



How To Construct Highly Effective Articles For Article Marketing

-You Don't Even Need To Be A Writer!

by Steve Shaw
SubmitYOURArticle.com

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Introduction: But I'm Not A Good Writer ...

When folks first get the idea to do article marketing, I can totally understand that initially there is a "deer in the headlights" sort of feeling of:

"Oh no—now I'm supposed to write articles. Where do I even start?"

A lot of people just aren't used to writing—after all, when is the last time you were required to write a professional sounding article?

Depending on what type of work you do, you may not have had any reason to write anything of any length since leaving school.

I knew I would love writing articles once I got the hang of it, but when I first started article marketing I did have an adjustment period where I was trying to get into the article writing groove.

So, if you're considering starting article marketing or if you've already started and are still trying to get your sea legs, please know that what you're experiencing is normal—any time we start doing something we're not used to doing it's a bit awkward at first! :-)

Rest assured, you do not have to be Hemingway to do article marketing.

Believe me, almost anyone can do this with a bit of practice and some good advice. You'll soon be able to churn out articles as quickly as you can write a letter to your old Aunt Mildred!

As with learning any new skill, it really helps to break down the process into parts. When you can see that writing articles for article marketing is simply a series of easy steps (that are entirely doable even if you've never written an article in your life!), you'll gain the confidence you need and will be well on your way to writing articles that you're proud to call your own.

After all, we don't want to write just any type of articles—we want to write effective ones! I'm sure you've seen articles on the net that are of questionable value with lackluster titles, unhelpful content, and ineffective resource boxes—that is not what we're going for!

When you're writing and submitting articles you need to keep in mind what the publisher's needs are. Publishers are looking for quality articles that bring value to readers.

Quality definitely counts with article marketing—you will see much greater results with one well written article than with 10 or more sub-standard ones.

And on top of that--remember that your articles are representing YOU on the internet!

If you were going out to meet your potential customers, wouldn't you want to put your most professional face forward? Of course you would!

In the following pages we'll go over everything you need to know in order to start crafting highly effective articles...even if you're not a writer, but first let's go over some of the basics.

What is Article Marketing?

With Article Marketing you write and syndicate free reprint articles via article directories, ezine editors, and announcement groups.

A key element of Article Marketing is the author resource box, which contains a short author bio and a link back to the author's website.

Through submitting free reprint articles that are picked up by online publishers, a website owner can effectively build links, increase search engine ranking, drive traffic to his website, and establish himself as an expert in his niche. Oh, and with all that comes increased sales!

Anyone can do this--You do not have to be a SEO mastermind to become a black belt at Article Marketing.

You don't even need to be a great writer!

Article Marketing is done by regular everyday people who want to drive traffic to their websites, increase their search engine rankings, and establish themselves as experts in their fields without breaking the bank.

Article Marketing: So How Does It Work?

In brief, article marketers write and then distribute articles to various publishers on the Internet. When publishers publish them, this can lead to rapid traffic and sales growth on my web sites.

You can write as few as one or two articles a month - with practice, you may be able to churn out a single article in less than half an hour, with a bit more time spent on reviewing it and ensuring it is suitable for publication.

So how does this concept work?

Quite simply, ezine editors and web site owners are quite literally crying out for quality content they can use.

For the ezine publisher, quality content is essential. It encourages their subscribers to keep reading rather than unsubscribe, and ezines that are read are far more profitable for the publishers, whether via advertising or other revenue streams.

For the web site owner, content equals traffic. It's that simple, the more content you have, the more traffic you attract from the search engines, particularly engines like Google which are content-crazy.

Content is what makes the web go round.

By simply providing the content that publishers can use in their ezines and on their web sites, you can get your name all over the web rapidly, boost your credibility, bring you large levels of traffic, and increase your sales levels.

Why Do People Do Article Marketing?

You may be thinking, "Why would someone go to the trouble of writing an article, and then submit it for free to online publishers? What do I get out of this?"

Great question!

Trust me, there is method to the madness--you, as the author of the article, are getting many things in return for providing "free" content. You are not receiving money directly for the article (there is no one handing you a wad of cash in exchange for the article), but you do receive three very important things that are massively valuable if you have a website.

Article Marketing is a triple threat when it comes to benefiting your website:

1. Article Marketing builds links.
2. Article Marketing gets the word out about your website, bringing widespread exposure and an increase in targeted traffic.
3. Article Marketing can help establish you as an expert in your niche and build customer confidence.

Here's how it all works--Each time an author submits an article, he includes his resource box. A resource box is a short author bio, which also includes a link back to the author's website.

Every time a website owner decides to publish a free reprint article, he also includes the author's resource box. So, every time the article is picked up for publication the author's name and a link back to the author's website are published also.

In this way the author builds links and increases exposure for his website. The people clicking through to his website will be doing so because they found his article helpful, and since his article is on the same topic of his website the article generates targeted traffic.

Yes, you are letting publishers publish your articles for free, but that's the point. That is what gets your article widespread distribution, builds links to your website, establishes you as an expert in your field, and brings increasing exposure to your website.

How about this--instead of thinking of Article Marketing as writing articles for free, ***think about it as letting other people market your website for free.***

Chapter 1: The Top 10 Questions People Have About Article Marketing

I'm sure there are some very good questions floating around in your brain right now, and we just have to get them out in the open before moving forward.

So, now on to the Top 10 Questions People Ask About Article Marketing...

Question #1: How long should my articles be?

I've found that articles between 700-800 words are optimal--anything overly short or long can have limited appeal to publishers. Generally speaking, ezine editors and other publishers are not looking for articles that are much shorter or longer than this. This length fits into ezines well, and looks about right on web pages too.

Technically though, most article directories will accept quality articles between 400 and 1500 words.

Question #2: What is a resource box?

By submitting your article to publishers, you are going to allow them to freely publish your article without any payment to you in cash - instead, your 'payment' for providing publishers with valuable content is that they must publish your resource box at the end of the article.

The resource box typically contains information about the author, and usually provides a link or URL to the author's web site that anyone reading the article can then follow if they wish.

So how should a resource box be constructed?

Here are some guidelines you should follow, based on my own experience with numerous publishers.

The information in the resource box attached to each article should always contain some biographical information about the author.

If it is entirely commercial, eg. just an ad about your product, many publishers simply won't publish it.

As a rough guide, it should be in context with an 'About the author' subheader, i.e. you should give some information about yourself and your background, while providing a link to your website and/or an email address via which readers of the article can contact you.

We'll go over how to craft a really strong resource box in much more detail a little later.

Question #3: How many articles per month should I submit?

In order to have the maximum impact with your articles, you should stagger your article submissions (this means not submitting a bunch in one day or over a short span of time). I suggest no more than 2 articles per week submitted on different days for a single website.

Submitting no more than 2 articles per week means you will be submitting somewhere between 1-8 articles a month.

I know some folks who submit just 1 or 2 a month and see great results.

Question #4: Why shouldn't I submit bunches of articles at one time?

Easy Tiger--this is actually a "less is more" situation, and you will have greater results by moderately and steadily submitting articles over an extended period of time rather than trying to inundate the internet with your articles. Here's why:

Quality publishers dislike several articles from the same author within a short time period, and submitting more than this can lead to publisher overload and refusals to accept your future articles.

Also, it isn't enough to just get your articles to the distribution sites; the articles have to be of such quality that it makes website and newsletter owners want to publish them. That's how you get your best exposure and boost your targeted traffic to your website.

While it's not in your best interest to inundate the internet with tons of articles all at one time, it is extremely effective to consistently produce quality articles and trickle them out over the long term.

Here's how that works:

The more quality articles you write, the more websites will publish your article online. The more websites pick up your article, the more inbound links you'll have coming to your site. The more inbound links you have, the more long-term targeted traffic you'll have. The inbound links and steady traffic will improve your search engine ranking, which will then, in turn bring you even more traffic.

