

from the editor

## *Solutions and opportunities await*

Freebird gets mail from students on a regular basis telling of their struggles in launching a freelance business. As you finish your course work or even before you are done, the fear of self-marketing begins. In this issue Lyn Blair explains that while you're not alone, there isn't a magic button for instant success either. Are you waiting for your first break or deciding how to make the break happen? Linda Angér teaches you a simple marketing trick. Create 30-second commercials to tell people about your business. Are you ready to launch your freelance business? We review the personal attributes needed to run a freelance business. We also continue with our tutorial series for building your own web site. Based on the problems we see other facing, we strive to provide solutions to guide you.

With suggestions in hand from the editorial staff, Karen Cunningham took her first marketing plunge. She approached High Country Outfitters with *Rollin' on the River*. To her delight, High Country Outfitters was very much interested in her article. As chance would have it, High County was in the beginning stages of a web page revamp, when Karen contacted them. Opportunities await you too.

**Maria Thompson**

## ***The (Sometimes Rocky) Road to Success - Chapter 4***

### **Are You Reaching for an Instant Success Button?**

*by Lyn Blair*

As a freelancer you won't have the security of working for someone else. You're setting out on your own to seek new freedom and the prospect of greater income.

A wide world of opportunity awaits you and the freelance work skills you've carefully crafted and honed. Now that you've learned and practiced... whether it's writing copy, graphic design, resume writing, travel writing, or even just *writing*, you're ready launch your career.

Are you feeling a little worried or afraid? *You are not "alone"*. Here's what your AWAI Forum buddies have had to say:

Cat started a thread called, "The real holdback and the underlying question is..." She asks, "*Are all the doors opened to me now? Or do I still have to go out and market myself?*"

Her post sums up the dread of self-marketing. Here are some responses to Cat's questions:

*"Hey cat, For what it's worth, I am in the same boat as you. The idea of having to market my skills seems so daunting!"*

***Dtravers Vancouver, BC, Canada.***

*"You sound maybe a little nervous about getting started marketing, which I believe is completely normal since there are so many different ways you could market yourself... 'Marketing' can be kind of an intimidating word for a lot of people, and so I do see where people develop a gripe because they feel at a loss on how to get started..."*

***Hmrobson, MT***

*"It's all too easy to hide behind the course, our books, and our writing and not get out there and pound the pavement with marketing. My fear of rejection and not being good enough has stopped me from going out on a limb and drumming up travel writing business."*

***Trease, TriCities, Tennessee***

*"How about intimidation? I think it is one or two points worse than shyness. I actually had the guy doing my hair on Friday afternoon TELL me he was LOOKING FOR A COPYWRITER... It was like God tapping me on the shoulder and yet I am VERY INTIMIDATED by the idea of him disliking my work... no one wants to put his work into the hands of the inexperienced."*

***Chrystine, Montclair, NJ***

In a response to a suggestion that she market a travel article, Karen replied, "I'll give it a stab this evening. My palms are sweating just thinking about it! I love to write...but marketing is very scary to me."

**Karen C., Alabama**

Russ expresses the common refrain in a recent **Freebird** interview "**Rendezvous with Russ on the way to the Beach**".

**MT:** What do you see as the most difficult hurdle as you move ahead with your three year strategy for life as a freelance writer?

**RB:** *More than anything, FEAR!*

The truth is, even answering the simple question, "What do you do?" feels awkward. The words, "I'm a freelance writer or designer" just don't roll off your tongue with an air of confidence. You find yourself saying too much, saying too little or saying the wrong things.

### **What Degree of Success Will You Have Achieved by this Time Next Year?**

Are you looking for the magic button to press to get that career going...the *instant success button*? If you asked a roomful of people if they wanted to succeed, everyone would raise their hand. *Yes they would like to succeed!*

With all that desire, why is it... *not everyone succeeds*? Reasons for not succeeding seem endless. If you were to write those reasons down on pieces of paper and line them up, they'd stretch for miles.

