Article Marketing for Content & Profit:

Using Articles to Make a Killing on the Internet!

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ARTICLE MARKETING FOR CONTENT & PROFIT
How to use articles to make a killing on the Internet!

Introduction

What an article is (and isn't)

You have a website. You want traffic. Therefore, you need articles.

If someone says the word "article" to you, you might think of stories in magazines and newspapers. Unless, of course, you're a serial grammarian, in which case you may picture a series of short words: a, an, the, and so on. In the interests of avoiding confusion (and assuaging the serial grammarians), all references to "articles" in this book should be assumed to mean this:

Article: *A relatively short, informative piece of writing that conveys an idea or concept in a useful, interesting and/or entertaining manner.*

Now, take a good look at that definition. There are several key words to help you determine what an article *is*. The word "informative" is perhaps the most important. Good articles let the reader walk away (or click away, as the case may be) knowing something they didn't know before. People read articles expecting to either learn something or be entertained—preferably both.

What about the term "relatively short"? Articles can vary in length, from a few paragraphs to several pages. The length of an article should depend on the information you're trying to convey. For example, "How to Make a Peanut Butter and Jelly Sandwich" would be relatively shorter than "The Basic Operating Principles of Fission Reactors."

The last part of the definition is to help you understand what an article *isn't*. This is a crucial concept for anyone using articles to increase website traffic and sales, and it's one many webmasters fail to grasp: **articles are not advertisements.**

No one wants to read a three-page ego-stroke about how great your product or book is, or why dozens of people in your hometown are raving about you. These types of "articles" will not be circulated or read, and can actually *decrease* your website traffic when word starts spreading that your site is nothing but a bunch of advertising hype.

Though your ultimate goal in generating articles for your website is to increase sales, using articles to spell out your goal in plain English (buy my stuff!) is a good way to make sure you never reach it. Believe it or not, subtlety still has a place in Internet marketing. By providing people with quality articles at no cost to them, you will reach a far greater audience—and convert more visitors to buyers.

Articles, Content, Visibility…Sales!

Now that you know what articles are, let's talk about why you need them.

Ask any successful 'netpreneur the secret to drumming up website traffic and earning repeat visitors, and you're practically guaranteed to receive a one-word answer: content. That's CON-tent (the "meat" that gives substance to whatever is being referenced, whether it's words on a website or cotton in a stuffed bear), not

con-TENT (sublime happiness, often realized through sufficient quantities of money—though that's not necessarily a bad thing, either).

Articles are content. They are the meat of your website; providing substance and value to both visitors and search engines. A website without articles is like a headline about alien babies on the cover of a tabloid magazine: easy to ignore. There is nothing to interest visitors in staying or coming back, and nothing to appease the search engine spiders into indexing your pages somewhere above the millions rank.

Once your website has content, you're on the road to visibility. By offering your visitors something of value, you not only increase the chance that they'll come back, but also that they will tell friends about your site. Also, search engines give more weight to websites with content as well as those that are frequently updated.

Face it: there are millions of websites out there in cyberspace. You need visibility to get visitors. And the more visitors you have, the more sales you'll make.

Before you start loading up your website with articles and sit back to watch the money roll in, you should understand that there are right ways and wrong ways to generate and use website content. This book will explain the do's and don'ts of article marketing and help you make the most of this powerful internet tool.

PART I: Generating Articles
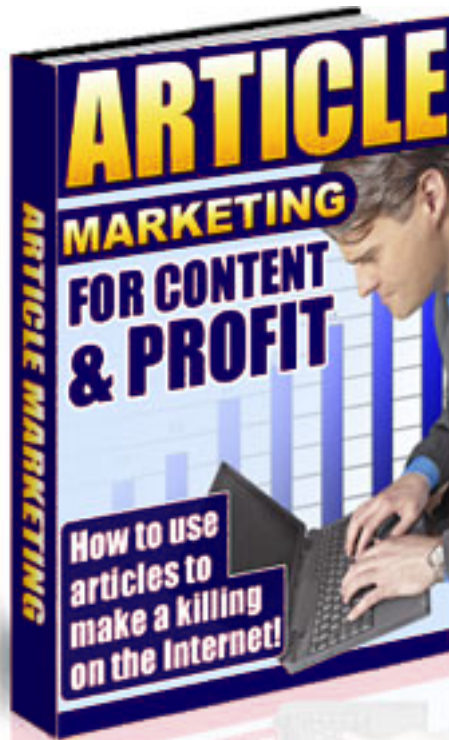
Chapter 1 – The Components of a Killer Article

Figure 1 – Components

Now that you've decided to use articles to promote your website and earn more money online, you should learn what a great article looks like. Internet articles generally have three parts:

- Title and/or subtitle
- Body text
- Author's byline, credentials, and links

Each part of an article has a different purpose, and all three are equally important. In this chapter we'll explore what makes a killer article that is enjoyable, informative, and attracts a reader's interest.

Articles aren't ads: Being informative and entertaining

As previously mentioned, the goal of an article is not to sell a product, but to give away useful information. The body text of an article should not be a commercial for what you're trying to sell.

An article's true purpose is not to sell product; rather, it is to sell your website and position you as either an expert or a person to be trusted (preferably both). No

matter what your internet business is, you are in a crowded field. There are dozens, even hundreds, of other websites offering products or services similar to yours. Providing knowledge in the form of articles helps people realize that you know what you're talking about, and gives them good reasons to buy from you rather than your competitors. Remember: **an article is not an advertisement.**

With this in mind, you may now be wondering exactly what it is you *should* be writing articles about.

Here's the good news: articles are flexible. You can write an article on just about any topic you have knowledge of, as long as you can relate it in some way to your website and your products or services.

Following are just a few examples of the many forms an article can take.

- **How-to:** Perhaps the most popular type of article is one that explains how to do something, get something, use something or find something. For example, if you're running an Internet business you could probably write an article giving people advice on how to start a small business from home. Think about your area of specialty and list some things you can do that most people might not know, but would like to learn.
- **Opinion:** Whatever industry or type of business you work in, there are always breaking developments, new products, or business advances. You can write an article focusing on an emerging aspect of your business, and offer your opinion on how it will affect the industry.
- **Personal story/inspirational essay:** Nearly every business owner and Internet marketer has a compelling reason they went into business for themselves. Consider writing an article or series of articles about why you chose the path you did. You can make it humorous, or inspirational, or both. Human interest stories are a popular article format.

- **Book excerpt or condensation:** If you're selling a book, e-book or e-course, you're in luck: you have articles built in to your product. You can offer your website visitors a free sample chapter, or write a condensed article based on one of the ideas in your book. Book excerpts and condensations also make great articles to post elsewhere around the Internet, and if you use HTML or PDF format to post an excerpt it can easily be passed around via e-mail.
- **Top ten lists.** Many engaging articles are centered around a list concept. You don't have to use the number ten; any number will do. Think "The Seven Habits of Highly Successful People" or "The Five People You Meet in Heaven." These are books, but the concept for articles is the same. Example: if your website is geared for businesspeople, you might write an article about the six features you need in a good PDA or SmartPhone.

You can generate articles in one or more of these formats that will get people interested in finding out what else you have to say. Remember to stay away from making your articles sound like advertisements. People read articles to be entertained, get ideas, or learn something they didn't know before.

Stimulating your Muse: How to generate article ideas that get read

Coming up with interesting ideas for articles is a challenge in itself. The more ideas you formulate, the better your chances at having a continual stream of fresh content for your website and general distribution on the Internet. Where can you find these elusive ideas?

There are several methods you can use to brainstorm article ideas that will be of interest to your customers, potential customers and website visitors. Following are a few to get you started.

Chat rooms and message boards. With billions of Internet users online, you are bound to be able to find chat rooms and message boards that relate to your topic. These people are your potential customers. Spend some time visiting chat rooms and reading through message board posts to find out what they're talking about, what concerns they have, and what kind of information they are most interested in. Checking out chat rooms and message boards serves a double purpose: it can help you generate article ideas, and give you some leads on where to post your articles after you've written them.

Television, print media and online news. Stay current with the most recent topics and trends in your industry by watching news broadcasts, skimming newspapers or browsing the latest online news feeds. If you notice anything relating to your topic or business that seems to be drawing a lot of attention, write a few articles about it. Timely articles are more likely to be spread fast across the Internet, and by taking advantage of current events in your articles, you can increase your visibility.

Figure 2 – Your Offline Resources

More timely ideas. Use the time of the year to your advantage when brainstorming article ideas. Can you relate your topic to a season, a holiday, or

an upcoming celebration? Invest in the latest issue of Chase's Calendar of Events, which lists hundreds of typical and unusual holidays throughout the year, and look for several you can tie into. For example, if you run a website design business, you could write an article about looking your best online for Build a Better Image Week in September. You can also discover more about current hot topics in public discussion by browsing online non-fiction bestseller lists to see what books people are buying.

Your website and current customers. You can generate article ideas according to what your customers are already asking about! Check your guestbook comments regularly and keep a file of any questions customers ask you via e-mail or phone. You can also ask customers and visitors to participate in a survey and let you know what types of articles or information they would like to see on your website.

If you don't know…find out!

You may come up with quite a few ideas for articles on subjects you are not familiar with. If a topic would make a great article, but you don't know much about the subject area, relax: everything you need to find out more is right at your fingertips.

Internet research is a great way to educate yourself and gather enough information for a compelling and factual article. The most obvious way to do this is using a search engine like Google or Yahoo. However, it can be hard to sort out the good, the bad and the ugly in search engine results.

Fortunately, there are plenty of free sources for good information online. Try plugging in your topic or subject at one of these websites:

Wikipedia – www.en.wikipedia.org: This free online encyclopedia contains over one million searchable articles on various topics.

HowStuffWorks – www.howstuffworks.com: A comprehensive searchable website that explains "how everything works. Categories include people, science, health, entertainment, computers, auto, home, money and more.

Fact Monster – www.factmonster.com: Another searchable database that features an online almanac, dictionary, encyclopedia and atlas.

RefDesk.com – www.refdesk.com: This site indexes and reviews web-based resources and archives quality informational websites. RefDesk.com features a facts subject index, a "fast facts" section, links to essential online reference resources like dictionaries, almanacs, calculators, encyclopedias and genealogy databases, and more.

Writing the article text

Once you have your topics and you've done your research, it's time to start actually writing the article. You don't need the title first (we'll talk about titles in the next section); and in fact, sometimes you can come up with a better title for your articles after you've written the text.
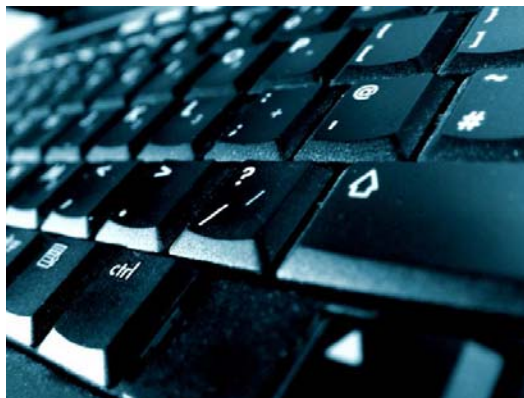
Figure 3 – Warm up those fingers!

Your article needs a beginning (introduction), middle (body), and end (conclusion). Without an introduction, readers can get confused and may stop reading if they're not sure what you're talking about. Conclusions are important because they sum up and reinforce the main points of your article.

Feel like you're back in a high school English class yet?

The basic structure of an article is where similarities to essays and school reports end. Writing for the Internet is different than writing for anything else. Online markets are highly competitive, and it's easy for visitors to click away from your website if you don't hold their attention.

