Interview – Brian Clark of www.CopyBlogger.com

Welcome to the Entrepreneur’s Journey Podcast. I’m your host, Yaro Starak.

Today I have a very special guest, Brian Clark, from www.CopyBlogger.com. Brian is a well known blogger in the blogosphere, who writes about copywriting tips for online marketing success.

As his tagline says, he basically teaches everyone how to do good content for blogs, how to get traffic to blogs, how to write good titles, and pretty much everything to do with successful blogging.

Brian and I sat down and recorded this interview late last week and I think it has some interesting content regarding Brian’s background and what he’s currently doing online today as an internet business owner as well as a blogger.

I hope you enjoy the interview. As usual, if you are interested in similar interviews with internet business folk or bloggers or if you’d just like to catch up on a bit of internet marketing advice which I produced over the past year now, I have plenty of previous podcasts archived at my blog, which you can find at www.Entrepreneurs-Journey.com. Or if you can’t spell that, just do a search for my name, which is Yaro, and it will be the first result.

I hope you enjoy the interview and I’ll see you next time.

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Yaro: Hi, this is Yaro Starak. Welcome to another Entrepreneur’s Journey Podcast. Tonight I have a special guest with me named Brian Clark. You probably know Brian Clark already from www.CopyBlogger.com. If not, you should probably go to www.CopyBlogger.com. He’s
currently rocking out the blog charts in terms of subscription numbers and readership and hitting Top 10 lists all over the place.

Thanks for joining me tonight, Brian.

Brian: Thanks, Yaro. Glad to be here.

Yaro: As per usual, I’m just going to go through a bit of your history, Brian, and find out how you got to where you are. And I’m really curious. You pretty much came out of nowhere for one. In my sort of exposure to the blogosphere I track a lot of people, and your blog just suddenly came to be.

So I’m curious to figure out where you got all the knowledge that you have in dishing out in your blog posts. You must have a lot of business experience, certainly copywriting experience.

Can we go back to maybe as far as your studying days and give me a quick run-through of how you got to where you are?

Brian: Okay. It was college and law school. A lot of fun and not as much studying, but I did okay. I got out of law school, practiced law, and did not like it at all. Basically, I spent all my time that I wasn’t working trying to figure out what else I was going to end up doing.

About 1997, I moved to Austin. Kind of dramatically just up and quit my big law firm job. It was kind of a reckless decision, but it luckily turned out okay. I moved to Austin. I actually was considering becoming a screen writer.

I’ve always had a thing for writing. And I had this starving artist mentality all of a sudden, which is very difficult to go from a cushy law job, but I moved down there and of course it was just the
beginning of the dot com boom, the first, you know, the nefarious Web 1.0 as it’s now known.

But I had been online basically since day one of the web itself. I did not participate much and I really didn’t get into computers at all, but I’d been a big fan of people like William Gibson and whatnot in the ‘80s, and they talked about cyberspace and whatnot.

Once it became easy to get on, I was right there and fascinated by it and also fascinated by the fact that it seemed like it was just an outstanding medium in order to make money to reach out to people and build a business.

Yaro: So are you talking like 1994? 1993?

Brian: It was probably December of ’94, I think is when I first got this really hideous Compac computer and an AOL account. It took me about five minutes to figure out AOL was not the internet.

Back in those days the internet was weird, because they had all sorts of weird stuff like Archie and Veronica and all these file server things and UseNet was the equivalent of the blogosphere. It was a very strange place, but fascinating at the same time.

Yaro: It hasn’t really changed all that much really when you think about it.

Brian: It really hasn’t when you think about it. It’s a little bit easier to get around, but ultimately I think it’s the same deal.

So anyway, I moved to Austin. People were internet crazy. Austin became a big technology town, thanks to Dell and a lot of other tech companies. Basically, here’s the short answer to your question about how I basically got the knowledge.
I was really big into e-mail publishing. The first thing that I got into was publishing ezines. I was inspired a lot by Chris Pirillo’s Locker Gnome. It was just fascinating to me that you could publish an e-mail and receive $1,000 for an advertisement that you put in it. I just thought that was the coolest thing ever.