Also, the more articles you write over time, the more you solidify yourself as an expert in your field. Publishers will start to know who you are and be more likely to choose your articles for publication. Readers will also get the feeling that you really know what you're talking about. After all, you've been consistently publishing valuable articles on your area of expertise over the long term.

Question #5: Does writing quality matter with article marketing?

Yes! There are some articles that are very effective at establishing you as an expert in your niche, driving traffic to your site, and helping you jump up the search engine results listing for your keywords....and there are other articles that are just plain useless.

One useful technique that I've found works well is to leave the article alone for a few days after you've written it - you'll be amazed at how much you'll then be able to improve its readability and construction.

If you're a beginner, it's best to then leave it again for a short period of time, and review it again, until you are happy that it's of publishable quality.

One final point - always ensure your article does not contain any spelling mistakes or obvious grammatical errors - run it through a spell checker to make sure before you submit it, and/or get someone else to read it through to double check it.

I have 3 things to say about article writing quality: *proofread, proofread, proofread!*

Question #6: Can I write articles about my website, business or products?

Don't **even** think about it.

Oh, I know that it's tempting to think, "Hey, I'm going to the effort to write this article, it will (hopefully!) be published on several websites, I basically have a worldwide audience--why not take this opportunity to talk about the supreme special-ness of me (or my website or products)?"

I beg of you--please don't even go there.

Here's why:

Just because you submit an article to an online publisher does not mean that they are required to publish it. Quality publishers have screening processes and editorial guidelines. They are looking for educational articles that their readers will find helpful, not advertisements or sales pages--that is not what article marketing is about!

So do yourself a favor and scrap the idea that you can use your article body to be like a commercial for your website or business.

Question #7: So where can I talk about my wonderful website and business?

In your resource box!

Yes, that's the appropriate spot to promote your website, your products and your business.

In a little bit I'll go over how you can craft a resource box that will lure readers back to your website.

Question #8: Alright, alright--what should I write about then?

Glad you asked :-)

Here's what you need to do--take your salesperson hat off and put your expert hat on--you need to think (and write) like an expert in your niche, providing useful information to your target readers--not sales copy!

To get the greatest benefit from article marketing and an optimum amount of targeted traffic to your website, you will write articles on the topic of your website. Articles on the topic of your website are on topics that your target readers will find helpful and informative.

Ask yourself this--*What are the top 10 questions that the people in my target market ask me?*

Or *What are the top 5 problems that folks in my target market have (concerning the topic of my website)?*

Remember, you cannot mention your website in the body of your article (your author resource box is the appropriate place to talk about yourself and your website), but you can most certainly address issues that are on the minds of your target market.

In Chapter 3 we'll delve more deeply into the age old question, "What should I write about?"

Question #9: Does my article need to be formatted in any particular way?

Advice on this can vary, but I've generally found that 60 characters per line is the format which most publishers prefer. Articles submitted via the service at SubmitYOURArticle.com can actually be format to whatever CPL (characters per line) the publisher requires, though standard is 60CPL for email submissions unless a publisher requests otherwise.

Question #10: How long before I see results?

While results certainly can be dramatic - for example, publication in a major ezine can bring a surge of traffic over a few days - article submission are generally a long-term strategy for building up the traffic to your web site, so don't think that you can submit one article, and then a few days or weeks later see a huge change in your traffic or search engine ranking.

It can certainly take a few months before you start seeing results. Remember, search engines such as Google can take months to adjust search engine rankings based on incoming links and an increased search engine ranking for your major keywords can of course build traffic dramatically for the long-term.

You should plan on doing your article marketing campaign for an extended period, generally for several months. Ideally, article marketing should be an intrinsic long-term part of your overall marketing strategy.

So article marketing does take time, but the results are excellent and long lasting--definitely worth the effort!

Chapter 2: Your Article Writing 'Quick Start' Guide

We all love a "quick start" don't we?

I put this in here for all of you who buy a product that says "some assembly required", and then you quickly open up the box and try to put everything together without reading the detailed instructions included in the box.

There's nothing wrong with that--sometimes that approach works!

There is something in all of us that likes to at least have the option to dive right into all the bits and pieces and try to assemble everything on our own.

Further on in this report I'll be giving you detailed information on the various aspects of writing articles, but for those chomping at the bit, here is your optional "quick start":

The Fastest, Easiest Way To Write Your First Article...Starting From Square One

You can rest easy that writing an article is not brain surgery--it is very simple when you break it down into steps, which is what I'm going to do for you. If you follow these basic steps, you will be well on your way to writing a very respectable first article!

A little warning though--this is by no means the "definitive" way to write an article--I just think this is a very easy way to get started writing your first article. (I also follow this method even though I've written tons of articles).

Here we go...

1) Determine your article topic.

I know, this is the spot that stops lots of folks dead in their tracks! :-) The problem is that there are so many potential topics out there related to your niche that it's easy to feel overwhelmed by all the options.

I'm going to make it easy for you. I'm going to tell you what to write about for your first article. Here's what I want you to write about:

What is the one question that your customers/potential customers ask you most frequently?

No matter what your business is, you will have an answer to this question. Whether your business is selling garden hoses, designing wedding gowns, or being a lawyer, you have an answer to that question.

Don't over think it—there may be millions of top questions that pop into your head, but just pick one question (or one topic) that folks routinely ask you about in relation to your field of business.

What your target customers are asking is a HUGE insight into the types of articles you should be writing.

2) Think of a working title.

This does not have to be your final title, so there's no pressure. Just come up with a title, and remember that your title should give some indication of what your article is about.

I know that sometimes the sheer overload of options is what stops us cold when we're trying to be creative, so I'll give you a guideline for writing this article title:

Let's make this a "list" article (articles that have numerical lists in them are HOT).

Narrowing it down even further, let's make this a "Top 5" list article.

So, try making your title something like this:

"Top 5 [insert solution to your customer's top question]"

For example, let's say you're a wedding dress designer, and your customer's top question is "How do I know what style of wedding dress to get?"

The wedding dress designer's title would be, "The Top 5 Ways to Tell What Wedding Dress is Right for You"

An interior designer's title may be, "The Top 5 Secrets for Creating a Beach House Look (Even If You Don't Live at the Beach!)"

You get the idea—use your customer's frequently asked question to make a title that incorporates the words "Top 5".

3) Write down some notes on what you'll cover in your article.

See, we haven't started writing the article yet, but we're doing the prep work.

You've got a title that gives you some guidelines of what you'll write about—you're going to be answering a certain question that is popular with your customers, and you will be breaking your answer down into 5 parts (that's where the "Top 5" part comes in).

We are still brainstorming and taking notes here—what are the 5 key points you want to make in your article to answer your customer's main question?

Here's a tip—if you're coming up with more than 5 key points, scale it back to just 5.

This is a big lesson with article marketing—you may not be able to tell every last thing in your article because of your word count limitations. It is just fine to make a judgement call and pick the Top 5 and leave some points out (you can cover those points in another article!).

If you can only come up with 4 points—stretch it and come up with one more to make it 5.

Why?

For some reason "Top 4" lists are not that captivating :-) —whenever you're doing a list, try to find a way to make it a "Top 5" rather than a "Top 4" list.

Really, if you dig down deep you will probably be able to come up with one more point so that you can round it out to 5, but if you can't think of anything and you've totally wracked your brain, then scale it back to "Top 3".

Yeah, I know that's weird—for some reason readers latch on to Top 5, Top 7, Top 9, Top 10 and Top 3, but other numbers are just not as compelling.

Also, as you're making your notes, remember that you have limited space in your article. At the very least, your article must be 400 words and at the most it can be 1500 words. Ideally though, your articles would be 700-800 words.

So, as you're making your notes, make them short and sweet and don't try to take on too much.

4) Start with the body of your article, rather than the intro.

