

The Email Marketing Techniques That Double Sales

Part One Of The Three-Part Interview With Copywriting Legend Ben Settle

Ben Settle has pretty much become the leader in email marketing. His style of infotainment combines storytelling with marketing, making readers entertained and curious so they're actually looking forward to his emails. And he sends out a lot of them too, sometimes two or three emails a day. But, he says, that's the kind of email marketing that doubles sales if done right. And in this three-part audio with Ben, you'll hear all about it.

Ben didn't start out knowing how to do all of this, though. When he began in sales, he was so poor, he had to live out of the office he was renting, take showers at the gym, and sneak around so his landlord wouldn't find out – all so he could sell MLM cassette tapes door to door. He knew there had to be a better way. And in Part One, you'll hear the amazing story of how he stumbled onto copywriting/email marketing, how he used it to make money right away, and how he uses it today to double sales.

You'll Also Hear...

- Exactly what "Attraction Marketing" is, why Ben only does the opposite so he's thinning his herd (of serial returners, lukewarm customers, and cheapskates), and how to make Ben's kind of "Repulsion Marketing" work for you
- The weird (but effective) way Ben would land his first copywriting client today if he had to start all over again in a new town with no contacts
- Why it almost never works to say you've studied under "Gary Halbert" or "Dan Kennedy" or any other expert when you're marketing yourself as a copywriter – and the one "can't miss" way that shows them you're worth taking a chance on
- The one best way to build a list from a podcast
- What changed Ben's mind about Facebook marketing (after he did this, he got four times as many new paying subscribers)
- Examples of how Ben makes sure his products stand apart from his competitors – and how he makes most his money off the backend of those
- An insider's look at Ben's 3-step sales funnel
- The one area Ben says all newbies need to get right before they even think about things like "email marketing" or "FaceBook ads that convert..."

Ben says when it comes to marketing, everyone seems to be concerned with building a list, when that's just part of the equation for doubling sales. If you concentrate on building an audience and a presence, you'll have lists from all over the place – podcasts, social media, ebooks, websites, etc. – making your email marketing more strategic and targeted (while making you more money). And in this interview, you'll hear how to do that.

Michael: Hi, I'm Michael Senoff, founder and CEO of www.HardToFindSeminars.com. For the last 5 years, I've interviewed the world's best business and marketing minds. Along the way, I've created a successful publishing business all from home, from my 2-car garage. Now my challenge is to build the world's largest free resource for online downloadable MP3 audio business interviews. I knew I needed a site that contained strategies, solutions, and inside angles to help you live better, to save and make more money, to save healthier, and to get more out of life. I've learned a lot in the last 5 years and today, I'm going to show you the skills you need to survive.

For the guests who are just now joining us, can you give out your URL website and tell them what to do when they get there?

Ben: Yeah, it's www.BenSettle.com and if you go there you can opt in or not opt in, it's up to you. If you do opt in, I will send you the first issue of my Email Players newsletter. It will be a PDF, not the print version of the first issue. That's a very real \$97 value. That's what it costs every month to be a member. No one ever gets a price break or anything like that. It's \$97 a month. That's what that issue is legitimately worth, and it's got 24 different ways to make more money with your emails. I just went through 24 different things you can do – different openings and subject lines and approaches and ideas – and people absolutely make money on that, just going through that free issue because that's the goal. I want them to get a taste of what I have to offer them, and what better way than show them how to actually make some more sales? So that's free and if you don't opt in, that's fine too. You can go to the blog and I've got well over 1000 pages' worth of content on there and a bunch of audio and video; it's all free so it's yours for the taking. You can download it listen to it, whatever you want to do; www.BenSettle.com.

Michael: Ben, for the listeners who don't really know who you are, have never heard of you, give them the Cliff Note version of how you got your start.

Ben: Okay. I was in college in the mid- to late-nineties, and when I graduated I knew I did not want to do the job thing forever. I just knew even at that age – I had an uncle pretty much the whole time I've been alive I think he's been in Amway, and he was always trying to prep me for when I was old enough to do it, so he'd always give me these inspirational books and all that. So when I got out of college, all I could think of, "Well, if I'm going to do business, this is the only kind of business I know how to do, MLM." I didn't join his thing; fortunately for him, actually.

The last couple of days of college, I remember watching this infomercial that Kevin Trudeau was putting on – you remember Kevin Trudeau, the infomercial guy? He did pretty good infomercials and he was doing an infomercial on MLM. He was generating his own leads and sponsoring people in MLM through direct response PD, and I didn't understand what direct response or anything like that meant, but I was definitely persuaded to want to do what he was doing, so I called the number. A few days later this guy called me. His name was Derek Scott and we became good friends over the years and he sponsored me into it. It cost like \$800 and that was when I was broke; I didn't have any money. I put it all on a credit card and got into debt. It actually got me started in business.

A year and a half, I'd gotten in so much debt, I had to find all these leads and the \$100 a month auto thing they had you on, and other stuff, and all these bad financial decisions – I was married at the time – and things had gotten so bad that I had to live in an office because I couldn't afford a real place. It was either go to this office, which was \$250 a month, or go live with my mother with a wife and those two did not get along very well, so the office it was. We went to this office and lived there.

It was a two room office. There was a bathroom – there was a toilet basically and a sink, there was no shower or anything. This office was conjoined to the landlord's office, this older man who was on all these different prescription drugs and everything, and he'd always fly through that door early in the morning right when he came into the office, to use the bathroom because that was on our side, and we didn't want him to know we were living there because that probably wouldn't have flown very well for him. What we'd do is every morning, we'd get up at 4:00 AM and we'd go down to the gym, go play basketball or whatever and shower there and get dressed and then come back around 7:00 AM as if we're just coming in for the morning to get some work done or whatever.

Anyway, this went on for about 5 or 6 months and then it was getting depressing. It was embarrassing. I was trying to hide the fact that this was going on from my friends and family because it was just humiliating, and we were both trying to work this MLM deal where we were getting to the point where we'd go around time and hand out these audio cassette tapes. This is back in the cassette tape days. There was no MP3s and barely anybody was probably marketing online the way we know it today, and we're trying to hand out these cassette tapes and trying to recruit local business people kind of like door to door, and getting laughed at and humiliated. You know you're kind of getting that look from people like, "Oh,

man, you poor schlubs.” You know me, Michael; I’m like this introverted guy. I like to just hang out by myself most of the time. I don’t really like talking to a lot of people and all that.

I don’t really know why I got into that business, but whatever the case, it was very humiliating, very humbling, and one night, I remember this like it was yesterday because it’s just seared into my brain, it was about 3:00 AM in the morning. We’re both laying on the floor of the office – we didn’t have a bed or anything – and I was just depressed off my butt. I’m like this is just not working. I literally prayed to God that night like, “God, you don’t want me doing this. I know you don’t want me doing this because I suck at this. I hate being in this business, I hate everything about it. I hope there’s something better for me.” So I got up, wide awake, and went into the other part of the office where the bookcase was and I kind of looked at the bookshelf just to keep my mind occupied on something, and pulled out this book called *The 7 Lost Secrets of Success* by Joe Vitali.

Michael: Was this the office owner’s book or your book?

Ben: No, it was my book and I had read it a couple times before because it was the book of the month at the MLM company I was in – they sent us every month called book of the month – and I liked it. It was a short book and it was about this old school advertising guy named Bruce Barton.

Now, hardly anybody knows who Bruce Barton is today. I bet if you asked 1 in 1000 people in marketing who Bruce Barton is, they wouldn’t know, or they might know because he was the second B in the BBDO ad agency, but most people have no clue who he is, but in the early to mid-1900s this guy was everything. He was a household name. Everyone knew who he was. He was an open enemy of FDR; they both were public about that. The President of the United States was an enemy. He would advise Wall Street people and he ran for Congress and he helped found the BBDO agency, which was one of the biggest advertising agencies in the world. In fact, somebody said at the time it’s hard to go anywhere, talk to anyone, and not hear the name Bruce Barton come up, and now he’s a complete unknown, unfortunately. He was the kind of guy that would tell businesses like US Steel, “You can’t stop advertising or people are going to forget about you.”

Anyway, the book is about him and these success secrets that Joe Vitali pulled out of studying this guy’s life, and it’s still one of my favorite books. Anyway, I was just thumbing through it and I turn to this page where he was telling a story about Bruce Barton back in 1919, which I believe was

right on the tail end of World War I, and the economy was in a shambles and a lot of people were out of work, and he was this businessman in a big city, Chicago or New York or whatever, and this salesman actually came to him for advice in his office one day. This guy just basically asked Bruce, “Help me, man. Help me find a job.”

It turned out that this guy who came to Bruce was known for being good at writing sales letters. He was a salesman but apparently he’d made a name for himself in the business as being very good at sales letters and Bruce Barton takes him to the window and says, “You’re supposed to be good at writing sales letters; why don’t you write a letter to one of these buildings out there,” and he’s like showing him all the buildings in the city, “selling them on hiring you.” Dude, there was something about that story that just clicked. I’m like, “Sales letters? You can get paid for writing that, you can sell through a letter? I don’t have to go door to door to call leads and cold calling and all that? I can actually sell by writing?” That’s like an introvert’s wet dream. That’s like exactly – I didn’t even know there was this out there. I’d heard of a term, “copywriting” and everything but it was just a vague notion.

That night, I got on the internet and started looking up sales letters and copywriting and ran into the names Dan Kennedy and Gary Hubbard and all the usual names people run into when they start studying direct response copywriting and it was like a rabbit hole. I just jumped into it. At first, I tried to sell MLM using sales letters and I did get some leads doing it, which was kind of nice, but I realized that MLM just wasn’t my thing and I wanted to do freelancing and it wasn’t long after that, maybe a couple years after that, where I actually ran into you and started working with you. That’s where I really started honing my abilities because we were doing those projects where we were splitting everything 50/50 so if my ads didn’t convert, neither of us got paid but they did convert and we sold some good stuff and I remember paying off some debts and all kinds of good stuff with it, and that’s how I got started.

Michael: So you knew when you saw that, “This is going to be my thing to go.”

Ben: Yeah, I did. It was the thing, because when you’re in MLM, at least at that time – I don’t know how it is now – but at least at that time, it was very, very cultic. It’s like “You’ve got to do it our way, we have a system, it’s got to be duplicatable,” as they used to call it, “You can’t go writing stuff because that’s not part of what we do. You’ve got this VHS tape, you have to use that and you have to show the plan in their way.” The whole idea of writing a sales letter or generating your own list and all that and selling

maybe some kind of low cost lead gen like they do today in MLM, or all the smart people do, they call it a funded proposal. You sell somebody a product on how to be better at network marketing generically promoting a company. People go through that product and they're like, "Man, this person really knows what they're doing, maybe I should have him sponsor me," which is a much smarter way of doing it but back then it was very cultic; it was like you have to do it this way and you got indoctrinated with this and it never occurred to me to write sales letters or anything like that. Once I saw that you could do this and I saw that it actually worked, I couldn't imagine doing anything else.

Michael: And it's your personality. It's a dream job for anyone who wants to sit on their butt, have their own time, have their privacy, and be able to make money from their kitchen table, literally.

Ben: It's the ultimate kitchen table thing. In fact, back then I was duplicating video tapes. That's what I did for my job, I would go and duplicate tapes like Knight and Dale Cohen and all these other clients like that, and I somehow was able to get a spot on the second shift which means I have a certain time at night, like 7:00 at night, where nobody was there except me. Even better than that, I was able to get my work done early and I would practice handwriting ads out by hand and reading books and all that on the job.

I remember when we were working on Art Hamel's stuff – that was how to buy a business using your own money – and I would listen to the interview you did with him over and over like on my lunch breaks, the drive to and from work, and just on my regular break. I wouldn't sit there in the lunch room with everyone. I would go out to my car and try to work on myself, try to make myself better at copywriting or study something. Back in those days, I was really on this Eugene Schwartz kick, *Thought Break Through Advertising*. I had this goal to read it 10 times and I was just immersing myself in this stuff, and you don't have to go to a college or university or anything; you can just do it right there at home or in a car or even at work.

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Michael: Tell us about your commute.

Ben: It was about a 30 minute commute, sometimes longer, and I would listen to stuff. If I was working on a project, for example, remember that Scooterport thing we were trying to sell?

Michael: Yes.

Ben: For example, the Scooterport. I wouldn't listen to the radio or anything. I would put that interview – or it wasn't even an interview; it was like a phone call you did with that guy – and I would just listen to that over and over while I'm driving so I was like imbibing myself with the product and how to sell the product and how to write, and there's a lot to be said for talking to a client, recording it, and then listening to it over and over to get in the head of the product you're trying to sell and that sort of thing, but that's what I would do. I would listen to that or I'd listen to copywriting training.

I remember the Gene Schwartz product that you sell, and I would listen to that over and over and over. And when I made money, I would always reinvest it, especially in the beginning. I'd always reinvest it back into more education. For example, the first paying gig I ever got was on Elance and this was probably back in 2002, I think I got paid like \$800 or something for it, so I didn't really spend that money. I actually took that money and then I bought John Carlton's *Kickass Copywriting Secrets* course and I bought this collection of Gary Halbert copywriting newsletters and Scott Hanes, and I bought a bunch of books from Dan Kennedy and that sort of thing, and I think that's important for people to do when you're just getting started, reinvest those profits.

Whatever it is you make, reinvest it and what that's going to do, I have found, Michael, is when you're broke like I was, it forces you to not fall for nonsense. You're not going to just fall for the latest hyped up launch or whatever. You actually do your homework on what you're going to buy. You don't just buy stuff because everyone's buying it. You only have limited funds; you got to invest in something that's going to pay off, so I think being broke was actually an asset because I was not making very much money at the time. If I had a bunch of disposable income, I'd probably be like these guys today, man. They just go around buying from every launch just because it's popular or whatever, just because they're getting caught up in the hype of it, and here's something interesting, Michael.

Back in like May or June, I was talking to this lady, her name is Michelle Spivel. I actually had her on my podcast to talk about this because she was telling me about how these biz op minded people and the people who just buy from one launch to the next and never actually implement anything, whatever it is, they just want to buy it. She says they're literally

an addict. They get a dopamine drip every time they buy something new and it gives them that excitement and thrill and now they're looking for that next hit. I'm just really glad I never got into that because I see a lot of people in that situation where they always want their next dopamine drip and they never understand it's a cycle.

That's why these people will buy every e-book and buy every course out there from every launch out there. This is not just copywriting but marketing in general; they buy everything and they never get anywhere. They're always spinning their wheels and that's a vicious cycle to be in. I think a lot of people need to be more aware that this is going on because there's a lot of addicts out there, man, and they don't even know it.

Michael: Here's a question from Alan Stacey. He says, "Dan Kennedy talks about the 'No BS' ways to build a herd. Then you often talk and write about thinning the herd. I'd like to know what techniques you find most effective in driving off the bum steers while corralling hungry heifers."

Ben: Interestingly enough, back in 2007, I was approached by this guy, Mike Dillard, who was pretty big in the MLM training world and he wanted me to write the sales letter for his *Magnetic Sponsoring* book, which is his flagship product and even to this day, nobody's beat that ad, but I learned something about that. They were big on what's called attraction marketing, and that's when you're trying to attract certain people to you in your life, and in your business and all that, and I think it's a perfectly valid way of marketing. I had no problem with it. I have found that you also get a lot of the bum steers, that way you attract a lot of what you don't want, too. That's just my observation in my own business. I'm not saying everyone else has that experience but just for me, so I'm big on trying to do the opposite of what everyone else is doing.

I don't know. Maybe it's a little rebel streak. Maybe I want to be like your teenage son, Michael, and I just want to do what everyone else is not doing and what I'm told to do, not do it, but I have this idea of why don't I try something like the opposite? Repulsion marketing? So I like to repulse people away because I had this theory at the time, and there are other people who have discovered this. I'm not the first to discover this or anything, but there are a lot of people who have had the same experience where if you focus on repelling the people you don't want, you kind of automatically do attract the people you do want and sometimes you flip people to your side who normally wouldn't be, because you're being so blatantly honest, and that's how you repulse people; by being blatantly honest. There are some people who for some reason think I'm kind of a

dick. I'm not; I'm just trying to repulse the people I don't want. It comes off that way to some people and if you do what I'm about to say, you will be called names. I know people who are way more hostile than me out there, and I don't understand why I'm the one who always gets picked on with this but whatever, it's all good.

Michael: So it's a strategy?

Ben: It's a strategy, and here's the thing: It's not done as like a trick or anything. Mike, it's just the righteous way by which I do business. I am going to repulse people away. For example, I don't want the dopamine addicts. I could make a lot of money. I'd probably triple my sales if I did what everybody else is doing and I went with that and put a new product out all the time and living launch to launch, and serving that dopamine drip for people, I would probably make a lot of money but I would have a lot of headaches. I don't want to deal with those people. I don't think they make very good customers. They tend to be complainers, refunders, and people who want to do chargebacks and all that kind of stuff; that doesn't make them bad people. I just don't want them as customers, so to me it's a righteous way of doing business. It's a philosophy. It's like a rule, a maxim but which I do business. I am going to try to repulse away the people I don't want.

I wrote an email that I was telling you about, the dopamine people and how they're literally addicts and all that, and I would write that because I want those people to know I don't want them buying. It's so weird. I will refund people's money right after they buy and subscribe to my email players newsletter, for example, because I know that they've refunded a product of mine back when I used to have products I offered refunds for, or somebody I know, because some of these people don't even realize that they've made a name for themselves. They're serial refunders, basically. I'm not going to give them an ounce of my knowledge. They don't deserve it. They're not going to do anything with it. If that's their mindset, that's fine, if that's how they want to live their lives, but I don't want them in my customer list.