And truly everyone would have different rungs they failed to climb in *their* ladder to success: Self-marketing skills. Correctly targeted markets. Strategy. Sales technique. Cash outlay. Self discipline. Motivation. Effective planning. Strong support. Excellent people skills. Persistence. Diligence... PLENTY OF NERVE.

The idea that you might fail at this new job becomes the worst of your fears. Yes, there's just that chance...you haven't got what it takes. Your fellow freelancers know these thoughts going through your head. You can read them in the forum posts, either expressed between the lines or openly in discussions that read like heartfelt confessions.

The degree of success you'll achieve lies before you, like a fork in the road, demanding you choose your path. You can walk down the nasty road of self-doubt, focusing on all the reasons why you "can't". What's the point in that? The truth is, there are many successful freelance people in this world. Success doesn't wear a cloak of mystery. With proper preparation, the right tools and knowledge, freelance writers and graphic designers achieve success all the time. So why shouldn't you?

### **Will You Choose to be a Spectator or a Participant?**

Perhaps the most challenging step on your ladder to success is *Spectators versus Participants*. You live in a mechanized, spectator society with pastimes like watching TV, going to the movie theater, playing video games, surfing the net, window shopping at malls and not playing... but *watching* sports games. You sit back, relax and let the gadget do it for you. You drive your car to the carwash and watch the machine soap up and rinse your car. You press a button and microwave your packaged food. Flip a switch and there's light. Turn a knob and there's heat. Mechanization does your work and fills your recreational hours, leaving you a passive participant, otherwise known as a spectator.

Now you want to launch your freelance career. Opportunity awaits you. Where's the button? I'm sorry. It just doesn't work that way. The good news is Freebird will give you help, tips and guidance. We share the secrets successful people use to launch freelance careers. With knowledge, tools, proper planning and moral support, you too can learn how to *succeed at your new freelance venture*.

That's enough of being a spectator. Let's get started!

## **30-Second Marketing: Creating Your Live-Action Commercials**

by Linda C. Angér, *The Write Concept, Inc.*

So you want to tell the world you're in business. You're trained, you're armed with all the tricks of the trade, and you're ready to tackle the world. Now you're just waiting for that first big break.

It could come in less than 30 seconds, if you learn some simple marketing tricks and use them to your advantage.

A lot can happen in 30 seconds. You can fall in love, win the lottery, miss your plane – or charm the socks off the CEO who could fill your bankbook with 5-figure deposits. You're on your own with the first three, but a little bit of time, effort and creativity on your part can make the last one happen with more ease than you think.

The trick is to learn effective networking techniques, and use them consistently. One of the most effective is the 30-second commercial, also called an "elevator speech," or a "sound byte." The 30-second commercial wraps your business up in a tidy, short package anyone can understand. It ties your name, your company and your capabilities to a phrase or catchword that has meaning to other people – something they will remember when they need your product or service.

### **A Commercial? But I'm Not an Actor!**

Oh, yes you are. As William Shakespeare wisely stated, "All the world's a stage, and all the men and women merely players." As an entrepreneur, you're on stage every time you attend a networking meeting. You're on stage at every client meeting, on every business phone call. You're even on stage at a neighborhood party – or any event at which someone might ask, "What do you do?"

Your 30-second commercials are, essentially, your opening lines. Like any good actor, you need to learn your lines well, and deliver them smoothly – after you've honed them into a compelling verbal advertisement.

Just last week I sat between two real estate agents at a large networking lunch in which everyone had 30 seconds to promote their business. The first agent's commercial went something like this:

"Hi, I'm Susan Soandso, an award-winning Real Estate Consultant. Whether you're buying or selling a property, I Make Your Way Home *EASY*."

Agent #2 stood, folded her arms, and said, "I'm Cindy. Most of you know me, or, well, maybe you don't. I went into real estate last year but I used to be in computer sales and, uuuhhhmmm, if you know anybody just give them my name."