I started up various ezines with various degrees of success. My real success was starting up a legal newsletter ezine that talked about online advertising issues. That was just the right match at that time.

I got tons of business and got totally integrated into what was going on in the Austin tech scene. It was interesting. I was advising start-ups as a lawyer, but I was also acting as a marketing consultant because I understood the space and they didn’t.

It just was really an interesting time. I had a great time, lots of parties, lots of excess, and in 2000 everything fell apart.

Yaro: Right. So you could call this your consulting years or months, right? The period where you mostly did consulting for your income?

Brian: Yeah, pretty much. I mean, frankly, we were all making it up as we went along. It was a totally new medium that you just tried to apply existing principles and make your way through it. There was much more just kind of pie in the sky attitudes going on at that time.

People thought the fundamental laws of economics had somehow learned not to apply and that e-commerce would somehow change the rules of supply and demand. It just didn’t work out that way, but it was a very heady period.

Yaro: Were you actually an owner of any of these dot com bubble bursting companies that were affected, or were you just consulting to them?
Brian: No. I had my own little projects going on, but they were always publishing related. I never tried to do the big grand plan. I was frankly too busy shaking my head at other people’s business models.

I remember one of the last things I did. There was a company called www.Living.com and they figured that they were going to supply all the furniture in the planet over their website. It never occurred to them that most people don’t like to buy furniture without sitting on it and touching it.

I got them out of their office lease the day before they declared bankruptcy, and that was pretty much at the end. That was when we packed up and moved back to Dallas.

Yaro: It’s amazing what people were spending money on back then.

Brian: It really was.

Yaro: Pie in the sky attitudes.

Brian: The investment was crazy. I mean, anyone with an idea with a .com attached to it was getting money and, you know, it was easier to make money really by advising people and trying to help them out than ultimately it turned out to be profitable for a lot of those companies.

Yaro: And you emerged from this reasonably unscathed?

Brian: When everything dried up, there was no more legal work and there was no more internet consulting work. Austin was really at the time a university town that became a tech hub, but it was totally dependent on the technology boom.
So when that went away the economy suffered and the real estate market kind of crashed. We were lucky to sell our home and get out before that happened. But basically, we went back to Dallas, which is a much more mature, broad city.

**Yaro:** I’ve got to stop you, Brian. When you say “we,” you’re talking about your family, right?

**Brian:** Yeah, my wife and I. That was before the children.

**Yaro:** Right. Because we’re not talking about business partners here, we’re talking about family.

**Brian:** Right. So at that time, I took what I knew about the internet and that’s when I became really kind of schooled in direct marketing. It’s interesting if you look at the history of what happened at that time.

Everyone thought the internet was dead and, of course, it was for these outlandish companies who thought they were going to rule the world and sell dog food to everyone like [www.Pets.com](http://www.Pets.com).

But the direct marketers, everything from individuals to larger companies, just applied basic principles of selling directly. That can range everything from Dell and Geico to the junk mail that you might receive.

It’s a whole spectrum of the direct marketing industry, but that’s really what the internet is if you think about it. It’s a way to communicate directly with prospects rather than necessarily having to go through a media company.

I think that’s been extrapolated to the point where we are today, which is social media, where all of us are the media to a certain degree and we kind of participate and decide.
Yaro: And filter.

Brian: Right, exactly. So if you look at it from that standpoint, it’s all been a nice kind of gradual evolution. I know that now the mainstream media is picking up on Web 2.0 like it just popped out of nowhere.

If you kind of paid attention, it all built on one step after another. So I started a couple of companies. I’ve resolved not to ever go back to practicing law. I got into real estate, which of course was big at the first half of this decade. Did very well with that. I totally, completely built both businesses online and never any offline marketing whatsoever.

Yaro: Okay. So these are real estate businesses with online marketing?

Brian: Right, exactly. There was a big shift at that time that if you were ahead of the curve it was really like shooting fish in a barrel.

Yaro: Yeah, using pay per click.

Brian: A buck. Yeah, exactly, back in the days when pay per click was easy and you didn’t even have to think about it, like you do with Google Adwords now. It’s very complicated and competitive now. Back then it was not at all. But luckily most people in that industry had no idea about any of that.

