

FREELANCE  
FORUMPO Box 250024  
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www.freelanceforum.org

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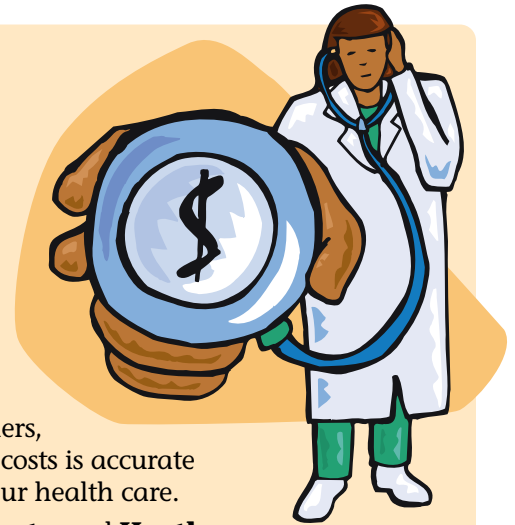
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Health Insurance  
Options

BY POLLY WADE

"Health insurance" ... it's a phrase that can drive any freelancer back to the corporate world. But it's not all doom and gloom. As independent practitioners, our best weapon in the fight against rising medical costs is accurate information for making informed decisions about our health care.

Join us in August as **Greg Yates, Amanda Fortunato** and **Heather P. Nesfeder** of the Metro Atlanta Financial Group discuss what to look for when choosing the health insurance plan that's right for you. You'll gain insights on what questions to ask of benefit providers, what to look out for and what you can do to keep your costs down.

**WHEN:** August 2, 6:15-8:30 pm**WHERE:** The Creative Circus**ADDRESS:** 812 Lambert Drive (near the I-85 Monroe Drive exit)**ADMISSION:** FREE for Members/Guests \$15**SEE LAST PAGE FOR DETAILED MAP AND DIRECTIONS TO CREATIVE CIRCUS**

## July Meeting Recap

BY CHRISTIN WHITTINGTON

**D**igital Diva" **Pamela Adams** led a lively presentation and Q&A on "The Power of Email Marketing" at July's Freelance Forum meeting. She began with the premise that email marketing is about



"Digital Diva" Pam Adams presented dramatic examples of how email marketing boosts sales for small businesses.

investing in building relationships — not just sending out promo information. Adams showed the group how to be careful gaining permission and staying off spam "blacklists," and why it's important to evaluate your results, including open rates and click-throughs.

As with direct mail marketing, email recipients tend to open mail only from businesses they know and trust. But email is a whole lot cheaper! Using an online email service costs about \$5 per thousand addresses, versus an estimated \$761 for direct mail. Not everyone will buy your product or service, of course. But the "conversion rate" for email is comparable to direct mail, and works out to about a \$1 cost per sale compared to \$20 for postcards and the like.

Adams had a number of tips to help small businesses extend their reach:

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**June Recap** continued from page 1



John Stemp

Adams takes a question from the floor. Above right: There was a lively audience debate at the July meeting.



- Put a “join our email list” signup form on every page of your website, not just on the home page
- Collect names (with permission) wherever you connect with prospects — networking events, meetings, trade shows, sales calls and the like
- Use your email signature (the one that accompanies every email you send) to advertise specials and limited-time promotions — and update it regularly
- Do NOT purchase email lists! Those people don’t know you, and haven’t given you permission to email them
- Stick to a schedule, whether you’re sending out an e-newsletter, promotion, announcements, coupons or holiday greetings: out of sight is out of mind

Throughout her presentation, Adams used examples from Constant Contact, but was quick to point out that there are several email services that offer similar results. Full disclosure: she was already using Constant Contact in her seminars and classes when

the company approached her to suggest a partnership. So now Adams handles new business development for Constant Contact in the Southeast as well as running her own business. You can find out more, and sign up for a free trial, at <http://georgia.constantcontact.com>.

**Say Hello and Introduce Yourself to More Business**

BY AYANA GLAZE

I’ve been doing a good deal of self-assessment to figure out why I haven’t been getting as much quality business as I’d like. You know — business from companies who need, understand and are willing to pay for the value I bring as a freelance writer.



As I reviewed my client list, it hit me. My best clients came from referrals from people I hardly know. I’ve never met many of these people face-to-face. Yet, I get referrals from them. So, what did I do that made them think of me? I introduced myself.

That’s it! A simple introduction, saying hello to groups and individuals within my industry, added business contacts to my network and qualified leads to my file.

For example, I recently joined PRSA’s Independent Consultants special interest group (SIG). I phoned one of the co-chairs and introduced myself as a new member and copywriter specializing in search engine

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**MEMBER NEWS**



Intrepid PR man **Stan**

**Schnitzer** gave blood (but not sweat and tears) for a worthy cause, the Atlanta Braves’ All-American Blood Drive, and got his picture in the paper as a result!

