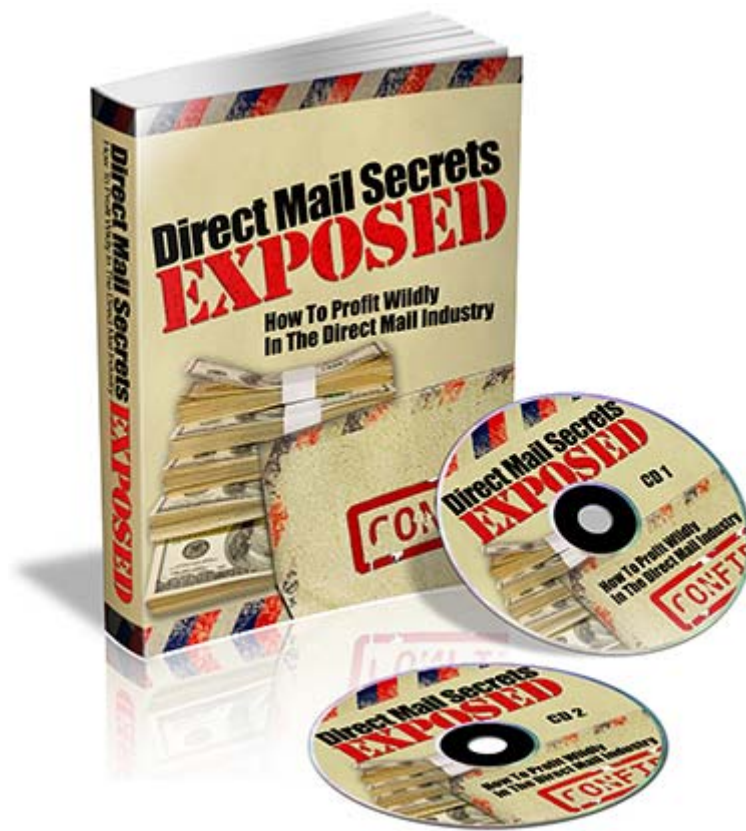


Direct Mail Secrets Exposed

How To Profit Wildly
In The Direct Mail Industry



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Terry:

Hi there. You're listening to Terry Telford, and we're very lucky to have someone today who is an extraordinary marketing person, both online and offline. His name is Jeff Sands. He's actually developed a direct marketing/direct mail business. He's been in the mail ordering business for 22 years, and he has built a list of over 500,000 people. But, that's not even the most impressive part. The most impressive part is that those 500,000 people are not prospects; they're actually customers. He actually has 500,000 customers on his list.

He's basically in the offline world, but he has stepped into the online limelight, and he has some very interesting stories and perspective of doing online business as opposed to working in the offline world. Today, Jeff will actually let me pick his brain for a while and get an insight into the world of direct mail, from both an online and offline perspective. First, I'd like to say thank you very much for being here with us today, Jeff.

Jeff:

The pleasure is all mine. You're very, very welcome, Terry.

Terry:

I appreciate it. Maybe we can start off with a bit of history about you. Where did you come from and how did you get where you are today?

Jeff:

I was born in New York City in Brooklyn, New York. I went to school there, moved out to Long Island, which is a little further out from the city in the suburbs, and graduated high school. I went to college, and went on to become a dentist. I practiced dentistry for about 15 years, and really did not like what I was doing at all. I found that it made me very nervous. It was technical; it wasn't my orientation at all. By the time I hit the age of 40 years old, I was a nervous wreck from practicing dentistry.

Most people don't know it, but dentists have the highest suicide rate and the highest rate of depression of any profession. I suffered from both of those things. One day, I came into my office and there was a piece of junk mail lying on my desk. I opened it up and it was really interesting. It was talking about starting a business at home that could make you some money. It wasn't anything, but it really peaked my interest. It had a lot of benefits in there about how you could work from home, earn money, and do it at your own pace. For whatever reason, I signed up for the program.

I forgot about it, and a few weeks later the program came in the mail. I looked at it, and it wasn't something that I would do, but it was something that was really creative and a way that people could really make money if they went and did this. I was totally impressed. So, I put it aside and forgot about it, but I kept it in the back of my mind. Obviously, whoever I bought that from, put me on some kind of a mailing list. I started to get some different mailers. A lot of the mail I got was really junky and I tossed most of them. They were things like chain letters and stuff.

