

How Article Marketing Works

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Article marketing involves the writing of short internet based articles for the purpose of submitting them to online article directories which will publish the articles as content for their own websites and offer the articles as content for other websites. One of the keys to article marketing is creating an author bio which includes at least one link to your website, and is generally placed at the end of your article. This link is one of the most critical components of the article marketing strategy, as that link will drive the bulk of the traffic that is central to just about any article marketing purpose.

When you submit your articles to an online article directory, they will first approve or disapprove the article based on its quality and relevance to the theme of their website. In most cases, if the articles are written with decent language and grammar, are written about a topic that is included in their directory (and there are many that are general-purpose), and contain reputable content of just about any kind that is legal, the article directories will generally publish the articles. When they do not, many of the article directories will send you an email indicating why they have rejected your article, and by studying the rejections, you can determine what changes you need to make to get your articles to the point that they are generally accepted and published.

Once your article is approved and published, it will be available online the world over for search engines to see and index, for humans to access and read, and for other webmasters to use as content for their own websites.

Many of the article directories also use RSS feeds that allow other webmasters to automatically update their own websites with the content from the article directories (including your own articles).

The net result of this article writing and submission process is that, depending on which and to how many article directories you submit your articles, not only does your article move through the internet at an astounding pace, but the link which you have included in the bio section of your article also propagates throughout the internet.

Strategies of Article Marketing

There are two primary strategies of article marketing, writing and promoting articles to generate backlinks for search engine optimization, and writing and promoting articles to create direct traffic to a website or a squeeze page. The article marketing effort will be significantly different in each of these two cases, and in many ways the two strategies can overlap. In both cases, if you were to

concentrate simply on one strategy, you would receive a crossover effect and some additional traffic from the other strategy.

Writing and Promoting Articles to Generate Backlinks for Search Engine Optimization

One of the widely popular uses of article marketing is that of creating multiple backlinks which the search engines can use to estimate the popularity of a website. The theory is this: if one website has more web pages from other websites linking in to it than another website, all other things being equal, it must have a greater 'popularity' than the other websites. Some search engine formulas are purported to use this concept as one of their main ranking criteria, so a popular form of search engine optimization and promotion is that of creating backlinks. Obviously those backlinks can be created through a number of methods, including website submission to web directories, link exchanges, link purchases, and simply asking webmasters to link to one's website.

However, writing articles, including a link to your website, and submitting that website to multiple article directories can create a massive number of backlinks that are relatively inexpensive (only your time if you do all the work yourself) and do not involve swapping links or otherwise personally asking for favors or reciprocity.

Writing and Promoting Articles to Create Direct Traffic to Website or Squeeze Page

Traffic generation is one of the key foundational activities in building and maintaining a strong internet business. Without adequate, quality traffic, you simply cannot succeed online. There is no other way around it.

There are four main methods by which article writing creates phenomenally awesome traffic:

- 1) When the articles are posted on article directory web sites and are read by members of the web sites or by surfers that happen on the web sites.
- 2) When the articles are picked up by other web sites that need content for their web sites, and choose to use your articles for their content.
- 3) When ezine publishers choose to use your articles in the publication of their ezine, again, because they need the content.
- 4) When the search engines notice the high volume of back links to your own web site when you submit high volumes of articles to multiple article directories.

All four of those methods create some of the very highest forms of traffic in terms of quality.

You see, visitors who come to your web site as a result of any of the four above-mentioned reasons, are already prequalified as to having an interest in the topic, liking your personal style of writing, and having a desire to know more about your particular business, offerings, or products.

This means that they are a far stronger form of traffic than classified ads, where the visitor only takes a few seconds, if that, to make a decision to visit your web page, or pay-per-click advertising, which has a similar scenario to classified advertising, or any form of purchased traffic such as expired domain or exit traffic, pop-ups, pop-unders, etc., or any other form of purchased email traffic such as safelists, coregistration traffic, etc.

The four forms of traffic that articles generate, when strategically written and submitted, are the best forms of traffic that you could buy, if you buy them. And if you learn the strategies of article writing and submission, you can receive that type of traffic with only the cost of your time.

Length of Articles

There are many different preferred lengths of articles, and those preferred lengths have a lot to do with the purpose of your article writing.

When you are writing articles strictly for the purpose of creating backlinks to your website, you can write articles as short as the article directories will permit, and some permit articles as short as 200 words. Many article directories prefer articles in the 350-700 word range, and so if you are planning to do massive amounts of submissions, then a minimum of 350-450 words is recommended.

When you are writing articles for the purpose of the articles being picked up by other webmasters and included in their websites, ezines, or other electronic newsletters, you might target a length of 450-650 words, as that seems to be a preferred length by many webmasters.

If you are writing articles for the express purpose of having your articles read by people who surf the internet and find your article online, either on the website to which you submitted the article initially, or on one of the websites that has chosen to publish your article, you want to write the article in such a fashion that the reader chooses to read the entire article and then clicks through to your link at the end of the article.