So that was kind of an advantage. From there I just started continuing to do my own kind of internet pure play projects, collaborating on information products with various people and doing affiliate marketing. Basically, I love the marketing more than anything.
Yaro: I was going to say it sounds like you’re almost breaking the rule, being a Jack of All Trades business person, because you’re really dipping your fingers into all different types of niches all over the place here.

Brian: Yeah. It’s so easy with the internet to have an idea and to try it out. That’s really the wonderful thing about the medium, and that’s why there’s so many people that can start out really with very little, no capital, just time, effort and a good idea. And they can make something of it.

Darren Rowse is a great example of that with www.ProBlogger.com. He didn’t have a lot of money, and in fact he was juggling part-time jobs while he made blogging his career.

Yaro: He stumbled upon success. He really did.

Brian: Yeah. He worked very hard for it, but he’s built something that’s going to continue to grow and he never had to worry about start-up money or anything like that.

I think, of course, that is a double edged sword. Anyone can get rich, but not everyone will. It’s always been like that, but there’s a lot of opportunity with social media. That’s why I started www.CopyBlogger.com, to kind of bring it all together. I realized that traffic has always been the hard thing, getting enough traffic.

Pay per click was amazing because it was a return on investment deal where you could pay $1,000 and make $10,000. That’s very amazing compared to most forms of advertising.

Like we mentioned, it’s a different game these days. When you have a good thing, everyone will figure it out. I think we’re seeing that now with like Digg. You know what I mean? People have figured out
that, “Hey, if I write a certain type of content, I can get 10,000 people to my website today.” That’s fairly powerful.

Yaro: Okay. Well, I want to go back a bit. You started doing e-mail and newsletters before it became a stock standard thing to do in the online world. Did you carry through all those newsletter businesses or projects through to today? Are any of them still running now or have you sold them off?

Brian: No. I would say that my early ezine projects, some I started and abandoned. Others were critically acclaimed and made no money. I had one in particular that was a movie review ezine. I got all sorts of great press. I was in Entertainment Weekly. I was a feature story in the Austin Chronicle, Sight and Sound magazine, all over the place. A lot of fun.

At that time, I didn’t understand how to make that into what I could do with it today. Now of course, starting a movie review ezine today would be futile, because that space is pretty filled up, right?

I think those early projects made me very pragmatic for a period of time, and I used what I had learned to sell services and it was, again, it was just like shooting fish in a barrel, because no one really understood it.

You had visionaries, like Chris Pirillo, who were able to charge $1,000 or $2,000 for an e-mail advertisement. At that time I was not able to achieve that, but what I did was just take the exact same marketing concepts of subscriber value, compelling content, etc., and then use that to build first a law practice, and then a couple of real estate brokerages.
From there, I had the confidence to start going back to pure internet only stuff. But instead of advertising, I became more of a direct marketing type.

Yaro: Okay. So your little projects were big projects in some cases. Were you the only one writing those newsletters and setting things up from a technical standpoint? Or were you hiring back then? How big were you?

Brian: No. You know what, and I probably should have, but I always wrote. I loved that end of it. I was always responsible for being the rainmaker, because I knew how. The people I needed to hire and work with in real estate had no idea what I did. They were just happy that it worked.

Yaro: Yeah, because you were generating leads for them, right?

Brian: Exactly. I’ve always been rather bad at delegating, and that’s something that I need to continue to work on. I’m fascinated by the ability, specifically with copywriting and direct marketing, how you can write one sales piece and fortunes have been made off of that. That’s a fascinating thing.

I’ve done quite well with several promotions. I’ve never hit one individual just out of the park home run, but I think that is what’s so fascinating about it, that you never know. You know?

The reality is most successful people online do project after project and it builds and builds and builds. Every time I have an idea that I’m working on it has to be homerun quality to me, but I fully expect that it won’t be. It’ll just do well.

So that’s the way to go about it, because I’ve never had much luck with anything that I wasn’t passionate about.
Yaro: The other thing is you’re taking action at least. You do create the chance for it to go big.

Brian: Literally 80-90% of it. I mean having great ideas, I have them left and right, but if you don’t act on them they’re no good at all.

Yaro: Okay. So if we took a snapshot then, Brian, of what you had today, I know you can’t talk about every single project you’re doing, but can you just give me a quick run through of what’s on your books today that is current for Brian Clark?