I want a clean customer list of winners. I want people who are going to play to win and not play to not lose, which is what a lot of these people want to do, so I openly mock the people that I don't want. I don't do it in a way that passive aggressive or anything, I'm just really blatant about stuff. For example, in the sales letter I have for Email Players, and I'll talk about this in email sometimes; if you're someone who complains about information overload, for example, don't buy from me. You're just going to

be overloaded with more information and anybody who complains about more information is not applying it. There are certain people I do like, we want information. I can't imagine being overloaded with good information, so I want people like that who are implementing and applying. I don't want people that are going to complain that they got too much stuff and they can't handle it, and "Oh my god, I'm overwhelmed." That means they're probably buying one thing after another, looking for that dopamine drip, and they've probably got a closet full of products they never went through and I don't want those people.

I want to be the priority in somebody's purchase. Let's say somebody follows me and five other people; I want to be at the top of that pile. That's how you do it, by repulsing away the people you don't want. You have a much better chance of that happening, so that's the way I do business. I'm not saying that everybody should do it necessarily, but it sure does work for me.

Michael: Give me a couple of examples of some radio show personalities that have been very effective using this type of polarizing strategy.

Ben: That's a very good question because part of my inspiration has always been talk radio personalities. Name any of the big ones; Howard Stern, Rush Limbaugh. My personal favorite is Michael Savage. I haven't listened to him in a while but I love listening to him when I do. He has a lot of guests on lately but when he's on, he's about as polarizing and repulsive to people he doesn't want in his audience as you're going to get.

Here's the irony of it all, at least in the talk radio business. I've heard Rush Limbaugh say that 50% of his audience hates his guts, and yet they listen to see how much more mad they can get, and so his haters are supporting his show because he gets to charge more money for advertising based on the number of people who listen to the show and all that so he wants his haters and stuff on that. A little bit different tone than the way I run my business. I don't really want people who are never going to buy from me.

In fact, Michael, I have another philosophy about which way I like to do business and it's actually based on the Book of Revelation of all things, but there's this letter to one of the churches from Jesus and he's like "You've done all these good things but you're lukewarm. I would rather you be hot or cold. I'm going to spew you out because you're lukewarm." That's the way I look at managing customers and lists. I want to spew out the lukewarm people. I want the people who are hot or cold. It's just what I teach and my personality, which I'm not trying to force on anyone; it's just

how I think. If I make someone cold where they're never going to buy, I have done them and myself a service because they're going to leave my list, peacefully most likely, and go on to other things and that's fine. That's good for both of us. If I can make people hot for what I have, they may not be able to buy right away but eventually they'll buy when they can. I like having them around. They make great customers and all that, but the lukewarm people, they just hang around and they're on your list to complain, like "Oh, man, you're sending me too many emails," and they're just like deleting your email or getting off of your list or whatever; those are the lukewarm people.

Those are the people I want nothing to do with. My goal is to turn them hot or cold and by trying to repulse them away, that's what's going to happen. They're either going to turn cold on me and leave or they may in some cases actually become a believer in what I'm doing and stick around. That's a whole other way of doing things. I think it's to spew off the lukewarm people.

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Michael: You're listening to an interview with Ben Settle. Ben, why don't you give the listeners your website? What is your URL?

Ben: My website is www.BenSettle.com. When you go there you have a choice. You can either opt in or just go to the blog from there. If you opt in, I send you the first issue of my Email Players newsletter as a PDF. It's a print newsletter that's \$97 a month. I send you that first issue as a PDF. It's got 24 ways in there that you can immediately use to make more money with emails. I've got people saying to me thousands of extra dollars just using that. You can get that if you opt in. If you don't opt in, you can still go to the blog. I have well over 1000, maybe 1500 pages of content on there and over a dozen hours of audio and video training that's free, so either way, if you opt in or you don't, there's a lot of stuff there worth checking out if you want to learn more about email.

Michael: Here's a question from Al Bravo. "Ben, if you land in an unknown city with no money and no one knows you, how would you go about getting to write, or simply said, how would you start your copy business from zero? How do you get to convince that first client that will get you going?"

Ben: It's kind of a two part thing. Getting started is not the easiest thing in the world if you don't have a network in place, but it's not impossible obviously

and the first thing you got to know is what kind of clients to go for. A lot of people, if they were dropped in the middle of a city with a few dollars in their pocket and they wanted to start a copywriting business from scratch, they would probably go to companies that they think would need copywriting. They would go to local businesses, chiropractors, and they would say, "Hey, you could really use copywriting and here's why you should hire me." That's the wrong way to do it.

The first thing you should do is do some research on who's already using copywriting, so people who are already paying someone or several someones to write copy for them. You want to go after people who are already buying what you're selling. Just doing that, this applies to any kind of product, not just copywriting. It's hard to convince people to want to use copywriting and have them behave in a way, but if you go to a company that's already hiring copywriting, they're already tracking their copy, they're already testing stuff, trust me, they're hungry for someone to come in and beat their control packages and all that and write better ads for them and make them an extra percentage point in sales. Those are the people to go after first, so that's the first thing, is research that.

Secondly, a lot of copywriters don't want to hear this, but if you want to do this fast, start writing sales letters for your own product or service. I don't care if it's an affiliate, like if you go find a product that's selling really good on Clickbank if you want and maybe the sales letter isn't that great, write your own sales letter. Then you'll be able to show a client "I was able to make more sales than whatever using this, than when I used their ad." Or create your own product, which I think is even a better idea, write your own ads for your own products and make some sales, and then you can honestly say "Look, I write ads that make money."

It's funny. I've had this discussion with somebody recently, Michael, where a lot of copywriters, and I've seen this over and over including from people that I have a lot of respect for and all that – I haven't talked to any of them about this but I wonder if they would agree with it or not – a lot of the newer people will go around and they will promote themselves by saying "I've studied under Jay Abraham and Dan Kennedy, I study all their stuff," and it's like that's going to benefit them. It kind of looks amateurish. Who's more likely to get a job, somebody who says "I study Dan Kennedy and Gary Bensavenga," which is fine, nothing's wrong with studying those guys, I do, but it's not a selling point for getting clients. Most clients don't care. Even if they're like a Gary Halbert fanboy, it doesn't hurt to say "I've studied under Gary Halbert" but what's more important is you say "Look, I've written ads and here's the response I've gotten where I sell my own

stuff. I don't just do this for clients. I do it for my own stuff. This is real world experience. I don't rely on theory and hearsay, I actually know it works."

That's how I would go about it, those two things. You find somebody who's already buying copywriting service and you sell your own stuff before you even approach any of these guys and you show them that you're worth taking a chance on and chances are, if you go after the right people, they'd be happy to give you a chance. They just don't want to waste their time with anyone.

Michael: Dave from Florida wants to know "Ben, how much have you and Jonathan, your producer from your podcast, tracked directly to your bottom lines from the podcast and from what sources?"

Ben: I started the podcast the first week of February 2014 – it was like a year and a half ago – and the reason why I started is because a few months before that, I had a conversation with a guy named Danny Eine. His thing is he's called the Freddy Krueger of blogging; that was how he got his start and all that.

Even more important than that, he kind of got me thinking differently about lists and all that and he's big on showing people not just how to build a list but how to build an audience. An audience is made up of more than just a list. The bigger your audience, probably the more money you're going to make. A list is part of your audience, your email list. Your direct mail list is part of your audience. Your social media list is part of your audience. All together, they're all part of your audience.

Take a talk radio guy; say Rush Limbaugh, his listeners are part of his audience but not all of his listeners are necessarily on his email list, and not everyone on his email list is listening to all of his shows, and people who follow him probably on social media, if he's even on social media, are not all necessarily listening to every show and they're not all on his email list. It's like the audience encompasses all of these different corners of your market that you can be exposed to and they got me thinking about that, and I started thinking about how maybe I should do a podcast.

This is something I knew some people were doing. It's something I wanted to do just to hone my communication skills, which I'm always trying to do, and that year I actually did some public speaking too and I wanted to get more comfortable with it, so I started up a podcast. What happened was in early January – I think it was January 1st that year – it was like a New

Year's Day email I sent out talking about my goals for the year, and one of the goals for 2014 was to start a podcast. I had no idea how to do it. I didn't know the technical aspects of it. I had no idea how to get on iTunes or anything like that. My friend, Jonathan Rivera, who's been a customer of mine, player subscriber since 2011, he said, "You know, Ben, I'd like to be a part of that."

As far as I know, he had never done any podcast stuff at that point so we were kind of learning it together. He became a producer. He had like a team in place of like audio people and all this stuff and we paid them through the profits from the show. We took a little bit longer selling stuff than we should have. That's a big mistake. We should have been selling stuff. The guy has his own list that's independent of my list. He runs that list and he takes care of the customer service and all that. He's kind of created his own little thing now called The Podcast Factory where he produces a lot of shows.

So anyway, that's how I got started. It's kind of hard to track if a listener, how they found you and all this. I can tell you this: my sales have definitely gone up, whether they've gone up from that or something else I can't say for sure, but I have had 10 or more people, they've told me that. They found me through my podcast and then they started reading my other stuff and now they're a customer, and that's just the people who are telling me, so for every person who's telling me there are probably more people who aren't. I would say it's very worth it. It has been worth definitely the time and energy. I would do it though, Michael, I honestly would do it just to do because it's like therapy. I get to get on there for 20 minutes and just rant about whatever. I like doing it. It's a nice income stream and all that – it's starting to turn into one, at least. My goal is for Jonathan and I to both make five figures from that each but that might be a little bit off.

Michael: How do you build a list from that podcast? Is it at the beginning of the podcast, you direct someone to a website specifically for the podcast list?

Ben: It's not at the beginning. It's at the middle and the end; it's like this little commercial. This lady comes on – I recently found another girl to do the voice; we're just like three months ahead so it's going to be a while for that – but a voice comes on and says, "Would you like a transcript for today's show," because a lot of people don't necessarily want to have to listen to it. Maybe they want to read it and dissect it. Well, if they opt in, they get a weekly transcript of every show so that's kind of like the carrot, but I also added in the free email players issue too that I give away on my regular site if they opt in.

What happens is it goes out every Sunday; we have a new podcast episode up. Usually that Saturday, I'll promote my podcast. I'll tease them about what's going to be talked about on Sunday and I'll send them to sites where they can start listening to the show beforehand hopefully and they can download past episodes. We have like 82 episodes now so there's a lot for them to do. It's a very responsive list. We recently did an affiliate campaign selling Ken McCarthy's copywriting course. This is an interesting thing we've done which kind of occurred to me as we were putting it together. I said, "Jonathan, let's try something here. Let's do an in depth interview with Ken. We'll do like a 2 hour interview with him and we'll break it up into four parts and we'll make like a four part podcast that goes out over the weekend."

We had one episode go out on Thursday, one go out on Friday, one Saturday, one Sunday. It was all the same interview but chopped up into four parts, like the first part was about headlines, the second part was about bullets, and I don't think we promoted his course in each one until that Sunday.

Michael: Did he come on the podcast show or did you interview him individually?

Ben: It's funny, he's like the founding father of internet marketing but he's like, "Dude, I'm going to be honest with you; I don't even know how to hook up a mic to my computer." It wasn't like this high level audio that we usually have, talking into microphones. It was a phone interview. It wasn't even the best connection so we had to do it that way, record a phone call and just chop it into four parts. I promoted that all weekend from Thursday to Sunday, just the podcast. I didn't promote his product at all to my main list because I wanted to do an experiment, but during the weekend, we did a Michael Senoff style, I will say, because I learned this from you, email promotion. I'd send like two emails a day to the podcast list selling his course while they were listening to the interview, and then Sunday blast them with like five or six or seven emails just the way we always do it.

Michael: How much did this course sell for?

Ben: It was like \$1000.

Michael: And this is just to the podcast list?

Ben: Just to the podcast list; I never once promoted it to my main list. I wanted to see how responsive the podcast list was, so here's what happened. On

Monday, I go, “Jonathan, how many sales did we make?” He showed me the stats. There was like 500 clicks and zero sales according to the affiliate thing. I was like wow, that’s a bust, whatever. Turns out though that the affiliate thing was just lagging a little. The software didn’t register the sales until that Monday afternoon and I can’t tell you how many sales I got but I can tell you it came out to like \$28 a click. It was pretty successful, way beyond what I thought it was going to be promotion.

It was so successful, Ken was like, “Can I just license what campaign you used and I’ll pay you half the sales of whatever my affiliates make?” I was all for it. It was a great idea, but then I had to tell him, “Ken, to be honest with you, unless they have the exact same bond with their list as I have with mine, and unless they want to say they’re me,” because a lot of the emails were all very me-oriented because of the actual experience I had working with Ken, “they’re not going to get anywhere near that.” He’s like yeah, you’re right, it probably wouldn’t work, but that’s how well it did. He wanted to license it, like he wanted to capture that, bottle it, and reproduce it, which made perfect sense but the way I do email, it’s kind of hard to pass my emails off to someone else to do that. It just wouldn’t work.

Michael: So all four parts were done over the weekend, provided for anyone to listen to over the weekend, and at the same time you did the email promotion while it was being promoted?

Ben: Yes, and I’m going to be doing this again actually at the end of the year with my and Chris’ Titans of Direct Response product because I sold that very successfully. In fact, I don’t know for sure who’s done the best with his affiliates but at the time, this is like a month or two ago, I’m like, “Chris, I don’t know if you’ve ever met Mike. He’s like the classiest guy in the industry. He makes you want to be a better person, just talking to this guy.” He’s like, “Ben, your affiliates, I just want you to know you’re beating Glaser Kennedy and her circle, you’re beating Joe Polis, you’re beating a couple other people, you’re doing better than all of them in terms of conversions and sales,” but I’m thinking there’s something to the way I email for affiliate marketers because people ask me all the time, “Can I use your system for affiliate marketing?” I’m like I use it all the time for affiliate marketing.

My friend, Ryan Levec, he’s got this product that shows you how to survey your list and all that, a very good product, and he had a whole bunch of people who were promoting him – this is about a year ago – and including people who sell funnel products themselves, because their lists are far more likely to buy my list, and I kind of half-assed my promotion because I

was really burned out and I was about to go on vacation and all that, and I still beat the closest guy by like 28%. In fact, one of his affiliates was joking with me. He was like, "God, Ben, I hate you." They should have been able to beat me just because their lists are more tuned to this, but it's just the way in which I do email and the way in which I teach people. It works even better I think for affiliate marketing that probably for your own products because you're standing out from everybody.

Michael: I remember we emailed back and forth. You did incredible in that promotion. I didn't realize that other people were promoting it at the same time. I thought you had approached them and it was a product that had already been promoted and you said, "Can I be an affiliate," and just promote this on your own. I didn't realize it was an active ongoing affiliate promotion with others at the same time.

Ben: It was. When I was promoting it, I don't know who, if anyone, was promoting at the same time I was. There are at least three people I can think of who told me – because I get all these bonuses if they buy from me, over almost \$6000 in actual retail value bonuses, including hard copy stuff I was giving away to people who bought from me because the commission was so big and it paid for it – there were at least three people who said, "You know, Ben, if I had known you were going to do this, I would have waited to buy it from you." That's part of the thing you got to give real value.

Most people, when they do bonuses, they say, "If you buy this affiliate product, send me your receipt and I'll give you this bonus." That's fine; most people don't do it right. Most people are very lazy with that and they just attach whatever phony retail value they want to it. My bonuses always have a real retail value like for example; one of the bonuses they got was this book I have called *Cryptomarketing Secrets*, which is the entire 30 issues of my cryptomarketing newsletter I used to sell all bound in one book. Every issue cost \$27 when that was going. That was like \$810 of actual retail value in that book. If there's anything to be said about bonuses, you got to make them real retail value.

You'll fool some people and they'll get all excited, like the people looking for the dopamine high and all that, they'll buy whatever you put out there. If you want the skeptics, I believe the skeptics are like a 5 times bigger part of the market than these hyper buyers. If you want them, you have to offer them true value. It can't be like this fake stuff, all you do is download all this air. You and I have talked about that. Try to get physical stuff that you can mail to people. They will appreciate it so much more.

Talk about a dopamine drip; did you notice, Michael, that when you get an email, you get a little dopamine drip? That's why we all keep checking our email throughout the day. It's kind of exciting. Probably goes the same with texts and instant messages and everything else. When you get an actual piece of mail that you want, that you're looking forward to, it's like 100 times stronger. That's a whole different animal than these hyper buyers. When you reward them with a dopamine drip, you're not just trying to geek one out of them because they've earned it. It's just a whole different thing and people appreciate it so much more, and talk about being on top of the pile.

There are people who will argue with me about this; "Well, everything should be digital." You know what? The fact that everybody else is doing digital, what it means is when my physical product comes in the mail, it gets all the attention, it's looked at on the bookshelf, it's what's on their desk, and it doesn't get lost in a sea of other stuff. There are arguments to be made for both sides. I understand that and for some products, I think digital is better, but I'm talking about high ticket stuff. It's amazing so few people do it.

Michael: Would you advise anyone who is all digital currently to integrate some form of their product delivery as a physical product? Tell me, you were all digital and you went with your physical email players newsletter; what has that meant for you?

You're listening to an interview on Michael Senoff's www.HardToFindSeminars.com.

Ben: This is a very timely question because I'm going to be speaking about this in Connecticut at this guy, Ryan Lee's, his event called Freedom Dust. I have a three step funnel. My main funnel is as follows – and I'm not saying I couldn't do more; I could. I've got the free opt in, and then once they're on my list I sell them the email players, which is a physical product, and that gets mailed to them. My back end sales, rarely do I sell anything by email to my customers. I do it once in a while but most of the stuff they get is included in the envelope they get with Email Players. I'm already paying to have this thing sent out, this envelope. It doesn't make any sense not to slip an advertisement in there.

