Douglas Crawford

email: douglascr@wford.uk
website & portfolio: douglascrawford.uk

Personal Statement

I have worked for over seven as senior staff writer, occasional editor, and resident tech and VPN industry expert at ProPrivacy (formerly BestVPN.com). This position allowed me to combine writing talents honed by a degree in philosophy with expertise and love of computer technology, together with a keen (and often outspoken) interest in contemporary politics.

ProPrivacy and I have parted ways, and I am now keen to put the skills, knowledge, and experience I gained there to good use.

I have been widely quoted on issues relating cybersecurity and digital privacy in both the UK national press (including the BBC, The Independent, and the Daily Mail Online), and by international technology publications such as Ars Technica. In 2017, I was invited by the Electronic Frontier Foundation (EFF) to participate as a host in online discussions about net neutrality.

Employment and Education

Dates	Employment
February 2013 – May 2020	Senior tech writer at ProPrivacy (formerly BestVPN.com). Working as a writer, resident technology expert, sometime editor, cyber-security researcher, and online privacy advocate. In this position, I maintained professional integrity in what is a very competitive market.
September 2012 – June 2016	Freelance writer/copywriter. I achieved "Top rated" status for three years running on Upwork before becoming signing an exclusivity contract with BestVPN.com (which was largely a formality by that point). I received flawless 5/5-star feedback, which can still be viewed on my old Upwork Profile.
September 2010 - July 2012	I was awarded a Double Distinction for completing an Edexcel BTEC Level 3 Extended Diploma. Although not much of a musician, the music tech and computing skills I developed as a sound engineer held to inspire by my drive to become a technology writer.
April 2004 - May 2006	While living near Malaga in Spain I worked as a freelance computer repair and upgrade specialist, also offering private tuition in all aspects of personal computer use.
2001 - 2003	Arachnophilia - We love to spin webs. I was the web designer for my own small (two-person) web design company, which I ran out of my home in Plymouth. Web design has moved on a great deal since 2002 and I am no modern developer. I did, however, knock my new website together on Wix in the space of around three days...
September 1988 - July 1991	The Manchester Metropolitan University. I studied Philosophy and Politics (with a major in political ethics), achieving a 2:1 Bachelor of Arts (BA) hons degree. These studies honed my use of the English language, taught me how to construct robust logical arguments, and fostered in me the development of rigorous critical analysis. My degree certificate can be viewed on my LinkedIn page.

Skills

Writing
I am a native (British) English speaker who is equally at home writing in British and "International (US)" English. My diction, grammar, and sentence structure are excellent, and I have always been complimented on the flair of my writing style.

As a highly successful freelance writer and copywriter I received praise and flawless feedback while writing for an eclectic mix of projects, for which I employed a wide variety of writing styles.

Writing for ProPrivacy allowed me to combine my writing talents with a deep technical understanding of computers, while also allowing me to write political analysis articles relating to the ongoing tensions between state surveillance and online privacy.

I've found that I have a particular talent for explaining complex technical issues in terms that casual readers can not only follow, but also find engaging.

Technology
I have owned a computer since the dawn of personal computing. I have also worked as a web designer, PC tutor, and computer repair technician. All of which should not obscure the simple fact that I am a complete computer geek.

I have a deep understanding of how all major modern operating systems (Windows, macOS, Linux, iOS, Android, and Chrome OS) work, with Linux Kubuntu being my current daily workhorse. I am also knowledgeable about most forms of computer hardware, and (just for fun!) like to keep abreast of new developments in the computer market.

Cyber-security and digital privacy
Working for over seven years as senior cybersecurity researcher at ProPrivacy, I know a great deal about cyber-security and online privacy. This includes in-depth practical and theoretical knowledge about cyber-security software, hardware, systems, legal frameworks around the world, and the politics that rage around online privacy.

I have performed countless detailed reviews of password managers, cloud storage platforms, ad blocker software, 2FA token hardware, routers, browsers, search engines, and more.

My thoughts on cyber-security and digital privacy issues have appeared in many national and international publications, and I have often been praised for my political articles that fiercely defending our right to online privacy.

Although not a cryptographer, I also have a strong working and conceptual understanding of cryptographic protocols - how they work, how they are used, and what their weaknesses are.

VPN industry
As a matter of both strong personal and professional integrity, I will never break any confidentiality I have been made a party to in my years working in this sector. I can, however, still bring a great deal of knowledge and insight about VPN services, the VPN industry, and the VPN-comparison industry to the table.

Office

For the last nine years I have worked remotely from home. I am comfortable and highly productive in this situation.

- I am used to collaborating with SEO experts in order to include search engine-friendly terms in copy in a naturalistic way.
- I am used to communicating and collaborating with colleagues using platforms such as Slack and GSuite.
- I can multitask, prioritize effectively, and am adept at delivering content to a deadline.
- I am intimately familiar with word processing software such as Word, Google Docs, Pages, and LibreOffice Writer.
- I am comfortable finding my way around other common office software such as Excel, Google Sheets, PowerPoint, and the like.
- I can create and collaborate on online documents using GSuite and similar platforms.
- I am used to working in WordPress and other online content publication platforms (including CRM systems).
- I can edit documents in raw HTML (code view), implement custom shortcodes, fill in properties forms, and generally do all the usual bits and bobs required for publishing articles online.
- I can crop, resize, and annotate screenshots and other images using a variety of software packages (I can also knock up graphics from scratch when needed, but make no claims to be a graphic designer).

Further information

Please see my website, douglascrawford.uk, for sample a portfolio, testimonials, links to articles published in the mainstream media, and more.