After the meeting, three people approached Susan for information. Cindy walked out alone. The reason is simple: Susan is a smart and savvy networker. She knows the best way to attract business at a networking event is to speak succinctly and focus on the prospect's emotional interests.

Dread is a common emotion for people faced with the prospect of moving. The entire process is such a drag, so complicated and time consuming. Susan painted a picture of comfort and credibility in six short words: "I Make Your Way Home *Easy*." People don't buy a *house*, they buy a *home* – a home that's a joy to return to every day, a home that's safe, a home that's close to the places and things they love to do or see. Emotionally, for most of us, "home" is our haven, our personal cocoon. "Going Home" is a good thing, and we all want our way there to be *easy*. In just 23 words, Susan created a perfect commercial, painting a picture of a common desire and setting herself up as a credible solution – and it took less than 30 seconds to deliver.

## The Elements of Effective Commercials

Effective commercials have three basic components:

Your Name & Company

A Direct Benefit of your work to the Customer

Your Tag Line

Direct Benefits are the hardest part for most people. The trick is to break your business down into small chunks that relate directly to a client's pain, hunger, or desire and show how your services solve their problem. Focus on the benefits your clients realize from your expertise.

Think of it this way: customers don't buy grass seed, mutual funds or vitamin supplements. They buy the promise of a lush green lawn, a secure retirement, or extra energy, vitality and health. And your potential clients don't buy sales letters. They buy the promise of increased revenues.

### **Step 1 – The Good Things You Do**

Start building your Direct Benefits list with the words "I help," and write as many different image-inducing statements as you can. Your list will grow and change as your business progresses, so if you can only come up with one or two right now, that's OK. They'll be your initial "control" – a starting line on which you will improve over time. Here are a few examples to get you started:

*I help business owners turn prospects into sales...*

*I help businesses get a higher return on their marketing dollars...*

*I help businesses boost their market share...*

### **Step 2 – The "In Your Hands" Form**

Add a specific form your work takes – the finished piece they can see, touch and distribute:

*I help business owners turn prospects into sales with marketing letters...*

*I help businesses boost their market share with brochures...*

*I help businesses get a higher return on their marketing dollars with direct mail...*

Now the stage is partially set. You've told them how you can help them, and what form your help might take. The final piece is to relate your expertise to a specific action by *their* customers – to build a stronger visual of more people coming into their store or office.

### **Step 3 – The Results**

Finish the picture with "your customer" images:

*I help business owners turn prospects into sales with marketing letters that make people pick up the phone or come in your store.*

*I help businesses boost their market share with brochures that people show to their friends and families.*

*I help businesses get a higher return on their marketing dollars with direct mail campaigns that jolt people into action.*

## Tag Lines

Sometimes called a "memory hook," your tag line is a phrase that makes your name memorable, something that ties your name to the service you provide.

Tag lines can relate to problem solving (Hair Stylist: "I fix \$8 haircuts!"), the emotional side of a transaction (Real Estate: "I find the house you put your heart into."), or amusing (Electrician: "We check your shorts!") Whichever tone you choose to take in creating your tag line, keep it short – ten words or less – and focus on being simple, direct and high-impact.

Here are three ideas for copywriters and designers:

“Making Your Words Matter.”

“Direct Mail, Direct Sales.”

“Designing your Success.”

### **Backstage Advice**

You're an actor. Remember? Once you've got the script in your hands, it's time for rehearsals. Write your commercials out from start to finish, memorize them and say them out loud. Choose your cadence, which words to emphasize, the tone of your delivery. Practice in front of a mirror, tape yourself and play it back until you are satisfied your words and delivery are convincing. Ask your friends or family members to be your audience and give you feedback.

Then get out there, tell people what you do and how it benefits them, and see what happens over time. Deliver your commercial at networking meetings. Introduce yourself to people in the elevator the next time you're going up ten floors. Tell your neighbors what you do, tell the people at your church or gym. You never know who you will meet or where, but one thing is for sure – a lot can happen in 30 seconds.

