Darren Hanser - Breaking Into The Health Niche

Mikhail: Welcome to Health Copywriting Profits, the online event that can help take your copywriting skills and income to the next level. Today, we're talking to Darren Hanser. Darren is a direct response copywriter and marketing strategist who works with health supplement companies and information publishers. He's worked with some incredible brands like Mindbodygreen, Mindful Health, Organifi, Just Drive Probiotic and many more. Darren lives in Ontario, which is just outside of Toronto. And apparently he loves making memes. So welcome, Darren.

Darren: Thanks Mikhail, how are you?

Mikhail: I'm good. How are you doing?

Darren: I'm good. Thanks for having me.

Mikhail: For some of the folks that may not be too familiar with you, why don't you tell us a little about how you got into copywriting?

Darren: Well for now, so I basically do a lot of strategy marketing consulting, and also copywriting. Of course, with, like you said, health supplements and information publishers, a lot of people in the fitness space. The way that I got into it is kind of a roundabout way as I was working a full-time job. I think as a lot of people, I was working full time. I was in marketing, but I wasn't in direct response marketing. I was kind of at a place in my career where I needed more money, but I didn't know how to do that at my current job.

So I started looking online, I think like a lot of people do. I started looking for ways to make money on the internet. I started looking for how to sell things. What I found was actually a course on building email lists and learning how to do copywriting, I guess. That's basically what I was being told. Told, and taught was here's how to build an email list, find a product, find a market and match that offer to the market and do it through email.

I built email lists. I emailed every day, I think I probably wrote to four emails a day from three years straight. That was my kind of trial by fire, it was how to make money and that was something I needed to do. Then in kind of a twist of fate, I lost my job and I became kind of unemployed and I think I had like a month of income leftover from my severance, and I just had to make it work. I actually put a program together, I think it was called the email affiliate program and it was a little coaching program and I would basically work with people and teach them how to email, how to write emails.

I think that coaching program did really well for the first couple of months, I replaced my full-time income. Then I got noticed by one of the companies that I was writing emails for and they asked me to do a promotion for them. They said can you like write our emails? We're doing a live event, kind of similar to what you're doing right here. They said, we're doing a live event and we're going to be selling tickets that people can watch from home.

This was back in like 2012, or 13. Yeah, I can't remember exactly what year it was, but this was one kind of live streams were a bigger thing. They weren't as popular as they are now. And so we did a promotion, I took over their email list and I think we did like $98,000 in that 72 hour period. It was like a three-day weekend, and we did like $98,000.

That result proved to them that I could get a result that I was worth paying. At that time they put me on retainer and I started writing all their emails. I started writing all their copy and it really threw me into the deep end of here's a massive direct response company who is coming out with new offers. They're coming

out with new sales funnels. And this is like a real experience of this is someone writing words and there's money coming up the other end.

It was something that I was now doing for someone else. I had been doing it for myself for a while, and it just kind of worked. Obviously, it wasn't without any trial and error or failures, but overall in this space, in the direct response space, it's all based on wins and fails. If you can just keep going through all the failures you'll end up on the other side, and that's kind of what happened with me.

And yeah, I kind of had someone give me a chance and see something, see some sort of hunger that was obviously there and gave me a chance to kind of put their money on the line and see if it really worked, which it did. So, so that's kind of like the intro into really writing.

Mikhail: It sounds a bit like what you started off not in the health.

Darren: No, I didn't start off in health at all. I started off in more of the biz-op, make money from home, all the different systems. Learn how to make money on with drop shipping with eBay, with all of those things. But the fundamentals behind it are all the same. It's really finding the audience it's finding what motivates them, what inspires them, what is hurting, how you can help and really coming up with a unique, different, new, exciting ideas that can kind of cut through the noise.

When it comes to health copywriting, the way that really happened was kind of by fluke. The company that I was working for on retainer and writing all their emails, writing all their copy, I believe the owner had some personal issues and ended up going in a different direction. They shut the company down. I think the company did I think a couple of hundred million dollars and the guy just shut it all down. I don't know what happened, but it's not my business.