For example, in every issue practically I put like a one or two page little promotion for a back issue that's popular, so the two popular ones I have are how I do my launch process just using email, and the other one is just

my business structure, kind of like how I'm explaining here. For some reason, those are the two highest selling back issues I have, so I usually put an ad for one of those two in each edition and it gets me sales. Sometimes I'll put a catalog of all the back issues for sale with Teaser Board. That's one way I get back end sales using direct mail from an email which starts with an email list.

The second way is I sometimes will put an affiliate offer in there, so for example, I had already done all the work to sell Brian Kurtz's Titans of Direct Response thing back in May and I asked him, "Can I do this thing again in July to just my Email Players subscribers," and he's like, "Yeah, go ahead." So I put like the six page insert in there that just explains all the bonuses they get if they buy from my link and we got a couple sales last month from it. I made like \$1800 just by slipping a few pages of paper in an envelope that's already going out, so that's the extent of my funnel.

Michael: For the guests who are just now joining us, can you give out your URL website and tell them what to do when they get there?

Ben: Yeah. It's www.BenSettle.com and if you go there you can either opt in or not opt in. It's up to you. If you do opt in, I will send you the first issue of my Email Players newsletter. It'll be a PDF, not the print version of the first issue. That's a very real \$97 value. That's what it costs every month to be a member. No one ever gets a price break or anything like that. It's \$97 a month./ That's what that issue is legitimately worth, and it's got 24 different ways you can make money with your email. I just went through like 24 different things you can do, different openings and subject lines and approaches and ideas, and people absolutely make money on that, just going through that free issue because that's the goal. I want them to get a taste of what I have to offer them, and what better way than show them how to actually make some more sales, so that's free. If you don't opt in, that's fine too. You can go to the blog where I've got well over 1000 pages worth of content on there and a bunch of audio and video. It's all free so it's yours for the taking. You can download it, listen to it, whatever you want to do; www.BenSettle.com.

Michael: Okay, let me recap your funnel: get them on your list, free opt in, sell them on Email Players, your subscription based physical email newsletter, and then back end from the physical offers in the newsletter.

Ben: I'll tell you what, if I was more motivated, I'd be snail mailing offers to those buyers all month. I'd probably send at least three promotions a month. I'm just not that motivated. Right now I'm more focused on getting

paid traffic so for example, from February to like June, I was using paid Facebook traffic. My friend, Shane Hunter, he was doing it all for me. He's just a genius at this stuff and my subscription rate went way up. I was sold on paid advertising. Up until the end, I'd just gotten organic traffic from search engines and word of mouth and doing a lot of podcast interviews, which I find are very good for getting quality traffic and sales. Then him and I both promoted our friend, Ray Higdon's 3 Minute Expert product back in June and for some reason, Facebook thought we were promoting a biz op, which we weren't. That Facebook advertising happens all the time and they shut you down for no reason and I got banned from using Facebook advertising. I could probably get back on there but why waste my time?

Michael: Tell me what he did for your subscription, Shane Hunter. He was doing it all. What did you see occur? You weren't a big believer in Facebook advertising, were you?

Ben: I was a big believer in paid advertising, I just didn't really know how to do it and it didn't appeal to me to spend time doing it. It doesn't excite me to do it and it would be like a chore and I would hate it. I can just tell you this: I know I got at least four times as many new paying Email Players subscribers during those four months than I would have had I not used him, but it was crazy. It took me way past my goal. I mentioned my friend, Ray Higdon. I spoke at one of his Masterminds last year and I stayed over. I was there to speak, I wasn't necessarily there to learn, but he said something during that thing that just stuck with me. He said you can't scale free.

For example, let's say you're getting traffic from paid Facebook ads. You find an ad in the campaign that's really working well. We were just spending like \$10 a day at the time. Once you get it working, you want to throw as much money as you can; it doesn't make sense to not spend all the money you can because you know it's going to bring you more money back. You can't do that with free. You can't predict it. You can't control it. You can't control what the search engines are going to send you. You can't control who's going to listen to a podcast. You can't rule it out as they say in direct mail.

Michael: You were impressed with the results with Facebook and you were using the same funnel; get them on your free list, sell them Email Players, and then back end sales from the physical newsletter, correct?

Ben: That's been my funnel for over four years now. That's all I do. I've got it so simplified. I got to say a warning, though, for people listening to this. I can get away with this because I'm pretty good at what I do and I email daily and I'm aggressive and I've created a persona that people tend to like. I have fans in places that most people don't have. I only say this because selling a \$100 a month continuity out of the gate like that is not easy for a lot of people to do. For most people who ask me about this, I recommend they sell the flagship product, so for example, if they're in a weight loss niche, sell the e-book that's about your philosophy of doing things and helps them lose weight, and then try to get them in continuity. I skip that part and I get them right into the continuity. I'm not saying it can't be done, I'm just saying that people should be careful. Don't just do it because Ben is doing it; it works. It took me 11 years to get that to work. I could never have done that out of the gate.

Michael: How about cancellations? How long does the average Players subscriber stay on?

Ben: You always get cancellations. You get people who come back too. Here's one of the things I do to prevent certain people from coming back which again, if I didn't do these things I'd probably make a lot more money but I'd be more miserable, and that is if I see somebody just subscribed and they didn't even get it like a few months before they arrived, I don't let them come back because they don't have the right mindset. This is a long term thing. This is something that you're going to learn long term and if you think you've learned it all, you're crazy, because I've been doing this for a long time and I haven't even learned it all. I'm always teaching the new stuff I'm learning and all it takes is one idea per issues that can put a lot of – my goal is this. There's no way an issue is going to be going out where I phone it in and I just put some crap in there. It's got to be stuff that has made me far more than the \$97 they're paying so if they implement it, there's no way they're not going to make their money back in spades.

If they didn't get it in a few months, it's kind of like someone who, maybe they take a health supplement, right? Maybe they take it and, "Nothing's happening. I haven't changed. This sucks." Well, it takes a few months to let something build up in your system to work. Or someone who goes to the gym, like "Oh man, I'm sore. I hurt but I didn't really get bigger. Forget this. It doesn't work." That's the mindset these guys have and I don't want them back so even if they try to get back on, I don't let them. Once in a while somebody will sneak through; they don't last long. They usually quit right away again. Again, it doesn't cost me anything other than it's like I don't want to give people like that any of my knowledge. I think that they're

better off getting a job. They've wasted their money. I'm doing them a disservice in a sense if I let them come back. I know they're not going to use that information. I know they're not going to profit from it. They just wanted their little dopamine drip. I don't want to fund their addiction. I don't like letting people back who haven't stuck around for a while.

Michael: Give me the URL address of your website and then tell me what's the big promise that your email newsletter is going to provide someone?

Ben: My main website is www.BenSettle.com and if you opt in, I give you the first issue of Email Players free as a PDF. IT is a print newsletter but I'll give you the PDF of the first issue. It's a very real \$97 retail value. I want to show you how to double your sales using email. To some people, that sounds like a big claim. I think it's a small claim. In fact, I recently asked my podcast producer, Jonathan Rivera, on the air, I put him on the spot and he could say whatever he want, I said, "Do you think it's doubled your sales?" He goes, "Double? I can't even put a number to it. It's like 10 times, 20 times, 30 times more sales. Double is a small number."

Michael, you're living proof of this. When you started emailing the way I showed you, your sales completely went up. I know they at least doubled from what they were, probably more than that, and that's what I show people how to do. Is it going to work for every single person? No, because there's a lot of people who don't have a list. There's people who don't have an offer that's converting already. It's not going to create sales for you; it's just going to multiply your current sales. That's all any kind of copywriting can do. A lot of people look to copywriting especially as a savior, a savior sales letter, but they don't have an offer in place, they have no good positioning, they don't have everything else they need to make good sales and if you're listening to this, it's not going to help you. You have to have a working offer, something that's selling already for it to double sales. You can't double zero. You've got to have something coming in already.

Michael: Let's talk about the lifestyle. What does a typical day look like for Ben Settle?

Ben: It's a little bit different depending on what time of the year it is. Right now I'm spending almost all my working day on my next novel, my third novel, which should be completed by mid-September, hopefully. Right now I get up and I work on that for a few hours. I've already written all my emails for the next month and a half. They're already pre-loaded in the auto responder as of today, and so I don't have to think about this. The rest of

the time, like on a typical part of the year where I'm not working on this novel, it's pretty simple. I get up, I write an email. Usually I write the next day's email. I write them a day before usually because I don't like being under pressure, and then I go off and I just don't do much after that. I'll go wine tasting or I'll go play with the dog or do something like that, or I'll go take off for the coast.

Recently I've got part ownership in a golf company so I work on that whenever they need something, which lately hasn't been very much but eventually I think that's going to take more of my time. It's a pretty laid back lifestyle. I joke I'm like a bum who gets paid because I wanted to just only do one thing and I didn't want to do all this other stuff; I wanted to be lazy. I can get away with writing an email a day, it takes me about 15 minutes, and then I'm done. I got divorced in 2012 and I moved from the state of Washington, town called Long Beach, back to Golda Beach, Oregon, where I'm hoping to move again probably but I moved back down there.

I was really burned out. I had worked my ass off for years doing client stuff, on retainer, trying to sell my own stuff, failure after failure. I finally got Email Players launched maybe 9 months earlier and I was burned out because I was trying to write a lot of issues ahead of time and all that kind of stuff to be ahead. It took me like a year to get un-burned out and I can tell you right now, most of my days, I will just recycle emails from like a year earlier, so we're talking 2 minutes of work and then I go walk my dog on the beach for several hours. I was just so burned out, I could never have done that if I didn't have things set up the way I do.

Michael: What about your Email Players newsletter? Do you have issues already done for the next several months and if not, how much time does it take to create an issue and how do you schedule that?

For more interviews like this, go to www.HardToFindSeminars.com.

Ben: I try to stay three months ahead. That doesn't mean they're ready to go but they're like 90% ready to go three months ahead. I take a first draft. I try to add like a bonus thing every month. Most months I do, like a bonus interview or something, just something to make it a little more interesting or valuable, but generally it takes me 2 or 3 hours to write an issue because I'm always thinking about this stuff. I'm always doing this stuff. I have stories and ideas and case studies and stuff sitting in my head, and I have examples from my own emails that I'm using or have used. It doesn't take me a whole lot of time.

That said, there are some issues that take me a lot of time. I've done issues like the one I told you about that explained the business structure I use. That one took me a lot of time because I had to sit there and really think about it. I don't have a lot of white space in my issues. You get it every month. There's not a lot of white space. People even say "Ben, haven't you ever heard of the return key to break paragraphs up?" But I don't. I want to keep it exactly 16 pages so it's predictable; they know what they're going to get.

This is kind of a paradox for most people when they hear this but when I give too much information away, I get people saying "Ben, I can't keep up with this. This is too much." I get it. I'm the same way. You can't overfeed somebody. You want to feed someone but you don't want them bloated and they can't move like if you were to feed someone food. You want to give them enough so they're satisfied but not full, satisfied they have enough information to implement, to make money, to make their money back in spades and not have analysis paralysis, so I'd say it's kind of a weird paradox but keeping it at the same page number every month, it's less overwhelming for people and as long as I'm delivering good value, if they're going to make their money back, to me it's not even an issue and it's not an issue for them either. If I give them too much, it's like "Where do I start? This is too much." We're all like that. In a way I understand the information overload people, but I don't want people who complain about that buying because those tend to be people who are just looking for excuses.

Michael: Question from Marigold from the Philippines: "Ben, I'm an aspiring copywriter and learned that there are lots of copywriting jobs that I can do, like writing copy for ads like Facebook and Google Adwords, writing emails, writing sales letters, writing videos and sales scripts, etc. Should I focus on learning email copywriting first?"

Ben: You know, I can't answer that for somebody. Everybody's got to do their own thing. Not everybody likes writing emails, especially daily. It can drag on some people. Focus on your strength. Whatever it is you're the best at of all the stuff that you can do, video scripts or Facebook ads or whatever, focus on becoming the best at that or at least excelling at it. It's always subjective who the best is, but excelling at that thing that you're already good at.

Take that thing and specialize in it and now when you bill yourself to clients, you are the specialist, for example, at writing Facebook ads that

convert. Somebody who's looking for someone to write their Facebook ad, if they can choose between you and some person who's got a whole menu of things they can do but they don't specialize, they're probably going to pick you because when it comes to paid advertising especially, every percentage of conversion counts. People don't want a half assed job so find whatever it is that you like doing the most and for a lot of people, they discover it's not email. They don't want to email a lot, they don't like doing it, they have a hard time, but a lot of copywriters are good at other stuff, so everyone has a thing they're strong at. Focus on your strength.

This is the end of part one. Please continue to part two.

This is the beginning of part two

The Deadliest Mistakes You Can Make In Email Marketing (And How To Avoid Them)

Part Two Of The Three-Part Interview With Copywriting Legend Ben Settle

Ben says, when most people think about running an email campaign with their list, they usually worry too much. They worry they'll send out too many emails and people will get mad and unsubscribe. They worry their emails won't be "perfect enough," or that they won't sound like an expert...

One of the worst mistakes you can make is to let those worries change the way you do business. Ben once had 200 people unsubscribe from his list after an email promotion, but he made \$34,000 on those emails. So ask yourself, what's more important – keeping 200 people happy or making \$34,000 in a few days? That's why Ben says if everyone likes you on your email list, you're probably not pushing hard enough with your marketing.

Ben calls it "playing to win," and in Part Two, you'll hear how to do it, along with the common mistakes to avoid that can cause huge losses.

You'll Also Hear...

- Exactly what Ben means when he says your emails should be "a hotdog that nourishes like broccoli" – and real-life examples of how to have that perfect combination of infotainment
- The email-marketing lesson you can learn from the sergeant in *Apocalypse Now* that will help you understand the kind of leader you'll want to sound like in your emails

- Do open rates really correspond to sales? – Here are the only numbers you really need to keep track of
- One of the worst mistakes you can make: sounding like a robot in your marketing – why that’s worse than typos or grammar slip-ups and what you should be doing instead
- How to turn a snail-mail list into email – even if you haven’t done anything with them in a long time
- The power of adding storytelling to your marketing and how to do it
- The recipe that works for email marketing: let your personality show through like you’re doing talk radio -- here’s how to do it, along with a sneaky way to develop a personality fast (if you don’t currently have one)
- Perfecting the “rant email” technique: take something negative like a bad review, hate mail, or a complaint and turn it into money
- The easiest way to keep your emails out of the spam folder

Ben says it’s ok to be scared about your email marketing, but you can’t let your fears cause you to chicken out and never send an email. Just make sure you’re concentrating on building an audience and connecting with them in a fun, relatable way. If you do that while demonstrating you also know what you’re talking about, people will look forward to your emails and they’ll buy from you again and again. And in Part Two of this interview with Ben, you’ll hear all about it.

Michael: Scott wants to know: “Ben, has the massive shift to smart phones from computers substantially changed email format, content, and strategies?”

Ben: No, and I’ll tell you there’s a lot of people that disagree with me on this but I do not do anything differently than I did before the smart phone craze and when I do joint ventures, the sales don’t suffer and I’ll tell you why. A lot of people read their emails on their phones. There’s no doubt about that, and especially for people obsessed over open rates, they’ve got to get this through their heads; those open rates don’t mean a damn thing when it comes to sales. There is a reason to track opens – I would never say don’t do it – but people who brag about their open rates like it translates to sales, it doesn’t. I’ll tell you why.

For one thing, your phone has to display HTML to even track an open. I have an Android phone and a lot of Androids have the HTML turned off by default because of viruses and that sort of thing. When I open someone’s email, it doesn’t even register. Now here’s something else that someone recently showed me; my friend Jim Yagi, actually. My friend Jim Yagi is a computer scientist, so he actually does scientific experiments; he laughs at all these people who think they’re scientifically testing emails. He laughs

out loud. He's like "These guys don't even know this is what it takes to do a real scientific experiment, which is like impossible with email because there's so many changing factors all the time it's never the same. Your list is always changing. Your auto-responder could be on certain blacklists one day and not on the other. Somebody could check their email on their iPhone one day and their iPad the next day and that screws things up. There's always things that can change."

He sent me this interesting news article that they did some study on the iPhone users and people who checked their emails on their iPhones, they mostly buy from their desktop. To me, I don't worry about it. I'm going to get the emails out, I'm going to make my sales pitch, they're either going to buy it or not, and that's fine. To me it doesn't matter. By the way, on formatting, I have had people debate me on this and that's okay; it's not against the law for them to be wrong or anything like that. If you look at my emails on a phone, they look like crap.

Michael: Are they HTML or are they text?

Ben: Mine are just plain text and it's weird because HTML doesn't always show up the same on everyone's phones either, because sometimes people have their table too wide and they have to use their finger to scroll to the side to read the whole thing, so HTML isn't perfect either. I just throw it out there as plain texts and it looks kind of messed up, but it's weird because it's easier to read that way. I have so many people say, "Ben, this looks so ugly but I got to be honest with you, it's so much easier to read than all these other ones I'm getting from people with perfect HTML." There are ways to do it, like my friend, Jack Borne, he's a programmer. He created this tool called AWProTools – it's for Aweber users – and one of the things you can do is you can put your HTML email into this form and it'll format it so it can be read on all phones, and it's cool so I would say if you're going to do HTML, do that. There's a thing Gene Schwartz said in his speech to Phillips, the one that you saw, and he learned this test after test after test that his ugly layouts always beat the pretty layouts, and he said, "The reason why is because in a world of beauty the ugly thing stands out, and in this case, reading plain text on a phone, even if it looks like one sentence is longer than the other," – that's basically what I mean by looks messed up and ugly – "it's actually way easier to read and it's very easy to read that kind of stuff." I would say if anything – now, full disclosure, I've never split test this; by all means, test this if you want. Your results may vary, I admit it, but as far as I'm concerned, it's probably helped me because of smart phones and all that.