The length of this type of article might vary from article to article, as one topic might lend itself easily to 700 words before a reader might get bored and click out, but another limited topic might only need 250 words before the reader would have all the information he or she needs to make a decision to continue surfing or click through to your website.

How to Choose a Topic

The first place to start when you are choosing a topic is with your own web site. What products do you sell, what needs do you meet?

Write out a list of 15-20 different ideas or topics about which your typical customer might be interested. If you are having trouble thinking of topics, go to Ezine Articles and look at their list of categories. They have an incredibly complete list of categories from which to choose. Keep in mind that one of your topics or ideas might be in a different category than the one that you would normally think it would be in.

For example, in my case, article writing and article marketing are located in the writing and speaking category, not in the internet and businesses online section, where I am accustomed to submitting articles.

In fact, it is a good idea to look through every category, searching for possible topics that would appeal to your typical purchaser. You see, the more categories and topics you have to work with, the easier it will be to crank out multiple articles per day. For example, in my case, there are about 20 categories of internet and businesses online and in writing and speaking about which I can comfortably write and whose traffic would be a good fit for my web sites. By having 20 categories to work with, I can literally write 20 articles a day before I run out of categories in which to write fresh material. And if I brainstorm some, I can come up with subcategories.

For example, in my case, there is the category of traffic building, where I have a lot of expertise. I can write a general article on traffic building as one of my first 15 articles for the day. But if I want to write more, I can write an article on pay-per-click advertising, on article marketing, on email advertising, on safelist and coregistration leads, on JV giveaways, on JV partnerships, and on ezine advertising, and on one of several additional areas of traffic building. By doing this, I greatly expand my ability to mass-produce articles daily. I am really only limited by my time and my concentration; I tend to get restless and bored when I write for more than a few hours (about 15-20 articles in a sitting).

Keyword Optimization

Keyword optimization is incredibly important to the overall success of your article marketing campaign. Now, before it seems like a bigger issue than it is, you can have great success without ever thinking about keyword optimization. Why? Because in the very course of writing your article, you will be focusing on keywords anyhow, without making an effort, especially if your article is tightly niched or themed.

But if you make a little bit more effort at optimizing your writing for specific keywords, you will have even more success than if you do not.

Now I am not going to talk here about specific percentages. I think that gets people in trouble. You see, your pages should be designed for human eyes. Notice I am not talking at all about writing articles for pay-per-click optimized web sites, or for driving traffic to pay-per-click monetized sites, although I must mention that most of the concepts I discuss here would work very well for such a purpose. I am teaching you the purposes, strategies, and methods of writing articles to increase human readership and subsequent click-throughs to your web site.

So I am not going to give you a keyword density percentage to work with or shoot for.

I remember when I first started online I focused a lot on keyword density – I spent a lot of time on it, and the content on my web pages and maybe even my articles was stilted at times, it was so loaded with keywords. And I don't think I got any more traffic; in fact, I probably received less because since I am looking for human buyers, not clickers for pay-per-click, I probably lost a few who didn't like my overly-optimized style.

Now, I have keyword optimization running in the back of my mind, and probably do a better job of it now than when I was counting keyword densities, and I know I have more traffic now.

So how do you do it?

When you are writing your article, you should be writing a tightly niched article that revolves around a very tightly themed idea. This idea should be encapsulated, or contained, in a few, preferably 3 or less, primary keywords or keyword phrases. If you simply follow a concept of writing each article with one, two, or at the most, three keywords in mind, the completed article should be naturally keyword optimized, and yet very readable.

Your goal should be to be extremely aware of optimization techniques and use them when it is natural to the process and does not require an exceptional amount of time to add in, nor does it detract from the human element. Remember, your articles are designed to be read by humans for the purpose of generating live and interested click throughs to your website(s).

Writing Your Title

Writing your title is one of the most important things you can do. You see, if you have a great title, your article might get read. If you have a lousy title, it probably will not get read.

Keyword-Optimizing Your Title

And then there is the issue of keyword–optimizing your title. Keyword optimization of your title should be integrated with the overall keyword optimization strategy of your article and associated website(s), as discussed in the section on keyword optimization.

The first few words of your article title will be the ones most important to the keyword optimization process. One effective method of emphasizing these keywords is to begin your title with them as a lead-in, then write the title as you otherwise would.

For example, a title for an article on list building might read:

List Building – How to List Build Like the Pros.

In that example, I have been able to use the keyword phrase at the very beginning of the title, and have still been able to create a very powerful title.

This can be used with any number of otherwise powerful titles, such as:

List Building - How I Grow Huge Lists with Very Little Resources

Or even: List Building – Master List Builder Reveals List Building Secrets First Time Ever

Notice that these titles will appear very natural to the human reader, and yet they will also appear strong for the search engine spider.