Brian: Well, we have the public projects. Like you said, I’ve always been behind the scenes, or more likely not necessarily behind the scenes, but I created local businesses. From there I would do joint ventures.

My model, it’s not really a secret, but for example let’s say you’re seeing a trend in a certain area of say the health and wellness industry, and you realize that there is a need that’s not being filled perhaps because the people with the credentials to do that have no clue about internet marketing or how to make a product, or whatever the case may be.

So essentially, you can find a market need and then contact someone and say, “Hey, are you interested in doing this? I know the ropes. I can put this together. All I need to do is let’s get together and create something.”

Usually the easiest thing to do is something like we’re doing right now. Get someone to interview the expert according to a script, and you have an audio product at the end of that.

Yaro: Not that this is scripted or anything.
Brian: No. I’m saying that just ...

Yaro: I know what you mean.

Brian: You can create a valuable product by just talking, you know, a conversation between two people. And usually from my standpoint, you did need a certain set of questions in order to extract what needed to come out.

Yaro: Of course, right. So is that what you’re doing now? You have partnerships with various experts in different niches? You provide say the internet marketing acumen and implementation and they provide the content creation?

Brian: I think that it’s fair to say that I’m enjoying some passive revenue at this time. Also from the sale of my last business, because basically at the end of last year I swore off anymore offline business activities. Never say never of course, the dust may fall.

That’s what really led me to kind of go ahead and start www.CopyBlogger.com. I’ve never really had any aspirations to be some internet marketing guru, and I’m not even sure I’m comfortable with this role, but I knew there were very exciting things going on online. I could see that coming, just like I saw it last time.

It’s different this time. There’s more power in individuals and small groups than there are in these $10 or $20 million venture capital funded things. We’re still seeing some companies get VC money. Good for them I guess. I’m not sure.

Usually if you’ve got a good idea, it’s either going to get traction or it’s not. I see value in taking money after the crowd has determined that this is something they’re interested in, but I don’t think I would
ever advise anyone to take funding based on an idea and then go out there and launch.

It’s just not necessary and you become very blinded to what people actually want. When you have money and an idea and a plan, you tend to try to just relentlessly implement it. When you don’t throw money into a project, and you know, it obviously takes money to do anything to a certain degree.

I’m talking about substantial amounts of money. If you’re forced to really give people what they want in order to be successful, that’s really the key for all successful businesses. Like Paul Graham says, “Make something people want,” right?

You can do that these days. Obviously 37signals is a good example there, a lot of Web 2.0 company successes. A lot of them are going to be failures though, because they may have the capacity to create a nice web-based application, but nobody wants it.

Yaro: Or there’s no way to keep it perpetually funded with whatever it needs for content.

Brian: Right. There’s no way to monetize it. Everyone is so looking to get acquired. Yahoo buys audiences with Delicious and Flicker, but I don’t think they’re ...

Yaro: And that’s the cream of the crop. How many little players are below them that are struggling to get through?

Brian: Right.

Yaro: The people that get the main attention are all we hear about throughout the day.
Brian: And they’re a very small minority. Against my better judgment, I’ve always tended to be a content person. That’s the kind of ideas I always come up with. And it generally works out for me, but as we’ve seen a lot lately, I think there was a great post by Scott Carpet, Publishing 2.0, about how content doesn’t scale. That’s true.

Content is labor intensive. That’s why user generated content is such the hot thing. Hey, they’re going to do it for us for free. Now there’s all sorts of fallacies in that model as well. Most of the content’s not that great and the other half is copyright infringement.

Yaro: Yeah. It’s very short-term thinking. I know a lot of people ...

Brian: Exactly, but building a platform such as Digg or Delicious, that’s true value. I just don’t know how easy it is to replicate.

Yaro: And I don’t think it should be something that’s easy to replicate, because there should be a few leaders in this area where the critical mass goes to. You don’t want to have, I don’t think, ten eBays lining up at one time, because you’re not going to get that top quality that eBay offers.

Brian: Right.