Michael: John wants to know “Do you have the name of an ethical mailing list broker?”

Ben: There’s different brokers that work with different niches. There is this guy – this isn’t for direct mail but it is for email lists; I know that’s not the question but since it came up – his name is Murdock. I can’t remember his first name. He emailed me like a month or two ago and he was the guy who designed that boardroom ad whenever he’s on an airplane, which is like a 30 year old ad probably, and he says he has all these really great email lists. I’m sorry; I don’t have his first name. I forgot but if you look up the last name Murdock, you’ll find him, but for direct mail, I can’t tell you because there’s so many different factors and it’s a swamp. What I will say is there’s this one guy, Craig Simpson, he lives in Grants Pass, OR which is like an hour from here. It’s amazing I haven’t actually hung out with him at least once. He is like one of the top direct mail guys on the planet as far as teaching this especially, and I would say go to www.Simpson-Direct.com or Doberman Dan at www.DobermanDan.com.

Michael: Jen asked “How can a newbie make a mark in the competitive world of email marketing when there are lots of experts such as Ben Settle?”

Ben: First of all, the word “Expert” to me is the first thing; don’t rry to be an expert. Try to be a leader because people will listen to experts but they’ll follow leaders. The question is how do you become a leader? Well, the way to become a leader in your niche, whatever business you’re in, my humble but accurate opinion is to email daily and demonstrate your knowledge and why they should be following you and build an audience, not just a list, like we were talking about earlier in this interview. I’m not saying you have to have a podcast, I’m not saying you have to do anything specific. I’m just saying focus on building an audience and connecting with that audience every day with something that’s interesting, something that’s not going to be a waste of their time, something that’s kind of entertaining and fun for them to consume because most people are very boring in their communication; just demonstrate that you know what you’re talking about and by doing that, you will stand out like fart in study hall. You’ll be fine.

Michael: What big fears did you have to overcome when it was time for you to start emailing daily and what advice would you give someone who believes that emailing daily is just too much and they’re going to upset their subscribers?

Ben: I remember that interview you did with Jim Camp. I've listened to that thing so many times, I remember the guy who asked the question, Paul Flood. He asked Jim Camp "How could I be seen as someone who wants to help and not just like a piranha looking to increase their feed," and Jim Camp goes, "If you're looking like someone who's out there just to make money off of people, that's not a problem the prospect has, that's a problem you have. That's not their problem." And I would say it applies to this too. If you think a daily email is too much and you've never even tried it, you're projecting what you think onto your market. People like to read good emails. If you're doing it the right way, you're not imposing on people. People look forward to it. They'll even ask you, "Hey, did you send one today? I didn't see it." There's people looking forward to it.

Again, it goes to getting rid of the lukewarm people anyway. If someone is on your list who would complain that's too much, is that really a good prospect? Ask yourself, are they at that point where they would really want to buy something to solve whatever problem your product solves? The answer is no. If somebody has a problem or a desire for something, it doesn't matter what it is and if they're ready to buy it, you can't send them enough information. They want to know before they spend their money and all that. They want to be offered stuff. Someone who's overweight and they're sad about it all the time and they're sick of their doctors saying they're going to have cardiac problems if they don't do something, they're sick of their so called passive aggressive friends doing things like tagging their heavy pictures in Facebook, which is something that happens believe it or not, which is really a mean thing to do to someone if they're trying to lose weight, and they're really upset before their next driver's license picture is taken, that they don't want to look heavy; think about that person. Do you really think you can send them too many interesting thought provoking offers that are going to help them? No, they want a solution. They just want to know that you're going to help them. They want proof that you're the one that's going to actually help them versus everyone just lobbing blatant pictures at them all the time, which does come off like they're just trying to get money and not try to help anyone.

I would say that is projection. Someone who would say that is simply projecting or they don't want to do the work to mail daily. I don't blame them either. If the thought of writing a daily email makes you feel weak and tired, you probably shouldn't do it. Outsource it to someone else. It's like me trying to do Paperclip. I got to outsource it. Don't project what you think on other people because I'm telling you – real life example, Michael. During that Titans of Direct Response affiliate campaign I did, there were

four days I sent like 17 or 18 emails. Even by your or my standards, that's a lot.

Michael: Were you a little bit worried about it?

Ben: I was a tiny bit just because I had never sent that many before. Usually I only send like 13 during a four day period. I knew that was a \$2000 product and it was not selling internet marketing, which is what most people on my list are looking for, it was more old school stuff, so it needed more of a sales job and I just did it. If I had listened to people who emailed me that weekend – a few people emailed me saying “Ben, this is too many, you should stop, this is dumb” – if I had listened to them, I can tell you right now that last day especially, as I was sending those emails, I watched those sales go up about 10 minutes after each email that went out. That wouldn't be considered a scientific test by any means but just an observation that something is happening every email because it was like 5-10 minutes after the email went out, I would see 2 or 3 sales and the rest of the hour, nothing until the next email went out. Had I listened to people instead of doing what I knew was right to do, I would have been out probably several sales. I'll never know how many exactly.

Michael: If you had chickened out on the last day, you would probably have missed out on at least 50% of your sales.

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Ben: Oh yeah, easily. I know that for a fact because I remember tracking the sales. I got more than half on the last day.

Michael: If there's one thing I remember from my interview with Jay Conrad Levinson, and it didn't really make sense until years later, he talked about the commitment to a promotion and the commitment to take that promotion all the way through rather than chickening out. You and I both know that at least 50% of the sales in most cases come from the last 2 or 3 hours of the promotion.

Ben: Oh, yeah, it's just the deadline. People always buy at the last minute and that's just normal. Most sales do come in right around the deadline. By the way, here's an interesting number for you. All in all, when all was said and done, I sold \$34,000 worth of Titans of Direct Response. That was the gross sales. We ended up with two refunds. One of those guys was an

Email Players subscriber; he was now banned after that because I'm not going to sell to people who refund things, especially quality stuff like that.

If somebody's going to refund something because it's a bad product or they got crappy customer service, that's one thing. You don't buy something if you don't want it. That doesn't make someone a bad person, just not someone I want on my list. Anyway, we did \$34,000 in sales to a list of less than 10,000 people selling a product that's kind of hard to sell to my kind of list. It's a lot of offline people and all that, very little internet marketing stuff in there, and I believe I had around 200 opt out, so let me just weigh the scales there. What's more important, keeping those 200 opt outs or \$34,000 in sales? You've got to really think about that and this goes back to the mentality are you going to play to win or play not to lose?

The people who worry about the opt outs and don't see it through and are scared, there's nothing wrong with being scared about this stuff. It does make you a little nervous. To chicken out when you have a plan and not go through with it because a couple people complained that's playing to not lose. That's like what the Republicans do in politics. They always play to not lose. They try to appease everyone to not lose. The Democrats are very smart about this stuff; they go after their base and they don't lose, they win. You can watch this in politics. People who play to not lose, lose, and people who play to win, win. I think in advertising you got to do the same thing, you've got to play to win and if you're not going to play to win, get out of the game because otherwise you're just in everyone's way.

Michael: For the listeners who are just joining us, can you give the listeners your URL and your website, and instruct the listeners on what to do when they get there?

Ben: It's www.BenSettle.com and when you get there, you have a choice. You can opt in and if you do, I'll send you the first issue of my Email Players newsletter as a PDF. It's a print newsletter that usually gets mailed to people but if you opt in, I'll send you a PDF of the first issue. I have absolutely had people tell me they made thousands of dollars just getting information on that. In fact, I had this one girl, she was working for this company that I guess had a pretty nice sized list and she goes, "Ben, I'm not even buying your stuff. I'm just using your free stuff and I've wrote some emails that brought in \$50,000 extra in revenue that would normally not have come in for my boss just by using your free stuff." So that's kind of what you can expect. If you don't opt in, that's fine. You can just bypass that and go to the blog and I've got over 1000 pages of content on there and well over a dozen hours of audio and video on there that's all free.

You don't have to pay for anything. I'm trying to demonstrate that I'm worth listening to. If you don't like anything, then don't worry about opting in. It's all good. You can get the free issue and walk away and it's all good.

Michael: Here's a question from Paul Howard at www.IGuaranteeSales.com. "Ben, I just did a marketing analysis for a small local retail sporting goods store. One of the biggest assets I found was that they have an email list of over 15,000 past buyers from over the last 4 years through eBay. They have done no marketing or follow up and don't even have the list compiled into a database yet. What steps would you take and implement an effective email marketing campaign to first introduce a new USP, then to send out regular offers? Also, how often would you keep in contact emailing them? Also, is there an email service provider that you would recommend that would work well for a small retailer looking to move toward online selling? I'm a big fan. Thanks."

Ben: There are several ways you could do this. My first idea and it's not like you have to do this or this is even the best way of doing it, is to not email those buyers and snail mail them instead. Snail mail them a reactivation letter. It's not unusual to get like a 30% response to reactivate a past customer. I've seen numbers like that in the chiropractic world so maybe it's not that big for retail, but still, send them a snail mail letter sending them and offer and getting back into their consciousness so they know who you are again.

If you insist on doing it with email, you'll have to find a provider that will import all of them without making them double opt in, which a lot of the ones will do it these days but that's something to be mindful of. Make sure you segment it and send them an email saying, "Hey, you bought XYZ product on XYZ date. I just want you to know I'm sorry it took me this long to keep in contact with you. I'm going to start sending you daily tips or ideas," whatever it is that fits sporting goods, so I would probably start sending them tips on how to be better at sporting related things; how to be better at certain sports, how to pick better equipment, how to maintain equipment, just useful stuff to people who are buying that kind of stuff, and start sending them daily emails like that and make some kind of offer in every email.

If there's an offer to get them to come into the store, that's even better. Then you don't even have to ask them to click a link or anything; "Hey, come into the store today and show us this email," or whatever you want to do, whatever qualifier, "and we'll give you 10% off today only. We just want to see you come in the store today. We'll give you 50% off

something.” You want to give them something irresistible; “If you come into the store by tomorrow, certain time, we will give you up to \$100 in store credit to spend on anything you want,” so think about offers. This is less about email and email technique and it’s more about offers.

The more offers you can think of, and for retail, you can just come up with different offers all the time. As a matter of fact, that’s what the retail clothing industry does; every couple of months it’s a new offer. That’s what they do. It’s a very strategic thing and you could do the same thing, just keep rotating offers around. “Buy one get one free of this, come in and get 10% off that or 20% off that,” just keep thinking of new offers. What kind of new offers can we give these guys to get them to come in here? Because very few people go into a store and just buy one thing. Chances are, if they’re buying at a discount, they go yeah; I saved some money on that, I can spend some money on this instead. I don’t know if they’re already doing this but let’s assume they’re not, Michael.

They should check out your course on how to get into Walmart. If I had a retail store, that course would be perfect because it talks about putting like products next to each other. That’s what Walmart looks at, at least when you’re doing that product. Like that guy says, Walmart doesn’t look at the product. They look at how your product can help sell the other products around it. It’s got nothing to do with email but it’s something to think about.

Michael: “Ben, for years you’ve discouraged your followers from using social media. In the last year or so, you’ve begun using it yourself. Why the change of heart and what have you learned from your foray into the medium?” This is from Bob Hingine.

Ben: I don’t know if I really discouraged it. I used to make fun of it and mock it for a while. I still call it “Flakebook” and all that because a lot of what’s on there is just garbage. It’s a time waste, it’s a time suck. People actually have to do what they call Facebook fasts to unplug from it because they become so obsessed with it. It goes back to that dopamine drip. I do use it but it’s not blatant. It’s more disguised now than it used to be because Facebook’s frowning on what I used to do but what I’m doing is self-promotion.

For example, when this interview is up, I’ll definitely tell my Facebook friends about it. There’s no doubt about it. I have a Facebook fan page now because when I was working with Shane Hunter and he was doing my Facebook ads, he’s like “Yeah, you want to get a Facebook page because it’s so much easier to sell to them once you have a Facebook

page. You have all these demographics and psychographics and all this information on them and it's just another way of getting your audience together." I'm not saying never use it. I just think people should use it wisely. Here's why in the past I have discouraged it in some ways.

I remember doing a post once and everyone's like "Don't let Facebook steal your balls." There's a lot of emoting going on. This is for guys. This isn't for girls. Girls like to emote. That's just how they get rid of their stress. Guys generally don't emote but there's a lot of girls on there emoting, complaining about all this stuff, and that's just how they deal with problems. It's not good or bad or anything and I've seen a lot of guys doing the same thing. They're starting to act like it because a lot of guys are on Facebook to stalk girls, unfortunately. If you want to see an example of this, find any pretty girl that you know on Facebook. Watch the next time she posts something irrelevant and irreverent. She'll tell you more guys are liking and commenting on it than girls, so I just noticed a lot of guys start to act like girls and I still think it applies today but if you're using it to keep in touch with your market, there's nothing wrong with it. You don't even have to be promoting anything. Just keeping in contact with them, it can be a good tool for that.

I'm probably more of a Twitter guy these days. On Twitter you can follow a lot of thought leaders and movement builders, people who are actually trying to create a movement for a cause and it's very fascinating. I only follow like 95 people on Twitter and I would say a good dozen or so are part of trying to create a movement or cause or something and it's very fascinating to watch that because it's a good education in how to build an audience and how to get your audience to become your troops on your side, they're with you. I think it's a good study.

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Michael: How do you use Twitter?

Ben: I don't use it in a way where I would track anything. Most of my time on Twitter is actually not business related. My blog and email through Aweber are automatically sent to Twitter because Aweber has this function where you can have a link to your email on Aweber's servers just automatically posted on your Twitter thing, so I have that go out and my blog has the same thing. Other than that, I mostly just read it for entertainment because to me it's like TV for people with really short attention spans, and I just

observe how certain people are leading their movements and industries. Other than, I don't really use it all that much other than those things.

Michael: "Greetings from sunny Italy. What kind of books do you read or have you read that helped you most with your story telling? Could you name one or two of them, or the most important ones, of course?" This is a question from Elvis.

Ben: I don't think I've ever read a book on story-telling. I think it's just something you do. I don't know how much you can learn about story telling other than just reading stories and then telling stories. We're all natural born story tellers, every single one of us. I guarantee you that you can tell a story, that you've told stories to people in your life, and it's no different than when you're writing copy or emails. I'll tell you something about stories, though. This is how powerful they are. I remember when I was in my last year of college, and I was like a complete C student through all the grades, K-12 and community college and all of that, I was always like a straight C student. As a matter of fact, I graduated 150 out of 300 people so I'm about as C student as you can get, but the very last year of college, I went to this one hour long seminar – I paid \$30 to go to it – on memory training and I got almost straight A's that year just from doing this and studying for maybe 15 minutes. One of the things they taught you was if you want to memorize a bunch of facts and stuff is to put those facts in the form of a story because your brain is just automatically tuned to picking up information via stories. IT wants to hear stories. That's why it's so powerful. People are hardwired to be persuaded by stories. That's why if you read the New Testament, the Gospel is practically all parables. They're all stories because that's how you get across everything. In that book I mentioned earlier, the 7 Lost Secrets of Success by Joe Vitali, he made a good point in that book.

He was like, "There was a parable where Jesus is talking to these people and he's like 'So, this man went down from Jerusalem and fell amongst thieves,'" and that's how it started, and Joe Vitali is like, "Isn't that more interesting than saying be a good neighbor," because that was the point of that parable, because he told a story that everyone there could identify with. Everyone in those times had either run afoul of thieves on that Jerusalem turnpike or they knew someone who had, it was very relevant to them, so when he told these things in a story, it had a lot more relevance than facts.

Story telling is important but the way to learn it is just do it. Read ads that are very story driven. One of the reason I like Gary Halbert ads so much

and read Gary Halbert ads is because he was really good at this. If anything, I probably learned more about story-telling and emails and copywriting just by reading Gary Halbert ads.

Michael: What exactly do you mean by “infotainment” and how do you integrate that with story-telling?

Ben: Infotainment is you’re merging information with entertainment, so you’re giving information that would normally probably be dry or just kind of linear and ABC, here’s the facts, but you’re adding a little entertainment to it, so story telling for example is natural entertainment. When I say entertainment, it doesn’t have to be like slapstick funny – it can be humorous; humor is really good if you can work it in and it makes sense – but we all like to be entertained because let’s face it; we live in a celebrity obsessed culture these days. People need to be entertained all the time. They’re always glued to their phones and the TV and the movies, everyone’s got a Kindle and an iPad and they’re always watching videos.

One of the reasons videos is becoming so popular is because it lends itself to entertainment. When I say information meets entertainment, I want to go back to a video you actually sent me like in 2009 by that guy Don Hewitt, the guy who founded 60 Minutes. He had died and they were interviewing his friend, Alan Alda, the guy who played Hawkeye in MASH, and they asked Alan Alda, “Why do you think 60 Minutes is so popular?” He said, “It’s because they gave you a hot dog but it nourished you like broccoli,” so it wasn’t like it was hard news. Today everyone does this; Fox and MSNBC and CNN, they all do infotainment now but back then, it was just hard news and this is what you get on CBS and NBC and ABC, but what they would do is put an entertaining twist on everything. It was infotainment. It was basically like a hot dog that nourished you like broccoli. It looks tasty, it looks wonderful, it looks fun, but it gives you a little bit of nourishment. It’s not like you just walked away with nothing and I think emails that do that are very powerful because you don’t want to overload people with hard content.

