John Forde – Great Leads

Mikhail: Hi, everyone, welcome to Health Copywriting Profits, the online event that can help take your copywriting skills and income to the next level. Today I'm very excited to be talking to John Forde. John has been writing winning controls for over 25 years, helping his clients generate millions of dollars in mainly financial and health industries. He's also the winner of the 2008 AWAI Copywriter of the Year award. And 2009 Most Valuable Player award from Agora Financial. He's also the author of Great Leads, which is, in my opinion, one of the definitive books when it comes to copywriting. And that's exactly what he is here to talk to us about today. So welcome, John.

John Forde: It's nice to be here.

Mikhail: So as I said, you know, you've authored this book, Great Leads, which it kind of covers the really important aspect of copywriting, which is that lead into your offer, lead into the body. I guess you can just kind of give us really quickly why, you know, the lead is such an important element of your copy.

John Forde: Well, before I start, I just want to add a detail to that, which is that-- firstly, I think it's now closing in on 30 years, I'm not sure. I think I started writing copy in 1991. But the other detail is that I co-authored that book. And it's very important to mention that because the co-author is who goes by the penname Michael Masterson. Well, he is somebody who I've known for a long time. He taught me a lot about copy, along with another mentor, Bill Bonner, who happens to run-- be the founder of and run Agora Publish, and Agora Financial. But Mark and I, many, many years ago, were doing regular training events for copywriters. So for people who are the in-house copywriter, the Agora team, which is a big reason why Agora is such a big name, both in health and financial copy now, because they grew their own copywriting teams, which was something that people were not doing nearly as much of back then. And we had to figure out ways to teach people what was working in copy. And that involved developing a language to talk to people about copy.

So it happens that one of the times that we're going to teach and we were-- this was going to be an event where we were flying everybody to France, we're going to take them on a train that would pick them up at Gare du Nord, that's the station at the north of the city, and would take them to a chateau that was out in the countryside. It's very nice event and everything, but Mark and I were going to do most of the teaching. And I had worked out some things that I wanted to cover. And he'd been giving some thought to things that he wanted to do. And it's a long bus ride from Paris to this chateau.

So we were thinking-- we were talking about some different things and we had actually gotten off the topic and I started talking about-- I was living in New York at the time and I had read an article on the flight about movie plots. Mark and I both like movies. The thing I was talking about how they were only-- I don't remember what the exact number was, only seven movie plots ever used, or only 13, whatever that number was, but it was limiting it to this set. And we talked about that, got onto some other topics. I'd mentioned that I had been recently rereading Breakthrough Advertising by Gene Schwartz, which is a great book. And one of the concepts that's in Breakthrough Advertising, which your readers I think are going to hear something about this in another part of your program is about customer awareness. So the awareness level of somebody that you're targeting. So Mark and I talked a little bit about that. And he said-- we were discussing what why that would be a great topic to cover during the event. And we'll

get into that in just a second too. But anyway, came around to that night. And after dinner, Mark and I went and sat down and we thought, "Okay, we really got to-- we've got to finalize our program here, look at what we've got on the table, organize it a bit. And I think it was Mark who suggested that idea-- some of those things came together. So we knew we wanted to teach about how to write to the awareness level of your customer, which is basically the idea that you are approaching somebody differently depending on how aware they are of the product, how aware they are of you, how aware they are of the solutions that are available in the market, how aware they are of the problems that they have to solve, because that orientation of the customer is going to change the way that you speak to them. So we knew we wanted to cover that. And then I think Mark had suggested that we try to find something similar that I'd seen in that article about movie plots, and kind of apply it to direct mail packages. Is there a set number of plotlines, so to speak, for promo packages that work when you're trying to approach customers. And because the most important part of a promotion is those first few seconds where you get the customer's attention, we wanted to take that idea and focus specifically on the way you jump into a promotion, because you've only got so much time to get their attention. And they're going to receive-- we in fact kind of saw an overlap there. They're going to receive you according to what situation, what awareness level they have when you approach them.

