

FREELANCE
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www.freelanceforum.org

Annual Membership Dues:

Individual - \$85
Couples/Partners - \$150
Student - \$60

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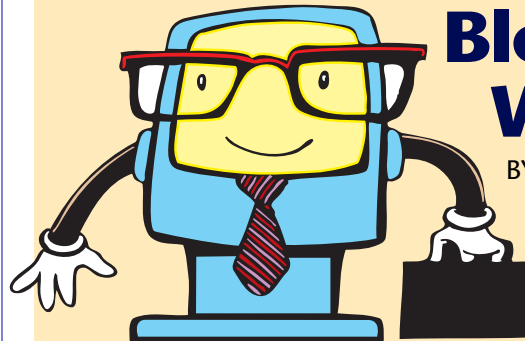
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Who Needs It?

BY POLLY WADE

Blogs are nothing more than a cute electronic toy, right? WRONG! Blogs are an essential element of what's known as "social media"—and they're playing an increasing role in today's business environment.

According to **Toby Bloomberg** of Bloomberg Marketing, "Savvy marketers are integrating blogs into their marketing plans to support strategies such as: extending brand awareness; building credibility through thought leadership; developing relationships with customers, prospects and stakeholders; generating sales leads; and conducting product research."

Join us in September as Toby explains the basics behind blogging and its partner, RSS news feeds. She'll share knowledge that will help you in advising clients and in determining whether a blog is right for your business.

WHEN: September 7, 6:15–8:30 pm**WHERE:** The Creative Circus**ADDRESS:** 812 Lambert Drive (near the I-85 Monroe Drive exit)**ADMISSION:** FREE for Members/Guests \$15**SEE LAST PAGE FOR DETAILED MAP AND DIRECTIONS TO CREATIVE CIRCUS**

August Meeting Recap

BY JANINA EDWARDS

Starting and maintaining your business on a good legal foundation is essential for your financial well-being, not to mention the peace of mind it can provide when "the taxman cometh." In August, long-time Freelance Forum member **Jon Lee Anderson**, and two other legal eagles, **Lesley White Berggren** and **Warren Traver**, briefly reviewed some best practices all freelancers should consider.

Lesley opened the panel discussion with basic information about starting a business. Most business should have a business license; be registered with the state of Georgia and the Georgia Department of Labor; have a registered trade name; and a federal tax ID number. All businesses should have a separate checking account.

Carefully consider what type of business entity you want to create. Sole Proprietorship, S Corporation, and LLC (Limited



From left: Jon Lee Anderson, Lesley White Berggren and Warren Traver.

Jan Stittleburg

Liability Company) are all viable options depending upon your tolerance for paperwork and liability, the number of people governing the company and other personal preferences.

Jon Anderson emphasized that it's always best to have a written agreement. Business may function without a problem 98% of the time. It's the other 2% that requires the

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August Recap *continued from page 1*

protection a contract gives. All contracts should contain three essentials:

- *Scope of Services* (what work is expected in this assignment?)
- *Ownership* (who owns what?)
- *Payment Terms* (be specific—how and when—including consequences for non-payment)

Warren wrapped things up by going over collections issues.

His succinct advice: "Document your file. Always let your client know where you stand, in terms of the performance of your contract."

Questions, answers and personal testimony kept the conversation interesting and the evening exciting. It all comes down to this:



Jan Stittsburg

The topic was serious, but Jon, Leslie and Warren kept the discussion lively and fun.

"Doing business is serious." Take it seriously from beginning to end, from the inception of the company to your daily interaction with clients. That's your best protection.

Ten Random Reasons Why I Belong to the Freelance Forum

BY PAUL GLICKSTEIN

10. Free Food! I work for food, but I'll show up at valuable and informative meetings for food, too.

9. The Reality Check as Clients Write Checks. Am I charging what I'm worth? My peers are the first to let me know—and to help me get there.

8. Thursday Night Must-See TV? With Seinfeld in Reruns, It's Not So Must-See These Days. But Freelance Forum meetings are always filled with must-hear speakers, not to mention camaraderie and good humor.

7. Call Me Co-dependent, but Their Happiness Is My Happiness. One reason I enjoy guest check-in: I know how unnerving it can be to walk into a roomful of strangers. I want our guests to feel welcomed from the get-go, and I've watched so many of you greet newcomers warmly. That's rare among professional organizations.

6. It's Not Just a Meeting, It's a Networking Lab. At other events, I use my experience here to engage prospective clients and working partners.

5. Our Annual Dues Are Less Than One Session with a Therapist . . . or Attendance at a Weekend Anger Workshop. Got a client, project or work-related situation from hell? Chances are a member has been there and can offer inspired advice.

4. It's Nice to Hang Out with Aging, Ageless Wonders! We all must be young at heart: I've got clients half my age, and we meet in this epicenter of 20-somethings!

3. Free Food! No, I'm not repeating myself. I'm talking about the free meal or other kind gesture you receive when you refer work to a colleague. When I refer a

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COMING SOON!

