From Initial Contact to Closed Deal - An Email Communication Case Study

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WHAT IS THIS CASE STUDY ABOUT?

"**Business is about cherishing those you work with and delivering more value than they could possibly expect**."

I recently received an international inquiry about developing a new website through my website's contact form. We exchanged messages regularly, and I never once brought up my service charges, packages, or any costs. It was like talking to a friend: one sharing his business dreams, the other offering insights into the pros and cons of those dreams, discussing the revenue model, and planning for the business's future.

Eventually, the person asked about my rates. That's when I introduced my pricing package, which he not only accepted but also hired me on a retainer basis. He told me to take as much time as needed for the website, and he was just glad that I was handling the project for him. I particularly loved that part.

I'll share our conversations with you, with certain details removed to protect privacy. I believe this will be incredibly useful for anyone looking to learn how to communicate with potential clients and add value without rushing to quote your fees. Being genuinely helpful builds trust.

EMAIL COMMUNICATION

Note: The project description was changed and is not real.

From: [REDACTED]

Hi Faraz,

I own www.[REDACTED].com. I really want it to come to life. As it's become increasingly difficult to find home appliances in retail stores across [REDACTED], I thought of a service where retailers could advertise only the appliances they have in stock that can be purchased immediately. This tool would save customers time by showing only what is actually available, rather than what the corporate websites list. It's essentially a classified ad site for appliance retailers and a shopping tool for consumers. What do you think? Can you build it?

Thank you.

[REDACTED]

From: Faraz

Hi [REDACTED],

Thank you for reaching out with your idea for [REDACTED].com. It's a great concept to provide consumers with real-time information on home appliances available directly from retail stores.

To build your site, I recommend utilizing a WordPress plugin or system that supports a multivendor setup. This allows each retailer to manage their own listings — their "inventory" of appliances that are physically present in their store and ready for sale. Retailers can update their inventory in real-time, ensuring that the information provided to consumers is always accurate and current. This setup enhances the shopping experience and helps in maintaining a dynamic and up-to-date website.

If you'd like to discuss this in more detail or have specific functionalities you want included, please let me know. I'm ready to help you build a website that perfectly fits your vision and offers a valuable tool for both retailers and consumers.

Looking forward to your response.

Best regards,

Faraz

From: [REDACTED]

Hi Faraz,

You have nailed the concept of this project. How do we get started? I am a private individual, so I don't have a lot of time to dedicate to this project. What would your requirements be to get this project started? A ballpark estimate of the time frame and cost would be reasonable. I would like this project to be low maintenance and self-sufficient once developed, hosted, and live.

Thanks for your timely reply.

Looking forward to hearing from you.

[REDACTED]

From: Faraz

Hi [REDACTED],

Before we move forward, it would be helpful to understand the financial model you envision for this platform. Are you planning to generate revenue by taking a percentage of sales made through the site, or are you considering a subscription or signup fee model for the retailers or users? Knowing this will help me tailor the site's design and functionalities to best suit the business model and ensure it aligns with your goals for revenue generation.

I look forward to your insights on this, and I'm here to help with any other questions you might have as I define the project scope and requirements.

Best regards,

Faraz

From: [REDACTED]

Hi Faraz,

A great question. I never really thought about revenue lol. If the site becomes popular, I think joining an ad network could generate revenue. I am also open to your suggestions. My goal is simple: Keep it simple without a complex payment system and make it easy for users to add information, edit information, and provide accurate information. If we achieve that, the rest I think will fall into place.

[REDACTED]

From: Faraz

Hi [REDACTED],

Regarding the simplicity and integrity of the website, it's important we consider a trustworthy environment for users. Allowing open and free registrations without checks can attract spammers who might create fake entries, possibly redirecting users to fraudulent sites. This could significantly harm the credibility of the website and turn away genuine users.

To prevent this, I recommend implementing a manual verification process for each retailer who wishes to sign up. Given your personal time constraints, would you have time to dedicate to this manual verification process?

Let me know your thoughts on this, and how you feel about incorporating a verification step.

Looking forward to your feedback.

Best regards,

Faraz

From: [REDACTED]

Hi Faraz,

The more we correspond, the more confident I become that you can bring this project to life. I totally didn't think about spam and spammers. It is very important that the information provided is legitimate and accurate.

