



EVERYTHING'S EASIER WITH ATTENTION

Attract leads and develop interest in your freelance service by focusing on activity which demands attention from your audience.

by Liam Veitch

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About the author

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.

It seems almost beyond our capabilities sometimes to 'do marketing well' as a freelancer. Indeed, for the most part, the advice is patchy at best. Which is why I call it 'attention' instead. This makes it clear what you're aiming towards and in this book I want to show you how I attract attention and provide you 20 ways you can get it too.

‘Attention’ is the ultimate catalyst. It’s one of the major factors separating the struggling freelancer from the effortlessly successful.

Rising above a noisy freelancer world to stake your claim on an audience is a bold, deliberate move that very few actually make.

Consider for a second the ‘stand out’ voices in your sector. That designer / writer / marketer / coder everybody knows. Can you hand-on-heart say that you became aware of them just for their service? Or do they have a wider reputation, a platform and a voice, which demands attention?

If nobody reaches your site, or even knows your name it’s hard to feel anything other than ‘anonymous’. A perennial member of the pack, the herd of other service providers a potential client has to choose from. If you do what it takes though to stand taller, shout louder and go further than your peers, **everything becomes easier**.

How so? Well, once you’re known to a wider audience:

- › Traffic is easier to come by
- › Your trust factor is boosted, as the arriving visitor has a little context already
- › Referrals from your peer group are infinitely more likely
- › You’ll get another chance if a prospective client doesn’t make contact the first time

Consider all of these benefits as contributory factors to an invisible ‘shield’ against instability. If you’re confident that you can acquire a baseline of leads consistently (even if its just one or two a week) it becomes easier to pick and choose who you work with, and be confident you’ll be able to pick up clients naturally.

So is ‘attention’ the same as ‘marketing’?

In a word, yes. But I use the word ‘attention’ deliberately. ‘Marketing’ as a phrase has been so diluted over time, so vague it can cover almost every area of your day-to-day activity.

When proposals are marketing, your website is marketing, your logo is marketing, your social media accounts are marketing there isn’t much that **isn’t marketing**.

This leads us into the shaky territory of “great, I’m doing marketing already, let’s file that task for later”.

This is very dangerous. So instead, I call it ‘attention’.

Attention is what you get from rising up out of the pack, broadcasting your message and making deliberate moves in your space to build a reputation.

You can interchange ‘attention’ for marketing if you wish, but be sure to understand that the objective of marketing, in the more aggressive sense of the word – as with any activity, which raises your profile – is to **build attention**.



QUALITY OVER QUANTITY

Attention isn't measured in pageviews

Success at ‘attention getting’ isn’t necessarily measured in pageviews or site visits. It’s often difficult to measure at all, but one overarching factor rings true:

The quality of this attention matters much more than quantity.

There are ways to unload a torrent of visits to your website if quantity was the objective. Hell, I could crash your server in 5 minutes by sending 10,000 real visitors; and it’d only cost me \$200 using a platform like popads.net*.

But would any of them convert into anything meaningful to your business? I can almost guarantee you they would not.

*Strongly recommend that you never use this channel as a source of traffic, their portfolio is popunders and popovers from some fairly shady areas of the Internet.

Corbett Barr founded the awesome Fizzle.co video learning platform. In a recent Freelancelift Q&A episode we got onto the topic of attention.



“If you think about the sea of potential freelancers out there [for clients], it’s really hard to compare one to the other, but if you find someone who has a platform talking about the issues you need solving you’re going to pay attention.”

- Corbett Barr on Freelancelift Q&A

Having attention and building a platform around it gives you the **competitive advantage** you need in an age where attention span is diminished.

When going to market for a freelancer, prospective clients at the smarter end of the spectrum (the only ones we really want to do business with) will do their own research as to your expertise level, credibility and reliability. Corbett continues:

“It really comes down to making an investment in your business that isn’t going to tangibly pay off right away. Just like offline networking, it might take a couple of months to have these relationships build into project work.”

So when it comes to attention, **who** we’re attracting it from is just as important as **how** we will attract it.

Peers as well as Prospects

For the most part, this workbook (and the course which supplements it) will focus on attracting attention from prospects, our would-be customers.

But a key mistake I see is ignoring the benefits of being a known, trusted voice **among your peer group**. When a client goes to market, they’ll often find themselves straying into areas mainly filled with designers / writers / marketers / coders rather than more people like them.

A good example for designers in particular is Dribbble. By gathering attention from your peers you'll build up a profile that looks credible to a client. More shares, comments and likes for your work can be directly related to your suitability as a service provider.

Later in the book we'll look at 20 specific techniques for driving attention to you and your message, but before we get to that, it's important to understand that attention alone isn't enough.



ATTENTION ALONE ISN'T ENOUGH

There needs to be a **wider purpose**

Everybody will by now be familiar with the TV phenomenon The X Factor. Thousands of nobodies compete to be somebody.

For a short while they are, the sheer weight of attention guarantees it. Yet, before long a huge majority will fade back into the distance; gone and forgotten. Nobody again.

