

Marketing Your Engineering Consulting Services On Craigslist

Recommendations for Marketing
Engineering Consulting Services
to Silicon Valley

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AUTHORS

Carl Angotti

President, Angotti Product Development

Chair, Online Ad Marketing Committee,
IEEE-CNSV

Past Chair, IEEE Consultants' Network of
Silicon Valley

Past Chair, IEEE Technology Management
Council of Silicon Valley

Past Chair, Professional and Technical
Consultants Association (PATCA)

Walt Maclay

President, Voler Systems, Division of
Strawberry Tree

Past Chair, Online Ad Marketing Committee,
IEEE-CNSV

Past President, Professional and Technical
Consultants Association

EDITORIAL REVIEW BOARD

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Kip Brown

President, CMBJR Consulting, Inc.
Chair, IEEE-CNSV

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Disclaimer

This white paper provides information that may be useful to engineering consultants in performing their marketing activities. This white paper is for informational purposes only and is not intended to be legal advice or investment advice and should not be relied on for such purposes. In addition the facts and circumstances of each situation are different and may be fluid and unpredictable. Thus, advice must be sought on each specific situation from well-informed legal, investment, tax, financial, management and marketing professionals.

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Introduction

Craigslist is widely used to sell things and to get a job. It was not designed to be used for consultants to get engagements, but it can be a very successful form of consultant marketing. The projects from Craigslist are not necessarily small. Consultants have closed client engagements that were in excess of \$100,000. Of course no one is going to give you a large engagement based on a resume and an email. Once you have been contacted, you must follow up by phoning and visiting the prospective client, just as you would if someone were referred to you by a friend or from the CNSV Website.

This paper discusses how to use the online Craigslist listings to get consulting engagements in Silicon Valley in the most effective manner. We have personally used these methods for five years. Remember that such an approach is not effective in bringing in a stream of steady request for work for your services. It should be considered a part of your overall marketing program to create a portion of your lead generation.

Many technical consultants, and even some non-technical consultants, would rather spend time on their computer to obtain contracts. This is in contrast to the generally more effective but more time consuming formal networking approach.

This includes direct one-to-one networking with past clients, networking with closer associates and formal networking within groups relative to your business area

The approach described here assumes that you generally have a presence on the web in the form of a professional Web page or similarly related blog that describes your services in depth, and in a marketing and sales effective way.

Your Craigslist ad(s) should be used to attract potential clients to one of your on-line presences. Of course, ideally, it will cause a client to email, or phone you directly from the ad, but this is more the exception than the rule. Potential clients often want to learn as much as they can about you before contacting you directly. Today they do this via your website, LinkedIn and other online information they can find about you.

This marketing process was designed for use by engineering consultants in Silicon Valley using Craigslist. It has not been adapted to other sectors, geographies, or other marketing environments.

Marketing Vs. Sales

To begin with, we will discuss the distinction between Marketing and Sales.

Marketing and Sales are two distinct disciplines:

- Marketing involves the ways to bring prospects to you for business that includes Networking with associates, Newsletters, Articles, Speaking, a Website, and other non-direct contacts with potential buyers of your services.
- A sales effort involves closing the deal, (usually) person to person. Very rarely does a consulting contract close without such face-to-face contact. It might be accomplished via a telephone conversation, or via an on-line discussion; but usually only directly in person (face-to-face) is effective.

Using Craigslist is a marketing tool; it is not a sales tool. It is used to attract prospects to you so you can initiate a sales cycle and have an effective sales conversation with them.

Note: You can learn more about topics relating to the sales cycle such as Prospects, the Sales Cycle, and your Target Market by checking out the companion White Paper on the CNSV website titled "The Professional Consultant: Recommendations for Best Practices in Silicon Valley".¹ It discusses this subject in more depth.

¹ *The Professional Consultant: Recommendations for Best Practices in Silicon Valley* by Duane Strong and John Gale is available at <http://www.californiaconsultants.org/TheProfessionalConsultant.pdf>

Marketing Overview

There are two types of marketing:

- Push Marketing
- Pull (Magnet or attracting) Marketing

Push Marketing involves the use of Newsletters, Journal Articles, Telemarketing, giving Speeches and other broad media that are directed towards qualified potential clients. These potential clients are often referred to as prospects. It is used to broadcast information to persons that are not necessarily searching for someone at that time. If they just happen to need a service at that time, they may be enticed to contact you for your services. This means that one has to broadcast periodically to a large number of such prospects to land a single engagement.

Pull (Magnet) Marketing is used to connect with persons that are currently searching for someone. They have a need for services at that time. Examples of these are a formal Website, listings on Craigslist, listings on CNSV, listings on Association groups, and similar venues.

Marketing which seeks to attract prospects to your website is sometimes called Inbound Marketing. It is less expensive than more traditional marketing methods.

Remember that marketing is a strategy, something one does over and over again. It is not something done just once, or a few times. It is an ongoing process spread out over time. There are several good books for learning more about marketing a small business such as a consulting business. There is a bibliography at the end of this paper that describes a few that we have found valuable.²

The balance of this White Paper will focus on the Pull style of marketing using Craigslist Ads.

² Two such books are "Guerilla Marketing" and its derivatives by J. Conrad Levinson and "Get Clients Now" by C. J. Hayden. Check these out online as well.

Marketing Plan Start

To begin this process, we will start out with a focus on creating a simple Marketing Plan. A lot of these ideas are developed and described in the small book “The One Page Business Plan for Consultants” by Jim Horan. It is available on-line and from Amazon. This will set the focus for the Craigslist Ad you will be creating. These should be clear at the beginning of this process. Take a blank sheet of paper or open a document file and answer all of these questions. Don't worry if you can't answer all of these questions at this time. This is a continuous process of refinement over time. Get down what you can at this time. Plan on updating, refining, and expanding your Marketing Plan each year.

Your Marketing activities are based on your Business Plan. Your Business Plan includes:

- Your Business Model
- Your Marketing Plan

Executing use of your Craigslist Ad includes:

- Your Craigslist Ad (run over time)
- Follow-Up
- Refinement over time
- Evaluation of metrics
- Adjustments

Thus your Craigslist Ad is just one piece of your marketing activities. The more energy that you put into learning to do these well, the better your revenue, margins, testimonials, etc.

- **What Business are you in?**

The first question we can ask ourselves is to define as specifically as we can the actual business that we are in. This sets up what services we are offering, who we are offering them

to, where we will provide them, when we will provide them and why does a company need our services? If we fail to answer these questions, we will be much less likely to attract clients to our business.

- **What type of service, or services, will you offer?**

Be as specific as you can. Start with the general, then with time work towards a niche to focus on. General appeals rarely work well.

Offering too many services can dilute your appeal as well. The “jack of all trades, master of none” also rarely works. What is the real problem you are trying to solve for your potential clients? Use your current experience with your business as a guide to what works. You can also discuss this with your past clients and your current associates.

- **What is different about your services, relative to those you will compete with?**

This is critical unless your service has a very high demand component. Then, the specific service is the differentiator. This means that you should do a thorough search for your competitors. Much of this can be done online these days. Check out such websites as the CNSV Website (<http://www.californiaconsultants.org>), PATCA (www.patca.org), and the IEEE Consultants Directory (See <http://www.ieeeusa.org/business/consultants/>) You can also check out any specific website in your field that has a directory.

