

# Conversation with

**Mighty Marketer Debra Gordon, MS**

*GordonSquared, Inc.*

**Freelance (medical and health care)  
writer since 1999**

[Website](#)

[LinkedIn profile](#)



## **Tell us about your work.**

I do many types of medical writing for patients and consumers, physicians, and healthcare-related businesses. Over the years, I've seen my business transition from all consumer, to a mix of consumer and physician-facing writing, to a lot of CME (continuing medical education), to, in the past two years, about 60% business-to-business writing for companies in the healthcare space, putting their business into perspective in the world of healthcare reform, which is my passion.

I'm also branching out into non-writing work, such as speaking and webinars. Hoping to start a new consulting business soon, also healthcare related, but far different from the writing end. Stay tuned!



## **How did you get into freelancing?**

This is actually the third time I turned to freelancing; the first was when my oldest son was born 28 years ago; the second was when the middle son was born 22 years ago.

This third (and final) time, I was working for a healthcare publisher writing and editing books and, to be honest, I was bored. I saw no reason why I couldn't do this on my own at home, as well as have other clients and more diversity in my work. So I lined up a couple of clients, told my boss I was leaving, and walked out with a third client – my old employer.

I'm really blessed in that it was the best thing I've ever done. I've thrived personally and professionally, and never had a slow period – even through two recessions.

## How have you marketed your freelance business? What's worked best for you?

I market through a variety of methods. My website is my most important marketing tool. It probably brings me about half of the serious inquiries I receive. That's followed by the AMWA (American Medical Writers Association) Freelance Directory and other freelance directories, LinkedIn, networking, and the occasional letter of introduction when I see a client I'd like to work with. And, of course, the most important marketing tool is myself and the quality of my work.

**“My website is my most important marketing tool.”**

## What hasn't worked well for you in marketing your business?

Hmmm. I think marketing has to be such a diverse approach. Even if I gain one client from an effort, it's working.

## How has your marketing changed as your business grew?

When I first started, nearly all my marketing was contacting potential clients via email and reaching out to people I knew and had worked with. As the Internet grew, however, my website took on greater importance. In 2009, I was one of the early adopters of LinkedIn, but didn't really start using it as a marketing tool until a couple of years ago. And, of course, as I gained experience I found more and more of my work coming through referrals.

**“Never stop marketing, even when you're busy.”**

## What are your top 3 marketing tips for a NEW freelancer?

1. Never stop marketing, even when you're busy.
2. Create a database of every client, potential client, and colleague and use it for marketing outreach like newsletters
3. Develop and promote your brand – not just you.

## What are your top 3 marketing tips for more experienced freelancers who are still building their businesses?

Actually, the same three. It's surprising how many experienced freelancers I see who aren't doing any of them.

## Debra Gordon's Upcoming Webinars and Workshops

### Workshop on Successful Freelancing

I'm taking my successful *Getting to Six Figures: The Business of Freelancing* webinar on the road on Thursday, March 26 in a full-day, live (i.e., face-to-face) workshop before the first annual HEOR and Market Access Writing Workshop in Philadelphia. The HEOR and Market Access Writing Workshop is designed to teach freelancers how to work in the lucrative health economics and outcomes research arena. I'm hoping we can draw in freelancers and want-to-be-freelancers from Pennsylvania, NJ, and New York (or further).

### Webinar on Successful Freelancing

If you can't get to Philadelphia and still want to take the Six Figures course, register [here](#) to watch the last, four-session webinar on demand or email me ([debra@debragordon.com](mailto:debra@debragordon.com)) and I'll put you on the list for the next webinar, which will be in early summer.

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