



ProCopywriters Survey 2024

A comprehensive survey of the
copywriting profession

Sponsored by CopyDeck and CopyCon

LONDON // 8 NOVEMBER

COPY

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2024

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56 COPYWRITING TECHNIQUES

13 CREATIVE PRACTICES

9 BEHAVIOURAL PSYCHOLOGY TACTICS

3 BLANKS FOR YOU TO EXPAND THE DECK

Join the alliance of commercial writers



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Directory listing

A listing in our new company directory is another way to raise your profile and connect with copywriters – as well as clients.

Learning and development workshops

Give your team access to our monthly webinars, delivered by copywriting experts, authors and authorities.

Networking opportunities

Use our chat community (Discord) to talk shop, and join our online networking sessions to connect with your peers.

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Run events for commercial writers? Use our Events page to promote your workshops, training sessions and networking events.

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Your colleagues can share their discoveries and viewpoints with our thriving community.

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Introduction

This expanded survey report is a deep dive into the life and times of the modern copywriter. Going way beyond basic demographics, we've asked questions about the working practices, client interactions, and project experiences of hundreds of copywriters.

Expanding the survey did come at a price: fewer respondents. The question for future surveys is how to balance our desire for insights with the need to keep it brief.

For now, I hope you enjoy this broad exploration of what it means to be a copywriter. You might find your own experiences reflected back at you, and you might learn something new along the way.

Thank you to everyone who gave up the 20+ minutes to complete the survey. And thanks to the sponsors who help to make this report possible.

Leif Kendall

Organiser, ProCopywriters and CopyCon

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Get involved

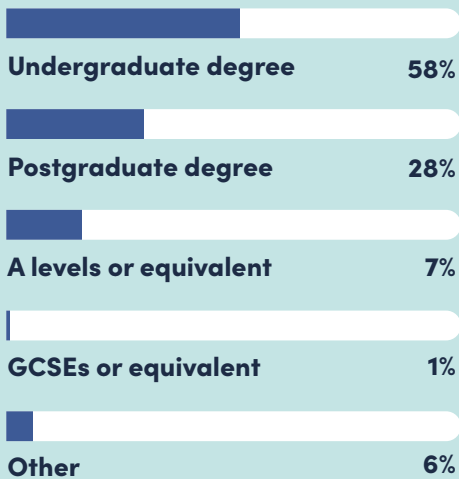
On page 35 we talk about the possibility of creating a code of conduct for copywriters. If you're interested in this project, please have your say via the linked survey.

We would also love to hear question suggestions for future surveys. Scan or tap this QR code to suggest a question for the next one.

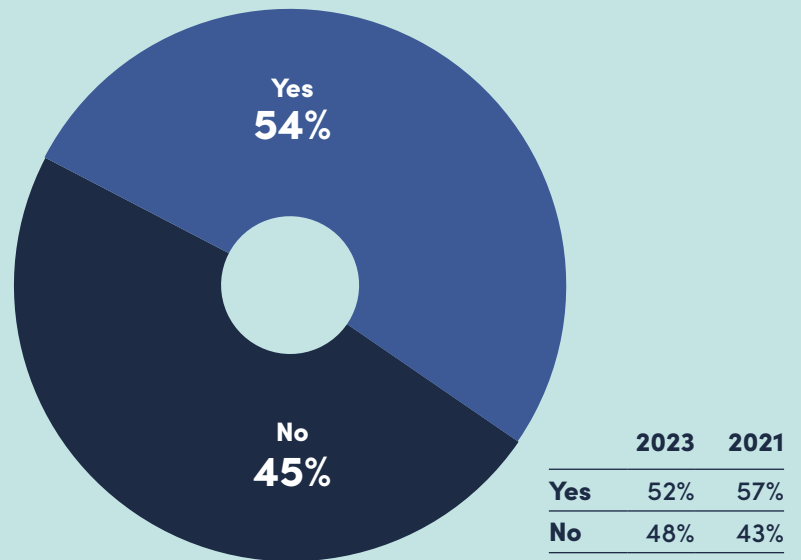


Education, training and development

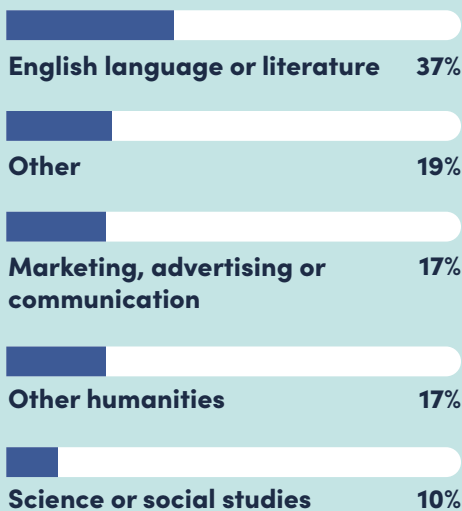
Education level



Have you completed any copywriting training during your career?

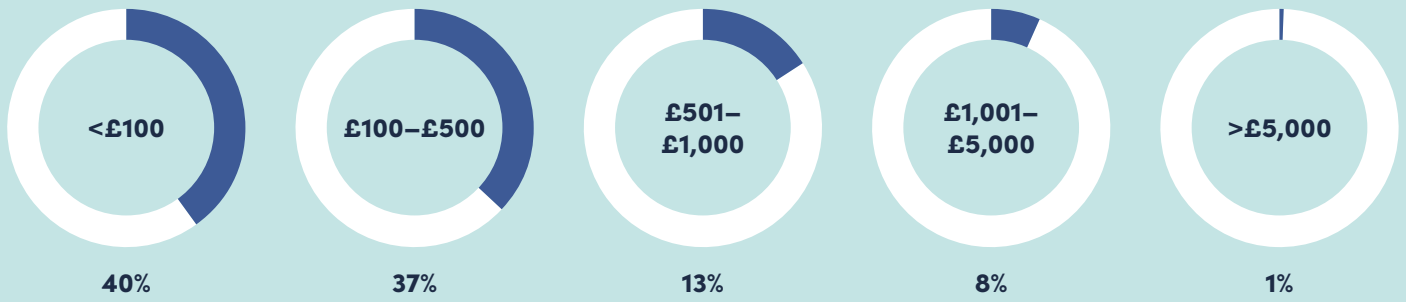


Areas of study

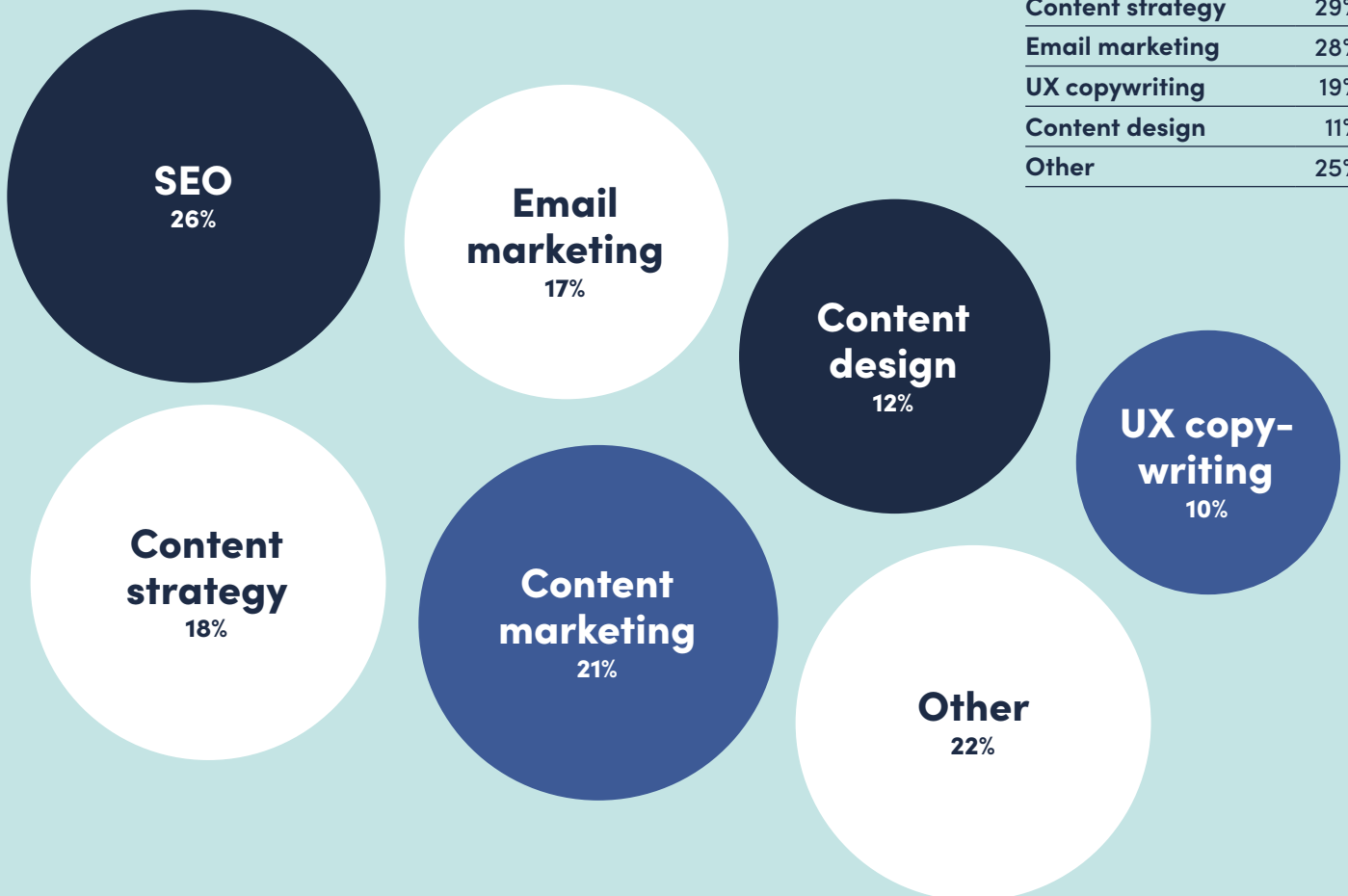


“
My favourite thing about being a copywriter is freedom to pursue a passion and for (most of) my work to be in the public sphere, visible to anyone.

How much do you (or your employer) spend on your training and development each year?



Did you invest in learning any of these skills in the past 12 months?



	2023
SEO	44%
Content marketing	32%
Content strategy	29%
Email marketing	28%
UX copywriting	19%
Content design	11%
Other	25%

Other responses included:

Storytelling techniques

Training and speaking skills

Psychology

AI prompt engineering

Brand voice

Crisis comms

How do you keep up with changing marketing trends, platforms and tactics?