Your article will be made up of 3 basic parts—

- Your introductory paragraph
- Your article body (this is where you do your main explaining and teaching)
- Your closing paragraph

As I said earlier, this is just one way of doing things, and I've found it to be the fastest and easiest.

Some folks may start at the very beginning with their introductory paragraph, but I don't—I start with my article body. I think of this as "focusing on the steak and not the peas". I have found that after I write the article body that it is so much easier to write the intro and closing paragraphs.

5) Take the 5 steps that you outlined in your notes, and flesh them out.

You are writing your article first draft now, and I would like to suggest that you explain each of your 5 points as briefly as you can, with one short paragraph for each of the 5 key points.

6) Write your intro and closing paragraphs.

I always keep these short and sweet—just 1-3 sentences as a summary of what is to come (in the intro) and 1-3 sentences as a wrap up (in the closing).

With the intro you want to tell the reader a summary of what you'll be telling them in your article. With the closing you'll be wrapping things up, reiterating the main points in your article, and ending on a high note.

(By the way, when you're submitting an article they always ask you for an "article summary". Try using your opening paragraph as the article summary—that keeps things simple!)

You see what I'm saying—when you're writing an article for online marketing you do not have to make it like a term paper. This is not a doctoral thesis. You want to be educational, but not encyclopedic.

Remember, you have limited space, and your target readers have limited time and attention spans for reading an extremely involved article.

The idea is to make your articles valuable, helpful and educational, but think of each article as being a bite sized morsel that can be easily consumed. (By bite sized, I mean ideally 700-800 words long).

7) Do a word count.

When you're finished with the first draft of your article, use the word count feature that is available in most word processing programs.

Is your article long enough (at least 400 words)?

Is it too long (over 1500 words)?

Are you aiming for the sweet spot of 700-800 words?

If you find that you are way over or way under on your word counts, now is the time to do some tweaking—either edit down or elaborate.

For those of us who love to write and explain things in detail, we need to exercise some restraint and edit our articles until we are within the word count limits. Yes, this

may mean cutting some sentences or re-phrasing things so that fewer words are used.

If you're on the short side with words, then you need to wax poetic and elaborate some of your points. This doesn't mean putting in filler sentences or saying the same thing over and over—it means adding more value to the article, more genuine information.

8) When you have your first draft done, put it aside and take a nap.

Okay, you don't have to take a nap :-), but just get away from the article.

Put it aside for at least 24 hours and then review it again. You'll be surprised at the typos and spelling and grammar errors that will jump off the page when you look at it with fresh eyes.

Run it through your spell checker and grammar checker. Review your article thoroughly to be sure it's just the way you want it, and then.....

9) Submit it!

I highly recommend using the automatic article submission service SubmitYOURArticle.com to get your article out bunches of publishers with the click of a button. If you're not a member yet and would like to join, you can [sign up here](#).

So, that's your quick start--that's a great way to write your first, second and third articles. But what about later after you've already used up your first burst of ideas?

We'll be talking about that next...

Chapter 3: What Should I Write About?

You may have been running strong with your first few articles, coming up with ideas for your articles pretty easily, but I think pretty much everyone at some point runs into a writing inspiration brick wall that has us saying:

"Um, I think I've written about everything I can possibly write about in my niche."

And this is when an author does one of the following:

- a) Gives up
- b) Starts writing off topic articles (and we know that that is a no-no!)
- c) Finds a way to tap into a limitless supply of article ideas

Let's choose option "c", shall we?

Yes, our imaginations run thin every now and then, and no, it isn't easy to come up with article ideas sometimes, but I promise you—no matter what the topic of your website, you can always generate new and interesting ideas for articles IF you follow these guidelines...

1) Get inspiration from magazine covers.

Most bookstores will have a wide array of magazines covering different niches. Find a magazine that is as close as you can get to your niche and look at the titles on the magazine cover.

Which titles jump out at you and make you say, "That looks like it would be a good article—I want to read that!"?

Many times you can bounce an article off of a title you see on a magazine cover. Can you convert that title to apply to something in your specific niche?

I get inspiration from all over the place, not just magazine covers. Look all around you—billboards, TV commercials, the newspaper—look for article titles that are somewhat in your niche and use those to bounce off new article ideas.

Now, notice I'm saying "find a magazine that is somewhat in your niche"—many of us have websites that are in niches that do not have their own magazines :-). If your website is kind of obscure or not really mainstream enough to have its own print publication, then look for a magazine in a related niche.

For example, if your niche was Article Marketing, there is not magazine on that specific topic, but you could look at magazines about writing, marketing, and productivity. Those would be related topics to your field that your target market would be interested in.

Look at the magazine covers, at the titles listed there. Those titles are constructed to grab a reader's attention—it is fine to use a great title as a launching pad for an original article.

Big warning—one thing I would not do though is read through the articles in the magazine and try to get inspiration from the articles themselves. You want to be super careful to create a completely unique article with no "borrowed" ideas or phrases—getting inspiration directly from someone else's article is dangerous because it's too easy to copy.

Just to be safe—let the titles be your inspiration, not the articles themselves. Your imagination needs to fill in the blanks between the inspiration title and the finished article.

2) Don't forget about the newbies.

When we're writing on our area of expertise, sometimes we can overlook the obvious. We want to write helpful, educational articles, and our minds oftentimes go to topics that are more advanced.

Have you ever considered that someone reading your article might not even understand the basics of what you're talking about?

Think about it—although our articles are not sales oriented or promotional in any way, when we educate our readers on some aspect of our niche, we are increasing the likelihood that they will one day be our customers.

So, don't forget about the newbies or the folks who are in your target market but who aren't knowledgeable about what you do.

Try to think back to questions you had when you were first starting out—What confused you? What very basic things do you wish someone had explained to you?

Try writing a few articles directed at someone in your target market who knows nothing about what you do.

3) Play this game: "What are the 10 questions that my customers (or potential customers) most frequently ask me?"

Write those questions down and address each one of them in a separate article.

In this way, you're letting your target market tell you what to write about, which makes perfect sense since you're trying to appeal to them anyway.

See, what may be obvious to you is not always obvious to a customer or potential customer. We have to think as teachers when we're providing customer support and when we're writing articles—what is the best way that we can get the information across and give our customers the understanding they need?

You'll know a sensitive nerve when you start getting the same sorts of questions over and over.

What questions are your customers asking you on a regular basis?

By providing the answers to those questions in your articles you can have a helpful resource ready and waiting for the inevitable question the minute it comes—and that impresses customers!

4) Use template titles and fill in the blanks.

Here are some of mine:

- * 10 Great Reasons Why _____
- * How To _____ in 7 Easy Steps
- * 3 Secret Tricks For _____
- * 9 Surefire Ways To _____
- * How To Conquer _____
- * The Top 10 Mistakes People Make When _____
- * Reader Question: "[insert question here]"

You may notice that these titles are all List articles (any article that has a 1,2,3 etc list in it), HowTo articles, and Question articles (articles that answer a question that is stated in the title).

These are some go-to article topic stimulators, because usually just seeing the format for the title can get the wheels of your brain moving (which helps creativity!).

I would encourage you—try filling in the blanks for the template titles listed above, and I bet you can come up with a compelling title to launch a new article.

5) Have an open classroom.

With article marketing, we are writing and submitting educational articles, so it really helps to pretend that you're a teacher in a school. Your students are your target market, and they have things that they need to learn in order to get a good grade in your class

:-) .

No matter what the topic of your website is, you can teach your readers something—that is the whole purpose (from the reader's standpoint) for free reprint articles. Articles are supposed to educate and inform, and our job as writers is to find a way to creatively teach our reader's something that will benefit them.

The types of titles that go perfectly with a teaching attitude are: How To articles and articles that ask a question in the title (and then the article would answer the question).

