



## CASE STUDY

# Investing in Freelance Success

**Núria Negrão, PhD**

Freelance medical writer since 2020

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After freelancing for about two years, Núria Negrão, PhD, was doing well. The freelance medical writer had gained experience with different types of medical writing and was earning a living.

But all of Núria's work came from one client, a company that matches a team of medical writers with clients. She knew that she needed to diversify. "I had developed a lot of skills and confidence and felt like it was the right time for the next move in my business—to niche down into continuing education and to find my own clients," she says.

## Investing in a Proven Marketing Roadmap

Núria knew that she needed some help to build her marketing muscle. "I wanted some direction in how to go about getting my own clients and I wanted some feedback and a sounding board about my marketing materials," she says.

Then Núria heard about [Finding the Freelance Clients You Deserve](#). She knew other freelancers who had taken the course and had been able to build stable, successful freelance businesses. "That gave me the confidence to invest," she says.

Within about a year of completing Finding the Freelance Clients You Deserve, Núria had gotten four new clients, three through referrals and one from networking in general.

## Getting Referrals through Networking

Referrals have been Núria's best source of new clients. But these referrals didn't just happen. "I got the referrals because I put a lot of work into networking, building community with other medical writers, and providing value whenever I engage with other medical writers," she says.

These activities show that Núria is trustworthy and likeable, two things that clients look for in a freelancer. "My main marketing is to show up, be friendly, and provide value," she says.

Most of Núria's networking is virtual, through communities of freelance writers and events of the American Medical Writers Association (AMWA). Núria is a member of WriteMedicine Pro, The Anthill, the community of the Nascent Medical LLC, and Freelancers in Publications.

Núria also loves going to conferences, like the AMWA annual conference. “Conferences always make me feel energized, filled with ideas, and hopeful for the future. They get me excited about work,” she says.

While networking is stressful and even scary for many freelancers, in *Finding the Freelance Clients You Deserve*, Núria learned to view networking as getting to know other people, not trying to sell her services. She also learned to give more than she takes when networking.

“I think of networking as making work friends. I do not think of it as transactional,” she says. “I network to make friends, learn from others, and share my perspectives on things. Everything else flows from that.”

Along with getting referrals from networking, Núria likes getting to know other freelance medical writers. “It’s good to talk to people who are in the same boat as you,” she says. “They understand the struggles and can give you support by just talking and sharing stories.”

## Gaining Authority on LinkedIn

While one-on-one networking is ideal, it takes a lot of time. By being active on LinkedIn, Núria builds her network and her relationships with the people in her network. She also builds her authority, especially about two topics she is passionate about: (1) AI and AI in medical writing and (2) effective communication and teaching in science and medicine.

“Being active on LinkedIn allows me to be in front of clients and colleagues in a cost-effective way,” she says.

As part of giving more than she takes, Núria uses her posts on LinkedIn to teach other medical writers about AI and AI in medical writing. She loves exploring AI and figuring out how it works, and then translating what she is learning in LinkedIn posts so that other medical writers can also learn how to use AI in their writing.

“People are interested in this topic and there aren’t many voices out there explaining how this works. So, this has made it really easy for me to position myself as an expert,” says Núria.

## Building her Marketing Muscle

“The most important thing I developed with the course was my marketing muscle. I developed a system for marketing and a habit for marketing that I maintain today,” she says.

Muscle memory usually refers to exercise, where consistent repetition makes it easier to exercise and get stronger without thinking about what you’re doing. This is like building the marketing habit—or as Núria calls it, marketing muscle. And developing the marketing habit is one of the keys to freelance success.

Building the marketing habit helps Núria find time for marketing—a key challenge for most freelancers. Taking *Finding the Freelance Clients You Deserve* and doing the coursework helped her build the marketing habit, along with course content that showed her how to do this.

By the end of the course, Núria was planning ways to continue using her marketing muscle that would be “as easy for me as possible.” Núria’s comfort zone in marketing is participating in

communities, which includes intense networking. The trust she builds leads to the referrals that are fueling her freelance business.

Also, Núria makes time to build her visibility and authority on LinkedIn and send direct emails to clients she would like to work with. Each week, she researches one client and sends a direct email. “I try to keep each task as simple as possible to prevent me from thinking it’s too much and convince me to actually do it,” she says.

Núria acknowledges that doing consistent marketing isn’t easy, no matter what marketing tools you use. “We all get to choose our hard. I do not think there is a truly easy way of doing this that is sustainable and reliably brings work to your table,” she says. For Núria, networking and LinkedIn work best in building her freelance business. Both of these, like all types of marketing, get easier with practice.

## Investing in Success

Along with Finding the Freelance Clients You Deserve, Núria has made many other investments in her freelance business. When she launched her business, Núria took Emma Hitt Nichols’ 6-week course on freelance medical writing, where she learned the ropes of freelance medical writing and saw examples of different types of projects.

Next, Núria joined Alex Howson’s WriteMedicine Pro, a membership community that combines strategic education and practical resources on CME/CE and the support of other aspiring writers. “This WriteMedicine Pro community is a continuing investment of furthering my skills as a writer in the continuing education field. I gain insights about how the industry works that are hard to get as a freelancer, and I get a lot of practical advice about running a freelance business too.”

Most recently, Núria joined Abigale Miller’s The Anthill, a coworking space that provides a supportive, engaging community for medical writers. Activities include a discussion forum, monthly mixers, weekly office hours, work sprints, and lots more.

“Doing these things accelerated my path and contributed a lot to get me where I am today,” says Núria.

## Building and Sustaining a Thriving Business

Now, Núria calls marketing the one habit that successful freelance medical writers have in common. “Freelance medical writing is competitive. Marketing is necessary to stand out in a sea of freelancers and build and sustain a thriving business,” she says.

“Finding the Freelance Clients You Deserve demystified the process of prospecting and gave me a marketing roadmap,” says Núria. “I’d much rather work with a roadmap and with a clear idea of the steps than trying to figure it out as I go.”

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## About Núria's Freelance Business

Núria is a freelance CME writer and a speaker on AI strategy & implementation for medical writing and science communication. She specializes in writing and providing strategic content guidance on engaging and evidence-based continuing education content for health professionals, including needs assessments, slide decks, and enduring materials. Also, Núria offers conference and advisory board coverage. As a speaker about AI for medical writing and science communication, she helps medical writers get clarity on how best to use AI as a work collaborator to make a real difference with their work.

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