Other responses included:

Learning from clients

LinkedIn

Peer networks and communities

TikTok

Industry publications like Creative Review

Working practices and experiences

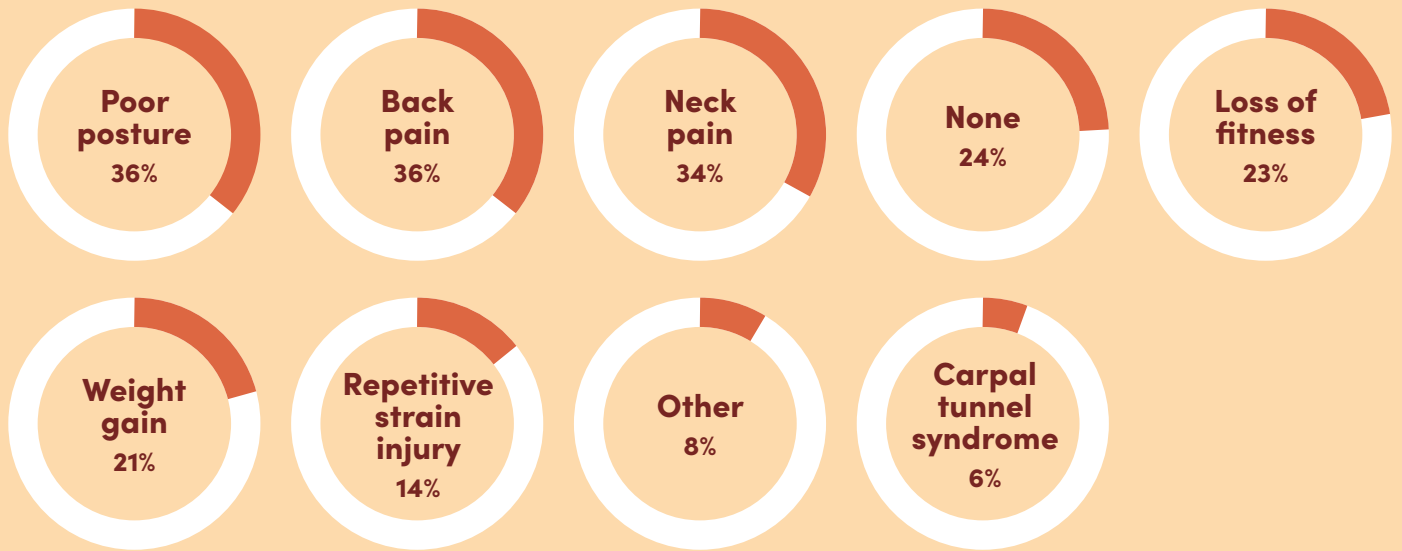
For the first time we included questions about the health and wellbeing of copywriters.

Do you have any of these forms of professional insurance?



While copywriting is a relatively low-risk profession, some risks remain. A sizeable minority of copywriters are backed by some form of professional insurance.

Have you experienced any of these health impacts because of your copywriting career?



Other responses included:

Burnout

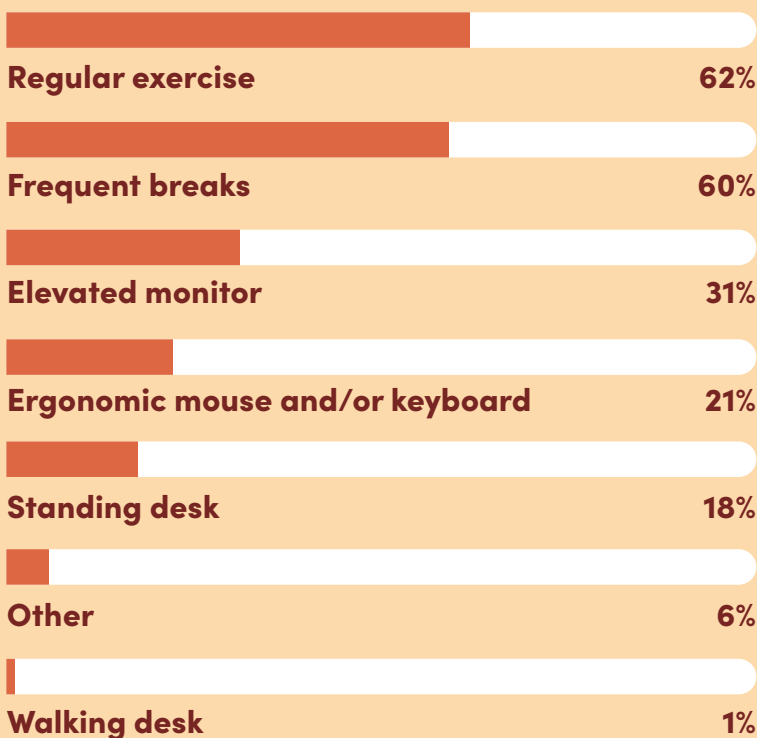
Stress

Anxiety

Eye problems

Using words to make sales might seem like a cushy career, but all that time in the goal mines can take a toll on the mind and body. Here's how copywriters are suffering for the art of commerce.

Do you use any of these tools to alleviate the pains of being a copywriter?



“
My favourite thing about being a copywriter is the mix of collaboration and deep focus time you get in an agency. I couldn't do it alone!”

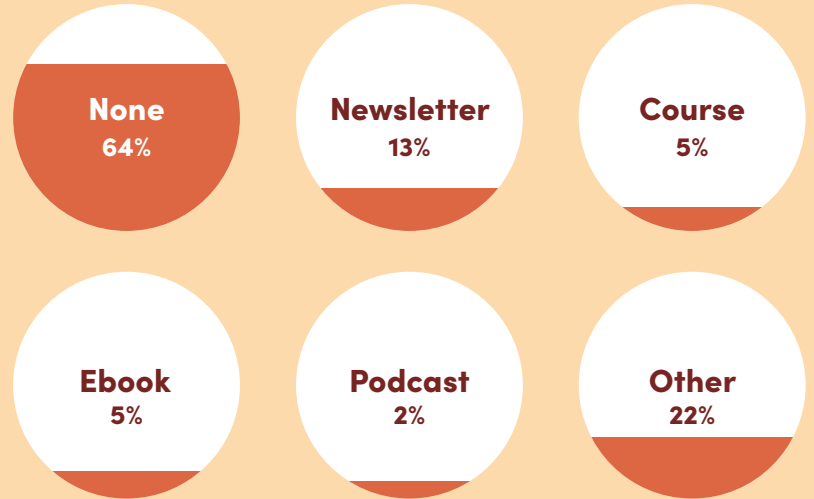
Do you offer services other than copywriting?



Other responses included:

- Translation
- Naming
- Creative direction

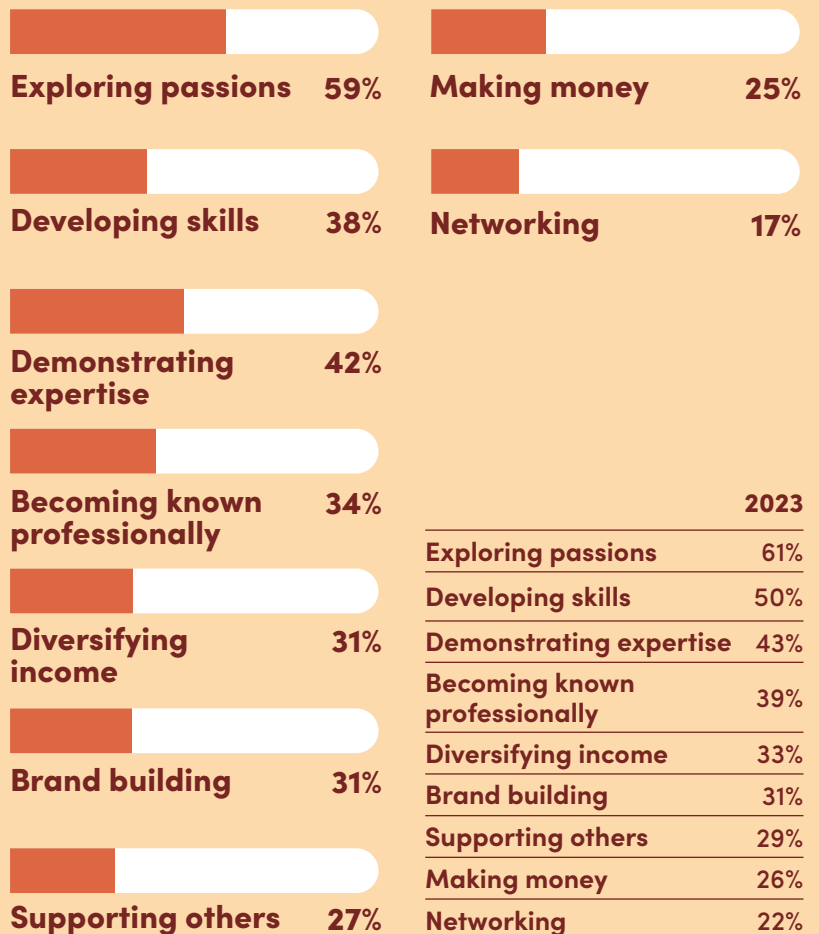
Do you have a side project?



Other responses included:

- Coaching
- Property renovation
- Poetry

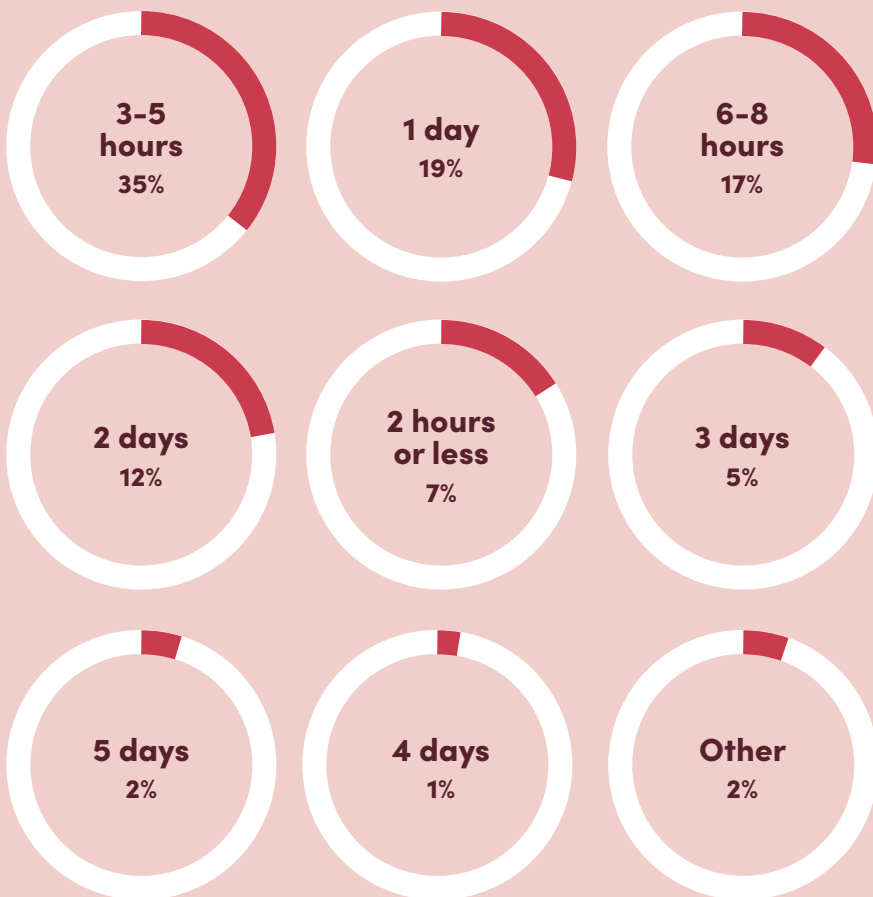
What are the benefits of your side project?