“I’m going to try to give during every holiday,” Stan told the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*. “I’ll be back here for Thanksgiving, New Year’s and baseball season opening day.” Read the full article at [www.ajc.com/search/content/metro/stories/2007/07/05/0705metblood.html](http://www.ajc.com/search/content/metro/stories/2007/07/05/0705metblood.html).

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We want to hear from you.

## PRESIDENT'S CORNER



One of the pleasures of being on vacation was going to a bookstore to buy something new. Among several treasures I found on the clearance table at Waldenbooks was a revised edition of Napoleon Hill's classic, *Think and Grow Rich*. Rereading the book last month, I focused on a topic I had skimmed over in earlier readings: the "Master Mind" principle. Hill advised anyone launching or growing an enterprise to build a network of knowledgeable colleagues. He said, "Economic advantages may be created by people who surround themselves with the advice, counsel and personal cooperation of a group of people who are willing to lend them wholehearted aid in a spirit of perfect harmony."



### NEW MEMBER LUNCH

**THURSDAY, JULY 26**

11:30 am to 1:00 pm

at The American Cafe in Phipps Plaza.

Contact Membership Committee chair  
**Ray Pelosi** at 404-373-1956 or  
[raypelosi@yahoo.com](mailto:raypelosi@yahoo.com) for more information.

**Say Hello** continued from page 2 optimization and public relations. We chatted for a few minutes and she offered to add me to the group's private Yahoo Group. Once added, I posted an introduction, including my name, background, services offered, and fun personal stuff to relax it a bit. Within minutes, I had welcoming feedback, leads and a possible project.

Now, this is not something I've practiced all along. But it is something I plan to do from now on. With a simple, personable introduction by phone, mail or email to groups of individuals who appreciate the nature of your business, you can introduce yourself to more business.

Isn't that what many of us do in the Freelance Forum? When our members draw on Freelance Forum colleagues to staff their virtual projects, to share war stories or job leads, we're accessing a "Master Mind" pool that expands our personal and professional value to our clients, and helps each of us toward our personal and business goals.

Whenever I consider moving into a new area — travel writing late last year, ghostwriting books this summer — one of my first tasks is to browse a member listing to see who might already be working in that niche. Then I corner them at a meeting (or call or email) and ask if they'll share some pointers on the field in question. Buying someone a cup of coffee is a small price for access to the knowledge our members hold — and most are more than willing to share. By the same token, when I get a similar request about how much I charge for a particular service or how I find clients, I'm glad to assist. It's a way to repay those who helped me out, and that kind of giving always comes back to you in the end.

I also read a great book on Zen and Tao, but I'll save that lecture for another day ...

—Bobby Hickman

### WARNING! IF THERE'S BARKING, DON'T BE PARKING!

Sometimes the lot at Creative Circus is overflowing and you have to look elsewhere for a place to park. But whatever you do, don't park at Barking Hound. They tow, as several members have discovered.



### SUPPORT OUR SPONSORS

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**REMINDER:**

For security reasons, Creative Circus has asked that we enter and leave the school through the Main Entrance only.

Thanks for respecting the wishes of our generous host!

**DIRECTIONS TO CREATIVE CIRCUS**

**FROM DOWNTOWN HEADING NORTH ON**

**PIEDMONT:** North of Ansley Mall, turn right onto Cheshire Bridge Rd. Go approximately 2/10 of a mile to Manchester St (at Roxx Tavern) on your left. Turn left and follow Manchester until it ends at Lambert and turn right. Creative Circus is the purple building at the end of Lambert on the left.

**FROM BUCKHEAD HEADING SOUTH ON**

**PIEDMONT:** Continue south past Lindbergh and go under I-85 overpass. Turn left at the first light past I-85 onto Lambert. Creative Circus is the purple building at the end of Lambert on the left.

**FROM CHESHIRE BRIDGE/LAVISTA ROADS:**

On Cheshire Bridge from Lavista, go approximately 1 mile south toward Piedmont Rd. Turn right onto Manchester St (at Roxx Tavern, just past NAPA Auto Parts). Follow Manchester till it ends at Lambert and turn right. Creative Circus is the purple building at the end of Lambert on the left.

**FROM I-85 NORTHBOUND:**

Take exit 86 (Monroe/Piedmont/Buford Hwy). Coming off the I-85 exit ramp take the first exit (Monroe/Piedmont). Go left at the light, then take an almost immediate left at the BP Station onto Piedmont Circle. At the next light, cross Piedmont Rd onto Lambert (staying to the right of the yellow highway barrels). Creative Circus is the purple building at the end of Lambert on the left.

**FROM I-85 SOUTHBOUND:**

Take the Lenox/Cheshire Bridge exit (Exit 86); turn left at the end of the ramp onto Cheshire Bridge. Continue 1.3 miles to Manchester St and turn right (at Roxx Tavern and just past NAPA Auto Parts). Follow Manchester till it ends at Lambert and turn right. Creative Circus is the purple building at the end of Lambert on the left.

