



What Elephants Know About Nonprofit Copywriters

Robert Roth, PhD

Introduction

If you are looking to hire a copywriter for your nonprofit organization, you need to know what elephants know.

Why, you ask???

Because elephants' brains have three times as many neurons as human brains and, according to many legends, they are extremely wise.

In Asia, the Hindu god Lord Ganesha (the god of wisdom) has the body of a human and the head of an elephant. And, in Gabon, Central Africa, legend has it that elephants are past human chiefs.

Whether you believe that elephants house the souls of legendary chiefs, or possibly not, it is still a good idea to take advantage of their legendary wisdom. The fact is that elephant wisdom just may be even wiser than Artificial Intelligence.

To be sure I covered all my bases as I wrote this ebook, I consulted with both several wise elephants, and also with Artificial Intelligence. My AI research was helpful, no doubt about it. But the elephants proved far wiser. So, in the next few pages, I will share what elephants know about hiring a nonprofit copywriter.

Hope this information is helpful. If so, please let me know!

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Some Good News

The **Good News** about hiring a good nonprofit copywriter is that can write creative, engaging and keyword optimized copy that attracts and retains program participants, donors and grant providers. And equally important, a good nonprofit copywriter can help you reduce your marketing expenses and increase both the financial and social returns on your marketing investment.



A good nonprofit copywriter:

- ❑ **Understands That Budgets Are Limited**

Because the budget for copywriting in a nonprofit is frequently quite limited, copywriting chores often can fall on the shoulders of organization managers and administration assistant who lack the time, training and experience to be good copywriters.

- ❑ **Is Enthusiastic To Volunteer Or Work At a Deep Discount**

For nonprofits, the bottom line is that a copywriter has to be affordable. That being the case, engaging an expert volunteer, or deeply discounted freelancer who shares a passion for the nonprofit's mission can be a big win/win for both the copywriter and the organization.

A lot of good things happen when you hire a *good* nonprofit copywriter. But before you pick up the phone or write an email to make an offer . . . you might want to also consider some Bad News, and also some Ugly News, that the elephants share in the next few pages.

Some Bad News

The **Bad News** about hiring a bad nonprofit copywriter is that a bad copywriter may waste a great deal of your time and money, severely reduce your program and fundraising impacts.

You can increase your new copywriter's potential for success by:

- Asking for recommendations** from previous employers and clients
- Checking out their work** on websites, LinkedIn, and professional association portals
- Interviewing several candidates** before making a decision.
- Interviewing potential writers thoughtfully and thoroughly**, asking:
 - **Why are you interested in our nonprofit's mission?**
 - **What is your approach to copywriting** and how would it take you to adapt your approach to our situation?
 - **Specifically, what is the step-by-step process** that you envision pursuing while you are working with us?
 - **What is your experience specific to marketing and copywriting work in our industry?**
 - **What are your rates?**
 - **How and when will you measure and report results?**
 - **What are your guarantees** (don't expect any . . . but it never hurts to ask)?
- Get a proposal in writing**, including scope of work, fees, and terms in the form of a legally binding agreement or contract.



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- **Negotiate a volunteer commitment or deep discount** because highly experienced copywriters are generally expensive with hourly rates ranging from \$50 to \$100 per hour. Volunteers are “free” and a passionate deep discounter may be willing to work for \$25.00 (or less) per hour.
- **Caveat emptor.** Hiring the lowest bidder may both waste your marketing dollars and damage your relationships with program participants, donors and grant providers. As ancient Roman elephants so often cautioned . . . *Caveat Emptor!*

By following these tips, you can eliminate a great deal of the bad news that can result from a less than productive copywriting engagement.

Some Ugly News

The **Ugly News** about hiring an ugly nonprofit copywriter is that he or she will take your money and then not deliver.

A bad hiring decision can be a VERY BIG PROBLEM that costs your organization a great deal of time, money and opportunity. That being the case, be sure to protect yourself and your organization from making an ugly hiring decision by:



- **Doing your homework**

Learn as much as you can about your prospective hire. Read online reviews, check their references, website, LinkedIn profile, do a little AI research and, perhaps, seek the advice of a few very wise elephants.

- **Verifying experience**

Make sure your potential hire has substantial experience specific to nonprofit copywriting.

- **Checking out their portfolio**

Any copywriter worth is or her salt will have a robust portfolio that they are ready, willing and proud to share with you.

- **Getting everything in writing**

Before hiring a candidate, get everything in writing . . . including the scope of work you anticipate them undertaking, their status as an employee or contractor, how and when they will be compensated, and how and where they will work including in-office, hybrid or remote locations.

About the Author

Bob Roth (AKA Robert Roth, PhD). nonprofit marketing consultant. I work with nonprofits, at deeply discounted rates, to increase marketing impact and reduce marketing expense. My work has touched more than 100 million people and raised more than \$40 million for nonprofits that are truly making a difference.



Read more about several of my favorite nonprofit marketing campaigns at <https://drbobmarketing.com/nonprofit-marketing-campaigns/>.

For-Profit Marketing Experience

My nonprofit work is informed and empowered by more than 30 years of corporate marketing leadership during which my work generated several hundred million dollars in equity value. In the for-profit sector, I have been honored to serve as:

- President and COO at Grand Canyon Railway
- Vice President Marketing for Del Webb Recreational Properties
- Vice President Marketing for Radisson Hotels
- Director of National Advertising for Holiday Inns

Nonprofit Marketing Experience

Concurrent with my for-profit career, I have been honored to serve a number of nonprofit and government organizations including the ACCESSMed Foundation, Arizona Office of Tourism, American Humane Association, Arizona Small Business Association, Butte Opera House and City of Cripple Creek, CO, Coleville Tribes, Desert Stages Theatre, Frank Lloyd Wright Foundation, Sedona Chamber of Commerce, the Navajo Nation, and Utah Navajo Industries.

Education

- B.S. in public communications (magna cum laude) Boston University
- MBA and PhD in business administration California Coast University

Veteran Status

I am a proud wartime veteran of the United States Navy.

Contact Me

Please [contact me](#) if your nonprofit organization needs a little (or maybe a lot of) support from a passionate nonprofit marketing consultant and copywriter.