



**The One With Brian Kurtz and
a \$100 MILLION DOLLAR Swipe File**

Episode #252

Ray: Episode 252 of the Ray Edwards Show. An interview with Brian Kurtz and thoughts for your thoughts. We have decided to do our podcast as if it were an NPR radio show.

Speaker 1: Exactly.

Ray: We're going to try to emulate the mood--

Speaker 1: And the feel--

Ray: And the energy level of NPR.

Speaker 1: I hope this makes you very excited.

Ray: And very very sleepy.

Speaker 1: I hope you're not listening to this while driving to work.

Ray: Please do not listen while operating machinery. Check with your doctor before listening to this sedative.

Speaker 1: See if you're healthy enough.

Ray: I just cannot do this.

Speaker 1: [laughs]

Ray: I cannot. I can't do it. I love NPR and I love that bit on *Saturday Night Live* even more.

Speaker 1: Yes.

Ray: We won't go into the whole Alec Baldwin bit because it's totally inappropriate.

Speaker 1: Totally inappropriate and then there's the actual thoughts for your thoughts on-

Ray: There is that.

Speaker 1: - Parks and Rec.

Ray: Parks and Rec, Leslie Knope for president.

Speaker 1: Yes. There you go.

Ray: Would you vote for her?

Speaker 1: I don't know. Maybe.

Ray: Ron Swanson.

Speaker 1: Yes.

Ray: Totally.

Speaker 1: Totally. [laughs]

Ray: Any man who hides bacon in his ceiling has my vote.

Speaker 1: Or gives land mines to children to guard their private property. [laughs]

Ray: Oh, Ron Swanson. All right. This week's episode is going to be an interview with veteran direct marketing expert, Brian Kurtz. He has a new book out. We'll talk about that. He's the former leader of Boardroom, Inc. and we'll talk more about that too. If you don't know what that means, it means he is a big deal.

Speaker 1: Bigger than Ron--

Ray: Ron Burgundy.

Speaker 1: Yes. Ron Burgundy or Ron Swanson.

Ray: [crosstalk] Ron Swanson.

Speaker 1: [laughs]

Ray: Either way. Tip of the week. We should explain that last week we did this and we're doing it again this week. We're not using the music or the jingle or any of the fancy production elements.

Speaker 1: Right.

Ray: Just this minimalist experiment. We're actually waiting to see if people complain or if they say, "Thank goodness you got rid of all that flash and dash."

Speaker 1: Yes.

Ray: But I think we'll be back with the jingle next week. Pretty sure.

Speaker 1: People do like the jingle.

Ray: They do. I've been told by certain people that they will stop listening if I stop using the jingle.

Speaker 1: Whoa. Well, that tells you where they find the value?

Ray: In the jingle.

Speaker 1: [laughs]

Ray: I could just play the jingle once a week and put it up on iTunes.

Speaker 1: A lot of people would just be happy with that.

Ray: Call it good.

Speaker 1: [laughs]

Ray: You could just make it a ringtone.

Speaker 1: There you go.

Ray: In fact, I would like for everybody please to make my jingle a ringtone.

Speaker 1: We should make it available for people to make it a ringtone.

Ray: Let's figure out how to do that.

Speaker 1: [laughs]

Ray: Let's move on to the tip of the week.

Speaker 1: Tip of the week. This week, the tip of the week is an app called WhatSize.

Ray: What?

Speaker 1: Called WhatSize, it's one word. I downloaded it. It used to be freeware way back in the day, way back in the day. I remember it back when I was in college.

Ray: What is this freeware of which you speak?

Speaker 1: Yes. It's software that was free.

Ray: Really?

Speaker 1: Yes, but that's becoming more and more of a--

Ray: Thing of the past.

Speaker 1: - thing of the past. Which is a good thing for developers and small-time developers.

Ray: That's true because you can make a little program, a little app and make a little bit of money.

Speaker 1: Yes, exactly. Get compensated for it. I'm all about value for value trade.

Ray: That is like capitalism.

Speaker 1: It is like capitalism and giving it a way is like socialism.

Ray: Just something to think about.

Speaker 1: Just something to think about.

Ray: Thoughts for your thoughts.

Speaker 1: Thoughts for-- WhatSize.

Ray: Yes.

Speaker 1: WhatSize is a great app that I did. I paid the 15-- No, I think it was 30 bucks. I paid the 30 bucks for it and what it does is it-- it doesn't take very long. I have 500 gigabyte hard drive and it scans your hard drive and it tells you, it scans all the hidden files, caches, and everything and it tells you where all of your space went, basically on your hard drive.

Ray: Does the typical user have hidden files on their computer?

Speaker 1: Yes. Lots.

Ray: What kinds of files are hidden?

Speaker 1: There are just a lot of different preference files and caches. In one area I found 40 gigs of Adobe cache files and I googled them and as long my Google information was correct, it came from an Adobe forum, so I'm hoping it is correct.

Ray: It must be.

Speaker 1: It must be. I Googled the file name and other people were asking, "Hey, I just found this thing using this hard drive scanner and it's like 50, 60 gigs." Basically, you can just delete those and if your Adobe program needs them again, it will just recreate them.