**OR:**

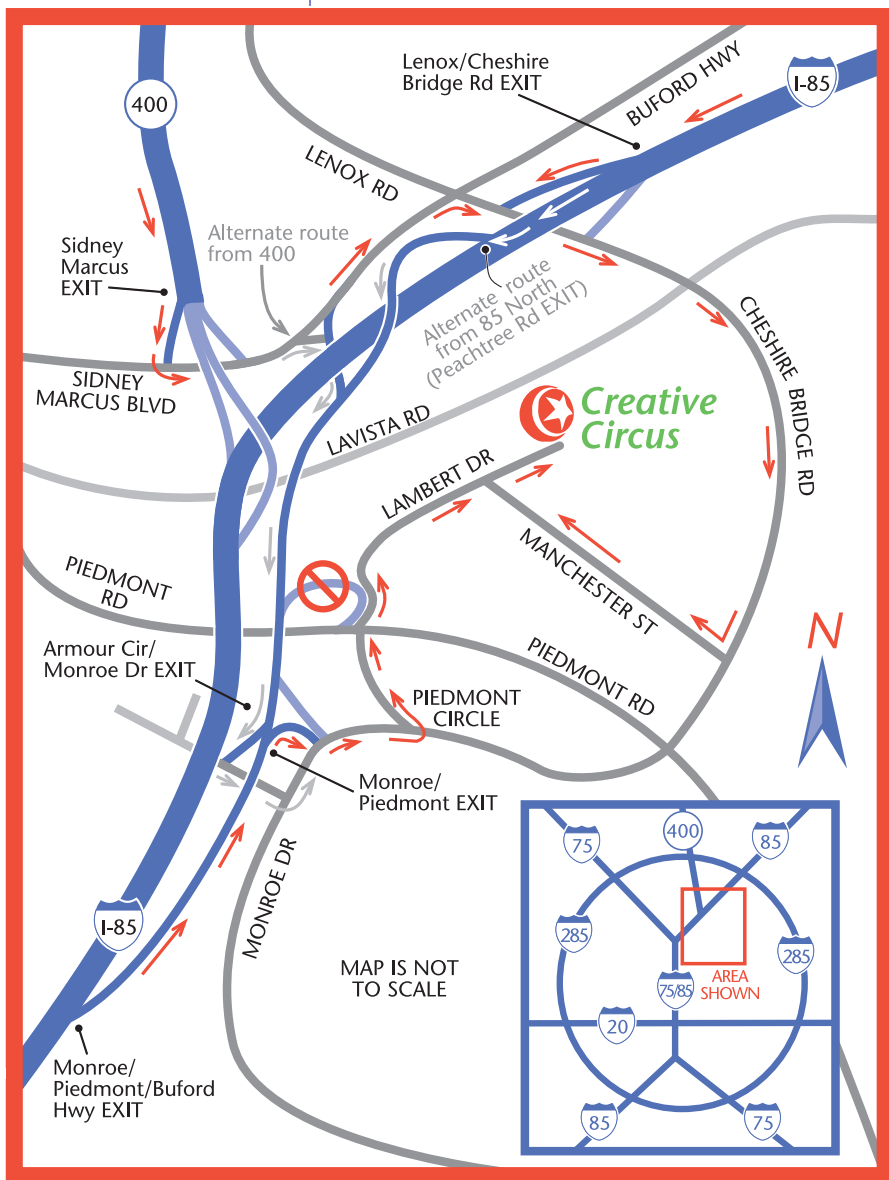
Take the Peachtree Rd exit (Exit 88) onto the access road. Take the first exit (Armour/ Monroe). At the end of the ramp go left to the next light and turn left onto Monroe. Turn left at the BP Station onto Piedmont Circle. At the next light, cross Piedmont Rd onto Lambert (staying to the right of the yellow highway barrels). Creative Circus is the purple building at the end of Lambert on the left.

**FROM GA 400 SOUTHBOUND:**

Take the Sidney Marcus exit. At the end of the ramp go left onto Sidney Marcus. Turn left onto Buford Highway. Turn right at the next light onto Cheshire Bridge. Continue 1.4 miles to Manchester St and turn right (at Roxx Tavern and just past NAPA Auto Parts). Follow Manchester till it ends at Lambert and turn right. Creative Circus is the purple building at the end of Lambert on the left.

**FROM I-75 SOUTHBOUND:**

Take the I-85 North ramp. Stay in the right-hand lane once on I-85. Go approximately 1 mile to the Monroe/ Piedmont/ Buford Hwy exit (Exit 86). Coming off the I-85 exit ramp take the first exit (Monroe/ Piedmont). Go left at the light, then take an almost immediate left at the BP Station onto Piedmont Circle. At the next light, cross Piedmont Rd onto Lambert (staying to the right of the yellow highway barrels). Creative Circus is the purple building at the end of Lambert on the left.



Janie Morgan