Here's how to do it:

- Use short sentences and short paragraphs. Big blocks of text on a screen are difficult to read, and the typical Internet surfer's eyes will glaze over when confronted with a page of solid text. Don't indent, and skip a line between each paragraph. Include the occasional one-sentence paragraph to attract more attention.
- Keep the language level conversational. Internet users aren't impressed with ten-cent words; if they have to stop and look for a dictionary, they'll probably just try another website. You aren't insulting anyone's intelligence by lowering the vocabulary level. You are making it easier for people to digest the information you're offering them.
- Create a sense of interaction by using the word "you" in your articles, as though you're talking directly to the reader. For example, instead of "A termite infestation can weaken the structure of a house and cause serious damage," you would say: "If your house becomes infested with termites, you could be looking at serious and costly structural damage."
- Use bulleted lists (like this one) to further break up the text on the page and provide fact-filled summaries that draw the eye.

- Images can spice up an article as well, but go easy on them. Slow-loading pages (which most often happens on graphics-heavy sites) are still one of the biggest reasons Internet users look for cleaner pastures.

Finally, keep in mind that grammar and spelling does count when writing articles for the web. **Do not:** use "chat speak," refuse to capitalize anything (or, conversely, capitalize *everything*), skip the punctuation, or otherwise generate sloppy prose. You are trying to position yourself as an expert, after all!

Running a spell check on your article before you post it is a great idea, but spell checks don't catch every mistake. Reading the article aloud can help you spot inconsistencies or flaws. You could also ask a friend or associate to read it over for you—a fresh pair of eyes can find mistakes yours can't.

A note on article length

How long should your articles be? The answer is: "As long as they need to be—and no longer."

Internet articles generally range from about 200 words (three or four short paragraphs) to about 1,500 words (about six pages). Much longer than that, and you're entering e-book territory. The length of the article usually depends on the topic being discussed.

400 to 800 words is a good general target for most articles. For those you want to post in places other than your personal website, you'll want to keep them on the shorter end of the scale. It is much easier for another webmaster to post a 400-word article that can be put on one page than one that must be broken up and given two or three pages of its own.

Whatever length you choose, it will be sufficient as long as you include all the information you want to convey, and no more.

Titles, Keywords and Links

When you're writing article text, your primary concern is what readers will think. When it comes to titles, keywords, and links, your main objective is search engines.

The majority of Internet users still find most of the websites they visit through search engines. Keywords and links help to boost your search engine rank, and the titles of your articles will be the first thing people see in the results.

Titles that shout "Read Me Now!"

Which of these articles would you want to read?

Using Vinegar in the Garden

Or…

The Cheap, Safe Way to Rid Your Garden of Weeds (Without Digging!)

Both of these articles would discuss the same thing—how to use vinegar as a natural weed killer. However, the second one sounds more compelling, exciting and useful. Chances are, you would choose to read the second article over the first if they both popped up in a search engine.

The titles of your articles should invite further attention, if not outright demand it. Coming up with an interesting, compelling title takes time, but it is well worth the

effort. Think of your title as a newspaper headline. If your title appeared on the front page, would you buy a copy?

There are several ways to generate article titles that stand out from the crowd and get read. Here are a few examples:

- Use numbers, such as "Five Steps to True Happiness" or "Three Good Reasons to Choose Fixed Insurance Over Variable." You don't have to limit number titles to list-style articles. Nearly any article can be broken up into a number of steps or reasons.
- Create a play on words using a popular phrase. For example, an article about how to wash the outside of your second-floor windows might be titled "Don't Let Window Washing be a Pane in Your Neck."
- Make your title a question: "Can You Really Make Money Online?"
- Compare something to something else: "Why Apples are Just Like Oranges."
- Fill in the blank: "How To (Blank)," "From (Blank) to (Blank)," or "Everything You Always Wanted to Know About (Blank)."

Another good way to get ideas for titles is to pay attention to newspapers, magazines, and popular websites. You can keep a file of headlines that catch your attention and use them as a basis for your article titles. The more you practice coming up with attention-grabbing titles, the easier it will be.

Keywords—Use them, but don't abuse them

Ah, keywords…the bane of an Internet marketer's existence. Use too few and the search engines will ignore you; use too many, and your website could be banned from search engines altogether. Then there is the matter of choosing the right keywords for your website.

Figure 4 – Words, words everywhere

The use of keywords is a puzzling science with no exact answers. It can be difficult to understand why some keywords generate massive results, while others yield next to nothing. Let us start by defining the term "keyword."

Keyword: A significant word or phrase found in the title, text, abstract, or subject headings of a web page, which can be used as a search term in an electronic catalogue or database, particularly search engines.

Got that? Keywords are single or multi-word phrases relating to your topic that help Internet users find your website when they enter them in a search engine. The strategic placement of keywords throughout your articles can help to raise your page rankings and online visibility.

Your first step should be to generate a list of relevant keywords for the article you're working on. Choose several words or phrases relating to your topic that Internet users would be likely to use in a search for the information you're offering. For instance, if you're writing an article about small business startups, your keyword list might look like this:

business, small business, startup, entrepreneur, work from home, start a business, business startup

After you've written your article, go through the text and count the number of times each of your keywords or phrases appear. Three to five times each is a good range to aim for, and you may want to repeat your main keyword (in this case, "small business") even more—eight to ten times.

The trick is to make the keywords sound natural within the text. You've probably seen websites stuffed with keywords to the point of generating nonsensical (or downright irritating) sentences: "When your small business is ready for a small business startup, your small business should get the best small business resources for small business startups." This makes for clunky, uninteresting reading; something you want to avoid.

It's also a good idea to incorporate your main keyword or key phrase into the title of your article. Search engines give more weight to page titles than text, and when you post your articles on your website, you will name the page with the title of the article.

Links within articles

Including links to other articles or resources relating to your topic is a good way to provide your visitors with more valuable information. However, you should be sure to link to other websites that complement, rather than compete with, yours. It's counterproductive to direct visitors to websites offering the same information as you.

Links also carry some weight with search engines. There are four basic types of links: inbound, outbound, reciprocal, and on-site. Inbound links are links on other websites that point to yours. Outbound links are the opposite: links from your website leading to another website. When you exchange websites with another webmaster (offer to place their link on your site if they will do the same for you),

this creates a reciprocal link. Finally, links that lead to other pages of your website are called on-site links.

Of these four, inbound links have the greatest influence with search engines. If there are many websites linking to yours with no return links appearing on your site, search engines assume your website contains information people are interested in. This is part of what makes article marketing so effective: when you allow other websites to use your articles, you create lots of inbound links to your website and boost your online visibility.

Outbound and reciprocal links influence search engines to some degree, but not much. You should limit the number of outbound and reciprocal links used in your articles and concentrate on outbound links instead.

Once you have built up a good number of archived articles on your website, you can start including on-site links within the text of your articles to refer visitors to similar information. On-site links help keep visitors on your website longer and increase your chances of converting them to customers.

Bio, Disclaimer and Signature File

At the end of every article, you should include a short biography, a disclaimer, and a signature file. These components establish you as an expert on your topic and direct readers who find your articles on other websites to yours.

Your author bio: making you the expert

An author bio is a short one- or two-paragraph description of you and your experience concerning the subject of the article. Bios are written in the third person (Shelly Smith is a word processing expert who owns and operates

WordWare, Incorporated…). Your bio establishes your credentials and convinces Internet users that your information can be trusted.

What if you don't have any professional experience? No problem. You can include anything in your bio that relates to your topic: life experiences, hobbies, high school or college credits, even personal interest. If you're just starting out in your field, use the reasons you decided to enter this particular business to formulate your bio.

Here's a sample bio for someone with limited experience:

sample

Once you have some practice in generating bios, you can start tailoring your bio to match the contents of each of your articles. Customized bios can be humorous and fun, or helpful and to-the-point. You'll also find it easier to refer to yourself in the third person with more practice.

The crucial signature file

Your signature file can be part of your bio, or it can appear separately following the bio. It contains a link or links to your website and a brief one or two sentence description of what is available there.

The active link contained in your signature file is what allows search engines to catalogue your website and track the inbound links. This is an important part of article marketing that some people overlook. You should make it a habit to include a signature file with every piece of information you post on the web.

Figure 5 – Spread the news around the world!

Warning: Thou shalt not steal my article

Every article you write should include a disclaimer giving readers permission to repost and redistribute the article on their own websites. However, you must state that your bio and signature file have to be included, or you won't be able to take advantage of inbound links and additional traffic.

Your disclaimer should read something like this:

This article may be freely reprinted or distributed in its entirety in any e-zine, newsletter, blog, or website. The author's name, bio and website links must remain intact and be included with every reproduction.

This ensures you will be given credit for the article, while allowing others to use your content without contacting you first. Webmasters often don't want to take the time to contact authors for permission, and are more likely to reprint articles that don't require contacting.

Chapter 2 – Write or Buy? Paying for Professional Content

Do you break out in cold sweat at the thought of writing an e-mail, much less a 500-word informative and entertaining article? Do you simply not have time to generate pages and pages of content? Fortunately, there is another alternative to writing articles yourself: you can pay a professional writer to do it for you.

There are thousands of writing services and individual freelance writers who are more than willing to provide you with professional, customized content for your website. Web-based and SEO (search engine optimized) writing has become a profession unto itself, as more and more webmasters discover that original content is the key to Internet marketing success.

Paying for professional content can be the perfect solution for those who don't have the time (or the interest) to develop writing skills. Hiring a professional writer to generate your articles leaves you free to concentrate on your business and ensures that you will have quality content.

As with any other business proposition, there are advantages and drawbacks to hiring a professional writer. In this chapter, we'll take a look at the pros and cons of paying for content and help you make an informed decision.

The Pros

Buying professionally written custom articles can help you in more ways than one. Here are some of the benefits to paying for content:

Professional writers have experience

Those who write web-based articles for a living know their stuff. They understand what Internet users want to read and how they want the information presented to them. They are experienced at not only writing articles, but also at researching topics to find the best, most relevant information available.

Professional content writers also know keywords. Give them a list, and they'll plug your pertinent phrases into the article text seamlessly. They can generate those all-important must-read titles that will catch the attention of readers and search engines alike.

When you hire an article writer, you get clean, error-free articles that boost your credibility and make you the expert. Custom articles with your byline set you apart from the competition.

Time: more precious than money

When you outsource your article writing to a professional, you save time. Often, the time you save is worth far more than the fee you'll pay the writer.

It's a good idea to weigh the cost of custom articles against the time it would take you to write them yourself. You can get a high quality 500-word custom article written for $10 to $25, and turnaround time for a single article for most professional writers is usually a few days. Compare that to the time it may take you to generate a good article: hours, or even weeks of research and writing, depending on your own experience. Would your time be better spent developing your business? If the answer is yes, you should seriously consider outsourcing.

Another time benefit to hiring a professional is the ability to order articles in bulk. Writing services will generally offer a discount if you order a number of articles, and you'll usually get them within a few weeks. Ordering bulk custom articles is a great way to jumpstart your visibility and get the marketing ball rolling.

The Credit Goes to You

When you purchase professional custom-written content, you are buying all rights to that particular piece (or pieces). This means you own the content. You don't have to list someone else's name in the author bio—you get to add your own bio and signature file, and help to position yourself as an expert.

Giving yourself credit for work you've paid for (but not done yourself) is not deceitful or unethical. In fact, it is common practice in both business and publishing. However, some people are uncomfortable with this custom. If this is you, consider listing the writer as a co-author: "By John C. Business, with Ima Writer." This way the writer is credited, and you can still list your own bio at the end of the article.

The Cons

Of course, there are a few downsides to paying for professional content. Fortunately, most of them can be avoided with due diligence on your part. Keep yourself informed about buying articles and you can ensure your investment will pay off.

Additional Charges Apply

This is the one unavoidable drawback: you must pay for professional writing services. If you're not paying for the content, you're not getting the rights to the work. This means you don't get credit, and all those visitors who read that brilliant article will be impressed enough to click the link to the author's website—and may not come back to yours.