Keep in mind, this will not be extremely easy the first few times you do it, especially if you have not spent a lot of time doing natural keyword optimization before, and even more so if this is your first attempt at writing titles or articles.

Formulas for Eye-Grabbing Titles

Over the years, a number of styles or types of titles have consistently outperformed other styles or types in testing and in real-life results.

If you are writing articles just to build backlinks, the article titles are not as important as if you are writing articles for the purpose of generating human clickthroughs, although keyword optimization of the titles is just as important.

Some of the most popular and effective title formulas include:

How to _____

For this simple title formula, simply follow the “how to” intro with a brief description of what you will be teaching or explaining in the article.

For example:

How to List Build with Precision, Starting With Your Very First Article

How to Train Your Dog to Sit in Five Minutes Flat

How to Plant Flowers so that they Grow Year-Round

How to Write Articles for the Internet so That They Get Read

How to Build a Website in One Day – Even if You Are Completely Computer-Illiterate

How to Add Years to Your Life Using this Simple Formula

For each of those titles, I could add my primary keyword phrase to the beginning of it, optimizing search engine results without sacrificing much in terms of readability and response with humans:

List Building - How to List Build with Precision, Starting With Your Very First Article

Dog Training - How to Train Your Dog to Sit in Five Minutes Flat

Planting Flowers - How to Plant Flowers so that they Grow Year-Round

Article Writing - How to Write Articles for the Internet so That They Get Read

Website Design - How to Build a Website in One Day – Even if You Are Completely Computer-Illiterate

Life Expectancy - How to Add Years to Your Life Using this Simple Formula

How I _____

This is another effective title formula. The key here is to create a title that demonstrates that you have done something and are going to show how you have done it, in the article. Using the same set of topics, here is what those article titles might look like:

How I List Build With Precision, Starting With Your Very First Article

How I Trained My Dog to Sit in Five Minutes Flat – And How You Can Too, Quickly and Easily

How I Plant Flowers so that they Grow Year-Round

How I Write Articles for the Internet so That They Get Read

How I Build Websites in One Day – and How You Can Too, Even if You Are Completely Computer-Illiterate

How I Have Added Twenty Five Years to My Life Expectancy – And How You Can Too, Using this Simple Formula

Once again, for each of those titles, I could add my primary keyword phrase to the beginning of it, optimizing search engine results without sacrificing much in terms of readability and response with humans:

List Building - How I List Build With Precision, Starting With Your Very First Article

Dog Training - How I Trained My Dog to Sit in Five Minutes Flat – And How You Can Too, Quickly and Easily

Planting Flowers - How I Plant Flowers so that they Grow Year-Round

Article Writing - How I Write Articles for the Internet so That They Get Read

Website Design - How I Build Websites in One Day – and How You Can Too, Even if You Are Completely Computer-Illiterate

Life Expectancy - How I Have Added Twenty Five Years to My Life Expectancy – And How You Can Too, Using this Simple Formula

How You Can _____

Once again, this title formula can easily be applied to the same article topics:

How You Can Learn to List Build with Precision, Starting With Your Very First Article

How You Can Train Your Dog to Sit in Five Minutes Flat

How You Can Plant Flowers so that they Grow Year-Round

How You Can Write Articles for the Internet so That They Get Read

How You Can Build a Website in One Day – Even if You Are Completely Computer-Illiterate

How You Can Add Years to Your Life Using this Simple Formula

Once again, you can add the keyword phrase you are emphasizing to the beginning of the title, to create maximum search engine responsiveness (I will not add the examples here, as you should have a clear picture of how this works by now).

The Top (insert number here) Ways to _____

This is another effective title formula and here are the examples for each of the sample topics:

The Top 5 Ways to List Build With Precision, Starting With Your Very First Article

The Top 5 Ways to Train Your Dog to Sit in Five Minutes Flat

The Top 5 Ways to Plant Flowers so that they Grow Year-Round

The Top 5 Ways to Write Articles for the Internet so That They Get Read

The Top 5 Ways to Build a Website in One Day – Even if You Are Completely Computer-Illiterate

The Top 5 Ways to Add Years to Your Life Using this Simple Formula

More Examples:

(Insert number here) Keys to _____

7 Keys to List Building with Precision, Starting With Your Very First Article

7 Keys to Training Your Dog to Sit in Five Minutes Flat

7 Keys to Planting Flowers so that they Grow Year-Round

7 Keys to Writing Articles for the Internet so That They Get Read

7 Keys to Building a Website in One Day – Even if You Are Completely Computer-Illiterate

7 Keys to Adding Years to Your Life Using this Simple Formula

(Insert number here) Steps to _____

9 Steps to List Building with Precision, Starting With Your Very First Article

9 Steps to Training Your Dog to Sit in Five Minutes Flat

9 Steps to Planting Flowers so that they Grow Year-Round

9 Steps to Writing Articles for the Internet so That They Get Read

9 Steps to Building a Website in One Day – Even if You Are Completely Computer-Illiterate

9 Steps to Adding Years to Your Life Using this Simple Formula

Obviously these are simply examples of using the formulas I have given you to create various titles. They are primarily designed to show you the ease with which they can be used and how various topics, keywords, and subjects can be easily interchanged to produce multiple titles quickly and easily.