So when you speak to them, you're going to change the way that you approach them. So we figured that if we could nail down these lead types, and then we could spread them out on that awareness scale, that maybe we'd have something there. So that was the origin of these ideas that we put in the Great Lead. And we sat down with a big stack of probably 100, or 150 promotions, some financial, some health, some travel related, some from fields that we were not, you know-- water filters and things like that. And we tried to divide them up and classify the promotions that were similar to each other.

And we basically came out with this kind of loose framework of six different lead types. And we refined that some more. And then when we wrote the Great Leads book, that was how we came up with the idea, with the different types that are in there. So that's how the ideas came about.

I Do you want to jump into what the different lead types are? Or where would you like to go?

Mikhail: Yeah. So I think one thing, know you mentioned, Gene Schwartz and his breakthrough advertising there. There was a speech that he gave, where he talked about how he kind of came up with ideas and his creativity was more just connecting to different unrelated ideas. And you know, that story that you mentioned about the movie plot, and how you kind of relate that back to the promos and the leads and finding that connection there, you know, that's kind of exactly what he was talking about. So I thought that was pretty interesting.

John Forde: Yeah, that's definitely true. I think that that is actually-- that is the definition of creativity. Maybe if you ever read the-- some great book recommendations, one is, for any Apple fans, you have to read the Steve Jobs biography. And also a book that talked about some of the Jobs stories and other ways of getting ideas is Where Great Ideas Come From, or Where Good Ideas Come From, I can't remember the exact title, but it's by a guy named Steven Johnson, really good book about creativity. And also Creativity, Inc., which is about the founding of Pixar. So a lot of those stories all come together. But in all of them, one of the things that they talk about is where good ideas come from. And it's exactly that what you just described, it's that spark that kind of jumps between few things.

And usually it's two things with which you're familiar. And what you're creating is the spark across the gap. So we kind of invent things by gorging on stuff and learning about it, and then all of a sudden, filling in those gaps. And then that gap creates something new that somebody else learns, and then they create a gap. It's a big network. Yes, I think it's kind of a fascinating thing for me.

But, so yeah, that is more or less what happened in that process too. And it actually does kind of pertain to this idea of the awareness levels. Because when you are pitching to somebody, what you're trying to do, no matter what it is that you're pitching, what you're trying to do is identify that thing that they know and find a spark that connects that thing that they know, that they feel strongly about, or that they're experts in, either intentionally or accidentally. So for instance, in the health field, you might be accidentally an expert in arthritis because you have it. You know, you never really wanted to be an expert in arthritis, but you had to become one. Or just an __10:56__ pain, maybe you don't even know what the cause of the pain is but you sure know what it feels like not to be able to get out of bed first thing in the morning because your feet hurt, or your knees hurt, or your ankles hurt, whatever.

So you find that thing that they're keenly aware of, and you know that you have a product or a solution or something that you want to make a connection to. So that's really what the pitch is doing, you're trying to find-- you're trying to create that link between the two, between their problem and your solution. So that's a lot of what the whole process is.

When it comes to the idea of the leads, you have to come up with the perfect lead to approach them, because they're being approached by many other people with many other solutions, promises, detailed stories, and some of them were people who are selling something like you are and others are just people who have something to say. So you're not just competing with every other. For instance, in the health field, you're not competing with every other vitamin salesman, you're not competing with the shops that sell vitamins, not just with them, but you're competing with what their doctor says and what their neighbor says, and what's on TV and the stuff that has nothing to do with health at all, because somebody's buying for their attention all the time. So that's why you have to find that perfect way in.

So, there was this one other thing I wanted to say about awareness levels, is that the whole-- well, actually about the whole thing, and then I'll bring it back to the awareness. The reason that Mark and I were trying to find to narrow down to six lead types was because there's so much information when somebody is trying to learn how to write copy that works or to run a business that's going to be depending on copy that we could go on teaching tips and tricks and things like that just forever. And there are lots of good things to learn. But in the end, you have to find a simple way to think about it so that you can make your way through, like getting a menu that has 20 pages. You know, they all might be great options, but you have to pick one. So you have to limit yourself to a process.

