



freelancelift

WHY NOBODY KNOWS YOUR NAME

A guide to raising your online roar & building reputation in a crowded freelancer space

by Liam Veitch



About the author

When it comes to constraints, there are few more frustrating than feeling ‘anonymous’. A yearning for more exposure and credibility is something that we all struggle with (at every level). So what can you do about it? Well this short book for freelancers attempts to answer that question.

I’ve grown my freelance business into something I am truly proud of, yet I know the feeling of battling as a freelancer all-too-well. Following an initial failure I tried again with a renewed mindset and I teach everything I know at freelancelift.com.

It took me one failure at the freelance game and a 2 year sentence as a zombie-herd employee at a corporate to figure it out, now I want to give you the benefit of my experience as well as inviting you into the world of the people who have been there and broken the freelance boundaries themselves.

INTRO

Why lions **roar**

Why do lions roar?

Asserting presence and assuming ownership of an area without fear or trepidation is a trait we could all learn a lot from. Dominance of a space and a pride in this position should also be something we all aspire to.

So why do most freelancers cower in the corner while others stand tall?

Excellent service output alone cannot save you from a lack of presence online either. Eventually this anonymity will come to bite you; the powerful freelancers roaring their way into your territory are going to take your clients. So what can you do?

By blending into the background you're missing a whole tranche of potential clients who want to work on great projects with credible freelancers. Unfortunately credibility = attention. Without that you're invisible.

Attention is generating interest in what you're doing, attention is being friends with peers, attention is new clients, **attention is revenue.**

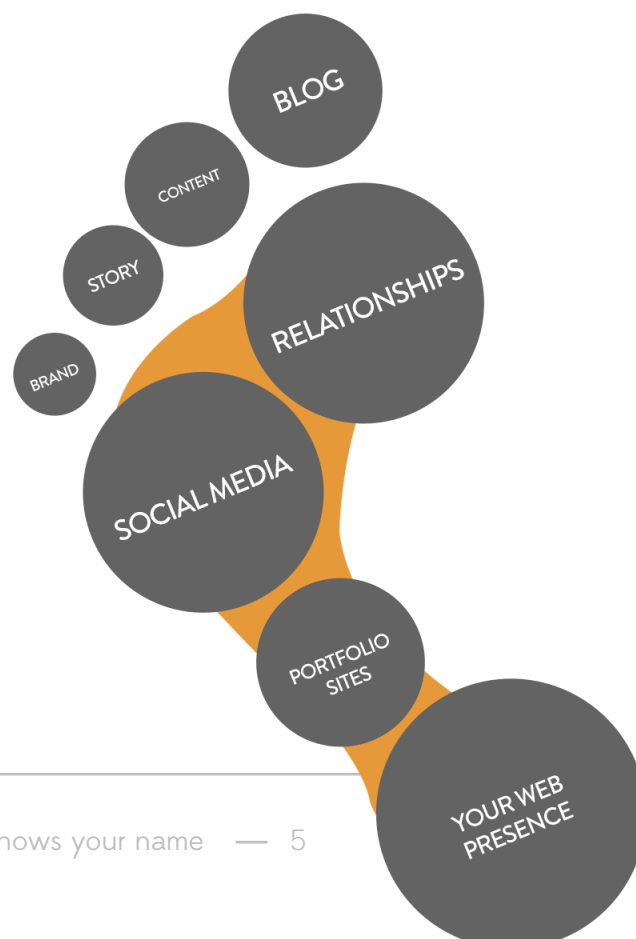
So you should scream from every rooftop about who you are and what you're capable of right? Wrong, **no one cares.**

Peers and potential customers alike care not about you; they care about their own goals. If you are looking to command attention by proclaiming your prowess it won't work, there are already too many other voices in your space all standing on their own soap box for your story to be heard.

Creating attention and attraction mechanisms that are mutually beneficial however will work, that's why I wrote this book.

WHAT IS 'ATTENTION' ANYWAY?