Using these five brainstorming methods, you'll be able to generate a steady stream of article ideas for a long time to come. Think about it—every time a customer asks you a question, that's a potential article topic right there. Every time you make a new discovery of a more effective way to do something in your niche, that's a new article topic.

Once you train your mind to be in tune with a steady influx of article ideas, you'll find it much easier to answer the question, "What should I write about?".

But what if you wanted to take things up a notch and actually write articles that struck a nerve with your target market? Is there any way to tell exactly what types of topics are HOT with your target marketing so that you could then write articles to satisfy that burning need?

The answer to that is a definite "yes!", and we'll be going over that next.

Chapter 4: What Are The Hot Topics With Your Readers?

We've just been over some key ways to get those creative juices flowing and jump start some ideas for article topics. As you'll notice with the above suggestions, the idea is to *provide value for the reader*.

You're not just writing to show your knowledge off or to collect backlinks from your articles as they're getting republished--your goal is to write articles that benefit your readers. If you can do that then the other elements (getting the backlinks, gaining the attention of search engines) will fall into place.

It's all about the reader, but how do you know what sorts of information your target customers are looking for?

Of course we always write on the topic of our websites, but beyond that, where can we get specific ideas for articles that tap into the nerve center of our potential customers?

The crazy thing is that we (the experts) oftentimes are so waist deep in our field that we overlook the most obvious questions and topics. As business owners who are marketing focused, sometimes our brains are not completely customer-centric when we're deciding what to write about.

That is just human nature--in order to get a read on questions that are circling through our customers' brains, we need to venture beyond ourselves and our expertise and journey into the turf of our customers.

So how can we get into the minds of our customers?

Please check out these 5 main areas where you can get a read on your target customers so that you can then produce content that will satisfy their needs:

1) If you have a blog, which posts are your most conversation stimulating?

With our articles we usually don't get the chance to see first hand feedback from our readers, but that's not the case with a blog. If you have a blog, have you written any posts that generated an avalanche of comments from readers?

If so, that's a clear indicator of hot topic that deserves further elaboration in an article (or several articles).

On your blog, do you have any posts that have generated a lot of interest or comments?

Why not turn that post into an article?

2) Read blogs in your niche, and find posts that have tons of comments.

Other people in your niche are a great source for article topics, but if you're not sure where to find blogs in your field just follow these steps:

a) Check out Technorati.com

Technorati is a blog search engine, and it also gives rankings of blogs so you can see which ones are the most popular.

b) You can find blogs in your field at Technorati in one of two ways—either use the search box on the home page to search for say, "Marketing blogs", or you could use the tabs at the top of the homepage to find an appropriate category for your niche. For example, you could go Lifestyle => Travel to find blogs about travel.

Oh, and if you'd just like to get an idea of what blogs are popular (and you might find one in your niche), check out the top 100 blogs list.

Get involved in the community of a blog (or blogs) in your niche, and study the comments. Sometimes you can get your best ideas for topics from reading questions that pop up in the comments of other people's blogs.

3) Use your previous articles as a gauge.

Here's one that may be too obvious to see—Look at your previously submitted articles and see which ones have gotten the most view or reprints. You may be surprised—an article you may have thought was just hum-drum may actually be a hot ticket item with readers and publishers.

If you find a previous article of yours that's HOT, try approaching it from a different angle for another article or fleshing out the ideas presented in that original article.

4) Try doing research on social bookmarking sites.

Look at Digg, Reddit, etc. and find articles and posts in your niche that are popular.

From looking at those sites you can see which topics are striking nerves in your niche, and you can use that idea as launching pad for your own unique article.

5) Stay in tune with magazines, TV, and newspaper stories.

When you're marketing on the internet you can get "Web 2.0 tunnel vision" and completely forget that there is a whole world out there offering clues to the interests of your target market.

Most of us have niches that in some way blend over into the offline world, so be sure to keep an eye on print magazines in your niche, newspaper stories about your area of business, and even television shows that frequently talk about your niche.

If you have a very specific area of business that is rather obscure, you may try going a little broader as you look in mainstream media. For example, if your niche was Article Marketing, you could look at magazines about writing or marketing. Both of those topics are mainstream, and both cover ideas that your target market would find valuable.

When you think about it, we really do have multiple ways to determine what kind of content our target marketing is hungry for. That means we don't have to be writing in the dark--all we have to do is look at the "hotness indicators" around us both online and offline. The idea is to give your readers an article that will make them say, "Thank you for that helpful information. I was wondering about that!"

Chapter 5: How To Write Articles To Drive Traffic To A Product Based Website

Alright, so you know how to write a basic first article, and also how to generate pretty much a limitless supply of article ideas that strike nerves with your target market.

But what if you have a product based website, and you're having trouble wrapping your mind around the concept of writing articles on your general topic that are not about your specific product?

This is a common dilemma that pops up quite frequently in Article Marketing. I think it's safe to say that the top reason why articles are declined by publishers is because they contain "promotional" content.

When an article is deemed "promotional", it means that it is written in a way to benefit the author, and that the information provided is not objective and purely educational. An example of a promotional article would be a person who has a website that sells Brand XYZ Chocolate Bars, and then they write an article called "Why You Should Buy Brand XYZ Chocolate Bars".

You see what I mean--that is not an educational article but is rather more of a sales piece.

I know this may be a difficult mind shift for some of you who have product based websites. One thing I've noticed is that people who are using article marketing to promote their product based websites encounter certain unique challenges in writing the types of non-promotional articles that quality publishers are looking for.

First off, let's clarify what a "product based website" is.

A product based website is any website that is used primarily to sell particular pieces of merchandise. For example, let's say your website is a sales site devoted to baby clothes. That is a product based website. So is a website that is all product information and sales pages for particular brands of vitamins, or watches, or gourmet chocolates or umbrellas.

You get the idea--if you're using article marketing to try to drive traffic back to a website that is sales oriented and that is comprised of product information and actual sales pages ("Click here to buy such and such!"), then you have yourself a product based website, and you have to be creative when writing articles to use for article marketing.

Why does having a product based website create unique challenges for a writer?

Well, there is something in us that thinks, "Hey, this is a no-brainer. If my website is trying to sell Brand XYZ of chocolate, then naturally I should write articles trying to tell people why they should buy Brand XYZ of chocolate, right?"

Nope. That is not the way it works. Do you know why?

Because when we're doing article marketing, we need to balance:

- 1) what will bring value to our target readers with
- 2) what quality publishers want to publish

You see, you can write as many articles about your own products as you like and submit them to as many publishers as you like, but if a publisher has a policy that they only publish educational articles (and this is the way most quality publishers work) and that they will not publish articles that are promotional (i.e. articles that look to be written specifically to promote the author's own products, website, affiliate products or business), then all of your work will be for naught.

Your articles should be informational/educational only, and your resource box (the author bio area underneath the article) only can be used to link to and provide information about your site.

So what are you supposed to do if you can't write about your products in your article body?

How can a writer who has a product based website write articles that will be welcomed by quality publishers, bring value to his target market, and inspire readers to click through to his website?

Sounds like a tall order, but it can be done my friend, with a little creativity.

Let's go back to our fictional website owner whose site is sales pages for Brand XYZ of gourmet chocolate. She knows she can't write about the gourmet chocolate she's selling at her website—that would be a no-no. What should she write about for her article marketing campaign? Hmmm...

Here are some ideas (and I'm putting these ideas in the form of article titles):

- "5 Ways You Can Tell If The Chocolate You're Eating Is High Quality"
- "What is the difference between Dark Chocolate, Milk Chocolate, and Semi-sweet Chocolate?"
- "The Health Benefits Of Eating Chocolate"
- "3 Restaurant Inspired Chocolate Dessert Recipes Made From Chocolate Bars"
- "The History Of Chocolate"

- "Is White Chocolate Really Chocolate?"