But one of the guys that was working for the company sent me a message and he said, listen, I think we can do something in the health supplement space. We're launching a supplement, and I think you'd be a good person to write for this offer. And I said, okay, let me try. I've never really done a full package before for health supplement. We were going to do a sales letter, an online sales letter, some email creatives.

I'd never really done that before. I'd done a couple of email campaigns, but they never worked. So the health supplements was something that I was kind of wary about, to be honest with you. At that time there was a guy you probably know, named Dan Ferrari. He had been writing for Motley Fool, he had been writing for some of the Avore companies. He'd been doing some consulting and he launched his own coaching program at that time, which was really focused on health supplements.

So I said to this client, I said, look, the only way I'm going to take on your project, because I don't know if I'll be able to deliver everything that you want, is if, instead of paying me for the project, you pay Dan to coach me and I'll write the package. We had an arrangement where if it worked, I would get some sort of backend. So I said, I'll write this package for you, but Dan is going to chief it, he's going to be my coach throughout it. And that's just how it was going to work.

And he said, okay, let's do it, sounds great. So we hired Dan and I was in his coaching program, I think for like, probably around six months at the time. We went through my promotions, he ripped apart my copy. He helped me kind of look at things a little bit differently. The biggest thing that he taught me early on was really how to think about ideas, how to come up with ideas that maybe aren't the norm or something that you've seen before. He really helped me just hone my skill of thinking about what we're doing differently than just writing a package and seeing if it works.

So I think that was really like the entrance into the health supplements. Then he saw potential, he saw what I was doing and he saw how quickly I would make revisions and things like that. And he said I think you actually might have a future in writing health copy. He referred me to a couple of clients and that just

kind of became the start.

And since then, it's just been through referrals and knowing people the right way, I think through just relationships and just being, I don't know, just approachable and just being like someone that people just want to hang out with, I don't know. That's kind of the way that I like to work. Then also having the skills to back it up. And knowing that it's really important to have the skills, but it's also really important to have the right mentorship and to have the right relationships that can help you at any level get better.

I think that was a real key for me, and it still is to this day. As much as I joke around, I still write my copy and then I have people look it over and kind of rip it apart and give me ideas that I never thought about. No matter what level you get to, there's always someone that can help you.

Mikhail: That's a really interesting story that you basically got your clients to pay for your coaching. I don't know how many other clients would be so generous, but it's definitely something that you can kind of keep in the back of your mind that if it's something you're approaching a client or they've approached you on, it's maybe something you haven't done yet. Maybe you can--

Darren: Yeah, I think the interesting thing is I think it's more about just being okay asking and being okay being honest about where you're at, what you want to accomplish and the root, if you can see a path to get to where you want to go, and there's a couple of steps that need to be taken that maybe you don't have the ability to like see that step even.

For example, when I had him as a coach, I didn't even see some of the things that he was seeing. And that was what I was paying for. I was paying him to bring another set of just experience and thoughts. You might look at a piece of copy and see something totally different than I do. And it doesn't mean the ideas are worse or better, they're different. And I think that's what having a coach allowed me to do early.

Was it allowed me to kind of not get bogged down with what I think things should look like or what I think a sales letter should be or what I think a message should sound like. It made me look at everything a bit bigger. And realize like, okay, well, here's what we're doing. We're going to now try to get a message to this 50 year old male who's sitting in office, and he doesn't feel good about going to his meeting because he keeps having to go to the bathroom to go to the bathroom. Like we're talking to that guy, we're talking to the guy who has like these problems that are impacting his daily life.

I think when we start talking to that person, and realize we're actually speaking to another human being that has these issues that we're trying to help. And we have something really good to help them with, it's our job to kind of figure out how to make sure that message is the best message possible. I think that's the job as a copywriter and as a strategist is to figure out what is the message here? What is the story that is going to connect? Sometimes having a coach or having someone that just has another worldview to look at that really helps elevate what you're doing. I don't think anyone can go wrong having someone else help.