Projects

This expanded section seeks to shine a light on precisely how copywriters tackle projects.

You're asked to write an 800-word article on an unfamiliar topic. How long would you need?



Our intention here is to offer a gauge of how much time copywriters typically spend on a common copywriting task. Of course, there is no single type of content that every copywriter writes. A blog post seemed the most reasonable choice in terms of being fairly familiar to many copywriters.

“

I love being able to create messaging that helps users relate and connect with products/brands

How accurate are your estimates of the time required to complete copywriting projects?



At which stage of a project do you get involved?



Execution - when the work actually happens



Planning - when the project plan is developed



Initiation - the first phase of a project where the business case is developed



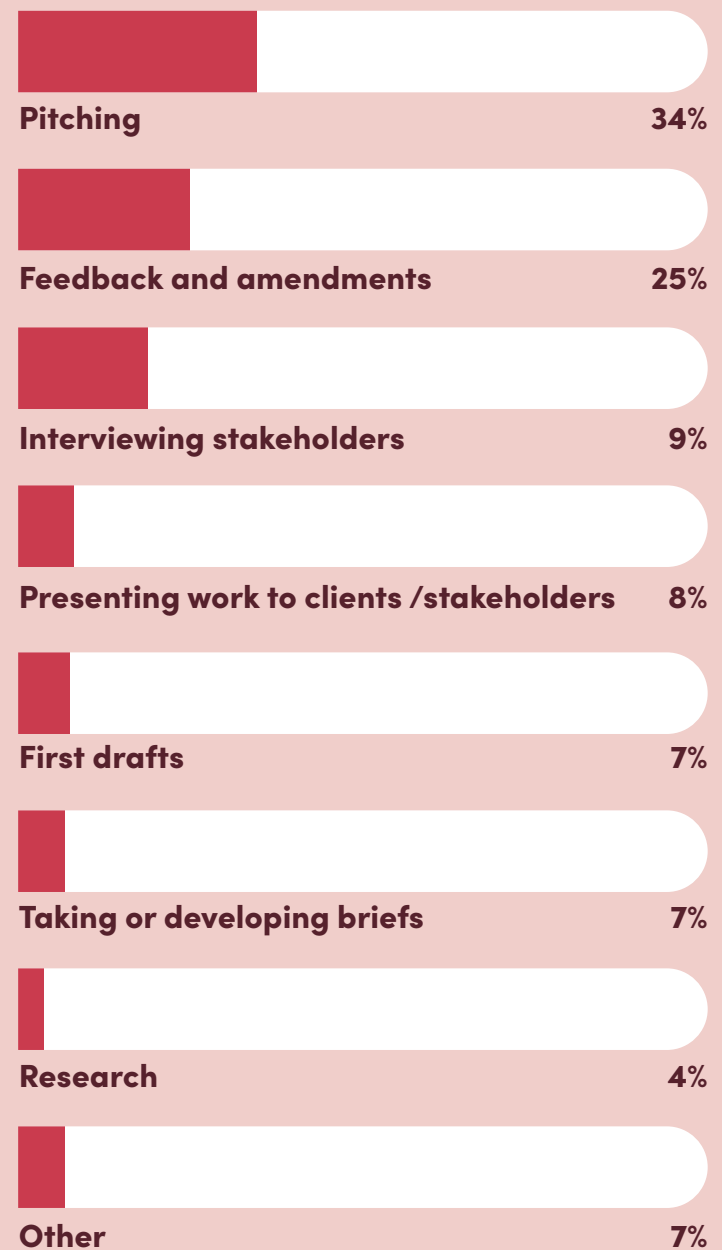
Not applicable



Other

Are copywriters integral to the strategy and planning of marketing projects? Or are we seen as taskmasters who turn sketched-out plans into concrete developments? While the responses suggest a fairly equal split, 47% of copywriters are involved before the execution stage.

What is your least favourite part of a copywriting project?



Most copywriters love their work. But even dream jobs can be a bit of a nightmare.

What kinds of copy/content are you writing most often?



Other responses included:

- Developing messaging
- App copy
- Case studies
- Exhibition materials

Where do you find inspiration for your copywriting projects?



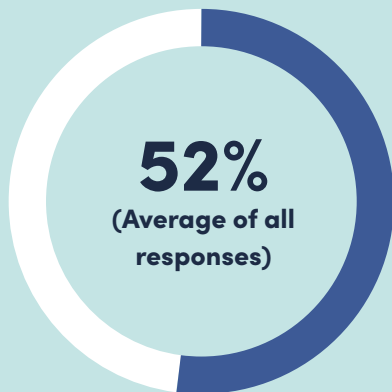
Other responses included:

- Google
- Conferences and exhibitions
- Experience/life
- CopyDeck

Collaborating with clients & colleagues

Copywriters are a core component of many projects, creating the voice that speaks the brand to the world. In this section we aim to reveal the experience of being a copywriter and collaborating with varied stakeholders.

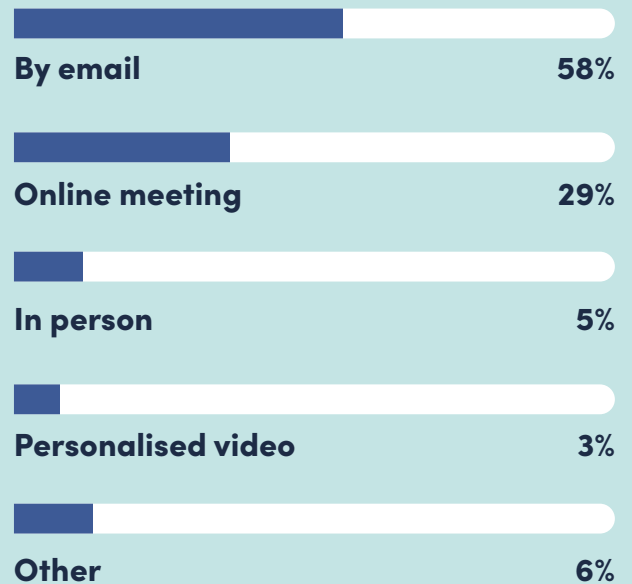
What percentage of your projects begin with a written brief?



“

The best thing about being a copywriter is organising chaos and telling stories.

How do you present work to your clients?



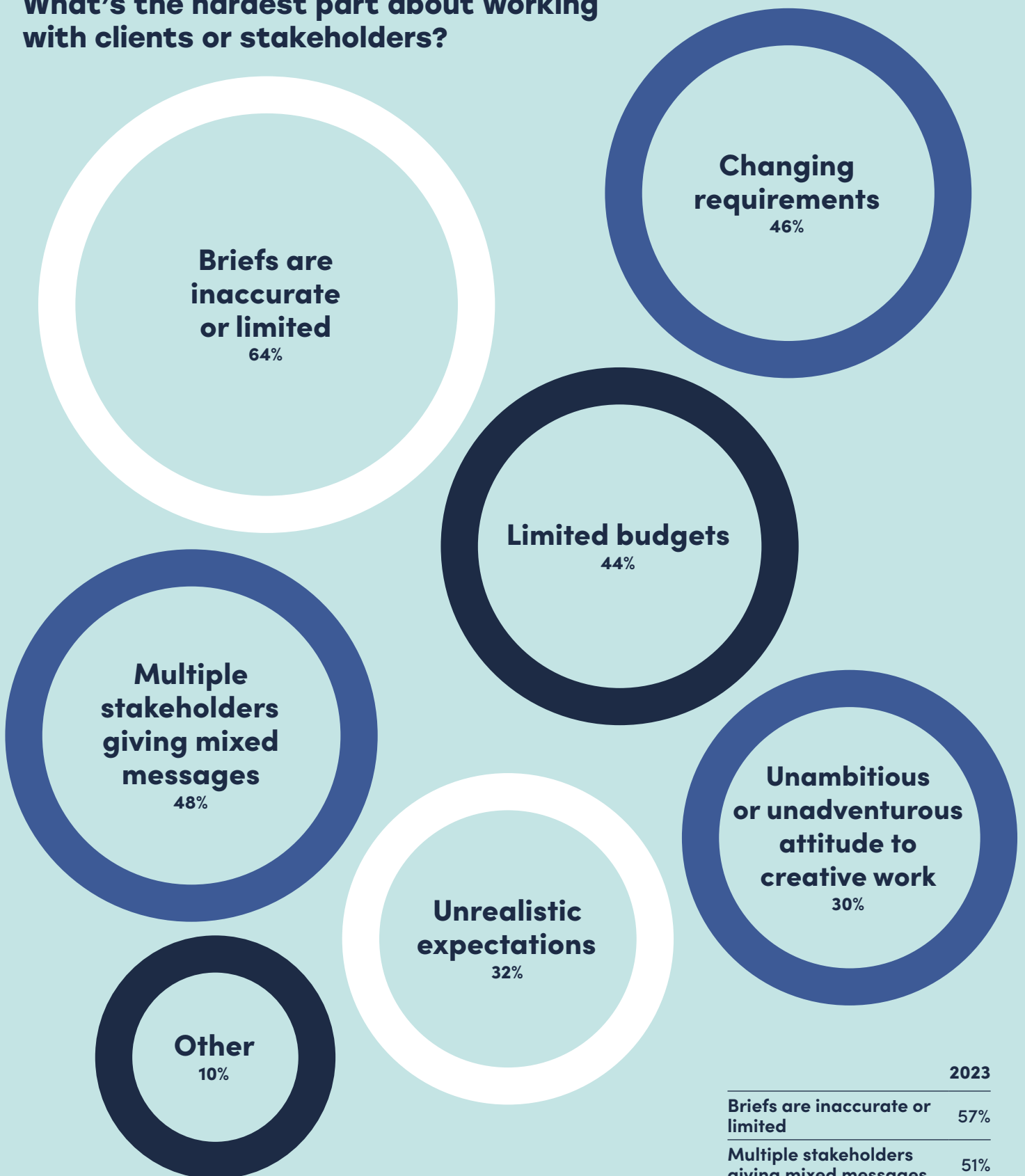
Other responses included:

Project management platforms

Blend of online and in-person

Using live documents (e.g. Google Docs)

What's the hardest part about working with clients or stakeholders?