People will just get bored of that. They’ll appreciate it, they’ll tell you the love it, but they’re not probably going to buy it from you, but if you use infotainment, you take something that informational – not hard teaching, not “Here’s 5 ways to lose weight using these super secret techniques” – it’s like telling a story about someone in the weight loss niche who was humiliated because people were tagging her heavy Facebook pictures. By the way, I’ve used that example twice in this call because I actually wrote an email about that and it did extremely well. I’m not in that niche

anymore; I have some friends who are really high level affiliates who say “I’ve used that email” and they did and they said “I’ve done over \$1000 a day with this” and it’s just these little things.

It’s infotaining. It’s not a happy story but it’s infotaining. It’s information and it’s entertainment by being a voyeur on someone’s life and watching what they’re doing and how they react and it’s just like watching a television show unfold, so very powerful stuff.

Michael: Question from John Iams: “Ben, if you could give only one piece of email advice given your years of email experience, specifically what would it be and how would it best be implemented?”

Ben: I would say be personality driven. I really believe this and I’ve heard this analogy before from other people, that email is talk radio. It’s your talk radio show. It doesn’t have to be political but you’re just going to go out there and be a personality, a unique you. You’re not swiping anybody, you’re not copying anybody else, you’re literally going out there and you’re using your personality just the way you would talk if you were talking in real life to someone, your slangs and your peculiarities and your way of doing this, of communicating. It’s not going to be perfect. It shouldn’t be perfect. You’re not going to sound like a robot. You’re going to sound like a person, a human being that people can bond with and trust. That is the thing that’s lacking from so many emails today.

Here’s another thing. He only asked for one but here’s another thing. This is kind of a subjective thing. I wrote about this in my Email Players newsletter once. Actually, it’s going to come out in a future issue soon. There’s this movie called Apocalypse Now and I think most people have seen it. Francis Ford Coppola directed it. It’s a Vietnam movie and there’s this scene in there with – I don’t know what his rank was, a colonel or something – and he’s played by Robert Duvall. His name is Kilgore in the movie. He’s like this guy leading all these people in Vietnam but he’s making them surf between attacks. This guy is crazy. He’s like “I want you guys to go out there and surf,” while all this carnage is going on. He’s all about surfing and the character, the one who’s narrating the movie, he’s like this guy is kind of crazy but people in his unit, they know they’re going to come home okay because of this guy’s person. He made them feel like no matter what’s going on out there in Vietnam, my guys are going to come home okay and I think that’s the feeling I strive for.

Everyone’s going through different challenges, everyone’s in a different place in life. You want to be that person, no matter what you’re selling – it

doesn't have to be business to business – you want to be that person that they just feel like if I'm reading this person's emails every day, I'm going to be okay. I just know everything's going to turn out okay. I think that's something that's lacking in pretty much everyone's emails and it's something that you have to work toward. It comes with building trust and a bond in your market. It comes with knowing your market better than everyone else and always studying it. It comes with knowing your product is the best or you have an excellent product, and all these things come together when you start mailing daily. People start to feel, "Hey, if I follow this Michael guy, everything's going to be okay; if I'm in a hell of a jam right now financially," or whatever the problem is; they're not going to verbally say this but that's the feeling you want them to have. They look forward to your email. You're the cut man in their corner that they just know you're going to be there to help them and they're going to buy from you eventually, because they trust you.

Michael: What if someone listening to this says and believes that they have not one ounce of personality? Is there still a way that they can create a personality even if they don't have it, to find their own voice or create a voice to sell using email?

Ben: Well, there are people who lack a sense of humor and they're really literal and I understand that. There are ways to be sort of infotaining and entertaining even if you're not naturally that way. Telling stories is one way. It doesn't matter if you have a personality or not if you can tell a story, but another thing I would recommend, there's this book by Dan Kennedy – I think it's *Make Them Laugh and Take Their Money* or something like that – and it's all about using entertainment when you're selling, and it's really good, and I think it's only like \$10 on Amazon or something, it's a great book and one of the things he says that just stood out to me is people buy and they buy in abundance when they're in good humor, so it's a very important skill to have. If you don't naturally have it, you can cultivate it.

Another thing you can do and should be doing is pick one or two of the best comedians out there that you like. I was talking to this guy, Kevin Rogers, he's a copywriter and he used to be a stand-up comic and this is some advice he gives to people, which I thought was interesting: "Pick a comic, a stand-up comic that you like and study that person. Watch them on YouTube. Just study them. Look at how they tell jokes."

Another person to watch is Johnny Carson. You can find all kind s of clips of his monologues on YouTube. That guy was an absolute genius, using

comedy and social commentary and all these things to make a point. All these things can be applied to your communications in business and in selling. Carson monologues were so well received that 20 million people watched his show every night, and apparently more well known than the President during his 30 years of doing it every night, and people would just get the whole family together just to watch his 9 minute monologues. They wouldn't even watch the whole show sometimes. They were so good.

Watch the show Seinfeld. Jerry Seinfeld is just a great, brilliant communicator when it comes to comedy and entertainment. Pay attention to the metaphors they use in that show, the stories they tell, how they make things funny, how they take the most ordinary things. They even said it was a show about nothing, that's the joke, and yet it was probably the most popular sitcom of the '90s. I don't know about viewership, it's probably one of the most popular that's ever been around, so sitcoms are good. The best talk radio personalities; Rush Limbaugh, Michael Savage, Howard Stern. These guys are all great entertainers and you can learn a lot by observing and then just applying it to your communications.

Michael: Here's a question from Carlos: "Ben, when it comes to coming up with topics for an email, are there any topics that you personally wouldn't write about to your list? Is there a specific topic that makes you think twice before you hit your finger on the send button?"

Ben: Not really. You always want to have good taste. You always want to know your market and your list. Every list is different. It's interesting. I was talking about that Dan Kennedy book. He used to give 300 talks a year. He's a funny guy, Dan Kennedy, and he's like "There's two topics you can never joke about. Just don't even bother. I don't care what you sell, just don't even bother. One is JFK and you can't joke about Martin Luther King." You might want to stay away from those topics if someone like him isn't even going there and believe me, Dan Kennedy has no fear and that guy has no problem skewering everyone in the room and offending everyone in the room, and he said those two topics you just cannot make work if you're going to try to be funny and entertaining and that sort of thing.

Michael: How can one use the rant email technique in their favor?

Ben: This must be an Email Players subscriber. I think I've only taught that in Email Players but that's where you're just ranting about something. For example, I once had a copywriting apprentice for a very short period of

time before I realized I'm the worst teacher in the world and I have no business doing such things.

Michael: How did that copywrite apprentice occur? How did that happen?

Ben: Well, she was cleaning my house. She used to be my housecleaner and then later on she would cook meals for me and she had a service cooking meals and delivering them to people. She had a pretty good email list. She was writing emails. I thought these are actually pretty good, you should get into this copywriting thing. One thing turned into another and suddenly I started being her kind of mentor, I supposed you could say, which ties into the rant thing, by the way.

One of her emails that she sent out that I thought was good was that she was ranting about Minute rice, like how stupid Minute rice is and how you should have real rice, so it was like a rant. She ranted and then she turned it into a reason why you should buy her ready-made meals. I thought this is actually pretty good and I'm going to use this as an example in the Email Players newsletter and that's what I meant by a rant thing, where you just go on a rant about something. It could be something as insignificant as rice or it could be something real like minimum wage for business owners, like "Hey, I'm being forced to pay this person more money than they're worth"; that can be a rant, so that's different than when you turn somebody's' negative email into a reason to buy.

I'll give you an example of what they're asking about. I have this e-book on Kindle called *Blue Chip Email Secrets* which is basically, Michael, that interview you and I did about email where I just took the transcription and turned it into a book. We got a lot of good information there. Yeah, it's an interview and some people don't like that format and this guy gave me a one star review after saying he liked the information, it was great information, and he just went on this tirade about how crappy the spelling was and how the format was done and it's just an interview and it's not even a real book, and it's stupid because if you like the information, who cares? I took his one star review and reprinted it and then I basically tore it apart, dismantled it point by point because it didn't really make a lot of sense, what he was complaining about, and then next day I put that into an email with my reply and then he actually went on Kindle and changed it to a four star review and was like, "Yeah, I was a little out of line with that. I'm still not liking the format but you're right, it was really good information," so that's an example of taking someone's hate mail and using it to make sales with it. That just did wonders for my credibility with people who read that. They wanted to buy that book then.

It doesn't always go smoothly people changing their mind, but it doesn't matter. If you're getting hate mail from people or complaint mail, that means you're probably doing something right and you should keep doing it and don't let that discourage you because you're probably turning on the audience you do want while making these lukewarm people mad and turning them cold, and that's what you want so that's good. They're handing you fodder. I don't recommend printing somebody's name or smearing someone's reputation or anything like that. Just take the message. You don't have to name them or anything. Sometimes you don't even have to reprint what they said, just retell what they said; "So this guy emailed me and was complaining about XYZ." You don't even have to reprint what they did.

The people on your side who understand where you're coming from, they're more emboldened and come to your side and they'll root for you and they're bonding with you more and you're bonding with them more and everyone's happy, while the people who don't like you will hate you more and that's good. You don't really want everyone liking you. You should have a healthy balance with half the people liking you and half the people hating you. If all you're getting is fluffy mail with how much people love you, you're probably not pushing hard enough and you should not fear negativity because you can take that negative energy like I explained and use that against them. It's not unlike, Michael, this kung fu I've been learning the last six months that's called wing chun, and you take that energy that someone's coming at you with and you use it against them so you hit them 10 times harder than you could have on your own. It's the exact same principle talking about emails, reusing people's hate mail and turning it into reasons to buy.

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Michael: By polarizing your list when you get that hate mail, have you seen any negative effects from the people who hate you?

Ben: What happens is you get the people who just don't like you and they stick around anyway, kind of like the Rush Limbaugh Syndrome and the Howard Stern Syndrome. He's got the same thing where he's got a bunch of people who keep listening to him because they want to see how much more mad they can get. It's not unlike in the 1908s when Marvel Comics turned the green raging Hulk into a smart gray Hulk, and all the green Hulk fans apparently were pissed and were like, "Never reading this again," but

they found that sales are going up. You know they're getting all this hate mail because people want to see how much more mad they can get, so it's something people have to get used to. I'm not saying it's easy for everyone but if you're going to do anything significant, people are going to take shots at you.

Michael: Do you see if there's negative shit on you on the internet on any of the message boards or you don't even bother?

Ben: I don't actively look for it but one thing I do, and I think everybody should do this just to do it, is you can use Google Alerts to put your name or anything you want really in there to alert you when that phrase comes up. Every time my name is indexed somewhere in Google, I get an alert about it, so sometimes I've caught some people on the Warrior forum complaining about me. It's endless fodder. It's almost like they're handing you money because usually, places like that where people are just whining and complaining because they don't like somebody, it's almost like a gift, especially the more detailed they are.

It's not like you're using it against them, you're just using it for yourself to make more sales because they're bringing up objections and giving you a chance to give your side of things privately to your list where you have a captive audience. It's awesome. There's none of this back and forth arguing stuff.

Michael: What's the reason you use a lot of slang in your emails and you make up interesting words and misspellings? Is there a method to your madness?

Ben: The Matt Fury email marketing methodology, I learned a lot studying him and his stuffy and he's really the one who mastered that sort of thing and I give him all the credit because he was big on just making up words for the entertainment value or misspelling the word, but it's like an obvious spelling. It's not like a typo, he would just purposely misspell words and it worked out in his favor that the spam filters weren't as bad on him because of that because he would change the word "money" to "munny" which was an obvious misspelling; it didn't look like an incompetent typo. There's an entertainment value to it.

It's powerful but here's what people don't understand, you don't want to go copying what other people are doing. There are people on my list and I know they do this because I see it and their friends will even tell me "So-and-so is using all your slang and all the words you use," and they don't realize how they look like wannabes doing that. I didn't trademark any of

these words but I know I'm the first one to misspell guru "goo-roo" and now everybody's using it like they all invented it but they all just sound like wannabe me's, so it's something to be careful of. In an email, you've got to be your own thing.

It's not unlike the jazz world. There's this book that Ken McCarthy put together called *The System Club Letters*, which System Club is his like \$100 a month membership website and I guess he writes a letter to them every week, like a 500 word letter, and he compiled a bunch of them together – it's probably my all time favorite business book, it's so good – but one of the early chapters is about the similarities between the jazz world and the business world. He's like, in jazz, the copycats don't last. In fact, they do not exist in jazz because if you don't have something new and unique to bring to the table, nobody's going to pay attention to you.

He goes, in business we have the same thing and you might last a little longer than you will in the jazz world but eventually you're going to be knocked out of it because people want a new take on things. They don't want a warmed over version of somebody else. They want a unique you. Most people who go around swiping and copying emails, I guarantee they don't sit there and talk to their family and friends pretending to be someone else. They're probably themselves. They're really shooting themselves in the foot by swiping and copying other people. They really should be an original and work hard and not try to take shortcuts because they're just hurting themselves.

Michael: Is there a place for swipe files for an email copywriter, and do you use swipe files to come up with some of your ideas for either sales letters or email copy?

Ben: I don't. I don't have a huge swipe file. I recommend your site, Hard To Find Ads, to everybody, which I think is such an under-known site because people could really use that kind of information. In the beginning, I would read ads and copy ads by hand every day. That was my main thing until I actually started getting clients, so I'm not anti-swipe file but for emails, I think you can study other emails. You can see how people approach their emails. How did that person tell that story? How did they structure that email? Look at how they made that concise and tight? Look how they made that entertaining, something so boring.

You can study and get inspiration from these things but I'm totally against word for word, whole cloth paragraph and stuff swiping because it just doesn't sound authentic. Forget the ethical side of things – there's that

obviously – if you ever saw the movie Transformers, there's that robot, Bumblebee, the yellow car. He can't talk. The way he speaks, it's like he uses radio transmissions from various songs and news reports and clips to talk. That's kind of what email swiping sounds like. It's like all these different voices in one email and it sounds clunky, it sounds very clumsy, and it doesn't sound right. People know it. They may not be able to verbalize why they can't stand reading it or why it bores them, but they know, as opposed to an authentic voice, someone who's an original to them, they're giving their opinion, they're giving what they want to say and it's coming from the heart and it's coming from their way of speaking, that's going to stand out. I guarantee it.

Michael: For the guests who are joining us now, can you give out your main website URL and tell the listener what to do when they get there?

Ben: It's www.BenSettle.com and you'll have a choice when you get there. You can either opt in, which I recommend and in my biased opinion you should opt in. If you don't opt in, that's fine. You can still go to the main site but if you do opt in, I will send you the first issue via PDF, not the print version. It's a print newsletter, my Email Players newsletter, and I'm telling you, even today people are like, "Oh man, I made all this money just applying the stuff from that first issue that you gave me free; thank you," and a lot of those people become subscribers as a result. You get that free just for opting in. If you don't opt in, that's fine too. You can go to the blog. There's over 1000 pages of content on there and there's well over a dozen hours of audio and video content on there too, touching on various aspects of email and selling, everything from "Here's how you can use emails to get clients," "Here's how you can use emails for entertaining," I try to keep them nice and diverse and that's all free. I'm big on demonstrating so if after all that you don't think I'm worth listening to, no big deal.

Michael: Here's a question from Rich French and he's from Chicago. "Ben, one of the hot topics in the guru space today is marketing automation in terms of building complicated structures to send emails based on your prospect's behavior. I love the simplicity of Ben's daily emails and would be interested to hear what he thinks about these latest tactics."

Ben: I think if they work, you should do it. I keep as simple a funnel as I can for my main thing, but that said, it's because I don't want to have to hire things out and outsource things and write a bunch of auto responders. I just don't want to do it. I got better things to do with my time and I have a nice little thing going now, but that said, there is a lot to be said for segmenting customers and people and having them tagged.

For example, there's software out there where you can tag someone where they may not be segmented necessarily but you can tag them so that they receive certain information if you want to send it out. I think if you're into that, then do it because there's a lot of power in segmenting when it comes to people's interests and that sort of thing. That is definitely something we're going to be doing in this golf company I have a partnership in. We're going to be getting into all that because that's a market where you can just slice and dice up a list a million ways and it's all good, so I'm all for it. I just don't do it. It's like I'm all for paid per click but I personally don't do it. I just don't do it for my main site. I don't feel like spending any time on it but if you have the software to do it, you have the time and patience to do it, or you have a team to do it, I'm all for it. I think it's a great thing.

Michael: What are some of the no-nos in one's subject line and body copy that can get email banned or rank as spam? What are some of the best practices that can keep one out of the spam filters?

Ben: Stop doing what spammers do. For example, there are people who do this who I have the utmost respect for except when they do this. I just shake my head when I see some of these things, where they'll put the letters "RE" with a colon like they're replying to something just to get someone's attention so it looks like their replying. I'm not saying it doesn't work on the weak-minded, I'm sure it does, but it's so shady and I believe, and I'm not a lawyer so I can't say this is a law, I'm pretty sure that violates the Canned Spam Act because I don't think Aweber lets you do that for that very reason. The same thing with people who put "FWD:" like they're being forwarded something, or people who put at the end of an email "Sent from iPhone." It's a list email sent from an iPhone.

I'm not saying it won't work. For all I know, it might jack your response up. I don't know but in the long run, really, for the people who think and the people who are skeptics, which is a much bigger section of a lot of niches than people realize, you just turned off a light switch and that's not coming back on easily, the light switch of trust, so I would say stop doing those things. Read your spam. If you're using Gmail, it's really easy. Just look at your spam folder. Look at the things spammers are doing that are getting them there.