But, one day I got a magazine in the mail. Unsolicited. It was called "Income Opportunities." I looked through it and I saw these ads all over. Some were full-page ads and some were one-inch ads; they were classified ads advertising all these different business opportunities. I started sending away for them and became a business opportunity junkie. I really started to figure it out after a while. I was spending \$10 or \$12; \$25 was a lot of money. I saw what these people had invested in a little book or piece of paper and some of the ideas were wonderful. Most of the ideas weren't, but some of them were. They just started to interest me.

Creative writing was always my forte. When I was in school, I never really paid much attention to punctuation or spelling. Now, with computers, it's so great with spell check because I look like a million bucks. I used to write compositions and my teachers would write back with all spelling corrections, but on the top there would be an A++ . They would say to me, "Wow. You're some writer. You should go into writing." I never really gave it much thought.

I was always able to write great letters to convince people of things. Once, the IRS gave me a late fee of \$5,000 and told me that I filed something late when I didn't even owe any taxes. I went to a couple of different accountants and they all said that I can't fight it and that it's too difficult. So, I went home and wrote a letter. I wrote the letter carefully and I went over it; it took me a while. Once the IRS got the letter, they apologized for the \$5,000s.

Terry:

You got the IRS to reverse a charge against you?

Jeff:

Yes. I explained to them what happened in a very logical, sensible, non-confrontational way, and they responded to me in a nice way. I have a way about me that allows me to go through life very easily because I treat people very fairly and I know how to express myself to people. One of my philosophies is to treat everyone like he or she is a long lost friend. If you do that, in your writing or when you meet and speak to them, you're going to go real far in this world. People always want to see a friendly face and people always want recognition. That's what people don't get. So, I always use those things.

In my own practice I was a very successful dentist because I was a great communicator. I just didn't like the idea of doing the physical task of being a dentist; it made me very nervous.

Terry:

What was the next step for you then? You have a lot of different junk mail filling up your post office box...

Jeff:

I decided to look into a few different things. I wanted to start doing things to help the universe instead of just taking money out of it. I noticed that there were a lot of credit repair things going on. At the time, I had gotten divorced, and my credit wasn't very good. So, I decided to look into what credit repair is and what credit repair isn't. I read all these books and everything else, and I went to an attorney. I asked her, "What is with these credit repair services? What can they do? What can't they do?"

She explained it to me. And I said to her, "Would you write a book on that for me? Or outline it for me?" And we did. She outlined it for me and I wrote the book myself. Then, I wrote a sales letter to sell the book. I tested it and it really worked. I was selling those books like crazy. So, I decided that I wanted to do things a little different. I made this a part of my career. Most of my career and programs are based on having affiliates or distributors doing the work for me. So, I advertised this program as, "A no nonsense way to \$500 a day." I sold them the whole program; they got the sales letter, they got reprint rights to the book, and they were able to go out and sell the book and brand my name as things were going on.

Terry:

When did all of this happen?

Jeff:

This was in the late 80's. 1986, 1987.

Terry:

So you're doing stuff back in the 80's that have just surfaced now on the Internet marketing scene as the newer thing. Resale rights and private label rights are now...

Jeff:

I was the first one to do it that I know of.

Terry:

That's very cool. This is all offline.

Jeff:

Yea, it was all offline. Then, I decided that I was collecting a lot of names on my mailing list, and that I should offer distributorship to people who could sell my names for me and get a good part of the profits. So, that was the next program that I developed. It was a "How to turn your junk mail into cash," kind of thing. I had many different variations of it, and that was also successful.

Terry:

How did that work? What was the process there?

Jeff:

Basically, they would mail out the flyers with a cover letter that I would give them, they would collect the orders from the list, they would keep half of the money, send me the other half along with shipping and handling, and I would drop ship under their label and name to their customer. This became a giant part of my business because they're all buyers. The average person in this country, if they want to go to a list broker and buy names, they have to buy a minimum of 3,000 to 5,000.

The average guy goes to a magazine, and in that magazine they see an ad for, "1,000 names for \$20, and we'll triple your order for free. These names are less than 30 days old." A guy called me once and said, "I would be glad to pay you ten cents for all your names that you use." At the time I was doing 20,000 names a month. And I was thinking, "That guy is going to give me ten cents each... that kind of adds up." Meanwhile, he was getting them when they were a year old for me, and selling them as new (less than 30 days) because he just got them.

Terry:

Because he just bought them.

Jeff:

And then I said, "Uh-oh, there is a whole in the market here. I'm going to fill it." So, I stopped doing that, and that's when I lead to my distributorship. I said, "Let the average guy who is doing an MLM program or something take the same quality names as someone who would have to go a list builder for, and buy 3,000 to 5,000. This guy could never do it." So, my deal is sell names as few as 100 so some average guy could go into an MLM program and actually be successful. I have people who are still with me today using my name from 1986, 1987, 1988, until now.