Ray: Really?

Speaker 1: Yes. I instantly cleared up 40 gigs because this thing showed me where those were.

Ray: Wow.

Speaker 1: It could show you where all of the spaces, so I'm like, "Oh my gosh. I had no idea that folder had that much stuff in it." You can drill down into it and you can find it. Over the course of about 30 minutes, from old files and then moving files I don't need anymore, but I forgot where on my hard drive, where I needed to hold off, so I transferred a bunch of them to an external drive and then I deleted a bunch of other stuff that I don't need anymore. I cleared up 160 gigabytes in about 30 minutes.

Ray: Whoa.

Speaker 1: I'd say that's worth 30 bucks.

Ray: I'd say it's like I getting a new hard drive.

Speaker 1: Exactly. The name of the application is WhatSize. Now, there are freer-- Freer [laughs].

Ray: They're more free.

Speaker 1: They're more free. There are freeware versions of software that will do something similar but WhatSize-- Imagine this, because you're paying for it, it's more polished, less buggy.

Ray: It's better, less likely to have code in it from Russian hackers.

Speaker 1: Right. Yes. Exactly.

Ray: Yes.

Speaker 1: You can buy free versions of it but they're not as good looking. They don't work as quickly. They're not as integrated into the OS. It's not as good. This has more of a fit and finish to it.

Ray: Yes. Seriously, you might think I'm being paranoid, but if you buy-- if you download free software, often there is code inside that software that uses your computer to relay messages across the internet and it actually is created by Russian hackers. They're not probably not doing anything bad to your computer other than using it to send spam and porn links.

Speaker 1: Yes.

Ray: If you're okay with that?

Speaker 1: Then don't worry about it.

Ray: It's not a problem.

Speaker 1: [laughs]

Ray: All right. Spiritual foundations. What a segway.

Speaker 1: [laughs]

Ray: This week, we've got the-- we just opened up the opportunity to invest in our copywriting program. If you go to copywritingvirtuallsummit.com, we've just had a virtual mastermind really of about 30 of the greatest copywriters living today.

Speaker 1: Copywriters and marketers.

Ray: Copywriters and marketers. I call them edge walkers.

Speaker 1: Edge walkers.

Ray: They're walking like-- John Lee Dumas is the first one I shared this with. I said, "You're like an edge walker. You're walking the edge of old-school direct response marketing and new social media marketing married together. Mike Stelzner, Amy Porterfield would all be the edge walkers. It's really great combo of the best of both worlds and then just go to copywritingvirtuallsummit.com and you can see what's available there. It was like a mastermind. I started thinking about this. It's just like a huge mastermind of great copywriters and marketers.

What's the value of a mastermind? It's getting counsel from lots of different people. What does this have to do with spiritual foundations? Well, if you look in the bible, in Proverbs Chapter 19, in verse 20, there's a little section that goes like this, "Listen to counsel and receive instruction that you may be wise in your latter days." No, I'm not in my latter days. I'm in my middle days-

Speaker 1: There you go.

Ray: - but I want to be wise when I get to my latter days.

Speaker 1: Right.

Ray: I'm going to listen to counsel--

Speaker 1: Well, you like to be wise before you get there too.

Ray: Well, yes now that you've mentioned it.

Speaker 1: You don't want to just save wisdom for your latter days.

Ray: That's correct. You are correct. I receive that wisdom from you.

Speaker 1: [laughs]

Ray: We just had a situation in our own mastermind group that we run, that people invest in financially to be part of, and one of our members made a big mistake. He sent a message to the group in total panic saying, "I just made this huge mistake. I'm

File name: REP252.mp3.docx

embarrassed." He was in complete panic and as he began to get feedback from the rest of the group he realized, "Well, you didn't make a mistake. You've created an opportunity." He really did turned it around and make it into an opportunity.

I won't go into details because it doesn't really matter in the context of this discussion other than to say, with counsel, you can see things like that that you can't see just on your own because what do we always say? You can't read the label--

Speaker 1: If you're inside the bottle.

Ray: - if you're inside the bottle. This is a way to get counsel from other people because other people can always read your label, like it or not.

Speaker 1: Yes. I was going to say at our last mastermind meeting, that phrase came up and I almost appended it. I said, "You can't read the label when you're inside the bottle, but you sure can read other people's labels really easily."

Ray: They're like in giant print.

Speaker 1: Right. Yes.

Ray: [laughs] It goes on to say, there are many plans in a man's heart. Nevertheless the Lord's counsel, that will stand. To me what that means is, you're not going to mess up his plan. You might not do what he thinks would be the best thing for you to do, but ultimately, he is going to guide the thing-- he's going to guide the plane to land where yhe wants it to land. Get good counsel. Listen to it. Receive wisdom so that you'll be wise in your latter days and maybe even in your early days. It's possible, there are people who are wise in their early days. You for instance.

Speaker 1: Hey.

Ray: Alright. Let's speak to another wise person. He's like the Yoda of direct response marketing. He's going to hate that.