Mikhail: Yeah, of course. I mean, once you have someone looking over. I just want to go back to one thing you mentioned a little before, which was being honest with your clients. Because there may have been people who and would have been in the same position that you were, who would think, well, I can take this job I'll get paid, but I'm really not sure whether or not it's going to work. Well, if it doesn't work that's up to the client, I've already gotten paid and I would have gone just move on and try and find something else. But if you had done something like that, you probably would not have been anywhere near where you are now, because obviously, you took a chance to ask about this coaching if they would do it.

Darren: I think it was also strategically choosing a coach that you know has the results to back them up and also has the ability to teach. I think there's other couple of differences when it comes to choosing someone to listen to. Or to learn from, or to have maybe be your copy chief or a coach like that. Is they

really need to have an in-depth knowledge of the market that you're in.

Also they have to have the ability and the desire and the joy in teaching. I think, even as a kid, you can remember there's certain teachers in your life that, or even just mentors, people that you've met that made an impact on you. Then you have teachers, you probably look at school photos as a kid, you don't even remember the teacher's name.

The main difference is the teacher that connected with you, that you felt something that was able to be memorable is usually the teacher that brought something out in you that you didn't know was there. And they allow you to see yourself in a way that elevates where you were before. A good coach, a good mentor will take where you are, kind of sprinkle some kind of belief maybe, or just another way of looking at something. Then everything you do after that point changes. Every single thing after that one single point changes. That's for me the sign of a really good coach or mentor.

When it comes to copywriting, a lot of times someone that's a great writer, isn't necessarily a great teacher of writing. Someone that can come up with crazy ideas sometimes isn't a great teacher of how to come up with those ideas. Because in a way, sometimes they don't even know how they came up with them themselves. But if you look at people like Dan Ferrari, like Stephen Georgie, and Justin Goff and Carlene, and Anglade Cole. People like that the ideas they come up with are fresh, they're new, they feel exciting. The way that they teach those ideas is also fresh, new and exciting.

So that makes something memorable. When something is relevant, something is new, it's fresh. You have some emotion when you're learning, it becomes memorable. I have this teacher in when I was a kid, her name was Mrs. Margolis. I remember her name. I literally remember the way she made me feel. Because she made me feel like I was worth something as a kid. I was in grade three or four, I was starting to act out and I was starting to, I stopped getting straight A's in grade two.

Then once that happened, something clicked, and I was like, okay, I'm not like this perfect student anymore. So now I can be the bad kid. She kind of like changed my worldview a bit. She literally sat me down and she said this isn't who you are. For a teacher to actually sit down with a kid and say that is very meaningful and memorable. Even now at age 40 I remember that, literally I remember sitting on the bench outside of our class, there was a window and I remember this viscerally it's in me and I'll never forget it.

So that type of emotion is what I look for if you're starting your career, find a moment like that. Find a moment where you were like, you know what? This is for me, I can do this. Whatever that is, I call them touchstone results. Touchstone results are little results in your career that you can look back on and say, that was a moment that changed things going forward. For me, it was that moment of the first weekend, I call it the $98,000 weekend. That weekend literally was my marketing up until today. I still use that as my marketing for today. Because that result, that one thing I can touch that result, and when I talk about it, I feel proud.

I talk about it because it was something I didn't know I could do, and then I did it. I think with a lot of freelancers, with a lot of copywriters, what happens is you might not have that result. You might not have that big, huge number. You might not have that million dollar week or that huge launch. But what you might have is an email campaign that sold 20 books. It might not sound great, but for someone new, that's a win, that's huge.

I remember starting my list, I was buying traffic and I was testing all these things. I'm like, okay, let me buy Facebook ads and build my list. And then nothing would happen, no sales would happen. Nobody would buy anything. Nobody who would opt in, and nothing would happen. I thought like, something is not working. This is working for other people.