For example, one popular subject line is "From" and then the person's name. Now, I don't know why someone would put that as a subject line anyway, but don't do it because it's obviously ending up in the spam

folder, so look at your spam folder, look at all the subject lines, and don't do what they're doing. There are caveats to this. If you end up opening a piece of spam because they got you to open it, you want to look at what they did to get you to open it. I'm not saying you got to copy it or anything like that, but they did something right and that's the only way a spammer can survive. In a lot of ways, they're leading the edge in how to get emails opened but avoid the things that are getting sent to your spam folder. That's why they're in the spam folder.

Michael: What kind of auto-responder do you use? Can you recommend any one company over another?

Ben: I can't and I'll tell you why, because all of these companies are prone to going dark side. They're all prone to doing things that I don't like and I don't want to recommend one and then suddenly they make some dumb change or they bring in too many of the wrong people and suddenly all the customers' emails aren't getting delivered because they're put on a spam list, because that can happen. I can't recommend one over the other. What I can recommend is go to the big ones, the reputable ones like Aweber and Get Response and Constant Contact, Mail Chimp, all the ones that are reputable. They've been around. They have relationships with spam blacklist companies so they're on your side with that. They all offer like a trial. I think they all do. I'd be surprised if they don't. Most of them at least offer like a \$1 trial or \$3 trail or something, and use whichever one's interface you like the most.

For example, I've been using Aweber since 2003. Right now at this time, I like them. That could change, so for example, I like the company but I don't like some of the changes they do. In fact, every time they make a change, I cringe, and I'm not the only one. There are a lot of heavy emailers that use Aweber that are like "Oh god, I hope they didn't do something to make this more complicated," but luckily in their case, they let those of us who have had Aweber since like 10 years ago grandfathered in where we can still use the old interface. The new interface takes more steps to send an email than the old one did. I don't know why they did that, other than maybe it's more simple for a newer person to follow one screen at a time just to walk them through it, baby steps maybe, which is fine.

Google does the same thing. If you log into to Gmail nowadays, you can't type in your username and password. All they'll let you put in is your username and then once you put that in, the password field will show up. I can see why this appeals to brand new people who don't know anything

about anything, but it's more steps. I want less steps so that's why I'm not going to endorse any of them, even the ones that I'm using. I also use One Shopping Cart. Maybe one day I won't. I don't know. I can't tell you. They've done the same thing where they've made it so I can't send plain text emails, which bothers me. It's not enough to not use them anymore because I don't do a lot of email from there, it's just my customer list is on there and I do most of my customer selling through direct mail, but that's what I'm saying.

Even if I'm using them, I'm not going to whole cloth endorse anyone because it could change at any time but you got to use the ones where the interface makes the most sense for you because you shouldn't be spending a lot of time on emails. I don't think, at least. There are some people who will spend days on an email and tracking every nook and cranny and I'm a big money is attracted to speed kind of guy. The faster I can write it, get it in there and get it out, the faster I make money so that's kind of the way I look at those things but either way, take the trials, look at the interface that makes the most sense, and go with that.

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Michael: Here's a question from Tony Polisi. "What do you see as one of the biggest mistakes people are making when it comes to the length and style of copy in our attention deficit social media obsessed world?"

Ben: Nothing's really changed. I would give the same advice 15 years earlier even when there wasn't that much competition. I didn't make this saying up, I just applied it to email. You want your emails to be like a woman's skirt; short enough to get attention and long enough to cover the details. As long as you're not boring and as long as you're not long-winded, you should be okay. So many emails are just long-winded and they're boring because nobody wants to hear the information, and that's a disconnect with somebody's market. It's not even the length of the emails. You could probably get away with writing a long, rambling email as long as it's fascinating information to the market.

Most people, even when they write concise emails, the people that are struggling, the reason they're struggling is because there's a market disconnect. They're not connecting with their market, they don't know their market, all they study is their product, and you got to study your product but the market comes first. In fact, when I brought up the wing chun kung fu earlier, when you start learning that, and I'm sure it's like this with a lot of other arts too, but the first thing they teach you is the form. There's a

Chinese term for it but I'll just call it the form, where you get in this stance and your body is in complete harmony with nature. Everything you do is connected with gravity. You're using all of gravity to strike. You're balanced by gravity, it's harder to move you, you're just in a position of power no matter how big or strong you are, it doesn't matter, or how weak you are.

It's a very powerful position, and you start going through this series of movements in this form with your hands and your arms and your wrists and your elbows and that form basically encompasses all of the moves you're ever going to use in this art, it's just done in a specific way and you just practice it every day. Well, the guy who's teaching this, we call him "sifu" – that just means "teacher" – the sifu who's teaching this, he's like "Whenever you get stuck in this, when you're trying to practice something or learn it" – like when I'm practicing it at home on my training dummy – "just remember this; the answer to what you're looking for is always in the form. Just go back to the form. You will find the answer there because all the movements are in the form."

It's the same in marketing. If you run into a problem or you think your stuff is too long-winded or you're not saying the right stuff, you're not getting attention, go back to the market. All of the answers are in the market. This goes for any kind of writing copy. It's in the product too, but mostly it's in the market. I can actually write emails now where I don't even see the product and I can sell the product. I did this recently.

As you know, I've been selling this Pross-ID book, people that process problems; teamed up with this guy, Eric MacMillan. He kind of runs the traffic to it. We use my emails. We haven't done much with it because neither of us wants to create content and we don't want to screw around with supplements and FTC rules. We just kind of let it to the side. We're both kind of focusing on this golf thing. It kind of pays for itself right now. Eventually we'll get to it but recently, like as of last month, he was on Clickbank. He's like, "Let's sell something to these buyers," so he went on Clickbank and he found certainly one of the highest selling informational products for people with erectile dysfunction.

Now, Michael, I can honestly say I've never had erectile dysfunction. I don't know the pains of that market. I'm not in that market. I can't even imagine that market other than what any other guy could imagine. I didn't even have the patience to sit through the sales pitch because it's like a video sales letter. I can't stand video sales letters. He's like, "Hey, can we sell this," and I said, "Well, I didn't get the product," so I never saw the

product and I didn't even sell the sales pitch, but I wrote an email in about 5 minutes with about 5 minutes of research and 5 minutes to write it.

Last I heard we were doing like \$2 and some cents earnings per click which for our sized list and the cost of the product was actually really good, he was telling me. I just knew how to study that market very quickly using Google, I found out a few of their pains, I told a story around it, and then in the bottom of that email, I admitted it. I came full disclosure; I said, "Look, I've never used this product. I don't have this problem. I can't make any guarantees but I hear it's helped a lot of people and you should give it a shot," and that was the email. It was a story and then a full disclosure I've never even used it and we got a lot of sales. In fact, I need to get off my butt and write more emails for that product. Once you know your market, even just a little bit about that market, as long as you know their hot buttons and what pains them, what plagues them every night, email becomes a very powerful weapon for selling. It's all about the market.

That's the end of part two. Please continue to part three

This is the beginning of part three

How To Build A Following

Part Three Of The Three-Part Interview With Copywriting Legend Ben Settle

Michael: That's good, so this may segue into this question. It's from DJ Hart. She wants to know "How does Ben research a topic he has no previous knowledge of," just like you expressed in the story, "in order to write a 750 word email?" So why don't you use that example? Where did you go to do the research to come up with the email for this specific topic that you knew nothing about, and could one copycat that technique for developing content for something they don't know about that they want to sell?

Ben: Generally stick with markets that I'm in, so like the golf market – I'm not an avid golfer but I'm enough of a golfer where I know the frustrations and pains and I can easily get the answers I need from other golfers. For example, when I sold in the weight loss niche, I'm not an overweight female. I can't just instantly connect and say, "Oh, I understand that market." I had to talk to overweight women. One of the shortcuts I would

do is I would go on Google and I would be like a fly on the wall in their chatrooms.

Understand this: On the internet, people think they have anonymity. They do to a certain extent, but they feel free to say whatever they want especially if they're not giving their real name, so whatever market you're in, you can do the same thing. Go to chatrooms and forums and blog comments and they will tell you stories that you can use in your emails. In fact, forums are perfect for that. A lot of forum software, you can sort forum threads by the number of views so that the highest viewed ones are the top so maybe one topic got a million views while the other ones only have like 3000 or 4000. There's something about that forum thread that's resonating and it's likely they've given you a subject line or the makings of a subject line in the title of that thread, so that's one good way.

Another way you do it is even direct mail lists are applicable. Not everything lends itself to this, but I know in the prostate niche, I would do this. I would get on a bunch of lists for prostate supplements and these copywriters are doing all the work for me. They did all the research for me, all the scientific studies; they researched it for me and put it in their ads. I'm not saying I would copy and paste what they were saying, but they were giving me information I could then put into emails. By the way, a 750 word email is really long. Chances are if your email is that long, and this isn't going to be every case, but in a lot of cases, people write long emails that are really two or three emails that they could break up in 200-300 word emails. Just something to think about.

Michael: How long should an email be?

Ben: Like I was saying before, just long enough. Like a woman's skirt, short enough to get attention, long enough to cover the details, just depends. I strive to keep mine under 300 words but I rarely ever do, but I think that's a good starting point. Do a word count on your next email and try to remove 50 words from it. Make it an exercise, and you'll start forcing your brain to think of ways to condense ideas into smaller chunks and make things more clear. You might find that you're actually talking about two things. If you're talking about two different topics in the same email, just separate that into two different emails so you don't overwhelm people. Think of email as a talk radio segment. So if you ever listen to talk radio, it's segmented. The first 15 minutes is the monologue and then they take calls, but each segment is like a topic in and of itself. They don't go into five different topics. It's this segment we're going to talk about X, Y, and Z, and then they go to commercial and that's how email should be too.

Michael: What other consistent marketing have you been doing that has helped you build a good following? You've got your podcast. You've got a little bit of Facebook. You're getting into some paid Adwords; anything else?

Ben: Yeah, I would say probably the best of all of them, and it's hard to track this but you just get a feel for it, I suppose it could be tracked but it would take too much work than I want to do, but I can just see it working because people say, "I heard about you from XYZ," and that is start doing podcast interviews where you make yourself available to be interviewed on other people's podcasts. Most podcasts out there that I have heard, at least, and I don't listen to a lot of podcasts, but very few of them are just one guy talking. Most of them are interview based. That's how they do it for whatever reason, financial reasons, whatever, they can monetize it better; they like to do interview based podcasts where they always interview someone new.

Understand that someone who listens to a half hour podcast or an hour long podcast all the way to the end and then goes to your site is a very qualified lead. You're not going to get a lot of traffic like that, but the traffic you do get tends to be very, very high quality; high quality customers, high quality people, people who are just into whatever it is you're selling, the topic, and so I would say make yourself available to do those things. There's a site called www.RadioGuestlist.com where podcasters and real radio shows – and I've gotten on real radio shows doing this – they will say "We're looking for an expert about XYZ to interview on our show," and they're basically saying "Send me an email and pitch me on why I should interview you." I've used that pretty successfully but just find podcasts and look at them. A lot of them are looking for good content. They need it. You're not imposing on these people at all; they need you, so if you have something good to share, start doing that.

In fact, for our podcast, my producer Jonathan Rivera hired this lady to go out and find people to interview me, so she's always researching other podcasts and getting me booked. It's like her job. I've been doing a lot of that over the last several months and it pays off because people do say "I've heard about you from XYZ show, I keep hearing your name pop up." I think they say that because they're listening to all the same podcasts and certain names do pop up over and over. It's very powerful. I don't know how you would track it unless you created a unique URL for every show that you were going to plug that URL on a different show, but you'll see your sales and traffic go up.

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Michael: How about joint ventures? When I first met you, you were married, you were pretty tied down; you're pretty much solo Ben. Over the recent years you've gotten out there and done a lot of networking, you're speaking at seminars, and you're connecting more with the internet marketing community, so are you doing JVs out there with these new connections and are joint ventures a source for new subscribers as well?

Ben: They certainly can be. There's a lot of people who owe me a solid because I'll promote certain people not because I want a favor from them or anything but because they're selling something that I think my list would want, so I don't do a lot of the "You scratch my back, I'll scratch yours." When I joint venture it's usually me selling someone else's stuff and that's really rare. I can count the number of people on one hand whose stuff I'm going to take the time to sell and it's good to be choosy like that. That is a good way to do it. You absolutely could. I remember you and I did a joint venture once where I was like, "Hey, Michael, how about I write you 10 press releases or something and you plug my site to your list," and your list was like 14,000 people at the time and mine was only like 4000 and that was a very big success. I always tell people to make deals like that if you can.

Michael: What was the seminar that you promote in Las Vegas? It was a real small Mastermind group. Is that a JV situation?

Ben: It's called Ocean's Four. It's four of us. It's me, Jack Borne, Ryan Levec, and Andre Chaperon where people, like 6, 7, 8, even the 9 figure business where they come and we put them on a hot seat and we tear apart their funnel, we tear apart their strategy, we tear apart their offers, we tear apart their emails and their copy. The four of us each bring different strengths to the table. I'm not the funnel guy. That's Ryan Levec's thing and he can just tear a funnel apart by looking at it. I'll go through all their emails and go through one by one and say "Do this, do this, do this." Andre does the same thing and Jack Borne's like a programmer and he's also Jack Marshall's affiliate manager and he knows all this stuff about the mechanics of a website and the mechanics of an offer and what's working and what's not working, so we all just bring different things to the table. It's a joint venture in the sense that we all just combine forces, so you could say it's a joint venture.

Michael: Do you all split the money?

Ben: Yeah, we split the money and we don't make very much when all is said and done. I don't know if it's worth taking a weekend to do it, but what's worth it is there's so many ideas flying around the room that the four of us get as much out of it as the attendees. We make a little bit of money on it but that's not even the goal of it. If we were trying to make money on it, we would double the price. It's actually relatively inexpensive to go and we have four or five people who just come every year, every time we do one, and then we get some new people come and go, and it's been more successful than we thought. It was really only supposed to be a one-time thing. We may not even do another one, just depends on our schedules getting crazier. If we do, it might be once a year from now on but we've done like six of them I think. It's been very successful.

Michael: Can a skilled email marketer expect better response if sending multiple emails per day?

Ben: I'll just put it this way. Everyone's results may vary but if I was more motivated than I am now and I wanted to put the time into it and the thought power into it, I would be sending two a day, if not three. I think as long as they're good and interesting, you're okay. If they're boring emails and it's just blatant pitching all day, it's probably not going to do too good for you, but if you are interesting and have something to say – I know people who do three a day. Dagan Smith, for example, I know he does like three a day sometimes and it's like the more he sends, the more money he makes. It's not unlike when we do our offers leading up to deadlines. Again, you have to kind of take the temperature of your list. Maybe your list really is going to get pissed at you if you send three a day. It's kind of hard to answer that as a blanket thing but personally, I would send two a day and I do sometimes, if I was more motivated, because I know it would make me more money.

Michael: Bill Mueller from San Diego here – he's a fellow copywriter – he wants to know, "Do you survey your list?"

Ben: I don't remember the last time I surveyed the list. If you're going to survey a list, do it in a way that's very meticulous, kind of like how Ryan Levec does that sort of thing. If I did survey my list, I would ask one question and one question only. I would ask "What were the last two or three or products you've bought and what are the URLs," because they're telling you what they're actually spending on other than what they think you want to hear or guessing. People will say one thing but they don't mean it. If you ask people "What's better, reading a novel or watching a movie," "Well, I read the novel." Most of them have never read a novel in their lives. They

just want to sound sophisticated. “What’s your favorite book?” “My favorite book is the Bible.” I can tell you most people who say that have never read their Bible.

They’re just getting a feel good answer, or sometimes people just don’t know what they want and so they think they want one thing but you’re noticing they’re spending money on something else. It goes back to what are they buying – not what they say they want to buy, but what are they buying? You might find that they bought the same kind of product the last three times they bought, three different versions of that product, and what would be the best thing to sell them is that same kind of product, only better.

Michael: For the guests who are just now joining us, can you give out your URL website and tell them what to do when they get there?

Ben: Yeah. It’s www.BenSettle.com and if you go there, you can either opt in or not opt in. It’s up to you. If you do opt in, I will send you the first issue of my Email Players newsletter. It’ll be a PDF, not the print version of the first issue. That’s a very real \$97 value. That’s what it costs every month to be a member. No one ever gets a price break or anything like that. It’s \$97 a month. That’s what that issue is legitimately worth and it’s got 24 different ways to make more money with your emails. I just went through 24 different things you can do – different openings and subject lines and approaches and ideas – and people absolutely make money on just going through that free issue because that’s the goal. I want them to get a taste of what I have to offer them and what better way than to show them how to make some more sales? That’s free, and if you don’t opt in, that’s fine too. You can go to the blog where I’ve got well over 1000 pages’ worth of content on there and a bunch of audio and video. It’s all free so it’s yours for the taking. You can download it, listen to it, whatever you want to do; www.BenSettle.com.

Michael: When it comes to subject lines, if you had to choose one subject line template idea for someone who wants to ramp up their response in email, could you share maybe one of your favorites even though they’re going to get it when they log in to your site?

Ben: This probably is in that free issue but when in doubt, go for maximum curiosity. Curiosity gets the click. Curiosity is actually more persuasive in selling than self-interest. In fact, here’s a story I learned from Scott Hanes. Scott Hanes was one of Gary Halbert’s only true protégés. Gary only had a handful from what I understand and he was one of them. I’ve actually

met Scott Hanes and I've sold his copywriting course; he's a really good guy, very, very high level copywriter. I remember many years ago when I interviewed him once for my site, he told a story about how Gary Halbert would take him out on a boat all day right before the deadline. They're cruising around on a boat because that's how he would get ideas, and one day he asked Scott, "Scott, what do you think the most important part of advertising is, of a sales letter?" Scott said, "That's easy, self-interest," and Gary Halbert said, "No, you're wrong. It's curiosity. People will buy because you made them curious on page 8 of an ad in a book and it's a very, very powerful thing."