Stiffing the writer you hired is a bad idea. Though some people do manage to get free writing by asserting the final project is "unacceptable" or "not what I

envisioned," this practice will put you on writers' bad books. Word gets around in the writing community, and you may find that no one is willing to work with you. Plus, it's just plain mean—writers need to earn a living, too.

Remember to weigh the money you'll spend against the time you'll save. Most of the time, you'll end up at an advantage in the end.

Knowing Your Business

No one knows your business, your website and your products better than you— and this includes professional writers. Ultimately, you are the most qualified person to write about your topic. However, there are ways to ensure the articles you outsource are written to reflect your knowledge.

Writers are adaptable. The more information they have about a subject, the better the finished pieces they will be able to produce. When you pay for professional content, consider providing the writer with a copy of your book, e-book, special reports, or product. This will help them write the best possible articles for you.

Also, consider providing the writer or writing service with a rough template you would like them to follow. This way, you can be sure the ideas you want to promote are included in the final piece.

Scam Alert: Not all "writers" are professionals

Every industry has its scam artists, and writing is no different. There are a number of "writing services" out there promising fast, cheap content for your website. Unfortunately, the content these scammers offer is not original—it's often a series of template articles with keywords plugged in.

You can avoid hiring scam writers by knowing what to look for in a writing service. Often, the price itself is a giveaway: "Articles for just $1 apiece!" With a price that low, it's most likely a scam. Few writers will work for so little; if they are, it usually means they're not working…just filling in a template.

Another tip-off is turnaround time. If the writing service promises dozens of articles in twenty-four hours, it's unlikely that they could generate that much original content in such a short time frame.

To avoid scam artists, follow the advice you'll find in the next section of this book…

How to Evaluate Writers and Writing Services

If you're going to pay for professional content, you want the best possible value for your money. It's important to evaluate a writing service or individual freelance writer before you decide to enter a business relationship with them.

In this section, you'll learn what to look for and what to avoid in a professional writer or writing service.

Evaluate the website

These days, it's nearly impossible to conduct any type of business without a decent website. For writing services and freelancers, this is more the rule than the exception. This holds particularly true for writers and services that specialize in web content—it would almost be hypocritical for them not to have a website.
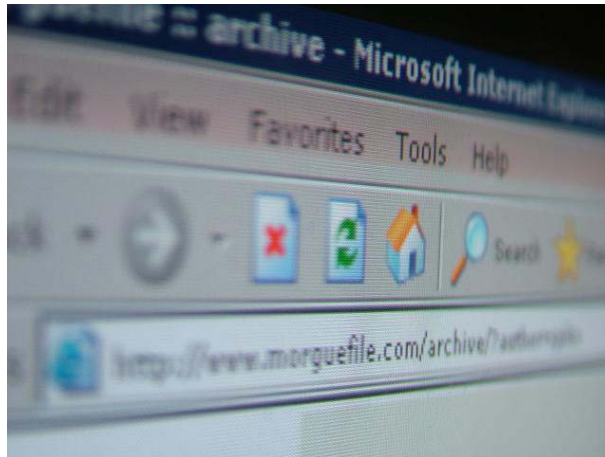
Figure 6 – Looks *are* everything

Look for professionalism and good presentation when you're checking out a writing website. Do they seem reasonable, coherent and well-informed? A professional writing services website should contain:

- At least one valid contact method (physical address or phone number) outside of an e-mail address
- A general pricing range or schedule or an invitation to contact the writer or service for a free quote
- Easy-to-read, error-free copy and clean page design
- Information about the writer or writers' experience, past or current clients, and/or writing samples
- A list of services provided and/or areas of expertise

If the writer or writing service has taken the time to put together a website that demonstrates professionalism and knowledge, they are likely to put the same effort into the work you commission through them. Sloppy websites can indicate sloppy writing quality—something you want to avoid.

Ask for samples

Always view samples of work from a writer or writing service before hiring them. Most will have samples posted on their websites. If they don't, and you still want to consider working with them, e-mail and ask for a sample. If the sample is riddled with spelling and grammar errors and poorly constructed sentences, you should look for another writer.

In most cases, writers who don't have posted samples are new to freelancing. However, they should still be able to demonstrate their abilities. Working with new writers is not necessarily something you should avoid, but it's important to make sure they can actually provide a finished, coherent piece.

When cheaper is not better

A good deal on pricing often masquerades a bad deal on quality. As with many other products or services, when it comes to commissioned writing, you get what you pay for.

You should expect to pay the going rate for quality writing. This varies according to the type of writing provided, but for SEO articles and web content it is fairly consistent. Usually the writer's fee is per word or a flat rate per article according to a word count range (250 to 400 words, 500 to 700 words, and so on).

If the writer is charging far less than what others are asking, there is likely one of two reasons: either the writer is new or inexperienced, or there is a scam afoot. In either case, investigate the writer or company, check out their samples, and use caution when paying dirt-cheap fees for content.

Detecting plagiarism

If you suspect a writer or writing service is using a template or recycling material they claim is "original," there are a few ways to find out whether your suspicions are correct:

- Copy and paste two or three sentences from the sample text into a search engine such as Google or Yahoo. Chances are, if it's a scam you will come up with several links leading to the exact same article on different websites with different bylines.
- Look up websites that deal with the subject of the article and question and check out their article archives to see if they have the same title.
- Go to www.findarticles.com and search for the title or unusual phrases within the text of the sample article.
- Enter the URL of the page containing the suspicious writing sample at www.copyscape.com to view other pages that contain the exact same content.

Free is not always good

You may be thinking, "Why pay for content when I can find plenty of free articles on my subject to use on my website?"

The answer, of course, is credibility.

There are plenty of resources out there for free articles. However, they still have a price: you have to list someone else as the author, and include a link to their website. This tells Internet users that you aren't knowledgeable in regards to your business, and have to rely on other people to explain things for you.

When you post articles written by other people in your business area, many of your website visitors will conclude the writers of the articles are more informed and more trustworthy than you. They will visit these other websites, and likely won't return to yours. When it comes to Internet marketing, first impressions count. Posting free articles on your website will often make you lose business.

Directory of Writing Services

Need help finding a reputable writing service? Here is a list of professional, reasonably priced services to get you started:

DocRocket – www.docrocket.net: This is a full-featured writing service offering a variety of custom writing projects, including web content and SEO articles. DocRocket employs a stable of professional writers with a wide range of experience, so your content needs can be matched with a writer who knows your subject.

Elance – www.elance.com: This site functions as a job board for freelancers. When you're looking to have articles written, you can post your project details on ELance and receive bids from several writers.

Killer Content – www.killer-content.com: Provides article, web content and SEO writing for a variety of topics and subjects.

Web Content Writers – www.writingassist.com: A database of freelance web content writers with various skill sets and areas of expertise, matched on a project-to-project basis.

PART II: Placing Articles
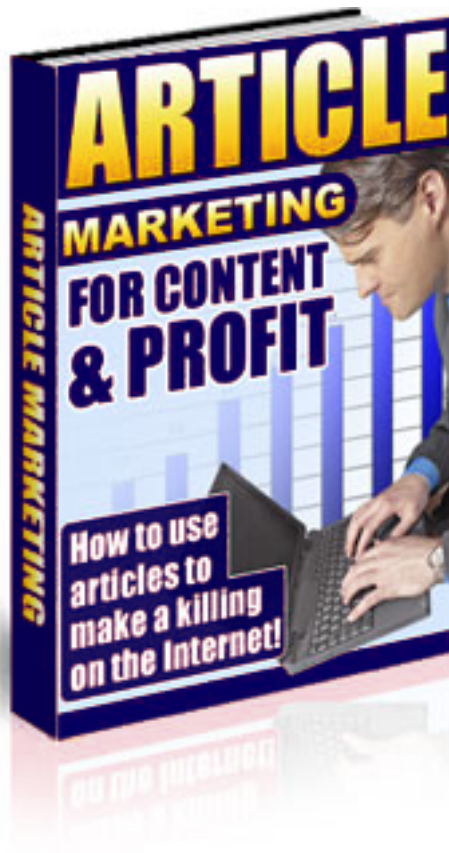
Chapter 3 – Personal Websites

Once you have generated articles, either by writing them yourself or buying them from a professional article service or freelancer, you're ready to start placing them on the Internet and getting visibility.

You can start by placing the articles on your own website. There are several ways you can use articles on your website to attract and keep visitors. In this chapter, we'll discuss the benefits of using your articles on your website, what they'll do for your website traffic, and how to place them for the best results.

Magic Word #1: Content

In the world of Internet marketing, content is king. Providing a number of articles that are free for your visitors to view, read, and distribute is a great way to increase visibility, improve your website rank, earn more return visitors, and convert more visitors to paying customers.

Content versus pages: Guess which one is more important?

Articles provide quality content for your website. You can have dozens, or even hundreds, of website pages and still not increase your search engine rank if the pages lack content.

You may have heard about the importance of confusing techno-terms like metatags and metadescriptions. These are functions of your website's HTML coding; hidden text that doesn't appear on the screen when your site is being viewed. However, these cryptic tags don't matter as much now as they used to.

Search engine spiders—those little programs that crawl the web indexing every page they find—no longer pay much attention to metatags. More importance is given to a website's content than anything else. This is where your hard work or your investment in professionally written articles pays off. The more quality content you have catalogued on your website, the higher your search engine ranking will climb.

Don't expect your website to shoot to Google's top ten the minute you put up your fresh new articles. Search engines take time to update the vast amount of information available on the web. However, the sooner you get started, the sooner you will start to see improved results on search engines for your website. Once your information is catalogued, you can remain high in the results ranking as long as you keep updating your website with fresh content.

When content is not enough: building trust with your customers

Some webmasters post a flurry of content to their websites, and then sit back and wonder why the business isn't pouring in. The reason, in a word, is trust.

In order to be a successful Internet marketer, you must build trust. Providing free, high quality information for customers is a step in the right direction, but it is not the be-all and end-all of marketing. The average consumer must be exposed to your business three to seven times before they'll consider making a purchase.

Posting articles on your website is just the beginning. Section III will discuss the many ways to get your name out there and build consumer trust using your custom articles.

Figure 7 – Foundations lead to structure

Magic Word #2: Relevancy

Your articles must be relevant to the general theme of your website. If they aren't, you will lose both the trust of your visitors and the esteem of search engines.

What's relevant?

"Relevant" means "related to." Basically, any subject you can tie in some way to your main business can seem relevant in an article. If you are selling a startup kit for small businesses, you can generate a list of relevant topics that will interest visitors and keep search engines happy:

- The pitfalls of starting a small business
- How to get a startup loan
- Basic equipment business startups need
- Creating an advertising budget on a shoestring
- Internet versus brick-and-mortar startup business
- Good reasons to start a small business
- Tax tips for business owners

Of course, this is a partial list. A website on small businesses can generate a huge number of articles with relevant content.

But what if you sell homemade dog treats?

Niche markets can be a bit more difficult when it comes to determining relevant content. If your topic or area of expertise is narrow, consider branching out the subjects of your articles to include other areas that may be of interest to those visiting your website.

In the example above, you can assume that most of your visitors and potential customers own dogs. With that taken into consideration, there are plenty of topics you can write or purchase informative articles on that will interest visitors and help solidify your expert status. For instance:

- Pet grooming tips
- How to come up with a creative name for your new puppy
- The best dog breeds for households with children
- Housebreaking tips for puppies
- Whether dogs should wear sweaters
- How to vacation with your dog
- Shelters versus pet stores

All of these topics are a natural extension of a core business: dogs and the owners who love them. They're all relevant to the website, and a mention of homemade dog treats could be included in each article without sounding blatant or awkward.