So we can't figure out what that process is until you load up on the tips and tricks and things like that. But what we wanted to do was give the people there a roadmap that was simple to follow. So, that was the intent of this whole thing.

So along that same vein, I like to simplify Gene Schwartz's idea about awareness levels, because I think he has, remember five or six levels of awareness, something like that. And the way he ranges that

awareness-- the other person who is talking about this will probably cover it in more detail-- is from somebody who is fully aware of the product, the problem, who you are, your credibility and all those other things. And then that spans all the way up to somebody who has no real awareness of exactly what the problem is. They might not even be fully aware of what the problem is-- might not be aware of the what the solutions are, they might not be aware of what the problem is that they're trying to solve. They don't know who you are. They don't know that there are solutions out there at all, or how they work, etc.. So, very aware, the least aware.

And you're going to approach those people in different ways. So I like to simplify it by saying, just think about it, like a regular personal interaction if you were trying to make friends at a party. If you go to a backyard barbecue, if we're ever able to do that again in the current situation, and some of the people that you know that are there are people that you know. So in other words, they're very aware of you, and you're aware of them, and you know exactly how to talk to them. Others are completely unaware, strangers, but you want to approach them because they seem interesting.

If you were to walk up to the person that you know and start peppering them with questions about their background, or you were to start talking to them like you didn't know them, they might find that strange. And if you were to walk up to the person you didn't know and start speaking to them like you've known them forever, they would also probably find that a little strange. You flip the way you speak to them and it's perfectly normal. So the lead types fall along the awareness lines with the same thought in mind so that somebody who's very aware, you're going to approach them, you're going to talk to them a certain way; and somebody is less aware, you're going to need another way to approach them. And generally, what that means is, the less aware they are, the more warm up they need to the idea. So the more that you would have to work your way in kind of through a backdoor, I mean a psychological backdoor, or emotional backdoor. And the people who are very aware, you can almost get right to the chase, start talking about the product and how much it costs and all the other things because already have the warm feelings about you. They already know what they want. They probably even have a pretty good idea of how much things should costs. So they're ready for you. And they have, most importantly, probably, they have some trust level already. So you don't need to work for that trust level. But at the other end of the spectrum, you need to work for it.

So you want to-- maybe we just jump in and let's just--

Mikhail: Yeah, you can dive in. I think that's a great intro into understanding, you know, why it's so important to get that match between who you're talking to and what you're saying to them. So, yeah.

John Forde: Okay. So the first-- our first lead type is the idea of an offer or an invitation lead. So this would be --it maybe in the context of health selling-- of health products. You might be writing to somebody who already feels that taking-- what I'm trying to think of, okay, vitamin D supplements. That's something that's in the news a lot lately, taking vitamin D supplements. You might be writing to somebody who's already very aware of that. The list that they come from might be somebody who already has purchased vitamin D supplements or is reading articles on a content that's about how they're used for everything from prostate health to bone health to protecting yourself from coronavirus and boosting your immune system.

That person does not need somebody to write to them about a mysterious new discovery or anything like that about-- they are okay with you mentioning vitamin D right up at the top. And they might even be okay with you showing your bottle of vitamin D and explaining why your vitamin D formulation is the best one. It's maybe more absorbable or it tastes better because you can chew it or something. It has some difference. But you're okay that person is already so aware of the value that you can take what usually is at the back of the sales letter, you put it right up at the top and say, you know, "Buy one bottle, get another bottle free," or subscription vitamin D or special absorbable vitamin D or something like that.

Okay, so that's the simplest kind of lead. And that means start out-- think about your offer, make sure it's really good and you could probably put it right up at the top and even mention it in the headline complex and talk about it in the first couple of paragraphs.