Speaker 1: [laughs]

Ray: Brian Kurtz. First of all, it's so good to talk to you. I always look forward to talking with you, Brian, because I walk away feeling better about the business that we're in and the future of that business, and also that there's somebody who remembers the same guys that I remember that I was influenced by. That's what we're going to talk about today. Some of the-- I would think of them as the founding fathers of direct response. Would you say that's accurate?

Brian: I think that's a really good way to put it. In fact I talk about them as-- I love talking about it. Specifically David [unintelligible 00:10:01]. But I think all of them, they are direct marketers trapped in general advertising bodies because at the time that they were practicing, there was no direct marketing. Direct marketing was not even a gleam in someone's eye and yet to understand ROI, to understand

measurable and accountable advertising in a period like we're talking 1930s and 1940s and 1950s.

Ray: Yes.

Brian: That amazes me because that's why these guys stand the test of time and not because we're older and we remember them. This is not about war stories . You and I I know are totally simpatico on this because we don't want to be the guys that are in the back of the TP saying, "You better listen to your elders." That's not what this is about.

Ray: No, not all.

Brian: That all of these is about fundamentals.

Ray: Yes, exactly. Because these people that we're talking about, these five founding fathers of this business, everything they wrote and taught and learned and passed along was principle-based and the principles are timeless. And we have this great advantage now that we have things like Google AdWords and Facebook ads and the ability to test things on the internet so easily. But before we jump into all of these, I kind of got the cart before the horse which is like the theme of my life.

Brian: [laughs] No. That's good, it's a nice open loop.

Ray: Thank you. Let's zoom out for just a minute and for those very few people who've been somehow not listening to my show as much they should have, give just a couple of paragraphs about what you've done and accomplished so far in life. And then, I want to talk about what you're doing right now because I'm really excited about that.

Brian: Yes, I don't want to spend a lot of time on my past. I'll just say that you know I've been in direct response marketing for a little over 35 years. The big chunk of time was spent building a company called Boardroom Incorporated which was a consumer newsletter and consumer book publisher, direct marketer. One of those companies that just was one of the places where everybody thought was the proving ground for state-of-the-art direct marketing and copywriters galore that we work with. A lot of people that we got are heroes to both of us and a lot of people who are listening were some of the people that I got to work with.

Just a great 34-year run of mailing somewhere between one and a half and two billion pieces of direct mail, hanging out with the best people in the industry, learning state-of-the-art direct marketing techniques, actually looking at all media. I mean while direct mails where I cut my teeth, we were on the forefront of the electronic newsletters, email marketing. We did a lot of DR TV which was tremendous for our business. I'm going to blog this week about my biggest success on DR TV.

Did a little radio unsuccessfully, but basically never met a medium I didn't like. And so, all of that, getting to the present quickly is that-- I'm a multi-channel guy. I think the Internet is awesome. I think that technology is awesome. I think that the

efficiencies that we have today, it's the best time ever in the history of the world to be a marketer as we all know. But it's not just about the technology, it's a lot about the fundamentals.

And so when I decided to leave boardroom, I did an epic event in 2014 which you attended called the Titans of Direct Response. That sort of kicked off my second career, my second lifetime which is to be a teacher or coach, to be able to take those fundamentals that I spent all that time learning and honing at boardroom and be able to bring it to the next generation of marketers in a powerful way. We're just talking before we got on the call about a hero of mine and someone who you'll be interviewing too, Jay Abraham. Jay is always on my case about that it's my moral responsibility to share what I've got with everybody who is this next generation.

And so, what I'm doing now, to get to that question which is the most important, is that I want to take everything that I've learned in terms of the fundamentals of direct response, everything I've applied, everything that's worked for me for 35 years and see what applies, what doesn't apply to everything that's state-of-the-art today and then work with the best and brightest marketers, copywriters that are in the business now and figure out how we can apply all of that for maximum results.

That's it in a nutshell. We can get into more details or if I missed anything or I glossed over too quickly. But I'm very excited about the second career of mine, I really am.

Ray: Well I'm excited about it too. I think that there's a need for a person with your experience and expertise. And it's interesting, you've been on my show a couple times and each time it seems like we talk about Eugene Schwartz. His name seems to come up. I just got an email from one of my listeners a couple days ago.

Brian: I thought you were going to say you got an email from Eugene Schwartz.

Ray: No. That would be--

Brian: I'm like, [unintelligible 00:15:47]. I thought he was dead.

Ray: That would be amazing.

Brian: That would be amazing [laughs].

Ray: It would probably only be Ben Settle channeling Eugene Schwartz.

Brian: That's right, that's right.

Ray: Now, I got an email from a listener who was saying, "Ray, I'm trying to find this book and I can't find it for less than \$300 and they were pointing me to some eBay listing or something like that." It just goes to demonstrate, I think this was a relatively young person, it goes to show you that there's a hunger for people for-- They don't even-- many people don't even know this knowledge exists. And you have done

something that I am so excited about that I wanted to have you on the show and talk about your new project. What is your new project?

Brian: Just going back for a second, that book had to be *Breakthrough Advertising*, right?

Ray: Yes, sorry, that was the book.