You may wish to understand the “marketplace” sites such as Odesk.com, Elance.com, etc. They do significant business in California and world-wide generating income for requested services. Even though their rates of payment can be very low, they do show what services may be in demand. Some Asian consultants are very low-priced. If this impacts your market sector, you will need to improve your market differentiation.

Last of all, you can go to the web search tools and use specific keywords to search for competitors, or near competitors to see what they are offering. This will be covered in more detail later.

- **Who will use your services?**

What are the demographics of your target markets and in more detail your targeted companies or prospects, and those of your competitors? Read what your nearest competitors say on their websites to attract traffic. Determine the size of these companies? How old are they such as: just beginning startups, initially funded startups, second round financed startups, later stage startups, mid sized companies, larger companies, or very large companies. What job titles typically purchase your services?

Note: There are far more companies under the size of 300 employees than there are with ones over 300, or even over 1,000. There is far more work and opportunity in the smaller firms. On the other hand, be cautioned that engagements with smaller firms may be different from engagements with larger firms in the area of financial risk.

Consider the age of your potential clients. Are they early career, early management, mid management or upper management? Your appeal must be quite different for each of these groups.

- **Where will your services be delivered?**

Will you serve clients locally, and if so how “locally”. For example how far in time, or distance would you find acceptable? Will you work exclusively from your office, or will you go to the client site, or a mixture of both? This is where work lifestyle is critical. If you like travel, or if you are very mobile, you can find more clients than if you confine your work to a local area.

- **When will you provide your services?**

What will be your general hours of operation? Will you work continuous weekends, or will you confine your service to a specified period during the day, or days of the week? Will you provide a very rapid response to a client query, or would you prefer a more casual schedule? Will you work at client sites, or in your office, or both?

Will you be a contract employee, directed by the employer; or work only on a specific task, say a \$20,000 engagement to be completed in X weeks?

Many clients today prefer a 24 hour / 7 day type of service during critical portions of an engagement. Will this work into your lifestyle? If not, how will you handle this type of situation?

Do you want to emphasize any of the above in your offering?

- **Why does the client need your services?**

There are a number of reasons that a client might need your services. These might include:

1. Lack of expertise inside their company
2. Overload to compensate for a crisis in a project
3. They have received a new line of funding and need to ramp up work on a project.
4. They need for an outside opinion while developing a strategy or in choosing a tactical direction.

5. No qualified consultant is located near to them
6. And many others...

Understanding the above will help you to create a focus for your ad's appeal. Which of these will be the major appeal of your Ad?

Note: You can read a great deal more on the topic of Marketing and Marketing plans by reviewing the white paper on the CNSV website at <http://www.californiaconsultants.org/TheProfessionalConsultant.pdf> . It discusses this subject in more depth.

Pull Marketing

Now that you have focused on your business marketing plan, you are ready to start the "Pull Marketing" process to help bring clients to your consulting practice. This involves a focus on "Searchers". These are persons looking for someone to perform a task right now.

- **Go to Where Searchers Gather**

To be effective go where searchers gather. One such place is Craigslist, as are websites like Dice.com and other "job search" sites. Generally, persons looking for a consultant do not look on the "Job" or employment websites.

These days, "LinkedIn" is another place where these persons gather. This website is much more inflexible for finding clients. Its biggest drawback is that you can't test marketing hypotheses very well. You can have only one profile identity at a time. If you wish, you can

use many of the ideas discussed here for "tuning" your LinkedIn profile as well, but this is not the subject of this white paper.

- **Stand out from the Competitors**

Use the ideas from your marketing plan, and create an Ad that draws as many of the searchers you can. Position yourself against your competitors with your Headlines and your Ad content.

- **Niche Marketing is much more effective**

As was stated earlier, you are looking for a niche that has enough demand and has less competition clients are drawn to you. You will start out with the best you can come up with in the short term, and then refine your Ad and marketing activities to make them work better and better.

On-Line Ad Basics

- **Most Wanted Response**

A key concept in on-line advertising is "Most Wanted Response" (MWR). That is, what response is do you desire from the Ad? Ideally you want the clients to phone you. Secondly you want them to e-mail you. If they are not going to contact you, you want them to visit your web page to find out more about you.

In today's world many potential clients will not directly call you. They will send you an email introducing themselves, explaining their needs and asking if you can help them. Whether you can or not you respond with an email. If you can, your email reply directly addresses each their needs. If you can't, you thank them for their interest. You never know when they or someone they know will have another project. In today's on-line world, most potential clients want to ease their way into knowing you. This means that unless they are very motivated, they will not directly call you. Hence it is more effective to have your phone number in your ad. If you don't, you block this response from happening. Usually potential clients will send you an email introducing themselves, and explaining their needs. They will then ask if you think you can help them. If you think you can, you email them back with your direct contact info. Often, they will then either call you, or disclose their phone number to you.

Most potential clients will visit your website to get more information about you. Then they might phone or email you.

This means that your MWRs are:

- Phone call
- Email to you
- Visit your Webpage, then call or Email you

Ideally, you would like to track persons that visit your web page, or Ad and find out how well your Ad might be pulling, even if you aren't receiving calls or emails. This will be discussed later.

- **Keywords Provide Differentiation**

Key words are the words that you use to attract searchers to your Ad Headline so they will click on your headline and read the copy in the body. The copy content, if it works, will produce the "Most Wanted Response". We will cover how to put good words in the body and headline later.

- **The Headline – Draws user to your Ad Content**

The headline is what the user sees when they complete a search. It is used to entice the searcher to open your Ad. This is very critical for your Ad to be effective. It must contain a very good set of keywords that are specific and general at the same time to position yourself against your competition and be opened. If you aren't familiar with Craigslist, you might want to quickly try to see how this works using some test keywords such as consultant, or consulting. Be sure to search under "Resumes", as this is where you will be listing.

- **Related Ad Content**

Once the potential client opens your Ad, the copy must convince them to either call, email or visit your website. If the copy doesn't relate closely enough to the search they are doing, they will immediately leave the page. If someone is looking for, say an RF Engineer, and your copy doesn't include at least the top level concept that you do RF work, you will immediately lose all contact with that prospect, even if you have RF experience. Hence, the copy should entice them to look at you further, much like a resume. This doesn't mean you have a lengthy amount of copy, covering

everything you do. Most people won't read an endless amount of copy just to get to what they are looking for. Most likely, giving detailed information is done via a well structured Website to guide them to the appropriate

information. Of course, if they are in a hurry, they might either email or call you and ask specifically if you are experienced in the topics they need currently.

Craigslist

Craigslist as an Ad Platform

One reason, as has been mentioned earlier, that we are using Craigslist.com is that searchers gather here looking for persons to help them. You can create a listing in three places:

- Resumes
- Services Offered – Small Biz Ads
- Gigs

Services Offered has had very little pay off for consulting businesses. A quick look at a search for "consultant" under this category shows the type of consulting that produces results in this category. If your service profile is like one of these, then all of the same rules apply as described going forward, and you can place your ad here.

Gigs are where you can find someone to repair your computer, but it is not a place to be found if you do electronic design, software, project management or general management.

Resumes are where persons, and especially companies, go to look for potential resources. You would expect people would use this category to find employees. In fact they are often looking for consultants. At first, it was thought that it didn't make sense to post here, but this is where the biggest payoff has come for consultants with

many of the skills hired by high-tech companies. We will focus on generating Ads to appear in this section. A quick search of this resume category using "consultant" shows the types of persons that have this term in their resumes. Likely this is where you will find others like yourself.

