



Ray Edwards Show, Episode 384

Interview with Michael Stelzner

- Speaker 1: [00:01](#) This is the Ray Edwards show, episode 384 social media examiner, a copywriting.
- Speaker 2: [00:16](#) This is the podcast for prosperity with purpose, right?
- Speaker 1: [00:22](#) I'm so excited about today's episode because my very good friend Michael Stelzner is my guest. He's the founder of social media examiner. I've got lots of good things to say about him, but before we get into that, I want to just call to your attention. One thing a lot of people have been asking, what happened to Tiffany? What happened to Adriane? What happened to Sean? Where are they? What have you done, Ray? It was good. Why did you get rid of them? I didn't. These last three episodes have been recorded all at the same time in one batch because we were all traveling in different directions and we weren't able to get in the studio at the same time, so we decided to run these interviews, which are golden.
- Speaker 3: [00:53](#) You're a treasure trove of information about marketing and copywriting, but we're going to be coming back together as a team and some people were concerned about the direction show was taking because a lot of folks said, hey, it's good that you guys are having fun. It's enjoyable listening to these free willing conversations that you're having, and obviously it's very funny and very entertaining. However, Ray, I came to this podcast originally learned about how to start running, grow my own business about copywriting, about marketing. What about that stuff? Well, I don't want to leave my faithful, longtime listeners behind because I know that's what you came here for. I want to be faithful and grateful to you and steward that well. So these last three episodes have been straight up about copywriting only, and that's what this episode is about today as well. Although you can't talk about copy without talking about business in general and marketing as well.
- Speaker 3: [01:38](#) So we'll have all those things in this podcast, but the other podcast with my cohosts, Tiffany, Adrian, and Sean and will return, we're going to start a separate podcast. That'll be just those kind of discussions. So you'll have this

podcast which they'll join me on, but it'll be focused on copywriting and marketing straight up and we'll have the new podcast, which will be the fun kind of crazy kind of meandering, good time you become accustomed to with those folks together with me in the room, we're going to have a great time. You'll be hearing more about it probably next week we'll announce the launch of that new podcast, so stick with us. Now let's get back to today's episode. My interview with Michael Stelzner. That's on the way now.

- Speaker 4: [02:14](#) Does anyone want to live a life as long and prosperous spiritual foundation? There's a person I believe her
- Speaker 1: [02:22](#) Christian, a follower of Jesus who's been running a struggling business for a long, long time. She never makes more than a small bit of money
- Speaker 3: [02:31](#) for time and effort, chef and struggles to pay your bills. Asked if she prayed for her business. She shook her head and smiled and said, no, God has given me love, grace, forgiveness, and daily bread. I won't ask for anything more than that. I don't tell you this story to criticize her about her attitude. She's one of the nicest people you could possibly cure to me and she's truly content with their life and that is awesome. We all have different goals and dreams. Not everybody wants to build \$1 million business. Some people want to build a business to provide a part time income. They can have the ability to stay home with your kids and have no interest in growing beyond that point. That's no problem. There's nothing wrong with that. Some of us though, some of us have big dreams for our business. If you've been a believer for at least 10 years, you probably heard of a little book by Bruce Wilkinson called the prayer of Jay Bez.
- Speaker 3: [03:15](#) If you haven't heard of it or you never got a copy of your own to enjoy a highly recommend it. I've owned several copies of this book and have given every one of them away. Not because I didn't like the book, but because I felt like people I met needed to have a copy so I gave it to them. Looking back. God definitely answered my own prayer of Jay Bez in a big way. My life is completely different than 10 years ago. This book is based on this one verse in the Bible. First chronicles chapter four verse 10 j Bez cried out to the god of Israel, Oh, that you would bless me and enlarge my territory. Let your hand be with me and keep me from harm so that I will be free from pain, and God granted his request. Now, if you Google the prayer of Jay Bez, you'll find quite a few opinions, both good and bad about this book, but you can't argue with the Bible on this. Jb has prayed for increase and God gave it to him. Don't let anything stop you from crying out to God about your business. Then all of us needs God,

equips you to run your business. If you're doing what he called you to do, he certainly, he's gotta to be faithful and give you the tools and resources you need to make it profitable and successful.

- Speaker 1: [04:25](#) Now, simple hacks that make live cheaper, easier, and faster. Raise tip of the week. My tip of the week is another APP. You should not be surprised. It's this cool little tool called Jim and I to photo Dee duper. We'll have a link in the show notes to the APP store. We didn't get a copy of it. This miracle working little app goes through your hard drive and finds all of your pictures in your photos app and you know when you take those burst photos, we have like 20 pictures of the same thing. He finds all the duplicates and lets you choose the one you want to keep and get rid of it. The rest of them just can really save space on your hard drive, on your phone, on your iPad. I love this little tool. I've used it to clean off my photos album on my phone or my iPad on my computer. It's very handy. It's very inexpensive. Check it out. Jim and I to the photo
- Speaker 3: [05:08](#) [inaudible] per app. You know one of my favorite books about turning what you love to do and what you get paid to do is real.
- Speaker 1: [05:16](#) Don't start. It's written by one of my best friends, Jeff Goins. It's required reading for anyone who ever wishes they could turn their art into income. Over the last few years, I've had the privilege of helping a small group of remarkable people transition from a boring, humiliating soul sucking job into a fun, fulfilling and financially rewarding career. For instance, Dr. Douglas Pew, a composer and conductor whose music was performed at the Kennedy Center and who as well on his way to becoming an a list copywriter. Then there's Mike Kim, the branding expert who turned the company he worked for completely around, made it prosperous, then started his own company and started his own hip podcast as well and who now runs marketing for John Maxwell's team. Then there's Sarah and her powers who left her figure job as an attorney and started her own freelance writing practice. Now she's running her own live bootcamps in high end coaching programs and it set up for her first million dollar year.
- Speaker 1: [06:06](#) Would you like to be a real writer and trade in the boring nine to five straight jacket job for a life you love? There's one thing these three real writers I just told you about having common. They are all graduates of my certified copywriter program. Would you like to know more? Go to ray training.com to find out the details and see if this is right for you. Maybe you could be one of us. This could be the new beginning you've been hoping for and now our

