



## Warm Email Prospecting for Freelancers

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### The Bad and the Ugly: Emails You DON'T Want to Write

Okay, so in this lesson, I wanted to go over a handful of emails that I've personally received over the last couple of years that I think are a clear indication of what you don't want to do, when you do email prospecting. A couple of things I wanted to point out before I start the analysis of these emails is, I've removed all identifying information, or as much as I could, from these emails.

I consider many of these to be spam, but at the same time, I wanted to be somewhat respectful to these individuals, and I'm not trying to bash anyone here. In fact, in some cases, there are some good elements in some of these emails, and I am going to point those out. But most of what I see here is just plain wrong, and these are not the worst emails I get. Unfortunately, this is most of what I'm getting.

I think these emails I'm going to show you are fairly representative of what I get every day, and what your prospects out there are actually getting every day. So some of them are coming from freelancers. Others are coming from other types of service providers and in many cases, they're actually coming from corporations. But they all have one thing in common: they're being directed towards businesses.

So I wanted to give you a flavor for what your prospects out there are getting day to day, and why it just doesn't work. All right, so this first email.

Let's just go in order here.

The subject line: *introducing Angel Vision to Gandia.*

This person was trying to use my company information and they got like a third of it. So they kind of missed the boat there, although I liked the fact that they used part of my company name on there so that was a little different from a lot of the stuff I get.

The salutation "*Hi Ed,*"

So obviously they had my name, at least they got that right. But, right away they make a lot of mistakes. Notice in the lead here, the introduction;

*I'd like to introduce you to what we do here at Angel Vision.*

Well, that was a lost chance to develop a meaningful connection with me. I just, this is really just a quick presentation of their capabilities. I do like the fact that down here, they present a soft offer that's somewhat appealing, if I were looking at solutions like these.

*If you're interested in learning more, you can sign up for our fun education webinar, no pressure, just useful information that every business executive should hear.*

So this is good. It's a good line. There's also a three-minute video here that I can access, and I like the fact that it's short but this is clearly a mass email. They use mail merge, and this is not what you want to do.

Okay, this next one is from a freelance translator.

Notice right away the subject line, a missed opportunity here to connect with me at a deeper level, at a meaningful level. I don't really need a translator. They led with a headline. I'm not sure what they were trying to accomplish here.

Hello, salutation is missing my name and then they try to develop some sort of rapport, and to justify their email to me, by saying that they've heard about me through the internet. Well, sure, okay.

*I'm a qualified freelance technical translator localized from English to French.*

Right away this gentleman dives into this huge presentation about his capabilities, his experience, his rates. Then he's trying to sell the value of using a translator.

*Please note that it's important for your company to use a qualified translator who will fill in the following criteria.*

You know, the email, again, is not intended to be a sales presentation. You are just trying to get a next step here, and this is way too long. It's assuming way too much.

*I'm looking forward to starting a long-term cooperation with your company any time the need arises.*

So he's already assuming that we're going to do business together, and then at the end and I didn't include this but from here on out, there's about two more pages with his full resume. So this is way too much. Not the approach you want to use.

Okay, this next one is from a freelance web designer

*subject line – Amazing Beautiful, Shockingly Affordable Websites.*

Okay, again a missed opportunity to connect with me in a more meaningful way, and to have some relevance. There are so many things he could have done here, just leading with a feature. Okay, I provide affordable websites. Well, I mean, so does about everybody else, so that's not going to be good enough to grab anyone's attention.

*You deserve an amazing website.*

So lead with a headline here, and it's hyperlinked. This really doesn't go anywhere.

*You deserve an amazing website.*

Okay, everyone does, right?

*In today's fast-paced world your business needs a website that's accessible to your existing and new customers.*

So he's trying to sell the value of having a good website. I mean this may have worked ten, twelve years ago but gosh today, if you're trying to sell that concept, I think you're approaching the wrong people.

*Take a look at what we can do.*

He just went on and included samples, and some of this is good.

*So call me directly. I'm a real live web designer. I will actually be designing your website. I don't outsource to India or to any other place.*

So some of this is good. He's differentiating here, in an industry that's full of people who are all over the place. You don't know who is actually going to be doing your design. So he did make some good points. Talk to me, I'm a real designer, not some lame salesperson. So he's trying to differentiate himself from maybe some of the larger design agencies.

All right, this next one is from an actual corporation, from Adobe, a rep over there.

So somehow I got on this gentleman's email list. I must have signed up for a webinar some time ago  
Subject line – *Engage Large Audiences Over the Web with Adobe Connect.*

It's okay, but it's assuming that that's something that I need. There's no relevant connection here to something that I'm doing right now, a possible need that I might have. This is just a mass email, obviously.

*Hi Ed, as you outline the requirements for your own enterprise level web conferencing solution.*

Okay, well, again he's assuming too much. How does he know that I'm outlining requirements or that I'm even anywhere near that? Or that I'm even, or would ever need anything like this?