This familiar pattern goes to show that attention alone isn't enough, there has to be a wider purpose. The purpose of attention should be to serve one of three areas:

- › Validation
- › Relationships
- › Credibility

Validation

Firstly, we need be really sure that the assumptions we're making about our client are correct. You can only do this by interacting with them directly.



“Test fast, fail fast, adjust fast” - Tom Peters

Our first job when we're building attention therefore is to validate our assumptions on:

- › Where our audience hangs out
- › What their pains and motivators are
- › Whether our messaging is strong enough

We need to be prepared to validate all of these assumptions, quickly. By failing (or succeeding) quickly with tests at grabbing attention we can adjust and evolve rather than playing the hopeful long game, clinging to an idea or client profile that may never be viable.

For each of the 20 attention-getting techniques I've marked their speed of execution, a 'High, medium or low' indication of time required. When you're looking to validate quickly, you should consider acting on the 'low-on-time' ideas first.

Relationships

As service providers, with variable pricing levels we'll always have a need for dialogue before the sale. Our services can't be bought 'off the shelf', so the second purpose of attention (once you've successfully validated your approach) is to **start a relationship**.

When you benchmark your own presence against your competitors, you could be forgiven for falling into the same trap as they have. "Click here to contact me" is something that will only happen when a client is 100% sure they would like to work with you.

When they're only 50% sure you're the right person, this kind of call to action is not enough. Later in the book we'll talk about converting this attention into email addresses, but for now consider that the bigger picture when creating attention is that you'll also create relationships.

Credibility

Credibility isn't generated overnight. It's the result of consistent high performance or unrivalled commitment.

To that end, when we're looking at longer-term strategies what we're actually laying the foundations for is a **layer of credibility**.

Some factors may not tangibly pay off immediately, but the third benefit to consider is that long-term, consistent activity will provide the credibility you'll need to raise your rates and break through any earnings ceilings currently holding you back.



PREPARATION

Know them before you attract them

In the books ‘Define your dream client’ and ‘Getting more out of your site’ we were putting in the preparatory work, which we’ll begin to put to use when building attention.

By now we should have a fairly clear idea of who our client is, along with a well positioned website that addresses their desires, beliefs and fears.

Carrying out these exercises first helps us answer questions like:

- › Where do they exist online?
- › What are they looking for and when do they go to market?

This in turn helps us to put together our attention plan.

What follows is a set of questions to help you triangulate your client and confidently move towards validation, along with walking you through the other key information you’ll need to prepare.

1. Social Media

The first step is to understand precisely where this audience exists online, starting with social media. Social media is a good ‘jumping off’ point for wider online communities. You’ll often find that the most prominent social media voices use the channels to **funnel visits into their own web properties.**

Platforms like Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn often act as the center point for most online activity so you can safely assume that in most markets, your audience will find themselves on social media in at least some capacity.

Here are some key questions to ask:

How is this client likely to use social media?

- A) A platform only to communicate with friends and family on
- B) A channel for professional dialogue, connecting with their customers
- C) A channel to broadcast messages about their own business
- D) All of the above

When on social media, which channels are they more likely to be present on?

In some industries Facebook is champion, while in others Facebook plays no part at all. When working with larger business-to-business clients for example, you'll find most of their time might be spent on LinkedIn. Which channels might you find your audience on?

Which voices would they be following on Twitter?

There are some accounts that almost everyone in your target audience will follow, so which are they? Are there industry publications they would follow? Prominent experts? Magazines?

2. Demographics

Is there a particular archetype you'll see regularly?

If your clientele is 'stay at home moms', well, they're probably going to be female.

Or in the building trade, you can be **statistically sure** (93.1%) that your audience is going to be male. Having this information makes it easier down the line to accurately target your prospect.

What would their job title be?

They could quite easily just be 'Owner' of course – but dependent on the size of your prospective client's business there may be a particular job title they align themselves with, a key decision maker role.

This information is great to have, as it's publicly available on LinkedIn. At Tone, we build sites for larger businesses who would have a *marketing team of some description*.

It normally falls under the responsibilities of the 'Digital Marketing Manager' to research and qualify providers if the business is going to be building a new website or making inbound marketing decisions. So guess which job title we target?

3. Web life

Which sites could you be sure they'd find themselves on?

If your client happened to be 'sustainable businesses in the Philadelphia area' it would be no surprise to find them in some capacity here: <http://www.sbnphiladelphia.org/>

You should also consider though, what other topics parallel to their industry they might follow. So if your audience is tech savvy, such as the internet startup space you might imagine they'd be a reader on sites like TheNextWeb.

What type of content do they generally consume?

Channels like BuzzFeed aim specifically at a B2C audience, queue cat videos, funny viral posts or celebrity gossip. This serves their insatiable need to drive visits to their site (which provides them with advertising revenue).

For some businesses however, a prospect is much more likely to consume a **whitepaper**, delivered sensitively and slowly over a platform like LinkedIn.

These polar opposite methods produce the same end result. **Visibility and attention for the business that produces the content.** Aiming cat videos at brain surgeons probably won't get you very far when trying to build a professional relationship. What content is your client sector likely to consume (i.e. videos, ebooks, blog posts, white papers, webinars) and where are they likely to consume it?