Other responses included:

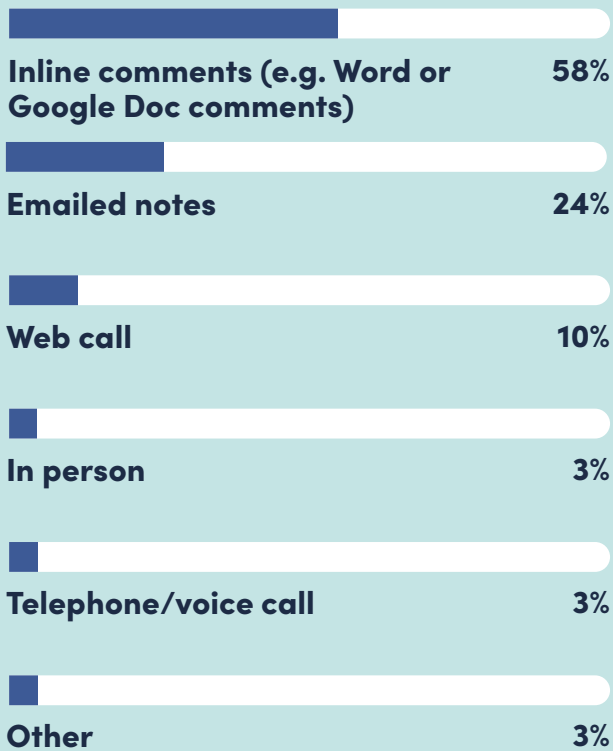
Ghosting

Internal politics obstructing projects

Getting feedback on the effectiveness of the work

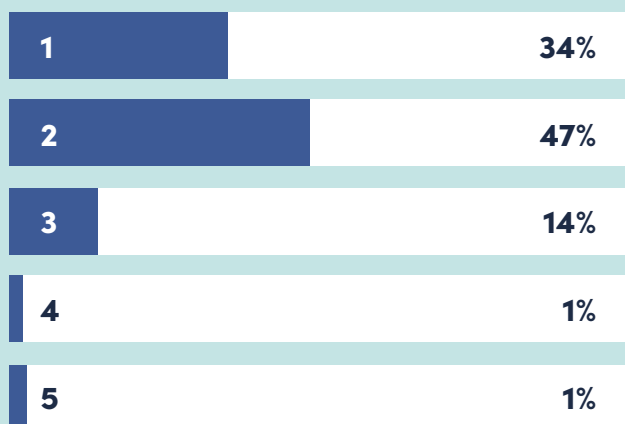
	2023
Briefs are inaccurate or limited	57%
Multiple stakeholders giving mixed messages	51%
Changing requirements	36%
Limited budgets	36%
Unambitious or unadventurous attitude to creative work	32%
Unrealistic expectations	30%
Other	10%

How do you prefer to receive feedback?



Unsurprisingly, most copywriters want the feedback where it makes most sense: within the document itself, alongside the copy.

How many rounds of feedback do your projects typically require?



Mercifully, most copywriters are spared the pain of never-ending feedback loops, with 81% of projects wrapped up after 1 or 2 rounds of feedback and amendments.

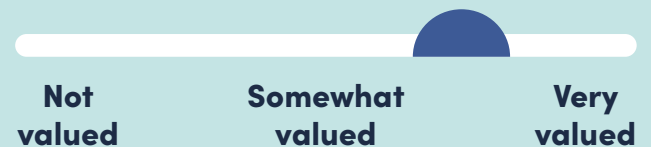
How often do you get to see the impact of your work?



A common challenge for copywriters is that we're often closely involved in the inception and creation of marketing and advertising campaigns and materials, but are often distant from the business end of these activities.

We might write the emails, but not see how many are opened. We might write the TV campaigns, but not see how much business they generate.

As a copywriter, how highly is your insight valued by your clients and/or stakeholders?



Copywriters know what works. So it's encouraging to see how highly our insights are valued by clients, colleagues and stakeholders.



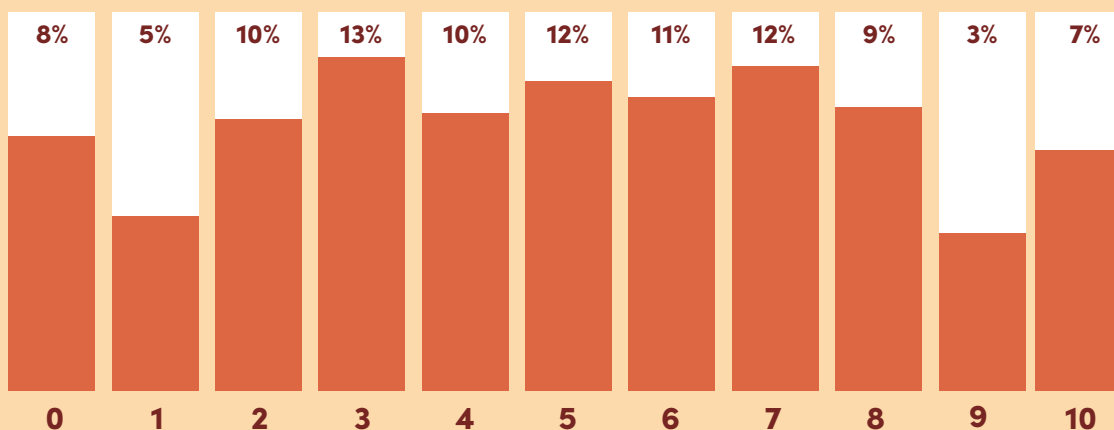
The best thing about being a copywriter is being creative and writing for a living!

AI adoption and competition

When we first asked about AI writing tools, our question focused squarely on concerns about robots coming for jobs. As AI tools have become more capable and more widely adopted, more copywriters have incorporated AI into their workflows, using artificial intelligence to accelerate research tasks, to simplify routine processes, and to shake up the act of creation. Our survey results reflect the remarkable popularity of AI-powered assistants like ChatGPT and Grammarly.

Are you concerned about competition from artificial intelligence (AI) powered writing software?

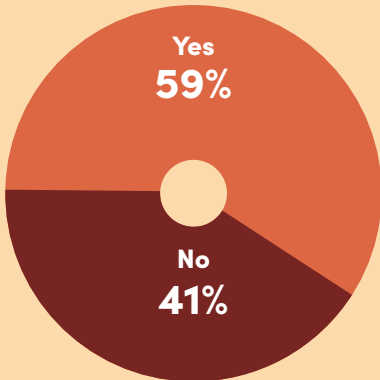
0 = Not at all concerned 10 = Very concerned



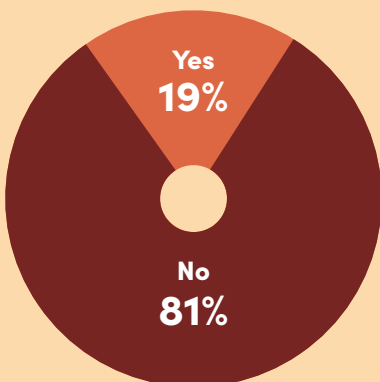
2023	
0	14%
1	9%
2	11%
3	14%
4	9%
5	16%
6	10%
7	7%
8	6%
9	2%
10	3%

More copywriters are concerned by our digital competitors. And if we count the top end of concerned responses (anyone responding 7 and up), we find an increase of 13% in those responses. While AI tools still can't replace human creativity, it is getting better at churning out words that seem intelligent. How long until AI can have an original thought?

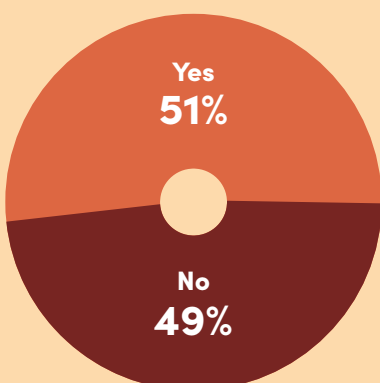
Do you use any generative AI tools in your copywriting work?



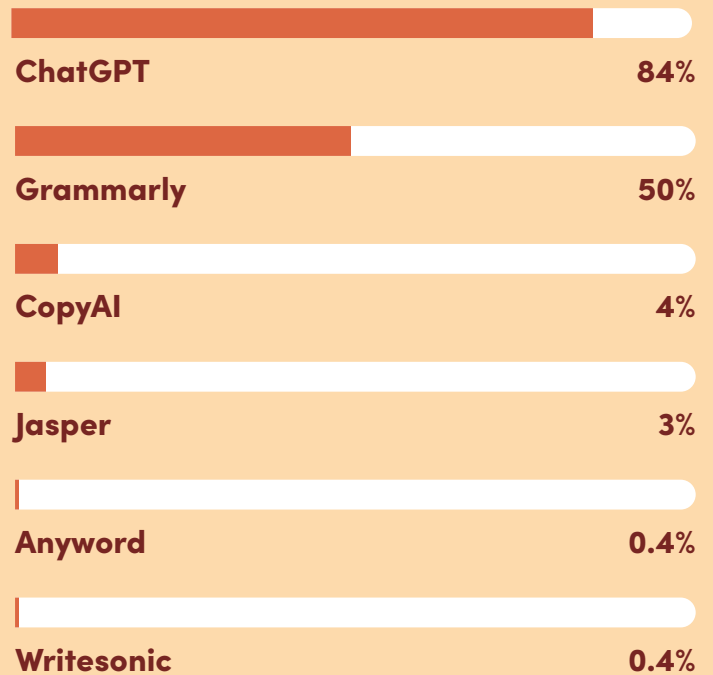
Are your clients aware of AI's role in your work?



Does AI-produced copy ever feature in the finished work you share with clients/stakeholders?



Which AI tools do you use for copywriting?



Of the respondents that use AI tools, ChatGPT is the runaway favourite.

Other responses included:

Google Gemini

Bing Chat

Claude.ai

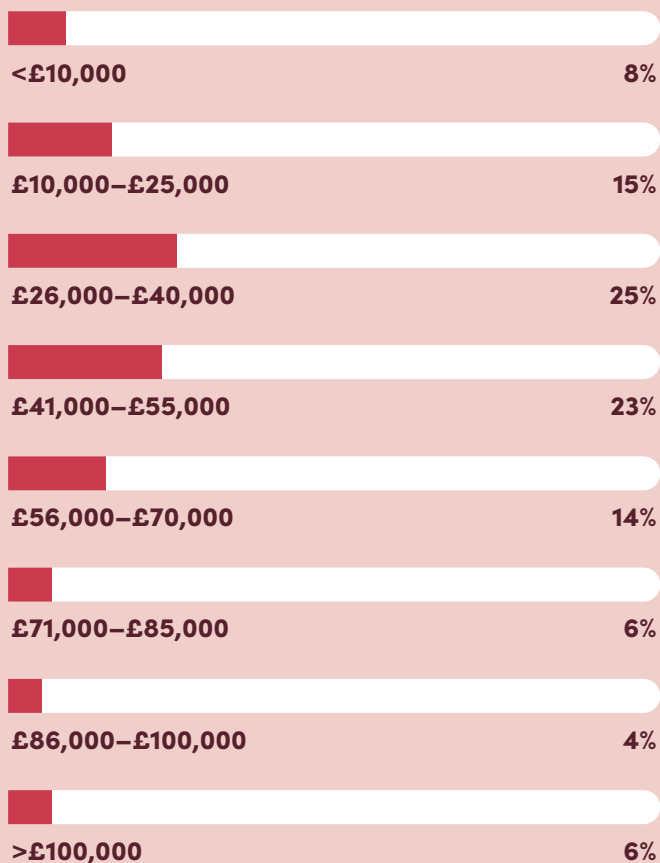
How do you use AI tools?