Attention for attention's sake is pointless. Throughout this book, I'll talk attention as it relates to **making a difference** in your business. By building attention you are creating an aura of magnetism to everything you do. Roughly speaking here's what your online footprint looks like:



Turning up the volume on each of these channels helps build that magnetism. If you can then turn this raw magnetism into leads for your freelance business you'll have an effective tool for building your business and starting great peer relationships.

Why 'crash diets' doesn't work

There is a reason 'crash diets' don't work in nutrition. The trauma is too sudden, the mental strength required to adapt to this new way of life is too great to 'make it stick' and the net result is almost always failure.

Trying to 'force attention' by over-committing to creating content or building relationships is a similar story. You've probably rolled up your sleeves on a number of occasions to think "okay this is it, I'm going to do more blogging" or "I'm really going to get out there more this time" or similar.

After a fleeting glimpse of high-velocity action something pops up and you slip back into your normal ways. Building a simple attention workflow that has gradual habit building at its heart is the only real way to ensure long-term commitment to becoming 'known' in your space. When it comes to attention, there is no such thing as an 'overnight success' I'm sorry to say.

Wanting what you have

The point of building attention is to make it more likely that a passing client will **want what you have**. This only occurs when your perceived value is so great they want that more than they want the money in their pocket.

The psychology of social proof

“Strength in numbers” is an idiom we’re all familiar with. We’re conditioned to follow the natural flow of things and move in packs. So when faced with a straight decision a prospective client will always pick the freelancer who has the most friends, the most connections, the most followers and the largest perceived reputation.

There is a sense of security in taking the path with the least potential for surprise. You should know that this ‘social proof’ can make or break your chances in a competitive pitch situation so it’s up to you to start making the moves which improve your overall standing online.

WHAT HANSEL & GRETEL HAVE TO DO WITH YOUR ONLINE PRESENCE

We’re all familiar with the 1812 fable Hansel & Gretel. But are you familiar with the business analogy that nestles between the lines?

The story is no relic, you’ll recall that Hansel scattered breadcrumbs to find a path home for him and his sister following a potentially ill-fated journey.

So what does this mean to you?

As a freelancer, you too are one of a whole forest of service providers vying for attention. You have a space in a dark corner of the web, but if you have no signals, nothing leading potential prospects back to your message you're going to struggle from a lack of attention for you and your message.

Every time you make an insightful blog comment, every time you strike up a relationship on social media, every time you publish a video, portfolio piece or image you're **leaving a breadcrumb**.

Over time, the more breadcrumbs you scatter around the web leading back to you and your message the louder your voice becomes. The more hungry peers and prospects you have beating a way to your door.

When was the last time you made a concerted effort to leave a piece of yourself somewhere other than on your own platforms? All of these breadcrumbs have a purpose; to lead right back into your domain, your territory where you control the message. If you can leverage these trail of breadcrumbs it can be highly lucrative for you and your freelance business.

These breadcrumbs or 'satellites' can include can include videos on YouTube and Vimeo, images on Instagram and Pinterest, social media updates on Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn and Google Plus. They could take the shape of infographics, guest posts, blog comments, ebooks email newsletters...

...These morsels of content, if situated correctly, will actively drive attention to your door.

ONE

Why **nobody knows** your name

If you're struggling to make an impact in your space then you probably have an issue in at least one of the following five areas.

If you feel your online presence falls down in all of these areas, then you'll find this short book infinitely useful. So before we go into how to fix it; why nobody knows your name:

1. YOU'RE NOT CLEAR ON WHO SHOULD KNOW YOUR NAME

In other posts and videos I've talked about 'being the specialist'. Working hard to build yourself a category of one. The objective of this is twofold; it makes it easier to identify and locate prospects and it reduces the white noise of your competition.

In my playbook 'A blueprint for your next move' we dive deep on figuring out what your 'reason for being is'. With this statement you have the strategic outline for new business decisions which lay ahead.

If you know precisely who your customer is and what value you're providing it makes it an easier job to keep an ear to the ground and leave breadcrumbs in locations you can be sure they'll be found.