Terry:

Wow.

Jeff:

That's how successful. If you were too call my list broker, which is Macro Marks Incorporated, who is the largest list broker in the United States, and ask them to name the top three lists, he would name my list, which is the Mail Order Marketplace. That used to be the name of my company for over 20 years, until we moved to Florida. We've always prided ourselves in that.

Terry:

So is your business more of a list broking business? Or are you actually selling products as well?

Jeff:

No, we're also selling products as well. There are many streams of income that we have. We're involved in multi-level marketing, writing books, and publishing books. The books that we publish are from real people doing real things making real money.

For example, I met a guy in New York who is making money by taking pictures. He had an unbelievable system of making money by taking pictures. He explained the business to me. When he did, I nearly lost my mind. I thought that it was the greatest business on earth; you could start it with nothing but a camera, and you don't even have to know how to take pictures. He said, "Yea." His penname is Mike Mansfield, and his book is called Easy Photo Cash. You can find it at EasyPhotoCash.com. This book has been selling since 1987, and it

never stopped being a top seller. That's how good the program is and that's how many people love it. Anything that I hear that a real person does, I go out and do.

I met a guy where I used to live. He was dressed in overalls at the bank. One day he came into the bank and he asked the lady a question at the bank and the lady said, "Listen. You have to get to the end of the line." So, the guy walked up to the next teller and withdrew \$3,000,000 from the bank and said, "I'm putting it in another account." You can't always judge a book by its cover. I walked over to him and said, "Hi. My name is Jeff Sands," and he told me his name, and we kind of became friends. I asked him what he did and he said that he was a carpet layer. He said his real business, however, was real estate. I said, "Oh really? What do you mean?" He said, "I have a way to sell real estate that's a little bit different than the average person." I asked him to tell me about it, and he said that he would be glad to.

So, he and I became really good friends. He told me every little thing that he did with selling real estate. I sat and interviewed him. I put it all down on tape. I said to him, "I'll publish your story. We'll split the profits. We'll do your real estate course. How about that?" He said, "Great." We've been selling that course for the last nine years. It never gets outdated and it's a fantastic way of selling real estate. So, that's one of the products that we offer as well.

Terry:

Do you have that online as well or is that strictly offline?

Jeff:

That's online as well. It's called The Missing Factor. It's about the factor that people miss when buying real estate. You can find the offer at TheMissingFactor.com. It's really a good one.

Terry:

If we take a specific product, like The Missing Factor for example, is it an eBook or a physical product?

Jeff:

It's a physical product. Most of my products are physical products. I have two downloadable eBooks. Easy Photo Cash is one. I suffered from gout a few years ago. I went to the doctor and he gave me all kinds of medications that made me feel worse than the disease. So, I went out and looked for some kind of help that I could get naturally,

and I found it. I started a website called GoutBusters.com. Instead of Ghost Busters, Gout Busters.

I sell that as a downloadable and I send them the physical product as well. The reason I made that downloadable is because people are suffering and they need instant relief. They want instant gratification. I find that selling them that downloadable product, getting them on my newsletter, then mailing them the physical product, is really good. I found that there are two sides on the Internet and that downloadable products are both good and bad. I found a very high refund rate with some of them. People said that they couldn't download it or that they couldn't read it. I never had an outrageous refund rate, but ever since I've been sending the physical product along with the download, refunds are practically zero, where they were at one or two percent before.

Terry:

So, whenever the people order, they know that they're getting the download instantly and then a book in the mail?

Jeff:

Correct.

Terry:

That's a good system.

Jeff:

I have my eyes and ears open all the time. I dabbled in eBay for a while because I wanted to write a book on eBay, until I found that there were so many books on eBay. I can go to eBay and learn about eBay. But, it was interesting. I wanted to sell a couple of things and I did. I was so proud of myself. I went to the post office and I was standing there. There's a guy on the front of the line, and the post office is just about to close, and he's arguing with the guy. People are waiting on line tapping their feet. I was thinking, "I better get this out. I promised it to this guy." I like to deliver whatever I promise when I promise it.

So, the guy is screaming, "Listen. I sold this stuff on eBay and you have to get it out today. You have to put it in a box and get it ready right now." I hear the guy behind me going, "That jerk is selling on eBay? I make a fortune buying one eBay, not selling." My ears popped and I turned around and I see this guy sitting in a wheelchair. I said, "Excuse me, can we talk?" And he said, "Yea." Once the post

office closed, we sat outside, and I said, "You make money buying on eBay?" He said, "Yea. I know something that you can buy on eBay and sell for hundreds of dollars." I asked him if he would tell me about it, and he said sure.