An Important Resume Posting Note

When posting under the Resume category, your Ad must be "resume like" and should preferably appear to come from an individual. Then it will "fit in" with the other ads in this category. If ads are too garish, or commercial appearing, they will eventually be flagged as miscategorized or spam. This can prevent you from appearing on the list in this category, or get you banned from advertising there at all.

Characteristics of Craigslist Ads

- **Uses simple keyword search**

Craigslist provides only a simple "String Search" that uses very little logic. That means that if you enter a string of words the result selects the following (Boolean result) for three words: word1 AND word2 AND word3. If you misspell a word, you get no results for the misspelled word. If you put in a plural, and the Ad doesn't have the plural in it, it won't be found. If you put in an "exact string" between two quotes, it will search for the exact string,

in that order. If you place a word with a minus sign (ie: -Word1) Ads with this exact word will be eliminated.

This means that you will have to have plurals and singulars in your listings or keywords, and you need to spell keywords correctly.

- **Search Results are shown in time order or by relevance**

The results in a searched list are shown in reverse chronological order. That means later postings appear on top. This means you must

refresh your Ads, or repost them periodically if your skill appears amongst those of many others.

Because of this phenomenon, Craigslist now allows one to “renew” an Ad, up until about a week or two before it is about to expire. This causes the Ad to move up the list as if it were posted on the day it is renewed. In the past, one would have to have several Ads in time sequence to do the same thing.

Market Research

In general, before you begin to build up an Ad, you will have to do considerable Market Research. Market research is the process by which you build up your keywords so you can attract clients to your Ad, and at the same time differentiate you from your competition.

- **Who Might be Searching?**

By now, you likely have already identified who will be doing the searching for you as a resource. Sometimes this might be a CEO, VP of Engineering, Manufacturing or Marketing, or another high level manager. Other times, it might be someone that is doing the initial search, but not the one to make the decision to engage you. Often the person searching on Craigslist is either the decision maker, or a strong influencer on the decision. You need to define who is searching from your experience or via discussions with others that might be better informed, or even interviews with potential clients.

- **What search words will they use?**

Remember that the search words they use are

not your words, but rather their words. That means you need a method to determine the words used by those looking for someone like yourself. More detail on how to do this will be covered later.

- **Who Are Your Competitors?**

You need to put some considerable focus on who are your competitors, even if you believe your service is very unique. The person hiring a consultant always has potential options, hiring someone and training them, or hiring a contract person and training them. In general, you will likely have some competitors. Probably your biggest competing factors are that the company decides not to start the project at all or they decide to do the project internally.

- **What is your Competitor’s “Story”**

You will need to learn everything you can about your competitors so you know their offers thoroughly, and how they present themselves. Your offering of services must compete effectively with these other firms or persons. You should offer a better, if not outstanding,

offer of your services to differentiate yourself from the others. This includes everything from the search keywords they use to the appearance of your Ad, to the appearance and navigation of your website.

Check out as many of these as you can. Look for directories of organizations such as:

- The IEEE Consultants' Network of Silicon Valley (IEEE-CSSV) (www.CaliforniaConsultants.org)
 - The National IEEE Consultants listings <http://www.ieeeusa.org/business/consultants/>
 - PATCA (The Professional and Technical Consultants Assoc.) www.patca.org
 - Craigslist Listings www.Craigslist.org
 - The Institute of Management Consultants (if you do management oriented consulting) <http://www.imcusa.org/search>
 - Competitor's websites
Any other place where your competitors might have an on-line presence
 - Online Marketplaces such as www.Odesk.com, www.elance.com, www.Linkedin.com
- **Finding Competitors using Keywords**
To study competitors, you need to come up with some critical keywords so you can search for them on the Web, or on directory sites. Start with initial keywords that you think might bring up your competitors.

From here on out, throughout this paper we will create an example to see how this process works in practice. We will use an example keyword phrase to start the process. This phrase will be "Board level Analog electronic engineer". This is an example of what we personally might put in. One can use all, or a part of, your initial set of keywords as a "**seed**" to begin mining for keywords used by competitors.

We will start off studying potential clients with Craigslist, a critical place to look. Go to Craigslist covering the geographical area you might serve and check out who comes up under "Resumes" with your keyword phrase, and its different words and groupings.

- **Who comes up?**
Are these persons true competitors, or are do they just happen to have some of your keywords? What content do the true competitors use for their Ad?
- **Competitor's Headlines**
The Headline is the short phrase that appears along with the listings in response to your search. What are your competitors Headlines? Do they seem on point?
 - Do they appeal to potential users of your service?
 - How effective do they seem?
 - Do they appeal to you or others you might know?
- **Generating Keywords**
Generating the best keywords is one of the biggest tasks one must do in order to attract clients to your Ad. From your initial keywords or phrase, you can come up with a thousand or more keywords likely to be used by searchers for your service.

Go somewhere where they are easiest to obtain.

- **Best Guess Keywords**
In the previous section we discussed using some "seed" keywords for your Craigslist review. These are the best keywords you have at this time, so start with them.

- **Your potential client's Keywords**

You should note that you are looking for are keywords that your potential clients might use. What you think are good keywords is only a start on the way to finding high quality keywords that attract clients to your Ad.

- **Use competitor's words**

Check out the keywords used by your closest competitors. These can help you refine your "best guess" keywords.

- **Create High Quality Keywords**

What you want are quality keywords that will be used by your potential clients to find someone like you. These would be a set of words they are likely to use in a search for someone like you.

- **Get the most effective Keywords you can**

If you have a service that is reasonably in demand, a good place to get keywords used by persons looking for assistance with their tasks is on a Job Search Service. You can go to job posting sites and review what persons needing your service are using in their postings. Here you search, using your "seed" keywords for jobs that have these words in their postings.

One of the best sources of keywords we have found lately is an aggregator job website such as indeed.com³ or simplyhired.com⁴. The indeed.com site also has some other features that you will find helpful.

- **Indeed.com Keywords Generation**

- **Search for similar requirements that describe the service you are going to provide.**

3 www.indeed.com

4 www.simplyhired.com

- **Go to the website and enter your "seed" keywords. This is straightforward.**

- **Locate Job Descriptions that fit your service offering and target locations**

These are ones that look promising as a type of service you might offer.

As a reality check look at the job trends for your exact keyword input, both in absolute, and relative terms from 2006 till today. This shows how the demand for this type of service, or services, has done in the past, and is doing recently. You can see this by scrolling to the bottom of the screen that has the results of the search and clicking on the "Trends" link.

After reviewing the trends for this set of keywords you might want to change the keywords if demand for this set of services is going down and select one that is rising. A recent one we viewed had a peak of use of these terms in 2011, and was now going down on a month by month basis.

- **Go into a posted indeed.com listing by clicking on the general listing headline in the search results page.**

- **Next, open a text editor⁵ and store the critical words in this text file.** Try to eliminate the "clutter" and other company specific phrases. What you want are requirements such as "job descriptions", Skills, education, etc. You don't want introductory information, addresses, etc.

After this, go back to the headings list, and click on the next interesting head-

5 This can be MS Word with an extension .txt or any editor with no hidden formatting characters.

line and get the critical words from its associated job posting. You will need to get 20 to 50 such listings that are put together into this single text file. The more of these you get the better. As an example, we have placed one such page of such a search using the example keyword phrase. It is shown in [Appendix 1](#).