2. YOU'RE NOT PROVIDING VALUE

In the previous chapter we talked about how few people will actually care about you and the skills you bring to the table unless what you are talking about positively effects them and their goals, or to be clearer; **what you're saying provides them with some value.**

Doesn't it appear strange that the lone preacher on a busy high street who stands two feet taller than the crowd, has a megaphone in hand and a constant stream of words gets **almost no attention?**

Online is no different, its much too easy for peers and prospects to simply walk on by if what you're saying holds no benefit to them and what they're trying to achieve.

If however the tact was not to bombard thousands of people with aimless diatribes, instead opting to spark up mutually beneficial conversations with a select few like-minded people which eventually led to his sermon, which do you think would be more effective?

3. YOU DON'T TELL THEM

If you never reach out far enough to tell anyone your name, how will anybody know it? We've established that the over-arching purpose of attention is to improve your likelihood of acquiring new leads and sales for your freelance business.

It doesn't start there though. Unless you buy them for \$5 you won't gather 1,000 Twitter followers overnight, you have to step outside the comfort of your current online footprint and introduce yourself to peers and prospective customers.

You also need to be prepared to tell your story. This gives you context. I find it interesting sometimes to hear freelancers bemoan a lack of attention when a vague brand name and generic copy is all that represents them online.

Who cares about the third birthday of 'BluePigBanana Creative'? I'd rather hear about the 'Jill Smith' and 'James Doe' behind it not the opaque dummy brand you establish to make yourself appear larger.

All that does is put a barrier between your prospective audience and your name

If you don't make moves to go and connect outside of your immediate circle and you do nothing to engage with a story when you do actually drive people to your message you're going to struggle to build enough brand recollection to justify any sort of attention any time soon.

- What's your struggle?
- How did you overcome them
- Why do you do this?
- What are you most proud of?

If you don't dare leave information like this on the table you're not in the right frame of mind to build the empathy required to create effective online relationships.



4. YOU PROVIDE NO CENTRAL 'HUB' TO ENGAGE WITH

As in the analogy of the builder whose own house is falling apart; freelancers who operate in a creative / web space often go ultra-light with their own site.

Or worse still, they don't have one at all - instead relying on a Dribbble or Behance portfolio to carry the strength of their brand. So what do you think happens when someone likes what you have to say? How can they make that connection? How can they make their feelings felt?

Even though you can like, favourite and otherwise engage with a piece of a portfolio does that really represent and define YOU? How does your same-same profile pitch you as anything different?

In particular I'm talking about ensuring you have a 'home' for your voice. A blog which transmits your message, your story in a shape of a short manifesto, USP or simple statement of intent and something that an otherwise passive visitor can leave with as a token of your intent to continue dialogue.

5. YOU'RE NOT LOOKING TO MAINTAIN DIALOGUE

If you've been able to reverse the negative aspects of the factors above and you're doing a good a job of providing value and commanding attention in a space you'll find yourself with a decent fbw of visits. What separates anonymous freelancers from those making real waves in their sector is how they can maintain dialogue.

The web is a very fickle place and often gaining a new follower just isn't enough. Specifically we're talking about exchanging a useful piece of content for an email address and maintaining dialogue with interesting and useful content thereafter. More on that later.

TWO

Where it **starts**

The purpose of the last chapter was to flush out any remaining element of ‘feeling sorry for yourself’. Attention won’t just land on your doorstep; it’s up to you to make the moves to provide the impact you’ll need to make a dent in your market.

In the sections that follow we’ll dig into all of the areas of your online presence and suggest some instant fixes you can make along with plans for habit-making activity that’ll avoid the crash diet factor we spoke about earlier.

It starts by looking inward, at the cornerstone of your web presence. Is your website the best it could possibly be for sparking engagement and brand/name recognition? Do you have a blog? Do you have anything you could prompt new visitors to take away with them? Are you leveraging email? Are you teaching? If you answered no to any of the questions above then this chapter is for you.