Here are some more formulas for creating effective headlines:

Discover the Secrets of _____

Learn the Simple Techniques of _____

Revealed – The Best Ways to _____

Recently Uncovered: Top Ways to _____

Secret Unleashed: How I _____

Revolutionary New Method to _____; Secret Revealed Here

Foolproof Method to _____

Mad _____ Unleashes New Method to _____

Are you getting the picture here?

Create a list of your keywords and subjects about which you could write, and practice inserting them into some of the sample title formulas and see how easy it can be.

For example, if your keyword is 'Time Management' and your method is 'free up 2 Additional Productive Hours Daily', the last set of title formulas would look like this:

Discover the Secrets of Time Management – Free Up 2 Additional Productive Hours Daily

Learn the Simple Techniques of Time Management – Free Up 2 Additional Productive Hours Daily

Revealed – The Best Ways to Free Up 2 Additional Productive Hours Daily

Recently Uncovered: Top Ways to Free Up 2 Additional Productive Hours Daily

Secret Unleashed: How I Free Up 2 Additional Productive Hours Daily

Revolutionary New Method to Free Up 2 Additional Productive Hours Daily; Secret Revealed Here

Foolproof Method to Free Up 2 Additional Productive Hours Daily

Mad Time Management Scientist Unleashes New Method to Free Up 2 Additional Productive Hours Daily

By adding the keyword to the beginning of the title, you gain additional search engine effectiveness without sacrificing much in terms of the effectiveness of the title to human searchers:

Time Management - Discover the Secrets of Time Management – Free Up 2 Additional Productive Hours Daily

Time Management - Learn the Simple Techniques of Time Management – Free Up 2 Additional Productive Hours Daily

Time Management - Revealed – The Best Ways to Free Up 2 Additional Productive Hours Daily

Time Management - Recently Uncovered: Top Ways to Free Up 2 Additional Productive Hours Daily

Time Management Secret Unleashed: How I Free Up 2 Additional Productive Hours Daily

Time Management - Revolutionary New Method to Free Up 2 Additional Productive Hours Daily; Secret Revealed Here

Time Management - Foolproof Method to Free Up 2 Additional Productive Hours Daily

Time Management - Mad Time Management Scientist Unleashes New Method to Free Up 2 Additional Productive Hours Daily

One important thing to note here: When you first get started writing articles and their headlines, it will not be as easy as these examples have made it out to be. It simply takes time and practice. Do not spend a ridiculous amount of time trying to craft the perfect article titles. You should be writing multiple articles, and getting them out fast is far more important than the perfect title. Over time, your headlines will become more effective, and your titles will improve.

One thing, though, that is important, is that your titles accurately reflect the information that will be contained within your article. This is important because the article is your first opportunity to show your reader who you are. One of the things that is incredibly important in building a web business is building your credibility. Everything you do, starting with the article, must reflect your credibility. If you do not show credibility in your article, and that is reflected by the continuity of thought between the title and the content, your readers will not trust that your web site will be credible, nor will they have trust that a sales page you might write will adequately represent the product you may be selling.

Outline Your Article

Once you have determined the subject matter and the title of your article, you can begin to outline your article, so that you have a firm foundation on which to write.

A note on this progression of steps: I personally write my title first, and use it as a kind of ruler, looking back at it to ensure that my article content is remaining consistent with my title. However, some authors will write their article first, and then craft a title that is consistent with their article content. Either method is OK, although I like the accountability that is created when I craft my title first. I also do not physically write out an outline, as I can easily do that in my mind, and you should be able to do it easily after writing 20-30 articles. If you have never written any articles, I recommend writing an outline first; this will help you keep focused and not lose direction when writing your article.

Once you have your topic, you will create an outline that will use as a framework the following parts:

- 1) Introductory paragraph or sentence(s)
- 2) 3 supporting ideas to your article topic
- 3) Conclusion paragraph or sentence(s)

As an example, using the list building article example from before:

One of the sample titles we created was:

The Top 5 Ways to List Build With Precision, Starting With Your Very First Article

So my outline would look like this:

1) Introductory paragraph or sentence(s)

2) 5 supporting ideas to your article topic

a) To list build with precision, you must have a tightly-targeted demographic to which you are directing your efforts.

b) To list build with precision, you must coordinate the topic of your advertising mechanism with the topic of your squeeze page, and the topic of your squeeze page with the content of your email campaign.

c) To list build with precision, you must continually send your subscribers useful information.

d) To list build with precision, you must continually survey your subscribers or ask them what types of information or products they are currently in need of.

e) To list build with precision, you must never forget the primary purpose of your list.