3. Aspirations & market moves

What changes are occurring in the industry that they should be taking advantage of?

In the book 'Stop Thinking Like a Freelancer' I talked at length about the link between pain and action. With access to information easier than ever, business pain tends to lead to research and investigation into the problem.

Something that'll give you clues about a potential pain is the **"Keeping up with the Jones"** effect.

In 2011, a major market movement in the web design space was that of **responsive web design**. My audience (bands, artists and record labels) was ambitious, and fairly tech savvy, so when I was able to place messaging in front of them, which agitated their pain (that their non-responsive website wasn't keeping up) it demanded attention.

So what movements, regulatory changes, technology evolutions are happening in your marketplace?

How can you capitalize on them by introducing your prospects to the realization that they might be behind the times?

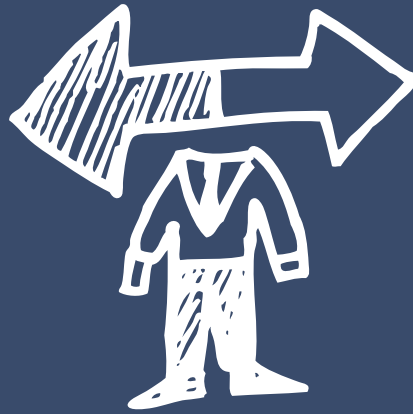
What research are they doing already?

Businesses have pain receptors too. In most cases, it is this pain that creates the environment for research and action.

Indeed, a nagging pain is generally a signal that something deeper is wrong, and every business owner is familiar with it.

Are they struggling to get customers? To save time? To sell more effectively? What pains are being experienced and what research are they doing already?

In the final section, we'll look at the activity you can put into place to intercept where this research is happening. This will ensure you're in the right place, at the right time to gather a good amount of attention.



ATTENTION IS A TWO WAY STREET

Providing **value**, building reciprocity.

We are all familiar with the benefits of attention to us (more leads, more visits, more commercially focused conversations, more customers) but looking at it from your perspective only is risky.

How can you expect your prospective client to pay attention to you if you're not returning the favor?

What we're really saying is that there needs to be an element of **reciprocity**. Attention is hard to come by, especially online so when you do get it you need to make the most of it.

It all comes down to **providing value**. I appreciate this is a 'wooly' term that you'll hear talked about everywhere, but allow me to clarify. Here are five ways to produce something that delivers value (along with how I've leveraged them for Freelancelift). We'll use this for our 'attention piece' later down the line.

1. Tell me something I don't know

If you're producing a PDF, report, video, case study or webinar which tells the passing visitor something they didn't know about their own business you'll build authority and trust in you and your message.

For Freelancelift, I put together ebooks and videos, which offer a provocative and counter-intuitive take on general issues the audience is facing:

- › “Hourly Rates Don’t Matter”
PDF short book aimed at freelancers billing by the hour
- › “5 Reasons top bracket freelancers aren’t on Elance”
Video aimed at freelancers on Elance

2. Results in advance

Can you provide a sample, trial or other no brainer offer which gives a flavor of your offering, without a hefty pricetag (or a pricetag at all)?

- › I regularly host free **1-2-1 Skype calls**, this is 20 minutes of my time at zero cost
- › I offer a **\$1 trial** for Freelancelift Pro, which gives lots of value at nominal cost

3. Going above and beyond

If you connect with a prospect in their ‘natural habitat’ (in their web life or on social media) and go above and beyond their expectations you’ll build value. Whether this is a deeper-than-expected Q&A response, a thoughtful blog comment, a ‘helper email’ which solves a problem they would otherwise have.

On Freelancelift I regularly put together entire posts based on emails or comments I've received from readers:

- › “Why you're not converting web visits to client enquiries”

A post based on an email I'd received that day

- › “5 things to remember when working for free”

This post was prompted by a comment on another post

In both of these situations I was going above and beyond, by offering an entire post when only a short email response or comment reply was expected. This adds value and draws additional attention.

4. Simplify something complicated

Is there something your audience is continually putting off? Or something that slips to the bottom of their to-do list on a regular basis? Can you help them to simplify this process in their own mind?

An issue freelancers really struggle with is figuring out how to make a secondary income. So in 10 minutes I laid out the fundamentals in a video, which aims to simplify the whole process down to its relevant parts.

- › “Building products for a secondary income, as a freelancer”

Video which breaks down the process of developing a secondary income, makes it easier to digest and accessible.

5. Provide something useful & reusable

If you can establish yourself as an authority on a topic and produce something genuinely useful and reusable (a reference point a user can return back to over and over again) you'll position yourself as a resource a prospect can rely upon.

This ensures that even if they are not in the market right now, you've built a familiarity that will result in opportunities when that time does come.

I regularly post content on the Freelancelift blog, which can be continually referred back to:

- › [50 Books to inspire you on your entrepreneur journey](#)
- › [How I write ebooks and why you should steal my process](#)

Whatever you do, just make sure you teach

The key takeaway here is to consider any value creation activity as teaching. If you can be the leader to your prospects, delivering it in a way that doesn't feel like a sales pitch, you'll maximise trust and connection with your message.