Finding relevant topics

If you're stuck for relevant subject areas, a keyword tool can help you generate more ideas. There are a number of free online keyword generators that can jumpstart your brainstorming process and reveal topics you might not have considered:

NicheBot www.nichebot.com

Wordtracker http://www.wordtracker.com

Yahoo! Overture www.overture.con

Good Keywords www.goodkeywords.com

Keyword Tumbler www.keywordtumbler.com

Magic Word #3: Placement

The placement of articles on your website can have a great impact on your visitors' impressions, whether they stay on your site, if you will earn repeat visitors, and how many you ultimately end up converting to buyers.

Accessibility and ease of navigation are important elements for any successful website. You should consider these vital factors when placing your articles.

Headline news: Placing articles on your front page

As previously mentioned, first impressions count. When visitors arrive at your website, you'll have from three to ten seconds to capture their interest enough to keep them there. Placing your strongest article right on your front page is a good way to grab an Internet user's attention.

Of course, there are a number of other things you should include on your website's front page as well. A good website has links to different areas, often in a side or top navigation bar; a note about the company, product, service or type of information visitors should expect to find on the site; relevant graphics; and more. Throw in an entire article, and your front page can look crowded.

To avoid cramming your index page, try this trick: post only the title and the first few compelling paragraphs of your article in a prominent position on the front page, and include a link to the permanent article page that says "Read more…" or "Click here to continue…" Also, make the article title itself an active link to the full article. This way, you have enough space to include all of your important information and you're still able to generate interest in your articles.

Your front page article should change frequently. If possible, you should have a timely or seasonal article linked from your front page at all times. This not only helps you with your search engine rank, it also gives visitors a reason to check back often to see what you've updated with.

Creating a resource section

You can showcase your articles by creating a resources section you can link to from your home page. Having a resource section comprised of original articles reinforces your expert status and helps generate trust.

Your resource section can be a simple list of clickable titles that lead to the articles' permanent pages. You can also structure your article listing similarly to the shortcut previously mentioned for your front page: include a paragraph or two of actual text beneath each article title and end with a "Read more…" link.

If you have several articles on your website, divide your resource section into categories for easier navigation. For example, if you have a website for small business owners, your categories might include:

- Starting a business
- Business financing
- Working from home
- Advertising for small business
- Business opportunities

Don't forget to link back to both your home page and your resource section page at the end of each individual article. If your visitors don't have an easy way to return to your list or index page, they might move on to another website rather than using their browser's Back button. Make it as convenient as possible for visitors to stay on your website.

Holding back: why you shouldn't post all your articles at once

Whether you write your own articles or purchase professional content, you may end up owning the rights to hundreds of articles. This may sound like an excellent opportunity to create a content-rich website—but there are several good reasons not to have all of your articles posted at once.

Fresh content. One of the most important things a webmaster must do to maintain high search engine rankings is to continually post fresh content on a website. If you refrain from putting up all your articles at once, it will be far easier to keep your content fresh and interesting to both visitors and search engines.

Too much information. Is it possible to have too much information on your website? Unless you have an advanced, site-specific search engine, presenting

visitors with hundreds of links can create confusion. Many won't know where to start, and will look elsewhere for the specific information they're trying to find.

Additional opportunities for revenue. Once you have established your reputation as a quality source for information on your topic, you will likely have replaced dozens of articles on your website with new content. After you have built a backlog of past articles, you can bundle them together and offer them as a downloadable e-book in addition to whatever products or services you're promoting through your website.

Chapter 4 – Blogs

Blogs are the latest development in the world of Internet marketing. Used properly, they can be a great tool for helping to market your articles and get more visibility for your website.

What in the World is a Blog?

"Blog" is short for "web log." A blog is a particular type of website that is structured to resemble a journal in online format. Blogs are frequently updates, sometimes daily, and are used for an enormous variety of reasons by millions of people. Here are just a few examples:

- Personal thoughts
- Business updates
- Political opinions
- Breaking news
- Public interaction (many celebrities use blogs to keep in touch with their fans)
- Insider advice from anonymous industry sources
- Buzz generation for new books or products
- Information showcases (especially multi-author blogs)

In general, blogs are casual and conversational. Blog entries are written in the first person and create a far more personal atmosphere than a typical website. The use of blogs has become so popular and commonplace that a whole new subsection of the Internet has been created. Dubbed the "blogosphere," it is a massive interwoven community of bloggers who support and visit each others' blogs and spread news throughout the blog network by linking and cross-posting.

If you decide to start a blog to help promote your website, you should be prepared to put quite a bit of effort into maintaining your blog. Frequent posts are not only good for search engines, they are also necessary to maintain your readership. If your blog lies dormant for weeks or months, people will stop visiting and probably won't come back even if you start posting again. Blog readership is based largely on trust, and if you break that trust by deserting your blog, it is difficult—or even impossible—to win that trust back.

Using articles in blogs

Articles are an effective marketing tool to use in conjunction with blogs. However, there are a few things you should keep in mind before you start pasting articles into your blog entries.

The most important thing to remember when dealing with blogs is the intimacy of this form of communication. Blogs connect directly with readers. Used properly, they can form a strong bond with the Internet community. However, if you use your blog to start posting articles after you've built trust with your readership, many of them will see this as an advertising ploy and stop reading.

Figure 8 – Trust?

You can avoid this loss of trust by mentioning what your website is about when you start your blog, but not making an issue of it. Once you have built a readership, make occasional posts regarding one of your articles *as long as it is pertinent to the latest discussion on your blog*. Don't post the whole article to your blog. Instead, put up a link to the article's permanent page on your website. Invite readers to check it out and offer feedback on your blog: did they find the article helpful? Would they recommend it to others? If not, what would they rather read about instead?

With this method, you not only avoid losing your readers' trust, you also gain useful information that will help you shape your article marketing campaign. Direct feedback from readers and potential customers is an excellent way to target your marketing efforts.

Speaking of readership: how can you tell when people are reading your blog? One way is through your comments section, which will be discussed further in this chapter. Another way is to install a simple, free web tracker and statistics counter on your blog.

You might try StatCounter at www.statcounter.com -- when you sign up for a free account and paste a snippet of HTML code into your blog's template, you can find out not only how much traffic you're getting through your blog, but also where your visitors are coming from and how long they stay.

Other free web trackers can be found at:

ShinyStat – www.shinystat.com
RiteCounter – www.ritecounter.com
Active Meter – www.activemeter.com

Most blogs contain sidebars with permanent links that appear on every blog page. Don't forget to take advantage of these sidebars and add a link to your main website, a few of your most powerful articles, and any affiliate programs you may be using.

How to get your own blog

Because blogs are so popular, there are a number of web service providers that furnish blogs. The best news is you can get one free. Blogging software is different from each provider, so you should choose the one that best suits your purposes in starting a blog.

Here's a brief overview of the major blog providers:

Blogger – www.blogger.com: Owned by search engine giant Google, this is one of the most popular free blogging programs, with millions of users. Blogger provides customizable templates, unlimited posts, archives, a search box for searching within blogs, image posting, and more. URLs for free Blogger sites are www.username.blogspot.com

LiveJournal – www.livejournal.com: Another popular free blog provider with millions of users. LiveJournal provides customizable templates, archives, and image posting options, and features the cyber-famous "Mood" and "Music" tags at the close of posts. LiveJournal URLs are structured: www.livejournal.com/user/username

WordPress – http://wordpress.com: This free blog provider also has millions of users and features templates, archives, a search box, and image posting. WordPress allows you to categorize your blog entries and list links to subjects in a sidebar. URLs for WordPress blogs read: http://username.wordpress.com

With any blog provider, it will generally take you under an hour to set up and customize your blog. You don't have to know HTML programming to set up and maintain a blog; it's one of the easiest and fastest website formats available.

Promotion, BlogRolling and RSS Feeds

If you're going to start a blog, you'll want people to read it. Like website promotion, drawing attention to your blog takes time, effort and commitment. There are millions of blogs out there, and it's rare for an Internet user to stumble across yours accidentally.

Getting "in" with the blogosphere

Bloggers are a community unto themselves. The best way to promote your blog, initially and over the long run, is to network with other bloggers. Look up blogs with topics similar to yours, read through them, and comment on some of the posts. It's also helpful to link to other blogs from yours. Most bloggers keep track of who links to them, and will often post a reciprocal link to your blog from theirs without being asked.

The comments section on your own blog is also a good promotional tool. It's a good idea to leave your comments section open and respond to some of the comments you receive. However, blogs fall prey to spammers who will throw up links to unrelated websites in any unprotected comment section. You can avoid blog spam by enabling word verification for comments. This requires people who leave comments to type in a series of characters in order to post, and keeps automatic software away from your blog. Word verification is a common blog safeguard, and will not deter readers from leaving comments.

It takes time and patience to build a blog readership. As long as you keep making interesting, frequent posts to your blog and continue to visit and comment on other blogs, you will see a steady increase in your number of readers.

BlogRolling and RSS feeds

Many Internet users don't want to take the time to continually add to link lists, or to visit all of their favorite blogs and find out who has made new posts. In order to make the process of updating readers easier, two new technologies have been introduced to the blogosphere within the past few years: BlogRolling and RSS feeds.

BlogRolling is a linklist manager program used by millions of bloggers to make linking to other blogs easy. By installing free BlogRolling software on your blog, you can manage and categorize your links, and update your list with a WSYWIG (What You See Is What You Get) editor, rather than going into your HTML template. The best feature of BlogRolling is that it displays a button on your blog allowing other bloggers to link to you with one click. The free program is available at www.blogrolling.com.

RSS, or Really Simple Syndication, is basically a simplified news feed. By adding RSS feed to your blog, readers can be automatically notified when you post a new topic. This keeps them from having to check in on a regular basis, and allows them to visit only when your post interests them.

Figure 9 – Keep visitors in the loop

This may sound counterproductive—why keep readers away from your blog? In truth, an RSS feed simplifies things for readers and makes them more likely to visit. With an RSS feed in place, they are constantly reminded of your blog's existence, even if they don't read every post. It is far more effective than hoping people will remember to check back on your blog for a new post.

Other ways to promote your blog

In addition to networking, BlogRolling and RSS feeds, there are a number of other ways to draw attention to your blog:

- List your blog with search engines, in the same way you would a regular website
- List your blog on directories, portals and search engines specifically devoted to blogs (see the Resources section of this book for a list of online blog directories)
- Link to your blog from your main website and relevant article pages
- Include a link to your blog in your e-mail signature and the resource block of your articles

Blogging can be an effective tool for promoting your website and boosting your article marketing campaign. Just remember that your blog needs proper care and feeding; neglect it, and it will wither and die.

Guest Blogging

Guest blogging is another common practice in the blogosphere. It's just what the name suggests: you are a guest posting something to another person's blog that would be of interest to their readers.

Even if you don't have your own blog, you may still be able to participate in guest blogging. However, you should familiarize yourself with the blogs you intend to communicate with first and become active in their comments section. Few bloggers will agree to let a complete stranger write a guest blog entry.

Find your friends

Look for blogs that are similar to yours (or your website, if you don't have a blog). When you read through the posts, find out whether they've had guest bloggers in the past. You may even find some blogs that are looking for guest bloggers.

Be sure the first time you contact a blog owner is *not* to request a guest blogging spot. Take the time to introduce yourself, compliment some of the posts, and let the blog owner get to know you and your website or blog. As mentioned before, blogs are one of the most personal forms of Internet communication around. Asking permission to guest blog without knowing the owner first is like showing up at a stranger's door and asking to give a toast at their dinner table. Don't get doors slammed in your virtual face!

Consider chatting

Many blogs host live chat sessions with guests on a regular basis. If you find one relating to your business that does so, follow the same procedure as you would for guest blogs: get to know the blog owner, exchange comments and links, and then volunteer for a chat session.