*Check out this guide, Webinars for the Large Enterprise...*

Okay, so this is an executive or a solution brief. That's good. So this is a soft offer and he kept this email short, and that's a good thing. But there's so much more he could have done with this, and you know, I don't blame him. Adobe is a large company.

This guy doesn't have the time and I'm probably not a real prospect for him. But if I were, he could craft, again, a very personalized relevant email based on what he knows about me that would probably get me to at least pay attention, and if I was a prospect, reply to the email.

Okay, this email I got from a list database company and, you know, this subject line is a perfect example of something that I see a lot out there, and I get a lot of these. This is what I call the bait and switch subject line.

*High tech copywriting inquiry.*

Now this guy obviously knows that I'm a high tech copywriter. I write for high tech companies. Those are my clients. And he tried to make it look like through the subject line like he's a prospect – high tech copywriting industry. So he definitely got my attention, but then as soon as I open the email, I realize that he's just trying to sell me a list.

And normally I would have just deleted it but not thought anything of it, but I actually got a little mad, because he pretended to be a prospect and he's not. He's not even close to being a prospect, he's a vendor.

The email is short, which is good, but here again the introduction:

*we provide a database on the web, the many companies to find high tech company CEOs, VPs of marketing, etc. Okay, so what makes you different here? What's your value?*

There's no real value statement. I mean a million other companies offer the same services.

Alright, another example of a really bad bait and switch subject line – *I'd Like to Buy you Lunch.*

You know, I don't go out to lunch with a lot of people. They have to be good friends. Obviously, I didn't recognize this name, but okay you got me, I opened it, and then I realized that this is a mass email from some company that they're doing these luncheons, lunch and learns, all over the country and they were going to be in Atlanta, and they wanted to invite me.

But, you know, again, I thought it was a personal request from someone and when I opened it up it's not. So I was very disappointed. The next thing he did is he referenced that he could help the Technology Association of Georgia. So this guy clearly got my name from the Technology Association of Georgia. I was a member of the Board over there and I haven't been in a couple of years, so he scraped my information from that website, added me to his email database, and he's assuming that I'm still there.

So this is just poor research on his part, and just a bad approach. So look at all the luncheons they're doing here in the Atlanta area or they were doing; and then he just talked briefly about what they do.

But again, this is from a company. I know this is not an approach you would take, but this speaks to something I mentioned in an earlier lesson, where you don't want to offer a luncheon or some sort of meeting. Those can work okay if you do it right, but this is an example of someone who just did it wrong, and it just doesn't work.

Alright, this one is from one of the previous companies that I already showed you.

Notice subject line – *Request for an Appointment.*

Okay, well that peaked my interest and then right away,

*does the Technology Association of Georgia already have a voice of the customer program in place?*

So here again, this guy scraped my information from a website, added me to his database which, you know what, it would have been okay. I mean, I talked about doing this when you do your research for emails, if you're going to send a very personalized and relevant email, prospecting email, to this person. But all he did is add me to a mass mailing database of his, and you know, it's just not going to work. Obviously this guy has no idea that I haven't been on the Board for a while. He doesn't care.

*I'd love to discuss your goals and addresses.*

I have a pet peeve and that is when people say, "I would love to do this. I would love to do that," and they don't even know me. To me, that just rubs me the wrong way. Maybe it's just me. This guy hasn't even, again, established value, created a meaningful connection. There's nothing here for me and then he's trying to buy me out by saying,

*"Okay, well, if I could do a demo for you I'll give you a fifty dollar Visa award card."*

I mean, that, that just, I'm gone.

Finally, this one is from a freelancer, specifically a freelance researcher, and there's a few things he did right here. I'm not sure if this is a gentleman or a lady, but I like the subject line –

*Save Time in your B2B Writing.*

Very targeted. This guy knew what I do for a living, so this wasn't a mass mailing. It might have been, but he took the time to at least identify the specific field that I'm in. But then he led with a big headline. Essentially this is a sales presentation of a big sales letter.

That's just not going to work in email; we've talked about this in this program. It's way too long. I mean, he's just giving me everything he can in here, packing it all in. This is, this is not effective.

*Understands the research needs of direct response marketers and copywriters.*

So one thing, had he done a little bit of research on who I am, he would have realized that I'm not really a direct response marketer. I do some direct response copy but mostly what I do is B2B content generation.

So a minor point, but based on what I saw right away, I knew that this wasn't a targeted email, but if it was a targeted email you really want to make sure that you know about this prospect. Everything you can. And that you create a message that's meaningful, relevant and again, you make that meaningful connection right away and you get right to the point. This is entirely too long. There are two more pages to this email that I'm not even showing you.

So again, some of these emails had some good elements to them, but most of them, I think, really failed to make that connection, establish value, and try to get me to the next step, because they did a lot of things wrong. Didn't mean to bash some of them, but I wanted to show you what your prospects and clients are getting every day, and why, if you use the approach I've taught you here, you can really stand out and get your email read and responded to.