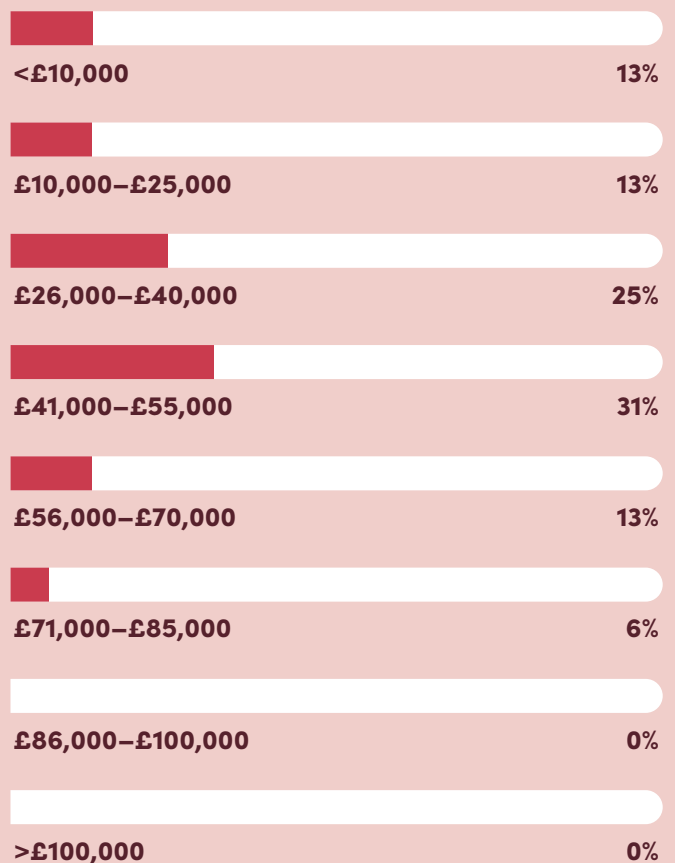
Income and benefits

What was your gross income from copywriting in 2023?

Overall

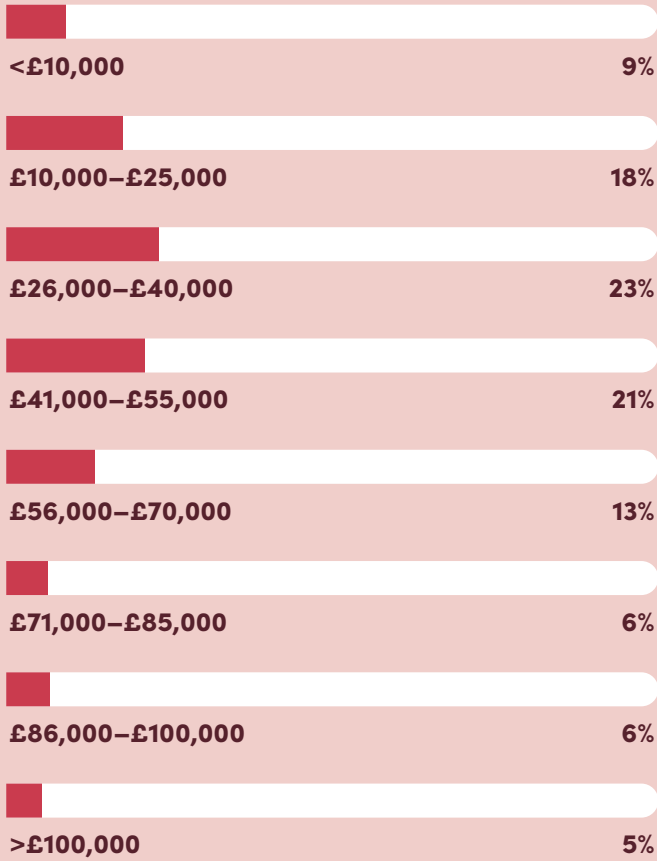


Employed and freelance

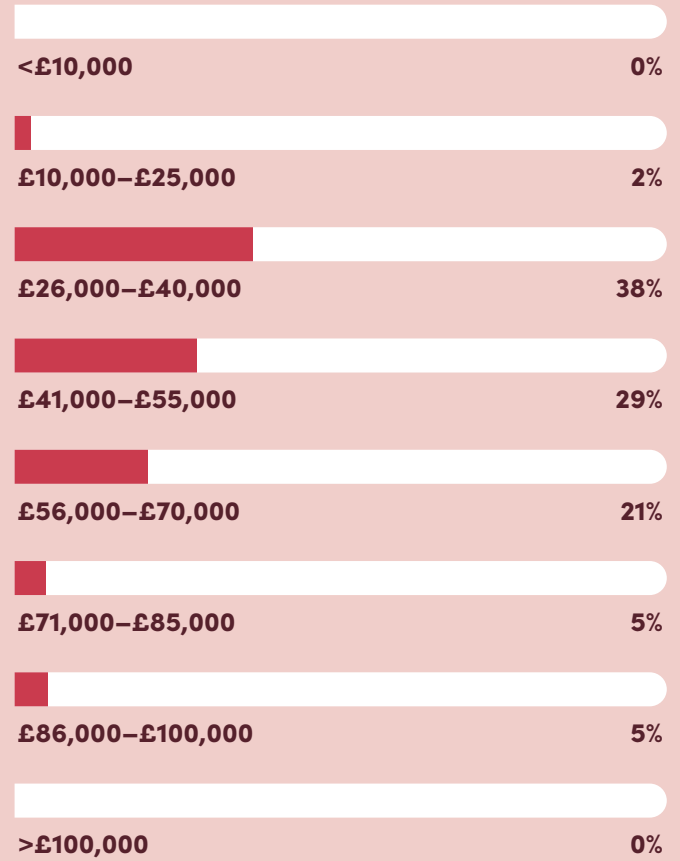


The best thing about being a copywriter is that sweet sweet moment when your research pays off and the right word combo BAM! hits you. AI could never.

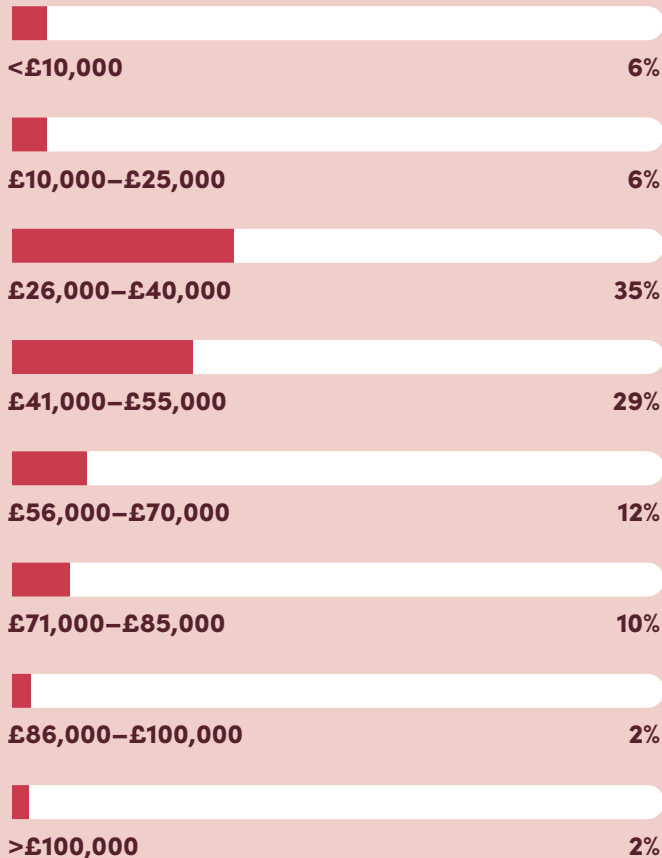
Freelance



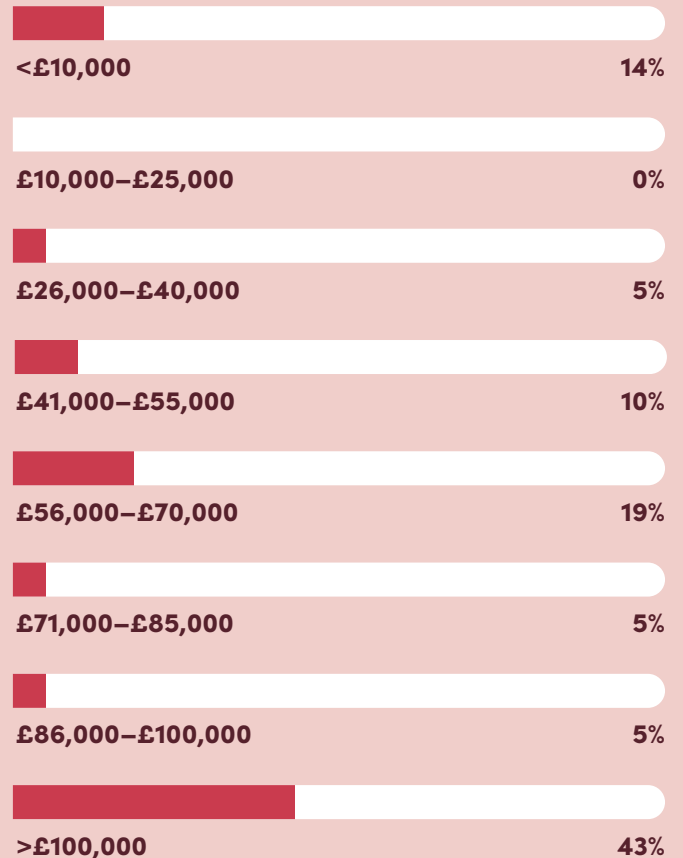
Agency



In-house

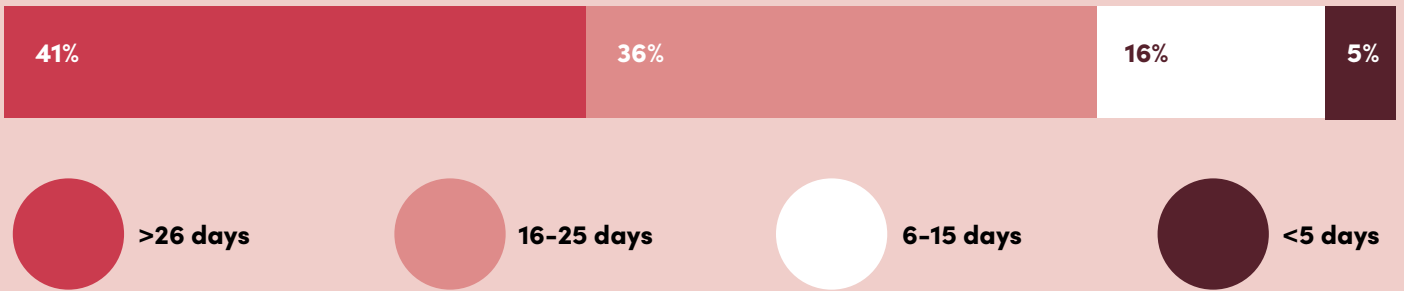


Agency founder



How many holiday days (annual leave) did you take in 2023?