You'll get around 8 seconds to ensure the prospect 'sticks around' – don't blow it.

‘Provide Value’ is a euphemism for ‘Create content’ right? Ain’t nobody got time for that!

I need to address the elephant in the room. The thing you know you should do but never get around to. Creating content.

I can almost feel the shudders. It struggles deep in the relegation zone of your to do list items simply because other stuff ‘comes up’ or clients shout louder.

I’m not the guy that beats you over the head with the ‘you must create content’, or ‘you must be a blogger mantra’; it’s difficult as a freelancer and I understand that.

Blogging, creating ebooks, videos or podcasts is one of those things glossed over as something you just ‘have to do’ and while I agree I think it’s worth mentioning that there are ways to shortcut the same end result if you are struggling for time.

Try talking

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 useful 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.com – 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.

Ghost writer

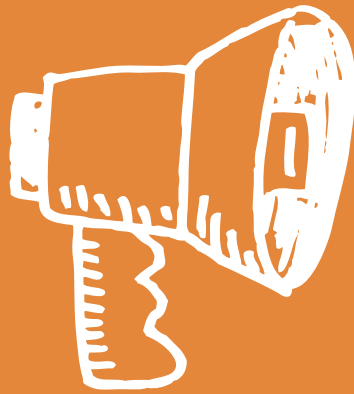
Provided you're not writing on intricate brain surgery you should be able to team up with an experienced writer who can put posts together matching your general style.

Expect to pay around \$0.05 per word for ghost writing.

Recycle stuff you've already said

Old email threads in which you've explained points or Q&A responses can all be repurposed as public 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 flow of posts.

So with that all said, let's go and get some attention!



LET'S DO IT

20 ways to attract attention as a freelancer

PREAMBLE: TO BUDGET OR NO TO BUDGET

The first thing to clarify is that regardless of its source **all attention has a “cost”**, so the concept of “free traffic” is false economy.

If you look towards paid channels you'll have a clear cost per click, which is clear for all of us to understand. But when you're playing the long game, providing value in a space with blog posts, ebooks, leveraging your expertise at events, building your reputation in communities or pushing forward your social media accounts this 'cost' is a little less clear cut.

You should consider this an 'opportunity cost'. **By investing time in these activities you lose the opportunity to do something else.**

If this time would otherwise be time you'd be filling with procrastination then there wasn't much opportunity to begin with. If however you're losing out on time you could otherwise be billing for, or worse still if you could repurpose this time to do the things that really matter (hint: not work!) and be no worse off financially then that's a cost that bears considering.

Taking the intangible 'time with family/leisure' out of the equation for a second, you can draw comparative costs for any activity.

If you understand that it may take you 50 hours over a 5 month period to develop enough attention to bring you 5,000 visits from various 'long term' sources, you should know that you're effectively trading **1 hour of your time for 25 visits.**

When stacked against an average \$1 per click from paid channels, which would you rather have in your pocket? **1 hour of time or \$25 cash?**

There is no right or wrong answer to that question, and at this point, I should be clear that I am not setting this up for an opinion piece on paid channels only. I believe paid channels are a good short-term play, but it should be considered as something you can supplement long term before gradually phasing out.

I just make this calculation to show you that **whichever way you proceed with this, there is a cost to bear for attracting attention from your market.**

So whether you choose to invest time or money, I've laid out reasonable options you can implement.

What you'll need

This book (and everything we've gone through so far in Freelancelift Pro) should have equipped you to get into the frame of mind for attracting attention. But what does that look like in terms of pre-requisites?

Website

You should have a website which speaks to a certain audience and delivers an answer to their problems, in previous modules we've looked at this and you can get everything you need to know.

Initial 'attention piece'

In the video course which complements this course we look at the relative benefits of each 'attention piece' but you should have prepared an 'attention piece' which serves at least one of the five 'providing value' metrics from the previous pages.

Here are some ideas:

- › Free Ebook or report
- › Impactful blog post
- › Video(s)
- › Webinar
- › Free / low-cost sample of your service

Logistics to capture email

You're going to need a way of delivering the attention piece to your interested party; this generally involves having a mechanism on your site to swap an email address for the attention piece.

You can then maintain this dialogue with a series of follow-up (also known as 'autoresponder') emails.

As a way to quick start this, you can use a platform like GetDrip.com (3 months free with this link) this has the modal windows and 'slide up' functionality out of the box. Or if you're comfortable with code you can get equally effective (but less expensive) campaigns on Campaign Monitor or Mailchimp.

In any of those cases you're starting the relationship with something that's a no brainer for the prospect, without it feeling like a sales pitch.

A hitlist

While for 90% of these techniques, a general market picture is enough, it's prudent to develop a hitlist of 10-20 specific targets which match the profile you're looking for. Specific prospective clients who are:

- › Accessible
- › Ambitious
- › Able to pay

(Refresh yourself on the course 'Define Your Dream Client' for clarification on these metrics)

Within any market sector there are tiers of client, more often than not you'll get many more in the lowest tiers, gradually rising to a successful minority.