Then I started following dive-ins of people that were ahead of me. There was this guy, he's kind of back

now. His name is Daegan Smith, and he had this program called Maximum Leverage. This program was like $197 a month. It was a membership. It was just a bunch of recordings of an event that he had, and he taught people how to do solo ads and do email drops.

He taught people how to email in a way that was kind of very personal. It was super personal, it was very differentiated between everyone else. I started emailing the way that he was teaching and I started getting results. I remember following his process and this is like super early, way before the supplement thing.

I remember getting, I won a contest because I got the most leads in some affiliate thing. The prize for that was you get an interview with him. He did an interview and then he sends an email out to his list and he gave you a little bit of notoriety and it was kind of a result kind of thing right there. It wasn't a big deal, but I remember the second that email went out and my name was in there and I had a screenshot and an interview with him, it changed like who I was, because I no longer was the person learning. I was the person doing and teaching.

When you elevate from the person doing to teaching, number one, you start to like retain a lot more of the stuff that you're learning, because you're like, oh, I'm actually teaching all this stuff. I know what I'm doing. But you also gain a little bit more of respect of your peers. I think in this industry, the respect of your peers and the reputation that you're a decent person goes along the way. It goes a long, long way, especially in the health market, it's super small.

There maybe a couple hundred people like that are actually doing things in this kind of direct response online kind of marketing place. Kind of that are visible, like on ClickBank or doing other offers and things like that. So being visible in that space and then also having a good reputation is key. I can't say that enough, just be a decent person to deal with. Do what you say you're going to do when you're going to do it.

I've missed deadlines before, I'm behind on a project right now, and I hate it. It eats me up inside. But I'm open with my clients. I tell them, look, this is what happened, we're a bit behind, but this is we're going to get back on track. I think client management, reputation all that. It seems like so normal to me, just like be a decent person to work with, but it is so hard to find. Just being that good person, fun to be around, to come up with good ideas and be honest.

That in itself separates you from a lot of people. It does, it separates you, and it seems so simple, but this is a personal relationship business. This business is about personal relationships and especially at the beginning. Then as you get better, as you get some results, like the touchstone results that I'm talking about. If you get your first sales letter, your first email period of that client runs and tests, it doesn't even matter if it fails.

If you have a client that is testing your copy, it means that it's good enough to go out and see if it has a result. Most clients won't test things that they know, there's like, yeah, this is what we would do. But if you can look at their offers, let's say you have, you want to break into the health space. There's a ton of different health offers out there. You look at a bunch of the different publishers, just look at who's speaking at this event and look around. There's a lot of publishers out there.

See what they're doing. Get on their email lists, start researching, read their sales copy. See what kind of offers they're sending out repeatedly over and over again. See what's working and then look at it, assess why it's working and then see if you can come up with something completely different that sells the same thing. Come up with a new headline, come up with a new short email, creative, like a simple email drop.

Doesn't have to be super long, detailed anything. Come up with something and reach out to one of these clients and just say, hey, I love what you're doing with email, or I love your VSLs. Especially this part, when

you talked about XYZ. I actually think I have another idea for this video or this email. I wrote it out for you. How would you think about testing it? Don't pay me, but if you use it and it works, then pay me X amount of dollars.

Or go to someone and say, hey, let's come up with, I can basically come up with three or four email creatives or something shorter. This is someone that like, if you have no experience whatsoever, you can see what's working out there. You can see what people are promoting over and over and over again and insert yourself into a relevant conversation. I think a big mistake is trying to pitch something that's completely irrelevant to a client. And it's the same thing with coming up with an offer.

If you're selling a supplement and it's completely irrelevant, like the problem that you're fixing doesn't really exist, or it's kind of a problem that's not really urgent enough or something like that. Then it's really hard to make it work. But if there's stuff out there that is working, that's continuously working, and if you can insert yourself into a relevant conversation about something that's working and maybe something that you think could work better.