Live chats can be great opportunities to connect with potential visitors and customers. They are conducted informally, and attendance varies—some live chats have only a handful of participants, while others have hundreds. There are actually some benefits to smaller live chats. You will have a better chance to connect strongly with participants, and more time to answer questions with thought and detail.

Chapter 5 – Ezines, Newsletters and Directories

Other than posting articles to your website and blog, you must also make them available for free reprinting and distribution across the Internet. The more inbound links you have out there, the higher your search engine rank will be.

Ezines, newsletters and article directories offer you the best avenues for exposure. There are thousands of ezines and newsletters that need quality content for their subscribers, and thousands of webmasters who use article directories to get fresh, free content for their websites. You can also create and publish your own newsletter to keep your business fresh in the minds of your customers.

Yes, You Need a Newsletter

You can submit your articles to various newsletters, either directly or through an article directory service. However, you should also take the time to publish your own newsletter. Newsletters and ezines (two terms that are virtually interchangeable) are excellent promotional tools that keep your website on your customers' radar.

It's easy to forget websites with bookmarks or those listed in Favorites folders. With a newsletter or ezine, your visitors and customers receive updates and valuable information delivered to their inbox. Remember, visitors must see your business information three to seven times before they become paying customers. A regular newsletter is an effective method for achieving the visibility you need.

How to build a valuable newsletter that gets read

Like your articles, your newsletter should not seem like an advertisement for your business. A successful newsletter adds value to your website and offers subscribers something others can't get—preferably several somethings. The more benefits you can offer subscribers, the more likely you will be to build and maintain a strong subscriber base.

The main purpose of your newsletter will be to showcase your articles. Remember all those articles you held back from posting on your website (you *did* hold some back, of course)? This is where you can put them to use. Allow your subscribers access to information that is not available on your website.

Here are some other benefits you can offer as incentives to join—and continue receiving—your newsletter:

- A free e-book or special report comprised of old or unpublished articles
- Product discounts or "buy one, get one free" offers
- "Plug space": Offer subscribers with related websites a brief mention and a link in an upcoming issue, in exchange for something else (subscriber referral or link space on their website, for example)
- Special "sneak previews" of new products or developments on your website
- Coupons or returning customer incentives

Your newsletter should also have a creative and memorable title. Keep it short and easy to remember, so your subscribers will be able to easily mention and recommend your newsletter to friends.

Formatting and delivering your newsletter

Successful newsletters can take a variety of formats. A good general format to use for a newsletter is:

- Title and issue/volume number

- General greeting and welcome to new subscribers

- Table of contents ("In This Issue")

- Personal message and/or editorial from you, the newsletter publisher

- Feature article

- Special offers section

- Links to other articles and resources

- Conclusion and/or what's coming in the next issue

- Invitation and permission to forward the newsletter to friends

- *Unsubscribe instructions

* All permission-based list e-mail, including newsletters, must include instructions on how to unsubscribe. Otherwise, it is considered spam.

There are many ways to physically put a newsletter together. You can type the text yourself in a word processing program and then copy and paste your newsletter into e-mails. You should also post back issues of your newsletter on your website and invite visitors to view them—which will encourage subscription requests.

If you type your newsletter manually and plan to deliver the issues via e-mail, you should be aware that different e-mail servers use different default view settings. Have you ever received an e-mail that appears choppy, with uneven line lengths, dangling words, and carat (>) symbols everywhere? This is a result of varying e-mail defaults.

To avoid having your newsletter electronically massacred, you have to keep your lines of text at even lengths that fall slightly below the maximum number of character spaces per line most e-mail programs allow. Generally, line defaults are 70 to 75 characters. To keep your newsletter properly formatted, use a fixed-

width 10-point font such as Courier New (Arial and Times New Roman are variable width fonts and will result in uneven lines) and insert a hard return following every 60 to 65 characters.

You can insert a character guide at the top of your document to help you determine when to hit Enter. Here is an example of a 65-character guide:

```
---------1---------2---------3---------4---------5---------6-----
```

If you're averse to formatting your newsletter by hand, you can get a desktop publishing program that will format your newsletter for you, and also allow simplified use of HTML text, images, borders and special fonts. Microsoft Publisher is an example of desktop publishing software that may have come bundled with your computer. There are also several free desktop publishing programs out there on the 'net:

RagTime Solo: www.ragtime-online.com

Serif PagePlus: www.freeserifsoftware.com

OpenOffice.org: www.openoffice.org

Once you have the formatting figured out (or before), you should determine how often you want to publish your newsletter and what delivery method you're going to use.

The frequency of your newsletter will likely depend on how much material is available on your subject and how often you anticipate being able to generate fresh content. Most newsletters are published either weekly or bi-weekly, and some run on a monthly or quarterly basis. A word of caution here: *never plan to publish a newsletter more frequently than you can realistically handle.* If you build

a loyal subscriber base, and then fail to deliver on your promises, you will lose subscribers.

You generally have two choices for your newsletter's delivery method. You can either send the entire newsletter directly in the body of an e-mail, or you can e-mail a link to a private page on your website. If possible, it is best to send the entire newsletter, as more people will be likely to read the whole thing. However, if you have a particularly long or complex newsletter, you can e-mail an abridged version with newsletter highlights and include a link to the complete publication.

For e-mailed newsletters, offer subscribers the choice between plain text and HTML-formatted mailings. Most mailing list programs will allow you to categorize subscribers for receiving different messages.

Getting newsletter subscribers

After your first issue is ready to run, it's time to start soliciting subscribers.

The most obvious—and surprisingly overlooked—method for gaining newsletter subscribers is to place a subscription box on the front page of your website. Be sure to indicate that signing up for your newsletter is free, and that the e-mail addresses you collect will be used only to deliver your newsletter.

You should also create a "landing page" dedicated to your newsletter, with a subscription box, an extended description of what the newsletter is all about, a list of subscriber benefits, and links to your sample issue and/or archives. Treat your landing page as a separate website: submit the URL to search engines, and include a link to it in the resource box of selected articles.

Since your landing page is not an article, you can treat it more like an advertisement. Internet users expect to be "sold" when visiting a newsletter page,

so feel free to tout the benefits of signing up for your newsletter here. Successful landing pages create a sense of urgency, and convey the idea that non-subscribers are missing out on great deals and information. Include opportunities to subscribe on this page several times—and don't forget your disclaimer. There must be a way to unsubscribe visibly posted on your landing page, and a statement to the effect that collected e-mail addresses will not be sold, shared or exchanged with third parties.

In addition to traditional website promotion, there are two methods of spreading the word about your publication exclusively available to newsletters and ezines: announcement lists and newsletter directories.

Announcement lists are subscription-based e-mail lists sent out to subscribers who are interested in newsletters and ezines. In order to appear on an announcement list, you must first subscribe to the publication. It's a good idea to set up a separate e-mail account with a free web provider, and subscribe to announcement lists using that separate address. Once you're subscribed, you can submit a request for a one-time listing that will be included in the next issue of the announcement list's mailing.

Newsletter directories are permanent web catalogues that list available e-publications, usually grouped into categories. When you submit a listing for inclusion in a newsletter directory, you will often be assigned a user name and password so you can make changes to your listing in the future. Again, it is advisable to use a separate e-mail account to sign up with newsletter directories (it can be the same as the one you use for the announcement lists).

Before you begin submitting to announcement lists and newsletter directories, you should have the following information prepared:

- Your newsletter title

- Your website URL

- Your landing page URL

- Subscription instructions (autoresponder e-mail address or URL containing your subscription box)

- A brief, two- to three-sentence description of your newsletter

- A longer, two- to three-paragraph description (not all lists and directories will require this information)

- A list of targeted keywords and phrases pertaining to your newsletter

- Unsubscribe instructions

You'll find an extensive section of links to announcement lists and newsletter directories in the Resources section of this book.

Other People's Newsletters: Getting Your Articles in Circulation

Reprinting your articles in other newsletters that pertain to your topic is another excellent facet of article marketing. Many newsletter publishers will find your articles themselves when you list them in article directories (a topic discussed further in this chapter). However, you should also get the ball rolling yourself by contacting newsletter publishers and offering your articles for reprinting.

Finding a match

The first step in this process is to locate newsletters that are related to your business. Newsletter directories are a great place to start. Since directories are usually arranged by category, you'll find a slew of related newsletters with just a few clicks.

You can also use search engines to find relevant publications. Simply run a search for "newsletter" + "topic" or "ezine" + "topic" and you will likely generate

thousands of results. Not all newsletters are listed in directories, and you may find some gems using this method.

Another way to find targeted newsletters is simply to ask other people. If you have business contacts in your field, e-mail them requesting recommendations for good, industry-related newsletters. If you have a blog, put out a request to your readers. Most people love to share information and opinions.

Introducing: You

Once you have a list of newsletters you'd like to target, you should subscribe to each of them—using the alternate address you've set up for your own newsletter submissions. You may want to hold off contacting the publishers until you've been subscribed for a few issues. This way, you can honestly tell them you enjoy their newsletter after you familiarize yourself with the formats and the type of information they offer.

The next step is to compose an e-mail introducing yourself as a newsletter subscriber. Try to mention something specific to the newsletter that you enjoy. Then, let the publisher know that you have several articles that may be of interest to subscribers and ask whether they would like to reprint one in a future issue. It's a good idea to offer a choice of several articles.

When you contact newsletter publishers, you should never send a single e-mail to several addresses at once. No one enjoys receiving e-mails addressed to dozens of different people—and even if you use your e-mails blind-copy feature, you won't be able to personalize a mass mailing. Also, unsolicited e-mails sent to multiple addresses tend to get lodged in spam filters, never to be read.

Remember that Internet marketing is based on trust and developed relationships. Sending blatant bulk e-mails is a fast way to break trust.

Article Directories

Article directories are vast repositories of free information. These sites allow busy webmasters to grab free content for their websites and newsletters. The catch is that they must include a resource block listing the article author's bio and website links in order to post permission-free.

Here's where all your hard work pays off.

It's good to give things away

Why should you give your articles away for free? You've put hours of work into them, or paid for the rights with your hard-earned cash. Shouldn't you make some money from your work or investment?

Actually, you will earn money—just not directly. When you allow other people to reprint your articles (including your resource box), you'll have inbound links to your website spread across the Internet. This will boost your search engine rank and bring more traffic to your website.

The articles themselves will help you convert more visitors to sales. By establishing yourself as an expert through your informative (and free!) articles, you will earn that all-important trust Internet businesses need to flourish. The exposure you will gain by giving your articles away will more than justify the effort and the investment you put into them.

Articles submitted to article directories should be high quality, extremely informative material. The reasoning behind this requirement is simple: you're competing with hundreds, or even thousands, of articles on similar topics. The higher the article quality, and the more information it contains, the more likely

other webmasters and newsletter publishers will be to choose your articles over the competition.

A directory of article directories

Following are some of the many article directories you can submit your articles to for reprinting and distribution:

Article Beach – www.ArticleBeach.com

Go Articles – www.goarticles.com

Ezine Articles – www.ezinearticles.com

Marketing Seek – www.marketing-seek.com

Idea Marketers – www.ideamarketers.com

Article City – www.articlecity.com

Internet Home Business Articles – www.internethomebusinessarticles.com

Article Central – www.articlecentral.com

Certificate.net – www.certificate.net

Article Dashboard – http://articledashboard.com

Ebooks 'n' Bytes – www.ebooksnbytes.com

Article Emporium – www.article-emporium.com

Site Reference – www.site-reference.com

Article Directory – www.article-directory.net

Sticky Sauce – www.stickysauce.com

NOTE: Article directory sites often require specific formatting when submitting articles for inclusion. Be sure to visit each site's submission guidelines and follow the formatting instructions, or your articles will not be listed.

