



**Bonus Episode 760: Mastering Email: The Quickest Way to Get an Advantage Over Your Competitors**

**Guest: Daniel Levis**

**WOODS:** I've got a lot of juicy questions I want to ask you about. Let me start off on something that has a little less to do with copywriting. When I first heard about you and before – you and I had a long conversation on the phone, where you were advising me about emails for one of my products, and I really appreciate that. But before we did that, I started to look you up. I wanted to know who these people are who produce these products. And I found out that you had done direct mail for – I think it's like a New Orleans, either Hard Money or Investment Conference, and I thought I know Peter Schiff, who's a guest on this show sometimes, speaks at that conference, and I doubt they would hire somebody who is totally out of sympathy with their views to do it. And so then I just came right out and asked you; I said, come on, Levis, are you a libertarian or not? And you told me you were. Can you tell us something about that?

**LEVIS:** (laughing) Well, I'm not big on politics. I don't usually vote. I'm just very much attracted to the libertarian ethos and philosophy. And for some reason I'm just naturally inclined to it, but I first learned about it when I was writing copy – writing to sell, in other words, investment newsletters. Folks like the *Safe Money Report* by Martin Weiss. Also you mentioned the New Orleans Investment Conference. I also wrote several promos to fill that event up for the Gold Newsletter. And in doing that, that's kind of really where I was formally exposed to the whole libertarian idea, and most of the folks who were buying those, or at least the folks who were buying the particular newsletters that I was writing for were libertarian, so part of the whole copywriting thing and the email marketing thing is you really need to know who you're writing to, so that was kind of my official exposure to libertarianism, if you will.

**WOODS:** Let's clarify the term *copywriter*, because even a lot of my listeners are not familiar with that term. They think it has something to do with intellectual property.

**LEVIS:** Right.

**WOODS:** We're not talking about copyright; *copywriting*. So copywriting, it's writing to sell something, in effect.

**LEVIS:** Exactly, yeah. Yeah, I was writing emails and I was writing direct mail pieces that would go out to people who had expressed a proclivity to buy investment newsletters and to invest in various things, and the whole purpose of that writing – and it's a very lucrative form of professional writing. The whole idea is to sell

something, in this case a subscription newsletter. But it could be anything. Copywriting by definition is writing to sell, so you have to be able to grab somebody's attention; you have to be able to inspire their interest; you have to be able to build a desire for the product or service, whatever it is you happen to be selling; and you have to be able to inspire that person to actually take action, grab their credit card, go online, put their information in there, and buy something. And if you can do that, then you're a very in-demand commodity out in the marketplace, and it's probably the most lucrative type of writing you could possibly do.

**WOODS:** I would say the three people I've learned from the most on email marketing would be Ben Settle, Michael Cheney, and you. And one thing you all have in common is you mail all the time. You do not listen to people who say, well, you better only mail twice a month or people will unsubscribe. So I like to mail every weekday if I possibly can do it. I have five kids, so I can't always do it, but I try every day to send out an email. And some people, that's too much for them. That's fine. But what do you say to people who say, Levis, that's too much. People are going to unsubscribe from your list. You're going to overdo it, and you're going to shoot yourself in the foot.

**LEVIS:** Well, here's the thing. I just defined copywriting. Copywriting is writing to sell. So you've got to come to grips with the fact that not everybody is going to want what you have to sell, regardless of how tightly targeted you are in your efforts to build your email list. The other thing is you obviously don't want to put people off, because this is not like – traditional copywriting you might think, well, you're writing an ad. Well, when you look at email marketing, you're not really writing an ad.

**WOODS:** Right.

**LEVIS:** You're trying to create a relationship with somebody over the long term. So it's different than an ad, that's like, you know, you hit them once, it's very on the nose, you're telling them the benefits, what is this thing, why should you get it. But that's really only half of the email marketing story. The email marketing is we want to be able to engage that person mentally and emotionally, and we want to give them some satisfying result or reward simply from reading the email. But that does not mean that we're not selling. We're doing those two things at the same time.

And that's what's really unique about my program and my methodology and my way of writing emails. I write emails that are very unusual. Most of the email marketers out there, people that are trying to sell you something, either they're very much on the nose and you know that this guy's trying to sell me something and it's very obvious and very kind of – it comes across like an ad, so how many times are we going to tolerate that? Maybe once. If you're not interested, next time you get an email like that you tune it out, you don't look at it, and pretty soon you're unsubscribing.