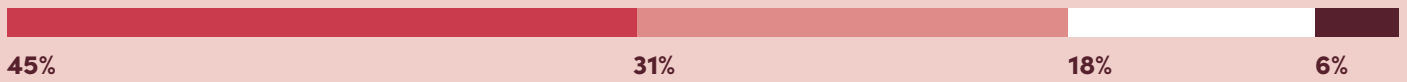
Overall



Employed and freelance



Freelance



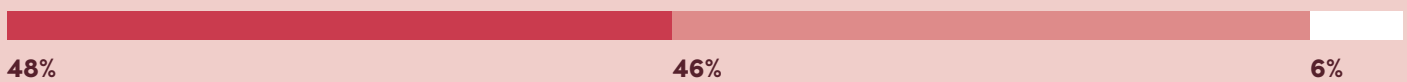
Agency



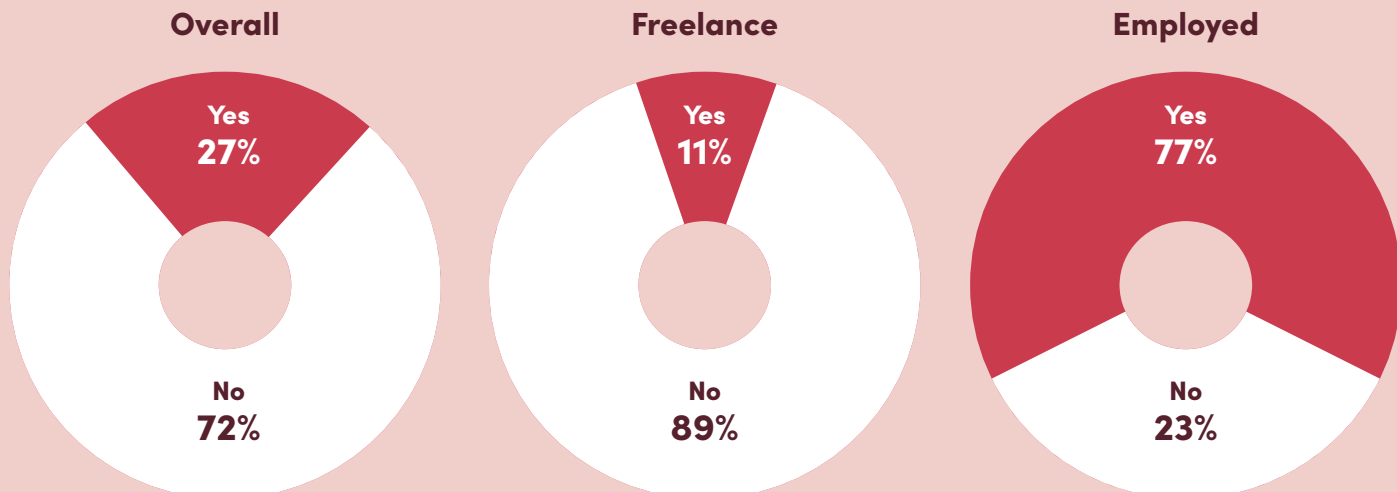
Agency founder



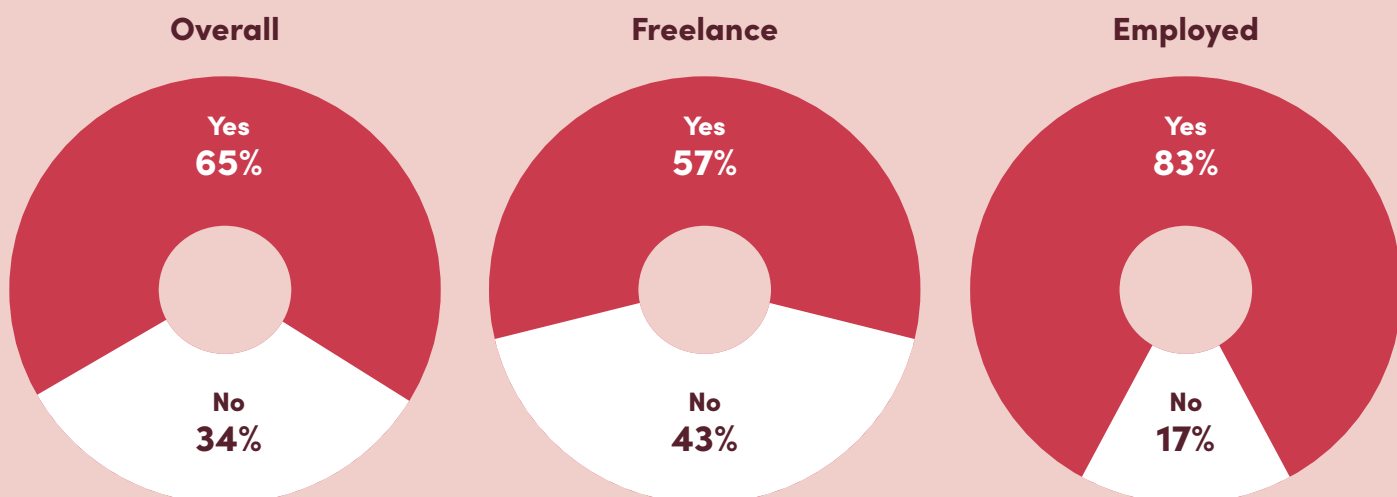
In-house



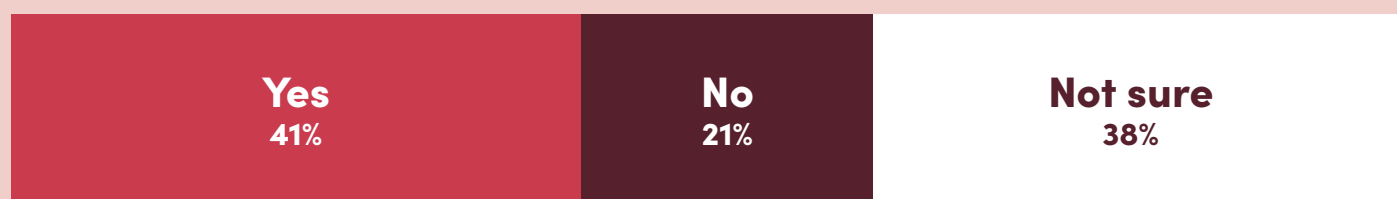
Do you get sick pay?



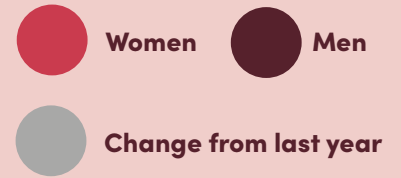
Do you regularly pay into a pension fund?



Do you think gender affects how much copywriters get paid?



Gender pay comparison



The stand-out story is the absence of a gap between freelance men and women. Unfortunately the same is not true in all segments. The gender pay gap has widened for in-house and agency writers, as well as agency founders.

Overall



Employed and freelance



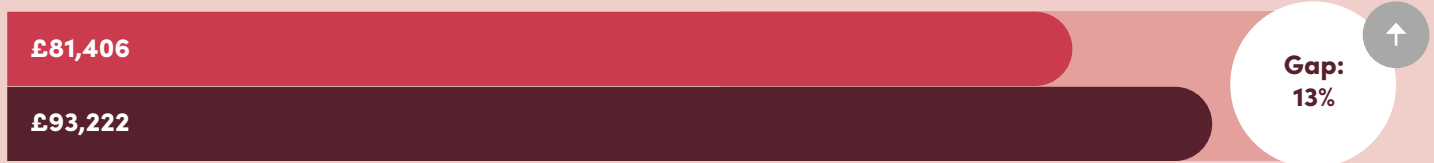
Freelance



Agency



Agency founder



In-house



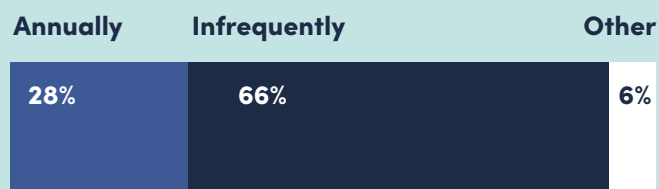
2021	Overall	Freelance	Employed and freelance	Agency	Agency founder	In-house
Gap	16%	35%	12%	23%	-17%	18%

Freelance copywriters

What is your day rate?

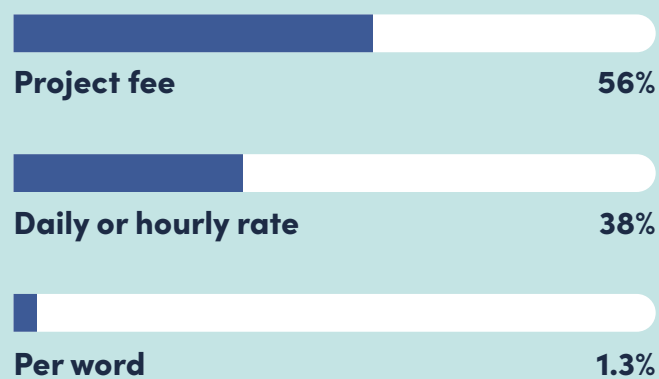


How often do you increase your day rate?



2023	
Annually	26%
Infrequently	63%
Other	11%

How do you charge for your work?