As for the design of the website itself, I would like the landing page to be clean, much like Google. Search would probably use criteria like Name, City, or zip/postal code. Brand, Make, Models. I've seen similar functionalities on various online marketplaces which streamline the user experience significantly; perhaps you have some great suggestions in this area as well.

P.S. as to manual verification, I would try to verify retailers within 24 hours, maybe via call, text, or email. I do not think the thousands of [REDACTED] appliance retailers are going to sign up the first day, lol, but we can hope.

:) [REDACTED]

From: Faraz

Thank you for your continued enthusiasm and trust in me bringing this project to life, [REDACTED]. As I begin drafting the project plan and outline the specifics, I'd like to ask if you already have a logo for [REDACTED].com, or

would you need one designed? A logo is crucial as it helps establish the brand's identity from the start.

Best regards,

From: [REDACTED]

Please see attached but feel free and make it anything you like. It's only a concept.

Have a nice weekend.

From: [REDACTED]

I will be unavailable for the next couple of days. I will check in when I can.

My little overview:

Header:

- Company logo (a stylized "[REDACTED]" or an appliance icon with a smile)
- Navigation menu with options like "Search Appliances," "Retailers Near Me," and "Resources"

Hero Section:

- Large background image or video of a happy family in a kitchen or a scene inside a modern home
- Headline: "Find Your Perfect Appliance with [REDACTED]"

- Subheading: "Connect with trusted retailers and explore a vast inventory of home appliances"
- Call-to-Action (CTA) button: "Start Your Search" or "Find Your Appliance"

Features Section:

- Section title: "Why Choose [REDACTED]?"
- Three or four cards with icons, headings, and short descriptions highlighting the website's benefits, such as:
    - "Huge Inventory" - "Browse thousands of appliances from trusted retailers"
    - "Retailers You Can Trust" - "Verified retailers with excellent customer reviews"
    - "Easy Search" - "Filter by type, brand, price, and more to find your perfect appliance"
    - "Resources" - "Get appliance-buying tips, news, and advice from our experts"

Testimonial Section:

- Section title: "What Our Customers Say"
- Quotes or videos from satisfied customers sharing their positive experiences with [REDACTED]
- Call-out to encourage visitors to share their own stories

Call-to-Action (CTA) Section:

- Headline: "Ready to Find Your Next Appliance?"
- CTA button: "Start Your Search" or "Explore Our Inventory"
- Optional: a brief form to collect visitor information for newsletter sign-ups or promotional offers

Footer:

- Copyright information
- Legal links (Terms of Use, Privacy Policy, etc.)
- Social media links
- Contact information (phone number, email, physical address)

This design aims to create a friendly, easy-to-navigate site.

From: Faraz

I've been researching potential themes that could accelerate the development of [REDACTED], and I've found one that aligns perfectly with your vision and your detailed specifications. The theme is called [REDACTED], a specialized appliance dealership WordPress theme available on ThemeForest. Here's why I think [REDACTED] would be an excellent choice for your project:

- **Advanced Search Features:** The theme includes a robust search tool that allows users to filter appliances by type, brand, price, and other criteria, helping them find exactly what they're looking for quickly and efficiently.
- **Monetization Systems:** The theme includes options for setting up payment gateways, allowing you to potentially earn revenue if you decide to charge retailers for listing their appliances or feature premium listings.
- **Time Efficiency:** Using [REDACTED] will save us considerable time and effort as it comes with pre-

built functionalities that are battle-tested and proven.
- **Customizability:** This theme allows for easy integration of your logo and adjustment of the main colors and contact details, ensuring the website quickly feels like your own and reflects the [REDACTED] brand.
- **Reliability:** Since [REDACTED] is widely used and well-reviewed by other users, we can be confident in its stability and ongoing support.

The next steps would involve setting up the theme, customizing it to match your requirements, and filling it with content. This theme provides a solid foundation for [REDACTED], combining ease of use with powerful functionality. Let me know your thoughts, and if this aligns with what you're looking for, we can proceed further.

Best regards,

Faraz

From: [REDACTED]

Hey Faraz!

Checking out [REDACTED] was a total game-changer! This WordPress theme is like a match made in heaven. I can already feel my excitement building from our unexpected encounter online. Your guidance and support have been absolutely invaluable, Faraz. Seriously, thank you!