3) Conclusion paragraph or sentence(s)

As another example, using one of the time management titles:

Discover the Secrets of Time Management – Free Up 2 Additional Productive Hours Daily

1) Introductory paragraph or sentence(s)

2) 3 supporting ideas to your article topic

a) Secret 1: Track Your Time Use Daily

b) Secret 2: Create a Goals List

c) Secret 3: Measure Everything You Do Against Goals List Daily

3) Conclusion paragraph or sentence(s)

There is no reason to write an outline that is any more in-depth than these examples. Remember, you are only writing a 400-700 word article about one tightly-themed idea. The purpose of your article is to deliver useful content to the reader, while also giving the reader a reason and an incentive to click through to your website or webpage after reading the article.

Write Your Introductory Paragraph

In your introductory paragraph, you want to quickly and succinctly indicate to the reader what they are going to learn about or otherwise find out if they read your article. This should be as short as possible without shortchanging the purpose. Many times my introductory paragraph will be as short as a sentence; other times it will turn into several paragraphs if I feel the explanation is necessary. Many times this is the case if I am going to create a list of points or keys or methods. This may be a short and very to-the-point list of steps or keys, and the extra verbiage up front is setting the framework for the reader to be able to effectively use the condensed information I will give them in the list.

Keeping with the theme of the last few examples, here are sample introductory paragraphs to use:

An example of a short introduction:

Title: The Top 5 Ways to List Build With Precision, Starting With Your Very First Article

Introduction:

List building is critical in today's competitive internet marketing environment, and article marketing is one of the easiest and most effective methods of generating quality leads that can be directed towards the purpose of list building. Here is what you need to do: (43 words)

At this point I would list the top 5 ways that you could list build using articles.

Example of a long introduction:

Title: Discover the Secrets of Time Management – Free Up 2 Additional Productive Hours Daily

Introduction:

Time management is critical in today's competitive corporate environment. Even at home, or for the work-at-home entrepreneur, time management is imperative for getting everything done that needs to be done, while balancing the needs of the family, friends, and the boss or self-employment project.

Imagine what you could do everyday at work, or even every evening with your family, if you could free up an additional hour or two of time, every single day. This could mean the difference between getting the promotion your desire and staying in your current position, or the difference between continuing to struggle to meet the needs of your spouse and more than meeting the needs of your spouse; it could mean the difference between personal burnout and the freedom of having more than enough personal time for personal recreation and refreshment.

Although the steps listed in this article can very effectively help you free up an additional 2 hours of time every single day, day and day out, week in and week out, they must be applied. They will not simply apply themselves. You must decide that you want the additional free time, and perhaps commit to doing whatever it takes to make the additional productive and free time a reality.

Take these steps and use them to supercharge your life by freeing up 2 additional productive hours every single day: (229 words)

At this point I would list the secrets that one can use to free up additional time in his or her life.

Write the Body of the Article

The body of the article will follow the introduction, and should adequately and completely give the reader all the information to do or learn, etc., whatever is promised in the title and perhaps the introduction to the article.

In the case of steps or a list of things, the body of the article is quite easy to write. Continuing to use the list building example, this is a sample of a list of ways to list build with precision:

1) To list build with precision, you must have a tightly-targeted demographic to which you are directing your efforts. It is far more profitable to build 5 tightly targeted lists where you know exactly what type of targeted items you can promote effectively, than to build one loosely targeted list to which you are offering products that for one or more segment of the list, have little or no value.

2) To list build with precision, you must coordinate the topic of your advertising mechanism with the topic of your squeeze page, and the topic of your squeeze page with the content of your email campaign. By coordinating the topics of these three major points of contact with your visitors and subscribers, you are able to effectively maintain your subscriber base. When these topics are not coordinated, you tend to lose subscribers who are not receiving the type of content they anticipated they would receive when they either clicked through to your squeeze page or subscribed to your newsletter or mailing list.

3) To list build with precision, you must continually send your subscribers useful information. This information can be in the form of useful emails that contain informative content which your subscribers can use, or it can be in the form of free gifts and recommended resources that help meet the needs of your subscribers. It is important that you do not email your subscribers any information that will not genuinely help them or advance their own cause. Think about that carefully before each mailing you do. You see, it is better to skip a mailing if you do not have good information to send, than to send bad information and have people unsubscribe as a result.

4) To list build with precision, you must continually survey your subscribers or ask them what types of information or products they are currently in need of. This is one of the most overlooked methods of both building rapport and ensuring that the information, content, and recommendations that you make, is in line with your current subscribers' needs. Remember, your subscribers' needs will change over time, and they will change if the primary source of your lead generation changes.