feature presentation, Michael Stelzner is the founder of social media examiner, the largest social media news source for marketers on the Internet. He's also the author of a book called launch and he's the man behind social media marketing world, the biggest event of its kind in the world. He's the host of the social media marketing podcast and he's the founder of something called the Social Media Marketing Society, which I highly recommend you become a member of yourself. He's also a well experienced copywriter and he and I share a very famous plant for our past. We'll get into that in this interview. My friend Michael Stelzner, you should find something to do with your time, like, oh, that must have say with that ray, you seem to be a into social media. I think I just get that sense. I think you're, you're very, very accurate. You, um, the reason I wanted to have you on is because you actually started, I don't know if most people know this, but

Speaker 5:

[07:25](#)

as a copywriter I did. So did you, is that what you went to school for? Did you plan when you were in college? Did you come out of college thinking I'm going to be a copywriter? Actually, funny enough, my undergraduate was in speech and my master's was in speech and I didn't know what I was going to do with that degree. However, now in hindsight, learning how to verbally communicate has been really instrumental for podcasting and for video work. And obviously for copy too, because nowadays they say write as you speak, even though they didn't use to say that. So I would say that my college degree definitely was a good foundation, but I had no clue. Uh, when I came out of college that I was going to be doing any of the things that I've done since college. So I want to get into the specifics about what you're doing in your business right now.

Speaker 5:

[08:17](#)

Uh, but before we do that, I'd like to know what happened. Uh, when you came out of college, how did you end up being a copywriter and writing a book on white papers? How does all that happen? Well, I was in Grad School, I was working full time, uh, for a a hundred million dollar high tech company in San Diego and I was in the product marketing department and part of what we had to do back then, and we're talking, we're talking mid nineties, um, was we had to help them create marketing materials. So I was interviewing engineers and translating their, you know, gobble Gook into human language and everyone else can understand. I was putting, um, what we used to call data sheets, which are one sheeters I was putting powerpoints together, brochures and I had to kind of be in a pretty techie guy myself. I had to translate what they were saying and interview them and then make it so that the sales team could use it. And I loved it and everybody loved the fact that I was good at it. And that's

how I kind of began to understand the craft and importance of translation, if you will, which is what I think copywriting really is.

Speaker 6: [09:21](#) Interesting. You're the first person I've interviewed who's said that copywriting is translation. So is that true for people who are not trying to translate for human beings out of engineering speak?

Speaker 5: [09:35](#) I think so because if you think about what translation means, it means taking something that someone else understands, but the rest of the world doesn't get and communicating it to the rest of the world. So Spanish, if you don't speak Spanish, you need a translator so that you can understand it. I think copywriting, their job of copywriting is translating

Speaker 6: [09:54](#) some sort of a benefit or advantage or message that the company has inside the company into something that the customer can understand. And often businesses do not speak customer speak, so they need a translator, right? Yes. Some of them desperately need a translator. Um, the, the irony of it is there's a quote by George Bernard Shaw that I saw recently where he said the difficult thing about communication is the illusion that it has taken place. Mm. And a, that happens I think in marketing more often than we would like to believe it does what our white papers,

Speaker 5: [10:34](#) it's a cross between a brochure and an article. So if you think about what a brochure is, it tends to sell and talk about certain sales kind of purposes. And article tends to be more of a journalistic piece that's meant to inform. So white paper brings both of those things together and it's usually created for complex sales. So your business has something that is, uh, not easy to sell and people need some sort of something to read or to present to the boss to explain what it is. I'll give you an example. Um, the Fedex hired me when they started international transit from China and their goal was to actually have a white paper for electronics manufacturers to help them understand the value of having overnight shipping. So what I had to do is I had to interview all these people at Fedex and understand the value and then I had to understand what the customer was looking for and the customer was looking for the fastest way to get, um, high profit products from China to their customers in, normally it would take six weeks on a ship and it could be overnight. So, um, I wrote this piece for their international launch and it helped them essentially convince other manufacturers in addition to apple computer to go, uh, overnight with their electronics.

- Speaker 6: [11:50](#) Wow. And do you, is there still a place for white papers in today's marketing world?
- Speaker 5: [11:55](#) I still get emails from people wanting me finding to hire me. Absolutely. Yeah, there really is because um, if you think about when you go to a page and you, you fill out a form to get a lead, right? Normally we think that we're going to provide an ebook. Well, white papers were there before ebooks and, and still to this day, you don't have to call it a white paper, but a white paper is what most B, two B businesses are using to generate the leads. And the white paper might be something like how to speed the transit time, uh, for, for products made in China or something, you know, and it doesn't necessarily say how to use FedEx. Do you understand where I'm going? So the solution is FedEx.
- Speaker 6: [12:34](#) Yes. Perfect. We actually have at least one copywriting client in common s and he's a very big man, isn't he? He's a big man. He's big in the world of business. Yes. Tony Robbins. Yes. I didn't even realize this until very recently that we had him in common as a client and I believe we worked with the same person who is the intermediary for his company. Yes. A young lady. Many people probably know Amy Porterfield. Amy Porterfield. That was a great experience for me because first of all, getting to know Amy was a, is one of the highlights of my business career. She's a special person and Tony, as many people probably would say, Tony literally altered the course of my life with his, uh, personal power program, which I listened to back when it was on cassette tapes and it changed the way I approached business and work and my job and my relationships and, um, delivered on all the fantastical promises that he made on late night TV.
- Speaker 5: [13:33](#) Yeah, it's, it was quite an experience for me to work with him. I actually never got to talk to him directly, which made it very, very hard. And a, what's really interesting is that he's got a special room in his house. Uh, that's a sound room that he goes into and he just, usually he'll bring one of his relatives in there and he'll just banter for an hour. And then the, uh, recording goes to an emergency's transcriptionist who blacks out all the expletives. And then I get back a 40 page document for a 10 page piece that I had delivered to him. And, and the process repeats and repeats. He actually tweeted me saying how much he loved the piece and he wanted to hire me again. But this was during the, um, during the, the rise of social media examiner and I had to turn him down because I couldn't do it. But the piece that I wrote for him was for his, um, uh, what's the big thing that a, that he, when the people walk across the fire, the unleash the power within weekend yet. Yeah. So I wrote,

