

**An Interview with BRIAN KONRADT,
author of *Freelance Poker Writing*:
How to Make Money Writing for the Gaming Industry**

Q: Tell us about your book.

BRIAN: *Freelance Poker Writing* is the first book showing freelance writers how to make money writing for the gaming industry.

Q: So it's not just writing about poker?

BRIAN: No, it's writing for the gaming industry in general. This includes all types of casino-style games. I focus more on poker in my book because it is the most popular game and writers make more money covering poker and the influences of poker.

Q: Tell us about your writing career.

BRIAN: I've been a professional freelance writer since 1992. I've written for many publications and companies in several industries. I am mainly skilled as a copywriter, since most of my clients were corporations and ad agencies who hired me to write their marketing materials. I've been reporting on new trends in freelance writing since 1998. I don't do much freelance writing for clients anymore because in the last ten years I have branched out into other areas. You can read about my writing career at my website, www.BusyEntrepreneur.com.

Q: How did you come up with the idea for your book?

BRIAN: I became addicted to Texas Hold'em when The Travel Channel began airing poker tournaments on TV. I then started playing poker for fun and became even more addicted. My poker addiction led me to research more about poker and the gaming industry. During my research I met freelance writers who were making money in this growth industry. I was interested in how they broke in and what it was like freelancing in this industry. I wanted to tell their story. This is what gave me the idea for my book.

Q: What was the writing process like?

BRIAN: It took me close to seven months to complete my book. I spent a lot of time researching the industry and interviewing writers and poker players. Because I run my own business during the day, I wrote this book in my free time.

Q: What obstacles did you face when writing your book?

BRIAN: Getting some of the information and facts correct was difficult, especially writing about the gaming laws. Interpretations of some of the gaming laws conflict with one another and don't make sense entirely, depending on who is interpreting the law.

Q: Who designed your book cover and website at FreelancePokerWriting.com?

BRIAN: I did. I love graphic design as much as I love writing. The two skills go hand-in-hand with me. I learned a long time ago if you offer both services to corporate clients – writing and graphic design – you can make a lot more money. The skills I had developed from my freelance career made writing and designing my book a lot easier. I also have two negative traits that work in my favor: I am a control freak and I have a (less than) zero attention span. I enjoy controlling all aspects of a project (writing, editing, designing, publishing, and marketing) as well as juggling several other projects throughout the day. I get bored very easily, so staying busy creatively is my cure.

Q: Can you make a living writing for poker magazines?

BRIAN: You can make some money, but don't quit your day job just yet. Poker magazines (the ones on the newsstand) don't pay high rates. Average rates are between .10 and .15 cents per word. Established freelance poker writers earn between .35 and .65 cents per word. Unless you are a writer with many clips and lots of experience, it is very competitive writing strictly for poker magazines. Poker trade magazines, on the other hand, do pay more and are less

competitive, but this requires you to know the business sides of gaming.

Many writers look outside the scope of poker magazines to other magazines that cover topics related to poker and gaming; these include magazines on women's issues, men's issues, lifestyle, sports, betting, gaming, technology, travel, entertainment, law and so on. Many writers do make a living writing for these magazines. Pay rates are much higher, up to \$1 per word and sometimes more.

Q: What other writing gigs exist for poker and gaming writers?

BRIAN: Tournament coverage, such as WSOP and WPT; SEO writing (writing search engine optimization copy) for businesses and affiliates; copywriting (writing for casinos, ad agencies, and gaming companies); ghostwriting books and ebooks; and, of course, magazine writing (which includes writing for newspapers, special publications, websites, and blogs).

Q: Which pays the most?

BRIAN: That depends. Covering a big tournament can make you plenty of money because you can generate many articles and news pieces with exclusive content and interviews. Plus, networking at tournaments is priceless. You can almost guarantee yourself you'll walk away with more writing gigs. However, covering a large tournament requires a lot of time – or, should I say, a lot of non-billable time.

Many writers find that SEO writing pays well. A client will ask a writer to write 20 articles at 300 words each on a topic (using certain keywords) for \$10 per article. A skilled SEO writer can whip out these articles in less than three hours. That's \$66 an hour. Many SEO writing gigs are not for me because I write slowly and I prefer writing articles that entertain and educate readers.

Freelance copywriting in the gaming industry pays well. The average hourly rate is between \$25 and \$45 per hour with three or more years of related experience. Many freelance copywriters secure copywriting gigs from ad agencies in this industry.

The most popular writing gig, I would have to say, is freelance writing for poker-related publications, both offline and online. Poker and gaming cover so many topics, and many writers sell their articles to a variety of media outlets.

Q: How do writers break into this industry?

BRIAN: I answer this question extensively in my book, so I will be brief. Some writers start their own blogs. Other writers pitch an article idea to an editor. Yes, that's it. No real big secret. Of course, you have to know your stuff. You can't fake it till you make it in this industry.

Q: What is the most effective marketing strategy to publicize your writing services?

BRIAN: Online and offline social networking is the least costly and produces the best results to build a loyal readership and to build relationships with prospective clients. Online and offline social networking includes blogging; networking and schmoozing at poker events and tournaments; participating in discussion forums at poker websites and writing-related websites; joining a writer's association to network with other members; creating a personality profile at MySpace.com; posting informative articles at AssociatedContent.com to generate free publicity for your services; and so on. There are so many variations of social networking these days, I can't list everything.

Q: What makes your book unique or what adds value?

BRIAN: That's easy – the entire premise of the book is unique. I feel what adds value is the interviews with freelance writers and poker players. Many of them are at the peak of their careers. They exemplify success in every imaginable way. I was very fortunate to pick their minds. All of the writers and poker players I interviewed were eager to share their experiences so they could help other writers to succeed.

Q: What's next for you?

BRIAN: I am currently under contract to ghostwrite two books, one on small business funding, and the other on Internet marketing strategies. This should keep me extra busy for a while.

Thank you for your time.

Learn more about Brian's book, *Freelance Poker Writing*, at <http://www.FreelancePokerWriting.com>

This is an AUTHOR INTERVIEW with Brian Konradt, author of **FREELANCE POKER WRITING: How to Make Money Writing for the Gaming Industry**.

You may reprint this interview, online or offline, without prior permission from the author. You may also add your name to this interview as the interviewer.