- **Next, copy and paste these to a word counting facility⁶.** Go to the link <http://www.textfixer.com/tools/online-word-counter.php>. One nice feature of this tool is that it eliminates “common words” such as “a” or “the”, etc.

An example of one page of the output of this program is shown in [Appendix 2](#).

Now, take the resulting output list of words and frequency and copy and paste them into a spreadsheet. An examination of this spreadsheet shows the keywords that have been captured. Often this can exceed 1,000 or 1,500. Far more than you could come up with on your own.

- **Strip out “not useful” words**
Next, sort the keyword list by Frequency, then alphabetically, with the frequency in descending order. Then scan the word list. As you scan the list, you can immediately remove the obvious keywords that likely wouldn't be put in by a person searching for your service.

Keep the frequently used keywords unless you don't provide that type of service. When this process yields a lot of keywords, you might want to eliminate the less frequently used words, but be sure to review these because they are likely quite relevant to the service you provide.

⁶ There are a number of these on the web. You can find them with search on terms such as “word counter”.

These are known as “long tail” keywords that don't come up often, but differentiate you from others.

When in doubt, leave a word in rather than remove it. Since Craigslist has a large limit on the size of a listing (over 5,000 characters). You will have plenty of room in the Ad to use all of them.

- **Next Create a Compressed Text File of the Keywords⁷**

This is easily done starting with a blank text document and inserting the keywords into it. This process strips out all of the special non-printable characters in the spreadsheet. Now, copy and paste the keywords from this text file into a Word document. In the word document, do a “Search and Replace” on the non-printing paragraph marker by entering “^p” in the find, and replace the find with “,” (comma and a space). Doing this helps the Craigslist translator make a sensible looking set of keywords.

Now take the resulting grouping of keywords and copy and paste them back into the text file previously opened. Save this file for later use as a “Master Keyword” file. This will provide a text file that contains the words for later use in your Ad in a compact form.

One page of the result of such a completed text file is shown in [Appendix 3](#).

There will be more on the use of these keywords discussed later.

⁷ Note: There are text editor programs that do word frequency counts right in the program. The best one we have found is NoteTab. This is a very fully featured text editor. It costs something, but can save a lot of time for routine editing tasks. They have a free version that does not include word frequency counts.

Generating Your Resume Like Ad

This is where the “rubber meets the road” for your Craigslist Ad. This is the major item that will attract your potential client to engage in your “Most wanted Response”. The approach below represents the best procedure that we have found to accomplish this goal.

One item of special note is that technical persons are often very weak in what makes good copy for an Ad. If you know you have a weakness in this area, write the first draft of your Ad copy, and give it to an experienced Ad editor⁸ or the closest person that you know with such experience. Ideally, after you have done this, pass it by a hiring manager you might know to critique it further.

- **Your Ad Should be “Resume like”**

A number of consultants have tried to make a “fancy” Craigslist Ad using HTML or image conversions of their Ad which Craigslist can handle. If you are very creative in this area you might want to try this approach. One concern is that if the resume looks too much like a commercial brochure it will likely be less effective. We found this out through first hand experience.

Initially, stick to nicely grouped regular text. Use capitals and white space to make the Ad readable. We often use a small “o” for a bullet point. Remember that different browsers handle text differently. Remember also that

8 You can find these at www.craigslist.org, www.californiaconsultants.org, www.patca.org, www.womeninconsulting.org and similar places

the Craigslist editor will automatically remove leading spaces.

Should you wish to experiment with a formatted resume, write it in Microsoft Word and then copy and paste into Craigslist. Formatting, such as bullets and paragraph breaks, will remain in your final listing. Other word processing programs probably work just as well as Word.

- **What service do you offer?**

Be clear on the exact service you want to offer. Most beginners start off with too broad an offering. Another thing we have noticed about persons starting to promote their business is that they want to write a long and detailed resume describing what they have done. Just like in a good resume, you must tailor what you offer to relate to what you are offering for a service, and no more.

We have found resumes on Craigslist that go on for ten printed pages. We call these Ads “I dare you to understand what I can do for you” Ads. A person must read considerable information, in a dense format, to see if they might want to use a consultant’s talents. Narrow your offering as much as you can. It is far more effective to be more succinct and make a clear offer. The hardest part is determining the exact offer that might be attractive to a potential client. As an option, make several Ads with different offers. If you have a website, you can make the offer a little more general, and have the searcher check out your website for more in depth information.

Backup the Promise of Your Keywords

- **Avoid the searcher coming to your Ad only to find your resume not useful**

Make sure that your key words are selected carefully to only relate to what you are offering. Then make your offering back up the words. Be sure that you have reviewed your keywords and that you intend to back up these keywords with material in your Ad to at least hint at the fact that you can meet their needs. Often, it works to have the searcher go to a special page on your website often referred to in Search Engine Optimization (SEO) terms as the "landing page". This page applies directly to the detailed story or description of what is offered in the Ad.

- **Pay Attention to your First Screenful Appearance**

The first Screenful is the first impact and impression you will make on your potential client. Keep in mind that people will not read much, and they will be looking for specific things. If they do not quickly find what they are looking for, they will look elsewhere. Hence, pay particular attention to how the first one or two paragraphs appear to the reader. It is the first sentence and paragraph that will draw your potential client to read further. Most readers stop right here if they do not like what they see.

In this regard, your resume should look a lot like your posting on CNSV, assuming you have done a professional job. Also keep in mind that every word in your resume is searchable. When someone is looking for a consultant, they will probably enter key words to find the skills they need. Make your resume rich in key words. Therefore, the best resume is short (no more than one page), and has brief

descriptions of your skills that use key words. A bulleted list is a good way to make your resume more readable. People tend to look first at a list, because they are easy to scan for key words.

- **Remember "What's in it for me?"**

Most technical people seem to dwell on telling potential clients how smart and experienced they are, but not presenting what benefits they will receive from engaging you instead of someone else.

Here you might want to illustrate how you have helped others achieve their project goals with examples of your work. Then relate how your experience will allow you to be productive more quickly than a lesser-experienced person. There can be quite an art to doing this, and this is where outside help can be very valuable.

If an individual consultant's resume says they can do almost everything, the potential client may be skeptical. When you use all the key words that describe what you are best at, your focus will help people find you. You should stay focused whenever you describe what you do, whether in writing or verbally.

To help focus the reader, have your short list of key words in mind. You should decide what you are best at and then focus on that. It may seem counter-intuitive that offering fewer services would do a better job of selling your skills, but it is well known by people skilled in marketing, that you have to be as specific as possible when trying to sell something.

- **Must have Resume Words**

Be sure to include the key words "consultant" or "consulting", as most resumes are for people looking for a job, not consultants. As was pointed out earlier, since the Craigslist

search engine is not very smart, use all forms of “consultant”, such as “consultants”. The two words are different to Craigslist.

Easy to Find Contact Info

- **Show a link to your target “Landing Page”**

Be sure you include your Website link in your Ad. Remember that your web link to your website should point to your preferred specially designed Landing Page that focuses on your offering. It has been found to be most productive to use a special Landing Page for visitors from Craigslist instead of your index, or front, page.

This is the best way to get your client to read more detail about your offering. If you don't have a web page, or blog, or some other web presence, this will likely be much less effective because you have to depend entirely on your Ad to create your “Most Wanted Response”.