I wrote the paper to help them sell that back in probably 2009 or something like that.

Speaker 6: [14:32](#) Splendid. So there you are, you're writing for Fedex and Tony Robbins and then you decided to stop doing that and create this thing called social media examiner.

Speaker 5: [14:43](#) How did that happen? Kind of on a whim. I had at this point, I had built a big following in the white paper world. I, a lot of people, me that, the dude in the space, and I started noticing that social media was becoming popular. So I started covering it for white paper source, which was my company. And, um, we, we send out a newsletter every month and we had articles in the newsletter which is an old fashioned kind of thing. And they used to call those e's Zines I think or something like that are easy. And um, and I started a part of the process was to help people figure out how to promote their white papers. And I had 20,000 people on my list and social media stuff was really hot back then and, and everybody was like, how do I actually use social media to somehow get people to somehow read my white papers or to get leads?

Speaker 5: [15:31](#) And that was the beginning of it. And I started to see how every time anybody wrote about social media just became the most popular thing ever. So I just decided to go ahead and start kind of as a test social media examiner.com. I was lucky enough rate to get the domain. I immediately registered with the trademark office cause I was completely freaking out thinking that the San Francisco examiner is going to sue me because I figured they might own the name examiner. And Luckily I got the trademark. Now I have a bunch of trademarks, but a man, the thing just took off like a rocket, right? We launched in October of 2009 we had 10,000 email subscribers and like just a few months and I had 20,000 at white paper source over many, many, many years and that's when I knew I was onto something and uh, it was just amazing.

Speaker 5: [16:12](#) I remember when it launched and one of the things that I wondered as I watched the growth of social media examiner was how in the heck is this guy making any money? [inaudible] that was part of my strategy, right? My strategy was to not sell anything until I got 10,000 people on my email newsletter list and we had no advertising anywhere. I wanted to create a movement. I wanted to create something that was completely commercial free that people would rally behind. And nobody was doing this at the time. Back then, people that were writing about social media, we're complaining about Twitter or Facebook or it was opinion pieces, but nobody was actually talking about here's how to use it. They were all

saying, I'm an expert, come pay me for my expertise. And I knew that people would eat up the how to stuff. So I reached out to all of my journalist friends and all the network of writers that I had built up over many years and I recruited a couple of them.

Speaker 5: [17:02](#) One of them in Casey Hibbard who wrote the book called uh, she went to book on Case Studies, um, at my suggestion and she felt compelled to help me out. So she did case studies for me every month for free. And I just started reaching out to everybody and I said, right for me one article a month. And then I organize it in such a way where I was writing one article a week and a bunch of other people were writing one article a month and it started taking off. And before you know it, everybody wanted to write for us. And being a writer, I set a super high bar right from the beginning and it had editorial guides and editors and all this stuff. It was all volunteers in the beginning, but, but the thing turned out to be a multimillion dollar business. So how long was it until you actually sold something?

Speaker 5: [17:39](#) We launched in October. We sold the first thing and in February we proceeded to make almost \$2 million in the first year. Wow. Yeah. And the social media examiner has grown now I mentioned at the beginning there's the conference, there's the virtual summit, there's, um, society, the society. Uh, so how was that all part of the master plan or did you unfold this as, as I'm definitely ray, you know, this about me, I'm strategic and I have plans, but at the same time I'm also a man of faith, so I tend to just walk and just kind of let things unravel and unravel. And I, I had a plan and the plan was that I was going to do a summit and I did, I had done some summits, which are my case, who were online, um, online, multiple trainers, you know, people paid to come to it.

Speaker 5: [18:27](#) I had done some of those before I started social media examiner. So I kind of knew how to do them. I did one on copywriting and one on white papers and actually one on social media, which I forgot to mention. And it was so successful that that was another impetus to start social media examiner. So the goal was to do three of these a year. So in the spring we would do like one and then in the, uh, you know, like February, May, and October. So in our first year we did, um, we did something called I think, content success summit and then we did Facebook success summit and then we did social media success summit. We did three of these a year. And, um, and that's how we funded everything. So many people believe that now that we're in the age of social media, that the day of the copywriter and copywriting is long gone and that that stuff is outdated and doesn't work anymore.