Yaro: It’s okay to have three or four perhaps, but you don’t want to get too many. But this is a good tie-in to what you’ve done with www.CopyBlogger.com. You’re talking about providing something that people wanted, and you’ve certainly hit the nail on the head with www.CopyBlogger.com.

Now, you’re not the only blogger who wrote about say copywriting or writing in general or blog traffic, and yet you really started off to find the feel.
I know you’ve answered the question already before of what you think it is that you did that was unique to get you to where you are, which was to create content that people generally wanted and to focus on your reader’s needs.

So I won’t ask you that question, but maybe you could elaborate a bit more on just a few -- I don’t want to call them insider secrets, but thoughts on what it takes to get a blog to a 5,000 a day readership, as opposed to where most bloggers are sitting on a 500 a day readership. You’re in upper echelon area, which is really hard to reach. So what do you think?

**Brian:** Well, when I started the blog, I thought it was a good idea. I thought it was a unique combination of elements, combining traditional copywriting with blogging and social media. It was just something that occurred to me.

Instead of SEO copywriting, which is keyword stuffing, at least it used to be, now you have an older form of copywriting applied in a new way, and I just thought that was a good idea and a good way to get across the point that you always have to focus on them.

It’s just the fundamental first rule of business as far as I’m concerned and certainly of marketing. But when I started [www.CopyBlogger.com](http://www.CopyBlogger.com), the idea was this. I’m going to talk about the subject matter and I’m going to be practicing what I preach on my readers. It’s either going to demonstrate in real time for everyone that it works, or no one’s going to read me. Everything will work itself out really fast. And luckily …

**Yaro:** It worked. This is yet another project that you attempted to see whether it would stick or not.
Brian: Sure. And of course with blogging, you don’t just start it for a month. You have to have signs of encouragement, I would say, but you can’t expect to just rocket to the top of the charts. It just doesn’t work that way. But you do have to see, I think, signs that you’re making progress in order to keep going.

If there’s anything that I think is the secret to CopyBlogger’s success, I think it was it’s just the realization. A lot of times when I talk to readers over IM or e-mail, they seem to really get a kick because they know that I’m teaching by doing.

Yaro: Yeah. It’s a lot of good social proof in itself.

Brian: Exactly. They just get a kick that you can read the post, but the post itself is working the way it’s intended to. It’s kind of a meta situation.

Yaro: Yeah, which could have backfired on you completely.

Brian: Absolutely. It’s very tenuous ground, really. But luckily it worked out.

Yaro: Okay. So outside of www.CopyBlogger.com, I’d like to know what’s in the day of the life of Brian Clark. I know you work pretty hard at the moment, because you have quite a lot of writing gigs to maintain. I know writing a blog in and of itself is a big job. I’m spending a hell of a lot of time doing that, as well as writing information products behind the scenes, so what are you doing in your 9 to 5 or 9 to 10, whatever it is.

Brian: Nine to 5, I wish. I don’t know how I thought I was going to have more leisure time with this, but it’s my own choosing so it’s okay.
Since September, well for a couple months before September, a lot of time has been taking up by www.Tutorial.com, which is our video site that I partner with Chris Pearson on.

That is a whole different ball game. I don’t think people realize how much work it takes. And these are just screen cast videos. You know, it’s not like live video or anything like that.

But I know, for example, www.Rocketboom.com or www.zefrank.com, they literally spend six to eight hours a day just getting that one three-minute clip out, so it’s fairly labor intensive.

Of course the rewards can be great. www.Tutorial.com is actually doing very well. Unlike Copy Blogger, it was designed to make money from day one, and it has, both from sponsorship and AdSense and affiliate links.

When you start off without obvious monetization, I think it can help you build readership to a certain degree, but then once you start to bring things in you have to be very strategic about it so as not to alienate your readers.

Luckily, I’ve been able to do that slowly at Copy Blogger, because it’s never been a priority. Copy Blogger really was intended to get myself known and be able to meet people like yourself and just dozens of other people that are doing interesting things online.

It’s almost worked too well, because I’ve gotten to the point that for awhile there I was kind of overwhelmed. A lot of people have good ideas. They wanted to joint venture, work on this project, etc. I had to really cut back on that because it was getting to the point that there were so many possibilities that nothing was getting done.