I could go on and on brainstorming topics for articles that will be of interest to our chocolate bar sales person's target market, make readers in the mood to buy chocolate, and that will also be seen as educational and valuable from a publisher's perspective.

Now, it goes without saying that as the owner of this gourmet chocolate website is writing the above articles that she cannot mention her own business, website, products or affiliate products within her article. She cannot allude to or make reference to XYZ brand of chocolates in any way, shape, or fashion in her article.

She knows that her well crafted resource box (rather than her article) is the appropriate place to talk about herself, her business, and her website.

Like every website owner that is using article marketing as part of their marketing campaign, she has had to take off her "I'm a sales person for XYZ Chocolates" hat, and replace it with a more subtle "I'm an expert on chocolate" hat.

Do you see the difference between presenting yourself as a sales person for a particular product and presenting yourself as an expert in your niche?

Writing as an expert in your niche (whether it be chocolate, vitamins, umbrellas, or baby clothes) has many benefits, and I'm sure once you contemplate these perks you'll never want to write a promotional, advertisement-type article about your own products again!

Writing as an expert in your niche (rather than about the particular product that you're selling) is much more subtle, much more reader and publisher friendly.

Readers looking at articles are not interested in an article that looks like an advertisement for your product. Immediately, once a reader senses that you're trying to sell them something, they put their guard up and lose interest in your article—and that is not what you're going for!

The object when you're creating your article is to:

1. Come across like you know what you're talking about
2. Come across as unbiased, like you have nothing to gain from providing the helpful article
3. Put the reader at ease and heighten their curiosity about whatever your topic is

Yes, this is much more subtle than writing an article that screams, "Buy my product!", but it's also much more effective at accomplishing your goals.

Let's look back at the main reasons why you started article marketing in the first place and how writing as an expert rather than a sales person helps you reach these goals:

- To build inbound links to your website.

The inbound links will improve your search engine ranking, which will then, in turn bring you even more traffic. How do you build inbound links through article marketing? You receive a backlink from every publisher who decides to pick up your article, publish it on his website, and share it with his readers. As we said before, quality publishers want educational articles that are not in any way an advertisement for your products, business or website. When you write as an expert in your niche (rather than as a sales person), you create articles that publishers want to publish, and you increase your inbound links!

- To get the word out about your website, bringing widespread exposure and an increase in long term targeted traffic.

When I say "get the word out about your website" I am referring to your well-crafted resource box that sits below your educational, non-promotional article.

- To establish yourself as experts in your niche.

When a reader develops a craving for a high quality chocolate bar after reading your helpful article, who do you think he will turn to for more information? He will likely turn to the person who he has confidence in, the person who has established herself as an expert on the topic.

Also, let's say someone is actually interested in your particular product, and he does a Google search of your business name (or your website name, or product name) to do a little background research. Well, if you've been doing article marketing, when a person does a search for your name a list of your articles will come up, and he'll get a great idea of your expertise in your field. This builds customer confidence and makes it more likely that they will trust you enough to purchase from you.

So, it's not that owners of product based websites have to write articles differently than owners of service based or information based websites, it's just that product based websites seem to tempt us into writing an article that says "Buy my product!"

It's completely normal if you feel that urge, but RESIST!

To drive traffic to your website with article marketing you need to think creatively, think like an expert in your niche rather than a sales person, and think about providing educational articles that potential customers will value and that quality publishers are seeking.

Chapter 6: How To Craft An Attention-Grabbing Title

What if I told you that amidst all of your article marketing efforts, all of the time you spend writing, all of your consistency and eloquently worded articles, that there was one very simple change you could make that would impact your results in a major way?

Well, there is, and I really want to encourage you to take this tip to heart:

An ATTENTION-grabbing article title is PARAMOUNT.

Were you expecting something more mind blowing?

It really is that simple-you can craft an excellent article and resource box but if your title is not enticing, you won't be getting folks to read your article, or to read your resource box, or to click through to your website from your resource box.

Here's what you need to do:

Construct the title to give people more of a reason to click through and read the article.

This is even more important nowadays with the amount of articles in circulation. You really have to find a way to make your article stand out from the crowd.

I was just reminded of this the other day when I saw one of my recently published articles appearing at one of the major directories. Along with my article, I noticed that there were a few other authors writing on the same topic, and as a viewer, the only thing that I could see was a list of titles.

So, imagine, we have 10 articles all on the same topic appearing on a directory. Some of them may be better written than others, some of them may make more insightful points, some of them may be more entertaining or easier to understand—but what determines which article I read when I'm just looking at a list of titles on a certain topic in an article directory?

The TITLE!

I looked through the list and clicked on a few of the more interesting and attention grabbing titles just out of curiosity as to what others in my niche were writing about. But do you know what?

There were some articles in that list that I didn't even take the time to click through and look at.

From the title I made the judgement– “Nah, it’s just the same old stuff. That article doesn’t sound like it would be worth my time to read.”

And then on I went to the next article that had a title that caught my eye.

What a shame!

Because I know that most of you spend hours crafting excellent, thoughtful, interesting articles—it’s a shame when a lackluster title that’s been slapped on at the last minute comes back to bite you.

It’s also important to bear in mind what people interested in your article content are going to be searching for on the Internet, you should definitely try to take advantage of people’s natural curiosity.

Let’s just go over an example—let’s say you’re writing about nutrition and you’re trying to enlighten your audience about the wonderful health effects of chocolate.

Rather than have a title that says ‘Chocolate Lowers Cholesterol’, you could use a title like ‘How to Lower Your Cholesterol - With A Natural Superfood!’.

People are much more likely to click through and read an article with that sort of title, as it’s ‘how to’ information they can put to use (rather than simple statement of fact), and they’re curious what the natural superfood might be!

Does this make sense? Having a well-written article isn’t good enough—you need to cap it off with a title that lures readers to your website.

Here are some article title ideas that are sure to catch a reader’s eye ...

1) Any "How To" title.

"How To" articles are HOT—the reason why someone is reading your article is because they are searching for the solution to a problem or the answer to a question.

In your title, use the words "How To" and tell them what you'll be showing them how to do. For example: ‘How To Make Artisan Chocolates’ or ‘How To Grow Heirloom Roses’.

2) Any "Top 7" or "Top 5" or "Top 10" list.

You get the idea. It could be any number in your list (although for some reason 3, 5, 7, and 10 seem to be the most attention grabbing numbers).

For example, "The Top 5 Beach Vacations Destinations", "The Top 10 Misconceptions People Have About The Self-Employed", "The Top 7 Ways To Do More In Less Time".

3) The curiosity tweaking title.

Here's a great title: "The #1 Very Simple Tweak You Can Make to Your Articles for Maximum RESULTS!".

That title grabs the reader's interest because:

- a) They aren't told exactly what the #1 thing is—they're left wondering!
- b) The title tells the reader that it's simple—simple solutions are attractive.
- c) The title tells the reader what the benefit is—to maximize your article marketing results.
- d) And the #1 conveys that this info in the article is crucial—if there's anything you need to know to maximize your results, it's this thing that's talked about in that article!

4) The controversial title.

Controversy is another great way to get a reader to stop and read your article.

Now, when I say "controversy" I'm talking about a title that brings about an emotional reaction in a reader where they say, "I totally disagree!" or something like that.

For example, a title like "Why Quitting Smoking Is The Easiest Thing You'll Ever Do", would doubtless have tons of folks saying, "What? Are you kidding me? It's actually one of the most challenging things you'll ever do!"

And I bet you they would click that article title just to see what sort of argument the author could come up with for saying it was easy to quit smoking.

5) The title that asks a question.

Momentum plays a big role in article marketing. First, you need the momentum of your title to lead the reader into reading your full article. Then you need the roll your momentum from your article into your resource box where your resource box is customized to fit the topic of your article. Then your resource box needs momentum to catapult folks from your article to your website—there needs to be something to inspire them to click through!