I was amazed. I went home and tried it out myself. I did what he told me: I went to the same spot he told me to go to, I bought exactly what he told me to, I sent out an e-mail to my list, and I made over \$6,000 the first day I tried it.

Terry:

This is something that you bought on eBay.

Jeff:

Yes. I bought three things on eBay and I sold them. Not only that, but I had a waiting list of people who wanted more. It was a matter of just going back to eBay and following this guy's simple step-by-step instructions. This is how you make money buying, not selling, on eBay. We called it, Ebay in Reverse. That became an international best seller. It was all over England with 50,000 books, all over Australia, all over Canada; anywhere they speak English, this book is being sold.

Terry:

This is a print product?

Jeff:

This is a print product, yea. It comes with a CD-ROM and also some really cool bonuses. So, I get my material from real down to earth people. In the old days, when I first came into the business, I first noticed that there were pictures with guys with mansions and fancy cars talking down to people telling them, "Send me ten bucks and I'll tell you how to be a millionaire. Here's my bank deposits; yours are going to be the same."

That doesn't really work. It doesn't cut it anymore. Maybe it did in those days, but now I find that if Joe tells his friend John, "I just moved from my single wide trailer to my double wide, and I got a new truck," that's much more believable to the average person. So, depending on who you're talking to and who your audience is, I like to talk to them from the person who is actually doing it. So, like this guy who wrote, Ebay In Reverse, if you read his sales copy, it's him talking. He actually gave me the sales copy. That guy was a funny man, and the sales copy is funny.

It's HathawaySecret.com. When I showed them the letter, they said that it breaks every rule in the mail order Internet world. You're not supposed to be funny. I said that this guy is funny. So, that's still going too.

Terry:

How do you go from creating the product and writing the product... do you have a printer print the books? Do you have print on demand? How do you do that?

Jeff:

Well, we have a printer that prints the books, but I have a guy who is really good at printing on demand right now. He's always a couple of weeks ahead of me, which is really helpful in terms of having stuff on hand and all kinds of inventory. That's what I like about eBooks; you don't need any inventory and there was no cost. There's also a feeling of what you can charge for certain eBooks. A lot of the stuff I sell is way beyond that.

Terry:

What kind of a pricing are you looking at for eBooks? For example, Gout Busters?

Jeff:

Gout Busters sells for \$37.

Terry:

What about, The Missing Factor?

Jeff:

That's not an eBook.

Terry:

So it's not available online?

Jeff:

No, it's not available online.

Terry:

What about, EBay In Reverse?

Jeff:

That's not an eBook either.

Terry:

Give me an eBook in the business world that you sell online.

Jeff:

The only one is Easy Photo Cash.

Terry:

Okay, what's the price point on that?

Jeff:

\$37.

Terry:

Okay. So, online is about \$37. What's the price point on, The Missing Factor?

Jeff:

The Missing Factor is \$97. It's normally a \$397 two-volume course, but we have it on special now for \$97.

Terry:

What's included in that?

Jeff:

It's a two-volume course that's the most comprehensive real estate course that I have ever seen in my life.

Terry:

It's two paperback books?

Jeff:

Yea, it's two perfect bound, beautiful books.

Terry:

Excellent.

Jeff:

It's about 400 pages.

Terry:

That's a substantial piece of work.

Jeff:

Yea, it is.

Terry:

So, you developed the product... what do you do for advertising? How do you get the ball rolling and get orders in?

Jeff:

The first thing I do is go to my own list, which makes me lucky. That's why I've stayed in direct mail for so long. I get a neat idea and I test it. I have half a million people waiting strong to hear from me.

Terry:

Fantastic.

Jeff:

I can get a neat idea on Monday and in two weeks have a bundle of cash in my hand.

Terry:

Wow.

Jeff:

Then, I go and rent other lists that I know are good. But, there aren't many. I'm in a business that is falling down. People are looking to make money or solve a problem, which is what we're trying to do: find a problem and solve it. I'm also in a multi-level program that really helps save the country. You save on gasoline and it cleans up the environment. That's at GasPriceRelief.com. That's the website for the multi-level program that I'm in. I'm also involved in mentoring others and writing sales letters and sales copy for others. Most of the time of my regular business is run without me. I'm not really required for it.

Terry:

That's a nice problem to have.