Automate this submission process and save yourself hours of time every day with an Article Submitter software. You can find a great one at www.jeremyburns.com/a/article-submitter

PART III: Where the Money Comes In
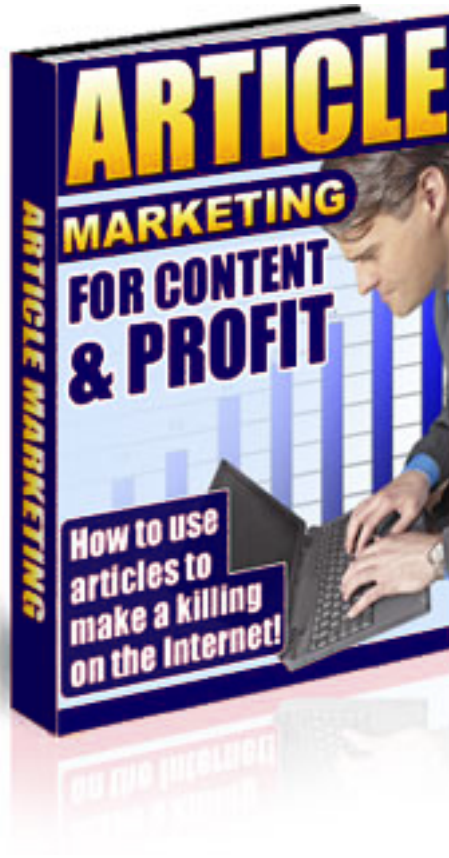
Chapter 6 – AdSense and Affiliate Programs

You can put your articles to work for you in more ways than one by using affiliate programs and Google AdSense advertising in conjunction with your article marketing efforts. These programs create additional streams of income for you while offering your website's visitors more targeted resources and valuable information.

A Crash Course in Internet Affiliate Marketing

What is Internet affiliate marketing? Here's how it works: other websites want traffic too. In order to get it, they institute an affiliate program: you post a link on your site to theirs, and they pay you a small amount every time a visitor clicks to their website from yours. Some affiliate programs also pay a small percentage of sales when a visitor from an affiliate website makes a purchase.

A popular example is the Amazon.com affiliate program. Websites that deal with books, such as book review sites, publishers, and author home pages, can become Amazon affiliates and earn money when their visitors arrive at Amazon by clicking their affiliate links.

In order to be accepted into an affiliate program, your website has to offer quality content that relates to the affiliate's site. If you only have a few pages with advertisements for your own products or services, reprinted articles, or extensive non-related link-swap pages, you probably won't qualify for an affiliate program. Decent affiliates will only link to websites that have something to offer their customers.

Another benefit to affiliate marketing is that most affiliates will also link to your website from theirs. This places more inbound links out there for you, and can increase your website traffic as well as your search engine rank.

Here's how to get started in affiliate marketing…

Step 1: Locate complementary affiliate programs

There are thousands of affiliate programs out there on the Internet to choose from. When you're sorting through them, look for those programs that complement, rather than compete with, your business.

For instance, let's return to the example of a company that sells homemade dog treats. If you owned this company, you wouldn't want to link to other manufacturers of homemade dog treats. However, you could set up affiliate programs through businesses like:

- Pet care and accessories
- Dog grooming services
- Veterinarians
- Dog obedience schools
- Holistic pet care
- Animal rights associations

With any business, there are a number of complementary services available. Look for affiliate programs that will give your visitors and customers added value to the information they're already receiving from you.

Step 2: Contact your target affiliates

When you have a list of affiliate programs you'd like to participate in, make sure your website is ready for the task. Affiliate programs are only interested in linking to and from informative, high-quality websites; after all, they are paying you. Ensure that your website is fully functional, with no broken links or odd formatting.

As you contact affiliate programs, make a strong case for your website to participate in their program. Point out the potential benefits your website holds for the affiliate's customers, including your newsletter if you have one. Invite the affiliate to visit your website and check things out.

Once you receive permission to participate in affiliate programs, you're ready to start posting links and earning extra income.

Step 3: Set up affiliate links

Affiliate programs will provide you with a special URL to use on your website that includes an affiliate number or code at the end. This number brings visitors to the same page as other affiliate members in the program, but it allows the affiliate to track where visitors to their website come from so they can pay you for the traffic you generate.

Never use the affiliate website's main URL in your links. If you do, the affiliate won't be able to tell when visitors come from your website and you won't get credit. If you participate in the Amazon affiliate program, for example, simply placing the link www.amazon.com on your website is useless. Millions of Internet users visit Amazon every day, and it's impossible to sort through click-throughs to determine how they got there.

There are a few ways to post affiliate links on your website. One is to create a list, either in a sidebar or top frame, or on a separate page. The drawback to this

method is that few Internet users bother reading through link lists on websites unless they're looking for something specific. A better way to post affiliate links is within the text of your articles.

You can hyperlink pertinent words or phrases within the text of your articles with your affiliate URL. This way, you avoid those tedious lists of advertising links and allow your visitors to find exactly the information they want. You can also add an affiliate URL to the end of your article: "Click here for more information on holistic pet care."

Another option is to post thumbnail graphics that are hyperlinked to your affiliate URL. A thumbnail graphic is an unobtrusive image, usually of a book cover or company logo, that takes up one or two square inches. You can create thumbnail graphics by shrinking an image in a graphics program such as Adobe Photoshop or Picasa, a free program from Google (http://picasa.google.com). Using a web design program to change image size often distorts or pixellates the image (makes it appear fuzzy or blocky on the screen).

Finding Your Niche

Niche: *A small segment of a greater group, i.e. society, with shared interests and common characteristics*

Niche marketing is a powerful and effective way to increase your visitor-to-sales ratio. If your advertising campaign targets those who are most likely to buy your products or services, your marketing efforts will pay off far better.

To take advantage of niche marketing, you must first identify your target customers, and then figure out how to reach them. Sounds simple enough, right? In truth, it does take a bit of research and effort on your part, but you will be amply rewarded with increased sales.

Who are your customers?

Defining your niche means identifying the interests and characteristics your potential customers are most likely to possess. A good way to start is by creating a general profile of your ideal customer: the person who would be first in line to click "Buy Now" on your website.

Try to determine the following set of demographics for your target customer:

- Gender (male, female, or both)
- Age range
- Income range
- Level of education
- Occupation or profession
- Interests and hobbies
- Single, married, or doesn't matter
- Parents, non-parents, or doesn't matter
- School age, employed, stay-at-home, or retired
- Geographic location (if applicable; no use selling refrigerators to Eskimos)
- Computer-savvy, computer-shaky, or doesn't matter

You don't need a definite response for each of these categories, but the more blanks you can fill in, the better honed your niche marketing efforts will be.

Where do your customers go?

Once you've identified your target customer, head for the Internet and start hunting them down.

Go back to the newsletter directories and look for publications that cater to your target market. Concentrate your efforts into developing relationships with these

newsletter publishers. Some newsletters and ezines may be willing to consider a regular feature column if your content is valuable to their subscribers.

You can also search blogs for people with related interests and find out what websites they link to. Most major blog providers allow users to post profiles that detail their interests and link to other bloggers who share those interests. You can amass a long list of target customers by sifting through blogs and get leads to popular websites that cater to them.

If you have a bit of an advertising budget to expend, don't discount print publications. There are thousands of magazines and thousands more newspapers in general circulation. Running a single ad in a print magazine or newspaper that caters to your target market can net some promising results, particularly for magazines and newspapers that sit for months in offices and waiting rooms around the country.

Figure 10 – Go for the gold

Using forums and groups

Forums and groups are great ways to hit your niche market. You can find forums and groups dedicated to just about any topic, from business management to left-handed bowling (and of course, if you sell left-handed bowling balls, you have the ultimate niche market).

There are several group and forum communities that will allow you to search for a group by topic. Here are a few to get you started:

Yahoo! Groups: http://groups.yahoo.com

MSN Groups: http://groups.msn.com

Google group search: http://groups.google.com

SmartGroups: www.smartgroups.com

My Groups: http://groups.aol.com

EZboard forum search: http://forumfind.com

Runboard.com: www.runboard.com (enter subject in "Search Boards" box)

But wait! Before you rush out and start posting your articles to your targeted forums and groups, keep in mind the issue of trust. If you enter a group or forum and start throwing articles on the boards, not only will no one pay attention to you, but you may find yourself banned from the group before you can say "Buy my stuff."

When you find groups or forums your target customers frequent, introduce yourself first. Take some time to read through the posts and offer comments. You will often make a handful of new "cyber-friends" in a short time. Once you've established that you didn't join the group just to fish for sales (even if you did), then you can start suggesting articles the group may find useful or entertaining.

AdSense: Getting Google to Pay You

Search engine giant Google is perhaps the best-known website on the Internet. How many other companies can you think of whose name has become a verb ("I couldn't find that website about left-handed bowling, so I just Googled it.")?

Therefore, it makes perfect sense that they're willing to pay Internet users to market their services for them.

Google AdSense is somewhat similar to affiliate programs: you place links on your website to other sites that may interest your visitors, and you get paid when visitors click on them. However, AdSense is far more versatile than straight affiliate programs.

How AdSense Works

AdSense displays a series of text or image ads on your website in column format that is relevant to your content. If you've ever used the Google search engine, you may have noticed a vertical column on the right-hand side of the screen that displays links outside of, but pertaining to, your search results (these are paid results from another Google program, Google AdWords, explained at https://adwords.google.com). AdSense text ads are similar in appearance to these results.

Figure 11 – AdSense in action

To use AdSense on your website, you insert a snippet of HTML code into your web page template. Once installed, the program generates targeted links according to the content on your page and displays the ads. You earn money every time a visitor clicks on an AdSense link. Because Google indexes and

tracks millions of websites, the AdSense program is able to generate relevant results for any business, no matter how broad or specialized.

Once you've signed up for the AdSense program, you can generate even more income by placing a Google search box on your website. Your visitors can use Google to search the web without leaving your site; and again, you get paid whenever a link generated by your search box is clicked.

AdSense's built-in filtering capabilities are usually sufficient to display only relevant ads. However, if you find inappropriate links are being generated on your page (usually a result of a word or phrase on your website taken out of context, such as "model" referring to aspiring actresses instead of the miniature train sets you sell), you can fine-tune your AdSense filter to correct this.

You can also customize the colors and templates of AdSense ads to blend in with your website's appearance. Google provides AdSense customers with up-to-the-minute statistical reports that detail your earnings and let you know where your visitors are coming from and going to.

Different articles, different AdSense

Since AdSense is a versatile and adaptable program, you don't have to limit your AdSense display to your website's front page. In fact, you may want to simply place the Google search box on your index page, and install the AdSense code where it really counts: your article pages.

Each of the custom articles you've written or commissioned for your website will address slightly different—or wildly different—subjects. Therefore, each article will generate a different set of AdSense ads that are relevant to the content your visitors are reading when they view the ads. Placing AdSense ads on each of

your article's permanent pages will allow you to maximize your AdSense earning potential. All those individual clicks can add up fast!

You may also consider generating AdSense ads on your newsletter's landing page, your resource directory page, and your "About the Company" page (if you have one).

AdSense and Blogs

You can get more mileage from your AdSense account by installing the program on your blog. Typical blogs pre-feature several link sections, and AdSense is relatively unobtrusive when it's run on blogs.

The easiest way to incorporate AdSense into your blog is by signing up for a Blogger account. Because Google owns both Blogger and AdSense, they've simplified the process of installing the program on Blogger sites.

However, you can run AdSense with any blog program, as long as you have access to your HTML template. If you're HTML-intolerant, Google support services will provide you with detailed instructions on how to incorporate AdSense on your website or blog.

Signing up for Google's AdSense program is free: https://google.com/adsense

Chapter 7 – Submitting Articles: Where, When, How Often?

You've done it: you have generated a serious chunk of informative, entertaining articles, all nicely tagged with your resource block leading readers to your website. You've researched your market, identified potential groups and newsletters who will be interested in what you have to say, and you're ready to kick your article marketing campaign into high gear.