Brian: That's all right. That book is a book that I have the rights to and I'm actually working with Barbara Schwartz, who's Eugene Schwartz's wife, and to try to keep the rights in my hands for the next 15 years at least and there is an appetite for it. In fact, I have some copies that I still sell but I'm almost out of inventory. I got to go back to press, once I get the rights, I will. Then he wrote another book called *The Brilliance Breakthrough* which is, I think that one on eBay is probably 800 or 900 dollars.

Yes, appetite for the book and make them available more widely is one of my goals. That leads me into the project that I got involved with just about six months ago with a guy by the name of Craig Simpson. Craig is a direct mail expert. He's kind of the direct mail expert within the D.N. Kennedy world. If you go to any GKIC events or are involved with D.N. Kennedy in any way when it comes to direct mail, Craig is his go-to guy. I once asked him why I couldn't be his go-to guy for that and he said, "Well, you were kind of busy at boardroom." He gave me-- I think he was being nice because Craig is pretty awesome.

And so, Craig came to me and said, "Brian I have this book I'm working on. It's my second book." His first one was called *The Direct Mail Solution*. It was all about direct mail kind of a primer for people in direct mail and he said, "I'm doing this other book and I'm calling it *The Advertising Solution*." I hated the title because immediately I had hives on me, because advertising to me smells like general advertising, which smells like not direct marketing which means runaway, runaway, right? **[unintelligible 00:18:29]**.

Ray: Yes.

Brian: And so, he starts telling me about this book, *The Advertising Solution*, and so I'm not so-- I'm saying, "Interesting, interesting, interesting," and then he says, "I want you to co-write it with me." I said, "Well, I don't know tell, me more." And he says, "Well it's going to be, I'm going to profile six legends." A lot of them like the real madmen, some of them of the '60s or before. The madmen of advertising, these six guys who basically were the forerunners of what we consider direct response marketing today.

The six were David Ogilvy, Claude Hopkins, Robert Collier, John Caples, Gary Halbert and Gene Schwartz who we already mentioned. Now, he had my attention. He's got six guys who I've studied. I've read their books. They've influenced me greatly in my career. I always used to say they were that, I already said I think, that they were general advertising guys but they were direct marketers trapped in those

general advertising bodies. And so I said, "Tell me more," and the book was almost already written. Craig had already done the heavy lifting.

Because going through those books like Robert Colliers letter book is painful. I mean the books a bit of a snooze, I have to admit. Although, it's an important book on sales letters. But to have someone like Craig go through and pull out all the gems, I'm like, "This is going to be good. This is better than to digest. This is going to expose a whole generation who never heard of most of these six guys if it may not have heard of any of them. We're going to get a book out that's going to get them exposed to these six guys in a very intimate way.

It took a little while for him to sell me on the idea of a book that I wasn't going to write from scratch, my next book I'll do that, but one that I could edit and put my stamp on it. Even in the case of Gene Schwartz, talk about some personal experiences I had with him since he was one of my personal mentors. I knew Gary Halbert, not well, but I know a lot of his students who are in the business today. I said yes to the project and then I just jumped in.

I hate the title obviously the Advertising Solution for reasons I mentioned. But why I love the title is that it's intriguing that you could have a book about advertising men, madmen, men who you think are not devoted to direct response and the fact that they are and we made the case for that. I also think, as I said I think this book is a shortcut to exposure to these six legends, I still think people should read *Breakthrough Advertising*.

I still think they should read *Scientific Advertising* which is one of the most important books ever written by Claude Hopkins, one of our six legends. Of course, I think people should read *Ogilvy on Advertising* and John Caples' *Tested Advertising Methods* and Collier's *Letter Book* although that's a tough read. Then everything that Gary Halbert ever wrote in his newsletters and of course as we mentioned *Breakthrough Advertising*.

I realized that I don't want to do a digest. But I realized that we can take the greatest hits out of the writings of these six guys and that was my role in the book. My role was to be Craig's editor and to make the book usable. Because if the book was just a bunch of war stories from the six guys, that's not going to be usable to the next generation and they're going to be bored very quickly.

I wanted the book to almost-- my mission for the book as I edited it was that I wanted it to be-- I'll use Ray Edwards as an example. I wanted to be able to be a book that Ray Edwards would put next at the side of his desk next to his thesaurus and his dictionary as a checklist when writing headlines, when writing sales letters, when when constructing offers, when thinking about what we call your called showmanship type mailings and three-dimensional mailings.

Whatever the things that we cover in the book that it can become this resource book. One of the people who wrote a blurb for me, Perry Marshall my buddy, kind of gave

me that idea. When he said, even though the book might seem a little old-fashioned because it's written about these old timers the idea is to make it applicable to today. That was kind of my mission with Craig's manuscript. I think i did a decent job. I think that the book reads a little old-fashioned in some places using my words. But I also think that by having the lists and the bullets and a lot of the number of things that that I may able to put together I think it really creates a phenomenal opportunity for people to use the book as a checklist.

Ray: Well, I am super excited about this because I can't tell you how many times, it must be hundreds of times, that I thought about trying to do something like what you just described that you and Craig have done. Which is take those old books which I love and I read Robert Collier's Letter Book and I love his work, but i will tell you that you're right its kind of antiquated in the language and it's not an easy quick read.