- Speaker 5: [19:16](#) And, uh, what do you think about that idea? Well, let them believe that, right? The rest of us will, will be persuading people for our advantage. Um, I think that, uh, I think now more than ever, we need people that understand how to persuade with the written word, right? Because now there are so many more things vying for our attention. And I think a copywriter now is critical. And I, and I, and anybody who thinks that they're no longer needed probably just doesn't understand their benefits. Well, clearly I agree with you. And, um, at the last social media marketing world, we had a session on copywriting and it was interesting to see social media marketers understand because there was a line out the door. Um, that was actually the first time I've ever spoken anywhere where there was a line outside the door where it was going to be speaking.
- Speaker 5: [20:05](#) And, um, you, you said you need to come see this. And, uh, it was, uh, it was a shock. Uh, but social media marketers I believe are, um, those are about connection and they understand the humanity of the people that they're marketing to. And so they, I think it's a more human way of promoting business when done correctly. I agree. I think that, uh, I think part of the reason there was a line out the door is because people desperately need to figure this stuff out. The, if you think about how many people are on Facebook, right? You've got what, 1.6 5 billion, and you think about the fact that we're talking hundreds of millions across every single social network and then you start to think about how many businesses are on there and they're all trying to develop a message and they're all trying to attract an audience or move an audience off the network to some other place like a sales page or landing page.
- Speaker 5: [21:03](#) And all those messages, um, are essentially competing against each other. It's the most competitive market place in the world. It was a lot easier 30 years ago before there was no internet to just walk down the street and know that you only had maybe three competitors on the road, if you, if, if it was bad. Now the Internet and social media makes it so that all the competitors are within instant reach of each other. And nobody understands this more than if you do a Google search on anything. So this is where copy is absolutely essential and persuasive copy. And that's why I think social media marketers get it because they are very into, um, measurement and it's something that they can do quite easily and they're willing to experiment because it's always changing. And, and they would love to learn this craft because the good thing about copywriting as it never changes, social media will always change. Copywriting will never change. And what I mean by that is the fundamentals of human persuasion are the same today as they were a hundred

years ago. So what are some specific ways that you see effectively using copy and social media?

Speaker 5: [22:13](#)

Well, there's so many different ways. I'll tell you how we do it as social media examiner. At the very basic level, we create content, a blog post, okay. Or a podcast. And that content is in our mind a form of marketing. But in the minds of the consumer, it is a piece of valuable how to information for them. So as a copywriting in this particular case is all about creating a article that is designed to attract the right person to your website. So for example, um, if I go back, uh, over the last few days, three tips to improve the search rankings for your blog posts. Okay, are um, another one would it be how to repurpose your Facebook live videos? So we are actually creating really rich articles, um, and giving them away for free. But we're coming up with headline and opening copy that we know is going to get drawn into social media.

Speaker 5: [23:08](#)

So whenever anybody shares it on Facebook, the headline and the first couple sentences get drawn into the Facebook open graph and Twitter and all the other social networks. So we understand that writing a good headline. And by the way, when we send out our emails, good headline means a good open rate. A good open rate means the likelihood that they'll click and they'll come. And all of these things are necessary for us in order to have a successful business because the content that we create at social media examiner draws millions. And then the hope is that a percentage of those people will, um, share the content, which draws in a perpetual new audience. And another chunk of those people will say, I want more. And they'll sign up for our email newsletter. And we are now signing up almost a thousand people a day, ray, under our email newsletter because of our copy.

Speaker 5: [23:55](#)

Wow. Um, something that I think is really important to highlight is you said that the content to the reader is content to you. You think of it as marketing. And I want to clarify, and I know you believe this also, but just so everybody understands, we're all on the same page that the content is, it's not the kind of marketing content that is a trick that it's like a lure, a bait and switch. It's actual content that is so useful that people would pay for it, that people would pay for it and it draws them in and they don't feel like they've been marketed to. They feel like they've been served, they've been given a gift. Yes. Yeah. Yeah. And that's, that's, um, that's always been what's differentiated us from a lot of other publications as we develop at least a thousand word articles that are very rich, very deep, very tactical.

- Speaker 5: [24:46](#) And we don't hold anything back and a, we do the same with our podcasts. So the idea is to create the right kind of content to draw the right kind of audience and, and acknowledge that we are actually serving millions of people who will never become our customers. But we know that when we do this ray, that some of these people, um, we'll share this content which will bring in even other people and we only need x thousands a year of to turn into customers. But if we didn't have the content we do, we wouldn't have the email list. And if we didn't have the email list, we wouldn't have the customers. Does that make sense? So it's all part of kind of, uh, a system, if you will. So even though it's technically not marketing, um, it is better than advertising because it's what people want.
- Speaker 5: [25:36](#) Nobody wants an ad. Everybody wants to know how to do something. That's going to benefit their business. Yes. And something else that's unusual about social media examiner is you one would think many people would think, well you probably really probably do a lot of affiliate promotion where you get a commission from people for promoting their site or their product and you don't do any of the of that non so we don't, we don't take advertising either. That was your philosophy from the beginning, right? Correct. Yeah. Um, we are, I like to refer to us as a, as a product based media company. We are a full scale media company. We do exactly what media companies do. The only difference between us and everyone else is we, we're not beholden to sponsors or advertisers. Um, so we can do whatever we want and the only ads are going to see on our site are the ads for what we're selling, which is usually one thing at a time.
- Speaker 5: [26:28](#) The conference or the summit or the society and sometimes nothing. Last month we had absolutely nothing for sale. And that's fine because in the end, uh, what we're doing is we want to become kind of a feeding trough or a town hall or a hangout or a water cooler for the right community. And this is why people love us and this is why they are linked to us and why they share a stuff and why they feel like there's just something uniquely different about us. And um, you know, this re people buy from who they know and they like and trust. Trust. That's right. Well they trust us because we give them so much for free. And many of them, even though they cannot afford everything that we have for sale, we'll tell all their friends to go buy it because they trust us.
- Speaker 6: [27:10](#) Well, and people will ask sometimes, well, how do I get people to trust me? Well, you'd be trust worthy and you've built that reputation.