### **About the Author**

AWAI 6-Figure Copywriting student Linda Angér is President of The Write Concept, Inc., a 5-year old copywriting service in Rochester Hills, Michigan. Her clients include DaimlerChrysler Corporation, Lucid Business Strategies ([www.lucidbusiness.com](http://www.lucidbusiness.com)) and Industrial Visions Company ([www.industrialv.com](http://www.industrialv.com)). Linda is a member of Business Network International, the National Association of Women Business Owners, The Association for Women in Communications, Detroit Working Writers, and the Rochester Regional Chamber of Commerce. Visit The Write Concept, Inc. at [www.thewriteconcept.com](http://www.thewriteconcept.com).

### ***The Tool Box***

#### **Get on the spot help with grammar and its usage**

As a commercial writer your writing is a reflection of you and your freelance business. Your writing projects will encompass many forms and styles. Direct mail promotions, brochures and newsletters used to sell a product, idea or service will call for a conversational style and informal structure. On the other hand, writing corporate materials, such as company brochures designed for investors, employee newsletters, manuals and annual reports, will require standard language usage and formal structure. When your words matter, **Grammar Station** offers help with understanding grammar and its correct usage. The web site provides a *Grammar Checker*, a *Spell Checker*, a *Grammar Guide* and much more. In addition to English language grammar, you will find help with grammar usage in other languages too.

- Take the *Grammar Test* to receive an evaluation of your grammar and receive suggestions for improvements.
- The *Grammar Guide* focuses on intensive practice based on specific grammar items like: Active/Passive, Subject-Verb Agreement, Determiner+Noun, Verb Tenses, Confusable Pairs.
- If you need help fast, copy and paste sentences up to 25 words in the *Grammar Checker* screen. Click “*Check Grammar*”. In an instant any incorrect grammar is highlighted. Recommended suggestions are given.

**Grammar Station** is a Freebird 5-star tool. Add [www.grammarstation.com](http://www.grammarstation.com) to your list of Favorites/Bookmarks for on the spot help with your grammar questions.

# A Professional Web Site – Made Easy

By Frauke Nonnenmacher

## Part 4 – Hyperlinks I

(If you've missed parts 1, 2 or 3, you can get them from the Freebird archives [here](#))

Congratulations! With all you've learned so far, you can put together some very creditable web pages for your business. But there's one more important element - you need to be able to link your web pages to each other. For this purpose, you need hyperlinks (A hyperlink is a piece of text or an image you can click on to go to another page, like the word "here" in the previous paragraph). In HTML, a hyperlink tag looks like this:

```
<a href="xyz.htm">Text</a>
```

In the above tag, 'xyz.htm' is the URL for the page you're linking to and 'Text' is the text you want to use as a hyperlink on your web page. The best way for you to understand this is to try it out. Open the index page you've created so far, and then create a new page called 'portfolio.htm'. You can use a different name, of course, as long as it doesn't contain spaces or punctuation marks and ends in either .htm or .html. This is going to be your online portfolio, but for now, just put a header on the page. Your portfolio page should look something like this:

```
<!DOCTYPE HTML PUBLIC "-//W3C//DTD HTML 4.0 Transitional//EN">

<html>
<head>
  <title>Portfolio</title>
</head>

<body>

<h1>My Portfolio</h1>

</body>
</html>
```