Your job is to try and understand where in this 'pyramid of excellence' you'd like your client to exist in.

If you're targeting authors are they NY Times Bestsellers or hobbyist self publishers? If you're looking to hone in on the travel sector, are they part time travel bloggers or TV travel personalities ?

This is important, as it'll make your job of finding them a whole lot easier.

So before starting out you need to have at least an idea who's at the right level for you, and to do some research into specifics. So specific authors who fit the bill, specific travel bloggers you'd like to work with.

Having a shortlist of around 10-15 opportunities (don't aim too high yet) will ensure you can start to fine-tune your abilities at attention getting.

20 WAYS TO CAPTURE THE ATTENTION OF YOUR AUDIENCE

So here we are, time to take action and put together an attention plan. I've outlined 20 methods for reaching out to an audience.

Some require time, others require budget. By reviewing each of these 'plays' you can find 5 or 6 which work for you and start integrating them.

1. 'The blip'

Level: Easy

Time: Low

Cost: Low

With this method, your intention is to be a blip on the radar of a prospective client. You should work your way through your hitlist of prospects (whose social media profiles you should have already).

Go through this checklist to ensure you're laying the foundations for 'being the blip'.

- › **Like** their latest Facebook status, and two others future ones (go for two or three in total)
- › Post an insightful comment on a recent **blog post** of theirs
- › 'Quote tweet' at least two **Twitter** updates

This activity is entry level sure, but is a great way to get started, while reaching out to a relevant audience.

2. 'The breadcrumb'

Level: Intermediate

Time: Medium

Cost: Low

I talk a lot about the business principle nestled within the lines of the 'Hansel & Gretel' fable.

As a freelancer - like the siblings in this story - you are one of a **whole forest** of service providers vying for attention.

You have a space in a dark corner of the web, so if you have no 'breadcrumbs', signals or signposts leading potential dream clients to your door you're always going to struggle with a lack of attention.

A good way to do this is to appear as a guest contributor on sites you outlined earlier in the 'web life' area. Here are some examples of top bracket freelancers deploying this technique:

- › **D Bnonn Tennant** has a service for marketers and small businesses so he writes posts where this audience hangs out, on **Unbounce.com** or **Kissmetrics.com**
- › **Nathan Barry** sells books and courses to other designers, he posts stories to **Smashing Magazine** and **TutsPlus**
- › **Justin Jackson** helps web developers and entrepreneurs, so found a great amount of traction on **Hacker News** and **Reddit**

While the time investment for this technique is high, it's beyond question that it's highly effective.

3. 'The Disruption'

Level: Intermediate

Time: Medium

Cost: Low

When you've profiled specific clients, it's a viable exercise to reach out to them directly by email. Approach this the wrong way and you'll be labeled a spammer, do it right though and you could build a customer for life.

The subject line is vitally important, there should be no mention of an offer; you're providing **ideas or feedback for enhancement first**. This starts the dialogue in a collaborative tone.

Example subject: An idea/feedback for [prospect-name] [your-skill] enhancement/improvement

Then within the body copy of your email you should address:

- › A particular **pain point** this prospect might have (Tip: A globally true pain or fear is being overtaken by competitors)
- › That this is in no way a pitch, only a **contribution** from a follower with ideas.
- › That a **reply is optional**, you'd be just pleased they consumed it.

This is known as 'an easy out'. Arguing against the primary purpose of your contact is a surefire way to ensure you do get a response.

On the next page I've laid out a template you can use

Hey Liam,

Love what you're doing on Freelancelift, just wanted to touch base and give you some feedback on a point you raised in a recent post by you on evolution as a freelancer and in particular having processes in place.

I have tons of experience in project management [content writing for conversion, plugin development etc.] and just put some thought into a quick process template [big content idea, development improvement idea] which I thought I'd share.

This approach has no ulterior motive just wanted to return the favor of you providing your expertise to me, by at least giving you something that I've learned from my 5 years' experience in design.

I also note that you're in a bit of a head-to-head battle with YourCompetitor.com and this is something they're just not doing either.

Anyway, appreciate your time in getting this far, I've compiled the ideas here:

::Link::

If I don't hear back from you that's cool, appreciate you're busy. For now I've kept this work between me and you and you have my permission to use it, with no cost. But just let me know if you've done that so I can jump for joy on my social channels.

Alternatively I can chat through with you how this might pan out if you wanted me to develop on this idea a little further.

My Skype is XYZ or hit reply,
Sign-off

4. 'The Reverse interview'

Level: Intermediate

Time: High

Cost: Low

If you're aiming your services at the higher tiers of the 'pyramid of excellence' for your market there will likely be key figures or major voices you can reach out to (with whom you'd love to work).

The idea here is to host an interview, which can be used either as a blog post, or recorded as a podcast / audio post.