What I do is I write emails that offer a reward, so I tell a lot of stories, interesting stories. I try to inspire people. I try to give them a smile, entertain them, to encourage their dreams and their desires and all of the things that people go to a magazine for. People read magazines because they're informative, they're entertaining, they're inspiring, and that's the kind of thing I try to do with my emails. But never forgetting that the purpose of that email is to create a sale. And it's very unusual. Like, either you get emails that are trying to teach you something, they're

giving you tips, they're entirely content and then there's nothing to buy, or you get these emails that just look like ads and it's all about getting you to buy something. Very rarely do you have somebody who approaches you in this kind of dual fashion.

**WOODS:** That is exactly the strategy that I've taken. Now, it's weird with me because what I'm selling is, well, knowledge. I sell courses and stuff that pertain to libertarianism and history and economics and stuff like that. And when I send out an email, there's always some good content. People learn something about economics. They learn something about history; they learn something about current events. They learn the latest crazy thing leftists are up to. Whatever it is, they get entertained, and then at the end, yeah, typically I do pitch something, and I'm almost waiting for somebody to be offended by that, because then get off my libertarian list if you're offended by a pitch, especially after I've just delivered you content. And I've heard the analogy to talk radio. People listen to talk radio all the time, and then as soon as an ad comes on they don't say, well, I'm never listening to this show again. These people want me to buy something. Of course they understand that; there's no reason they can't understand it with email. Now, why is email so important? Why couldn't I just build up a big Facebook page or Twitter following? What makes email the thing that you in particular focus on?

**LEVIS:** Well, email is where people buy. I mean, if you're interested in making money, the medium, the way that you are communicating to people is all-important, probably even more important than what you say. I mean, what you say is critically important, but the medium. And I've done all different mediums, experimented with all kinds of different things, and pound for pound email is probably 30 or 40 times more effective at getting people to buy. It's just a fact of life. It is the most effective method. Now, why is that? It's more personal. It's the kind of place where people are accustomed to sharing intimate communications with friends and family. It's business. People associate email with business, with buying things, with commerce. I'm not really sure all the reasons why; all I know is that in my experience it's the fastest, the easiest, the cheapest, the most cost effective way to really build a business of any kind. I mean, if you're not building an email list and you're in business, you're absolutely crazy. And even if you're not in business, email is the fastest way to build any kind of business.

**WOODS:** Let's talk about that, because I have people who listen who are not online entrepreneurs or anything but who are kind of intrigued. And they're not really sure where to start, but you would say start building a list. Now, how do they build a list? Where do they begin? Now, you specialize in showing people how to write the emails and what kinds of tactics to use, but can you also say something about how somebody builds a list?

**LEVIS:** Sure. Well, I can share my own personal experience. I started in this business back in 2004, and my background before that, I was a salesperson. I worked in Fortune 1000 companies primarily, selling software and technology service solutions to Fortune 100 companies. And I don't know if you remember, the late '90s was kind of like a dot com boom, and there was a lot of money to be made, but I really hated the whole idea of working for somebody else, and not punching a clock, but having to be at staff meetings, and it just really wasn't I enjoyed. I was making a lot of money doing it, but it wasn't what I enjoyed doing. So I started moonlighting.

Because I was a salesperson anyway, I was always interested in ways of generating leads. How do you find somebody to sell to? And the telephone was becoming not nearly as productive as it used to be, so I started getting very interested in email. And part of my exploration was signing up to various email lists of people who were selling stuff about marketing, and I would buy their stuff, and this whole idea of, well, you can sell stuff about selling stuff. Wonderful market. So I thought, well, maybe I ought to do this too, so I started creating my own newsletter. And I would write it religiously. I would write a little piece every week while I was working, kind of moonlighting, and back then I would advertise on Google AdWords, and people come to my website; they would sign up for my newsletter about how to sell stuff, and then I would sell affiliate products. So I would send my weekly newsletter out, and then I would have a little pitch there at the bottom that would sell some type of information product, very similar to what you're doing, Thomas, except it wasn't about libertarianism. It was about how to sell stuff.

And it could be about anything. Whatever you're passionate about, whatever you're really good at, chances are there's a market for that. So you could do the same. You could advertise on Google AdWords; you could advertise on Facebook; you could approach folks who have lists in that particular space, and provided you have some kind of unique take on your specific area of expertise, chances are they might introduce you to their list. They might do a podcast; they might send an email that would direct folks to your webpage, and your webpage would have some kind of free problem-solving information that's relevant to those people. They sign up to your list, and then you could sell affiliate products, or you could build your own product. I mean, when I started out – I don't know if your audience is familiar with Dr. Joe Vitale, Thomas; is there a possibility? He appeared in that movie, *The Secret*?