- **Use an individual phone number and email**
Especially if you don't have a formal web presence, be sure to have an easy link to your email and a clear, business oriented, phone number. Make sure that you review this email address and phone voice mail frequently. Ideally, you should answer the phone immediately. If a person calls by phone, they definitely are motivated. If they send an email, they are just a

bit less motivated to purchase your services. If you provide a prominent website URL, phone number and email address, along with a physical address on your website, you will set yourself apart from those that are doing only temporary or moonlighting consultants. This makes you seem much more professional to your potential customers.

- **Add your Keywords to your Ad**

These are ones you entered into the final merged version of your Master Keyword search. They are the basic reason that an Ad is opened, if the Headline entices the potential client to do so. These keywords are entered at the bottom of the Ad, into a section called something like “Special Keywords”. See an example of this in [Appendix 4](#).

- **Template for a Basic Ad**

Review these ideas together in the template for a complete Ad that appears in [Appendix 4](#). Tune this by checking out potential client responses as time goes on. As an example of an Ad similar to one actually used on-line see [Appendix 5](#) for reference. The name and company are fictitious, but the rest of the Ad isn't.

Your Business Website

You have a Website, don't you? If not get one right away, before posting on Craigslist. The first thing a potential client will do to confirm you are the right choice is to go to your Website.

A lack of web presence also appears as though you are a less stable or less experienced business than those that have a formal presence. One can get by without a formal web presence, but we believe that this weakens your offering and results.

Your Website presence must follow the same advice that is suggested for your Ad, but here you can have more information, such as examples of your work and comments by satisfied clients. Once prospects have seen your Website, a percentage of them will call you or send an email.

Post Your Resume Like Ad On-Line

Once you have created a Resume-Like Ad, you are ready to make it available for everyone to find you.

- **Merge all copy into a single text file**
Before you place your Ad into Craigslist, create a single text file containing your entire Ad prepared as shown in [Appendix 4](#). If you create several Ads with different Headlines or Ad copy, be sure to save the separate versions with different file names so you can keep track of them, and for reposting.

You should also give each different Ad a separate Headline tracking identity (See "An Ongoing Marketing Process >> ["Add a Method to Track Responses"](#)"), so you can check its "click on" effectiveness. You can then later compare to see if headlines or copy are improving your responses.

- **Learn to Use Craigslist Postings**

Now it has come time to post your Ad on-line. If you have never used Craigslist for a posting, you should become familiar with the process. Posting a resume on Craigslist is quite straightforward. Use your browser to go to www.craigslist.org.

We highly recommend that you open a Craigslist account. Go to the area homepage for Craigslist in your main geographic area of interest, and click on "My Account". Create an Account, then from within the account, click on "New Posting In" and select a region. This will begin the process of creating your Ad. Be sure to post in "Resumes".

You must specify a location. In the Bay Area of California, you must specify South Bay, East Bay, San Francisco, etc. You may optionally

specify a city within the region if you choose. Unless you only want to work for clients in one city, click on the selection "bypass this step". You may then specify a "Specific Location" that will appear in the heading of your resume. You may want to enter Bay Area, California, or United States. You should not be too specific or too general, just as with specifying your skills. Focus on a region you can service well.

You may post in more than one geographical area. Craigslist asks that you not post the same resume in more than one location, so you should make the new resume different. If you violate Craigslist rules, you may get flagged and eventually banished from posting. It is a good idea to follow the rules and behave as a good citizen, since you want to have a good reputation.

As was covered earlier, the most important part of your resume is the Posting Title or Headline, which you will be asked for on the same screen as the Specific Location.

You will have an opportunity to edit the resume after entering it. Even if you pasted it from Word, make sure it still looks right. Be on the lookout for format changes, and excessive white spaces added by the Craigslist editor.

Once you have posted, you will get an email confirmation. Check the link in this email to make sure your posting is truly posted and looks right. You may edit your posting at any time.

An Ongoing Marketing Process

Add a Method to Track Responses

You will need a method to track the responses to your Ad. This includes adding a special piece of code to your Ad, and finally a method to track response to your web presence from your Ad. This Ad tracking method is optional in that you do not need this feature in your Ad, but you will not know as much about how effective it is if you do not use a tracking method.

- **Check the "Hits" your Ad is getting**

If you do not have a method to track your Ad openings, you will not know the effectiveness of your Headlines. In the past, there had been direct methods to track Ad openings. This gave a direct measure of Headline effectiveness.

Unfortunately, Craigslist has recently banned web applications that track openings directly via "img" (image) links. Now, all images that appear in an Ad must be directly uploaded to Craigslist and links to external images are not permitted.

Note that the approach that follows here is as yet untested, but it is a viable technique used on other sites featuring Ads. This next best on-line approach to track openings utilizes very old techniques that originated in the direct mail marketing area. The best source of information we have found on this approach is outlined in the legendary book "Tested Advertising Techniques by John Caples ([See Bibliography](#)).

In this process, you would create a very attractive enticement to get the potential prospect to respond to a clickable target link on your website so that it may be counted. Since the user must click on a link, this indirect method will yield a much lower number of counts than a pure image counter would. By contrast, pure images count every opening because the prospect doesn't have to do anything but view the Ad to generate a count. On the other hand, this alternate approach does allow the comparing of the openings between two, or more, ads. This comparison then becomes the method of testing Headline effectiveness. Be sure to keep the "offer" identical in each Ad, so it won't be a variable in the number of counts you get.

Creating linkable enticements often involves skills most consultants, especially technical ones, don't possess, it would make sense to seek some assistance from good copywriters to make this work. If not, study books like "Tested Advertising Techniques" to learn how these are written.

An example of such an approach would be to offer a free checklist or white paper of interest to the person doing the searching of the ads. Here you will need to be very creative, and likely experiment a bit.

If all of this seems daunting, you can just skip this measurement technique, and rely on the much smaller number of responses the basic Ad will elicit via links to your website, email or phone calls, and compare the measurement of results from them.

- **Use a Web Statistics Page to Check on the sources of clicks**

The next tracking method that is recommended is that you use is a web page tracking service for your Website or blog site. These

also work placing script code into your web page source code. This code snippet is placed at the bottom of any web page that you have used as a clickable target "landing page" from your Craigslist Ad.

Blog based websites can utilize the excellent "StatCounter"⁹ to check on visits. For HTML based Websites, the common tracking tool is "Google Analytics"¹⁰. The simple versions of these are free. Just follow the instructions as to how to install the code on your webpage or blog. You should study how these work, and learn to use them. They provide a very large amount of information.

These facilities will let you know if persons have read your Ad, and then that they want to learn more about your services. Very often, and if your website is effective, such persons are very qualified leads when they call or email. They are the most likely to give you a call directly. My experience has been that such persons invariably call.

If you do not get contacted by these web visitors, then likely your landing page is not good enough to back up what your Ad states. This lets you know that your Ad needs work.

Generate a Headline

Even though all areas of your Ad are important, the very most important one is your Ad headline. This is a summary of your carefully written resume. It should use the most important key words from your resume. This is the first thing people will read at the top of your resume. They may not look further if it is too broad, too narrow, or not very descriptive.

⁹ www.statcounter.com

¹⁰ www.google.com/analytics/

Someone doing a search using keywords will be exposed to all of the headlines that are a result of using the Craigslist search function. At this time, you are going head to head with your competitors and others that use the search keyword in their Ad to be opened by your potential client. You must be at least equally competitive, or even better, or more competitive than the others that the searchers encounter.