- Speaker 5: [27:18](#) You give and you and you give and you give and you really don't take. And you'd be okay with the fact that that the vast majority of the people that are consuming will never be customers.
- Speaker 6: [27:30](#) What, um, what role does, do you play? Are you still involved in the writing of copy and creating content?
- Speaker 5: [27:38](#) I am a lot. Um, I write, I write every single headline for every article at social media examiner and every opening set another way. I edit every single headline in every opening. So every week my team brings to me all the headlines and openings for every article for the following week. And I go through and I review the articles. I make sure that the promise of the headline matches the article. And I also make sure that the headline is quite strong because I'm writing headlines is not easy. Um, I, and by the way, part of the, part of the way we know what works is every year we do a survey where we survey thousands of our readers and we asked them what do they want to learn about? Um, which is kind of intriguing. So I run that survey, I run all that analysis. In addition, I write all the emails that are all the promotional emails. I write all the copy on all of our product sales pages. So I'm, I'm pretty active as far as the writing side of things and, and I, and I watch what happens and then I tweak it and just, I'm very involved at that side. It's the one special gift that I had that I have not been able to delegate.
- Speaker 6: [28:50](#) What is your process for doing that? Do you do the writing early in the morning? Is it all at once or do you do it in segments, pieces throughout the day? How does that work?
- Speaker 5: [28:59](#) Um, when it comes to the headlines and stuff, I'm very fast, so it takes me a half an hour to do an entire week's of articles. Um, so I usually get those on Tuesday and being a mountain about a half an hour. Um, sometimes it talk it out with my team. Um, but, but the more complicated stuff, like the writing of the emails, it's always done in the morning. And the way that I do my schedule, Ray is I know that I'm best between the hours of Eight and 11. So I never schedule a meeting between eight and 11 ever Monday through Friday, except for like when I have my live show. Um, cause I have to, because it's in the morning, it's called the morning social media marketing talk show. Um, so that morning time is purposely kept open so that I can refine my craft and we are always essentially, you know, working on whatever the email copy's going to be for whatever we're promoting. I'm always taking a look at the messaging that we have on our sales pages and because I have that time set aside, it's always a constant, um, process, if you will,

of improving. And I also, by the way, look at a lot of my peers, I study what you do, Ray. And I studied with a lot of other people do and I, and I look at what they're doing and then I say, is there any room for what they're doing with my audience? And I try little things up.

Speaker 6: [30:12](#) Now you review every headline in every opening for every article. So do you change every one of them? Do, do any ever get through and you just go, that's good.

Speaker 5: [30:23](#) One or two get through? I have a feeling, yeah, one or to get through, but most don't. Um, and it's okay because, uh, my team understands that I'm going to make it better whenever I can. Um, no matter how good my team is, I'm, I'm looking at it from a different Lens because I'm not, so they say that the painter, he gets blind to the spots that they miss on the wall. And, and even when I was a full time copywriter, I had another editor who proved all my work because it's always good to have someone else look at your work and say, you know what? Like, like I've said, you know what, this article, we're not going to run this article, sorry, but I'm pulling it, you know, because the headline and the promise of it isn't there in the article and our integrity is on the line. So that stuff happens infrequently. But yeah, it does happen.

Speaker 6: [31:12](#) What mistakes do you see social media marketers make with their copy?

Speaker 5: [31:22](#) I think that a lot of social media marketers just take and paste, you know, they'd just take whatever's somewhere else and they paste it in. Um, and the same thing goes when they're sharing someone else's content instead of contextualized in it for their audience. They might take even our content and just say, here it is. And they paste the link up there and they just assume that that's all they needed to do. And I think a lot of marketers don't understand, especially social media marketers, that they should customize it a little bit to their audience in particular in particular. And Facebook, you can change any headline that pulls in from the open graph just by clicking on it and you can alter a not so good headline to be slightly better to get to get better performance. And here's a little secret, right? When you're emailing a newsletter to your list, you don't have to copy the actual headline that's in the article the same way it is.

Speaker 5: [32:13](#) And the email newsletter, you can change it. Ray, what? Yes, because maybe people that open email or a little different than people that read blogs, maybe they are, maybe they're not. So you can experiment with it. You can even what we do is we bury the lead. So, um, we have a lead story and we put out our newsletter now three days a week, Monday, Wednesdays and Fridays. And

we have multiple items inside the newsletter. And what we do is we take the lead story and we bear it down the page. And the reason we do that is because we have other stories that we want people to potentially consider. And by putting it down the page, those other stories get a chance to be seen by the eye. And also for advertising something in our newsletter, like our upcoming conference, that ad will be seen if we bury it a little bit further down the page.

Speaker 5: [33:02](#) So because people are looking for it. And another thing is that when people read emails, sometimes they have some of the email pull in. So if the headline is one thing and then they see another headline inside the summary for another article, either both of those things are at play to try to get the email to be opened. Very smart, very strategic, exactly what I would expect from you. Um, how important is the visual part of social media marketing? I think the bigger question is how important is the visual part to copywriting? And I will tell you that a lot of us that our writers don't think about this, but if you take the exact same set of paragraphs and you put them on a page and you make the type really tiny and harder to read and you take the exact same thing and you put it on a page in a font that's a little bit bigger with a little vertical spacing behind it and a little bit of bolden and headlines and stuff, one is going to get red and one's going to get ignored.

Speaker 5: [34:03](#) So I think that layout, white space, visual design is absolutely essential because people make a snap judgment, whether it's in an email or on Facebook or anywhere else, they make us snap instant judgment about whether or not that's something that ought to be read. So instead of pasting a paragraph into Facebook, how about putting a carriage return on every sentence and see if it makes a difference. I mean, Ray, you, you know this, I mean you do a lot of one p one sentence paragraphs, don't you and your copy. Yes. Why? Because people will skip over a big massive block of text. They won't read it. It just looks intimidating. They scan the skim through the copy. So one of the things that we do all over social media examiner on our sales pages and in our articles is we bold what we want them to see because we know people skim.