Brian: No.

Ray: Now, Gary Halbert stuff reads like butter.

Brian: It does.

Ray: Is just magnificent.

Brian: What we did, one of the criticism and-- I'm really glad you brought that up. One of the criticisms of the book that I got from Dan Kennedy was that there weren't enough samples in the book of ads, of letters, of work of the of the six legends. Again, by the time I got involved in the project, the publisher had a page count and Craig already had exceeded that. What I did was I told Craig that I'm going to create a swipe file as one of the bonuses for people who buy the book. Whether it's through Amazon, Barnes & Noble, I don't care.

But I want to bring them back to a place where I'm going to put together a swipe file of the six legends. I got to tell you the putting together, picking the 10 where so best Gary Halbert swipes was the toughest actually. We'll talk about that, help how your how your listeners can get a hold of that free swipe file of Halbert swipes of - swipes from the other five guys as well. Plus some videos of all of the Halbert thoughts and some other stuff as well because that was actually something that someone told me was a weakness in the book. I quickly turn that weakness into a strength by giving away more than they ever would have gotten, had me thrown a few sample pages in the book of ads and stuff.

Ray: Well, I think that's tremendous. I mean for anybody who really wants to understand on a deep level the principles of good direct response advertising and marketing, that they can use in their business today in today's environment with today's technology and understand it without having to dig through these older books, I think you should. I think you definitely should go back to the sources, but this is a good way to get yourself brought up to speed. Even if you've read these guys, what I'm looking at this as is a chance to get a refresher course. Then the

swipe file, you got to talk about, this is the coolest deal ever. Explain what they-- not they, I've already pre-ordered my copy. I'll just be honest with you.

Brian: Okay.

Ray: What we get when we get the book.

Brian: Yes. Again, this was-- I said you know me because you came to the Titans event. I'm always into over delivery and that's a direct marketers-- that's [unintelligible 00:26:30] of direct marketing.

Ray: Hang on.

Brian: [unintelligible 00:26:33] may have they ever wanted and-

Ray: Yes, yes. But hang on.

Brian: - hopefully deliver.

Ray: I got to tell people. When you say you over deliver, you are not kidding my friend. I will never forget the look on people's faces when you said, "Now, I've got these swipe files for you," and you started handing out those gigantic binders.

Brian: Yes.

Ray: I mean they're the biggest freaking binders I think I've ever seen in my life.

Brian: Yes, it was about-- it was like almost 900 pages of the 30 best direct-response packages boardroom ever mailed.

Ray: It wasn't just one binder.

Brian: It was two, yes.

Ray: It was two, and so people were like--

Brian: Then we gave way that book that D.N. Kennedy put together with his swipes too.

Ray: That's why I've got them all together on the shelf right behind me. I referred to them frequently. I just remember the scramble of people trying to find boxes to ship this stuff home because they couldn't fit on the airplane and it was hilarious. When you say you over deliver, I just want people to have an appreciation for the fact that you are not kidding around.

Brian: Interesting, Ray, and I want to ask you a question actually, but the over-delivery concept, you can understand that when Dan Kennedy told me that the book was deficient in not having the ads and the samples in the book. Can you imagine you knowing me pretty well now, I lost sleep over that. It's like how am I going to over deliver when you know one of my heroes, mentors, someone who you

know has written, what, 30 books, 40 books whatever he's done, tells me that my book was basically-- he didn't use these words, my book was under-delivered.

I live to over deliver because as a direct marketer, even in my promotions at boardroom, it's like, "How many premiums can we give you? Four special reports? Yes. Let's test 20 special reports. Yes. Let's test 100 special reports." We have controls for some of our books but we actually gave away 100 special reports. They were short reports, two to three page special reports on different topics but more is better when you're selling information.

My question for you is something you've probably talked about with your folks, but talk about how you use swipe files and why they're so important. Because I try to sell this, not selling it. I try to teach people that it's not about ripping off shit. It's about using swipe files for fun and profit in it with high integrity. Can you just speak to how you use them and how important they've been to you?

Ray: Yes. Yes, absolutely. They are supremely important to me. I think it's no different than any other form of creativity or art. If you are a writer of novels, you read a lot of great novels. You don't rip off Stephen King but you probably are going to, especially in the earlier days of your career, you're going to use his work to inspire you. You may write similar stories but they're not stolen stories. Swipe files in our business are simply direct response ads or copy or sales letters that have worked and the key here-- this is where people get messed up. The key is to know for certain that they were successful and that they were successful over a long period of time and it wasn't just a fluke.

It's hard to get your hands on those that you can know for sure because nobody today is going to tell you, "This really sucked. It didn't sell anything." For me, the most valuable swipe files have been when I could get my hands on something that was written by Robert Koehler or Eugene Schwartz or Claude Hopkins. Even though the language in a lot of those pieces of copy is from a different era, the whole point is not to copy the language, the point is to look at the ad and say, "Well, what was the tone that he was taking here? What was the big idea? The underlying core premise of the ad and how can I adopt that to my own copy that I'm writing right now?"