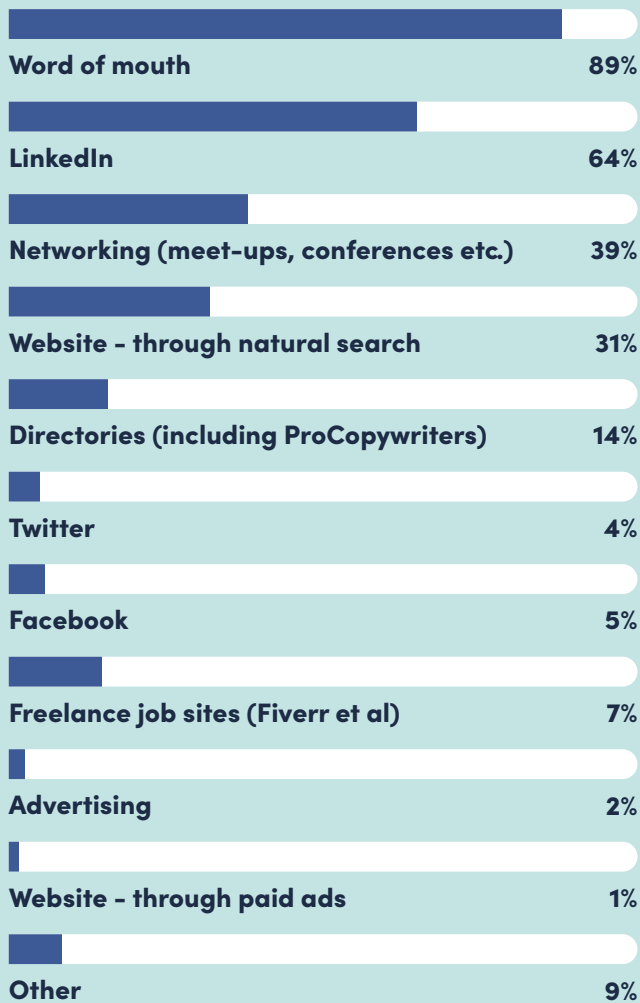
2023	
Project fee	59%
Daily or hourly rate	34%
Per word	5%

“

The best thing about being a copywriter is writing for a living.

Working with words every day.

How/where do you find new clients?



2023

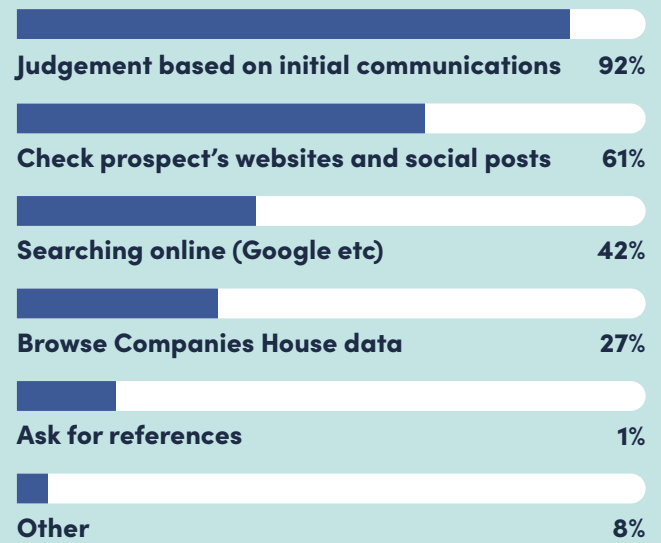
Word of mouth	88%
LinkedIn	67%
Networking (meet-ups, conferences etc.)	38%
Website - through natural search	36%
Directories (including ProCopywriters)	17%
Twitter	12%
Facebook	10%
Freelance job sites (Fiverr et al.)	9%
Advertising	3%
Website - through paid ads	2%
Other	11%

Other responses included:

Agencies

Referrals

How do you qualify leads?



2023

Judgement based on initial communications	93%
Check prospect's websites and social posts	62%
Searching online (Google etc)	46%
Browse Companies House data	19%
Ask for references	3%
Other	8%

Other responses included:

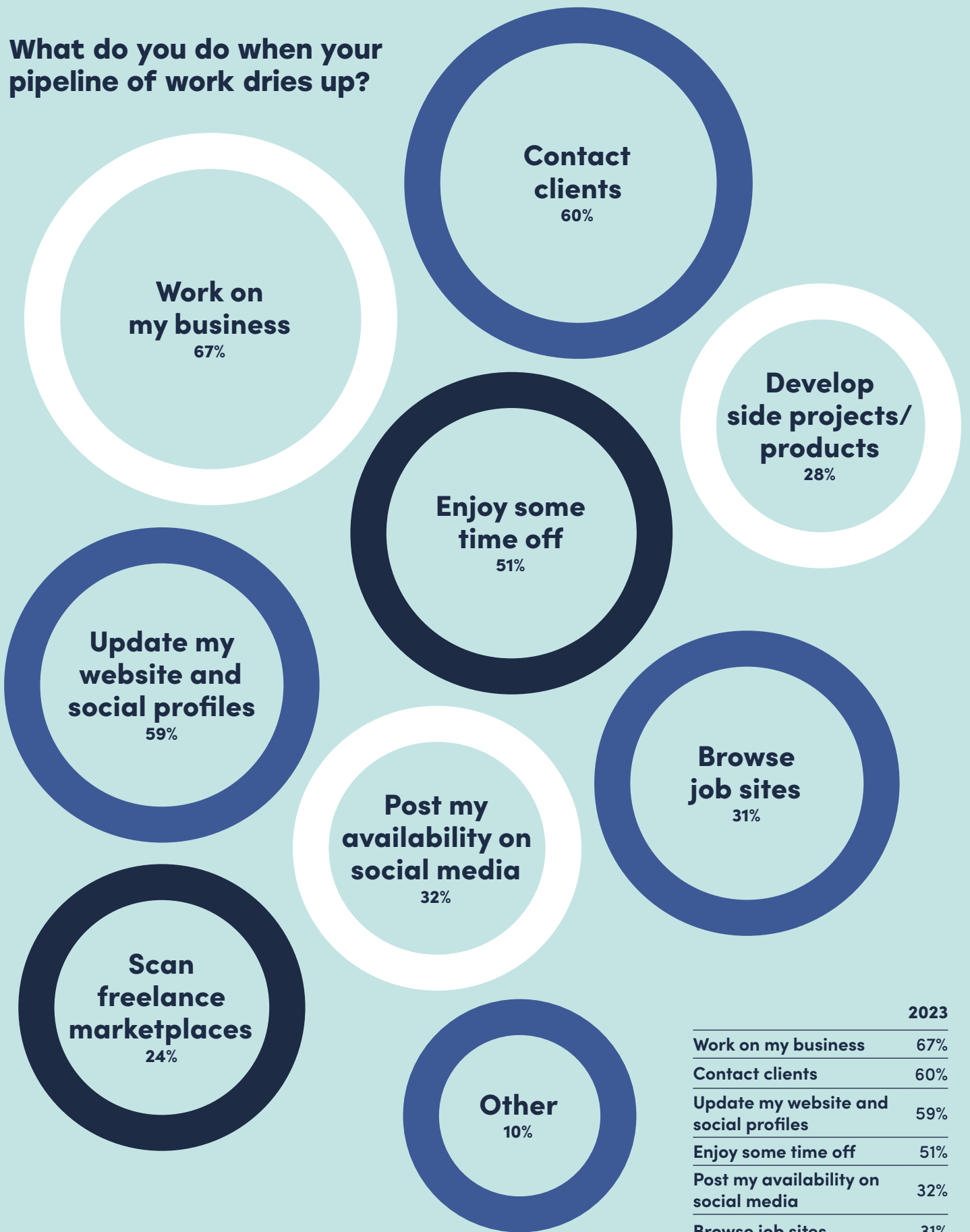
Fishbowl (from Glassdoor)

Pre-qualifying questionnaire

“

The best thing about being a copywriter is seeing how effective copy can help SMEs grow and blossom.

What do you do when your pipeline of work dries up?



	2023
Work on my business	67%
Contact clients	60%
Update my website and social profiles	59%
Enjoy some time off	51%
Post my availability on social media	32%
Browse job sites	31%
Develop side projects/products	28%
Scan freelance marketplaces	24%
Other	10%

Other responses included:

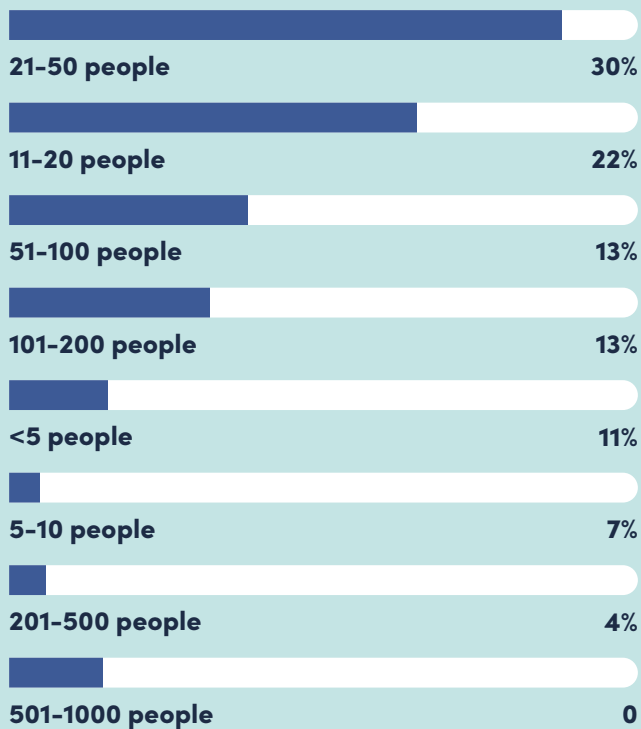
Cold email potential clients

Contact other copywriters

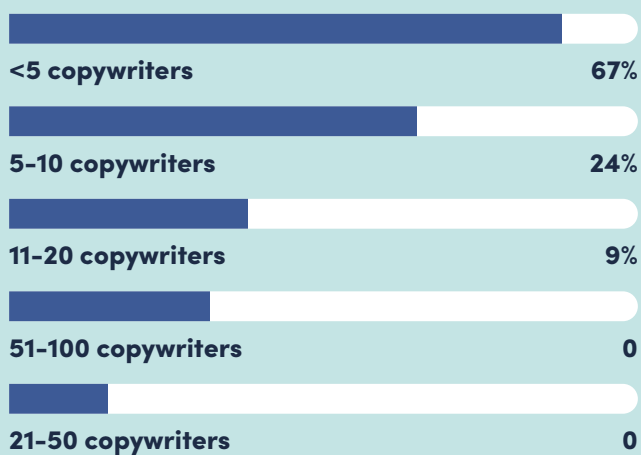
Create content for social media promotion

Agency copywriters

What's the size of your agency?

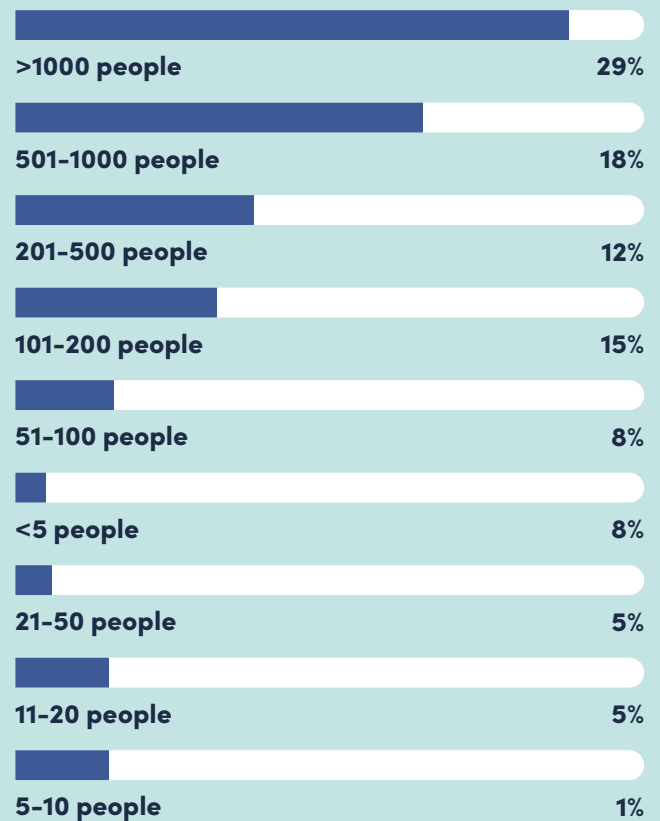


How many other copywriters work in your agency?