Speaker 5: [34:52](#) So we use a lot of headlines. We use a lot of uh, uh, numbers, the pound sign, one colon and then something and then the pound sign to colon, something. Just these little techniques that are designed to make it really, really easy, um, to skim because we know how most people operate. Humans operate by making quick assessment of what there is before they decide to dig in. Um, or they might start reading linear linearly from top

to bottom, but if for whatever reason they're distracted or they're bored, they're going to abandoned immediately. So just having certain sections bolded just kind of allows them to see, okay, I'm going to keep reading. There's something down here that I want to see. And uh, something else that I think is Kinda cool is sometimes not just using words in tax but using them inside of graphics. Um, uh, one little tip I want to share with you that we recently discovered is on our sales page for the social media success summit, we use something called an exit intent pop up.

Speaker 5: [35:51](#) And I'm sure you know what that means, right? But not everybody might not understand that it's when your mouse is about to leave the page, we pop something up. And in this particular case I popped up a graphic and it says not sure question mark, will it be good question mark, watch free sample and the watch free sample is in bold and orange and it's got a little picture of like a little camera. I mean like a little youtube kind of thing and you know what this thing converts like crazy. These are people that are about to leave the page for whatever reason and I just asked the question, not sure. Will it be good watch free sample and we've only been using this for a few days and we've already got nine sales off of this exit intent pop up that we strategically put on a couple of pages and I would imagine as this runs for months, it could be dozens or even hundreds of sales that are going to happen because we just made a graphic with some copy in it that was designed to get them to not quite leave yet.

Speaker 6: [36:45](#) Do you have any tips for copywriters who may be the, the whole idea of graphic design has not been something they've thought about and now that they've heard you explain it, they're thinking, well I need to do that, but I don't really have the resources that Mike Stelzner has. What would you say to them?

Speaker 5: [37:03](#) Okay. Um, first of all, picmonkey or Canva are two free tools that you can just pop text in and you can just format them and lay them out and look like you're a graphic designer in seconds. Um, I happen to use Photoshop and Adobe illustrator just cause I used to own a design agency back in the day. But um, I would say that if you can afford a graphics designer, go for it. One of the things, ray, you'll notice about social media examiners, we have a really cool graphic with the exact same headline in it on every single article. And it's not just [inaudible] and you might be thinking, well, why would you do that? That's redundant, right? It's the exact same headline that's in the text. The reason we do that is because first of all, it makes it look more professional. Secondly, that's the image that shows up on Facebook and

that's the image that shows up on Twitter. And people would much rather read a really cool graphic that shows that, you know, three tools to create social media visuals with all sorts of cool, really sexy looking graphic than they would just the text. So the investment in a designer might pay out in spades. Um, and I don't know, ray, if you use a graphic designer, do you?

Speaker 6: [38:17](#)

I do. Yeah. And it seems like a big investment, uh, until you go back and compare when my case, until I go back and compare the graphics that I used to make to the graphics that my designer makes and I realized, Oh, I should've done this a long time ago. Just remember, perception

Speaker 5: [38:32](#)

is reality for a lot of people. When I, I'll tell you a quick story. When I started social media examiner, I was at blog world. I was three days old and I went up to the, to a trade show booth of this very big company who's never heard of me before. And I said, I'm Mike Stelzner from social media examiner.com and I would like to interview your CEO. And the Gal that was at the booth took her iPhone, typed in social media examiner.com while I was talking, saw that I had a very professional looking website and said, oh Richard, this is Mike Stelzner from social media examiner. He would love to interview you. And she was the head of PR. They'd never heard of me. I looked professional, it looked professional. They thought I had been around for years. I would get emails from people saying, I've been reading your site for years and I'd only been out for a couple of months.

Speaker 5: [39:18](#)

And people just thought, I, you know, I like to say that visuals overcome the who are you perception, right? Um, which is like, if I've never heard of you, but you look professional, then the presumption is that you must be professional and you've existed for a while. And there's a lot of value with that because it can help radically improve trust. How do you suggest, um, a copywriter who wants to, uh, so many of the people that I work with and that I encounter are, I would, I would call them novice social media marketers. So how would you, uh, recommend that they go about learning? There's so many resources. Um, how would you recommend they get started in doing social media marketing the right way? The freeway would be to listen to my podcast, social media marketing is called. Um, I've had so many people come up to me and my conference saying, my Gosh, I got a raise, I got a promotion, or I've been able to help my customers or my business just by listening to your podcast.

Speaker 5: [40:20](#)

So that's like the effortless way to do it. Got hundreds of episodes that you could just listen to while you're at the

gym or in the car to at least begin understanding whatever you want to understand. You don't have to listen to all the episodes. You can pick a topic and just go download all of those topics. That's the easiest way. Um, and then I would start reading to some of our articles. I would start there because like we put out so much stuff that's so good that you don't need to pay anybody if you've got the time. Now, if you don't have the time, then you have to decide do you want to make the investment to accelerate your benefits with social media? That's when you decided to either a hire consultant. Can you hear the copywriter in me working or be decide to invest in some sort of professional development, conference, summit's whatever. Um, all those things can fast track you, but they come at a cost. So you have to decide what is more valuable for you, your time or your money. Well, I totally agree and I, your podcast is one, I have only a few podcasts that I absolutely will not miss a single episode of. And Yours is one of those. Thank you. And it's the only social media marketing podcast

Speaker 6: [41:33](#) that I listened to. Um, there you go. That's a good endorsement. And it's when I tell people, when people ask me, well, how do I learn about, there's so many sites and people and courses and I'm like, no, just go to social media examiner. And if you need to hire somebody or pay for something, you'll find it there. And I know because of your integrity and because we know one another, I know that every, every article, every author, every person who's involved in any way with what you're doing is on the level. And I think that's important. And that's, that's the kind of trust that you've built over the, over the years.