**Yaro:** Right. Have you hired an e-mail manager yet?
Brian: Gosh, that will probably be the first thing that I do. At this point, I’ve just become very bad at e-mail and I warn people, “Look, I may not get back to you for awhile.”

Yaro: It’s scary when you have to devote a weekend to responding to your e-mails or something like that, which I find myself doing lately.

Brian: Right. But yeah, trying to keep up with e-mail. I think being engaged in my comments section and answering e-mails and reaching out to people and all that kind of stuff. I think that’s been a part of how well Copy Blogger has done.

It takes a lot of work, but I really do enjoy it and sometimes I have to say, “Look, you need to focus a little bit more on what’s paying the bills.” And I do that all the time.

I end up working more, but this year I kind of knew once Copy Blogger started to take off that I was going to be busy. I was going to be working a lot. I think there’s a lot going on right now. I think this is a good particular time to be working hard.

Yaro: How does the wife feel about you working so hard?

Brian: Well, she just went back to work recently after staying home several years with the children. Not really because she had to, but because she was just missing her professional life.

So now she’s back to working, which just makes it more crazy. She doesn’t mind me working, anymore than I mind her working. We just have to make sure that things get taken care of.
Yaro: You don’t have the advantages like I do of being a single guy. I can totally lose myself in work and I have to smack myself to get out of there.

Brian: When I was a young, single guy, I didn’t work enough, I’m afraid.

Yaro: There you go. Maybe I’m being smart, I don’t know. Time will tell.

Brian: You’ve done quite a bit more than most people your age accomplished. Actually, more than some people my age accomplish. I wouldn’t worry. You’re on the right track.

Yaro: I’m curious, Brian, you were talking about your bread and butter. I know this is just getting started so it’s not the significant portion yet, but are you still doing a lot of consulting? What can you talk about in terms of your income at the moment?

Brian: I have two. I explicitly state on the blog that I’m not really for hire. I’ve had the most amazing, not even requests, they were almost like demands. “I need this press release done by tomorrow. I’ll give you $100.”

The first response that I wanted to send, I didn’t, but I politely told them the same thing, which is no way.

Yaro: What if they said $10,000?

Brian: Well, sure. For $10,000, a press release, I could squeeze that in. But most people terribly undervalue good writing, and I’m just not about to entertain that, because I don’t have to.

Yaro: And you’ve never thought about being a Dan Kennedy or Michel Fortin, Gary Halbert, these sort of professional copywriters? Because they get paid sort of $10,000 for a sales page.
Brian: Right. I’ve done a few of those, but my passion is more about starting up businesses and projects. I don’t want to just be the guy who writes the words. In fact, I’m getting closer and closer to hiring out my own copywriting.

I mean, I really enjoy doing it. I always have done it. I always write everything basically related to any project I’m doing. I finally started letting Pearson write his own copy on www.Tutorial.com just because he’s good at it, but I enjoy doing it.

I’ve got two major projects going right now that are live. I’ve got several things that are kind of in maintenance stage from last year that, you know, you don’t have to pay much attention to them.

Yaro: Can you name these? Are these public?

Brian: The people that I’ve joint ventured with would not appreciate me naming it.

Yaro: Okay, fair enough.

Brian: Their expertise and their product, and they don’t necessarily want me saying that I actually produced something.

Yaro: All right. I thought we could help them make some sales maybe, but if it’s not related.

Brian: Oh, no. Find a strategic way to do that. But with my background, what most people call joint venturing these days is just a glorified affiliate program. It’s really a bastardization of the word.

I learned about joint ventures from practicing law. I mean really sophisticated stuff, whether it be real estate development or
business licensing, whatever. This is the kind of stuff I worked on as an attorney.

I didn’t enjoy playing that role, I guess, any more than I would enjoy playing only a consultant role. I wanted to be the guy making the deal, not the one papering the deal. But that was an excellent background. I routinely kind of get in the middle of stuff that makes money.

**Yaro:** Nice way of putting it.

**Brian:** There’s a deal closing this week that I did. I helped a company build up a sales relationship with an electronic funding company. That company is getting acquired and we have an interest. I mean, I don’t like to talk about money because I think it’s gauche.