Now, it's time to think about how we can make this collaboration even more amazing for you. I've got the vision and the domain locked down, but your technical prowess is what's going to bring it all to life. So, let's talk compensation. Whether you prefer a straightforward payment for your expertise or are open to the idea of becoming a partner in this venture with www.[REDACTED].com, I'm all ears. Let's make this journey together something truly special.

As for cost, what are you thinking, with the theme development and hosting? I am located in [REDACTED], but we can be hosted anywhere, as for payment platforms, and the back end maintenance, there will certainly be cost involved there as well.

Looking forward to your response.

[REDACTED]

From: Faraz

Hi [REDACTED],

You're welcome! I'm glad that you loved the theme! Let's discuss the costs associated with bringing [REDACTED] to life:

1. **Theme Purchase - $[REDACTED]**: This is a one-time cost, and any future updates will be free. I suggest you purchase the theme and grant me access to your account for downloading and setting it up. This way, you will own the theme and the license.

2. **Logo – Cost Undetermined**: Do you want to go with the logo you sent earlier or would you like me to get a new one designed? If using the earlier logo, do you have the source files available?
3. **Hosting – Cost Undetermined**: Initially, we can host the website on my server for free during the development phase. Once the site is live, we can move it to your own hosting account or continue hosting it on my server at a nominal cost.
4. **Theme Setup, Development, and Testing – Flat Rate [REDACTED]**: This includes installing the theme, customizing it to meet your vision, and thoroughly testing it to ensure everything works perfectly.
5. **Technical SEO After Site Development – [REDACTED]**: After development, I'll optimize the site for search engines and performance, including speed optimization, image compression and lazy loading, code minification, XML sitemap creation, structured data implementation, and website security improvements.
6. **Site Maintenance**:
    - **Initial Support**: Free website theme, plugin, and security updates for [REDACTED].
    - **Ongoing Maintenance**: [REDACTED] per month afterward, which includes up to [REDACTED] hours of work per month for any updates or additions.

Let me know your thoughts, and we can get started!

Best regards,

Faraz

From: [REDACTED]

Hi Faraz,

Go to ThemeForest; I have purchased the theme.

[REDACTED]

As for payment, let's get started. I would like to send [REDACTED] or [REDACTED] to you in good faith, so you can get the project moving and once we are rolling, I will transfer another [REDACTED] to keep it moving, and another [REDACTED] on completion and live. That will cover 1st month's maintenance/hosting. Please provide the information needed to send the 1st payment.

We will go month to month after that, agreed.

Faraz, we both know the web isn't going anywhere, so this isn't a race to get [REDACTED] online and running. Take all the time you need, let's make it the best it can be. Nothing any good was done in a hurry, and I am so happy you have decided to take on this project for me.

As for a logo, I am only suggesting. Let's keep it simple.

[REDACTED]

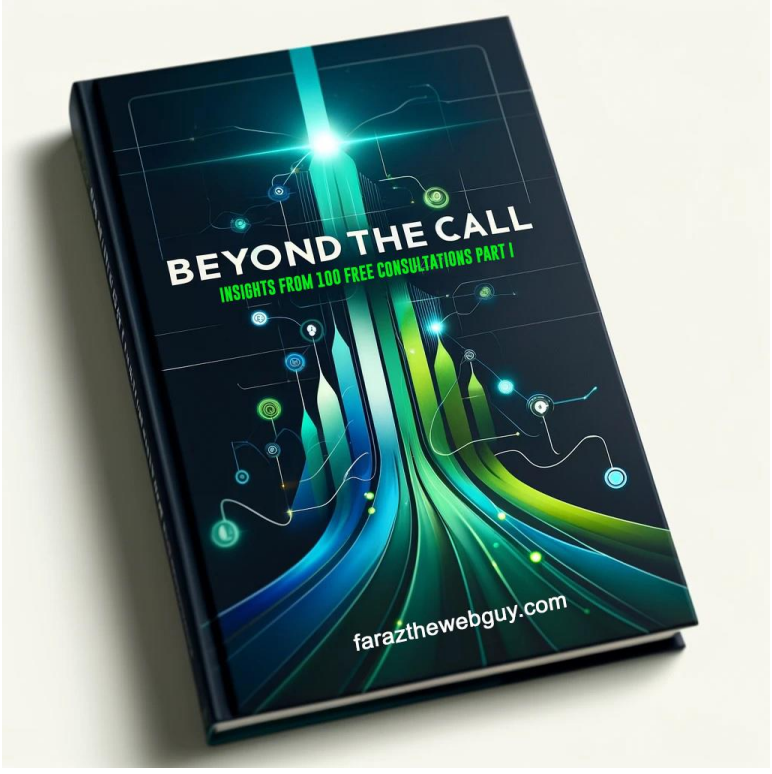
Colors I would like to see throughout this site:

[REDACTED]

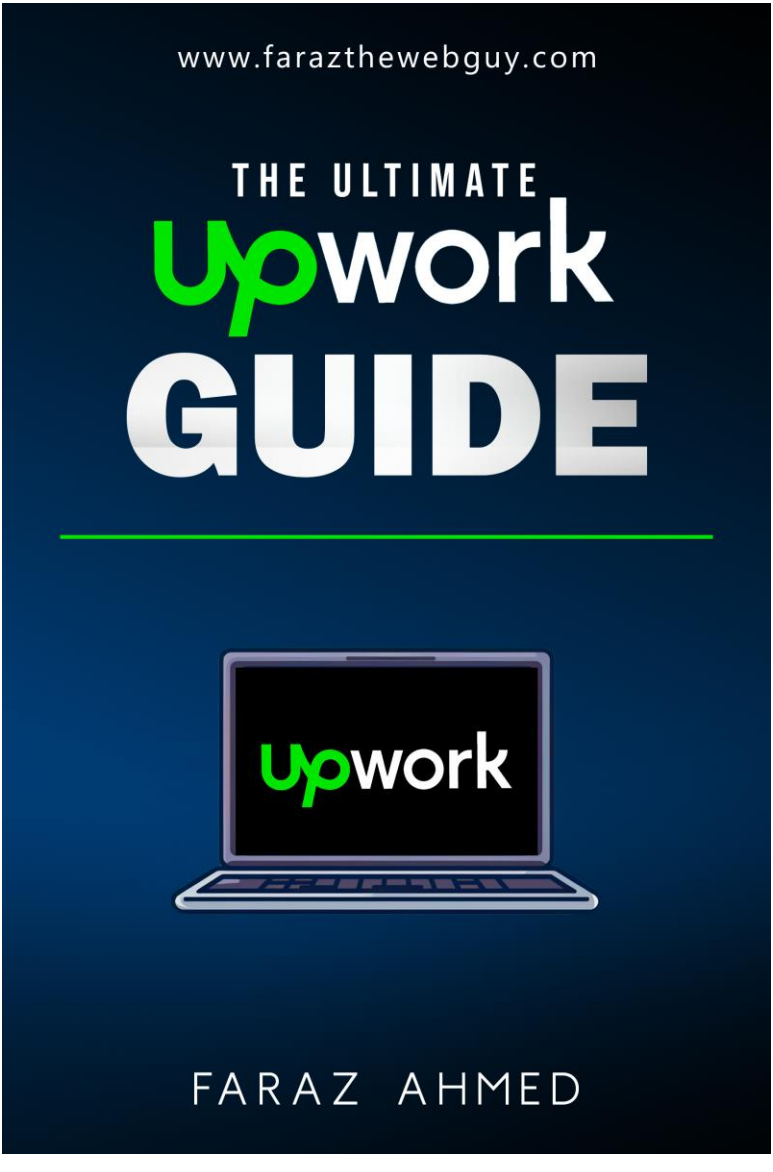
Faraz, have a nice day.

[REDACTED].

