains the 'meat' of the article. The conclusion is the part which, as its name implies, closes the article. You can actually end the article in a number of ways. You can end it the same way you started it; this will 'round up' the article. You could also end with a summary of your article.

Coherence

An article's contents shouldn't be all over the place. It should be concise and coherent. It is important to know what you're talking about when you write an article. Stick to your topic. It's unwise to talk about Giant Pandas when you're supposed to be talking about the Pyramids – unless you can ingeniously connect the two of them.

Tone

Know why you're writing the article. Sometimes, using a formal tone is appropriate but there are also times when the informal tone is more interesting.

Style

When you're done with the basics, polish your style. If your writing style is interesting enough, people are more likely to read your whole article.

Headings

Use headings and sub-headings to make things easier to locate and your articles easy to browse over and understand.

People read articles because they're trying to look for something. Headings will make it easier for your readers to skim through your work. Articles with no headings are often overlooked even if they have the information the reader was looking for in the first place.

The Secret

One thing that you have to remember is that you don't have to be Shakespeare in order to write well. Thus, if your articles come out looking a bit crappy from time to time, don't worry. The most important thing to keep in mind is that there's always room for improvement. Who knows, if you practice enough, you just might become Shakespeare's modern-day equivalent.

Never lose hope and always believe in yourself. This is the surefire way to write better articles.

Chapter 19: Insider Secrets to Speed Writing

One of the limiting factors of ghostwriting when it comes to earning money is your writing speed. It is a fact; slow writers earn less and thus some people drop out of the race mainly because they will not be able to earn enough on a monthly basis. However, ghostwriters who persevere inevitably find a way to make writing a lot faster. They usually stumble on some techniques or ways to cut down the time needed to finish their work. Here are some of these techniques.

The Thinking Stage

Skip the Intro: For most writers, the thinking stage is the most difficult stage in writing. Ever noticed that it is almost always harder to write the first paragraph than the succeeding ones? One way to go around this problem is to literally go around the intro. Skip the intro entirely and write the body of the article first. More often than not, the natural introduction or opening paragraph will come to you after you have written the rest of the article.

Use an Outline: Using an outline is a great way not just to keep your article on the right direction but to lessen the time you spend thinking after every paragraph about what to write next. Write down the key points that you need or want to discuss in the article and you will find it easier to fill in the gaps.

Research: Researching on the topic before you actually write an article usually helps decrease the time you need to finish it. While you are doing your research, you will gain some ideas on how to structure your article and what key points to discuss. Moreover, you may also learn some things or remember some facts that you can add to your work later on.

The Typing Stage

The typing stage may also offer some ways to increase your writing speed. Using several tools available in your operating system – more importantly in your word processing program – you can speed up your writing to earn more.

Test Shortcuts and Auto Correct Function: Shortcuts and the auto-correct function will help a lot especially if you are comfortable using these tools. With keyboard shortcuts, you can easily cut and paste texts on your screen, save your file, make some changes in your article format, and many others. With the auto-correct function, you can automatically input long words or frequently used words just by typing some letters like 'esp' for especially, 'imp' for important, etc. This may take some getting used to at first, but it will definitely be to your advantage if you start learning to use this function.

Typing Programs: Typing programs works much like the autocorrect function. The only difference in using these programs is that you won't need to set it up before you can use it. Although this may mean that you cannot customize your shortcuts, it also means that you won't have to spend many hours setting it up. It can also be easily reinstalled in case you have your computer reformatted.