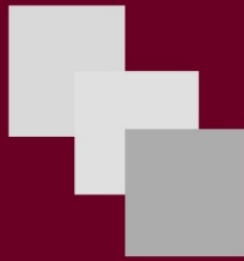


# HOW TO HIRE AND WORK WITH A GHOSTWRITER



YOUR SOLUTION TO  
QUALITY CONTENT MARKETING

JACQUELYN LYNN

***You've got a great idea for a book  
but don't have the time or the skills to write it yourself***

***You know you should be blogging  
but you're too busy to do it regularly and effectively***

***You'd like to produce information products  
but aren't able to get them organized and written***

***You know content marketing is critical  
but don't have the resources to produce the quantity and  
quality you need***

**Do any of these situations sounds familiar?  
If so, consider hiring a ghostwriter.**

A ghostwriter is paid to write books, articles, blogs or other content that is officially credited to another person. While it's commonplace for celebrities, executives and politicians to hire ghostwriters to produce their written materials, you don't have to be in one of those categories to benefit from the services of a talented ghostwriter.

The content, of course, is that of the named author; the ghostwriter simply provides the wordsmithing necessary to get the thoughts and message organized and into a readable form. A variation on ghostwriting is to hire a collaborator who may or may not get bylined credit (either as an equal, as in "John Smith *and* Mary Jones" or in a support role, as in "John Smith *with* Mary Jones" or "John Smith *as told to* Mary Jones").

Ghostwriting arrangements can vary significantly from one where the named author simply establishes the concept and the ghostwriter completely researches and produces a final manuscript to one where the named author writes most of the first draft and the ghostwriter cleans it up—and anything in between.



Due to the nature of the business (ghostwriters often work under stringent confidentiality clauses), it's impossible to know how many books were written all or in part by a ghostwriter, but some industry observers suggest that named authors and publishers spend as much as \$500 million or more every year on the services of ghostwriters. Why? *Because it's a worthwhile investment.*

### **Good ghostwriters can:**

- Save you a tremendous amount of time;
- Help you turn your information into a marketable book or popular blog;
- And enhance your reputation by the quality of their work.

### **What is that worth to you?**

### ***What a Ghostwriter Is – and Isn't***

A ghostwriter is just what the title says: a writer who is not visible to the public. Ghostwriters are not editors, literary agents or publishers.

Good ghostwriters will ask you about the market for your book, articles or blog so that they can write to the correct audience, but they aren't going to help you market your material – if they did that, they would be publicists and marketers, not ghostwriters.

Some ghostwriters simply deliver a manuscript; others can provide a package that might include book cover design, book interior design and production, posting blogs, submitting articles to content sharing sites and more. When evaluating and comparing ghostwriters, be sure you are absolutely clear on the entire scope of services they are offering.



Ghostwriters are professionals and should be treated and compensated as such. For example, don't ask a ghostwriter to write your book for nothing now and the promise of payment when (if) the book sells. Would you work under those terms? You can certainly incorporate a percentage of revenue from sales of your product into your agreement as a bonus, but don't suggest making it the only source of compensation for the writer. Remember, this project may be your passion – but to a ghostwriter, it's a job.

### ***Show Them the Money: What do Ghostwriters Charge?***

The short answer to how much ghostwriters charge is: It depends.

Before you and a writer can determine an appropriate fee, you need to figure out exactly what the project is going to entail, including who is responsible for doing the research, how you and the writer will work together, and what the final product will be.

For most medium-sized book projects where the named author provides the majority of the research, you can expect to pay a writer in the range of \$15,000 to \$45,000 plus expenses for a completed full-length book manuscript. E-books tend to be shorter than traditional books and consequently the fees will likely be lower. Blogs and

articles typically range from \$200 to \$750 or possibly higher, depending on the length and complexity. The fee for special reports, white papers, op-ed pieces and so on will vary widely depending on the scope of work.

If you want to write a book and your goal is to work with a commercial publisher but you don't want to complete the manuscript until you have a contract, be aware that some ghostwriters are willing to work in stages. For example, a writer may be willing to work with you on the book proposal with the understanding that the remainder of the book doesn't get written (or paid for) if you don't get a commercial publishing contract.

### ***Evaluating a Prospective Ghostwriter or Collaborator***

What should you look for in a ghostwriter or collaborator? First and most important, you want someone with good writing skills. Yes, there are plenty of people out there who call themselves ghostwriters who can't write. So ask to see writing samples from the writers who are candidates for your project. Recognize that many ghostwriters are bound by confidentiality clauses and may not be able to show you everything they've written, but they should be able to show you enough for you to determine how well they write.