The Freelance Forum Annual Portfolio Show

November 2nd
at the Defoor Centre
1710 Defoor Avenue NW
Atlanta, 30318
(site of the 2003 and 2004
Portfolio Shows)

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Janina Edwards

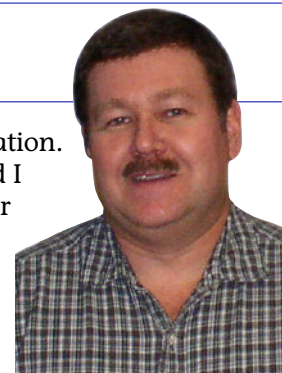
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We want to hear from you.

PRESIDENT'S CORNER



One of my major clients, an international news service based in the United Kingdom, agreed to be sold this month.

Coincidentally, its main business is reporting on mergers and acquisitions. Yet the employees I deal with don't seem to appreciate the irony of their situation. They're too wrapped up in how it might affect them. Will there be layoffs? Will there be more work for less pay? Should I get my résumé on the market? Will this still be a good place to work? In a nutshell—how will someone else's decisions affect my life?

Other freelancers who also write for this company have concerns, but for most of us, it's business as usual. It seems likely the company will have freelancers write most of its content. After all, we're paid by the article, and we manage ourselves, so the company doesn't have as much overhead cost.

Hearing the concerns of my client's full-time employees reminds me of one of the main reasons I'm a freelancer—control of my own destiny. Most of my former employers are no longer in business; they've either been acquired or moved away or gone under. At my last employer, a conservative 120-year-old Canadian insurance company, the executives gambled so badly on real estate investments that their losses drove the

company into liquidation. That's when I decided I was tired of my career depending on the whims and incompetence of others, and went out on my own.

Sink or swim, whatever happens, I'm responsible for the results now. I decide what my priorities are, who my clients are, how much I'm worth, whether to work overtime. If I end up dealing with a jerk, I don't have to sneak around looking for another position with a (hopefully) nicer boss—I just walk away when the contract ends. There's always another client out there, another opportunity, new challenges and a variety of interesting work.

We all have our own reasons for freelancing. But for me, that's a biggie—the simple freedom and power of controlling my own fate.

—Bobby Hickman

WELCOME, NEW MEMBERS

Richard Sine, writer

Karley Ann Barber, web designer

Angela Walten, graphic designer

Karen Kennedy, writer

Holly Mullins, writer

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10 Random Reasons continued from page 2

seasoned professional to a client project I'm unable to take on, it only enhances my value to the client. And believe me, I've seen my colleagues maintain astounding ethical and professional boundaries when that happens.

2. Recognition Runs in the Freelance Forum's DNA.

Volunteering is a great thing, and we do it to sustain this organization. But our Board, our Committee Chairs and our newsletter editors take great pains to recognize the contributions, large and small, that our members make.

1. I Get to Stretch My Creative Chops while Talking Up a Great Organization.

I know we've all grimaced and snorted "why-did-I-take-this-on" through pro bono assignments, but this one I'm happy to do. Thank you, and hey . . . have your people call my people!

DIRECTIONS TO CREATIVE CIRCUS

FROM DOWNTOWN HEADING NORTH ON PIEDMONT: North of Ansley Mall, turn right onto Cheshire Bridge Rd. Go approximately 2/10 of a mile to Manchester St (at Roxx Tavern) on your left. Turn left and follow Manchester until it ends at Lambert and turn right. Creative Circus is the purple building at the end of Lambert on the left.

FROM BUCKHEAD HEADING SOUTH ON PIEDMONT: Continue south past Lindbergh and go under I-85 overpass. Turn left at the first light past I-85 onto Lambert. Creative Circus is the purple building at the end of Lambert on the left.

FROM CHESHIRE BRIDGE/LAVISTA ROADS: On Cheshire Bridge from Lavista, go approximately 1 mile south toward Piedmont Rd. Turn right onto Manchester St (at Roxx Tavern, just past NAPA Auto Parts). Follow Manchester till it ends at Lambert and turn right. Creative Circus is the purple building at the end of Lambert on the left.

FROM I-85 NORTHBOUND: Take exit 86 (Monroe/Piedmont/Buford Hwy). Coming off the I-85 exit ramp take the first exit (Monroe/Piedmont). Go left at the light, then take an almost immediate left at the BP Station onto Piedmont Circle. At the next light, cross Piedmont Rd onto Lambert (staying to the right of the yellow highway barrels). Creative Circus is the purple building at the end of Lambert on the left.

FROM I-85 SOUTHBOUND: Take the Lenox/Cheshire Bridge exit (Exit 86); turn left at the end of the ramp onto Cheshire Bridge. Continue 1.3 miles to Manchester St and turn right (at Roxx Tavern and just past NAPA Auto Parts). Follow Manchester till it ends at Lambert and turn right. Creative Circus is the purple building at the end of Lambert on the left.