Jeff:

I love it. You asked me once before what I do when I get up in the morning. When I get up, it's great; I do my yoga exercise and I meditate. I live in a place that is probably one of the most beautiful subdivisions of Florida. We have a 17-room mansion. I have a separate apartment over my three-car garage that I have my office in. I go out and ride my bike or take a walk with my dog. I'll go talk to

some people, and then go up to work at about 11 or 12. I see how everything is going and see if there are any problems.

Then, I go downstairs to my glass room that overlooks the most beautiful tropical paradise that you have ever seen. I have my laptop down there and I do whatever creative work I want. I speak to my clients that I mentor too. I believe strongly in having a mentor. It's helped me out. Right now, Dan Lok is my mentor when it comes to the Internet. There is always more to learn, and that's what makes life exciting.

Terry:

So, how do you go about... you have your list and you mail your list. Is this e-mail or postal?

Jeff:

That's all postal.

Terry:

Okay.

Jeff:

I also collect names on my websites, so I also have an e-mail list as well. Today, the direct marketers who are not using e-mail or direct mail lists are really missing the boat.

Terry:

If you didn't have a list, where would you go? I'm thinking of somebody who just started out in business, they've come up with a great product idea, and pretty much got to the point where he has to market it. That's where I find that the whole thing falls apart.

Jeff:

That's true. I just forwarded you an e-mail, and maybe I can even read part of it. It's really so encompassing in what I wanted to say because you have to learn something... when I became a dentist, I didn't just say that I wanted to become a dentist, opened up a box of dental tools, then became a dentist. You have to do something and you really have to learn your craft. I wrote an Internet piece today because I was selling your membership site. I wrote, "Dear fellow entrepreneurs and valued subscriber, if you want to learn how to do anything, ask an expert. Don't go out and buy turnkey websites and businesses and think they're going to make you money. Nothing can be further from the truth.

When I wanted to learn direct mail marketing over 20 years ago, I read all the books written by the pros and attended many seminars so I could perfect my craft. If you're promoting anything online, you may not have the time or resources to find what teaches your craft. My good friend and Internet marketing extraordinaire, Terry Telford, has a motto that says, "If you do what you love, you'll never have to work a day in your life." Terry gave me an incredible but very limited offer."

I go on to speak about how I had to go on your membership site and when I went to it, and started learning things, it was helpful. But, when I wanted to do direct mail, I looked at magazines and saw who was running the biggest ads and called them up. I realized that they all talked to me, even though I thought that none of them would. I had a mentor in direct mail, and when I got in the Internet, I had a mentor there as well. I really believe that anybody who comes in and wants to learn a craft should get a mentor. It really is the way to go. You could trial and error and lose your shirt. I was losing money on the Internet for years. I met a few people about three years ago who put me in the right direction. When I hooked up with Dan Lok, it was the greatest thing that ever happened to me.

I'm not a kid anymore, but I'm still alive and kicking, and I want to be on top of the heat. To do that, it takes work. It's also about knowing where to go. If someone wanted to start in direct mail, I have a terrific mentoring program myself. I teach people where to go: where to get the good lists, who is a good copywriter, and who is the real deal? That's very important because in this business there are many scoundrels who are so happy to take your money and give you nothing in return. It's a shame. Meeting a guy like you, for me, is like gold. Also, the day I met Dan Lok was one of the luckiest days of my life. I could do that for so many people as well, or recommend them to people who can.

Terry:

That's fantastic. That's very inspiring. If you were going to be my mentor, and I developed a product, which is a book that I've written... I have several different markets that I could target, but mainly it would be the business opportunity people. What should I do first in my marketing?

Jeff:

First, you better have a damn good sales letter. That would be the first thing. Most people go to a professional, when they probably have

it within them to do it themselves, better. I'll give you an example: take a Madison Avenue guy who comes up with a slick ad for perfume and puts it in a magazine. They never code their ads or anything; they never know if they're good, bad, or indifferent. If you take someone who's not a good copywriter but who knows how to talk... I will tell you that my first few attempts were very successful. I was not lucky, but I knew how to speak to people and communicate. I studied communication and it was always important for me to communicate and connect with people.

I would tell anyone to have their sales letter reviewed. It has to reflect what you're really selling. What's the hook? You have to know when to put the take away in. You have to know what to do with bonuses. You have to know a lot of things. So, I first have somebody look at my sales letter. I would put down my own ideas and have someone look at it. If you're a complete novice at it, then you should hire a professional.