A HUB FOR YOU AND YOUR MESSAGE

The importance of having a centrepiece to your web presence is difficult to overstate. Put simply; it gives you the anchor point that is difficult to replicate with social profiles only.

It doesn't need to be overly complex either. Most DIY site builders even are now advanced enough to accommodate everything you'll need to make that centrepiece a valuable fulcrum of your online voice.

Specifically; a great central web presence should:

Be designed to attract conversion.

Your site should enable and encourage otherwise passive visitors to convert into something of value to you. Specifically this means always being able to answer the following on each page of your site on behalf of your visitors:

- What should I think about this page?
- What should I feel about this page?
- What should I do on this page?

Every page on your site should have a logical next step; whether that's getting more information on a particular facet of what you do or downloading a piece of takeaway content. Each page should have a purpose, to advance the likelihood of conversion.

Tell your story

Your reason for being should be clear. Why are you different? All-too-often you'll see generic headlines and vague statements on freelancer websites. If you're good; show how you're good. Then back that up with great stories about who you are specifically.

Be an outlet for your voice

The volume of your online voice is hugely effected by the exposure you can generate for your own messaging; generally via a great blog.

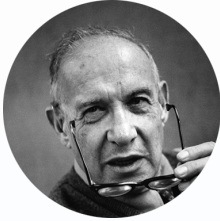
Introduce a value-content piece

We'll talk about 'content' as an area shortly but your central web presence should lead a visitor to consuming content you're producing. Something infinitely valuable to your prospective audience has the potential to really propel you and your brand so you should look to provide value via an ebook, video, infographic or short course and introduce this on your own site.

Have great design

There is no excuse nowadays for poor design. If you're on WordPress, you can get a great theme from Themeforest for \$35 or if you're on a platform like Squarespace or Dunked great design comes pre-rolled. If in doubt, simplify!

VALUE-BY-EMAIL



“The aim of marketing is to make selling superfluous”
Peter Drucker

If you have systems in place to maintain dialogue with your audience and you’re providing value-by-email you can **teach** your way to better brand recognition. You should **consider every email communication you put out to subscribers as marketing.**

When compared to general social media and outbound activity email is incredibly effective. If you have 1,000 followers; only 5-10% of those may actually see your tweet (before it gets buried beneath updates from other users they follow), yet if you email 1,000 you can achieve open rates of 40% and beyond.

In terms of ensuring ongoing attention, you should take email (and the gathering of email addresses in the first place) very seriously.

PRIVATE COMMUNITIES

In my opinion, generic ‘forums’ are a preserve of 20th Century online activity. They have long since been superseded by multi-channel communication via a number of social channels.

That is, until you pay to be involved with one. There are several great ‘closed doors’ communities where great freelancers and solopreneurs speak openly about what is working for them.

I would recommend joining at least one community; the relationships you build here will have great knock-on benefits for your online voice.

Fizzle (\$35/m Fizzle membership)

Includes Fizzle library video training

Workshop Community (\$29/m)

Includes daily freelance leads-by-email

Freelancers Guild (On-application)

Community of freelancers

Freelancelift Pro (\$24/m COMING SOON)

Community of freelancers with in-depth learning content

SYNDICATION SITES

Sites like Quora and Medium offer a great way to broadcast your message further than your current online circle allows. With Quora in

particular you can have a blog set up in 10 minutes; which you'll then re-post your own blog content to.

If you're active in the Quora community too you'll build up 'credits' which you can use to boost posts so that they appear right in front of your prospective audience.

This is a great way to ensure you get maximal exposure for every post you create.

Q&A SITES

With Quora and Clarity.fm you have a way to continually be visible and drive interest back to your central presence. Leaving 'breadcrumbs' in the shape of useful and insightful answers will help you spread your message and raise your online voice.

SOCIAL

Chances are you're doing social already, but why? Do you have a clear objective for everything you do on social? Remember, we're trying to build attention and we do that by providing value. A few retweets here and there just won't cut it.

Your blog should give you spark point for conversation and if you're providing value on that channel your updates will carry depth and purpose.