People will buy very expensive products they didn't even know about 5 minutes earlier because of some kind of curiosity thing in a sales pitch, so it even double applies to email. If you want to stick out in that inbox, you go for maximum curiosity. That's not the only way to do it, and I teach dozens of ways to do it, but that's the go-to way.

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Michael: Here's a question from Dr. Lance Zimney, DC; Life in Motion Chiropractic and Wellness at www.LifeToTheFull.com. "Ben, as a doctor of chiropractic, is it better to write the bulk of my emails on more controversial issues in healthcare or stay relatively even keel and throw in more bold controversial subjects few and far between? Note: I've purchased some of Ben's products in the past and I know he can get quite controversial. I'm trying to gain the thick skin that Ben has. :)"

Ben: Well, I'll tell you what, I think you should give your opinion and if your opinion happens to be controversial, so be it. I don't necessarily think you have to go out of your way to invent something. That's not a bad idea either to stay controversial, but a few people come to mind in the health niche. One is Dr. Mercola; www.Mercola.com is probably the biggest independent natural health advice and product site on the internet, certainly one of the biggest. That guy never says anything in the mainstream. You almost want to get angry at him because he'll make you think you're going to die if you use anyone else's product but his and he's very good at that. Is he trying to be controversial? Is he up there ranting and raving? No, he's very even keeled and very methodical and logical and all that but it's just inherently controversial because he just doesn't agree with the mainstream.

There's this other guy, Dr. William Campbell Douglas, he's got a print newsletter that's like \$39 a year and I highly recommend getting on that too because he goes out of his way to be controversial. This guy will pick anything that the mainstream says and – in an infotaining way, I might add – he will skewer it and it's so fun reading his stuff, so yeah, I would recommend it. It doesn't mean that you have to be obnoxious about it. You can just have a counter opinion.

Now, chiropractors have a lot of uphill battles as it is. You have a lot of competition from each other and you have the mainstream always downing you and saying you're frauds and quacks and all that, so if people are going to paint you as a villain, this is my way of looking at things, Michael. I'm not saying everyone needs to adopt this but this is how I look at it; if someone's going to cast me as a villain, I'm going to play the part well. I'm just going to run with it, so I think you should. And do you need a thick skin? Yeah, you'll get it over time.

It's kind of like the Thai boxers over in Thailand. Thai boxing is a very interesting sport. The movie Kickboxer kind of went into it a little bit, they Hollywood-ized it a little bit, but they will sit there and kick a banana tree until their shin breaks and then they'll let it heal and then they'll kick that tree again and let it break again. And they'll keep doing that because every time they kick that tree and break their shin, what happens is they call it calcification or it's calcifying or whatever – a good chiropractor would probably know more about this than I would – but the little cracks in the bone and all that start to harden so your shins become rock hard eventually and it's the same thing when you're dealing with the internet and all the trolls and haters out there.

At first, yeah, it's a little hair raising but then you start to realize – this one guy who was on Twitter, I can never pronounce his last name; it's something like Mike Serlovich, I'm probably butchering his name – but he said something like the whole internet, it's basically just pro wrestling. All of the controversy you see on the internet, it's like pro wrestling and once you realize that, that that's the mentality of what's going on out there, it's not worth getting upset about it. It's not worth letting it keep you awake at night. People who are attacking you tend to be losers with no lives of their own and they're attacking you because they want to be heard and that's the only way they know how to be heard. That's what they do. It's a very troll-like thing and like I said, if you're not getting that kind of reaction, you're probably not pushing hard enough anyway.

If I was the chiropractor, I would. I'd go all in. If you're going to paint me as a villain and a quack and all that stuff, then I'm going to play the part well. In fact, I would play that up. I would call myself "the quack that actually knows what he's talking about" or something like that. It's called agree and amplify. If someone's going to accuse you of something, agree with it and then take it another step higher. Go ahead and agree with them but then make it like a cartoon like thing. It tends to shut people up. It makes the people attacking you look stupid. It's fun. It's entertaining naturally. You just won't care what people think too much after that.

Michael: Ben, how important are the use of bullets in your personal sales copy and emails?

Ben: I don't use them a lot on emails except when I'm promoting the Email players newsletter, like the last day they can get it that month. Bullets are everything. Ken McCarthy, he has a really good take on this I think. He's like the most important skill to learn in copywriting is bullets even if you're not writing bullets for your ad, everything is really chunked down into bullets, little sound bites. A whole ad can just be a bunch of bullets thrown together in a paragraph. Think about how the human mind takes in information. It wants things bulleted. When you go to the grocery store, you don't bring a grocery story or a grocery paragraph, you bring a grocery list, a bullet thing. It's a very, very powerful thing. Paul Hartounian, the publicity guru, I'm a big fan of his and he's really big on bullets because he uses those in his press releases all the time because that's what gets reporters to call him. He says whenever he's writing a note to somebody, like leaving a phone message for someone, he always puts everything in bullet form. He's always writing bullets. I think it's a good habit to get into.

Michael: How many emails would you send to the same recipient before recycling them? Do you recycle the same emails?

Ben: I do. Practically all of July's emails are recycled. Sometimes you just need a break.

Michael: Do you change them up at all?

Ben: Maybe a little bit. Maybe I've learned something since the last time and I can make it better, but I look for the ones I can use verbatim. I don't do it an awful lot. I just do it when I want to do other things and I don't want to think about it. Generally speaking, I look a year earlier. It's not a hard and fast rule; it's just what I like to do. Some people might remember. They

don't care. They're on your list because they want to hear from you and most people won't remember anyway. I've had people respond to the same email. I've noted that someone responded to the same email a year ago will respond to that same email as if it was the first time they heard it today, so you can do it. Here's another interesting thing. This goes back to testing emails and why I think you've got to be careful if you're going to do this. In copywriting, you have the A/B test, so you test two sales letter and the winner, that's your control.

With email, it's not quite that black and white because I have done this so many times that it's not even a question to me anymore. I've taken an email that didn't get any sales the first time I used it for whatever reason, but it's still a good email and I'll reuse it like a year later, 8 or 9 months later, maybe two years later, and I'll get a lot of sales. I've had emails that I've sent out that did really well and I reused them again and they didn't do anything. I throw that in there because I'm very distrustful of people who say they test emails and "this thing kicked butt." Well, when you're doing daily emails the way I teach – maybe you're sending out one email a year – but a lot of that has to do with where your market's at, where people are financially when they're ready to buy, what they think of you. There are so many factors at play that you can just keep reusing these things and maybe you'll get more sales, maybe you'll get less, who knows. The key is to get something out there every day.

Michael: Do you have a method for the time of day you let your emails go out; morning, evening, afternoon?

Ben: I used to have them go out 6:30 AM Eastern Time just because that's the default time in Aweber, which is 3:30 my time over here on the coast, and then I got to talking to Andre Chaperon about this. I haven't even taken the time to test it or not. I think that would be an ongoing test you would have to do forever because it's hard to test these things with email because email lists are always changing. The variables are always changing. It's not stagnant like a sales letter. He's like, the way I do it, I want my emails to get to people around 9:30 in the morning Eastern Time because it seems like most of the population is over there on the east coast, all those cities. He finds that 9:30 – this is not to say I want you to say 9:30. It could be 9:00; it could be 10:00 AM. I just chose it because I want mine to go out early because I like to see the reaction at that time of the day so I don't have to think about it anymore. He's like, they've gotten their morning rush of email at 6:00 or 7:00 AM or at 8:00 AM when they've gotten to work. Their inbox is less crowded later in the morning than earlier in the morning.

Now, have I seen any tests on this and can I prove it? No, I just took his word for it. He's a very smart email guy. He knows what he's talking about, and I did that. Did I see a rise in sales or anything? I didn't notice it but to me it made sense. That said, I have no problem sending emails out later. In fact, eventually when I get around to it, I'll probably start sending mine out at night time just to see what happens and I'll do that for a year or two. I have done that in the past where I've sent them out at like 8:00 at night. Have I ever seen a huge uptick in sales or drop in sales doing this? Never, because it's not the time that matters, it's you. It's about your uniqueness that people are reading and buying from. It's not the time of the day so that's something to think about too.

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Michael: How are you using yourself on Kindle? Do you have any strategies? What do you have up on Kindle? Have you been able to determine if it generates leads for you, generates sales? What's your strategy with Kindle?

Ben: My friend Greg Perry publishes all my Kindle stuff and he encouraged me several years ago to do this. He's like, "Anything you've written, let's package it and put it on Kindle." It could have been a 12 page e-book but it's good information. I put all this stuff up there so I have a lot of books up there on different subjects. My strategy for that is maybe random people buy it and then they're going to find me. It's just a way to build an audience. I know my copywriting e-book, which is like \$2.99, if I wanted to package this thing, I could easily sell it for \$100 or more, and I have that on there and that tends to bring me a lot of leads actually, so there's a strategy there. It's not something I think about a lot but it makes me a decent little side income stream. I like having it there and it's very consistent and every time I put new books up there, it goes up a little bit more. I think if people already have content just sitting on their hard drive – dude, I've talked about that, like all those interviews you've done, if you're already having them transcribed, why not just throw them up on Kindle and then don't even think about it? Just write a description for them and let them do their thing. Maybe they make you money, maybe they don't but they're not making any money not being used, so I would give that advice to anybody.

Michael: That's good. Here's a question from Leo Restrigh. "Is a discounted price more effective than other type offerings?"

Ben: It can be. The offer is more important than the copy so you want to put a lot of thought into that. I think discounts can be good. I think it can be really good. It's not something I do a lot of because I like to have a higher air of quality. Discounting kind of cheapens things sometimes; not all the time. If I'm doing an affiliate offer for somebody, I want to have a unique case so they buy from me and not someone else, I say "Hey, can you give my list a little discount," and when people say yes to that, it's great. It definitely helps. People like the word "sale." If you want to have a little cash flow surge, have a sale on something. The best way to have a sale is just discount something you're already selling for a limited time and see what happens.

Michael: Barb wants to know, "How should I use guarantees when selling my products online? Do you use a guarantee when selling your products and if not, why?"

Ben: Well, it really depends. My stuff at www.BenSettle.com, like my Email Players newsletter, my copywriting grab bag product, my *Crackerjack Selling Secrets* e-book, I don't give any guarantees on that. I really believe it's high quality stuff that's going to make people a lot of money. It's an education. It's like a university education. If you go to the university and say I want my money back, they're going to laugh at you. If you've taken the classes or bought the classes and didn't attend, it doesn't matter. They're not going to give you your money back, so why should I do that with my stuff when I consider my stuff more valuable than what someone can get at a university? Plus I like the mentality that it has when people buy and they know there's no guarantee and it's very clear there's no guarantee and it's sink or swim. It's like that story we've talked about before. I don't know how true it is or not, but when Cortez came over to the Americas and he burned all his ships so they'd have to conquer. It's that mindset I want in my customers. I could probably double or triple my sales if I did what everyone else is doing, but I'd have a lesser quality of customer.

I'm a big believer, Michael, in having four quarters instead of a hundred pennies, because I'd rather have a few really high quality customers than a lot of mixed bag customers. If you have a hundred pennies, some of them might be clean and shiny, some of them are going to be sticky; you don't know how many of them were in a stripper's underwear at one time or something, and I guess you could say that about quarters too. That analogy breaks down after a while, but I'm a big believer in that so for my stuff, I don't.

Other stuff that I sell, for example in the golf market, it's a ridiculous guarantee. They can join our online golf membership club for like \$29.99 for an entire year and they get the first 30 days free no matter what and for the next year, they can get their money back even if it's the last day of the year. If you're selling mass market like that, I think you do have a bold guarantee, or see what happens when you take away that guarantee. You might find that it doesn't affect your sales either way, so it's not like a blanket answer for everyone that. It's just the way I look at various things. I think every product, every niche, every market is unique, and every product is unique and everything from the guarantee to the offer to the copy to the headline to the branding to the positioning, it's all going to be unique to this one time in history, to these exact people and this exact market so it's all different. That's the way I look at it, at least for my stuff. Most of my stuff I do not have a guarantee with.

In our market, the internet marketing world, I don't like the type of people that are attracted to a guarantee. If you don't believe I'm going to deliver, then don't buy from me. I tell people this in my emails for selling Email Players. After getting my daily emails and maybe you've listened to some of my stuff on my site, you might have heard an interview like this, if you're still on the fence, maybe I just said something that you're not feeling easy about, do not buy. I don't want you to buy. I want you to buy when you're in, you're ready. You're not only showing up to the job but you're ready to work. There's something to be said for people who not only show up but show up on time and ready to work. That's like 99% of the battle in the job world and so it is when you're buying high quality information, whether it be stuff I sell or anyone else sells. You should be ready to go or not buy at all.

I don't want people who buy something and just let it sit on the shelf because it just makes them feel good knowing it's there. For example, people who have eating disorders in some cases, not all eating disorders, but maybe they were starved a little bit as a child and all this and they have a little bit of a hang up about food. I know someone who had this happen to her. "I don't eat all this junk food, I just like to have it because it makes me feel safe like it's there if I ever need it," and she'll never eat it. It's never going to be eaten but it's there, and it's actually tied to that dopamine drip thing we were talking about earlier. I don't really want that mentality buying my products, if they're thinking of my products that way. It's not something you get and just put it in a binder and never read it and you'll get it to someday. Don't buy it if you're going to do that. You're wasting your money and you're wasting my time and I don't like it, but

when I'm selling mass market and there's a team in place that can handle all the refunds and all that stuff, yeah, I'm all for it.

Michael: If I'm interested in starting my own physical newsletter, can you give me a few tips on how to handle the outsourcing for the design and the printing and the mailing? How do you handle that?

Ben: Well, I've done two print newsletters. I did the Cryptomarketing newsletter which lasted 30 issues and then the only reason I ended that is I was selling the Email Players newsletter at the same time and serving two masters never works, and Email Players was far more profitable so I just let Cryptomarketing die after 30 issues, and I had pretty much said everything I needed to say in it. It was just generalized marketing information.

I've done two of them and I've learned a lot of things, made a lot of mistakes, but one thing I recommend is for the printing and fulfillment that you use Richard Selby at www.SelbyMarketing.com, and I'm telling you I've been through several printers since I started selling my own stuff back in 2009 and these guys have been the best, and I'm talking people – I've used companies that came well recommended by big name gurus and I'm like, this is who they recommend? These people are a joke. There were orders not going out and excuses and these weird ridiculous minimum quantities that didn't make any sense, and I went to Selby and I said hey, all I want is to be able to do this. I have it rigged to my shopping cart so that you guys will get an email every time I get a sale. It'll have the customer's information. I just want it to go out the same day or the next day if it's kind of late, and I want a tracking number. He goes, "Ben, you're not challenging me." The thing is at the other places I used; it was hard to get them to do that. You'd be amazed at how incompetent some of these printers are.

I highly recommend www.Selby.com and they can do a lot more than that. They can actually do whole campaigns for you and segment your list, do sequences, but they make it very simple. It's like as easy as if you're selling an e-book because it's all automated. They take care of it. The only time I have to deal with anything is if the post office doesn't deliver something, the customer says, "Hey, I didn't get this," and I'll just forward that email over to Michelle – she's the girl I deal with over there at Selby – and she just takes care of it. She's on it like white on rice. I can't recommend them enough so that's one thing.

As far as the design, I used this guy, he calls himself Mr. Subtle. He used to be big in the Warrior forum and Michelle Thornton's copywriting board that is no longer up anymore but that's how I learned about him. He's a direct response guy by trade. I think he's at www.marketingbrainfarts.com. For all marketing related products, that's who I use. If you're not selling something business related, the best thing you can do is just put it out there like on social media or an Elance type of site and just put out there what you're looking for and you'll get bids and people will show you their samples and you just pick the one that makes sense to you. It's kind of a subjective thing who's the best. I used that dude when it came to my newsletter design.

My first newsletter, the Cryptomarketing newsletter, I had this dude I knew – back when I was 19, I worked with him at a pottery store – he's an artist and he hand draws his own fonts and I thought man, can you create Cryptomarketing newsletter masthead for me? He hand did it and it was really bizarre looking and cool, that sort of thing. The most important thing is to find someone who matches the personality and the feel that you want. If you want something professional, find someone who kind of does slick and professional. If you want something that's a little bit edgy, find an artist who does edgier stuff.

Michael: So your newsletter is a template that he helped you design and you just pull that up every month and try and follow it?

Ben: I don't even have it that sophisticated. I don't even have a template other than what I created using Pages. I kind of modeled mine after how Gary Halbert did his. Mine's a little bit different. It's not like 8 pages on one subject; it's multiple topics within the same thing, but it's basically letter style. It's written as a letter to somebody. You don't have to do that. There are people who use two columns like a newsletter would do sometimes. You can do it however you want it. I just want mine to look friendly and warm like a letter. Some people don't write that way. They write very differently and they should go with a more professional layout, like maybe have someone do that. There's no one answer. It's all up to you and the feeling you want people to have when they see it.

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Michael: Now when someone goes to your website, www.BenSettle.com, pretty much you're forced to opt in, right?