About maybe something totally different, but I can pick up the tone, and the rhythm and the structure of the argument that he's making to buy the thing, whatever the thing is. It serves as the inspiration and guidelines or guard rails even to keep you from running off the road with your copy. If you use swipe files correctly, you will write original copy that has a much higher probability of succeeding.

Brian: That's brilliant. I knew you would articulate that better than I could. I'm just a swipe file junkie. Most of the copywriters who are the best in the business have incredible swipe files. I'm actually working on a project right now that-- I'll go back to the book in a second. I'm working on a project right now, *The Great Jim Rutz*, who a lot of people probably on this call never heard of, but one of the -- with Gary Bencivenga, one of the fathers of the Magalog, one of the best copywriters I've ever worked with.

When he passed away, I wrote a lengthy blog post called, *The Copywriter Closest to God*. He was a deeply religious man. He actually he started his own church using all his great techniques of sales letter writing. His sister, Ginger, after he passed away sent me two huge boxes of Jim's swipe files. In the blog post, I talked about how Jim Rutz-- I visited his house twice in Colorado Springs, and I used to say that he used to have swipe files as furniture. There was this one room in his house where he had piles. He had the Rodel pile and the boardroom pile and the Agora pile, the Philips Publishing pile.

He would just collect and collect. Then his own stuff obviously was gem after gem of writing, and she sent me all of that. We're going to create a product. I've got three young copywriters working with me on the product and something like the Lost Files of Jim Rutz. It's going to be a swipe file. I'm going to interview people who work with him and I'm going to bring him to life. No one who's probably listening to this call might have ever heard of him.

For my money, him and Bencivenga, were my one and two when boardroom was doing the biggest mailings we've ever done. Right behind them were obviously -- right with them were Jane Schwartz and then we had an internal writer who no body ever heard of called Mel Martin. Those four guys were my original Mount Rushmore of copywriters.

Anyway, I digress but you can see that I'm obsessed. I did a swipe file of the great Bill Jamie, who was one of the great consumer-copywriters of all time, and I have a swipe file that I sold for \$400, that I still have samples of. His stuff was really interesting. A lot of consumer magazines and had a different kind of writing style but beautiful, beautiful writer, someone to really emulate.

Anyway, going back to the current project, Dan Kennedy telling me that I was under delivering, shame on me. I went to Craig and I said, "We're going to come up with a bonus package," because the books have to be bought via retail. It's an outside publisher. I can't do the free plus shipping and handling thing. But they have to go buy at Amazon or Barnes and Noble or Indie Books or whatever. But once they buy the book and show us the receipt, I want to give them more than they ever would have imagined that they ever could get from buying a \$17-book, which is I think what it is on Amazon on pre-order. Maybe it's 20, I don't know, it's not more than \$20.

Anyway, they come back to this page, it's thelegendsbook.com. They go to this page, thelegendsbook.com, there's a button there, they go buy the book. They come back to the page, opens up a new window, comes back to the original page, and they send an email to this email once they buy the book. With their receipt-- We give them access to first of all three basic bonus-- well, I call them bonus packages. One is a swipe file of the six legends profiled in the book. It's somewhere around 10 of the best ads, letters, whatever, direct mail packages, whatever, that were ever written by Ogilvy, Caples, Hopkins, Koehler, Halbert, and Schwartz. Incredible stuff.

My buddy Lawrence Bernstein, who has an amazing archive, helped us put it together. It's just a tremendous-- It's a .pdf file, people will be able to download and keep it forever. Then, what I did was I said, "You know, there's a lot video out there,"

some on YouTube but some hard to find and rare. It's always hard to find and rare till you put it all together in one place. On that page, we put together some of the best videos of Gary Halbert, not readily available actually but the one's from Gary are one's that he did at the Systems seminar with Ken McCarthy and also one that he did with Joe Polish which is just incredible.

It's like six videos of Halbert, one of which is an hour, the other are all like these five-minute gems from Halbert. Then I've got the video that I gave away at Titans of Gene Schwartz presenting live at Rodel, which is tremendous. I've got six more videos of David Ogilvy, including an appearance he did on the David Letterman show. The Ogilvy stuff I think is more readily available but again I just felt like, let's put it all on this page so people can just access it real easily.

Tremendous videos of Halbert, Shwartz, and Ogilvy. The third big piece is Bob Bly, a copywriter we both know and love, put together a illustrated and annotated version of *Scientific Advertising* by Claude Hopkins. Which is probably-- *Scientific Advertising* for me, is the second book I recommend to aspiring copywriter. I don't know what you recommend first, but I recommend *Breakthrough Advertising* first. I recommend *Scientific Advertising* second. The reason why I love Claude Hopkins is that here's a guy who died in 1932. He wrote this book I think in 1923. There was no science in advertising 1923.

There wasn't spreadsheet -- there weren't the kind of spreadsheets. There surely weren't computers to deal with the metrics that we can deal with now, in terms of analyzing response rates and yet this guy understood that was what was coming. Bob Bly did the industry a service by creating this illustrated and annotated version that's really a wonderful read. It brings Claude Hopkins to life. A book that was written in 1923 to be this lively. The third giveaway is a .pdf of that book that people can download for their library.