- **Use Competitive Analysis**

Again, do a search on your primary keywords on Craigslist and see which Ads come up. Try all of the combinations of Keywords you think might be used by someone looking for someone like you.

- **What would make you stand out?**

Now, you can review the kinds of Headlines used by your competitors. Be sure to avoid anything that might give a “trashy” appearance such as using lots of odd characters to make the Headline stand out such as with sequences like “!!!!!!” or “@@@@”, etc. We have experimented with a few of these and they don’t seem to work. They also make your Ad appear unprofessional.

- **Keep it succinct and on point**

Keep your Headlines as economical in terms of word count as possible, but use ones that describe what you do well. This is where your creativity comes into play.

In general, you will be doing considerable experimenting with your Headline to see which ones have good opening rates. You can try different ones, and see how well they work. By doing two or three ads with the same body, and different headlines, you can see which create more attention.

- **Keep looking at the competitors**

As time goes on, you should regularly put in your major keywords, and see what competi-

tors are selected by the search engine. You might get some important clues as to how to improve your Headlines.

Check your On-Line Listing

Now begins the time that you see how your Ad appears.

- **Check On-Line Listing**

Check to see if your Ad is indexed using any critical keyword in your Ad. It will appear and show how you appear against your competitive Ads.

After this, try several of your critical test keywords and see how you appear against others on-line.

- **Tune the Ad and Headline**

Now you begin the process of making your Ad as effective as possible. This is a continuous process. Periodically, you will want to review your Craigslist headlines against those used by others by going to Craigslist and trying your critical keywords.

After this, you will want to review your Headline Tracking and Analytic results to see how effective your Headline is in attracting openings. Then you will review the web analytics to see how often visitors to your Ad sought out additional information. Of course, as you receive calls, and emails, you will get further information as to who opened your Ad and their interest. Be sure to ask them where they heard about you within your sales process.

An Ongoing Process

Now that you have completed the initial process, you will want to refine your headlines and body to attract clients. Ideally, you would do this on a

weekly or bi-weekly basis. In between time you can think of how you might want to vary these.

Repost Your Resume regularly

To make your resume highly visible, you must repost it regularly, even if you don't change the Ad. Postings are shown in chronological order by default, even if the user selects show "relevant" Ads. Craigslist uses an algorithm for "relevant", but it appears to check first for "relevant" then by posting date.

If you are not near the top, you will not be seen. Craigslist asks that you not repost the same resume more often than every 48 hours. You may find it convenient to post on the same days of the week, such as Sunday and Wednesday. Research shows that Tuesday is the busiest day for people looking at resumes, so you should have a recent posting on Tuesday.

If you have a Craigslist account, you can use the "repost" facility to make this process go much more quickly. You will notice that you are blocked from "reposting" for the 48 hour period. You will also not be able to "repost" once your Ad is about to run out of its 30 day life period.

Even if you don't have the time to review and update your Craigslist ad regularly, you should repost it. Reposting can be done in one or two minutes. If you don't repost, your ad becomes old and ineffective.

A Craigslist Process

A recommended process for your Craigslist Ad Strategy might be

- Review your Tracking for the previous period
- If possible, repost your Ad to bring it to the top of the daily list.
- Change your Ad or headline

- Consider making an alternate Ad for a different service niche
- Repeat this process

Again, it will save time if you have created an account, since you will be posting regularly. When you have an account it shortens the time it takes to post. You will be able to post in about 2 minutes. This is not much time to spend for the potential results and business that your ad can generate.

Dealing with Spam

Craigslist is highly visible and well known. This is good and bad. Google searches rank Craigslist high, because Craigslist has credibility. Spammers are very active on Craigslist too.

You can leave a box unchecked that lets people contact you about other services and products. This does not stop them, but at least you know that any email you get with your Craigslist Posting Title in it is a spammer. Unfortunately the spammers will outnumber the prospects by what seems like 50 to 1.

You can eliminate nearly all the spam by anonymizing your email address. Craigslist has a button for this that is selected by default. We recommend selecting "show". Someone who wants to contact you must send an email to an address that is forwarded to you. Most spam is removed. The downside is that you may lack credibility if you seem hidden. If your email and Website are hidden from view, it is harder to contact you, so you may miss some prospects. The choice is yours. We find that deleting a dozen spam emails a day on an initial post update is a small price to pay for the results we get from Craigslist.

An Ongoing Sales Process

Answer inquiries professionally and promptly

It should go without saying that you should utilize a professional approach to answering the phone, or phone message, very appropriately and quickly. A home phone answering machine, with your daughter singing a cute song just will not be as effective as a direct business sounding outgoing message.

Email should be answered promptly as well. It is best to try to directly and effectively answer the potential client's email questions and make an attempt to arrange a phone call as soon as possible. The longer you delay in responding, the significantly higher the probability that this potential client will engage someone who has already responded more promptly. If you delay a day, the value of the call has dropped 80% to 90%. If you delay an hour it has dropped 25% to 50%. If you can answer the call when it comes in, you will not give the prospect a reason to call the next person on his list, and you will not have to call back, which can take time. Answering a phone call promptly is critical.

Response delay can mean that all of your work to find a potential client has gone down the drain.

What Success Looks Like

Success of this approach grows slowly, and there can be periods where results, as measured in phone calls and email from prospects that respond to your Ad can be very low. Some of this might be due to the time of year (seasonality) or decrease in demand for your services. It could also indicate that your Ad isn't working or needs to be repositioned or rewritten.

Metrics

As your success builds, you need a way of tracking your results at the preceding levels of your process. By measuring these, you can see where the problem might be located. Is it your headline? Is it your message? Is it your landing page? Is it your on-line copy? Does Craigslist work at all? This is where your on-line tools come in handy.

- **Track Ad Openings**

If you use an "Ad Opening" approach (described in "[Add a Method to Track Responses](#)"), you can test the effectiveness of your Headlines.

If you use such an "Ad Opening" tool, you will notice a burst of openings when you first post, or repost an Ad. This is just the openings of Search Agents that troll Craigslist looking for new Ads. This usually settles down after the first or second day. It is the remaining openings that let you know that your Ad is being opened by real potential prospects.

If you have at least two different Ads, you can track the effectiveness of the different openings in your account by the name of the account. More openings mean a better Headline. This will allow you to tune your Headlines. It probably isn't too practical to use more than 3 different Headlines at once. After a while drop the worst one, and add a new tracking counter and repost a new one with a different Headline.

Don't be surprised if your openings are only 2 to 5 per day. This is quite normal. Just keep striving for more openings, and you will see the results most likely in your Google Analytics results.

- **Google Analytics**

As mentioned earlier, the Google Analytics tool allows you to track the non-phone, non-email interest in your offer of services. The use of Analytics requires a lot of skill. For your purposes, you are only interested in tracking your Craigslist Ads.

For this you must place special Java Scripts into your web pages. Please read carefully how to do this on the Analytics site. Be sure to focus on your landing page or pages. Ideally, these Scripts would be placed into all of the relevant pages on your website. The more you have the more user behavior you can track.

After you set up your website, you can then check in your Analytics pages under "Acquisition" in the sub-heading "Referral". This shows you the source of your page openings if they come from a specific other site. You will see your source Craigslist Ads here and you can then track the responses from each one. This allows you to see which Ad copy is more attractive to a potential prospect. You do this by seeing how long they actually spend time on your website after they reach your landing page. The longer they dwell, the more interested they are.