Just keep in mind the three C's when it comes to social. Your approach depends on how you want to be considered online:

Creator

If you're looking to establish yourself as a thought leader, share great content and value created by you.

Curator

By curating great content from around the web that is of interest to your space you're establishing authority and above all great taste. If you are recognized as someone who is established in a particular topic it'll make it easier to justify why you would be a great as a service provider.

Chatterbox

Engaging in conversation on your feed isn't for everyone, but done well it establishes relationships which can then be taken outside of the social sphere. Likewise, adding your own insight and complimentary comments when sharing as a 'curator' is great for sparking conversations.

In general though; you need to remember that its up to you to provide enough value and demonstrate that in enough locations that you build a reputation and ensure prospective clients **want what you have.**

OFFLINE

When was the last time you went to an event in your specific area?

As online service providers we tend to forget there is a 'real world' out there. Even if you are in a relatively tight vertical there will still be an event, talk, meetup that's right for you.

The value of an in-person meeting (especially if alcohol is involved) is invaluable for cementing relationships which can then be transferred online.

VIDEO

Video isn't for everyone, but now that most of the population thinks nothing of carrying around a HD camera in their pocket (iPhone) there are fewer and fewer excuses for not putting out video.

You are solving problems on a daily basis for you, your clients, your peers so if you can wrap those into value-driven videos you'll have a great head start on the 80% in your space that won't bother.

WRITING AS A GUEST

For the past few years, 'guest blogging' has been the weapon of choice for low-quality SEO operators. Forget about its SEO impact however, instead have a think about how valuable it would be to have a platform.

How valuable would it be to leverage someone else's audience, for free? If you are building relationships online you'll have great opportunities to further the reach of your message by proposing you write for other people's audiences.

TRAFFIC

If you've implemented at least three of the points above you'll start to gather traffic and momentum naturally however there are newly emerging channels open to you; which will provide low-cost high-quality visitors to your site.

Namely Twitter and Facebook ads. Its not uncommon to achieve a visitor cost of \$0.20. If you had 100 targeted visitors matching the profile of an ideal client landing on a great piece of content you've put together do you think you'll be able to generate more than \$20 in revenue from those visits?

Once you've established a solid reputation you should seek to supplement natural traffic with paid activity, even if you're just carrying out a 'toe in the water' exercise.

THREE

What's the point in producing content?

This is a good question as it's one that is pretty difficult for most freelancers to answer.

It's one of the more common questions that come up when I'm chatting with freelancers and looking to justify why they need to do all of this 'extra stuff'. Put simply, content is the beating heart of your online presence. Having it gives you great leverage for wherever you choose to broadcast your message online.

Define: content

Content can best be described as relevant information aligned with or explaining your product or service. When used for commercial ends, content should drive demand and make starting a relationship with an otherwise passive visitor easier (note I said easier, not easy!).

Building content such as blog posts, ebooks, infographics, videos and a whole lot more can help you drive traffic, generate leads and nurture / educate your prospective customers.

So the point of creating content is to **give your voice a vehicle**. Without it you have nothing bearing your stamp; and you'll have a hard time building a reputation. To help you get started here is a quick framework with 5 rules all of your content should abide by.

1. DON'T "ALWAYS BE CLOSING"

Unless you're dealing with an exceptional circumstance (such as group buying sites where general communication mostly centres on offers) try not to be overly promotional. It'll leave your recipients or readers feeling a little cold. Try to inspire and excite.

2. KEEP IT ORIGINAL & CLOSE TO YOUR CORE MESSAGE

If you put out generic content that could just as easily be found on about.com and other content farms you will find it difficult to realise success. It should be useful, actionable and support your core message. Generic materials that are not highly relevant to a reader will not result in increased success. When writing content you must make sure it will be useful to the reader, regardless of whether it supports your online message.

3. CREATE DEMAND

By developing content which gives “tip of the iceberg” messaging and addresses a pain or a problem a prospect is facing you'll create a curiosity that pushes a prospect closer to your “buy” zone.