There's also some other stuff on the page once you buy the book and get these access. Craig put together five other special reports that are some stuff that's not in book from the legends. We're going to continue to add to that resource page as we go along. But I really wanted to figure out, okay, how can I over deliver when I think might be scarce on "samples." I think pre-ordering the book at thelegendsbook.com, you won't get the book until-- the book's not coming out until October 11th.

I don't know when this is airing, but the giveaways are available immediately even if the book's not available yet. You will get the giveaways whether you buy the book as a physical book or you buy it at Kindle or whatever.

Ray: Yes. I can verify that. This will air before the book is actually released, but I would encourage you to do what I did. I went and bought both editions. I got the Kindle and the paperback because I like to do that. Sometimes I want to take things with me that I don't want to carry books on the plane or whatever. This is one I'm going to want to have with me wherever I go. Then I want the paper, the physical version I can hold in my hands in my office, so I can pick it up have it next to my computer. Then I can verify.

I got an email right back after I verified my receipt, that gave me all the bonus material you just talked about, which is priceless. Seriously, I know the temptation on the part of some will be to think, I am being hyperbolic, but seriously you could have charged \$500 or more for the stuff that you are giving away when people buy this book.

Brian: I guess if you wanted to put a dollar value on it, that's true. I do have this feeling that, well, I think swipe files are gold based on everything that you said previously in this call and I'm so glad I asked you that question, because you're a working copywriter. I'm not the same way you are and I think-- I write a lot but I don't write like you do. The fact that the way you use swipes is so important. Swipes are considered, "Ah, the thing mailed a million pieces like how valuable could that be?" You know what I mean?

It's like this it's hard to put a dollar figure on something that mailed a million times or had millions of impressions online if it's a video sales letter or an email promotion. But I got to tell you, for people like us and I know I'm talking to my brother Ray here, it is worth thousands to me to have that stuff.

Ray: Yes, and if you simply receive it with that idea in your head and ask yourself, "Well, how can I use this in my own business or my own practice?" I mean, just to give an example of how you can take an old idea that you feel like everybody's seen this idea and it can turn out to be remarkably successful. There is a very well-known guy named Robbins who holds these seminars that thousands of people attend and I wrote some copy for a product that was being sold at those events.

Frank Kern was involved in this whole cycle. He's the guy who got me involved with the Robbins and Amy Porterfield was part of that circle as well. Frank said, "Hey, you know here's an idea, what if we did the dollar bill letter thing?" When people would come back from a break, there would be that letter that I had written, the copy that I had written with a dollar bill stapled to it laying on the seat and the copy would say and did say, "You may be wondering why we've attached a dollar to this letter and if that sounds familiar it's because one of the great people that are featured in this material that you're giving away is the guy who originated that idea and it's decades old."

Brian: That was Collier, wasn't it?

Ray: I thought it was Gary.

Brian: It might have been Gary. You know what, Collier had something else-- because he did a lot of showmanship type stuff. Collier did a lot of early stuff with contests and giveaways and involvement of ISIS, but you know I think you're right that is Gary.

Ray: That piece of copy with a very old, some people might call it a trick, that many of us who've been around direct marketing in any length of time at all know about the

dollar bill letter. We might be tempted to think but that will never work. That piece of copy has sold millions of dollars in product for Tony Robbins.

Brian: That's amazing.

Ray: It's just an attention getter and that's the value of you see a great idea and you think about, "Well, how can we apply it in this situation?"

Brian: Yes. And even as simple as-- I hate to just rip off copy but copy platforms are everywhere. I remember someone who we both know in a foreign country took a line, because he studies swipes, he took a line from a Maxwell Isaak Ahmed who was one of the guys that worked closely with a lot of the guys in this book that we're talking about. He had a language program, I think, that you make these mistakes in English.

Ray: Yes.

Brian: I think this guy in our group, in one of our mastermind groups said, "Do you make these mistakes in Internet marketing," as a subject line and he got as high as the open rate. I'm only using that almost anecdotally. I don't recommend taking someone else's line and insert your word here. But there is some ways. We did stuff for a state planning books for years about what your wife never wants you to know when you make out your will was one of the great headlines that David Deutsche wrote or what your lawyer doesn't want you to know. If you recall when Kevin Trudeau was on TV, they don't want you to know that's a copy platform.

The idea that you're the blood hound and we're going to tell you the inside information that no one wants you to know. That's not ripping off copy, that's looking at tried and true-- in this case it's the blood hound concept that I call blood hound concept that you could start applying to almost any business where there's a great villain which is always great for any copywriter to write against some kind of villain. You're going to rail against the machine.

You can either rail against Big Brother. You're going to rail against the man. You're going to rail against the institutions that screw us all up and you can find so many amazing pieces of copy with the kind of people that are in our book and the kind of people that you talked about and then techniques as you just said, you know the dollar bill from Gary.