Before you explode your business across the Internet, put on the brakes and read this chapter. There are a few more things you should know.

The Art of Article Directories

Article directories are excellent places to list your articles for potentially massive exposure. Note, however, the word "potential": there are some things you can do to increase your chances—and some that will inadvertently decrease them.

Poor quality articles

The articles you submit to article directories should be informative and well written. Poorly written articles not only will not be printed, they also run the risk of not being listed in a directory. Though many article directories are run by automated means, some are monitored by real live people who read through the articles and decide whether to accept or reject them—and this number is growing. As article marketing gains popularity on the Internet, more article directories are responding to a flood of submissions by monitoring for quality and content.

There are many good reasons to ensure your articles are well written. Competition is one of them. Hundreds of other articles related to your subject are competing for readers' attention. The best way to draw interest in your articles is to give them great, must-read titles and equally great informative text. Good articles get read; poor articles get ignored.

Another compelling case for writing quality articles is the expert status you're striving to obtain. If your articles are poorly spelled, contain bad grammar, or convey useless or erroneous information, you're not going to look like an expert.

Not everyone is a writer. Not everyone has the time or the interest in learning the necessary skills to put together a compelling article. Fortunately, if this describes you, you don't have to. Commissioning articles through a professional writing service is one of the best investments an Internet marketer can make. When it comes to content, there is no substitute for well written, quality articles.

You may be tempted to cut corners here. Perhaps you're thinking about using a handful of high quality articles to draw traffic to your website, and then posting anything—or nothing—on the site itself. Resist the temptation! Generating traffic is only half the battle for Internet sales. The rest is up to your website. You can receive thousands of hits to your website and still not see an increase in sales if there is nothing to retain a visitor's interest once they arrive on your site.

Article marketing is not an exact science. You should give yourself every possible advantage when it comes to selling on the Internet. This means generating high quality articles, whether you write them yourself or pay someone else to do it, and making sure your message spreads through outlets like article directories.

The do's and don'ts of article directories and announcement lists

As with newsletter directories, there are two different types of article catalogues: directories and announcement lists. Article directories allow you to add and remove articles as often as you'd like, while announcement lists only permit a one-time submission for each article. As a rule, announcement lists are more selective of the articles they will accept for submissions.

Whenever you submit an article to either a directory or announcement list, you must follow that website's submission guidelines. Most directories and announcement lists require you to join a mailing list before they will accept your articles. Remember to open a separate e-mail account for your mailing list subscriptions.

When given the option to subscribe to a list and receive Individual E-mail, Daily Digest, or Web-Only (no e-mail), you should choose the Daily Digest option. After you submit your articles, you will want to occasionally check and ensure they're being published. The Individual E-mail option will flood your new inbox with messages, while the Daily Digest delivers all messages sent to the list for the day in one e-mail message.

Most submission guidelines for article directories and announcement lists will require that you format your articles for optimal web and e-mail viewing. This means your articles must appear the same way you would format a newsletter: 60 to 65 characters per line, using a fixed-width font. You can format your articles manually—or you can use this handy shortcut:

- Type your article normally, using a word processing program such as Microsoft Word.
- Go to http://www.web-source.net/format_text.htm -- a free, automated online program that formats text for optimal web viewing.
- Copy and paste your text into the box on the screen and set the number of characters per line you want your article to include.

- Choose "y" for "Reformat Text?" to overwrite your word processing program's automatic formatting presets.
- Choose "y" for "Remove Extra Spaces?" if extra spaces appear between the words you pasted into the box, or if you use two spaces after a period while typing.
- Click on "Format Text"
- Copy and paste your formatted text into the body of the e-mail you're sending to the article directory or announcement list.

If you use a windows-based operating system, you can open your e-mail program and run it simultaneously as you format your articles. This method will save you time and allow you to automatically adjust line lengths according to the specifications of each article directory or announcement list.

When you submit articles for inclusion in a directory, it is polite—and recommended—to include a note in the e-mail before the article text requesting a listing and granting reprint permission. You may also request to be sent a copy of any newsletter issue in which your article appears. Don't forget to include your resource box with your website links at the end of each article you submit!

Here is a sample note you can include with your article submissions:

Please consider publishing this article on your website or in your newsletter. Free reprint permission is granted with byline and resource box intact. If you choose to publish this article, please send me a copy of your publication or link to your website at myaddress@myprovider.com.

You can choose to have newsletters, ezines or links that publish your articles sent to your directory e-mail address or your main address.

(Over)submitting to Search Engines

If you have a website, you probably already know that you have to submit your URL to search engines in order to be listed on them. However, you may not know:

- You can submit URLs to search engines more than once
- You can submit URLs to search engines **too often**
- You can use an automated program to submit your website to multiple search engines at the same time
- You can submit the URL of each page on your website as a separate search engine listing

In this section, we'll discuss the various methods, tips and tricks of search engine submissions that will help you achieve optimal website traffic.

Autosubmitting: Dozens of search engines, just one form

Many a new website owner has undergone the painstaking process of seeking out individual search engine submission pages for the major search engines such as Google, Yahoo, MSN and Dogpile. This search-and-submit process can take hours, or even days. However, there are several websites that make search engine submission fast, easy, and free by submitting your information to multiple search engines simultaneously.

Figure 12 – Speed things up!

Having your website catalogued on the major search engines is an excellent Internet marketing strategy. However, you shouldn't overlook small and specialty search engines as further opportunities for website exposure. Your best option when it comes to search engine submission is to list your website on as many search engines as possible. This strategy will boost your inbound links and increase the possibility of visitors finding your website.

Have the following information at your fingertips when you begin the search engine submission process:

- The name of your business or website
- Your website's main URL
- The title of your home page
- A brief two to four sentence description of your website
- List of targeted keywords and key phrases

Got it? Now visit the following websites to submit your URL automatically:

SubmitExpress – www.submitexpress.com/submit.html

1 2 3 SubmitPRO – http://websitesubmit.hypermart.net/freesubmit.htm

SubmitShop.com – www.submitshop.com/freesubmit/100engines.html

Ineedhits – www.ineedhits.com/free-tools/submit-free.aspx

You can also pay a small monthly fee to have your website automatically submitted to thousands of search engines each month. SubmitFire provides monthly submission service to over 3,000 search engines for $7.95 a month, and

includes regular reports on submission success, link popularity, and site rankings. You can access SubmitFire at http://submitfire.coffeecup.com.

Also, keep in mind that while you should submit your website regularly to search engines, it is possible to over-submit. If you attempt to add your website too often, search engines will ban your listing permanently—you'll be viewed as a spammer. Repeat the submission process once every one to three months for the best results.

Beyond the main page

Listing your website on search engines is a huge step in the right direction. However, you can also submit each individual page of your website separately to gain more inbound links and more exposure.

Submitting your permanent article pages to search engines is a time-consuming process, and unfortunately, there are no shortcuts other than those you can use for submitting your main page. However, the time you invest in preparing individual pages for search engine submission will pay off in website traffic.

In submitting your articles, you should prepare a separate list of targeted keywords and key phrases for each page. Before you begin the submission process, make sure these keywords appear both in the text and in the page's metatags (yes, metatags are not as important as content, but any advantage helps). Also, check your entire website on a regular basis to make sure you aren't displaying any broken links or misplaced text.

Once you have unique page titles and keyword lists for your article pages, use the same submission procedure you followed for your main website. As a rule, major search engines like Google and Yahoo take longer to index your website; so the sooner you start submitting, the sooner your listings will begin to appear.

Don't forget your newsletter landing page and your article index page when preparing individual pages for search engine submission. Follow the same process for each page of your website, and exposure will be yours.

Maintenance: Shortcuts to Keeping Content Fresh

If content is king when it comes to Internet marketing, then fresh content is Supreme Emperor of All. Content draws search engines and visitors to your website; fresh content keeps them coming back for more.

Most business owners and webmasters don't have time to continually generate brand new fresh content (which is why many turn to article directories for fast, free reprints). However, there are several tricks you can use to keep your website fresh and full of quality information your visitors will value.

Reduce, reuse and recycle

As previously mentioned, don't post all of your articles to your website at once. By having several articles in reserve, you can continually remove and replace your articles to keep your content fresh. Older articles can be packaged into ebooks and special reports, which you can either sell or give away as incentives to purchase your products or subscribe to your newsletter.

To save even more time, you can leave your website pages intact. When you "remove" articles from your website's directory or resource page, simply delete the article title and the active link, leaving the article's permanent page in place. If the article is already indexed on search engines, visitors can use the links from your resource box to return to your main website and find more articles. And this way, when you decide to resurrect an article, it's simply a matter of reposting and re-linking to the page from your directory.

You can also post articles you're holding in reserve with this method. Format and post the articles to a permanent page when you have the time, and simply refrain from linking to the page from your main website until you're ready to grant access to visitors.

Rewriting and updating old content

Many Internet articles become "dated" with time. Articles based on current events become old news; those that tie in with a holiday or seasonal event become irrelevant; new industry developments render "breaking reports" and speculative pieces obsolete.

When this happens to your articles, you don't have to discard them. It's a simple matter to rewrite those portions of the article that are no longer valid. In the case of holiday or seasonal related pieces, you can enroll them in your reserve program and trot them back out at the appropriate time.

Whenever you revise and re-post an article, you should resubmit the new information to search engines. It takes time for search engines to update submissions, but if the page information is already in place, revisions tend to occur more rapidly. Sometimes search engines will automatically pick up on changes to your website's pages, but it doesn't hurt to hasten the process with a manual submission.

Focus on current events

Current events always make for popular articles. Whenever there is a current event or an industry development that relates to your business, you should release an article or series of articles to capitalize on the event or development.

You can write or commission completely new articles—or you can revamp an old article to give it a current slant.

Once you've written a piece on a current event or industry development, you can use that article's format to convey the latest information on new events and developments. Simply replace the event and revise your thoughts on the matter accordingly, and *voila*—you have a whole new article!

Find current events to breathe life into your articles by subscribing to news feeds, reading newspapers, watching television news, or subscribing to publications that cater to your industry. You can also visit other people's websites and blogs, as well as check into forums and groups, to get an edge on current events and find out what everyone else is talking about.

Conclusion: The Future of Article Marketing

Article marketing is a website promotion method that is growing rapidly in popularity and widespread use. Will this strategy, like so many others before it, become so saturated that it will be rendered as useless as keyword stuffing?

Probably not.

The Internet has been, remains, and will always be, a source of information. People use the Internet to find information, whether they're seeking knowledge, entertainment, or a bit of both. There will never be too much information, and there will always be readers who desire more.

The articles you generate through your article marketing campaign have value to you as a business owner. However, they also have value to the millions of Internet users out there who are interested in your topic. This alone ensures that article marketing will not go the way of the link farm and fade into obscurity.

Since the rise in popularity of article marketing strategies, submissions to major article directories have doubled or tripled, and in some cases have increased by a whopping 600 percent. This doesn't mean the article market will become glutted and overstuffed, rendering all article submissions useless.

It does mean that article directories will likely shift their focus from amassing quantity to amassing quality. Article marketing will become more competitive only in respect to the quality of the information being distributed.

How does this affect you? As long as you begin your article marketing campaign with quality output in mind, this shift will have a positive effect on your business. Lower quality articles will be edged out and develop a tendency to drop from the public radar, while your articles—your informative, topical, targeted and well written articles—will rise to the top.

Figure 13 – Your future looks bright

With effort and commitment, your article marketing campaign can be a huge cyber-success. Happy submitting!

Now that you are on your way to becoming an Internet Marketing Article Expert, don't stop there! The next step is the Holy Grail of Internet Marketing How To Guides… Read on for details!

"Learn how to make a life-changing income of $100,000 to $250,000 with your Internet business... even if you're a computer dummy!"

