



Warm Email Prospecting for Freelancers

Filter Your List to Find the Highest-Probability Prospects

Even if you use only three or four of the resources we discuss in this program to compile your list, you'll quickly have more prospects that you'll have time to approach. So before you start any email prospecting effort, take some time to rank your list. Then, focus your efforts on the highest-probability prospects first.

Here's a simple yet very effective ranking mechanism. Rank each of your contacts using your best guess. Those who score high and medium in all three categories are your best bets. And, to remain on your list, each prospect just score "high" or "medium" in two categories.

#1: Rank each contact based on the company's level of activity in your field

The best prospects are those who work for organizations that have a high level of activity in the type of work you do. For instance, companies that produce a lot of marketing communications to promote their products and services are the best prospects for commercial writers and graphic designers, everything else being equal. For freelance software developers, organizations that are constantly writing code and developing new software are better targets than those that do so sporadically.

This may sound obvious. But too often we get away from this guiding principle when, for example, we know someone who works for a company on our list. So even though that company does not produce a lot of work in our area of expertise, we approach them anyway, thinking that the strength of our relationship with our friend or associate is more important than whether or not they have a need for our expertise.

Low - Does not produce a lot of work that requires my help.

Medium - Produces a moderate amount of work that requires my help.

High - Produces a lot of work that requires my help.

#2: Rank each contact based on how well you know them.

Obviously, the better you know someone (and the better they know you), the higher the chances of making a connection. Take a few moments to rank each of your contacts using the following criteria:

Low – You barely know them (or don't know them at all)

Medium – They'd probably recognize your name but don't know you intimately

High – You have a strong personal or professional relationship with this individual

#3: Rank each contact based on your credentials in the industry they work in.

Do you have professional experience, skills, education or portfolio samples that would appeal to prospects in a given industry? If so, your chances of attracting clients in that market improve dramatically. Samples are ideal. However, companies are impressed by other credentials as well.

Say you you're trying to break into the corporate market as a commercial writer or copywriter. Let's also assume you have a financial background and helped your previous employer implement an ERP or accounting software system. Your background and experience makes you very attractive to companies that develop and market accounting software. Why? Because you've been on the customer side. You understand what it's like to implement and work with a system like theirs.

So...rank each contact based on your credentials in the industry they work in or the industries they may have good contacts in:

Low - Few, if any, of my credentials would impress this contact.

Medium - I have some credentials that would impress this contact.

High - My credentials would definitely be appealing to this contact.