There are so many variations of that that even go before Gary. I always give Gary. You're right about giving Gary credit for that but there are so man-- When I look at certain sweepstakes that are being run today and I think about Reader's Digest in the 1960s, the forerunner of so much of that and you know everything is adaptable. I mean Groupon owes a debt of gratitude or whoever is the best sweepstakes mailer or contest mailer right now, owes a debt of gratitude for so much before them. If they study what came before them, they'll only going to do more powerful, it's promotion.

Ray: Absolutely. If you're someone who has heard about swipe files and you don't have a swipe file or you have just a few pieces and maybe you don't know if they're

successful or not, you just thought they look good, that can get you into trouble. What I recommend is that you get this \$100 million swipe file with a copy from Eugene Schwarz, Claude Hopkins, Robert Collier, David Ogilvy, Gary Halbert, John Caples and not just copy but copy that sold hundreds of millions of dollars worth of stuff.

You get the rare videos and you get this cool-- I've never actually seen this illustrated version of scientific advertising so I'm super excited about that. I'm extraordinarily amped up about the book itself which will give you a very fast and effective education in the bedrock principles of direct response marketing. I just think this is fantastic, Brian. I appreciate the fact that you and Craig went to the effort to put this together.

Brian: Yeah, I want to give big shout out to Craig because he did so much heavy lifting before he even knocked on my door to get involved in the project. So I don't want to make it sound like Brian was slaving away at the initial because he did that. He did that hard part that you talked about. Imagine diving into Collier and making sure you get all the best stuff out of that book and everything about Caples.

By the way, John Caples who might have been the guy that invented testing and his book *Tested Advertising Methods* is one of the most important reads for people. It's probably Breakthrough Advertising one, *Scientific Advertisement* two, tested advertising methods in my top ten for sure or maybe top five.

I want to tell your listeners though, if you can't don't buy the fifth edition which is the one that's readily available. Try to find the fourth edition. It's not hundreds of dollars but it's a little more expensive, but the guy who rewrote it in the fifth edition changed a bit too much from my taste. But the fourth edition is tremendous and so there's a guy that-- I'm sure if any-- the people who are listening, they have to be serious Ray Edwards students to have heard of John Caples, I'm sure. If you haven't, what a great opportunity to get exposed to a guy like that. Again, I think he really did invent a lot of the testing methodology that is prevalent today and we take for granted.

Ray: Yes, He. He is one of the writers and that is one of the books that I recommend in my top list of books to give to people or recommend that people acquire for their library, for their basic education. I mean, you don't know what you need to know unless you know these guys and their work.

Brian: Yeah, I think in the swipe file, we put his classic ad you know they laughed when I sat down at the piano but when I started to play. That's an amazing ad one of that kind was like probably his most famous ad I think.

Ray: Well, the book is called *The Advertising Solution*, Influence Prospects, Multiply Sales and Promote Your Brand. It's by Craig Simpson and my friend and my guest today Bryan Kurtz and you can and should get the book at thelegendsbook.com. We will have a link in the show notes. I recommend you do what I did. Get the electronic version and get the print version and then make sure you send your receipt in and get your bonuses which are just tremendous. Super generous and once again Brian you over deliver.

Brian: Thank you so much for having me and giving me this opportunity, because I feel like your audience is just once of the audiences that can just benefit as much as any body from a book like this.

Ray: Well, I do to. Just for the record. I want to be clear. I'm never shy about if I'm getting a commission for promoting something but I'm getting zero for promoting this. Except that I get the satisfaction and the good feeling that I have, that I've helped you out constant listener by furthering your education in the art and science of Direct Responds Marketing. I have no other interest in this other than helping you. Go to the legendsbook.com and get yours today.

Brian: Actually, I want to be completely transparent as well. This is not a moneymaker for me either. Anybody who's actually written a book and sold it on Amazon and Barnes & Nobel and Indie Books for \$17 knows that there's no money left to the author. So this was one of those things where let's get it out to the world. I know it's going to create such good karma that people getting on my list and people learning more about me is always possible that I could do more for them and that could lead to something.

But there's no expectation of return for me at the moment, except that this is part of my mission as we talked about it beginning of the call that this is my calling. Actually, it was a pretty easy decision once I realized the purpose of this book when Craig asked me to be involved. So I just want to make sure that people that this is not a huge money making endeavor but it is one that I think enriches everybody.

Ray: Well, thank you again Brain. It's always a pleasure to talk to you. I always walk away feeling excited about the business we're in.

Brian: Thank you so much, Ray.

Ray: Now, that guy has a world of stories and stored up wisdom from direct responds marketing. Whenever I talk to him, when I finish talking to him I feel smarter. I feel like he just imparted more knowledge and wisdom to me. We talk about getting good counsel receiving very good counsel.

Speaker 1: That's right.

Ray: You get it from Brain Kurtz, so be sure you follow up on that. Well, that's going to put the wraps on this weeks show.

Speaker 1: It is and if you found it helpful, please subscribe, leave a review. If you would like to get access to the transcript and show notes, just to go Rayroot.com/252 and they'll be there waiting for you.

Ray: Until next week, I pray that God continues to bless you and that he does more for you than you can ask or even possibly imagine, and that he gives you wise thoughts for you thoughts. Peace to your house.

[00:52:56] [END OF AUDIO]