If you do that kind of stuff you don’t necessarily have to worry about slapping ads all over Copy Blogger or trying to pitch something every week or every day. You know, you just don’t have to do that. And that’s a luxury and I recognize that.

I don’t want to in any way belittle people that are trying to make money from what they’re doing. In fact I applaud them. There’s just a way to do it and there’s a way not to.

I think I probably would’ve tried to do more with Copy Blogger on a faster schedule if the money had been that much of a concern, but I had a luxury and now I’m kind of scrambling.

It’s more a matter of time, but I’ve got some ideas about sponsorships and whatnot and things that add value to the audience that also make me money. That’s a win-win situation for everyone, so those are the types of things I want to implement.
Yaro: I think it’s an important point when you talk about blogging with the luxury of not having to focus too much on how you’re going to make money from that, because it allows you to be almost purely creative in what you write about, how you write about, and when you write. It’s just a much more natural flow.

I know a lot of people get hung up on the blogging for dollars part of the equation, which can ultimately be, I think, a big detriment, because it kills the motivation. It doesn’t kill it, but certainly makes it a bit misguided.

I think if you’re in a situation where you’re doing something else that pays your bills, and you can also blog and demonstrate expertise as a side project – pretty much what you’ve been doing up to this point, maybe – your best work certainly comes out that way, I think.

Brian: Right. And just to be clear, for example, a lot of the people that I enjoy or that I hope are reading Copy Blogger, and I think they are, are more of the small business people that are promoting their existing business or a business that they’re concurrently starting.

That’s very similar to the multiple ezines that I’ve done to build my businesses. In that case, the whole reason why you’re blogging is to promote your business. I mean, never be shy about that, but I think that’s a very different situation than someone who’s not necessarily trying to attract consulting work or sell an existing product that they might have.

It’s when people are trying to monetize through other avenues. Of course, everyone is just enamored with AdSense. It’s a very alluring program. I would love to have a few websites that racked in all that AdSense income. I think it was a lot easier to do several years ago. It’s not impossible now, but it’s certainly not easy.
Yaro: Well, actually, I’ve only just recently acquired one website that was basically – well, not set and forget, but it’s a forum so it runs itself. It does make a majority of income from AdSense. And I’ve got that little Firefox extension on my browser down in the bottom right corner that tells me every hour how much money I’ve made.

Brian: I know, it’s addictive, isn’t it?

Yaro: Oh, it’s terrible. I spend so much head space on that little counter, just because it’s there. I’m thinking of taking it down because it’s actually a big distraction.

Brian: Checking AdSense, checking affiliate stats, the money’s either there or it’s not. And trust me, I’m just as bad as anyone because it’s just fascinating. I mean whether it be checking ClickBank stats or the shopping cart, whatever. There’s all sorts of different way you can make money. The more ways you go about it, the worse it becomes.

I think the only saving grace I have at this point is there’d be too many things to check. I’d never get anything done, because I’m sure there’s -- I checked a Paypal account today that I hadn’t checked in awhile and there was money in it. I mean, a few thousand dollars.

You know how people say that PayPal money doesn’t feel like real money? I was instantly thinking about, “Man, what can I buy with this?” I’d spend it like it’s five dollars in my jeans. I didn’t come from a wealthy background, so I don’t have a disrespect for money whatsoever, but you stumble across a PayPal account that you forgot about, that’s like Christmas morning.

Yaro: So Brian, where are you going in the future? Where do you want to be? What’s the plan? I know you don’t want to work as hard as you’re working at the moment in the future.
Brian: I was heading in that direction and then I got sidetracked, which I often do.

Yaro: Keep going.

Brian: Yes. I’ve got at least two projects firmly on the table for the beginning of 2007. I will have an e-book for Copy Blogger shortly.

I also am interested in doing more teleclass type stuff from Copy Blogger. I think there’s a lot of subject matter than can be covered. I’m losing some interest in the e-book format. I’m much more interested in more of an interactive audio or video environment. Then of course, you can always package that up later and continue to sell it. So that’s on the plate.

The other two projects are just completely independent blogging and podcasting projects that I’ll probably be launching.

And that will pretty much be as much as I could possibly do on my own. Some of these things actually are designed, well everything I do, you’ll notice it never has my name front and center. I always create some kind of branded product or whatever, www.CopyBlogger.com, www.Tutorial.com.