Then you might get somebody who is aware of that market-- let's just keep the vitamin D thing going-- but they need to know that there's some kind of special advantage to what it is that you're offering, they need a little bit more trust built up. So that would move into what we had as our second lead type, which was the big promise lead. I think that that sometimes is confusing to people because you really are probably not ever going to write a promotion that doesn't contain a big promise somewhere. But in a big promise lead, you're taking that promise and you're putting it up near the top and you're making a claim to them that is bold and unique and fulfillable, believable and puts your positioning above wherever your competitors are. So you still might be talking about the product, you still might be mentioning it in the headline and lead complex, but now you might be promising some bigger advantage with whatever that product-- the vitamin D product is, whatever there is that's different about it. Or you might be making a health promise that they haven't heard before nd then tying it quickly to the product that you're trying to sell.

But the idea here is that you've got somebody who's aware of the problems that they're trying to solve, and you're promising to solve them better than somebody else. Or maybe they're aware of the advantages that you're trying to offer and you can promise a better advantage than somebody else. So here, you're just acknowledging that they might not trust you as much like you're ready to buy based on price or some kind of special deal or some kind of setup that you've created, but they need a little bit more something to push them toward that sale.

Then we move to even a little bit less aware. They might not be aware that the benefit is there. But what they are aware of is the problem. So I think in the health field, a lot of products make the big promise coming right out of the gate. But sometimes, it might try to target the problem that a person has and then bring them around to a solution. So I don't know if you remember-- sure you're probably too young to remember, a commercial that used to have out there for Alka Seltzer where Alka Seltzer is this, you know, the things that tablets, so you drop into the water, and they're basically-- it's basically baking soda and aspirin with a little bit of fizzy flavor, so. And you would take it for indigestion or a hangover or something like that. And then the commercials, they always showed this person looking really queasy and they would say something like, "I can't believe I ate the whole thing." Meaning like they were just feeling terrible. And then they would drop the things into the glass and it would fizz is and it would, you know-- this would be the solution to their health problem.

So, problem-solution or another thing that's similar thing is back in the '90s Bill Clinton was running for the presidency in the US. And he said to people, and people were going through this economic, this recession, and somebody had written on a on a board-- one of his campaign advisors had written on a board, "It's the economy, stupid," meaning, don't talk about anything until you talk about the economy because they can't hear you if you're not talking about fixing the economy, because they've been coming out of this recession. So Clinton famously said, "I feel your pain," meaning, you know, I hear what your problem is. And as soon as people understood that-- he understood what the problem is, then they're willing to listen to him because they think the solution he has might be more tailored to the problem. And the willingness to listen to the complaints increased their trust.

So problem-solution is based pretty much on that. You try and find out what is the pain point that those customers have, what is it that they have on their minds? Because that's what they're thinking about, that's what's keeping them up at night, or that they're wincing in pain from during the day or whatever it is, whether worried about a long term health problem or an immediate problem, that kind of fix. And you have to acknowledge that first. Then you can work your way toward a solution. Then when a problem-solution lead, instead of putting an offer up at the top, instead of putting up a big promise claim up at the top, you might first-- because you have somebody that's not aware yet that there might be some kind of solution. You might first acknowledge their pain.

You know, so if you were writing to somebody who has arthritis-- I'm just thinking of this because it happens to be raining outside-- you might have a picture of somebody who's holding her knee. And the headline that says, quote, "I can't believe it's raining again." So you know the feeling that those achy joints whenever it gets a little bit damp outside or something. That's not an accident. The reason that your-- did you know the reason your knee hurts when it rains is because of this, that or the other thing, some kind of research that said, but did you also know it doesn't have to be that way? There is a new discovery how you can use whatever it is, that helps-- I don't really know in the health field, but you're trying to tie the one to the other.

And now, because you're starting to move away from the awareness level, that means that the person needs to feel they can trust you because they don't know you yet. So you're trying to let them get to know you gradually enough that they won't feel like you're pushing them towards something. That means that you're probably before you can reveal your product and who you are, the rest of your copy after that lead is going to have to show them that you've done the homework, that you understand the studies, that you can give specifics that support the argument that you're making, and maybe gradually introduce the product and show that the product has been tested and proven and give some testimonials of people who have been helped and things like that. Because this is the person-- we're starting to move toward this person who might be familiar with who you are, but they don't know you really that well. They might be think that you look interesting, but you're working your way toward their inner circle, so to speak.