5) To list build with precision, you must never forget the primary purpose of your list. Ask yourself regularly, what is my purpose with this list, and am I meeting my purpose with this list. If you are aimlessly managing your list, it will be much less profitable than if you are managing your list with clear purpose and direction. (427 words)

In the case of the time management article, the body might look like this:

1) Keep a log of all the things you do throughout the day, and at the end of each day and each week, add up the time spent doing each activity. When you do this one step, you often realize incredibly wasteful patterns in your daily routine. For example, you might be checking your email 20 times a day for an average of 10 minutes each time, for a total of 200 minutes per day. If you were to cut that back to 3 times a day, and spend as much as 30 minutes per time, for a total of 90 minutes per day, you would save 110 minutes immediately. The same concept can be applied to returning phone calls, surfing the web, or reading newspaper or magazine clips.

2) Create a goals list. Many times we are not productive during the day because we simply do not know what we are supposed to do to be productive. This is especially common for entrepreneurs and self-employed individuals who do not have well-defined daily activity expectations. Create yearly goals, break those down into the requisite monthly goals that, when met, would ensure the accomplishment of the yearly goals, and you can even break those down into weekly goals, if you need to.

3) Constantly evaluate every activity that you do against the goals list. Ask yourself, is this activity furthering or hindering my ability to meet my goals? If

the answer is hindering, quit doing the activity, and switch to one that furthers your goals. (246 words)

Notice that in both cases, I very closely followed the steps I had created for the outline. In fact, for the list building article, I used the steps I listed in the outline as the first sentence of each paragraph describing the steps.

Write the Conclusion to the Article

Once you have written the body of the article, you can write a conclusion. For me, I like to write a conclusion that simply sums up the purpose, points, or message of the article, and gives the reader a reason to click into my link in the bio.

For example, in the list building article example, my conclusion might look like this:

As you can see, effective list building using articles as the initial point of contact can be extremely easy to do, as long as you follow specific steps. As you are list building, always keep in mind your long term purpose in list building. Sometimes it is easy to get hung up on the concept of adding subscribers to your list, but lose sight of the big picture, that those subscribers actually have a purpose on your list.

In the time management article example, it might read like this:

As you can see, time management is one of those productive tasks that you really can achieve with a little effort and determination. I encourage you to incorporate each one of these steps into your daily schedule, and I truly believe you will find an increased level of productivity in your own life, as you free up at least 2 hours of productive time every day.

Creating Your Bio

Writing a Call to Action

You want your bio to include a direct call to action for the reader. Sure, you might think you want your bio to tell about yourself, your credentials, and your experience, but the bottom line is, by the time they have read your article and get to your bio, they have already decided whether or not you and your information can be useful to them. They don't really need to know if you have a PhD or have worked in your field for 20 years to know if your information can benefit them.

A call to action might look something like this:

To receive more information about _____, click here:

To receive a copy of my free ebook on _____, click here:

Do you want to know more about _____? Click here:

Want to learn more about _____? Click here:

Are you interested in learning more about _____? Click here:

To immediately receive my free ebook, visit this site now:

To receive my weekly newsletter full of useful tips on _____, go to this webpage now:

Some examples of a call to action that I might use for the list building example article would be:

To receive my free ecourse 'List Building Secrets', click here:

To subscribe to my free newsletter 'List Building Secrets', visit this webpage:

To download a free copy of my ebook '15 Steps to Internet Success', click here:

And some examples of a call to action for the time management articles would be:

To subscribe to my free time management tips newsletter, click here:

Interested in more time management information? Click here:

Do you want to read my new book "The Time Management Guide"? Download it here:

Providing Information about Yourself

This part of your bio, although needed, should be as short as possible. Remember, the reader has already decided whether or not they like you and your information by the time they get to this section. You are simply giving them an additional piece of credibility in the bio.

Examples of providing information about yourself:

John Smith is an experienced _____, who has written a number of informative articles on the topic of _____.

Mary Smith has been working and writing in the field of _____ for _____ years and offers online coaching to beginners.

John Smith is an experienced _____ writer and has coached hundreds of people into _____ success.

Inserting Live Text Links

One of the most critical elements of making the article marketing process work to your benefit is that of the link to your website or your webpage. It is important that when your link shows up on a website, that it is a live link, meaning that the reader can click on it and be taken to your website immediately, without having to copy and paste the URL into their web browser.

There are two basic ways that article directories will accept these links so that they are live. They will either require that you simply use the direct URL of the website or webpage, like this: <http://www.secrets-of-internet-success.com> or they will allow you to use a text link that looks like this: Secrets of Internet Success. If you click on that second link, you will see that it goes to the same webpage as the first one, but the text (hence text link) is different than the URL.

When you are submitting your articles to each of the article directories, you will want to check to see which format they each use. If they use the first format, that of the URL, simply type in the URL of your website or webpage, generally starting with <http://>, but double check with each article directory to be sure.