Review: "The Insider Secrets to Marketing Your Business on the Internet" by Corey Rudl

I've just finished reading the brand-new version of Corey Rudl's top-selling Internet marketing system, "*The Insider Secrets To Marketing Your Business On The Internet*," and frankly, I'm overwhelmed by the huge amount of critical wealth-building information he's managed to pack into these **two hefty binders and 3 CDs!**

But I guess I shouldn't be surprised; after all, when the box containing these materials showed up at my door, it weighed in at **over 10 pounds!**

That's 10 pounds of the most comprehensive **marketing strategies, test results, case studies, tools, and ideas** for generating a life-changing income online (from $1,000s to over $1 million) you're ever likely to read!

I'm talking about information like...

- Step-by-step advice for starting your own Internet business **in as little as 48 hours!**

- How to build a top-selling web site... for less than $100!

- Where to find hot products to sell (in 20 minutes or LESS)!

- 100s of FREE and cheap online tools, resources, and software

- How to get 1,000s of qualified NEW visitors to your web site... for FREE!

- How to **get #1 rankings in the search engines** and get tons of FREE traffic from the "Big Guys" like Google!

- Secrets to writing sales copy that can **increase sales by up to 400% (or MORE)!** And much more!

If you're unsure who Corey is, you should know that he's been a recognized expert in online marketing for a decade now. Not only has he generated **$40,000,000 in online sales**, his sites also attract **450,000 visitor a week!**

What's *really* great about Corey is that he can show ANYONE how to have a **wildly profitable Internet business** (that takes just a few hours each day to run)...

... ***even if you're an absolute computer dummy!***

And if you *already* have an Internet business, he can help YOU, too. The advanced sections of his system show you how you can **increase your sales by 400%... 700%... even as much as 1,000%!**

I give Corey's system the highest rating possible! Its 1,300+ pages of step-by-step lessons contain the exact SAME tested and proven fast-growth strategies he has personally used to generate over $40 million in online sales -- *starting on a shoestring budget!*

And it's the SAME SYSTEM that literally **1,000s of his students have used** to drive "truckloads" of cash out of the Internet.

I strongly urge you to check out Corey's wealth-building system as soon as possible! Go To http://jeremyburns.com/a/tips for a FREE preview.

Table of Figures

Resources There are all kinds of links below that will help you with your article marketing..

We just thought we could save you some time by posting these links here!

More valuable resources to enhance your article marketing program!

Internet marketing resources

Jeremy Burns Internet Marketing http://www.JeremyBurns.com

Products you can resell as your own http://www.SourceCodeGoldMine.com

Copywriting360—advice on writing web copy: http://www.copywriting360.com

If you would like to **learn how to write articles that will make you a fortune** then you absolutely must see Jim Edward's website **How To Turn Words Into Traffic! Click Here for details**.

"How to write and publish your own OUTRAGEOUSLY Profitable eBook in as little as 7 days - even if you can't write, can't type and failed high school English class!" http://www.jeremyburns.com/a/7dayebook

Blog directories and search engines

Google BlogSearch: http://blogsearch.google.com

Blogwise: www.blogwise.com

RSSTop55: www.masternewmedia.org/rss/top55

Blog Universe: www.bloguniverse.com

Eatonweb Blog Directory Portal: http://portal.eatonweb.com

Web Blog Directory: www.weblogalot.com

Bloggeries: http://bloggeries.com

Blogarama: http://blogarama.com

Newsletter announcement lists

Directions: Send a blank e-mail to each of these addresses to receive instructions on announcing your newsletter to the list. NOTE: Use an e-mail account separate from your main account, and subscribe in Daily Digest format.

00-list-announce-subscribe@yahoogroups.com

Announce_It_Write-subscribe@yahoogroups.com

a1promo-subscribe@yahoogroups.com

AAnnounce-subscribe@yahoogroups.com

Announce-subscribe@topica.com

Announce-A-List-subscribe@yahoogroups.com

add_your_list-subscribe@yahoogroups.com

Announce-subscribe@yahoogroups.com

announce_lists-subscribe@topica.com

announce-lists-subscribe@yahoogroups.com

compu-list-subscribe@yahoogroups.com

eAnnounce-subscribe@yahoogroups.com

elist-advertiser-subscribe@yahoogroups.com

ezinelister-subscribe@yahoogroups.com

ezine_announce-subscribe@yahoogroups.com

GetMoreSubs-subscribe@yahoogroups.com

GetMoreSubs-subscribe@topica.com

List_Announcements-subscribe@yahoogroups.com

List_Announcements-subscribe@topica.com

List_Builder-subscribe@yahoogroups.com

List_Builder-subscribe@Topica.com

List_Of_Lists-subscribe@yahoogroups.com

ListAdvertise-subscribe@yahoogroups.com

ListAdverts1-subscribe@yahoogroups.com

listbuilding-subscribe@yahoogroups.com

listpromo-subscribe@yahoogroups.com

Listpromote-subscribe@yahoogroups.com

lists_for_all-subscribe@yahoogroups.com

List-Your-List-subscribe@yahoogroups.com

List-Your-Lists-subscribe@yahoogroups.com

MyPageAnnounce-subscribe@yahoogroups.com

NewLists-subscribe@yahoogroups.com

NewsBroadcast-subscribe@yahoogroups.com

NSAdvertise-subscribe@yahoogroups.com

PromoteList-subscribe@topica.com

Promote_Your_List-subscribe@topica.com

promoteyourlist-subscribe@yahoogroups.com

promoteyourlist-subscribe@topica.com

SitesandZines-subscribe@yahoogroups.com

webbyweb-subscribe@yahoogroups.com

websurfing-subscribe@yahoogroups.com

WritersZines-subscribe@yahoogroups.com

Newsletter and e-zine directories

Charlie Page's Directory Of Ezines www.directoryofezines.com This is a much
have!

The EzineZ Search Engine: www.e-zinez.com

Infobot: www.infobot.net

Echelon's Newsletter Exchange: www.bizx.com/newsletter.html

The John Labovitz Ezine List: http://www.meer.net/~johnl/e-zine-list/

Ezinestoday: http://www.ezinestoday.com/

eZINESearch: http://www.ezinesearch.com/search-it/ezine/

Newsletter Access: http://www.newsletteraccess.com/database/reg.html

Yotta: http://www.yotta.com/magazine/addfree.htm

NewJournal: http://gort.ucsd.edu/newjour/submit.html

Newsletter Library: http://www.newsletter-library.com/ven.htm

Ezine Ad Source: http://www.ezineadsource.com/d6pages/submit.htm

List City: http://list-city.com

ListsNet: http://www.listsnet.com

Even more article directories

Add Me Newsletter: http://www.addme.com/nlsubmit.htm

All Net Articles: www.allnetarticles.com

Article Avenue: www.articleavenue.com

Alumbo: www.alumbo.com/submitcontent.html

Article99.com: www.article99.com

Article Directory Pro: www.articledirectorypro.com

Article Finders: www.articlefinders.com

Article Hub: www.articlehub.com/add.html

ArticleStop.com: www.articlestop.com

Articles4Content: http://articles4content.com/content/submit.php

Articles Factory: www.articlesfactory.com

Articles Online: http://articlestation.com

Article Pros: www.articlepros.com

ArticleResponder: http://articleresponder.com

BOC Online: www.boconline.com/sub-art.htm

Boaze Publishing Affiliate Program: www.boazepublishing.biz

BPubs: www.bpubs.com

Business Know-How:
http://businessknowhow.com/newsletter/articleguidelines.htm

Bytesworth.com: www.businesstoolchest.com/articles/submit.shtml

ClickForContent.com: www.clickforcontent.com

ConnectionTeam: www.connectionteam.com/submit.html

Content-Articles: www.content-articles.com

Content Tycoon: www.contenttycoon.com

Digital Women: www.digital-women.com/submitarticle.htm

DimeCo: www.dime-co.com/articlesub.html

Ebusiness Articles: www.ebusiness-articles.com

E-Calc: www.e-calc.net/submit_article.php

Expert Articles: www.expertarticles.com

Ezine Plug: www.ezineplug.com/authors/register

Ezine Writer: www.ezine-writer.com.au

Amazines: www.amazines.com

Free Sticky: www.freesticky.com/stickyweb/submitarticle.asp

Family Content: www.family-content.com/articles/submit.shtml

Free Article Search Engine: http://articles.in/submit.php

Free Articles Directory & Articles Submissions: www.articlesbase.com

Free Articles Zone: www.free-articles-zone.com

Free Zine Site: http://freezinesite.com

FreeZine Articles: www.freezine-articles.com

Fresh Articles: www.fresh-articles.com

Hot Business Articles4U: www.homebiznow4u.com/portal

How-To Advice: www.howtoadvice.com/Submit

ISNARE: www.isnare.com

Jogena: www.jogena.com/articles/articleform.htm

Link General: www.linkgeneral.com/author.asp

MailBiz: www.mailbiz.com

Net Pro Marketer: http://netpromarketer.com/index.htm

Niche Content Articles: www.niche-content-articles.com

Opportunity Update: http://opportunityupdate.com/articles

PowerHomeBiz: www.powerhomebiz.com

Promotion Data: www.promotiondata.com/submit.php

Reprint Articles: http://reprintarticles.com

SmartAds: www.smartads.info/articles/submit

Sticky Sauce: www.stickysauce.com/articles/webarticles_index.htm

The Article Shelf: www.articleshelf.com

Ultimate Profits: www.UltimateProfits.com

UPromote: www.upromote.com/newsletter/submit.html

Valuable Content: www.valuablecontent.com

Vector Central: www.vectorcentral.com

Web Articles: http://webarticles.com

Webmasters Library: www.webmasterslibrary.com/submit.shtml

Article announcement lists

AABusiness: www.groups.yahoo.com/group/aabusiness

AAGeneral: http://www.groups.yahoo.com/group/aageneral

AAInet: http://www.groups.yahoo.com/group/aainet

Announce It Write: http://finance.groups.yahoo.com/group/Announce_It_Write

Articles4you2use4promotion:
http://groups.yahoo.com/group/articles4you2use4promotion

Article Announce: http://www.groups.yahoo.com/group/article_announce

Articles Archives: http://www.groups.yahoo.com/group/articles_archives

Article Publisher: http://www.groups.yahoo.com/group/ArticlePublisher

Article Submission E-Gazette: http://groups.yahoo.com/group/articlesubmission/

Epub: http://www.groups.yahoo.com/group/epub

EzineZone: http://groups.yahoo.com/group/ezinezone

Free eContent: http://groups.yahoo.com/group/Free_eContent

Free-Content: http://www.groups.yahoo.com/group/Free-Content

Free Ezine Articles: http://www.groups.yahoo.com/group/freeezinearticles

Free Zine Content: http://www.topica.com/lists/freeezinecontent

Freelance promotion: http://groups.yahoo.com/group/freelance_promotion

Free-Reprint-Articles: http://www.groups.yahoo.com/group/Free-Reprint-Articles

Free Writes: http://www.groups.yahoo.com/group/FreeWrites

Her Small Business: http://www.groups.yahoo.com/group/hersmallbusiness

I Need Content: http://groups.yahoo.com/group/I_Need_Content/

Netwrite Publish Announce: http://www.groups.yahoo.com/group/netwrite-publish-announce

PromoteYourArticle: http://groups.yahoo.com/group/PromoteYourArticle/

Publisher-Network: http://www.groups.yahoo.com/group/publisher_network

QC Reprint Articles: http://groups.yahoo.com/group/qc_reprint_articles

Readmyarticles: http://groups.yahoo.com/group/ReadMyArticles/

Reprintedarticles: http://groups.yahoo.com/group/reprintedarticles/

Reprint Articles Paradise: http://www.groups.yahoo.com/group/ReprintArticles-Paradise

The Write Articles: http://groups.yahoo.com/group/TheWriteArticles/