



## Fine-Arts Grad Charts Path to Top Financial Copywriter

When Aaron Gentzler graduated with a master's degree in fine arts, his sights were set on teaching fiction writing. But months after graduation, with job prospects still meager, pangs of fear crept in.

"I needed a paycheck," Aaron says. "I needed a way to start making a living — someplace to get my foot in the door."

*What about copywriting?* That idea never percolated until Aaron stumbled across an ad at a coffee shop.

"I saw a 'Copywriters Wanted' poster in the newspaper classifieds and thought, *Maybe, fingers crossed, this is something I can use my skills to do,*" he says.

In answering that ad, Aaron began a rewarding, long-term relationship with Agora Financial, the unforeseen start of a successful copywriting career.

Success didn't happen overnight, however. That took hard work, persistence, and an initial period of "unlearning."

### Mastering the 'Golden Thread'

As a new copywriter, Aaron discovered that the fundamentals of "good writing" he had learned in college didn't necessarily apply to good copy. While copywriting still required creative flair, his new aim was to weave the "golden thread" (the big idea behind every direct-mail campaign) through each piece of content.

That process of "unlearning," while simultaneously learning copywriting techniques, created a difficult first chapter in Aaron's new career.

"The beginning was painful," he recalls. "I had hundreds of copy submissions returned for revision with comments like, 'This is okay, but it's not good enough.'"

#### CASE STUDY:

### Aaron Gentzler

"I came to copywriting out of necessity, but quickly fell in love with the profession. It's become a dream come true — the only work I've done since."

#### MEMBER:

Aaron Gentzler

#### LOCATION:

Maryland

#### FORMER CAREER:

Graduate student, Johns Hopkins University

#### HOW HE GOT HIS FIRST CLIENT:

Signing on as a junior copywriter with Agora Financial

#### TOP AWAI PROGRAMS:

- *The Accelerated Program for Six-Figure Copywriting* (now *The Accelerated Program for Seven-Figure Copywriting*)
- *The FastTrack to Copywriting Success Bootcamp*

Still, Aaron remained committed to mastering the copywriting craft. He just needed help enhancing his skills.

### ***Tasting the Secret Sauce***

Fortunately, Agora Financial valued training for its copywriters. The company enrolled all junior copywriters in *The Accelerated Program for Six-Figure Copywriting* (now *The Accelerated Program for Seven-Figure Copywriting*), presented by American Writers & Artists Institute (AWAI).

*The Accelerated Program* introduced Aaron to AWAI and the big-picture concepts used to punch up ideas.

“We learned how to compare copy pieces to determine which is best, and how to make qualified assumptions about how well a piece will perform,” he says. “It was eye-opening!”

Next, attending AWAI’s *FastTrack to Copywriting Success Bootcamp* spurred his copy to another level.

“I was jazzed to be in an atmosphere of people genuinely excited about the industry, ideas, and creating copy,” he says. “We were exposed to the Mount Rushmore of copywriters and other players in the industry, all sharing their tips, techniques, and ideas. That *Bootcamp* was transformational for me — the secret sauce.”

### ***Rounding the Corner to Success***

Hard work and AWAI’s expert training were key components for Aaron’s first big win: a direct-mail campaign that reaped tens of millions of dollars in sales and became a template for success at Agora Financial.

“It was a very difficult time in the financial industry, the crisis of 2008–2009,” he recalls.

“I’m proud those publications we created helped people who needed a path back.”

That winning campaign resulted in greater access within the industry, accelerated success, and what Aaron considers the ultimate benefit: professional freedom.

“When you write enough winning copy, you get to pick and choose ideas and writing projects that you’re truly passionate about,” he says. “Your credibility and track record speak for themselves. That’s freedom.”

Through the years, Aaron’s copywriting projects expanded from direct mail to just about every type of copy. His professional roles have evolved, too, including stints as copy chief, chief marketing officer, and publisher (Seven Figure Publishing). And just for fun, he enjoys freelancing about his personal passion, golf.

Today, Aaron’s thriving career has come full circle. In the financial copywriting and publishing niche, he is recognized as an industry leader similar to the innovators he sought guidance from as a junior copywriter.

Aaron has “a bold and steady knack for taking promotional ideas and turning them into money — lots of money,” says one financial podcast host. And that reputation regularly brings requests for personal insights into his professional journey, copywriting, and current financial topics.

### ***Looking Back with Gratitude and Advice***

Reflecting back, Aaron is grateful for opportunities, people, and support that contributed to his success. And AWAI ranks near the top of his appreciation list.



Aaron credits AWAI with providing the tools and resources he needed in the early days of trying to prove himself as a copywriter and along the way — including industry leaders he met at Bootcamps, who've become lasting friends and consultants.

“AWAI makes it easy and accessible for people to take big, potentially daunting steps in their lives,” he says. “They provide how to start, next steps, and an extra layer of support that accelerated my development as a writer. I am enormously grateful.”

Today, encouraging new copywriters is an added passion for Aaron.

“Early on, when it feels like nothing’s working, it can be easy to get down on yourself and want to quit,” he counsels. “Don’t quit! Do whatever you need to put that voice aside and just keep doing the work, one step at a time. Because if you do, fantastic rewards are possible. I’m living proof.”

Nearly 20 years after entering the profession, Aaron still loves the challenge of writing clean, crisp, ethically persuasive copy that motivates people to action.

“I came to copywriting out of necessity, but quickly fell in love with the profession,” he says. “It’s become a dream come true — the only work I’ve done since.”

### *Aaron’s Tips for Copywriters*

- **Surround yourself with inspiration** — Put yourself in rooms where the level of ideas is beyond anything you could produce alone. That’s how your ideas will get better.
- **Say “Yes!”** — When you have the chance to meet someone, go someplace, or participate in something new, do it. You never know where new relationships and opportunities can lead.
- **Do something daily to improve your skills** — Do the work, take it one step at a time, and things will begin to accelerate.

## Ready to pursue *the writer’s life*?

Learn more about the program that helped launch Aaron’s career,  
*[The Accelerated Program for Seven-Figure Copywriting.](#)*