It’s always going to be that way, because building a strong personal brand is important, but building a brand that can be conveyed or taken over by someone else is, in my opinion, much more important to keeping your sanity, and if you’re like me, moving on to the next deal.

And so I guess to answer your question, part of why I’m so keen to be actively involved with the blogging community is because I view myself more as a producer-type, with the legal background, a lot of ideas and not enough time to implement them.
It’s time to collaborate at a different level. Beyond the joint venture, more into putting projects together with talented people and, again, same model, “Does it fly or not? If so, let it roll.” I’d love to be able to do more of that per year than I’m capable of doing on my own.

Yaro: Okay. So you’re not the kind of “I want to set up passive income and sit on the beach, perpetual holiday” kind of guy? You want to keep your hands dirty in more projects for the near and current future?

Brian: Yeah. I mean, I don’t think I’ve made enough money from what I did last year to retire forever, but I can sit around for awhile. That’s just not any fun for me. I like having the option. Some people refer to it differently, but we can call it “Go to hell money.”.

Having passive income or money saved up gives you freedom. If you’re unhappy, stop. And again, I’ve been in positions before where I couldn’t stop. I had student loans to pay. Everyone is to a varying degree in that situation and no one really likes it.

The first key is to love what you do. The second key is to try to continue to build trickles or flows of income from various sources. Never put your eggs all in one basket. A lot of people do that with Google and then they get slapped around when the algorithm changes. That’s a scary idea.

If you enjoy not worrying when you go to sleep at night that if something gets cut off, there should be three or four other things that keep you going. And if you continually enjoy creating new things and seeing if they work, and if you’re successful with some of those over time, it just works itself out. It really does.

Yaro: I was going to say, I normally finish these by asking what would you recommend, because the audience of these podcasts are small
business owners and young entrepreneurs and entrepreneurs in general, who may or may not have their own enterprise already or certainly are about to launch one or are interested in launching one in the near future.

If I ask what would you recommend to these people are the key to successes or how you’d go about launching a first project, but I think you’ve kind of answered that already, in a general kind of way anyway.

Do you have anything to add perhaps? If you’re fresh out of university or high school or you’re 20-something and you’re about to start something online, what would you dip your toes into first?

**Brian:** I really wish I was this guy back then. That’s why, Yaro, I think you’re really ahead of the curve and I hope a lot of your listeners are as well. That’s really cool. I think there’s more sources of this type of information than ever.

I think before the internet really exploded most business advice was somewhat stuffy. Of course, you had your classics like, you know, *Think And Grow Rich* and all that kind of stuff, but those weren’t on my radar at the time.

I think from a general sense, it’s important to really try to enjoy what you’re doing and while you have the freedom and you’re not locked into -- people at a younger age think they’re locked in and they can’t do certain things. It only gets worse, okay? So, the best advice I can give you ...

**Yaro:** So optimistic, right?

**Brian:** Well, this comes from a responsibility standpoint, right? The best advice I would give is be practical. Look at a way that you can fill an
actual need. Tie it into a passion and then take risk. Just try it. Just do it. Give it a shot. If you fail, you’ll learn more than if you succeed. I failed tons of times. I learned. I still continue to fail.

There are always missteps and as long as you figure out what was important to pick up from that, you’ll just continue to grow. That’s all I can say.

And again, I wish I could tell myself this advice when I was 20, because I had that kind of mentality that you have to find one thing and it just takes off and that’s what you do for the rest of your life. When you think about it, that’s kind of depressing.

Yaro: Yeah. It’s certainly restrictive. A lot of pressure on yourself.

Brian: There’s a whole world of ways to make money. Find one that you’re into and go with it, or 20 of them. But just tend to focus on one at a time.

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And that’s where the interview with Brian Clark ends. I’d like to thank Brian for coming on my podcast. If you’d like to learn more about him, check out his blog, which is at www.CopyBlogger.com.

If you’d like to listen to more podcasts like this, please visit my blog at www.Entrepreneurs-Journey.com or do a Google search for my name, which is Yaro. I hope you enjoyed it and I’ll talk to you next time.