Then we get a little further, it's kind of like halfway through the lead types, and you start looking at we call the secret lead. All the leads-- I like to think of the ones that-- the three that are left. These are kind of like default leads that work not because of the relationship that you have with the customer, because it's not quite there yet, not quite established yet, but more because there are certain aspects of human behavior that you're trying to trigger as you-- they don't know much about you, but you equally don't

know that much about them. So now you kind of step into what is it that people respond to in a more general way.

One of the things that people respond to in a general way is secrets. So we think of the next lead type, the fourth lead type as a secret lead. And that's the idea of giving some kind of-- putting some kind of air of mystery, or new name or something in the headline that the intrigue itself adds to the plot of the lead. So you might be hinting that there was a big discovery made that every arthritis-- every person with arthritis is going to want to hear before it rains next week, you know, something. You might get something from a university or something like that, but you're going to hold off the same way that somebody would in a mystery story or when they're telling a joke and they have a punch line or whatever, you're going to hold off on revealing what that secret is as long as you can to pull them along because you need to sustain their interest while you lay out the research and proof and testimonials and promises and things that you would in a pitch. So a secret lead will often use the word secret in the lead, doesn't have to in the headline, it doesn't have to. But it often does. Or it will give something a name that appears in quotes that indicates it's substituting for an idea that will be exposed later. And you usually sustain that as long as you can, sometimes, and often actually, until after the reply in-- at least in information products-- until after they have placed an order when they find out the full secret. In health products, there's a lot of things that you need to disclose. So I don't know if you would be able to do that all the way through, but you're certainly in the lead and in the headline in those first couple of paragraphs trying to hook them by using that mystery to pull them in.

So then we jump to what our fifth lead type, which we call the prediction or a proclamation or an exclamation. We have different names for it. But this is the idea that you need to say something bold. And that bold thing that you say just jars somebody's attention. So it doesn't necessarily mean that you're shouting, but it does mean that you're saying something that they are not hearing anywhere else and it's audacious.

So just one that's popping into my head was I remember a promotion for a health letter that I think was written by Jim Rutz. The headline was "Read this or die." So he was saying is like, if you're not aware of this information, your life may be in danger. And it was for a health newsletter. Well, that's certainly a bold statement. And probably the first thing that the person got in the mail that day that said "Read this or die" were in a long time. So it really gets your attention. First, you have to be able to deliver on that story. It has to be real, it has to be substantive and proven and the urgency has to be turned up. But that's you're using their-- the boldness and some kind of emotion that is being stirred by that.

And then the last lead type that we talked about was the story lead, which is just premised on the idea that people just respond to stories. We just like to hear stories about people, about events, about things. Stories are a way of packaging knowledge in a narrative so that they're entertaining. So that's how we even remember and carry around our own human history. History is just a collection of stories. So, lessons from the past that are packed around events and characters and things like that. So a story lead is taking something that you want to say, showing somebody-- say in the health context, somebody's recovering from a situation and dealing with a situation or not successfully dealing with the situation or making a discovery, all kinds of ways to use stories to get into health promotions. Testimony-- anything testimonial driven. Before and after is essentially a story promotion. So you're just telling somebody kind of a rags to riches story, except in health terms it's a poor health to good health

usually. Or the discovery of some kind of breakthrough medication or something like that. That would be another way to do a story lead. Or a story about, say, a founder of a company who had the problem that they're trying to solve for you, you know, maybe somebody who's-- what was the name of that guy, Richard Simmons, who was overweight, before he discovered-- put together his own weight loss program. And he used his story to sell his weight loss program for years.

So that's it. That's the whole run through of all six lead types. And one other question that I-- I don't want to just keep talking over here. But one question that we get-- gotten a lot when we talk about it is what is a lead exactly? I probably should have covered way back at the beginning.