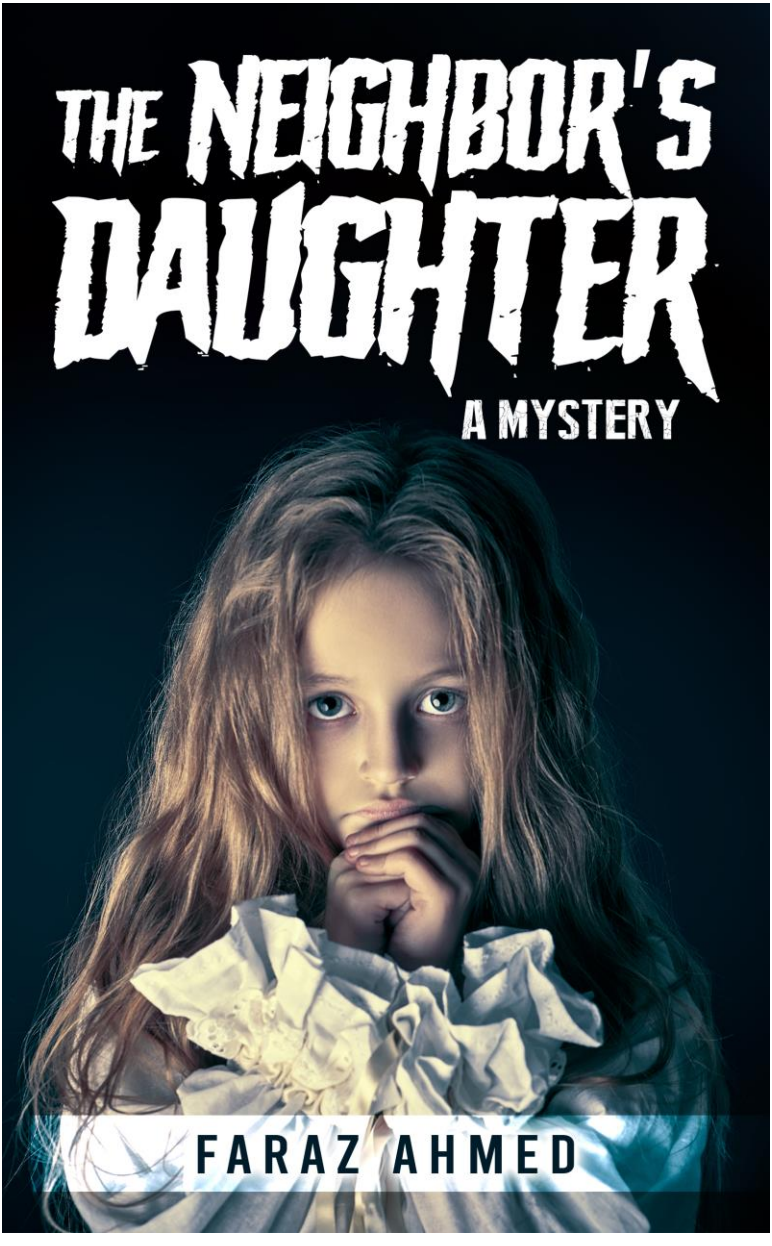
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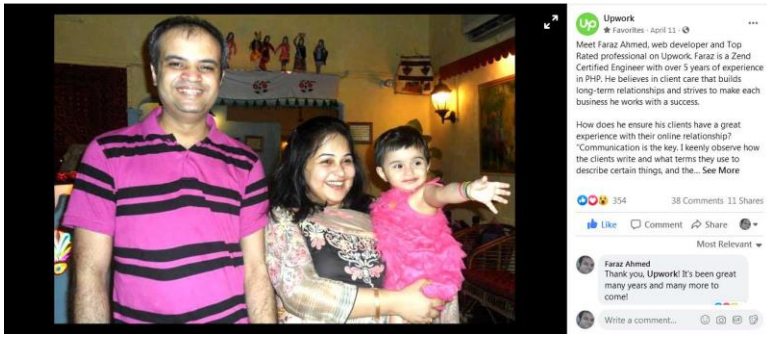
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About the Author



Faraz Ahmed is a Zend Certified (official PHP certification) PHP Web Developer, Writer, and CBT Life Coach from Karachi, Pakistan. He has been developing websites for the last 15 years. He is also a Top Rated+ Freelancer on Upwork and has been featured by Upwork many times on its website and social media (see below). WordPress is his expertise, as he has worked on more than 1000+ websites developed in WordPress and can do anything in it, from creating simple content-based websites to developing complex eCommerce websites or applications.



One Last Thing...

I am not currently accepting consultations via call, but please feel free to send me a message or a voice note with your queries, and I will attempt to respond at my earliest convenience. And if your issue warrants a call, we can have that call too.

https://www.facebook.com/faraz.ahmed84/

Thank you for reading!