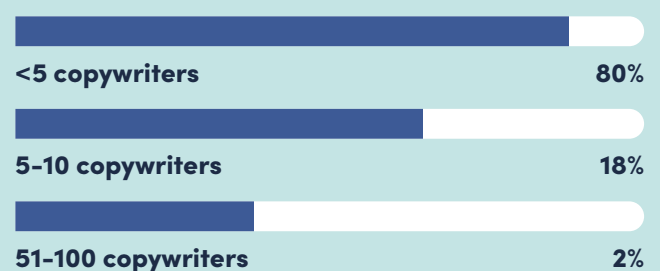


In-house copywriters

What's the size of your company?



How many other copywriters work in your agency?



Motivations and aspirations

How would you like your career to develop over the next two years?



	2023
Earn more money	53%
Do more strategic/consultancy work	23%
Pursue creative writing	14%
Go freelance	2%
Hire employees	3%
Start an agency	3%
Switch career	2%

What would help you develop your copywriting career?



	2023
Networking opportunities	52%
Mentoring or support	48%
Training	46%
Awards or recognition	32%
Accreditation scheme	NA
Other	7%

Demographics

Our demographic data remains broadly static.

Number of respondents



The big dip in respondent numbers this year can largely be attributed to our expanded question set.

We will consult the copywriting community about this consideration before deciding how to proceed in 2025 (i.e. do we reduce the questions or accept fewer responses as a fair price for more meaningful insights?)

Location	2024	2023	2021	2020
England	79%	71%	82%	73%
Scotland	3%	5%	3%	4%
Wales	3%	2%	2%	2%
N. Ireland	0.5%	1%	0.5%	0%
International	14%	20%	12%	21%

We've simplified the reporting of location to group all of England together. However, the distribution of English respondents was broadly the same as every year, with copywriters concentrated around London and the south.

Age	2024	2023	2021	2020	2019
Oldest	77	76	75	73	67
Average	45	41	42	41	40
Youngest	20	21	21	20	20

Gender	2024	2023	2021	2020	2019
Women	71%	68%	66%	62%	66%
Men	28%	31.8%	32%	38%	34%
Other	1%	.02%	2%		

Race	2024	2023
White (including English, Welsh, Scottish, N. Irish, Irish, Gypsy, Irish Traveller, Cornish and others)	96%	90%
Asian/Asian British (including Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi)	1%	3.5%
Mixed/multiple ethnic groups	2%	3%
Black/African/Caribbean/Black British	1%	2%
Arab	0%	0.4%
Other	0.2%	1.2%

Experience	2024	2023
6-10 years	27%	26%
11-15 years	22%	19%
3-5 years	13%	18%
16-20 years	13%	11%
0-2 years	6%	9%
21-25 years	9%	8%
26-30 years	3%	5%
31+ years	6%	4%

How do you describe yourself?

We asked the question a little differently this year, asking respondents to pick the single title that best describes their work.



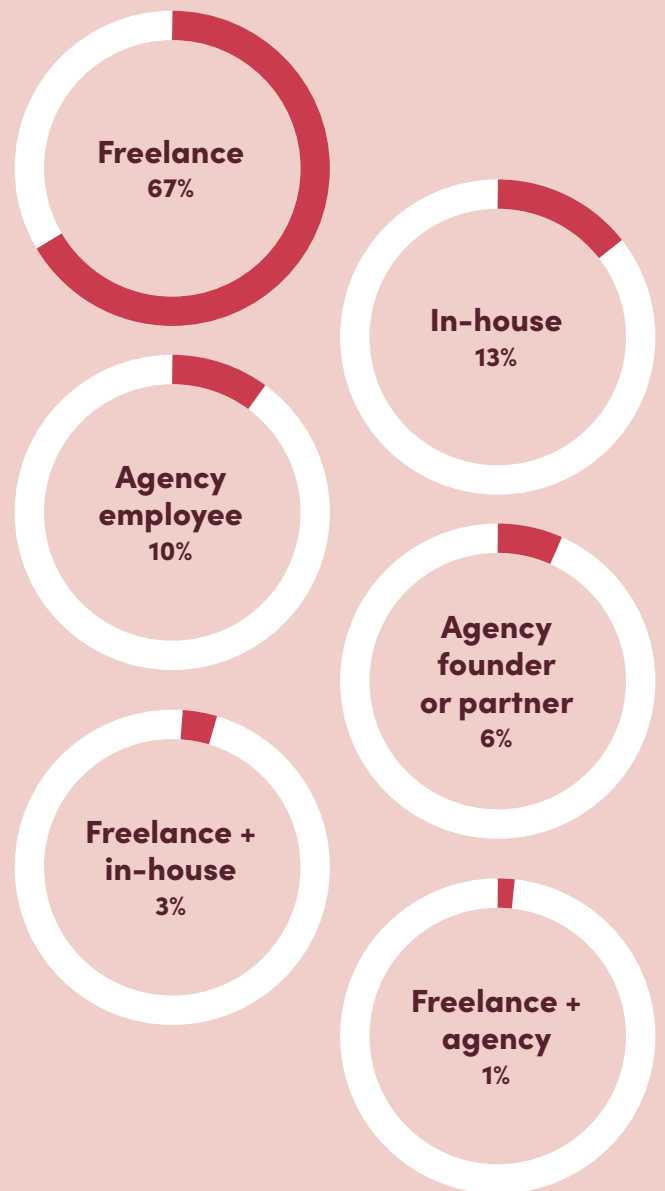
2023

Copywriter	79%
Content Writer	40%
Creative	16%
Content Strategist	15%
Brand Writer	12%
UX Writer	6%
Content Designer	4%
Other	16%

Which types of copywriting do you do?

	2024	2023
Marketing materials/content	86%	85%
Digital and SEO	58%	59%
Advertising	33%	38%
PR and journalism	23%	30%
Technical	16%	13%
Other	8%	10%

Employment model



How are our respondents employed? This year we saw drops in all forms of employment except for freelancers.

As ProCopywriters gains more agency and in-house members, we hope to see a better balance in respondents.

	2023	2021	2020
Freelance	59%	67%	57%
In-house	15%	8%	13%
Agency employee	13%	10%	12%
Agency founder or partner	7%	6%	6%
Freelance + In-house	5%	NA	NA
Freelance + agency	2%	NA	NA

Which sector do you specialise in?



	2023	2021	2020
B2B	60%	63%	57%
B2C	36%	25%	29%
Science and technology	26%	29%	27%
Business, finance and law	20%	21%	25%
Sport, travel and leisure	20%	15%	13%
Consumer goods	20%	12%	16%
Charities	18%	14%	13%
Healthcare and pharmaceuticals	16%	16%	14%
Education	14%	16%	14%
Property and interiors	12%	11%	10%
Public sector	10%	7%	9%
Fashion	8%	7%	6%
Beauty	7%	9%	9%
Family and childcare	6%	2%	3%
Politics and society	5%	3%	2%
Other	19%	NA	NA

What's your favourite thing about being a copywriter?

Learning about new industries, sectors, products and services etc. Research.

Using my skills to support my clients and help promote their businesses.

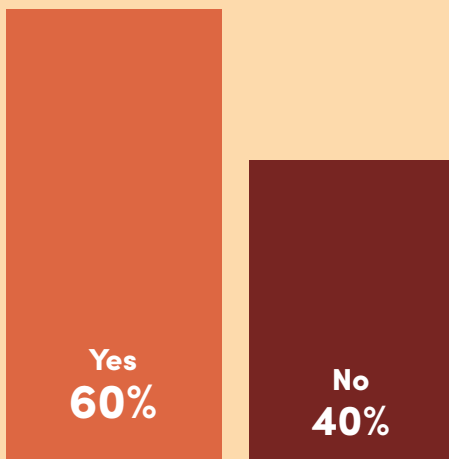
That feeling when you get positive feedback on a project you're excited about.

The meeting of creativity + competition. You get to write creatively and strategically and then watch it perform, tweaking and adjusting to improve. It's a blast!

The Copywriter Code

Should copywriters have a shared code of conduct/code of practice?

While a majority of respondents support the concept of a code of conduct, there is a significant number of respondents who have reservations about the idea. As ProCopywriters continues to explore the project, we will endeavour to understand and address the concerns of the 40%.



Would you like to be involved in the creation of a code of practice for commercial writers?

ProCopywriters is exploring the possibility of creating a code of conduct for copywriters, and we'd love to hear what you think about the concept



Scan or tap the QR code to tell us what the Copywriter Code should include

Why create a code of conduct?

Because in 2024 it's difficult to answer these basic questions:

What are the basic standards that all copywriters should uphold?

What are the fundamental skills, qualities or expertise that a client can expect from any copywriter?

What makes a copywriter qualified to take on a project?

These questions are tricky to answer, because copywriting remains a quasi-profession, one that does not have the backing of a professional body, a code of conduct, or even a documented definition of what the work entails. A code of conduct could be the first step in formalising our profession.



About this survey

This survey is operated and published by ProCopywriters, a UK-based alliance of commercial writers. Since its beginning in 2016, the survey has provided a window into the working lives of copywriters who serve the UK market.

ProCopywriters exists to bring copywriters together in a supportive, collaborative environment. The survey, alongside our online workshops, annual conference and popular website, are some of the ways we achieve this.

Format and data collection

The survey was built on Typeform by Leif Kendall, based on the original survey created by Joanna Tidball, with many new and adapted questions – some of which were proposed by our community.

The survey was open to the public during February 2024. Respondents were sought via social media posts, emails to our list, and on our blog.

We do not record respondents' personal information, or vet the responses in any way.

Design and production

The survey data was processed and the report written by Leif Kendall. The design and layout was provided by [Anna Patience](#) and the final report was proofread by [Chris Walkley](#).

You are welcome to quote or reproduce any content in this report. We simply ask that you identify ProCopywriters as the source.

Limitations and disclaimers

This was an open survey, conducted in good faith. We haven't vetted respondents so we cannot rule out distortions or inaccuracies resulting from errors, misinformation or malice.

Our reach is limited to our network and friends of friends – so of course we can't claim to represent the complete copywriter experience. This survey is provided for information only – please don't make any wild decisions based on this report.

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