



Layoff Lands California Copywriter with her First Freelance Client

The bad news, for Melanie Rembrandt, came at the best possible time.

On an October day in 2003, Melanie learned her employer was letting her go. The Detroit company – hit by the city’s downturn – could no longer afford her public-relations services. But with quick thinking, she turned the situation around.

“This was the second time I’d been laid off,” she says. “They said they couldn’t afford me, so I took matters into my own hands and asked my employer, ‘Why don’t you hire me as a freelancer?’ I had nothing to lose and my former employer could save a lot of money and still work with me.”

And in fact, her boss agreed on the spot. The company still needed her but just couldn’t swing the pay and benefits of a full-time employee. Thus, Melanie left the office that day with her first, freelance client.

Ironically, Melanie had returned just days earlier from Florida, where she attended AWAI’s *FastTrack to Copywriting Success* Bootcamp and Job Fair. There, she learned from some of the best copywriters in the business – all making healthy incomes as freelancers. Most importantly, she came back inspired.

“*Bootcamp* gave me the motivation to take control and take this big step,” she says. “I knew I could do it.”

“Always Wanted to Work for Myself”

Melanie has always written, both personally and professionally. As a college student studying dance and

CASE STUDY:

Melanie Rembrandt

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MEMBER:

Melanie Rembrandt

LOCATION:

Redondo Beach, CA

OTHER JOBS:

Dancer, actress, PR pro

HOW SHE GOT HER FIRST CLIENT:

The hour she was laid off, she landed her former employer as her first, freelance client.

TOP AWAI PROGRAMS:

- *The Accelerated Program for Six-Figure Copywriting*
- *FastTrack to Copywriting Success* Bootcamp and Job Fair
- *Web Copywriting Intensive*

theater at UCLA, and then as a professional dancer and actor, she vowed never to wait tables. Instead, she earned side income crafting website copy, and other marketing and PR materials.

After numerous years working in theater, Melanie decided to make a change and pursue public-relations and copywriting full-time. Around the same time, family needs took her back to the Midwest, where she grew up. Near Detroit, Melanie successfully worked with a Fortune 500 company and various, small businesses in different industries.

Around 2002, she started studying AWAI's *Accelerated Program for Six-Figure Copywriting* with two goals in mind: "It's important to stay up on your skills and get the latest information about copywriting," she says. "But it was also in the back of my head that I always wanted to work for myself."

The following year, she attended *Bootcamp* for the first time, not realizing how quickly that experience would pay off. Not only did she gain the confidence to turn her layoff into freelance work just days later, but she applied *Bootcamp* lessons to build her business rapidly. Melanie immediately reached out to previous employers.

"I started with two clients the same week I opened for business, and made just enough to pay my bills," she says.

An In-Demand, B2B Content Strategist

Experts will tell you, start with what you know best. For Melanie, it was PR. From those two clients, her business expanded mostly via referrals, leading to engagements with celebrities, large corporations, and small businesses.

But business-to-business (B2B) clients are where she found her sweet spot. As a B2B content strategist, Melanie delivers both the overall strategy and the content, including website copy, email auto-responders, newsletters, articles, press releases, blogs, social-media posts, SEO, and more.

"There is a huge demand for B2B copywriters," she says. "A recent survey indicates that 81 percent of businesses use articles on their website, and 80 percent use blogs.* "As a fellow business-owner, I can understand what my clients and their prospects want and create content to meet their specific needs."

Melanie repeatedly turns to AWAI to augment her skills – joining *Circle of Success* for lifetime access to programs – including a series of B2B writing programs. After taking an AWAI program on search engine optimization, Melanie added SEO as a new service – and revenue source – tying in perfectly with her B2B content focus. It's a niche that Melanie has diligently carved out, and in fact, she was named one of the "Top Google SEO Copywriters on Earth."

Yet no matter what services she provides for a client, she's known for getting results. After she landed a feature story for a client in *Success* magazine, the client paid for Melanie and her husband to enjoy a ski trip in Montana. And another client pulled in \$95,000 in sales from a single article, thanks to Melanie.

Days of Her Own Design

By reaching out to contacts, and referrals, Melanie doubled her salary in about two years.

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Melanie is the first to point out that growing a thriving business takes serious dedication, and at times, longer hours than her previous full-time job. Yet the hours belong to her, not someone else.

Outside of work, her life also looks different. Free from a specific job location, she and her husband moved back to sunny California. There, they enjoy one of the activities they love most: scuba diving. And Melanie continues to

take professional-level dance classes, as well as kickboxing – sometimes in the middle of the work day.

“I realized I was finally in control of my career when I didn’t have to get dressed up on a Monday morning and drive to an office,” she says. “And I get to pick which clients I want to work with most. If I worked for someone else, I wouldn’t have the freedom to enjoy all the activities I love.”

Melanie’s Tips For Copywriters

- **Work hard** – “I’m just a small town Ohio girl who decided to make this happen,” she says. “Anyone can do this. It’s just a matter of working hard at it.”
- **Learn from client feedback** – Clients inevitably will make changes to your copy. Don’t take suggestions personally.

Ready to pursue *the Writer’s Life*?

Learn more about the program that launched Melanie’s career, [***The FastTrack to Copywriting Success Bootcamp & Job Fair.***](#)

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