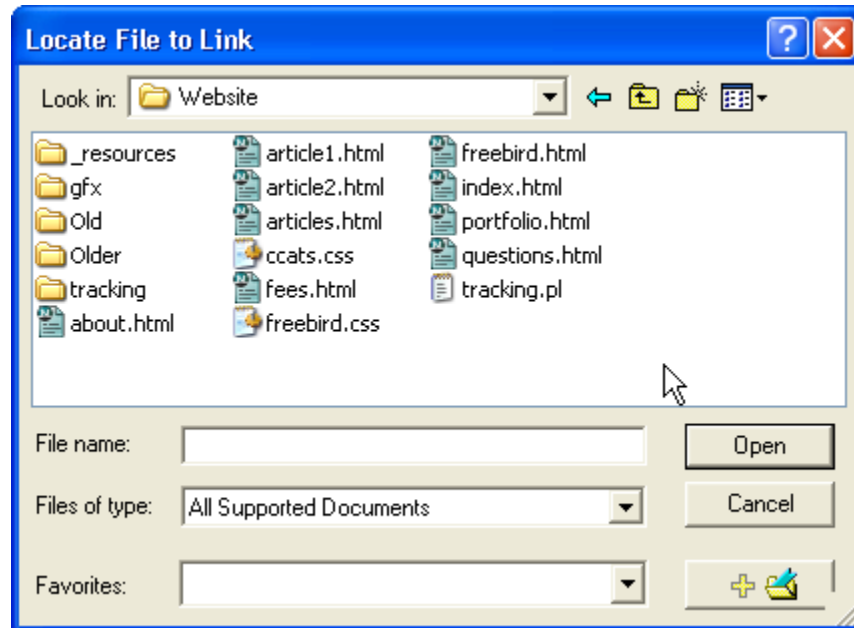
Save this page in the same directory as your index page. Now you're going to create links between the index page and the portfolio page. In the body section of the index page, add the following line:

```
<a href="portfolio.htm">Portfolio</a>
```

Now go to the portfolio page in your HTML editor. This time you're going to insert a link via the toolbar. On the standard toolbar you can see an icon that looks like a hard drive. When you move the mouse over the icon, it should say "Anchor - Local"



Click on the Anchor - Local icon to open the following dialog box:



Select the file you want to link to (index.htm) and click "OK". This will insert a link into your web page.

Save both pages and open the index page in your web browser. You'll see a hyperlink in blue saying 'Portfolio'. Clicking on it should get you to your portfolio page, which should in turn contain a link back to your home page (index.htm). If you have any problems with the links, make sure the file names are spelled correctly and that the file you're linking to has been saved in the correct directory. For now you should save all HTML pages in the same directory, to avoid confusion. Your web site is not yet large enough to warrant sub-directories other than for graphics.

**Homework:**

Create the rest of the web pages you want on your site and link them. Always give your visitors the chance to return to your home page in just one click, so every page needs at least a link to your index page.

Take a look at the web sites of other copywriters, to get ideas about what pages to create (resume, biography, fee schedule etc.)

**Don't forget:** Previous parts of this article are available from the Freebird archives.

Take a look at our exclusive section devoted to web site design, construction and maintenance at [www.freebird-zine.com](http://www.freebird-zine.com)

**Caution:** Before you use this method of inserting a link, make sure that the page you're working on has already been saved. If you get a link that looks like this:

```
<a href="file:///C:/My Documents/index.html"></a>
```

you have to delete it, save the file and insert the link again.



## ***Rollin' on the River***

*By Karen J. Cunningham*

Rolling rapids on the Ocoee River pulled us into the churning brown current. Our rubber raft headed straight for a boulder in midstream. In the blink of the eye, the front center of the raft smacked the boulder, spinning us backwards. I hazarded a glance over my shoulder at our guide, Smiley. "For luck," he yelled over the roar of the river.

On a hot August day my husband Rick and I maneuvered through crashing waves, around treacherous boulders, and over steep ledges in the Middle and Upper sections of the Ocoee River as it twisted and tumbled through a spectacular scenic gorge in the Cherokee National Forest.

Our day began at High Country Outfitters' outpost, near Cleveland, Tennessee. The first order of business was selecting life jackets, helmets and paddles. Next, came a short "safety presentation". Raft guides explain how to hold a paddle and how to brace yourself to prevent falling out of the raft. Just in case you do become a "swimmer", the guides demonstrate the white water swimming position and how to get back into the raft. After everyone divided into groups of four to six for raft assignments, we boarded an ancient, repainted, school bus.