With your article titles having a question in your title is a great way to start the ball of momentum rolling. You want your question to be phrased in such a way that the reader actually starts wondering what the answer to the question is.

For example, 'Is It Time To Get An Outside-The-House Office?'

When the reader see that question they start to wonder, "Hmmm, is it time? How could I tell if it was time for me to get an outside the house office? Maybe this article will give me some criteria."

6) The command title.

For example, 'Ditch Your Cell Phone!' or 'Start Making Your Own Baby Food!'

This is another way to get the ball of momentum rolling on into your article, because the title implies that within the article you will tell the reason why someone would follow your command and how to accomplish the command. There is also an urgency to command titles.

7) The "reason why" title and "steps" titles.

For example, "5 Reasons Why You Haven't Taken A Vacation Recently", or "25 Reasons Why You Don't Need To Worry On Your Wedding Day". Obviously the "reason why" title is closely related to the list title—for some reason it's easier to read an article that has numbered items.

I've also heard that if you have steps in your title and article, such as "7 Steps To Take Your Desk From Cluttered to Organized", that it is very hard for human beings to just read a few of the steps.

There is something in us humans that finds it unsettling to read only 3 of the 7 steps—if you're listing 7 steps, most folks will want to read through them all. This is why any time you insert a numbered list in your article you are leading folks through your article, and you have a better chance of them reading everything you have to say.

A great title can have a huge impact on the success of an article--after all, before getting anyone to read your article you need to capture their interest with your article title.

But what about after you get the reader to read your article?

Article marketing benefits quite a bit from reader momentum--you lure the reader in with a attention grabbing title, then you capture their interest with the first few

paragraphs of your helpful article, then you transition from your article into the one spot where you can (and should!) mention yourself, your business and your website--your author resource box.

The resource box is the author bio that sits below your article, and I like to think of it as the pot of gold at the end of the rainbow--if you craft it carefully.

Yes, your resource box can pay off in a major way by generating click-throughs to your website, but how can you make a strong one that will get the job done? You're about to find out next.

Chapter 7: Creating A Resource Box To Lure Readers Back To Your Website

Have you ever spent hours on your article, been eager to get it submitted and off to the distribution network, and then at the last minute threw together a resource box that didn't have much thought behind it?

I think we've all been there, especially in the early days of our article marketing campaigns before we realized the power of that little box. Yes, that's the place where you get to include a link to your website, and some folks put little more than a link back to their site in that precious area underneath the post.

But the resource box has the potential to do much more than just build links to your site—your resource box is the one place where you can talk about your own business/website and entice the reader to click through to your site.

But how do you entice and lure in 450 characters or less? Great question! Don't worry, it's not difficult, but it does take some strategy. If you want to get the maximum benefit from your resource box, just follow these tips:

Tell the reader your full name in your resource box.

Have you ever seen those sales people in department stores who stand in the perfume department ready to spritz folks with cologne or perfume?

If you watch from a distance, you'll often see people going out of their way to get around that person because 1) they don't want to get spritzed and 2) they don't want to have to say "no" to being spritzed.

It's a sales tactic you can see from a mile away. You don't know them. They don't know you. They aren't really interested in helping you find the right scent for you—they just have a specific product that they want to convince you to buy.

Well, when you're writing your resource box and you just launch straight into a sales pitch without even a "Hello, my name is...", it's a bit of the same feeling.

A reader gets the impression—"He just wants to sell me this product." And then a wall goes up that prevents a relationship from developing further.

When you include your full name with your article, as well as a little author bio info, you're telling the reader

"Hey, I'm a real person. You may start to trust me as you get to know me. You can have confidence in the information I've just provided you. I take full responsibility for and ownership of this article."

Give a little bio info.

At it's heart, your Resource Box is really an "author bio". This means that in your resource box you should include at least a teensy bit of info about yourself and not make your entire resource box a commercial for your website

Why include name and bio info?

Some publishers are super sensitive to authors using their resource boxes for strictly promotional, link-oriented information. For some publishers, when they encounter a resource box that appears does not have any info about the author, they trash it in a heartbeat! So, let's oblige them and our readers—do include a little info about yourself in your resource box.

Also, there are some publishers who will have a separate area that says "Author: [Your Name]", but publishers are not required to do that.

They are required to print your resource box, so please be sure to include your name in your resource box so that if a publisher doesn't have a separate spot where an author name can be included, readers will still know you wrote the article.

Tell the reader exactly what to do and why.

When creating a really strong resource box, tell the reader exactly what you want them to do and be as specific as possible.

Let's understand the reason behind the extreme attention to detail. Think like the reader—

Most readers are not giving 100% of their attention to reading your article. They're looking for specific information for a certain need, and at the same time their phone is ringing, they've just noticed the incoming mail chime on their email, they're trying to finish up a report for work, and perhaps their children or co-workers are gabbing in the background.

When we're writing our articles it may seem very clear to us what the next step is—if you like this article then click through to my website for more valuable information!—but we're giving our article 100% of our attention, and the reader is

probably just trying to glean the basic information that he/she needs at the time with a million distractions going on.

This is why we need to specifically tell them **what to do** and **why**.

Let's look at an un-inspirational resource box:

Julia Brioche is an accomplished pastry chef. [link here]

Yikes! Why should we go back to Julia's website? What is there for you? The reader needs to know or else they have no reason to click through.

We need to make it more specific—tell the reader what to do next and why.

By editing it in a simple way we can significantly improve the number of click-throughs:

Julia Brioche is an accomplished pastry chef. Want to learn more about baking like a pro at home? Claim Julia's popular free ecourse, available at: => [link here]

A reader would be much more likely to click the link in the second version of the resource box. Why?

Well, Joe Reader can find out more about a topic he's interested in by clicking through. Also, he should grab that e-course because it's 'popular', which plays on the herd instinct.

It's free - yes, people are always on their guard and want to be assured that they can get more information with no obligation to buy anything. In addition to this, she's very helpfully guided them from the article on to the next step—go grab the free e-course.

Joe Reader has an assignment, a direction in which to go next, and that message comes through clearly to him even though he has a million other things on his mind and is surrounded by distractions. He knows what to do next, and he has a reason for the action.

You may have also noticed something interesting with the resource box above—I use this symbol => to help move the reader's eye to the link. It's an effective technique, and I think the reason why is because that arrow is action oriented. When you see an arrow, you naturally want to see where it's pointing. (That isn't a hard and fast rule—you can choose to do it or not do it.)

Also, you'll notice that the link is on a new line—aha!

Perhaps you haven't seen that technique before. Did you know that it is often preferable to put your URL by itself on a new line, so that it stands out better to

increase click-throughs, and to avoid any possible problems with individual publishers if the article is wrapped incorrectly when published? Well, now you do!

Customize your resource box to the article.

So, you've garnered the attention of a reader, and she's been interested enough to read your article—why not capitalize on your reader's peaked interest by continuing what you started in the article on into the resource box? That makes sense doesn't it?

Suppose your article was about "7 Top Tips for Baking Homemade Bread" (or whatever). Your resource box can continue in the vein of your article and say:

*Julia Brioche is an accomplished pastry chef. If you found these 7 bread baking tips helpful, claim your free e-book showing you how to bake 50 tasty bread recipes, available at =>
[link here]*

What should the reader do after reading the article? Go to the author's website. Why should they go to the author's website? To claim their free e-book on the topic that they're interested in!

Of course you don't need to have a free e-book or an e-course to lure a reader to your site, but you must have something to offer readers to entice them to click.

Maybe you have a blog that has a post containing 50 more tips, maybe you have a newsletter—if you can't think of anything special at your website that would lure a reader from your article, then you must create something. You absolutely must have a reason for the reader to click through, or she simply won't.

Use a single link.

It seems like some authors think—"Since I get to link back to my website in the resource box, I want to include as many links as possible!" Sometimes people include multiple links to increase the chances that a reader will click through, but actually the more links you include in your resource box, the less likely a reader will click!