This "dwelling" on your Web page shows you how well your Ad copy is matching up with your Ad promise.

Don't be surprised if you only get one or two hits a week where a person dwells on your Web site. These are your more serious inquirers. You don't need many of these, unless you have a high volume of sales, to produce a good sized contract that can be very valuable. Also, don't be surprised if you get a phone call from a prospect that already knows a lot about

you. This leads to a much easier sales process and indeed is your highest level "Most Wanted Response".

Seasonality

Another metric that might be useful is to track how your responses vary over the year and how they are affected by specific seasons. There are definite cycles to Marketing responses to your campaigns. Some of these are:

- End of Year Slump – mid December to mid January
- Inquiry Pick up - mid January to early April
- Summer Slump – mid June to early September
- Inquiry Pick Up – September to October

There also appear to be some variations of responses over the day of the week. Some empirical evidence shows opening to be slow on Mondays, and Fridays. You might want to check this out for yourself. ([See "Repost Your Resume regularly" section on Page 23](#))

A savvy Ad campaigner might keep track of these seasonality metrics on an Excel Spreadsheet by month or day of the week. This could be valuable information relative to your campaigns as your practice grows.

A Final Note

Be sure to keep repeating your Craigslist Ad campaign process until you improve your sales. Of course, keep up your other marketing functions as well.

Appendices

Appendix I - Example of Keywords Captured

(Using the key phrase Board level Analog electronic engineer on a particular day and described in the paper on page 13)

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Analog Board Level Design Engineer << "Seed Keywords"

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The Electronic Engineering position will provide technical support to the New Product design group as well as Sustaining Engineering. This position requires Electronic testing of both analog and digital circuits for design verification for new and existing products. The potential candidate must have experience with testing electronic products using the test equipment including, oscilloscope, DMM and various test fixture. These fixtures may require the Electronic Engineer to simulate various input and output functions in order to qualify the device under test. Must also be able to log the test data and present to the design engineer for review.

- Familiar with general digital logic circuits and embedded systems.
- Hands on skills in electronic required.
- Schematic capture, simulation, PCB layout, BOM management.
- Ability to handle and resolve recurring problems.
- Demonstrated ability to manage multiple projects concurrently to deliver products of varying complexity on schedule.
- Generate technical design documentation per our quality process.
- Create circuit designs including component selection, schematic capture
- Troubleshooting and debugging -- determine causes of failures and methods of correction.
- Other sustaining, support or development activities as required.
- Good verbal and Written Skills
- Labview experience
- Must be able to conduct Electronic tests and form a conclusion in a written report.
- Excellent troubleshooting of circuits boards down to the component level.
- Must have CAD experience, preferably Autocad and PADS logic.
- Must have good understanding of PCB layouts.
- Must work independent with minimal supervision
- Team player who must work with engineering group to complete required task.
- Ability to read and interpret documents such as safety rules and operating and maintenance instructions.

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You will be designing, developing, analyzing, troubleshooting and debugging systems, and doing research and development of new technologies. This position requires a broad knowledge of engineering disciplines, methodologies and systems. The ideal candidate will have project and program management responsibility.

Appendix 2 - Example of the Output of a Word Frequency Counter

(See [page 15](#))

The list shows the word, and how often it is used

Primary Keywords	Frequency	Primary Keywords	Frequency
design	172	including	31
experience	107	work	31
hardware	54	required	30
engineering	52	electronic	25
system	51	layout	25
product	49	designs	24
electrical	48	products	24
level	47	requirements	24
development	43	software	24
systems	43	plus	23
analog	40	strong	22
skills	40	new	21
test	40	circuit	20
board	39	team	20
power	39	electronics	19
knowledge	37	embedded	19
signal	34	firmware	19
technical	34	high	19
digital	32	years	19
engineer	31	candidate	18

Appendix 3 - Example of a Completed, Compressed Set of Keywords.

(These are placed at the bottom of a resume Ad. See [page 17](#))

design, experience, hardware, engineering, system, product, electrical, level, development, systems, analog, skills, test, board, power, knowledge, signal, technical, digital, engineer, including, work, required, electronic, layout, designs, products, requirements, software, plus, strong, new, circuit, team, electronics, embedded, firmware, high, years, candidate, documentation, equipment, support, ability, logic, circuits, control, pcb, schematic, teams, customer, degree, job, mixed, qualifications, such, testing, analysis, applications, component, field, issues, manufacturing, quality, simulation, understanding, components, debug, drive, management, mechanical, provide, responsibilities, responsible, specification, tools, using, working, analyzers, position, specifications, verification, application, capture, customers, developing, environment, equivalent, good, internal, preferred, troubleshooting, written, architecture, boards, communication, complex, engineers, familiar, fpga, functional, medical, minimum, production, audio, communications, data, designing, excellent, hands, include, interfaces, low, multiple, perform, performance, problems, project, successful, wireless, assembly, compliance, develop, devices, education, experienced, integration, integrity, interface, projects, senior, supplies, usb, validation, analytical, circuitry, device, etc, implementation, industry, lab, lead, noise, oscilloscopes, related, release, reliability, selection, specific, speed, supply, techniques, verbal, based, bring, bsee, complete, computer, conversion, cross, debugging, description, document, driven, dsp, expertise, individual, integrate, key, leadership, player, processing, safety, sensors, solutions, various, verilog, well, within, acquisition, applicable, basic, both, business, closely, constraints, contribute, criteria, current, desirable, detailed, drivers, emi, ensure, evaluation, existing, fabrication, familiarity, highly, ideal, imaging, integrated, life, manage, marketing, methods, more, network, participate, process, proficiency, program, programmable, programming, requires, reviews, science, self, skill, suppliers, technologies, time, travel, under, works, write, 802, areas, bachelor's, background, build, cad, camera, certification, definition, deliver, emc, environments, evaluate, following, generators, higher, implement, innovative, jose, limited, meet, motivated, msee, needed, notes, oriented, phys, plans, preferably, presentation, printed, problem, procedures, processes, processors, protocols, prototypes, proven, range, relevant, results, review, robotics, role, sales, san, serdes, set, solving, spectrum, staff, standards, sustaining, technology, thorough, topologies, training, types, voltage, x86, active, analyze, analyzer, aspects, capability, center, chip, clearly, colleagues, comfortable, commercial, concepts, consumer, controls, create, critical, cycle, demonstrated, dfm, dft, directly, disciplines, documents, duties, edge, emulation, entry, ethernet, expert, failure, fast, final, general, generating, group, guidelines, help, i2c, includes, independent, leader, location, manufacturability, materials, micro, microcontroller, microprocessor, networks, orcad, oscilloscope, ownership, pads, part, peripheral,

Appendix 4 - Example Template for a Complete Craigslist Ad

(This summarizes all of the Ad sections together See [page 18](#))

Your Name

Your City

Your Phone Number

Your Email Address (optional: use
anonymous Craigslist email address)

Your Landing Page Web Address

<Start of Body>

- Your introductory paragraph that emphasizes potential benefits
- Organized Detail about your Service – keep this focused and as short as possible.
- Call to action – Ask for the potential client to contact you and put your phone number and email at the end.
- Be sure to use a text file as the basis for your Ad, and consider strongly using just text and simple characters in your Ad.