I think the big mistake is saying, hey, I saw this sales letter and it sucks. Here's 10 things that I would change about this sales letter because obviously it's not working right now. That attitude doesn't get you a response. What gets through a response is, hey man, I took a look at your funnel. I think there's like three things we could look at to improve conversions or improve order values. I just saw this amazing seminar on upsells, and I think I could apply that to what you're doing with your keto funnel.

How would you think, how do you feel about me rewriting your upsells or just maybe the intro of your upsell? Using a couple of things I've learned, I'd love to see how it does. We could either do a fee upfront or if you're more comfortable, why don't I write it out for you and then have you test it. If it works, pay me for it. I think there's a lot of value there in actually coming with a relevant for an offer owner or a business owner that maybe they haven't thought of yet. Or something that they've thought of doing, but they just don't have the bandwidth to do.

That's a huge thing is making the business owners or offer owner's life easier by what you do versus making it a hassle to deal with you. I think that's also a huge thing. Sorry, I just went off on a little tangent, but all these things are super relevant, I think for especially new people.

Mikhail: I think you've raised a good point there that I want to come back to as well with the touchstone results. You have this big $98,000 in one weekend thing that you can kind of hold on to. I think a really good point you made is you don't need to have that. You don't even need to have sales or anything. Like you said, if you have a client that's testing your copy, that's just one step closer to you becoming or reaching where you want to be and you just kind of have to get through those moments to get to the actual wins.

Darren: I think another thing that I literally just thought of is leverage the mentorship that you've chosen. For example, at the beginning I had that relationship with Dan Ferrari. We were working together, he referred clients to me. I think he referred a number of clients even after we stopped working together. Another situation was, I really wanted to work with, like right now I'm in Justin Golf and Stephan Georgie's mastermind in the copy accelerator.

As a full member, it's a group of like copywriters offer owners kind of, everyone's like committed to being in the same situation. Like we're paying, there's skin in the game for everyone. You really can't be a full member if you can't afford to be a full member. There's a little bit of like already, okay, there are working active person.

But I think at the beginning, for me, it was really about where are the clients that I want to work with? Where do they hang out? Where are they? I live in Toronto, just outside Toronto. I don't live in Austin, I

can't go to the Onnit factory or the Onnit gym and go talk to Joe Rogan or Aubrey Marcus and try to write for Onnit. I'm not just going to go hang out and work out with like a bunch of people like that. But what I can do is I can find masterminds, I can find live events. I can find groups where there's already people having relevant conference.

I can't say this enough, find where people are having these relevant conversations. Not just messing around, talking about nonsense. Not job groups where you're competing with a bunch of different people for jobs. I used to use job boards and I got a lot of business actually. Maybe I'll do another course on that, how to do that. But I think the main thing is number one, finding out where your clients are, going there, being there, and then also like being relevant in the room.

So coming up with ideas, making introductions, being valuable, I think. Also being a valuable resource for other people. So for example, one client that came my way was referred actually from Justin, from Justin Golf. I had never worked with him before. I had never spoken to him personally. I had never done anything. We'd never had a conversation. But what I did do is made sure that he knew what I could do.

The way I did that at that time was I emailed him, number one. We became friends on Facebook, started interacting and a couple of things. I think I sent them a couple of samples, just so he had them. Just so I was on his radar and then this sounds strange, and I haven't really shared this with anybody, but I actually wrote him a direct mail piece. I wrote a sales letter and yeah, this is an interesting story. Okay. I'll tell you it.

I don't know if this is what works or not, but all I know is that after that he referred me clients. He came to me with this bigger control type thing, and he said, hey, I've got this client, and we're doing a bit of control type thing. If you want to come maybe write a couple of leads or whatever, this is what I'll pay out or something like that. And I said, okay let's do it. And it never ended up working out. I literally never heard back from him. I was like, okay, that's kind of weird.