After that, it's a matter of having someone who has the experience which are the good lists and which are the bad lists, if you're going into direct mail. You should also know about Google advertising, if it's going to be on the Internet. I also have ads that are print ads for my website. There are a lot of ways to advertise websites, no matter what your budget is. You can have affiliates who do all the work who help you. I believe in affiliates; I'm working on a project now that's going to be all affiliates. It's something brand new, and for me it's rather earth shattering. It's something that's going to help the planet.

What I would recommend is to go to people you know, pose the question, and pay the price. They say, "Step up you discontented man. If you want something, simply pay the price and take it." You can't have anything without paying the price for it. I don't even always mean money. Sometimes it could be time, talking to people, or any other way to pay the price. But, there is a price for everything in life.

Terry:

Either time or money. If you have a fairly good sales letter, and you don't have a list of your own yet, you're going to want to develop your list. Would you go more towards online advertising with something like Google AdWords, classified ads in certain magazines, or direct mail?

Jeff:

Right now, if I were to start fresh today, I would probably go right to the Internet.

Terry:

Okay. Why is that?

Jeff:

Because it's such a good way to go. It's electronic direct mail, as you say, and the new for people to find the solution to their problems is on the Internet. My particular field of direct mail is a dying field. There used to be millions of names that I could mail to, but now if there are 75,000 good ones, that's a lot. That's not really a lot. So, if you're a newbie, I would recommend that you go to the Internet first.

Terry:

Okay. So, I just had an afterthought about the sales letter. Do you have a formula that you use? You said that you know when to use a takeaway and bonuses. Is there a specific formula that I could follow?

Jeff:

People buy, not because of reason. People buy because they are drawn into something. If reason kicked in, no one would buy any of these business opportunity offers, because they're all so unrealistic. So, I like to get people into what I call, "a state of magical thinking." I like to do that as fast as I can, like right from the headline. Right from the get go I want to get them into a state where they're in a dream state and they're not using their cognitive senses as much as they would.

Terry:

Can you give me an example of a dream state headline?

Jeff:

Yea. "New York Princess wants to release cash to those who want it."

Terry:

Okay. Does that not sound like a lot of hype, though?

Jeff:

Not if you read the letter. It's something that's been working for 16 years. So, it does sound like a lot of hype, but you want to get them into a dream state and that kind of does it for some people. Another example is, there's a guy who came to me from England, and he was a

cab driver who became very successful in direct mail in England. Then, he came to the United States, and wanted to tell his story about what happened to him over there. He was born in an orphanage and he was raised by strange people. He was adopted when he was older.

He was chosen to get an education that non-collegiate; he was going to be in a trade. In England, they supposedly decide by the sixth or seventh grade whether you're college material or not, and they decided that he wasn't. So, he became a taxi driver. One day, his life changed when he got a piece of junk mail in the mail. He read it and decided that maybe he could try something like this. His headline now reads, "How a simple piece of junk mail turned a taxi driver's wrecked life into a ride down easy street." That's something that people could relate to.

It's thoughts that get them into that state right away. Then, I said, "Finally revealed, the junk mail secrets that let me quit driving a cab to live the life of my dream and now you can too." That puts people into a state where they think, "A taxi driver is telling me this. I can relate to that. Let's see what else." Then he says, "My name is so and so, and you and I are probably a lot alike. Do you want to earn some extra money? Maybe even want to get rich? I was that way too. You don't want to work that hard to do it either. That was the same with me." So, we're putting them right there in that state where they don't want to work hard. "I'm a taxi driver and I made the money. I can show you. If I can do it, you can do it." Now, they're in that state.

Terry:

Right. So you have the headline, then a transition that brings them...

Jeff:

It's really not just a New York Princess; there's more to it than that. That's just written in an editorial and it looks like it was placed there by the magazine.

Terry:

So you have an advertorial.

Jeff:

Right. That's the whole thing.

Terry:

Very cool.

Jeff:

I try to get them into that magical thinking, because that's when people actually buy. Even with cars... when there is a red car on the cover of a magazine, Car and Track sells double the issues. I don't know why, but they do. A picture of a blonde girl... with the New York Princess, we tried three different pictures: one with a blonde girl, one with a brunette, and one with a red head. The blonde outpolled them all four to one.

Terry:

That's funny.

Jeff:

There's a lot of stuff like that that people should know.

Terry:

Where do you find out that kind of information so you don't have to test it?

Jeff:

Ask someone who has done it before. If you see a name, call that person up on the phone and see if they'll talk to you. Find out who is good. Ask questions. Go seek it. I went after it with all my heart and soul; nothing was going to stop me. That's how you have to be. You have to be relentless.