If the article directory uses the second format, that of the text link, you will use html code that looks similar to this:

```
<a target="_blank" href="http://www.secrets-of-internet-success.com">Secrets of Internet Success</a>
```

You will replace: <http://www.secrets-of-internet-success.com> with your own website or webpage URL and replace: "Secrets of Internet Success" with the text you want to appear in your bio.

Using Text Links for Search Engine Optimization

Whether or not your primary article writing purpose is to generate backlinks or it is to simply create direct click-throughs, you should still take advantage of

the opportunity to allow the search engines to upgrade your search engine rankings by giving you powerful credit for your text backlinks.

When you use the html code to create a text backlink, simply place keywords for which you want your website to be highly ranked, in the text portion of the text link.

For example, in this case, I have the words 'email list building' in the text part of my html text backlink: `Email List Building`

When search engines read that, they make the assumption that the webpage to which the reader is directed, is about 'email list building', especially if my keywords and other optimization items on the web page are correlated with 'email list building'; that text link helps increase my ranking in search engine results.

Formatting Your Article

Some of the article directories prefer that you submit your article to them using a text based editor such as Notepad or WordPad. Simply copy and paste your article into whichever text editor the particular article directory prefers, and then copy and paste from that editor to the article directories' submission page.

One thing to note here, although some of the article directories have varying standards for your articles, such as length, text editor, bios, or live link format, and it may feel overwhelming now, once you have submitted a few articles, it will feel much easier and not nearly as cumbersome.

One thing that I have found that is useful when submitting to multiple directories is to copy and paste each of the article directory submission page addresses into a Word or Excel file, and then note the rules in a separate column, in addition to information like usernames and passwords for each directory. I try to use the same username and password for all the article directories, except for the few that assign you names themselves, so that remembering the usernames and passwords is more manageable.

Choosing Article Directories

Article Directory Choices for Link Creating Strategies

If you are writing articles for the primary purpose of generating multiple links, you will want to submit your articles to as many article directory websites as possible. In the appendix, there is a list of article directories that make a good place to start, but if you want to generate hundreds of links, simply type in 'article

directories' into your search engine, and you will find hundreds of additional article directory sites.

When you are submitting for volume like this, the quality of the article directory is not of primary importance, because you are simply looking for the highest quantity of published articles and backlinks. If you are pressed for time and can only submit to a few article directories, use the first 5 or 10 on the list I provide for you in the appendix, as many of those have RSS feeds or very high traffic, and that tends to correlate with you getting many more additional links than just the ones you get from the initial article submission.

With this strategy, it is better to write one article and submit it to 100 or 500 article directories than to write multiple articles and submit them to a few article directories, as you would do it you were simply looking for the direct immediate human readership, rather than the search engine rankings provided by the multiple backlinks.

Article Directory Choices for Massive Direct Traffic Strategies

If you are simply writing and submitting articles for the purpose of generating massive direct hits via search engine traffic directly to the article as it is posted on the article directories, rather than focusing on creating search engine traffic directly to your website, then you are much better off writing multiple articles and submitting them to just the first few article directories on the list I have provided in the Appendix.

The first few websites on that list provide probably 10 times more traffic to your article than all the other article directories online today. The added benefit of additional article submissions for the primary purpose of direct traffic via the article directories is very slim, so your time is much better spent writing new articles, rather than spending it submitting to hundreds of article directories, as you would if your primary focus were to generate backlinks.

Signing Up With Article Directories

When you first go to most of the article directories in the list in the Appendix, or when you find them online, most of them will require that you sign up to be an article author or submitter.

The easiest way to do this is to sign up for many of them in the same sitting, as most of them require a confirmation email in order to complete the sign up phase. The easiest way to do this is to go, one by one, to each of the article directories and fill out the required information, and when you are finished, they will send you a confirmation email. While you are waiting for the confirmation emails to come in, continue to sign up with the rest of the article directories, assembly-line style. When you have finished signing up with the article directories, all of the confirmation emails should have come in. At that point, you

can go through the confirmation emails one by one, completing the confirmation process for all the article directories in one sitting. One thing to keep in mind here is that a lot of the article directory confirmation links will only be live for a day or two, so be sure and schedule time to go click on the links in the confirmation emails before they expire.

Submitting to Article Directories

Once you have confirmed your author status with the article directories, and you have written your first article, you are ready to begin submitting your article.

The first time you do this, it will feel slow and tedious, but you will get more efficient with time. There is a lot of copying and pasting involved in getting the article and the bio from your file to the article directory, and until you get efficient at that, you will be a little slow.

At this point, you may be asking, well what about the article submission software I see advertised?

First, before you try out any article submission software, be sure and do it by hand for a few times so that you will truly understand the benefits and the disadvantages to automatically submitting your articles.

A few things to note about article submission software:

If the article submission software is truly automatic, it is going to be unable to do a great job of making it look like the article submission is done by hand, or personal. A lot of the article directories are proud of their website and when they allow automatic submitters to submit articles to their site, the quality of the articles tends to go down, as spammers try to submit as many articles as possible, many times of poor quality, for the sake of getting their backlinks to propagate over the web.