As you review the samples, consider the writer's style. Ideally, you want a ghostwriter who can write in your voice – meaning that what they write sounds like you. It's easier to achieve this if your respective natural styles are similar.

In addition to style, consider the writer's knowledge of the subject. Good ghostwriters can quickly learn about any subject from the named author and other research sources, but it's helpful – though not essential – if they start with some familiarity and interest in the topic.

You should also consider the writer's overall experience. Certainly everybody is a beginner at some point, but as writers gain experience, they also gain market knowledge and connections that may be of benefit to you. Of course, experience usually comes with a price – you'll likely pay higher rates to a more experienced writer.

Finally, consider your compatibility with the writer. Ghostwriters and their clients usually spend a lot of time together and get to know each other very well. Depending on the subject matter of your book, you may need to reveal a lot of personal information to get it written – be sure to choose a ghostwriter that you'll be comfortable doing this with.

Once you've selected a writer and agreed on the scope of the project and the fee, put it all down in a detailed contract. This clarifies your agreement and prevents any potential misunderstandings. The contract should:

- Stipulate the relationship (typically, the ghostwriter is an independent contractor, not an employee);
- Provide details on the payment amounts and schedule;
- Include a description of the work plan and schedule, as well as how revisions will be handled;
- Outline who is responsible for what when it comes to research;



- Clearly define the ownership of research materials, other intellectual property and the finished work;
- Include an appropriate confidentiality agreement; and
- Address standard contractual issues such as termination, legal written notice, severability, arbitration, and venue.

### ***Finding a Ghostwriter***

If you know someone who has written a book that you like, ask if a ghostwriter was used and, if so, who it was. It's possible that the named author will even make an introduction.

Another option is to check the acknowledgements of books you like or that are similar to what you want to write. Ghostwriters are often mentioned, typically for things such as their "editorial contribution" or something similar. An internet search on the name should tell you if indeed that person is a professional writer and how to make contact.

If you don't have a name, you can do an internet search on the term "ghostwriter" – but the challenge with that is the sheer number of results. You can refine your search with additional terms, such as a geographic area or subject specialty.

[LinkedIn](#) is an excellent resource for finding professionals of all kinds, and thousands of ghostwriters are listed on that network. Use the "Advanced People Search" function to find a ghostwriter in the particular area of expertise you need.

You can also find ghostwriters by posting your project on various writer job banks, such as that of the [American Society of Journalists and Authors \(ASJA\)](#) and the [Writers-Editors Network](#). Still another way to find writers is on bid sites such as Elance and oDesk, but since the jobs on these sites are often very much price-driven, quality writers rarely waste their time going after these projects.

Remember that good ghostwriters are usually busy and may not be available to start work on your project immediately. Be flexible and willing to wait for the writer you want.

Once you find a ghostwriter you enjoying working with and who produces quality, effective work for you, nurture the relationship. Respond to questions and requests promptly. Make payments on schedule. Be respectful of the ghostwriter's knowledge, contribution and role in the process. When your ghostwriter is a valued member of your team, everyone wins.

#### ***What Ghostwriters Write***

- Books
- Ebooks
- Blogs
- Content Marketing Copy
- Social Media Copy
- Social Media Profiles
- Articles
- White Papers
- Special Reports
- Web Copy
- Case Studies / Success Stories
- Op-Ed Essays (Editorials)
- Newsletters
- Information Products
- Email Marketing Materials

## ***About Jacquelyn Lynn***

[Jacquelyn Lynn](#) is a freelance business writer, ghostwriter and executive ghost blogger who has been helping business leaders work smarter and more profitably for more than two decades. She has written and ghostwritten more than 25 books; 3,000+ articles that have appeared in over 100 regional, national and international publications; plus countless blogs, ebooks, newsletters, white papers, news releases and other materials.



Jacquelyn has the skills and temperament to work effectively with different and often demanding clients on their book and article projects. She has the ability to help clients get their thoughts into words in a readable, understandable and entertaining form that people will want to read.

More than a writer, Jacquelyn is a savvy businessperson who works closely with her clients to help them develop and implement effective strategies for their content marketing programs and information products.

[Click here](#) to visit Jacquelyn's website and learn more about her writing services, or check out her [blog](#).

A [TCS Media](#) Special Report:

### ***How to Hire and Work with a Ghostwriter Your solution to quality content marketing***

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