Terry:

I think that's really the key. You just hit the nail on the head. No matter how good it is what you're doing, if you don't have the ambition and the drive, and you don't hold onto it like a Pit Bull and act like you totally want it, it's probably going to go by the wayside once some of the problems start hitting you.

Jeff:

Anyone who is sitting there waiting for it to be handed to them might as well go play the lottery because they have a much better chance with that. But, I knew that there were people out there who were successful, and I wasn't about to stop until I hit the top.

Terry:

You've had quite a long career in the mail order business. What kind of challenges have you faced along the way?

Jeff:

A lot of them. I had a lot of dry periods where I couldn't write. I've had some periods where we had some bad experiences... 9/11 was the worst. I had a very big operation at the time: 17 employees, three printing presses, we were doing our own books and everything, and all of a sudden the phones went down for seven weeks. Anthrax came along and that was holding up the mail. That was the most major thing I ever faced; I almost went out of business at that particular. But, I dumped all of the big overhead and right now I'm working in my home. I have three employees. We've cut things back a little bit. I outsource a lot more stuff. I find that much more relaxing.

Terry:

And there's a lot more free time for you.

Jeff:

A lot more free time for myself, yea.

Terry:

I don't want to keep beating a dead horse here, Jeff, but I want to go back to the sales letter because I think it's extremely important so that people can get an idea of a formula. You've kind of touched on it already. You need a headline that really smacks people in the head. You have a little transition that basically brings them into the first paragraph of the letter. From what you just read, you've really drawn people into the letter instantly, and brought them onto the same side of the table as the person telling the story. It doesn't seem like it's a sales letter; it almost seems like it's more of a story. "I'm a taxi driver and here's what I found. Maybe it can happen the same way for you. Let me tell you about it."

Jeff:

I have another example. My headline for the EBay In Reverse program, is, "EBay shocker. Sitting in a wheelchair, I made \$3,806 my first 24 hours. You may do better. I did it buying, not selling, on eBay." Then it goes on and says a few things, then it goes into the story. "When I first showed a marketing guru, Jeff Sands, a very successful publisher, he nearly died laughing. Then, he tried my system and banged \$6,750.65 his very first day. Then, he nearly begged me to let his company publish this story."

Hi, my name is Neil Hathaway and I'm so excited that I wish I could get out of my wheelchair and break dance. I'm just an old loser who spent years of my life working the same backbreaking dead-end job.

When I finally made it to the finish line and retired, all I got was a cheap Timex, a cupcake with a candle on it and a swift kick in the pants. What was my job? Most of us hardworking red, white, and blue citizens are stripped down to the fruit of our looms and don't even realize that we're too rusty and worn out to do anything about it.

What was my job? I'll give you a hint: every time you drive down the road and see those bright, yellow and white stripes painted on the streets, I'm probably the Picasso who painted them. It was no walk in the park, especially on those really hot summer nights that made me feel like hot, sizzling bacon sitting in a frying pan." Those are his words. It's pretty humorous. And people can't stop reading it.

Terry:

Because it's a real life story.

Jeff:

It's an absolutely 100% true, real life story.

Terry:

So, like you said, where do you put the take away in there? Where does that fit in?

Jeff:

There's a limited number.

Terry:

So, the takeaway will be, "We only have 1,000 copies," for example.

Jeff:

Right. Tell the truth: "I don't know how much longer I'm going to do this," or, "I don't want too many people competing with me," which is true. He told me, "You could do this, but I don't want all the competition in the world. So, do it until I say stop because I don't want to create too much competition for myself." That's the answer. There's the takeaway there.

Terry:

Does a bonus come in before that or after that?

Jeff:

It usually comes in beforehand. Have testimonials thrown in as well.

Terry:

What if you came out with a book right now, and you just printed it, so you don't have any testimonials yet. How do you quickly get some testimonials for your sales letter?

Jeff:

I'd send it out to my friends and people who knew about it and have them read it.

Terry:

Okay. And just get their feedback from the book.

Jeff:

Right. I wouldn't ask them for one, but they'd know what I want.

Terry:

Okay. How about the bonuses? What kind of bonuses would you put in with the eBay book?

Jeff:

It's interesting, because I like to put bonuses sometimes that people might want without even doing the book. Sometimes people buy things for the bonus alone. Here, I give a whole bunch of different ones, which is interesting. I say, "If you order this package in the next 72 hours, I'll give you two never before heard of bonuses on a special bonus CD-ROM that will make your eardrums explode. Valued at over \$537.