Lead is the usually the headline complex, which means whatever is above little-- we call that piece above the headline is the eyebrow, the headline, you know, those the little line that you see at the top. Headline. Then something that-- nobody uses this term anymore, I don't think but it used to be called the Johnson Box, that's the text that goes underneath the headline, if you have some. You don't always have to have some, but usually that's something that expands on the headline. Then it's some kind of introduction, or transition into talking about what the lead is going to cover. And then you might have three or four lines, paragraphs, inches of screen that expand on the setup, whatever setup you've created in that headline. And then the lead ends when you know in your gut, really, it's more of a feeling, that the person is hooked enough that they're ready to hear more. So that's why leads often end with lines like, "Let me explain" or "Let me show you what I mean," or "Here's a perfect example," something that kind of transitions into proof of the position that you just set up in the lead. So there you go.

Mikhail: Yeah, I think that's a good overview of it. I guess my question would be, what do you see being the biggest mistake copywriters make when it comes to the leads?

John Forde: Well, that is an easy answer. Usually, they don't have a single idea to write about. And I mean, specifically one idea on which to focus. So you hear people talk about writer's block and how somebody sits there with a blank piece of paper and they don't know what to write. I think that the idea of writer's block distorts the challenge of writing a little bit. It makes people think that the problem-- the hardest part about being a writer is having anything to write about. But I think the hardest problem of being a writer is figuring out what not to write about. I know that's definitely my problem. I'm interested in lots of things. I'm a curious person. And I'll find myself going off on tangents and writing about all kinds of ideas-- around the ideas that I want to write about or around the pitch that I want to make, doing research into stuff that ends up being useless. That we're not used, I guess it's a better way to say it-- not used in the pitch.

And I think a lot of other people have that problem too but just don't realize it, so that when you're sitting there looking at a blank page, it's not because you don't have an idea. It's because you haven't refined any one ideas enough to have the passion to write about it to get it on the page. And to me, the solution for writer's block is often a lot of research. So just go-- you can't figure out what to write, go read something and your mind will start worrying. You'll start with making those connections between two things that we've talked about before.

But then you have another job, which is to make sure you only focus on the best one, the one that's the most exciting, the most original, the most useful to the prospect that you're writing for the most perfectly timed for what's going on in the market at the moment. And the one that you can write about in an interesting, even profound way, without needing to feeling like you need to go off on a tangent. So the mistake that a lot of writers make is that they throw in everything. They throw in, you know, everything in the kitchen sink, is what they used to say. So they just put it all in there. And, you know, there's this point, and this point, and this point, but you're much better off finding one thing to write about and using that as your entry point. And if it's good enough, you might be able to write about it all the way through the promotion. But at least in your lead, your lead needs to set things up and everything else needs to kind of come under that umbrella, if that make sense.

Mikhail: Yeah. So that's something that comes with experience or is it a gut feeling? Like how do you know when or which idea is the one you should focus on? Is that just something you learn from experience?

John Forde: Well, you don't really know for sure until you write the promotion, you put it out and you see whether gets results. So it's hard to know. But you take a guess. Yeah, I guess based on experience, I mean I think there are plenty of times where I've gotten interested in an idea that turned out to be the wrong one. And that doesn't really go away. You just have to keep taking shots at it until you get the right one. I guess you get better at it. But the way you get better at it I think it is exposure. You find a niche that you're interested in or you go even deeper within the niche. So you're writing to health copywriters, they probably will find actually areas in health. They might specifically write about women's health products or men's health products or cognitive, you know, supplements for people that help them with memory and alertness or something that helps people sleep. They're probably going to find a few niches underneath that in that area that they're more interested in because they can develop expertise on those. And then they study everything that's being sold in that area and they read the articles that are being written about innovations in that area and discoveries and they ask questions.

So once you're-- you know it feels kind of daunting when you just kind of sit down and somebody says come up with a good idea. But when you get in there-- it's kind of like a comedian if you said, well, if you want to be a comedian, the first thing you have to do is be funny. You can't just choose to be funny. You have to start looking around at life and situations and putting things together and then something funny crops up and you throw out kind of the jokes and keep one. Well, it's the same. It's the same thing, you get into the niche and you study a whole bunch of things and then one of them strikes you, "Hey, this is a good idea" and you start trying to develop it.