This is a non-threatening approach for the prospect, an opportunity for them to spread **their** message further so you'll find that almost all recipients will at least get back to you, with most agreeing to the interview. **But there's an ulterior motive.**

The interview should be held professionally and be something that's valuable and utilized in its own right, however before and after the call is your chance to **reverse the interview**, explain what it is that you do and give some minor pointers for their own web presence.

As this is in a non-sales environment (and you're speaking verbally rather than via email) the prospect is much more likely to listen to your comments and open up, so you have the ability to bring them into your way of thinking and develop the relationship personally. With this relationship you can look to transition the client to a more commercial discussion.

5. 'The blanket'

Level: Intermediate

Time: High

Cost: Low

For every industry sub-set there are probably 5 or 6 useful online communities, several categories on Q&A sites such as Reddit, groups on Facebook, LinkedIn and Google+ and more.

What if you were everywhere? Participating and organizing in all of these key areas. This of course is a long-term play which requires lots of time, but if you could establish yourself as the pre-eminent voice in this space (by sheer reach alone) you'll become hard to ignore.

6. 'The professional headhunt'

Level: Intermediate

Time: Medium

Cost: High

LinkedIn is the social media 'weapon of choice' for lots of businesses. Moreover, the levels of professional data held about every user is unsurpassed. This means you can be **ultra-specific** when targeting prospects on LinkedIn knowing it's a channel they exist on.

So you can set up an ad account with LinkedIn along with a set of ads and messages (promoting your attention piece) which speak to the pains and worldview of this prospect.

You could target their job title, experience level, seniority, skills and more. You'll only pay when someone engages with your ad and with a cost per click (CPC) of around \$1-2 it is something you can achieve a return-on-investment on fairly quickly.

7. 'The marquee'

Level: Expert

Time: High

Cost: Low

There are few trust indicators more powerful than being a **published author**. The barrier to entry on a full-length book is so great historically, that very few people make the step up, and there is a good amount of esteem attached as a result.

This gives you the opportunity to prove to an audience that you're a trusted service provider who has expertise and authority on a topic.

With self-publishing easier than ever now too, it's definitely something to consider when looking to build attention and credibility.

8. 'The no brainer'

Level: Expert

Time: Medium

Cost: High

When you are moving traffic and visitors away from their intended destination (example, they read a post on a blog they're viewing and end up at your site, or they're on social media and are pointed to a resource outside of the social network) their guard is up **considerably high**.

We've all developed sophisticated BS detectors and are wary of things that that seem anything other than normal.

So to combat this (and aid retention for their own network) Twitter developed '**Twitter Cards**'. This is a self-contained lead capture mechanism which exists entirely inside of Twitter.

Here's how it works.

- › Set up an ad account
- › Put together your ad (a tweet) which promotes your '**attention piece**'
- › Provide a URL for the downloadable
- › Twitter displays a panel for the prospect to opt-in to
- › They don't leave Twitter, they don't have to enter their email

Twitter has their details already and the prospect receives the content from a Twitter address by email.

The act of 'opting in' gives you permission to market to this client, so Twitter provides you a list of names, emails and Twitter handles for everyone who downloaded.

All of this happens away from your website, bringing the 'friction' down to a minimum and making it a no brainer for a lot of Twitter users.

At this point you should be targeting your tweet ads to followers of the 'voices on Twitter' you identified at the preparation stage.

9. 'The elevator pitch'

Level: Intermediate

Time: Medium

Cost: High

We're all familiar with those 'otherwise annoying' ad spots at the beginning of Youtube videos. If you're like most, you'll skip the Ad as quickly as the channel will allow.

So why do people still advertise? Well, it actually works.

Youtube has such high viewer volumes that even the fraction of a percent point who do see your ad through to the end are still huge in number. You only pay when someone watches over 25% of your video too, so nothing is wasted.

You can expect to pay between \$0.05-\$0.10 for each one of these views which renders it a very reasonable attention channel cost-wise.

So what can you say in a video and how will you make it?

Well, you should put together a 60 second 'elevator pitch' about you and your service. Speaking in the language of your prospect, you should break it into 5 areas:

- › What they're already trying
- › Why it hasn't quite worked yet
- › Your difference statement
- › How you've helped others
- › What to do next

You can craft these into 5 short statements and utilize a video producer like ['MrExplainer' on Fiverr](#) who will put this together into an engaging video.

You can add your voice over the top yourself or have this editor do it on your behalf. For an outlay of \$20-30 you'll have a professional video you can add to Youtube.

By targeting videos and categories of channel your audience will already be consuming, you'll have another area covered.

Given the reasonable cost of production and affordable view cost, you you could have 1,000 users consume your video for less than \$100 potentially, which makes it a great platform for validation.

10. 'The Chaser'

Level: Intermediate

Time: Medium

Cost: High

You've been there before; you visit a site with the intention to find out information (not necessarily purchase) then leave. Before you know it, you see the brand you just visited **everywhere**. On Facebook, on blogs you're reading and even on Ebay!

This is known as 'remarketing' and it's really easy to implement. What it essentially gives you is **another opportunity**. For a reasonable amount, you can show your ads to people who have already visited your site with a view to bringing them back again.