Bonus number one, yours free. Complete information and step-by-step instructions on how to set up your own Internet radio station to broadcast anything you wish worldwide for less than ten dollars. Commercial advertisers are willing to pay fast cash to broadcast their commercial worldwide. You'll keep all the cash because you own the station.

Bonus two, that is yours free, is my secret weapon. I will release to you two unbelievable software packages that will allow you to cash in on what I'm going to teach you to buy on eBay automatically, with limited to no work on your part. My secret weapon software package is so easy to use, even a kid in third grade with no computer experience could get it up and running in five minutes. These programs have put my system on autopilot for you, and will even make you money while you snooze."

Terry:

Very cool. So, you have one bonus that is related to the product that can increase the value of the product, and one bonus that is within the business opportunity field, but it an additional bonus.

Jeff:

Correct.

Terry:

Okay. Do you have a system to decide what bonuses to use? Or, is it just what you have on hand at the time?

Jeff:

It just comes to me.

Terry:

The bonuses... are they products that you bought private label rights to? Or are they things that you have from previous information that you've written?

Jeff:

Sometimes. Not usually, but sometimes.

Terry:

Okay. Your business is extremely successful compared to the majority of the businesses in this industry. What do you think has been the biggest reason that you're successful when there are a lot of other companies that just fall by the wayside?

Jeff:

Persistence, persistence, persistence, and persistence. I honor refund guarantees, and give the greatest customer service in the industry.

Terry:

As far as percentage wise, what are you spending in advertising and direct mail in relationship to what you're bringing in?

Jeff:

About 35%.

Terry:

Okay. Even when you're online you have 35% expenses because of your overhead?

Jeff:

I would say it's less, but it depends. I'm doing some print ads for my online too. I do some direct mail for my online stuff also.

Terry:

That's a good point. What do you do in the print ad area? What are you doing offline to drive traffic online?

Jeff:

I advertise the different websites and offers that I have. I'll place one or two inch ads in magazines for HathawaySecret.com and EasyPhotoCash.com. People see the ad, go to the website, and check it out.

Terry:

Where do you advertise those?

Jeff:

[Money Making Magazine](#), [Entrepreneur Magazine](#), [Money Making Opportunities](#), [Home Business Opportunities](#), and things like that.

Terry:

Cool. Do you have a list or somewhere that you go to dig up these magazines?

Jeff:

Actually, yea. I also have a coaching manual that lists them all, that also tells people how to start a business from day one from day 31 one. If someone is a total novice, they can get that manual. One is a manual of what to do each day: how to register for a business one day, how to set up a bank account, and exactly what to do to make it legal. The second volume is a list of all the publications that they can advertise in.

Terry:

Where do you get this? Can we go online and buy it somewhere?

Jeff:

It's not online as of yet, but it's about to be.

Terry:

So, if I wanted to get it today, where would I go?

Jeff:

Just ask me to send you a copy.

Terry:

To anybody who is listening to this interview, how would they go about getting a hold of this?

Jeff:

They just have to send an e-mail to thepalmgroup@juno.com. The cost of the manual is usually \$149. For anybody who is listening to this interview, it would be \$49.95 for both volumes. I just need their credit card number, expiration date, security code, and address.

Terry:

Very cool, thank you. They just secured \$100 discount right off the bat.

Jeff:

Yea. And it's really pretty neat. It gives you a real good way to start your business.

Terry:

That's cool. Excellent. You've just given us an entire university course on direct mail. Is there anything that we haven't covered that you'd like to add before we wrap things up?

Jeff:

I'll say something very similar to you: do something that you love and you'll never have a bad day in your life. I do what I love. I'm pursuing my passion. Everyday is a new adventure. It's really exciting. A lot of people don't know this, but I'm going to tell you something. Do you know who holds the records for the most strikeouts in baseball?

Terry:

Babe Ruth.

Jeff:

That's right. Do you know why? He's the one that swung the bat the most. Most people don't remember him for that. People remember you for your successes, not for your failures. So, if you want to be out there and be a winner, get out there and keep swinging that bat.

Terry:

That is a perfect way to wrap things up. That's great. Thank you so much for your time, Jeff. I really appreciate it and I think a lot of people are going to learn a great deal about getting their business working online and offline.

Jeff:

It's my pleasure, Terry. Have a wonderful day.

Terry:

You've been listening to Terry Telford and Jeff Sands.

Terry:

Thanks very much for being here. Thanks very much for your time.

Jeff:

Thanks, have a great day.

Terry:

You too.