As we bumped along a rutted road, the lower part of the Ocoee River was visible on one side. The Ocoee was wide and calm and looked more like a lake. The bus climbed several steep hills; the streambed became narrower and the water ran faster. The side road leading to the river looked barely wide enough for two cars to pass each other. Yet our driver didn't so much as slow down on the curves, even when passing a bus coming the opposite way! After nearly an hour our bus rattled to a stop at our "put in".

Soon we were rolling down the Ocoee. After we "kissed" the rock in the middle of the river, Smiley "surfed a hole." Deftly turning the raft around, he pointed it upstream; holding it in the strong current while water rushed over the front of the raft. "Might as well get everybody wet at the beginning!" he announced.

The river's rapids all have creative names, like Mickey, Hungry Mother (It'll eat anything!), Washing Machine and Double Trouble. Smiley, expertly guided us through the Upper Ocoee, a five-mile stretch of powerful rapids, a legacy of the 1996 Olympic games. We beached our rafts to take a break and watched other paddlers battling the current. I was curious as Smiley brought out a small bag and pulled out a rope. In a few moments, I understood. A raft was in trouble even before it reached the rapids. A guide was yelling at the four people in her raft to "PADDLE!" but they weren't in sync. I could tell from the look on their faces, they were terrified. Sure enough, right in front of us, their raft tipped on its side. Two paddlers spilled into the churning water. To their credit both immediately assumed the correct white water swimming position; head up, bottom down, feet pointed downstream. Smiley tossed the bag to one of the women, but the current swept her too fast to catch it. Down the river, ropes snaked out until finally both women were hauled onto the bank. I breathed a sigh of relief as we boarded our raft.

Below the Olympic section the river is wide, deep and smooth. Here Smiley suggested a swim. After witnessing the "swimmers" at the last stop, I practiced the "whitewater swimming" position, just in case I needed it downstream. I jumped into the water feet first. My life jacket bobbed me right back to the surface. Holding on, I drifted along with the raft. The water felt "soft". It wasn't cold, as I expected it to be.

After a lunch break at a picnic area, we tackled the Middle Ocoee. The dam came into sight. We were relieved we weren't going over it. We did have to port the raft down a ramp on the right of the dam. Smiley pointed to the footing of the dam. "Usually you can see the footing," he yelled over the noise of tons of rushing water. At least a foot of water poured over the dam. We were in for the ride of our lives.

One continuous rapid plunges 269 feet over five miles from the dam to the middle of the Ocoee. What a ride! By now we were all used to working together and could quickly respond to Smiley's directions: "forward, backward and all down". Speeding towards the last set of rapids we suddenly began spinning. Our raft executed a graceful pirouette straight through the middle of the Hell Hole.

Once more the river widened, running smooth and deep. When Smiley suggested another swim, I jumped into the water. As the sun sank to the horizon, the temperature cooled. Basking in the pink and gold sunset behind the peaks of the mountains, I floated along in the early evening mist rising from the water. Peace and quiet prevailed. The only sound was the movement of the water. No planes or motors, no loud music or strident voices, just the caress and murmur of the river. Too soon, it was time to get back into the raft.

On the bus ride back to the Outpost, the ever changing feel and the sound of the river lingered in my thoughts. With a life of its own, the river raged; dangerous and unpredictable in places, yet other sections were calm and filled me with peace and serenity. Life, I realized, is a lot like rollin' on the Ocoee.

KJC © 2003

*High Country Outfitters:* <http://www.highcountryoutfitters.com/>

## ***Co-op Connections***

### **Resume Writer Needed!**

Hello, fellow students!

I'm just starting to market myself as a freelance copywriter, and I'd like a powerful resume to impress my future clients. If you have completed the AWAI resume writing course, how would you like to swap services? In exchange for a resume, I'll write any piece of copy you need, e.g. a brochure, ad, sales letter, press release.