**WOODS:** I think I know the name only because I'm on lists that use him as an example.

**LEVIS:** Yeah, so what I did – in addition to buying Google AdWords, advertising on AdWords, I would approach folks who had an audience of folks who could buy my stuff or be interested. I built a product, and I sent an email to Dr. Joe Vitale, and I said I built this product, and it's kind of based on this guy named Robert Collier, who I know you love and you talk about him quite a bit, and I was wondering, man, could I get a testimonial? Could you have a look? And I'd love it if you could give me a testimonial. And so he did. He sent me back a beautiful testimonial for my ebook – it was an ebook – and as soon as I got his testimonial I immediately wrote back.

And I said, great, I really appreciate it. And hey, would you consider promoting it to your list and taking a 50% cut on all of the sales we make of my ebook? Or would you prefer to write a foreword and we'll call it our book, and I'll give you a percentage of all of the sales that I make of it, regardless of if you promote it to your list or not, from here to perpetuity? And so maybe 45 minutes later I had my foreword, stuck it in my book, and then a couple of days later he sent several emails out to his list – and he had a list of about 100,000 people – and we made, I don't know how many thousand – thousands of subscribers came into my list, and we sold several hundred copies of my ebook. And I paid him, and I kept paying him for many years after that. So that was one way to building a list, a great way of building a list, by the way, and I've done that over and over and over again ever since in various different ways.

**WOODS:** That is a really great way. I've done the very, at this point, so traditional as to be yawn-inducing strategy of the free ebook, but man, does it work, especially during the primaries. I have a lot of anti-Bernie Sanders people who listen to me, so I took transcripts of my podcast episodes where we talked about some of his issues, and I put them together, edited them, made them into a free ebook. So the content was already there; I just had to assemble it. And I had thousands and thousands and thousands of people sign up to my list just because of that ebook. And then the appendices promote my own products or affiliate products. The thing just had "win" written all over it. Now, I'm afraid I'm going to have people listening who will think, if Woods were talking to somebody who was going to teach me how to do affiliate marketing or how to get an affiliate business started or this or that, then I would take action, but email marketing seems like four or five steps down the road; I'm not ready for that; I'm just a newbie. Make the case that email marketing is for newbies.

**LEVIS:** Well, if you want to be successful, email marketing is really the cornerstone. It's the key. I mean, I experimented with so many different things. Back in 2004 there was this thing called RSS, and then we had this, and we had that, and social media marketing and everything else. And none of it holds a candle to email marketing. It wasn't until I built that list – I remember the first time that I ever really offered anything. I had 400 people on my email list. And it's all numbers, right? Marketing is mathematics. So I know that when I would advertise with Google AdWords, for every 500 people who visited an affiliate marketing sales page, maybe you'd get a sale. But I noticed that when I'd send an email out, I could get sales from, like, 50 people. So it's like 10 times as effective.

So whatever kind of business that you want to get started with – affiliate marketing's probably the easiest one – the worst mistake you can possibly make is to drive traffic directly to an affiliate offer. You have to get them on your email list first. You have to create a relationship with people. You have to bring value to the equation. And many, many people make the mistake in affiliate marketing. You know, they'll buy some ads and direct traffic directly to the affiliate offer, or they'll do social media marketing and they'll drive traffic directly to an affiliate offer. And you're just basically wasting your time, because you're not building anything. You're not building any kind of an asset. You're just working for today, where what you should be doing is building a business. Affiliate marketing is a real business, but only when you have ownership of the list. You can build a million followers on Facebook, and Facebook can change their policies overnight, and you're out of business. You've got no business. The same is true of all of these other sorts of media. But if you own an email list, you're in control. You have an ongoing asset. You can even build something that you can sell.

**WOODS:** Yeah, now that – what you just said I think saved me a lot of money for the future, because there are some campaigns coming up, launches coming up that I actually thought, I wonder if I go the social media route of promoting these, whether I might be able to do well with that. But it's – boy. Those people, even if they did click through, I would lose them forever. The key thing is getting them to me, then get them over there. And I don't know why I didn't see that until you just said it, so I'm grateful for that. Tell me about your Email Alchemy program, because I know a ton of people who swear by it. Tell people what it does.