So I actually wrote him a sales letter. It was probably like five or six pages telling him about the results that I've gotten, how I work. But I made it relevant to him. Because what I did is I actually donated, I knew that he is a dog lover, and he loves dog rescues and locally, he donates to like dog rescues and things like that. So what I did, is I found a dog charity in his city and donated, I think it was $100. You know the dollar bill letter from Dan Kennedy or Gary, whoever wrote it?

Mikhail: Gary Halber. Yeah.

Darren: That's used all the time. I basically said, instead of putting out like a $50 bill or whatever, what can something be, how can I make this relevant to him, and create some sort of emotional connection. So I made a hundred dollars donation to Austin Pets Alive. It's a dog rescue in Austin, got their receipts and stapled it to the top. I basically wrote this letter, and part of my offer was that I will donate a percentage of any kind of wins that we get to the dog rescue of his choice.

I don't think he responded to that. I followed up with him. He did get it, and then he started referring me clients. I think there's a lot of people that would be scared to do that. I found his address and I literally like mailed him a direct mail envelope, like personal Justin Golf open please. I think it kind of separates you. Like if I got a letter that was like directly to me, the headline was to me, it had a donation to my favorite charity. It would be memorable. I think that's what a lot of people forget, is there's a lot of noise out there.

There's a lot of noise in copywriting, in freelancing, especially now it's become kind of like it's the new make money online, is like learn how to write copy, is kind of the new opportunity right now. There's a lot of noise out there. One thing I do now on Facebook and Instagram, I make memes. Honestly, memes are funny, I get laughed at, and it's hilarious. I get people messaging me, like go do work, stop making memes.

Reality is I get a lot of attention. I make sure that my memes are hyper relevant to the people that are reading them. I'll talk about the VSLs and I'll talk about upsells and I'll talk about exit pops and all the things that marketers talk about, but I'll make them relevant in like these funny memes.

The interesting thing is that they get so much engagement. People love them, and my email list has grown. The messages I get from people, the engagement I get, and the conversations that are started are hilarious, number one. Number two, they are with the people that I'd like to work with. I think if we don't know each other very well, but I don't take a lot of things seriously.

That's probably as a kid why I got in trouble a lot, I was the constant class clown. That's just how I was. I love laughing. I like funny things. That's literally what I like to do. While I'm making these memes, I'm like, oh, this is hilarious, but it's actually like part of my work, because now I share like lessons with my email lists kind of about that. Like kind of drew from these memes.

It's finding like these funny things in really niche audiences, and my niche audiences, like copywriters offer owners. That's like our little world. Making memes is kind of the first, like what I say to people, it's like a big idea in one picture. That's what a meme is. It's literally like one picture. You can look at it, you read a couple of captions and you're like, you either get it or you don't. If you don't get it, you're not supposed to get it.

I've looked at all these meme accounts of like some these shows and things like that. And there's some that I just don't understand because I don't watch the show. I'm not in that community, but if you are, they get you and they're immediately attractive and they make you laugh and they make you memorable. So I think that as a new copywriter, I think it's super important to find something that is natural to you. That makes you memorable.

For me, it's making memes. I don't like going on live video. I don't like doing all that stuff. I like literally sitting on my phone, looking through groups and I find something funny and I'm like, oh, that's hilarious. And I literally make it, I post it and it creates engagement. The funny thing is when I'm in groups and I'm in zoom calls, I just get to be myself now. I don't have to be this serious buttoned up guy who not, I'm not saying like, you're a serious guy. What I'm saying is I did everything in my power to get away from that.

I was like a guy who wore a suit every day. I gave myself a no tie policy at my office because I couldn't stand wearing a tie every day. And I get yelled at by my bosses. It was like this life that just wasn't me. Finally, I'm doing what I'm supposed to be doing and I'm doing it my way, and it's working.