Pro tip: Use content like this in your lead nurturing funnel after you've grabbed the opt-in

4. IT HAS TO BE CONSTRUCTED WELL

I say “constructed” here rather than “written” as we’re including all content types within that broad term so if you’re putting out videos make sure you are audible and the lighting is good, if you’re producing a book make sure the design is tight and if you’re writing it has to be grammatically beautiful.

5. IT SHOWS AN ELEMENT OF PROOF

By offsetting your message and demand creation with real life testimonials and case studies you’ll build a bond of trust that’ll make the prospect infinitely easier to sell to when the time comes.

Since you write to support a business goal, your content may seem biased. Make sure that content you create gives proof either through quotes and testimonials or through actual metrics and statistics.

FOUR

Committing long term

If you could take one realisation away from this book it should be:

“I need to build a central web presence that provides valuable content.”

We’ve spoken about the importance of content and the methodology behind creating a piece of content that helps further your message – but how can you make this stick long term?

TAKE YOURSELF ON AS A CLIENT

In a recent Q&A session with Corbett Barr, we talked about your ‘Me Project’ and investing in yourself.



“As a freelancer, you should be able to say: For x hours per week I’m going to be working on my ‘Me Project’, creating content and building things that are going to be better for my business in the long term.”

Corbett Barr

The process of developing content, whilst initially pays very few dividends is a long-term investment in your business growth. Corbett advocates developing a “Me Project”, where you are in effect one of your more demanding clients.

By working this way you can allow, then justify time spent on developing content and building the most important brand you'll ever work for... yourself.

Try setting aside 4 or 5 hours per week to work on content, products or projects that will elevate your online voice in the long term.

DO THINGS MORE QUICKLY

Just talk

If writing doesn't come naturally, maybe talking does. If you record yourself talking with authority on any subject you're just a transcription away from a great blog post.

The best advice I have is to mindmap everything you'd like to talk about so it flows and has structure. Record this into your smartphone or even the microphone on your computer and dispatch that off to be transcribed.

My transcriber of choice is [Magiscript](#) – Lainie and her team work wonders, removing the umms, aahs and spaces along with structuring the content with headers, sub-heads and more.

If you can chat for just 4 or 5 minutes you'll have a 600+ word blog post that just requires some small amendments and publishing. Try it.

Work with a ghost writer

Provided you're not writing on intricate brain surgery you should be able to team up with an experienced writer who can put posts together matching your general style.

Expect to pay around \$0.05 per word for ghost writing. I recommend [ContentHero](#).

Recycle stuff you've already said

Old email threads in which you've explained points or Q&A responses can all be classed as content. If you can get to the essence of what you were trying to say, and build a post around you'll have ammunition for a steady fbw of posts.

Make it achievable

Yes you need to plan out what content you're going to be putting out, but don't overestimate your capabilities.

Always err on the side of caution; constantly hitting easier objectives is much more rewarding and has a much higher likelihood of sticking than constantly missing difficult objectives.

If your schedule allows, create a post per week – but don't worry if you are only aiming for one per month. You can still build an online voice this way.

Feel your way into it, don't over-commit.

Track your progress

If you've tried losing weight you'll know that seeing real changes in the mirror gives you insane amounts of motivation to keep going.

If you are feeling results from building your online voice in the shape of positive sentiment (comments, tweets, shares) and real tangibles (visits and new leads) then you have the key ingredients for building a habit that sticks.

Positive reinforcement is crucial, so use tools like Google Analytics to monitor key actions on your site and keep on top of the numbers.

So there you have it, in this short book the intention was to introduce you to the reasoning behind WHY nobody knows your name. By understanding this, you're in a much more informed position to do something about it.

The framework I've laid out above isn't exhaustive either, any opportunity you have to provide value and be seen and heard in your space you should grab with both hands.

In the end, the best clients will do their own research as to the stand-out freelancers in a particular space. Moreover, if you're one of five other freelancers pitching you'll probably be judged on the credibility your online presence exudes.

Credibility is attention, so go get some.

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