Speaker 5: [42:05](#) That's so cool. And by the way, and there's a lesson for the copywriter right here, right? So here ray has given me a, I'm a glowing endorsement, but the reason that he's given me a glowing endorsement now is because we know each other. But he would probably give this endorsement before even met me because of what we've done for him. And the value that we provide in the lesson to you as a copywriter is that if you can figure out a way to provide value over a podcast in the written word and a blog post or via videos, uh, and you consistently do it, the rewards are going to be gargantuan. And I have no idea how many tens, hundreds of thousands and even millions of rays are out there saying the exact same thing about me. And that's what you want when you're a copywriter.

Speaker 6: [42:50](#) I think that's exactly right. And uh, I'll give you another example. There's a guy named Shawn Coyne who is a book editor and he has edited many New York Times bestselling works of fiction and nonfiction and he has a book that he wrote called the story grid. And he's got a website which is story grid.com. He sells nothing except he has a link to

his book, but he gives and gives and gives. And I've been watching what he's been doing now for over a year. As he does a podcast, he writes articles. He breaks down how he uses the story grid to evaluate what makes a good book work and how you, he even gives away a spreadsheet that lets you use the tools that he uses to analyze books and make them better and fix books. And I kept thinking, well, at some point he's going to charge for this. And he hasn't up until this point. Now that doesn't mean Sunday. He's not going to. But I'll tell you one thing, when he does whatever he offers, I will pay for, because I've gotten so much from that guy. I've never met him. I don't know him. Uh, I just have received so much value from him that I, I couldn't do otherwise.

- Speaker 5: [43:54](#) And an even more important if for whatever reason, you're in a spot where you don't need what he has to offer, but you meet someone who does, he's going to be the first thing and it's going to roll off your tongue. And, and this is a very important marketing philosophy here, which is that people buy on referral over a Internet search any day of the week. Yes. And having, having evangelists for your product is really the ultimate thing that all marketers want. And that's what this guy has got. And he doesn't even have a product yet. That's awesome. Awesome.
- Speaker 6: [44:24](#) And uh, you saw me laughing because I've actually done that. People ask me about book stuff and I'm like, Oh, you go this site.
- Speaker 5: [44:32](#) Yeah. And I get the guy's book and listen to his podcast and read every article on his site. Um, so I've already been evangelizing for him. And you know what, here's the thing, right? Most people never do what this guy does and what we do at social media examiner because in their mind, that's too much work. And this is the thing that everybody needs to understand. If you're not willing to invest in, and you have to think about this as an investment, this is like putting money in the stock market. When apple was cheap and nobody wanted to be with apple, knowing that down the road it was going to pay huge dividends. If you're willing to invest in some sort of a long game with the idea that you're not doing this for the short run, you're doing this for the long run and you see it as an investment, as a cost, that is a legitimate cost of your time, but it's going to bear enormous fruit down the road.
- Speaker 5: [45:21](#) If you think about it from that perspective, strategically, um, you're going to be set and you're never going to have a problem. I could have continued to write white papers for the rest of my life and been just fine. And, um, instead I decided to want to pivot. But now I can stay in

social media probably as long as I want to. And it's a great place to be in. But the only way to get there is to be willing to do the work and consistently do the work. And, um, and that's, that's a big struggle for copywriters because generally they like to get paid for the work. That's true. Not going to see the pay until down the road. But I really think that is, especially for copywriters, because if you're, if you're a copywriter as a service provider, you're always looking for the next client.

Speaker 5: [46:04](#)

And there's nothing wrong with that, but there will come a point when you won't want to do that anymore. And having built something over time that will sustain itself is an enormous asset that you don't get as just a freelancer. Well, and if, if this guy, this book guy was a consultant, kind of like a kind of like you can argue a copywriter is, he would have an endless lead opera lead funnel of opportunities. You know, he would never have to work or advertise ever to be able to find more business. Oh, I'm sure he's turning business away now. Yeah. Um, so if only you had written down exactly the process you used to build your business so that people could read about it in and kind of replicate that success on their own. Actually, I did, but wait, you did. Uh, yeah. Tell us about the book launch came out in 2010, 2011.

Speaker 5: [46:54](#)

Uh, fundamentally there's nothing about it that is not valid today. I'm not, that is not, that is no longer invalid, I should say. There's nothing invalid about it today. Um, the long story, the short version of the book is that it's a very simple principle I came up with called the elevation principle. Great content we've been talking about that plus other people minus marketing messages, equal growth and great content is podcasts, blog posts, videos, all that stuff plus other people. This is the other people is a little bit complex. Let me explain it. You're designing, you're creating content to draw a lot of people to you, but some of these people that you're going to be drawing to you are going to be a, what I call 'em special p. I have a name for it. I've forgotten the name, but they're like super super people.

Speaker 5: [47:46](#)

They're like, um, but I called my firestarters. Okay, these are people that have influence. And in my case, I'm always drawing towards me people that are experts in social media. So, and, and, and I provide them my platform through my podcast or through my blog or through my conference. And the reason why they're drawn towards me is because I have the audience that they want, if that makes sense. So the other people is not just the audience you're drawing to you, but also the um, uh, influencers, if you will, amongst that audience. And it's about giving all of them what they want. So it's about giving the influencers what they want, which is often

exposure or fame. And it's about giving the customers what they want, which is information and how to so great content plus other people minus marketing messages. So when you get rid of the marketing, when you have marketing messages is kind of like the flaps on an airplane.