There's this guy, Dave Miz, who does, he makes a lot of memes as well and he's awesome. Has an email, an e-commerce email agency. They focus a lot on direct to consumer email marketing. They'll take over people's email, they'll optimize it, they'll design, they'll do everything. His memes are all about email. About scaling with email. Because it's literally that's what he does.

But I know that, and I think the lesson there is a couple of years ago, I was friends with him on Facebook. I didn't know what he did. I knew he was a marketer of some sort. I knew he had pretty deep ties into like direct response, like old school guys. I knew he had like a dating offer, but I really didn't know what he was doing. Then he started sharing these memes, and I was like, oh, instantly I knew what he was doing. Instantly I knew exactly what he was doing. I knew the problem, I knew the solution. I knew he was the one that could do it.

So it's interesting, anytime I enter into an enthusiast type market, which is like something where I guess people will spend kind of a disproportionate amount of their income on certain markets like essential oils, Jeeps anything like that. If you go into those markets and look for memes, it's unbelievable what you'll find. I think that's probably like one of my secrets of finding connections and things like that and coming up with ideas that are kind of like abnormal. But they're a bit like quirky and they work.

That's a super long answer to a question that I don't even remember. I think like everything that we're talking about when it comes to being a copywriter and getting some momentum is understand your market and understand it's all the same. Use yourself as your client and market yourself. You don't have to do it in a way that everyone else is doing it. You don't have to write a book. You don't have to launch a course. You don't have to do any of this.

You can find a way to be yourself and you will connect with the people that you want to work with. I think that that's a big lesson for me, is client selection, but also it's personality selection. I almost kind of pre filter the people that I work with through my social media, through the things I share. Because if they don't like that, if they don't find that funny, if they don't kind of get my humor, they're not really going to like me very much, and working together is going to be tough.

Mikhail: Yeah. I think that's a really important plan. Like you said from the outside, it looks like you're just making memes, but really you're marketing yourself.

Darren: Yes, exactly. That's the thing, one of the biggest lessons that just last week, I was at the copy accelerator event and the VIP night, Craig Clemens spoke. Craig is the owner of Golden Hippo. He runs some of the largest offers in the health space, Dr. Gundry, Amy Myers, kind of all the major offers that are running on Facebook native traffic. He said something really interesting. He said, when you're thinking about your marketing, you want to think about how to make it, not look like marketing, but make it look more like entertainment.

Because for example, last night, I'm sitting on the couch and there was on Netflix, it's called Challenger the Last Flight or something. It was about the challenger spacecraft that exploded in the eighties. I thought it was an hour movie, or an hour and a half movie. So I was like, okay, but it's funny because an hour and a half movie seems like a big commitment. To sit there and get into like, oh, I got to start it and finish it and sit here, and it's a whole thing.

I found out it's actually a seven part series that's like eight hours long. That made me want to watch it. Because it made it like bite size, it was easy to understand. I knew it wasn't a huge commitment. I could sit down and watch 45 minutes, and if I want it to continue, I could, I wasn't actually like locked in and it looked super entertaining. The first five minutes of the show, actually the first minute of the show I was hooked.

They put the hook so strong in that first minute of the show that I committed to watching seven more episodes. Instead of committing to an hour and a half, I committed to eight hours. But I needed to hit play, and the only way I was going to hit play is that first episode was 45 minutes. So, because it was entertaining and that's what I'm competing with as a marketer, as anyone writing copy. You're competing with Netflix seven hour specials. Because that's the alternative. It's either I'm watching that or I'm watching your video sales letter.

If your video sales letter isn't getting my attention hyper-relevant to me right now and entertaining, I'm gone. I'm completely gone and I'm watching challenger the last flight. That's my competition. When he said that it made it really clear that I guess, what I'm doing, and it's funny, when you hit a cord you'll know. When you hit the right chord in a market, you'll know.