<Add 25 or more Blank Lines here>

- This separates the keywords from the body
- These can be omitted, but most folks use them

<Your Keywords>

- Give this section an initial title like “Special Keywords”
- These are the ones you have previously constructed in your Master Keywords text file. Paste them into this section.

<Your Tracking Image>

- This is used to allow an external resource to track your Ad openings (See the Section on this subject)

Appendix 5 - Example of a real Craigslist Ad

(The Ad is shortened and the company is a fictitious one)

Title: Wearable Devices, Home Health, Medical Devices - Electronic Design

John Jones
President
Example Systems Inc.
San Jose, CA 95131
408-555-1212
www.ExampleSystems.com

Seeking consulting work

Example Systems develops wearable devices, home health devices, products for the aging, and medical devices. Our expert engineers design sensor interfaces, Wireless, motion control, and low power electronics. My staff of very senior engineers can design a new product rapidly that works the first time. We are experienced with:

- Medical devices – we have a Design Control procedure meeting FDA 21CFR 820.30 and ISO 13485:2003
- Sensors such as temperature, pressure, flow, vibration, force, strain, distance, and cameras.
- Analog circuit design: low current (picoamps) and high speed (over 100 MHz).
- Motion control systems – stepper motors, servo motors, and AC motors
- Wireless: Bluetooth, Zigbee, CDMA, GPRS, GSM, GPS, and RFID.
- FPGA and CPLD: Altera and Xilinx using Quartus, ISE, ModelSim, VHDL, and Verilog tools.
- Embedded design: microprocessors (Intel, TI, Freescale, Renesas, PIC, etc.).
- Windows and Linux software.
- Microsoft C (C++, C#), Java, and Visual Basic.
- Power supplies, including switching regulators.
- Complete product development including design, PCB layout, prototype testing, and manufacturing of small quantities

Ours is the highest quality work, done by professionals. Recent examples of our work:

- Wearable golf game tracking device
- Night vision device
- Monitor for the elderly
- Catheter sterilizer for home dialysis
- Stroke therapy machine including sensor signal conditioning and motion control
- Tester for heart ablation catheter

Comments by clients:

- "It was on time and below budget."
- "Excellent job"
- "Their work is professionally done, high quality, and on time."
- "They worked well under pressure and cooperated well"

See more examples of our work at www.ExampleSystems.com (you may need to paste this address into your browser if clicking on it does not take you there). I will meet with you to discuss your project, and determine the best way to accomplish what you need. I will show you some of our outstanding references. Call me at 408-555-1212.

[Note ----- Lots of Blank Spaces Here in the Real Ad -----]

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Key Words Describing Our Capabilities

medical device, sensors, FPGA, microprocessor, USB, analog circuit design, digital circuit design, circuit design, electronic product design, hardware design, embedded, software embedded, firmware, Windows drivers, instrumentation, data acquisition, device driver, systems, thermocouple, product design, measurements, microcontrollers, cardiology, design control, I3485 quality system, FMEA, I3485, ISO13485

software, Visual C, C C++ and C#, RTD, thermistor, strain gauge, temperature sensor, accelerometer, linear, mixed signal, printed circuit, PCB design, load cells, LVDT, humidity, pressure sensor, laser sensor, distance sensor, flow sensor, vibration sensor, force sensor, machine vision, analog-to-digital, digital-to-analog, Windows,

8051, PIC, PCI, RS232, RS-232, RS422, RS-422, RS485, RS-485, SPI, I2C, JTAG, Modbus, Ethernet, VB, Basic, Linux, HTML, JavaScript, PHP, Process Control, Real-Time, Real time, TCP/IP, network, server, Altera, Xilinx, Spartan, Renesas, VME, CPLD, IAR Tools, OrCAD, Altium, PADS, Cadence Capture, Pads Logic Capture, Quartus, ISE, ModelSim, VHDL, Verilog, ECOS, Windows, Visual Basic, Visual Studio, .NET, USART, UART, HDLC, CPU, op amp, Cypress, Microchip, RFID, NFC, WiFi, Bluetooth, cellular, Zigbee, BT, BTLE, GPRS, GSM, GPS, consumer, networking, control, controllers, networks, servo, converter, noise, signal, 32bit, converters, signaling, Op-amp, DSP, thermocouples, Analog-Digital, ADC, PLC, ladder logic, EPROM, flash memory, FPGA design, Flex circuits, hand held devices, hardware software integration, Intel, IR detectors, Logic Design, Low noise design, Machine Control, Materials, medical device development, medical equipment design, Medical Equipment, Medical Instruments, Medical product battery powered, Medical Product Development, medical sensor, Medical Systems, Medical Test Equipment Design, Memory Systems Design, microprocessors, micro-power design, Microchip PIC, microcode, microcomputers, microcontroller, Microcontrollers-Single Chip, Motion control, Motor control, Motor Drivers, MS-WINDOWS, multi-tasking, multi-threading, New Product Introduction, Object-Oriented Programming, OOP, PADS, PC Card, PC Interface, PCAD, PCB Design and Layout, PCI Express, phase lock loops, Photodiode

amplifiers, PID, Precision Circuit Design, Product Development, programming, Project Management, Project Schedules, PROM, Proposals, Protection Circuits, protocol converter, Prototype Development, proximity sensors, redesign, reference design, reverse engineering, RF wireless, robotics, consumer, networking, control, controllers, networks, servo, converter, noise, signal, 32bit, converters, signaling, Op-amp, DSP, thermocouples, Analog-Digital, ADC, PLC, ladder logic, EPROM, flash memory, FPGA design, Flex circuits, hand held devices, hardware software integration, Intel, IR detectors, Logic Design, Low noise design, Machine Control, Materials, medical device development, medical equipment design, Medical Equipment, Medical Instruments, Medical product battery powered, Medical Product Development, medical sensor, Medical Systems, Medical Test Equipment Design, Memory Systems Design, microprocessors, micro-power design, Microchip PIC, microcode, microcomputers, microcontroller, Microcontrollers-Single Chip, Motion control, Motor control, Motor Drivers, MS-WINDOWS, multi-tasking, multi-threading, New Product Introduction, Etc [.....Lots more Keywords beyond here]]

Glossary

Keywords – Words that are used in an on-line add to attract visitors from the Internet or other Search Engines such as the Craigslist Search engine.

Landing Page – A special page on a website that is the target for a specific Ad campaign. These are intended to specifically attract the attention of a visitor that comes to the page via the Specific Ad. They serve to guide the visitor to the appropriate information that they desire.

"Most Wanted Response" – Most wanted response to an Advertisement. Commonly used for responses to a Web presence. It is what you desire the viewer of you Ad to do to respond to the Ad.

Seed Keywords – These are keywords that are used to create other keywords. When doing online searches, these are the highest level words a searcher might enter in looking for a specific service. A few of these seed keywords can be used to create a large number of other related keywords.

Bibliography

"Guerilla Marketing" and its derivatives by J. Conrad Levinson

"Get Clients Now" by C. J. Hayden.

"The One Page Business Plan for Consultants" by Jim Horan

"The Professional Consultant; Recommendations for Best Practices in Silicon Valley" by Duane Strong and John Gale, November 16, 2009

"Tested Advertising Methods", Fifth Edition, by John Caples. (An oldie, but a goodie for headlines and Ad Copy)

Action Plan Marketing – Website and Blog by Robert Middleton, See <http://www.actionplan.com/> . His newsletters are an excellent source of Marketing Information for Small, Service Businesses.