If you're interested, please email me at [frauке@creativecats.com](mailto:frauке@creativecats.com)

## ***Laying the Foundation For Your Freelance Business***

*By Maria Thompson*

Right now you might feel like a juggler. You're tossing many balls in the air at the same time. You're working on your AWAI course materials; you are getting started with self-marketing strategies; you're searching for your niche and you're practicing for a class act. One thing you haven't done is prepare the groundwork for your freelance business

Before you finish your coursework, you experiment with marketing your skills. To your surprise, you land a client. Your prospective client asks about your fees. You didn't think you'd need a fee schedule until much later. You haven't even selected a name for your new business. Now what?

As the old saying goes, "Don't put the cart before the horse." You need a plan before you build a business. Starting a business, small or large, carries risk. There are no guarantees, but planning, preparation and a close look at your strengths and weaknesses can boost your chances of success. One of the first considerations in planning a freelance business is finding out, if you have what it takes to do the job.

### **Are you Ready?**

Not everyone possesses the attributes necessary to run their own business. Even a business starting out as a sole proprietorship requires wearing many hats. You may not want to take on a certain responsibility or acquire skills vital to certain parts of your business success. To operate your freelance business the following personal characteristics are crucial. Be prepared to don all the hats listed below or include a partner/assistant to wear the ones that don't fit you.

**Self-Starter.** It will be up to you to market your business, find clients, develop projects, set your schedule and follow through on all the details of managing your business.

**People Handler.** You will develop working relationships with clients and their staff, vendors and professionals like accountants, bankers and lawyers. Whether you have a demanding client, an unreliable vendor or have to deal with difficult front office personnel, you will have to take charge of your business interests.

**Decision Maker** You will have decisions to make daily. An ability to make decisions on your own, and many times on the spur of the moment or under pressure is vital as a freelancer.

**Planner and Organizer.** You will be responsible for planning and organizing the details of your business. You will need to set up a business plan, organize your time, schedule project production, and manage financial details.

**Self-Motivator.** You will need ambition and drive to succeed on your own. You will bear the full burden of responsibility for your business. It will be exciting to run your own business, but you need to be prepared. If you are phasing out of a regular job into your freelance business or starting out as a full-time freelancer, you may need to work long days, six or seven days a week, especially in the beginning. Another important consideration as you venture into the land of freelancing is family support. When starting out, the long hours and demands of your new business can disrupt family life. Tell family members what to expect. Explain that your standard of living may need to be adjusted until your business becomes profitable. Having your family's trust and understanding is important.

Don't be taken by surprise. If you land a client before you have a plan in place, you could find yourself in a panic situation. Go through the "Are You Ready?" Checklist. Assess your strengths and weaknesses today. Start building the foundation for your business. Planning and foresight will turn you into an expert juggler and soon you'll be enjoying your new venture.

## ***The World of Graphic Design***

*This KidSafe ID flyer was created as part of a fund raising project for A Child's Desire, a group that helps adoptive parents with grants for children who have been in orphanages more than one year. Using a combination of graphic design and writing skills the flyer increased the response rate of photographers by 20%.*



### **Earn up to \$20 an hour working part-time taking pictures?**

**If you have a digital camera and like kids, A Child's Desire needs your help.**

Hi, I'm Tanya Sturman and A Child's Desire needs your help to take pictures of day care and preschool children in your local area. You'll be paid per photograph and you can take on as much work as you like.

All you need is:

- A digital camera,
- Access to a computer with Excel, and
- A phone

**Contact us today at (318) 354-1229 or by [grants@achildsdesire.org](mailto:grants@achildsdesire.org) to find out more!**



By helping A Child's Desire, you'll be helping orphans all over the world get adopted. You'll also earn some great money.

**Contact Us Today  
at (318) 354-1229!**

### ***About the Designer***

*April Morelock completed the AWAI graphic design and copywriting courses. She lives in Kempton, IN with her husband, Thomas and children, Ian and Kara. She has been working professionally as a copywriter and graphic designer since December 2003.*