Think about it—we have a very limited amount of space in our resource box, and we need to use our words wisely. If we concentrate on convincing the reader what action she should do next and why, she will be more likely to click through.

On the flip side though—if we just hurl links at her and don't give her enough reason to click, then she won't. Multiple links in a resource box leads to reader confusion and it dilutes the potential power of your resource box call to action.

So, stick to one precious link in your resource box, and focus all your efforts towards encouraging the reader to click this link. For maximum effectiveness, avoid hyped up or promotional language; just offer the reader further information that will be of interest to them.

If you'll follow these guidelines as you're crafting your resource box, you'll maximize the effectiveness of your article marketing campaign.

Once you get the hang of creating a basic resource box like the one described above, you may be inspired to take things up a notch. Yes, there is an important technique to use in crafting a resource box so that it packs more SEO punch, and it's a technique you should learn and start trying to use as soon as possible ... it's okay though, it's very simple! It's called the HTML resource box, and we look at that in some detail in the next chapter.

Chapter 8: What's An HTML Resource Box?

All article directories (and other publishers too) accept text resource boxes, but some directories also accept HTML resource boxes.

What are the perks of providing an HTML resource box?

The HTML resource box allows you to get more bang for your SEO buck by allowing you to hyperlink specific keywords or keyword phrases. Google and the other search engines pay special attention to hyperlinked phrases, so doing an HTML resource box can be a good way to help boost your search engine listings for those keyword terms.

Some common mistakes in an HTML resource box:

- * Hyperlinking your name or business name. You should hyperlink your keyphrase in your HTML resource box, rather than your name (your name is not a keyphrase). A keyword would be something that your target market would be typing into a Google search box that would hopefully lead them to your website.
- * Not hyperlinking any keywords at all, but just hyperlinking your regular text URL.
- * Submitting an HTML resource box with just a hyperlinked word or phrase and no other information. Your HTML resource box should contain just as much information as your text resource box would--you need to include your name, a little bio, a reason to click-through to your website, and a link to your website.
- * Hyperlinking a highly competitive keyword term – you are far better off targeting keyword terms with relatively low levels of competition, but still good amounts of traffic, than terms such as 'lose weight', where you're going to need a ton of resources and a large budget to be able to crack the competition. We deal more with keyword research in the next chapter.

If reading about "HTML this" and "keyword that" and "search engine terms" makes your brain hurt, then don't worry about it –just start off using your text resource box, and as you get more comfortable with the article marketing process you can later advance to creating an HTML resource box.

The SubmitYOURArticle.com article submission service allows you to create a plain text resource box (so without the keyword linking) on its own, or the additional option of creating a more advanced HTML resource box. When your article is distributed, the HTML resource box will be used wherever possible if you've provided one, ensuring you get maximum SEO advantage.

Chapter 9: Maximize The Effectiveness Of Your Articles By Targeting Keywords

There is a delicate balance between the SEO side of article marketing and the educational, writer-ly side.

On the one hand, most likely you started article marketing because you wanted to build links, increase traffic, and basically grab Google's attention so that your website would be featured more prominently in the search engine results.

So, our motivations may be SEO oriented, but at the same time we have to remember what article marketing is at its heart:

Article marketing is writing quality educational articles that publishers want to publish and readers find valuable.

The problem I see most often when people try to leverage their keywords to attract Google's attention is that they let the writing quality side slip in favor of a more technical SEO oriented approach.

Frankly, when you use your keywords in your articles to the point where you compromise the quality of the article, you're basically shooting yourself in the foot.

I always tell folks--focus on quality and always write articles on the topic of your website, incorporating your keywords in a natural way into your article. This is far more attractive to Google and to your future readers than manually stuffing them into your article to the point where it looks unnatural and unreadable.

In incorporating your keywords, try to always put the needs of the readers and publishers on a level with your need to target specific keywords in your submissions. Any keyword targeting should be virtually unnoticeable to someone reading the article.

If you are considering taking a stab at walking that delicate tight rope between a quality article and a keyword rich article, I've compiled some resources for you below that will hopefully help you maximize your SEO punch while at the same time maintaining writing quality and value.

We'll cover some basic info below, like what a keyword is and then graduate on to more challenging and rewarding aspects of using keywords in article marketing.

Let's start at the beginning...

If you want to "take things up a notch", how do you effectively use your keywords to grab the attention of readers and also appeal to Google?

I've broken it down into a 2-step process:

1) **Determine the keywords for your site.**

What search terms are your target customers typing into Google when they are looking for a site like yours?

Make your list extensive, including long-tail keyphrases, similar to what you would do when setting up a PPC (pay-per-click) campaign.

What's a long-tail keyphrase?

We'll get to that in a minute, but first let's go over what a keyword is.

As website owners who are trying to attract certain types of search customers, we do research to pinpoint which keywords are appropriate for our website based on what our potential customers are typing into Google when they do searches.

When we write articles for article marketing, we keep in mind what our keywords are for our website so that we can send a clear message to Google. We want to proclaim to Google—My article and website provide great information about such and such!

That way when a person types your keyword phrase into the search box, Google says, "Ahh, I remember seeing a website that I'm positive will satisfy this search customer's query. Let me show them that site as one of the results."

Now, of course this is a dramatization to try to make this keywords thing easier to understand :-) —what is happening on Google's end is technical and based on many factors, but as far as keywords go, we know that we need to provide the information that our customers are searching for, using the words that they use, or variations of the words that they use.

Keywords tell the search engines what a web page is about (and your articles will be published on web pages), and we want to be sure that we're using phrases or variations of phrases that our customers really use.

Search engines look for keywords to help them classify what a web page is about so that when the search engine customers type a search query into Google (or whatever search engine they're using), the list of results is totally spot on, listing the sites that have the greatest chance of satisfying the query at the top.

When you're determining your keywords, you have to think backwards.

You need to think like someone who might be searching for a service/product/website like yours. If you could get into your potential customers' minds, what would they be typing into the search box?

The better you can align your keywords with what your target market is typing into the search boxes, the better chance that your web pages turn up high in the results listings when people search for your keywords.

Now, usually a competitive keyword phrase is 2 words long.

If you were to look at a list of the searches your target market were typing into Google to reach sites like yours, you might see some longer phrases (3-5 words) popping up now and then— those are your "long-tail" keyphrases.

Here's an example:

Basic keyword phrase: *smoothie recipe*

Long-tail keyphrase: *smoothie recipe orange mango*

Here's another example:

Basic keyword phrase: *dog collars*

Long-tail keyphrase: *pink rhinestone dog collars*

As you can see, the long-tail keyword phrase has more words in it and also is more specific.

So, when I say "Make your list extensive, including long-tail keyphrases", I'm saying make a list of possible keywords that are 2 words long and also some of your longer phrases (3-5 words).

2) Then, once you've pinpointed an extensive list, focus your articles on those keywords, taking each keyword term one at a time and writing an article around it.

Go through the keyword list multiple times, taking a different angle on a particular keyword each time.

What you are doing is helping people to find your articles in the listings so that they can then click through to your website. In this way, when your articles rank highly for your keyword terms, you're driving traffic to your website even if a searcher doesn't find your site itself.

The end result would be an extensive amount of content out there within a niche, blanket coverage of all applicable keywords, all directing readers to your site.

Now, I don't have to tell you not to stuff your keywords in your articles, do I? :-)

Write naturally, but you can still write an article around "pink rhinestone dog collars" (or whatever your long-tail phrase is) without peppering the article with that phrase unnaturally.

The density of the key phrase within the article should be around the 2% mark to give it a chance to appear in the search engines for users searching under that key phrase (and the chances of that happening is higher of course for the long-tail keywords, simply because there is less competition).