Mikhail: Yeah. I guess the more in touch with the market, you become, I guess the-- there's still no guarantee, but you probably just have a better idea of what may work and what won't work.

John Forde: Right. And I think that sounds daunting to some people but-- because it sounds like work, but it's also good news because what it means is anybody can do that. Anybody who is willing to ask questions and pay attention can do that. So that's often the difference between somebody is good at writing health copy or any other kind of copy. Or doing anything really and not being good at it is the willingness to __43:55__.

Mikhail: Yeah. So then I guess kind of on a little bit of a tangent from the leads, when we kind of get into split testing, which I don't want to talk too much about, but basically is it that when you're looking for testing, I know, would it be like a different lead? What would be the sort of thing you look to test for __44:22__ or a different-- or you stick with the lead type or different idea, or how does that work?

John Forde: Well, it's going to-- I mean it's going to be different depending on what it is that you're selling because your opportunities for tests are going to be subjective. You know, in one market or versus another with one product versus another product. But you know that usual-- it's kind of an old direct mail stand-bys, the three things that you can influence are the copy, the author and the list. So that's changed-- the terminology has changed around all that now that direct marketing is happening in so many different ways and you know, digital marketing and things like that changed the way you get access to names and-- so your specific testing opportunities have changed because the ways that we can deliver products, find people, etcetera, have changed. Even the ways that we can deliver a sales message has changed.

But you might end up testing different lists. You might end up testing different forms that they offer. And those two things are very powerful and not to be ignored. You know, even if you're the person writing the copy, you should-- you need to understand how those names are being accessed, like what social media channels they're going through, or display ads they're using, things like that. It's worth understanding marketing, especially today.

You might work with the person if you're working with the client. Or if it's your own business, you might work on what is available from the offer. What they're actually going to get when they order because that can make a big difference, really big difference. The way it's priced, what bonuses are thrown in, what kind of things they try to sell to somebody after the sale is completed to upgrade the sale. All those things can make or break the success of the promotion. So they're worth testing if you've got a really good idea there.

But as far as in the context of leads types, sure I would-- I think you would end up-- usually when you're writing copy, you end up with a couple of different ideas about how to get into it. And sometimes it's going to be based on who it is that you think you're writing to. Like, maybe you think some people are more aware than other people that you're going to try and approach and you're not sure how much of your audience is aware, so you might end up trying a problem solution lead where the headline identifies the problem and then ease its way into the product. You might have one that puts the biggest product promise up at the top that would be a promise lead. Then you might just go and try and do a straight offer with putting the price right in the headline and lead. You might have the price up there. You might have some kind of special deal mentioned there, just as an example. Or you might have one that's a big promise lead and another one that starts with the testimonial story. And you want to test in between.

So the testing-- infinite possibilities of testing.

Mikhail: Yeah, yeah. Well, John, thanks for taking time. I think you've given us a really good breakdown of these leads, these different types of leads where you would use them. And you know Great Leads is one of those books that I would recommend any copywriter, even just in a business owner, just to get

that understanding. If our folks want to learn some more about you, get on your email list, where can they go to connect with you?

John Forde: Copywriters __48:25__ is one word in the URL. Copywritersroundtable.com.

Mikhail: Okay.

John Forde: They can sign up and get a weekly free e-letter. And also now since we're doing this video stuff-- sorry, it's outside. I've set up a Copywriters Roundtable channel on YouTube, where if you just go to YouTube and type Copywriters Roundtable you'll find it where I'm interviewing some of my friends who are copywriters. And in fact in half an hour, I'm going to be interviewing my co-author from Great Leads Mark Ford, so.

Mikhail: Okay. Great. Yeah. Well that will be one I look forward to.

John Forde: That'll be up in a week or two, yeah.

Mikhail: All right. Thanks, John. Thanks again for your time. Like I said, really great session. I'm sure our viewers have a lot of takeaways from this.

John Forde: Great. It was a pleasure. And take care and good luck.

Mikhail: All right. Thanks.

John Forde: Bye.