You can either manage this directly with Google Adwords (you can then place banners or text ads on web properties powered by Google Ads. There are lots of these, but a platform like Adroll combines various channels into one, meaning you can manage ads on Facebook in the same way.

- AdRoll - **\$60 free credit**
- Google Adwords - **\$75 free credit**

You will pay every time someone clicks your ad and you can expect to be billed around \$1 for each of these clicks.

11. 'The ask'

Level: Easy

Time: High

Cost: Low

There is a surprising trend in the freelancer world, which is to voluntarily enter the difficult cycle of winning new clients, completing the project, then moving on.

I advocate developing **mutually beneficial partnerships** with clients, which is too deep of a topic to go into now, but a key takeaway is to **build referrals into your processes**.

At the commencement of a project you can plant the seed for referrals with a simple statement:

If I do a good enough job with you on this project, would you be comfortable recommending me to businesses you're friendly with?

By doing this at the outset, you can pave the way for 'The Ask' at the end of the project, simply ask clients if they can introduce you to similar businesses to theirs.

You'll be surprised how many clients will be willing to help.

12. 'The heavies'

Level: Easy

Time: High

Cost: Low

The Internet is predicated on sharing and helping others. When you're part of a vibrant, active community and you're providing your fair share value (going above and beyond) you'll build an element of reciprocity.

In doing so you'll build a team of people that care about your plight and want to look after your interests. This can directly relate to referrals, case studies and generally promotion of your message to others.

By committing your own time, you'll build a loyal band of heavies to help multiply your own efforts. The Freelancelift Pro community is a good example of this.

13. 'The almanac'

Level: Intermediate

Time: High

Cost: Low

Chris Coyier is a designer, originally from Wisconsin. You may or may not know his name, but if you're in the web industry you'll probably recognize the name of the site he launched in 2007 to serve his needs to share and talk about CSS.

The site, css-tricks.com is now one of the largest, most in-depth resources on the internet and a part-time passion project for Chris.

He's is still a designer, but the work he's done to teach everything he knows and build huge resource has positioned him as one of the most sought after designer/developers in the World.

It's a long-term play, but if you can build a site that serves as the industry resource, the fountain of knowledge or the almanac you'll never have an issue attracting attention to your service.

14. 'The Syndicator'

Level: Intermediate

Time: Medium

Cost: Low

Historically, it was taboo to duplicate content, following a huge clampdown on Google who went after poor quality content.

Nowadays however, syndicating (yes duplicating) content isn't such a grey area. Sites like [Quora](https://quora.com) and [Medium](https://medium.com) offer a great way to broadcast your message **further than your current online circle allows**. Utilizing both platforms, you can have a blog set up in 10 minutes, which you can 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, at zero cost.

This is a great way to ensure you get maximal exposure for every piece of content you create, and it's a great way to reach out to a wider audience without incurring monetary cost.

15. 'The billboard'

Level: Intermediate

Time: Low

Cost: High

Another way to appear on the sites your audience exists on (without going requiring guest posts) is to simply **pay to advertise there**.

Display advertising is commonplace in big business; whether it's the billboard at the side of the freeway or the ad pasted on the side of your local bus, the objective is the same. **Achieve attention & brand recognition.**

Scaling this down is easy too, sites like buysellads.com have a huge directory of sites in various sectors. You can buy space on the sites in its network, paying on a CPM (cost per thousand impressions) basis.

There is a cost attached to this, which you're in control of but it can be fairly expensive to achieve a good amount of traffic.

16. 'The Zuckerpunch'

Level: Intermediate

Time: Low

Cost: High

Following its entry into the Nasdaq; Facebook had a new need, to **generate much more revenue to keep investors happy.**

The method of choice was advertising, lots of it. Facebook ads can be very reasonably priced though if you follow these key rules:

1. Make it really specific

Use everything you know about your audience, their demographics, location, interests to make as specific an ad as possible.

2. Showcase your 'attention piece'

Your ad should make it clear what the result of this click will be. If you're going to give them a free ebook download, tell them!

3. Use Facebook conversion tracking

By placing a 'pixel' (embed code) on your thank you page, Facebook can track how many users you converted into leads. It uses this information to optimize the delivery of your ads so it's crucial the information is there.

It's in Facebook's interest to make the campaign work for you. If it works the first time, chances are you'll keep spending. So if your ad doesn't perform as well, a set of automated systems will send you more traffic to ensure you can get a reasonable amount of conversions.

4. Don't overcomplicate the landing page

All of the landing pages you see for the Freelancelift short books are simple. Headline, intro paragraph, two paragraphs of copy and a bullet list. Then an image which sits at the top of a short form.

It's tempting to over-think and over-design these pages, but make it really simple and you'll achieve great conversion rates. This page for example regularly converts at over 45%!

5. Don't bid per click

From my own testing, when you're bidding a specific maximum click your ads are shown less frequently. Instead, Facebook will optimize your cost based on impressions and the number of conversions you're receiving.

6. Ride it out

It can be really scary seeing costs go up without having conversions. The longer you leave the ad to run the more likely the result will go in your favour. There have been occasions where I have been paying \$12 per lead by the second hour, having spent \$100... only for it to even itself out across the day, ending in me spending \$200 at around \$1 per lead.