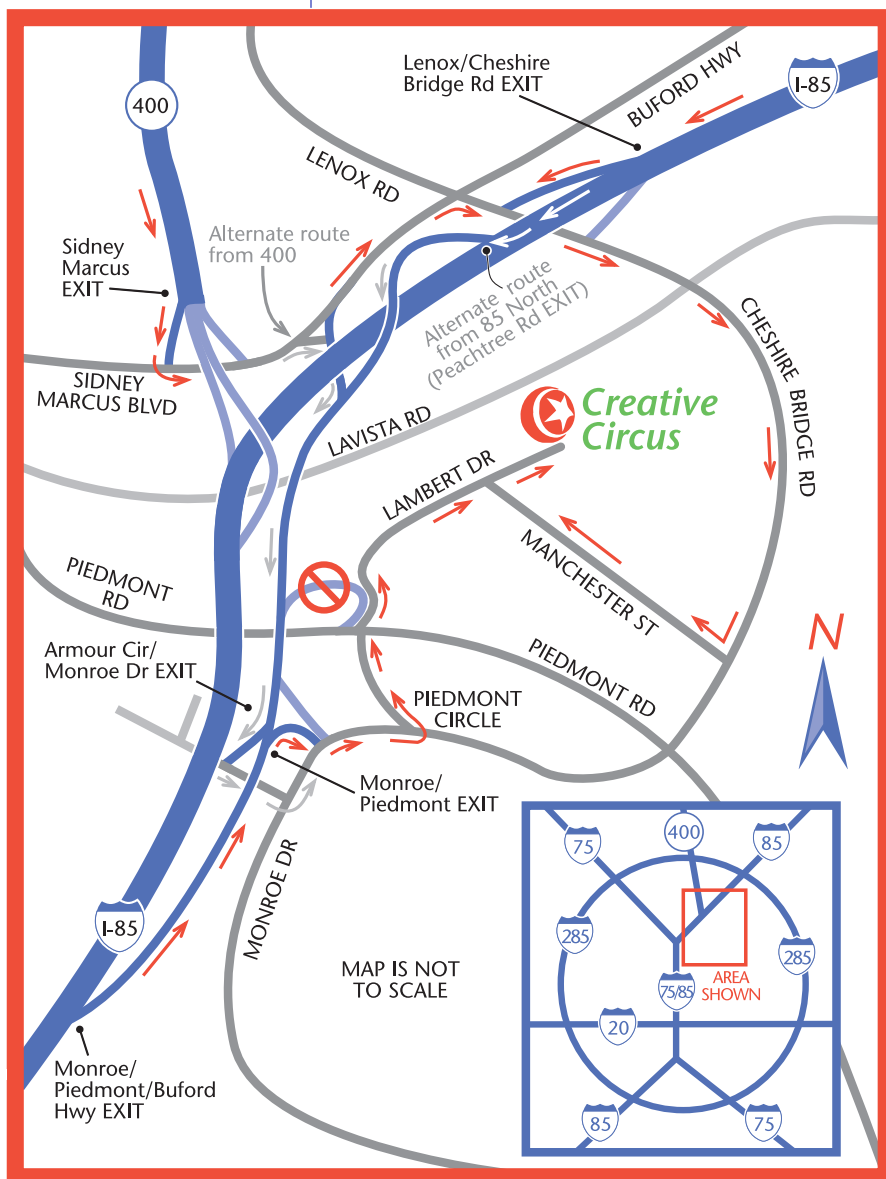
OR: Take the Peachtree Rd exit (Exit 88) onto the access road. Take the first exit (Armour/ Monroe). At the end of the ramp go left to the next light and turn left onto Monroe. Turn left at the BP Station onto Piedmont Circle. At the next light, cross Piedmont Rd onto Lambert (staying to the right of the yellow highway barrels). Creative Circus is the purple building at the end of Lambert on the left.

FROM GA 400 SOUTHBOUND: Take the Sidney Marcus exit. At the end of the ramp go left onto Sidney Marcus. Turn left onto Buford Highway. Turn right at the next light onto Cheshire Bridge. Continue 1.4 miles to Manchester St and turn right (at Roxx Tavern and just past NAPA Auto Parts). Follow Manchester till it ends at Lambert and turn right. Creative Circus is the purple building at the end of Lambert on the left.

FROM I-75 SOUTHBOUND: Take the I-85 North ramp. Stay in the right-hand lane once on I-85. Go approximately 1 mile to the Monroe/ Piedmont/ Buford Hwy exit (Exit 86). Coming off the I-85 exit ramp take the first exit (Monroe/ Piedmont). Go left at the light, then take an almost immediate left at the BP Station onto Piedmont Circle. At the next light, cross Piedmont Rd onto Lambert (staying to the right of the yellow highway barrels). Creative Circus is the purple building at the end of Lambert on the left.

REMINDER: No More Slippin' In the Back

For security reasons, Creative Circus has asked that we enter and leave the school through the Main Entrance only. Thanks for respecting the wishes of our generous host!



Janie Morgan