Speaker 5: [48:34](#)

When the plane comes in for a landing and it slows everything down. When you don't have marketing messages, you can glide and you can, you can go a lot faster. So I believe in being very tempered in your marketing. It doesn't mean no marketing ever. It just means generally speaking, you're not going to in a blog post say, and if you'll love this blog post, hire me. You know, instead you're going to say, if you love this blog post, get I get the next one by getting your name on the email and just let her list, don't miss out. You know, or it's going to be, get my free report and get my free book. So instead of doing traditional marketing, which is selling, instead you're selling something that is actually more of what they already want, which is something of value and free. And then, um, when you combine all those three together, that's when you can have crazy dramatic growth.

Speaker 6: [49:23](#)

Highly recommend that you get the book and read it. It is just as valid today as it was the day you wrote it. And there's audio book too that perfect. Do you read the audio book? No. I wish they would've asked me. I wish they would have to. I didn't even know it was coming out until I heard it. And it's got, I don't care for the guy's voice, but for those of our listeners, you know, if you want to listen, it's, it works. Um, and I think a great case study that proves that it still can work exactly the way it worked for you is actually Shaun Coin's a story story grid website because he's doing exactly what you just described. He is providing great content. He has other people involved. Yeah. There's a gentleman named Tim Grahl who hosts the podcast and who serves as kind of the sounding board, uh, for Sean to talk about his stuff.

Speaker 6: [50:08](#)

And then he's got Steven Pressfield who is somebody that he was an agent for an editor for and, and uh, Steven is like an evangelist for Sean and the, there are other people that are drawn to and promote Sean's website. Jeff Goins is one of those people. So he's done exactly what you're talking about. And he's still hasn't marketed anything. But when he, I have no doubt it will be successful. Yeah. And I'm sure, I'm sure he's smart. He's got a plan here. Who knows what it is. But for now it's his book, but tomorrow could be something much more. Right? Yeah. I just think it's a fantastic case study. If anybody thinks, well maybe it was go okay for Stelzner back in 2010 but it won't work now. I think that's

absolutely not true. It will work now because it's really about human psychology. It is.

Speaker 6: [50:50](#) It's about giving people what they want when they want it for free. It's amazing. I mean it's, it's not rocket science and I'm not the first one to figure it out. I've just kind of formulated it in a way that I think people can understand it. But, um, you know, in the olden days you had to pay somebody to get the information. Nowadays we're in a world where there's overwhelming amount of information. So now the struggle is not getting it for free. It's getting good for free and it's getting great for free. And that's still where you can as a copywriter thrive. Because if you know how to create really good content for free, people will love it because most of the content out there is not good. Yes. And that brings to mind something that I was discussing with a friend of mine recently who said, well, you know, you can't just put a form on your website anymore and say, get my blog post updates for free.

Speaker 6: [51:37](#) That won't work anymore. And I said to him, well that just means you blog posts aren't good enough. That's probably true. And I think it is true. I think that it's not that offering other things is not a good thing to do, but I think if your content is good enough, um, then like with, I keep talking about Sean's website, but I think they just proves the point cause I have no interest. Yeah, I have no financial aid, wasn't podcasts. You find a good podcast, you're gonna hit that subscribe button because you don't want to miss it. You don't want to miss the next one. Exactly. Exactly. Well, and I will say though that I think that, uh, if you have something valuable to give away, you can couple those two things together. So, and we've, we do that with great success. We say we say get our free industry report, which is like a 56 page report and never miss a future episode or article.

Speaker 6: [52:24](#) So when we couple those two things together with great success, but the, the, the report that you give is also have much higher quality than most of the other free stuff being given away. Yeah, we could definitely charge for that. So it's, yeah, absolutely. So it's really about the quality of the content which comes down to you got to do the work upfront. Exactly. To build the thing. Well I want to thank you so much. This has been one of the best interviews we've done in a long, long time and I didn't expect anything less, but I appreciate your time and your candor and your transparency. Thank you so much. Absolute pleasure. Thanks for having me. Right. And so go to social media examiner.com and we'll have links to the society and the summit and the books and all the other things you should get, but definitely subscribed to social media examiner. You will not be sorry. Thank you Mike.

- Speaker 3: [53:08](#) Thank you Ryan. This episode is brought to you in part by the raid re certified copywriter program. Why would you want to become a ray? Had Re certified copywriter? Well, here's three good reasons. First, establish your credibility. It's hard to stand out in today's market as a copywriter. There's so many people doing it. Borrow my credibility and my reputation. When you're certified by me, I put my name under yours. Number two, reason number two, to become a certified copywriter, get more leads. The toughest part of this business is getting leads. We get lots and we can't handle all the ones we get. We would love to possibly share qualify leads with you as a certified copywriter. Wouldn't you like that arrangement? And the third reason is to multiply your income instead of growing your copywriting business incrementally. Why not grow it exponentially? Don't just add your income, multiply it. Now, I can't guarantee any certain level of income, but I can guarantee you to give you all the tools, the knowledge, the wisdom and the advantages that I've had that helped me get where I've gotten to today. And I believe you can get there faster and avoid many of the problems that I had cause I'll tell you what they were. So if you want to know more, go to ray training.com that's ray training.com and you'll get all your
- Speaker 1: [54:14](#) question answered there. If you enjoyed today's show, subscribe through apple podcasts or wherever you get your podcasts and give us a rating and a review. Make it honest. I hope it's good, but we can do you use constructive feedback if you have it the worse we might mention you on the show. So make sure you put your real name and your website and the text of the review if you're allowed to do that at the site you're using. Find the show notes and links to everything we talked about at [inaudible] dot com slash three eight four and until next week, may God bless you and your business and may you enjoy a long and wildly prosperous life. See it.
- Speaker 2: [54:48](#) Thank you for listening to the Ray Edwards show. Find the complete archives of all episodes@rayedwardspodcast.com or subscribe for free through apple podcasts and never miss an episode. This program, copyright Ray Edwards international incorporated all rights reserved. Each week we bring you a message of prosperity with purpose and freedom. Remembering that true freedom is available to all through Jesus Christ.