If the article submission software is not truly automatic, you are still taking a lot of time to do the submissions, although it can speed up the process some.

I have personally tried one of the automatic submitters and was not happy with the performance. Because my personal primary strategy is that of writing many articles and submitting them to a very select few article directories rather than mass submitting to many article directories, I have simply chosen not to use or investigate article submitters. However, if your article submission strategy is instead to write a fewer number of articles, but submit them to multiple article directories, it might be in your best interest to look into purchasing quality article submission software.

Tracking Your Submissions and Propagation on the Web

When you first get started submitting articles online, and periodically in the future, you will want to track your article submissions and the articles' propagation on the web, so that you can see where your article submission efforts are most effective.

There are several ways you can do this; tracking by the title and tracking by clicks are two of the most effective.

Tracking by Title

One easy way to track the number of times your article is appearing on the web is to create original, never-before-used titles for each of your articles, and you can track the number of times your article appears online simply by typing the article name into a search engine and counting the number of times it appears.

This method is one of the easiest ways to track the propagation of your articles, especially if you are mass-submitting to multiple websites for backlink purposes.

To do this, simply use a search engine to search for your proposed article title. Type your article title into a search engine, in quotes, and if you come up with a 'search term not found' result, then you have a unique title. If not, add or subtract a word from the title and try again. For example, if I am thinking about using the title "List Building – How I Use Articles to Maximize My List Building" I would type that title into a search engine, in quotes, and see if anyone else has used that title or word combination before. If they have, I might add the word 'results' to the end of the title, to create more uniqueness. The new title would look like this: "List Building – How I Use Articles to Maximize My List Building Results".

Once you have a unique title, submit the article you have written using that title. In a few days, type in the title you used into a search engine, once again in quotes, and unless someone else has by chance created something with exactly the same name as yours, you will be able to count the number of times your article appears by the number of times your article title shows up in the results.

Tracking by Clicks

This is another effective method of tracking the propagation of your article, although it is geared more towards tracking the effectiveness of your article or article submission process when you are submitting for the purpose of generating immediate article directory clicks rather than mass-submitting for backlink purposes.

To do this, you can use ad tracking software, or you can design a separate opt in page or web page for each different article directory you use.

If you are using ad tracking software, simply include the ad tracking link to your bio instead of your regular website link, and you will be able to track the number of clicks from each article directory. This allows you to determine exactly which article directories are most effective for your style and genre.

Instead of using ad tracker software, you can assign a different webpage for each article source, and place the link to that particular webpage in each article that is submitted to a particular article directory. As long as you can view the individual pages results in your website traffic tracking software, this is quite effective.

If your traffic tracker does not offer the ability to view visitors by page, you can use your autoresponder opt in code to do the work for you. Some autoresponders like Aweber, (which I use) can show you the number of times a particular opt in form is shown, and they also show you what percentage of unique web hits that you have received have become a subscriber. This is an additional method of determining which article directories are most effective at generating clicks, and also allows you to compare the responsiveness of different visitors based on their article directory source.

Understanding the Big Picture

My guess is that by now, you are starting to see the big picture with article marketing. Whether you are attempting to increase your search engine rankings by submitting to multiple directories, or you are looking to increase you direct traffic, article marketing is powerful.

Even if you are not focusing on search engine rankings, generally you should find that as you article market, your websites will become more popular. They will naturally receive more backlinks and traffic, and generally your search engine ranking will go up, even without any special emphasis on it.

One of the powerful things about article marketing, especially if you are building a list, is that subscribers who come to you after reading one of your articles tend to buy more than subscribers who come to you from many other traffic sources. Generally, when someone subscribes to your list after reading one or several of your articles, they already are beginning to trust you, and might buy from you sooner than someone who needs to read several emails from you and perhaps communicate online before they will purchase. Article writing simply provides a unique opportunity for you to attract subscribers to your list who have a prequalified interest and trust in you.

Maintaining Patience as it All Comes Together

When you first get started with article marketing, things will probably move slowly for you. One of the things that happens with article marketing is an exponential effect. When you have only 3 articles written, you are not going to have a flood of traffic. But if you write and submit a few articles a day for several weeks or months, you will begin to experience an incredible effect, and it will all become worthwhile. Remember, you will continue to receive the effects of articles you have written for as long as they are online and published. So when you have 10 articles or 100 articles online, you will have 10 times or 100 times the traffic that you will receive after the first article.

It is easy to become discouraged when you have written just a few articles, and your revenue is not consistent with the time you put into article writing and submission.

In fact, I will go so far as to say, if you are only going to write a few articles and then quit, you might as well not write or submit any articles. Article marketing is extremely powerful, but it is most powerful when there is a cumulative effect, and that cumulative effect takes time and multiple articles and submissions.



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