So do give it some time, ensuring you're staying in an area you can afford.

Facebook ads can be a really valuable source of traffic for the right market if you get it right, **it's a channel I highly recommend.**

17. 'The offline shortcut'

Level: Intermediate

Time: High

Cost: High

Regardless of your industry, there will be someone, somewhere hosting a conference or event about it. More often than not such events will be attended by precisely the type of people you'd like to talk to about your service.

It does take time, and is potentially very expensive but it's a huge shortcut in making relationships and commanding attention.

From guest speakers who might be at the top of the ‘pyramid of excellence’ to the regular attendees you can chat to during the breaks, there are lots of opportunities to develop relationships you can transition online later.

Without the heavy burden of their (or your) working day, their over zealous email client or online walled garden protecting them from your messaging you have a great opportunity to connect and make yourself known.

18. ‘The not-so-dark art’

Level: Intermediate

Time: High

Cost: High

There are lots of benefits to narrowing your potential market, so it’s vital that you maximize every one.

One such benefit is that you’ll have a much smaller pool of competitors. **That is to say, there are far fewer people competing on organic search for the same eyeballs**, so this previously inconceivable channel becomes an option again.

So you should ensure you're getting the technical aspects right on your site to assure you position well on search:

Title element

Containing the keyword(s) your audience would likely enter

URL structure

That is search friendly (i.e. not `yoursite.com/page/xx7722m`)

Correct heading structure

Just make sure your primary headline is wrapped in a H1 tag, other headings tagged accordingly in HTML

Responsive design & build

These sites are shown more prominently than non-responsive ones in the search index

Quick load speed

A factor in the current Google search algorithm

Good design practice

Google is currently utilizing over 10,000 human employees (named 'Quality Raters') to figure out what constitutes 'good design'. This information is being fed into a super-computer, and at some point in the near-future AI will be able to spot a good design from a bad one in milliseconds, significantly improving the ranking algorithm.

So it'll pay to have a site designed with best practice in mind!

If your desired phrase is specific enough, having these in place alone might be enough, then any work you're doing outside of your site to raise your profile (with links back to your web presence) will have a multiplier effect.

19. 'The portfolio hustle'

Level: Easy

Time: High

Cost: Low

It's very easy to tell someone to 'work for free'. Indeed, it's something I try to **steer clear of advising**, however there are occasions when it's prudent to do so. The time you invest in doing this should be recouped in the attention that working with this client could bring.

So you should be working with **reputable voices on a free, or low-cost basis**. This is particularly useful if you're entering new markets or if you're looking to build a portfolio of higher caliber clients.

This was something I did effectively with the music industry in 2011-2012 and it was a real catalyst for the growth that followed. I was working for free but had full creative control and these projects became mine to showcase, an example of **top-level prior work with happy testimonials** to show for it.

The client was happy, they had a great end-result for no cost. I was happy; I had two dream client examples, which gave me a huge amount of leverage. Who would ever know (or care) what I was paid for it?

I put together an exhaustive post on this topic, which will give you some more pointers [here](#).

20. 'The keynote'

Level: Expert

Time: High

Cost: Low

When your voice is credible enough to be heard outside of your own webspace, you should definitely consider **cranking up the volume**.

You'll do this by appearing in more notable locations. These include interviews on high value websites, appearance on popular podcasts or as a keynote speaker at an event in your sector.

The interesting thing about speaking is that often it's more accessible than you might think.

Sites like Lanyrd list all conferences actively **looking for speakers** ([check it out here](#)). If you feel confident on stage, and can negotiate a position as a speaker this will provide yet more credibility and authority when someone hits your site looking to consider you as a service provider.

This is a long-term play that will require significant time investment, but it's an option that is definitely recommended.



MAKING IT WORK

Closing remarks & moving forward

So there you have it, in this book we've taken a big picture look at why attention is so important, along with laying out an understanding of right type of research before making the leap.

We've looked at what you'll need to prepare and what to have in place before starting an attention campaign and we then reviewed **20 different ways you can promote yourself and your message.**

From here it's over to you, to qualify which of these 20 ways will work best for you and aim to just do it.

Remember, **the first purpose of attention getting is to validate that your assumptions are correct**, so don't be afraid to get it wrong. The objective is to fail fast if you're going to fail, learn fast and adjust fast.

In later Freelancelift Pro modules we'll take a look at **how to develop this attention** (email addresses we'll begin to gather) into paying clients, but for now we've achieved a way of working that will:

- › Ensure we are targeting a more readily available client
Defining a specific market sector
- › Guarantee we speak their language, and provide an environment they can engage with
Developing a site which works well and delivers leads
- › Find the right type of attention and convert that into leads
By leveraging the power of 'attention'

The video course will provide more real-world examples for you to follow. I look forward to seeing you putting these principles into action.

EVERYTHING'S EASIER WITH ATTENTION

Share your thoughts and progress at freelancelift.com/community

This was short book for
Freelancelift Pro members.

freelancelift