And as far as that "deer in the headlights" feeling that many folks get when trying to reconcile what search engines are looking for with what will appeal to readers, I have one bit of advise:

What search engines are looking for is not at odds with what readers are looking for.

The reality is that search engines want to please their customers—all of the rankings and such that search engines do for web pages is with the end objective of providing the searcher with a list of results that is the most helpful.

So, the search engines want to please their customers, and your potential customers use search engines to find you—this means that if you focus on pleasing your target market, you will as a side effect also please the search engines.

So, they're not really at odds—in your articles I would focus on providing valuable content, written in a natural way (not contrived and stuffed with keywords) on the topic of your website. If you want to go above and beyond, you can write articles around your keyword phrases, including your long-tail keyphrases.

The truth is, if you're providing content that your target readers find valuable and is on the topic of your website, then Google and the other search engines will reward you.

Chapter 10: ArticleLeverage™ Makes Keyword Targeting Easy

I've just told you that one excellent way to maximize the results you see with your Article Marketing campaign is to target specific keyword phrases in your article submissions, but is there an easier way than to simply write a separate article around each keyword term?

If you have several keyword terms and you're targeting long-tail phrases along with your basic keywords, then that could take a while to write an article around each phrase. Is there any easy way around that?

Thankfully, the answer is "yes"!

The automatic article distribution service SubmitYOURArticle.com has an amazing tool available for their members. It's called ArticleLeverage™, and here's how it works:

For each article you wish to distribute, using SubmitYOURArticle.com's proprietary ArticleLeverage™ system, you can set up multiple variations of your article.

(This does NOT mean sending out poor quality 'spins' on your article where words are randomly replaced with synonyms from some huge thesaurus, which makes most such articles virtually unreadable, and certainly unpublishable. This system is designed for the professional online marketer, and each variation of your article will maintain the same quality as the original article. Why? Because you set up the variations that are used.)

It means instead you spend a few extra minutes providing variations to certain elements in your article, namely variations of your title, your introductory paragraph, your resource box(es), and any number of sentences in your article.

Then when your article is distributed to the web sites in our network, a different article is constructed and submitted each time, by either swapping in one of your variations for the original article element, or leaving the original element as it is.

As the variations you set up are completely interchangeable with the original element, the end article reads perfectly normally, and has the same high quality as the original – it is just different.

So it may have the original title, but a different introductory paragraph, certain sentences may have changed, and an alternative resource box.

Or the title may be one of your variations, the introductory paragraph will be the same as the original, certain other sentences will have changed (potentially, a different number and a different set of sentences each time, limited of course by

mathematical possibilities), and possibly a further variation of your resource box will be used.

You can provide as many variations as you like to your title, your introductory paragraph, and your resource box(es), and you can choose to provide a variation to as many sentences in your article as you like too.

In fact, the more variations you provide for each element, the more each distributed version of your article will differ from other variations of the same article, and ultimately the more you stand to benefit.

Effectively it means there are so many possible variations of your article, that the article directories in our distribution network will potentially each receive a unique, quality, perfectly legitimate version of your article.

That's the overview of how ArticleLeverage™ works, but here's the application part--specifically, how can you use this tool to make your keyword targeting easier?

By creating variations for your HTML resource box, you can effectively focus a single article on different related keywords.

As we talked about in Chapter 8, using an HTML resource box is a great way to give your articles an SEO boost. Search engines pay extra close attention when they see words hyperlinked, so by hyperlinking your keywords in your resource box, you're basically shining a spotlight on your keywords and saying, "Hey Google--associate this keyphrase with this webpage!"

So instead of writing an article around the basic keyphrase of "running shoes" and hyperlinking the keyphrase "running shoes" in your HTML resource box, you can use ArticleLeverage™ to create as many HTML resource box variations as you like targeting a different phrase each time.

For example, in your variations you might hyperlink the keyphrase "New Balance running shoes" in one resource box, "long distance running shoes" in another, and "running gear" in yet another.

Because the variations you create are limitless, with just one article you could cover all of your keyword and long-tail phrases by making as many resource box variations as you need to.

Another cool thing you can do with ArticleLeverage™ is vary the web pages that you link to from your resource box variations.

For example, you may link to your main domain in a few of your resource box variations, using different versions of your keyphrases as your anchor text (anchor text refers to the words that are hyperlinked).

Then you can also link to inter-related sites, such as your blog, your Squidoo lens that's associated with your website, or any other web sites associated with your main website.

Additionally, you may want to do some deep linking to internal pages on your website. While you might not feel like writing an article specifically to link to a particular post on your blog or a particular page on your site, it would be very easy to just write one more resource box variation that was deep linking to that web page.

While most of the time folks concentrate on building links to their main domain, there is also benefit to building PageRank value for a variety of pages on your website, not just the main page.

You do this by deep linking — meaning linking to pages on your website that are not the main page. On a blog, a deep link would be to a specific post, or a specific page.

So, with one article you can drive traffic to multiple websites. In ArticleLeverage™ you can create limitless variations, so if you had a number of web pages all on the same topic you could create 5, 10 or even more (as many as you like!) resource box variations linking back to different web pages on the same topic.

In fact, even if you don't want to create variations for your articles, it may be worth your while to go into ArticleLeverage™ and just skip to the step that allows you to create resource box variations. That alone would be a great use of this tool.

Why Would You Want To Link To Multiple Sites from One Article?

Great question—why not just write separate articles and have all of the links going back to one site? What's the benefit of dispersing the sites you link to from one article?

Well for one thing, it allows you to build links in a more organic way. Rather than building 500 links to one site within a short span of time, you can spread those links out over several sites (all on the same topic) so that the links for each site build up more slowly. Google appreciates the slow and steady build up of links over one burst of links generated all at once, and ArticleLeverage™ allows you to accomplish that.

Some qualifiers:

- You may think you're killing five birds with one stone by putting five links in one resource box going to different sites, but that is just not true. For optimal click throughs, spend your efforts trying to drive traffic to a single site. (One site per resource box)
- As always, consistency is key when you're doing any type of online marketing, including article marketing. We do article marketing over the long term, submitting

1-8 articles each month. Even though we can submit one article and drive traffic back to several sites when we use ArticleLeverage™, we still need to be consistent in our submissions in order to get the results we're after.

So, using ArticleLeverage™ to create multiple resource boxes to drive traffic to multiple sites doesn't mean that you can submit fewer articles.

- When you're creating your resource box variations, all of the web pages you link to should be on the same topic as your article. For example, if your website is about ballroom dancing, you wouldn't be linking to a site that's about stereo systems. If your article is about ballroom dancing, then the links in your resource boxes should all lead to websites on related topics to your article.

If you're already a member of SubmitYOURArticle.com, think about how you could apply this technique to your own use of the service. If you aren't a member yet and would like to take advantage of ArticleLeverage™ so that you can drive traffic to multiple sites and target several keyword phrases with just one article (and also create limitless article variations), you can [sign up here](#).

Need More Help?

As you're finishing reading this report, you now know pretty much everything you need to know in order to make a strong start with your article marketing campaign.

You know how to write your first article, how to generate a steady stream of article topic ideas, how to tell which topics are hot with your target marketing, how to make a strong resource box and title, and how to target keywords with your articles, and make excellent use of the revolutionary tool, ArticleLeverage™. You've also learned lots of tips and tricks for taking things up a few hundred notches as you strive to make your articles even more effective.

Was this report helpful? I hope so!

Have you still got questions about Article Marketing?

The knowledgeable and helpful support team at SubmitYOURArticle.com will be happy to receive questions from you. Every day website owners contact them asking wonderful questions that they enjoy answering, so please don't hesitate to get in touch if you need anything.

Alternatively, you might just be ready to get going with article marketing right away--if so, using the article distribution service SubmitYOURArticle.com will allow you to maximize the benefits of article marketing and get going really quickly.

[Click here](#) for more information about how article marketing can bring massive publicity to your website.