Ben: No, I use what's called a splash squeeze page. They've been around forever. They fell out of popularity for like a decade, I don't know why. There was a time when people were doing this all the time like in the late '90s, early 2000s, and then people just went to straight squeeze pages or they went to no squeeze pages and they sent people to content for like SEO reasons and there's all these different reasons. Back in 2012, I think it was, I used to subscribe to Dan Kennedy's No BS Marketing letter. I don't think he owns it anymore, but there was an article in there by Ryan Dice, talking about how they were testing all these different ways of doing squeeze pages and he talked about the splash squeeze page where it's still a squeeze page but you give them the option to click through if they don't want to opt in, and his example was that's what the Obama campaign was doing. At that time, they were trying to get votes for the 2012 election or getting leads. If you go to www.archive.org, you can look at old websites and if you go back to the www.WhiteHouse.org site using that site, you can go back to late 2011, maybe early 2012, you'll see an example; it's like Obama sitting there at his desk and just an opt in saying "join our list" or you can just "no thank you" and click through, and that's what his example was. I did that. I don't remember the exact percentage but my opt ins went up immediately after that so I was a believer after that one.

Michael: Yeah, this looks good. I don't remember seeing it like this. When did you change it to this format or this design?

Ben: Well, I've had a splash squeeze page since 2012 but I've recently hired the only designer I've dealt with on the internet who's not like a complete flake. His name is Keith Commons and he's out of Ireland, and the guy is direct response trained. He's just the best guy you can work with as a designer, in my opinion, but he's worth it and I had him go through this and he created what you're seeing there now on the site and we're split testing two right now, actually. I'm not sure which one you're seeing. There's one where I'm kind of sitting against the wall and there's another one where I'm kind of staring at you, and the one where I'm sitting against the wall is pretty much the winner but those are going to be dismantled very soon because Jim Yagi is taking over my Adwords stuff and he's going to test landing pages that he knows works very well for Adwords, so it's going to be changing very soon and that's fine.

You always want to keep things in motion. You always want to be using the best thing, so we'll see what happens with that, but I think it's definitely worth it to hire someone who's a professional, who understands direct response design, who understands from our point of view. He's not an

artist. He's not an artsy-fartsy kind of guy. He's looking at it from a sales point of view and a response point of view. Very few people out there like that but if anyone wants to hire him, I have him on retainer every month so I pay him money so I can just email him if I want something done and it's worth it.

Michael: It looks good. It's very clean design.

Ben: Yeah, I also had him redo the www.EmailPlayers.com sales letter. I said okay, I want to try something different. I have found that when I split test sales letters for my own stuff, my leads, it makes almost no difference because the emails are doing all the selling but I wanted to have something that looked a little bit better. The way I had it before is still kind of cool looking but it wasn't really mobile friendly. It was old. It was like old HTML that I created back in 2007 or something, maybe even earlier than that. Actually, I think I created it back in 2005 or '06. It was just out of date so he updated all that, made it mobile friendly, which your sites have to be if you want them indexed in Google from what I understand now, so it's worth it to hire a designer. It doesn't have to be him but any designer that you can trust, who knows what they're doing. It's worth the money.

Michael: How often do people contact you and want to hire you to write email copy or sales letters for them and are you currently taking clients?

Ben: I haven't done clients in exactly 4 years. When I launched Email Players, I was thinking I'd be lucky to get 20 subscribers when I launched because it was a high ticket thing and my list was only 5000 people at the time and I ended up getting 82 people on the launch, and I'm like that's it, I do not need to do client work anymore. I haven't done client work since July of 2007, so I don't want to do client work, God willing I'll never have to do client work again. I don't like it. That said, I have on my website this thing at the top that says "FAQs for the uninitiated," people who don't know me, and I spend time in there saying I don't take clients and if I did, here's what I would charge. I put that in there and people who don't read that will sometimes ask me, "Hey, are you taking clients on," and I don't. What I do is I pass client jobs that come across my desk, as long as it's someone who's legitimate – no one's going to work on spec that I'm going to pass it to – if they're legitimate, worthy clients, I will tell my Email Players subscribers about it because there's some freelancers who subscribe. I think you're in good hands, but I always tell everyone it's a private thing between the two people. Don't bring me into it. If something goes wrong, it's between you guys. I'm just letting you guys know each other exists.

I will do that for people every now and then. I may even start charging for that. If it becomes this thing where I'm getting lots of people wanting me to tell my paying customers about their client project, if it gets to the point where I get like 10 of these a week or something, which is starting to get to that point almost, I may start charging with these clients to advertise them because this is valuable. These are the people I'm training month after month; they're paying me \$100 a month to learn this stuff. They're serious, but generally I don't take clients.

Michael: About the website; are you using Wordpress for the back end?

Ben: Yeah, it's all Wordpress based – not the Email Players newsletter by itself, but my blog is definitely Wordpress based and that's why I use Keith Commons, because he understands Wordpress. I know nothing about technical stuff. I spent so many hours in the early years trying to figure out how to put up HTML – I wasted so much time. I was so broke back then, I could have outsourced anything if I wanted to. They didn't have Fiver back then, but I'm a big believer in outsourcing all this stuff if you're not good at it or don't like doing it. Just be nice to yourself and outsource it.

Michael: You want to share with the listeners the story about you being part owner with the golf company? How did that come about? What is it? What are you guys going to sell?

Ben: Yeah, like I said, the guy who helps me sell in the prostate niche, I've known him a few years and he's got this friend, Marty McDonald. We've run in the same circles for years, I just never met the guy until spring of 2014. He came to me and said look, we're putting this golf deal together. Eric's going to do all the traffic stuff. Marty, the other guy, Marty McDonald, he's like the rainmaker. He's the one doing all the deals, making all these deals and stuff and getting things set up. It's his vision. It's his conception. It's his baby, really, and he calls it Golfing Fanatics. They use social media to get their clients sales and likes and all that, so he's a real direct response, smart savvy, guy, and he had this idea for an online private golf club.

If someone listening to this plays golf, they know what I'm talking about. There's country clubs out there, private golf clubs that can cost as much as \$100 a month to as much as \$50,000 a year. Sometimes they're even more expensive than that. I think it's like \$100,000 a year to belong to one of these, and some of the perks that you get when you join these clubs is you get free stuff. Major golf manufacturers don't really know how to market themselves – we're talking about apparel manufacturers and golf

clubs and gadgets and equipment – they're not very good at marketing themselves. In fact, a lot of them are struggling, so they rely on these private golf clubs to do demos there.

They'll send people there with a bunch of clubs and they'll give people a bunch of free stuff just so they'll use it and review it and let their friends see that they're using it. For example, let's say you've got a new golf driver and wow, you're hitting better. You best believe that the people you play with who are hardcore golfers are going to want to buy that same thing. We're all working for that edge, so that's kind of what they rely on. They actually give free stuff away to these types of clubs so that people will use and review this stuff. If it's clothing, they'll go wear it and then all their friends will want to buy it. They're just not very sophisticated marketers. I don't understand it either because it's like the most rabid market out there. You'd think that all the best marketers would be in this, but they're not. Anyway, his idea was what if we created an online golf club that was private, that we charge like \$30 a year instead of \$50,000 a year, but they get most of these same benefits?

So he's made all these relationships with brand name manufactures at that, and they're agreeing to send us stuff that we can send to our members so they can review it and use it and they get to keep everything. It's not like they have to send anything back. He's just a very unique guy. He's got connections in the PGA where he lives in Pennsylvania and now he's going nationwide. We've got some really high level golf coaches, like people who teach, PGA magazine, the Golf Channel, got people like that involved with us to do the training side. So we have this membership site where if you sign up, you're eligible to get free stuff, whatever we can get to you, and that's what's taking us so long to launch this thing; we want to have everything in place so that we have stuff to give people. You fill out your measurements and you fill out the stuff you want and there's no guarantees but you're eligible for all of this stuff just by being a member for \$30 a year. At the moment, it's that. We'll probably start charging a monthly thing of like \$20 a month or something eventually but as of now, summer of 2015, that's our price. So we're doing that. There's also high level training insights from PGA pros and PGA master professionals. A PGA master professional is kind of like the graduate PhD version of a golf instructor, just a very rigorous thing they have to go through to prove their philosophy. We have a lot of experts in there.

A lot of people don't realize this but golfers get what I'm saying here, is that golfing is kind of a lonely game to play. This actually happens where a guy will go out and hit a hole in one, which is the coolest thing you can do

in golf is hit a hole in one, and they'll go home and tell their wife and she'll say "That's nice" but she doesn't get it. She's not a golfer. It's not like she doesn't care but she doesn't get excited by it. He wants to go tell somebody but he can't because none of his friends are playing golf either, so it's like a camaraderie there in these types of golf clubs too, so we've got that built into it. It's like a real club experience but it's all online and people can get discounts on travel; that's in the works. We're putting things like uploading video of your golf swing, put that in the forum, everybody can critique it and help each other out, but the main thing is you're eligible to get free stuff which is really cool, I think, and that's how that came about.

They came to me and said, "Can you do the copywriting and email?" I said hell yeah, count me in, so it's like the three of us co-own it together. We've got the majority position in it. We've got some other people who we're giving a little bit of the company just to keep them in, but it's our thing and we already soft launched it once in the springtime and we're going to do a second soft launch very soon and even at our soft launch, we were getting \$5 buyers to ice cold traffic, which Eric tells me is really good. The offer I wrote is converting like crazy, everything is in place. We just want to make sure we have everything to give people before we really roll this thing out. I think it's going to be big.

Michael: And it's going to be rolled out through paid advertising?

Ben: Not just paid advertising like the normal stuff like pay per view ads and pay per click ads and Facebook, but also Groupon and Living Social type sites. It's perfect for those types of things, so once we get this thing rolled out – I don't want to say it's a sure thing because there's never a sure thing – but the three of us are extremely excited by it. It's something we can all dig into and build something big, and that's perfect because I don't have to do all the administrative stuff. I can just do what I do and probably hand it off to some other copywriter later. That's kind of the ultimate goal, is to build this thing up and let other people run it and go start something else.

Michael: Sounds good. It's a great market too. Hey, I'm looking at some of the testimonials on your www.BenSettle.com site, and I got a question from Pat Murray from New South Wales, Australia. "Russell Bronson; is he the real deal?" And he goes, "Michael, I know Ben did a Mastermind with him at some stages and has talked him up quite a bit," and he's one of your subscribers, I'm pretty sure.

Ben: Yeah, I have nothing but respect for Russell Bronson. I've been a big fan of his for many years. He paid to attend Ocean's Four once. He said a couple things to me that I found was kind of interesting and kind of inflated my ego a little bit. He said, "Ben, you're kind of the only reason I came to this. I just really wanted to meet you. I'm on your list and I'm just amazed at how you mail daily and are able to consistently do that." I guess he's been a fan of mine for a little while too, which is kind of interesting. We were having dinner one of those nights and we were talking, and he goes, "Ben, I used to just really hate you." He's like, "I don't know why, I just didn't like you. I just couldn't stand you." If you know this guy, he's not that kind of guy. He doesn't come off like a hater in any way. He's like the classiest guy you'll meet. I was a little taken back by that, but he goes, "Now I have to read your stuff; now I like it."

So I thought that was kind of interesting, but he has this book if you go to www.DotComSecretsLab.com I think is the URL, where you can get a copy of this book he wrote, I think it's called *108 Split Tests*. I don't think that's the title, but it's all these split tests he's done and with email, he's confirmed a lot of stuff that I've often suspected and been too lazy to test myself. All you pay for is shipping so he's obviously getting you on a list and he sells to the internet marketing crowd so he's got to use the stuff that works on them. In my opinion, just from my observation, not speaking for him by any means, it looks like he's going after the mainstream marketing crowd, the dopamine drip people, so he's got to market to them in a way that they'll buy. I think that's why sometimes people will ask about this, but if you talk to this guy, if you read any of his stuff, if you listen to his podcast, you can just tell he eats, breathes, and craps marketing. This dude is like an encyclopedia of marketing knowledge. Talking to this guy is a fascinating experience and I can't recommend this guy enough. I like what he teaches, I like what he does. As a matter of fact, I didn't even know he had a print newsletter until yesterday, so I subscribed to it right away. I can't wait to get my first issue. He just really knows his stuff. Is he perfect? No. Are any of us? No. We all have things that are probably going to repulse you but I think he's the real deal.

Michael: Can you recommend some direct mail podcasts that you listen to and learn a lot from?

Ben: About direct mail?

Michael: Direct mail, email, marketing, any podcast that you're getting into that you find a lot of value in.

Ben: Here's the irony: I'm a podcaster but I don't really listen to other podcasts. I'm a novelist but I don't really read other novels. I'm an email marketer. I don't really read a lot of emails. I don't know a lot of them but I can tell you this. Jonathan Rivera, who produces my podcast, he produces other people's podcasts. He's building a little syndicate, like a network of his people, and I know Doberman Dan's podcast is on there. You can trust him. His stuff is really good. If you go to www.PodcastFactory.com, that's Jonathan's site, you can see all his podcasts and I would say he's not going to associate himself with bad people or anything, so I would think you could trust those podcasts. I haven't heard them but I know Jonathan's not going to put his reputation on the line with garbage, so www.PodcastFactory.com is a good place to start.

I've heard a couple of Russell Bronson's podcasts, just a couple episodes. I think he does them while he's in the car. He records himself while he's in the car driving somewhere, which is an interesting way of doing it, and I listened to a couple of them. They're really good. They're short, they're like 8 minutes long, so I would recommend his. And if you're in network marketing, my friend Ray Higdon has a daily podcast like 3 or 4 minutes each, so that's a good length. I think he has like 100,000 downloads a month or something so he's obviously resonating. You can start with those.

Michael: Great. Have you heard anything about the Halbert brothers? Do you know if Kevin and Bond are doing anything worthwhile when it comes to marketing?

Ben: I don't know. I don't really read their stuff. I'm on their list but it's like something they send out once in a while and I just don't get to it. That said, from what I understand – this is all hearsay; I don't really know the guys – they probably do have some things planned. I would guess they would. I hope so. They have a tremendous legacy to share with everyone. I remember on Facebook once, this is kind of a side note, I remember Russell Bronson said something to Bond Halbert on his wall – because you can see when your friends post on other people's stuff sometimes – and he's like, "Can I just buy everything your dad did? I want to buy everything. Can you guys offer that?" I hope one day they do that. Maybe for some reason they can't, but I would love it if they would make all his stuff available for sale. I know a lot of us would be buying that left and right. I'd be on that like white on rice.

Michael: All right, one other question, and you referred me over to Andrew when I was having problems with people counterfeiting the HMA system, and

what advice would you give for someone with online marketing when it comes to digital products and what to look for with all the counterfeiters out there?

Ben: Yeah, Alastair Evans, I think his name is. Gosh, his URL escapes me. I don't know if you remember what it is.

Michael: Not off the top of my head.

Ben: But if you look up Alastair Evans, I'm sure it'll come up and they do a really good service. People who are sharing your stuff illegally, the pirates, they'll file all these things with Google and get them removed from Google so nobody can find them, and they give you a report every month so you get to see exactly what they're doing. I love their service. I told the guy "Man, you're really doing a service" – there's a lot of people that don't worry about this stuff and they have a good point, people who say, "You shouldn't be wasting your time. Just sell and don't worry about it." I get it. They have a good point there. Obsessing over this is not going to do you any good.

At the same time, to me it's kind of an ego thing and it's kind of the principle of the matter. If you go and sell to your market, you actually care about your market, which I do. I don't think you should sell in a market if you don't really care enough about it the people there. You're doing your market a disservice if you're allowing stuff to be downloaded for free because they're never going to apply it, they're never going to do anything with it, they're not going to respect it, and it doesn't help anybody, so if anything, it's going to hurt people, is my way of looking at it. To me, it goes beyond just money and this and that. It probably doesn't even hurt people's sales.

People who are going to pirate your stuff weren't going to buy it anyway but it's the principle of the matter. Why share the stuff that you're busting your ass to learn and experience? Why let people just walk into your house and steal it? It doesn't make any sense. You do what you can but Alastair Evans, he definitely does have a good service for that. I referred you and several people to him and you get that printout, I'm sure.

Michael: Yeah, he's done an incredible job.

Ben: I think it's called www.TakedownCzar.com. It's good stuff. I highly recommend it.

Michael: All right, one last time for this interview if anyone is just now checking in. Can you give out your URL for your website and tell them what to do when they get there?

Ben: Yeah, it's www.BenSettle.com and when you get there, if you're so inclined, you can opt in or not, you don't have to opt in, but if you do opt in, I will send you the first issue of my email players newsletter. It's a very real, legitimate, \$97 retail value. That's what each issue costs. Now, it's a PDF. It's not a print version like people actually subscribe to it. They get a print version for their money, but you get this free, this first issue, just for opting in. If you don't opt in, that's fine. There's like 1000 plus some pages of content on the site, a ton of audio and video training, it's all free. I get testimonials from people who have just applied the free stuff that says they've doubled their sales.

Now, a lot of them have gone on to subscribe but I was telling you earlier about the lady who emailed me and said "I've just got your free stuff so far. I didn't have a chance to subscribe or anything and it put like \$50,000 of extra profit in my bosses' last sale we did, just using your stuff, that they never would have got otherwise and they're really excited now," so this stuff works. Now, I'm not saying you're going to make that much necessarily. That was probably a big list, but people are making money just with that free issue, so go ahead and use it.

Michael: Perfect. Ben, that wraps it up, man. This has been a kickass interview. I think we've covered a lot of topics here, so I really appreciate you doing this.

Ben: Absolutely. It's been a long time, man, since we've done one of these.

Michael: I know. It's been a long time coming, so I'm sure you'll get some value out of it.

Ben: Do you remember the first time you interviewed me? I was so nervous.

Michael: Yeah. Dude, you've come a long way but you've earned it. You were a shy little kitten.

Ben: I'm like a cranky old tomcat now.

Michael: You're a tiger. You've busted your ass. You've earned it. You've worked incredibly hard so you deserve all the success that you have. That's what it comes down to, man. Hopefully more to come.

Ben: I'm sure.

Michael: That's the end of our series. I hope you found it helpful.

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