Sometimes that's with testing emails, sometimes it's testing subject lines. For me, it's testing means. And I'm seeing what topics are my audience really finding attractive and what's engaging them. Is that when I talk about Facebook compliance in a meme, is it when I talk about a VSL, is it when I talk about upsells, what is it? It's funny, patterns start coming up and that kind of helps me figure out, okay, well, if they're super interested in this and they found this really funny, maybe I'll write an email that goes a little bit deeper. So I can capture their attention with a meme about this, then I can get a little bit deeper when

we have to write.

So I think that's the tension situation that has to happen also with copywriters if you're using that as part of your marketing. Putting up a lot of value posts and this kind of stuff, it works in a way. But if you're in a super tight knit group of a bunch of marketers, sharing a bunch of tactical stuff is going to help.

This is what I did on my sales letter, this is what I did on my upsell. I wrote this. This how it work, these are the stats that it's going to work with people that are data driven that are already in that mindset. But the people that are kind of outside that mindset that you want to bring in, you got to reach them with something that's going to separate you and something that's going to make you memorable.

Mikhail: Well, Darren, you've given a lot to digest there. I think it's so many great points. I think my key takeaway from this has been how important it is to be honest to yourself when you're looking for clients to work with when you're marketing yourself. Then also that honesty with your clients, let them know this is your skill level, this is what they can expect. Be upfront about those things.

Darren: When your skill level increases, make sure that you make that aware, make them aware that now I have this new result. I usually send an email out a few times a year to a couple of key clients or maybe that I haven't worked with before that I've been trying to work with. And I say, hey, I know we haven't spoken in a while. Just wanted to update you since we last spoke, I wrote two VSLs. One of them is converting really well. The other one we're still working on, but with some consulting and some changes, we're going to really make it sing. What do you have coming up in the next few months? Did you want to talk about something?

So always kind of keeping, staying top of mind with new, fresh results. I think that's really the key. Be honest with where you're at, but also be honest and be okay sharing where you're going and how you're getting there. I think people like that, I don't know. It's an interesting thing. People love honesty. It kind of breaks down the walls.

Mikhail: It says a lot. If just being honest, separates you, it's not a difficult thing to do.

Darren: It's funny, I say this and it's not table stakes, like shouldn't everyone just come across as yourself. The reality is like, no, a lot of people think if they come across as themselves, no one will like them, or they're not good enough. Or they'll feel like they're bragging or whatever. But honestly, life is way too short to think you could do something and then not do it because you talked yourself out of it before you even tried.

It sounds so backwards because when like you're talking to a child that they're riding their bike, when they fall off their bike, you don't say, ah fuck. And throw the bike away. You don't do that. Oh, I guess bike riding is not for you. Bike riding is for everyone. I think bike riding is one of those things that's like universal. As long as there's a bike somewhere, some kid is going to learn how to ride it.

If we can take that kind of approach to something, I think we'll be a little bit more gentle with ourselves and be like, look, if this pitch didn't work, I got to try again. Maybe I got to split test telling people how great I am versus telling people how great they are. Maybe I got to split test sending this subject line to this. Use marketing knowledge as a way to market yourself. I think at the beginning having to build a list and having to send emails and not get any response and then get one sale and make like $7 commissions on some random product, I think that teaches you a lot about what actually happens in marketing, versus I think the fancy picture we see.

Mikhail: All right. Well, thanks Darren. Where can our viewers if they wanted to get on your email list, learn some more about you, where can they go to do those things?

Darren: Well, if you want to find me on any social media, it's just me. Darren Hanser, D-A-R-R-E-N H-A-N-

S-E-R. That's me on Instagram, Facebook. Also if you want to get on my email list where I send all the funny stuff that you heard today, you can go to 15minuteemails.com. So 15, the word, it's 15minuteemails.com, or you can go to Darrenhanser.com and learn more about how I work with clients and do consulting and reach out there.

Darren: All right. Thanks Darren. Thanks so much for taking the time. This was a really great interview.

Mikhail: Thank you so much. I was excited to come and I'm glad that we got to do this.

[Audio Ends]