**LEVIS:** Yeah, well, Email Alchemy, it's part training — I mean, the initial iteration of Email Alchemy was trying to teach people how do you monetize a list once you get one. Getting the list is one thing, but actually getting people to buy is another, and keeping them buying over the long term. So it's back to that description we talked about earlier about how do you actually write an email that gets somebody's attention, gets their interest, not only today but ongoing, continually interested in what you have to say. How do you inflame a desire — so some kind of problem that they're desperate to get rid of or some type of opportunity that you can help them to achieve. How do you build that desire, and how do you get them to actually take action, and do it long-term without burning your list out so that you can continue to grow and build a real business and a real asset? So that was the training aspect of it that we initially started out with.

But what we found out was only a small portion of people were willing to actually learn how to do that. Very, very difficult. I mean, if you know, Malcolm Gladwell popularizes the idea of the 10,000-hour learning curve to become expert at something, and that's really what we're talking about. Very few people have the time or the patience for that.

So what Email Alchemy is I've actually created a whole, we call it an arsenal, of fill-in-the-blank email templates. Brilliant, world class copywriting masterpieces that I write in such a way, and I borrowed this from the screenwriting craft and from the fiction novel craft. And what I do is when I'm writing an email, I write it based on these very sort of universal ideas, like triumph of the underdog or man versus the system or love conquers all. These kind of universal ideas that are proven effective from the time of Shakespeare to absorb people's attention and rivet their interest and build — and actually tell inside of all of these great movies and stories, there's always a moral to the story. Now, the novelist will not reveal it, but here we do reveal it.

So we tell a lot of stories; we tell universal stories that are applicable to any type of life situation, any type of problem or opportunity that people are interested in pursuing or solving. And I write these templates so that you can basically take the specifics about whatever it is you happen to be selling and the specifics about the people that you are selling to, and you just kind of insert them into the blanks in these universal stories/emails, and that way you send them out to your list, you make sales, you build relationships, you make money, where most people who do this really struggle with that whole thing, because they're not writers. You don't have to be a writer to make a lot of money with Email Alchemy.

**WOODS:** Yeah, that's the thing. The thing is I am a writer, so when I say to people, oh, it's easy to do email marketing, they say, well, you've written 12 books; two of them are on the *New York Times* bestseller list; I can't do that; I don't want to do that. That's the benefit of Email Alchemy, which I also belong to. You're doing a — what are people going to learn about — you're doing a webinar October 26th, 2016. What are people going to learn about email marketing there?

**LEVIS:** Oh, they're going to learn a whole bunch. Basically I debunk a lot of the myths that are out there that people are being hurt by and losing money, because, the thinking that you mentioned — well, I can only email my list once a month or once a week. Well, if you do it the right way, you can email your list five times a day,

literally. So that's kind of the myth-busting piece. People are always worried about, well, only 10% of people are actually opening my emails; oh my God, that's terrible. And the more I email, the worse it gets. Wrong. I mean, you don't take open rates to the bank and cash them. You don't take the click-through rate, how often people click on the links, you don't go to the teller and say, hey, I've got a back full of open rates and click-through rates. You go to the bank with checks, right? Your PayPal account either goes up in terms of dollars or not. So a lot of those things that people are worried about with email marketing are absolutely wrong, provided you do it correctly, provided you send the right type of content, the right kind of messaging. So I'm going to bust all the myths.

And then I'm going to show you how you can basically take a template, why the template is universal. I'm going to actually demonstrate; I'm going to take various different types of products and services, and I'm going to take the exact same template, exact same story, and I'm just going to insert different details into those blanks, and you're going to see how powerful – awe-inspiring, in fact – and impressive those emails are, and you will have access to them if you decide to join us in the Email Outcome Elite community.

**WOODS:** Well, you've got a series of videos that you're going to be putting up. I've got a shortcut link to them: [TomWoods.com/Daniel](http://TomWoods.com/Daniel). So if you opt in to watch those videos, you'll automatically get invited to that webinar October 26th, and I'll probably remind people about that, because it really is important, and it will – just listening to Daniel talk will save you just hours and days and weeks and months of frustration and little result and the risk of giving up. He's one of the best there is; that's why I've used him myself, and that's why I wanted to bring him on the show to chat today. So [TomWoods.com/Daniel](http://TomWoods.com/Daniel) is where you should go. I'll also link to that on our show notes page, which is [TomWoods.com/760](http://TomWoods.com/760), for Episode 760. Well, Daniel, best of luck with the webinar and your launch this quarter. I hope it goes great. You're doing great work that helps us all, certainly has helped me, so thanks for your time today.

**LEVIS:** Thank you very much for your interest, Thomas.