



Supercharged Article Marketing & Distribution *Leverage Your Article Marketing Efforts...Automatically!*

By
Robert G. Yetman, Jr.

Article marketing is one of the cornerstone mechanisms by which an Internet entrepreneur can bring business, through the form of traffic, to his cyber-doorstep. Part of the reason it is so popular is that, as a mode of advertising, it is very inexpensive. In fact, there's no reason why article marketing has to have any hard costs at all for you; there are countless ways by which you can now send for free the things you write into the realm of the Internet. That said, we're going to discuss later on the concept of using fee-based article distribution services that might actually be a very wise expense for you to absorb, but we want to underline the point that article marketing is something that can absolutely be done for no cost to you.

So what exactly is article marketing? Article marketing is a way for you to indirectly advertise your website, blog, and/or product or service by writing short articles about subjects that have as a general theme your particular area of expertise. For example, if your website is about auto repair, you might craft articles about various aspects of auto repair that can be posted both on your own site's home page, but also posted throughout a variety of sites around the Internet that are looking for content on the subject of auto repair. Your article, particularly when it's distributed to third-party directories and other sites looking for content, will have in-

cluded with it some information about yourself and what you do, including a link back to your own proprietary site—that's how the readers ultimately arrive at your doorstep.

Note that article marketing is something that has always existed. Take a traditional magazine, for example. A traditional magazine may have many of its articles written by staff writers, but will usually have several written by freelance writers, as well—the content demands of a monthly periodical like a full-fledged magazine are usually such that outside help is required to fill the space. These freelance writers will usually have the opportunity to have a brief, promotional biography of themselves inserted either at the beginning or the end of the article, thereby directing readers to the writer's website, company, whatever.

Now, in most cases, traditional magazines are also paying the freelance writers a fee for having submitted the article, and that's something that doesn't usually apply in the realm of Internet e-magazines, or "ezines," but the truth is that whether a writer is being paid for content or not (the fees are usually pretty minimal, anyway, on behalf of all but the very largest and best-known of magazines), it's really the opportunity to gain business from the exposure that is of greatest interest to the freelance writer.

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Avoid Self-Promotion in Your Articles

I want to take this opportunity to address the issue of self-promotion in your articles. You will remember that I said at the outset of this piece that advertising through article marketing is to be done less directly, and it's important that you recognize that, for two reasons: First, none of the legitimate ezines or article aggregators will accept articles that are blatantly self-promotional on behalf of the author, and second, that kind of promotion works against you, anyway. With regard to the matter of the ezines and aggregators, they attract users and readers based on the useful quality of the content that's contained in the articles they offer up; if they accepted articles that were more promotional...themed on the advertising of products and services, etc...no one would go to them for their content. With regard to *you*, articles that are self-promotional will quickly see you dismissed as someone who's pretending to write objective, informational articles but who is really just trying to pitch something. The result of that is that people will learn to avoid reading anything that they can see is authored by you.

The way that your article becomes good promotion for you is that you configure it as part of a two-step sales process. The first part is offering up good information in the article that both establishes your credibility as an expert in your field, as well as shows the reader that you are indeed not blatantly pitching anything within the confines of the article itself. The second part of the process comes

in the form of the biography section, commonly referred to as the resource box, that appears at the end (usually) of the article. Your resource box will say a little about you and what you do, and, most importantly, include a link back to your website or blog. Assuming you captured your audience's interest deeply enough by the time your article ends, many will be inclined to click on that link and come visit you at *your* house.

The important thing to note here is that the self-promotion in article marketing, while present, is more subtle. It is, however, very effective.

Two Main Purposes of Article Marketing

While it's reasonable to say that the ultimate, overriding purpose of article marketing, as with any form of marketing, is to make more money, we can break things down just a little further. Certainly, one of the main purposes of article marketing is to attract more customers. However, a second purpose is to use the creation and circulation of articles as a tool by which to increase your credibility. Remember that while some who are reading what you've written for the first time might be prompted to click the link back to your site right away, many others will want time to get to know you and your ideas a little better. In other words, they need more convincing as to your credibility as an expert in your chosen field. People who have written just a small handful of articles are regarded not nearly as expertly as those who have written dozens, let alone hundreds or even thou-

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sands. On that note, I can tell you that Jim Paris was a well-trained, credentialed, and experienced financial professional before he ever published one book, but after he began publishing his first few books on personal finance, the perception of Jim started to noticeably change. He was now perceived as more of an expert, and with each successive book, article, etc., that made it into the public domain, he was regarded more highly still by those who would look at Jim's credentials and could now see that he was a prolific author on topics of personal finance. Well, it is that sort of perceptual benefit that can accrue to just about anyone, including yourself, who begins writing articles, reports, books, etc.

In the end, working toward the creation and growth of a body of "scholarship" in your area will create a nice symbiosis between established credibility and customer attraction; as your credibility increases, you will attract more customers who come to regard you as an expert in your field, and as you attract more customers and can point to that fact, you will see that your credibility is enhanced on that singular basis, as well.

Maximum Exposure is Key

If writing your article is one-half of the battle to article marketing, taking the appropriate steps to gain quality exposure for your article is the other half. As we've said, there are numerous locations online at which you can post your article, too many to mention. A lot of people out there have developed online magazines and other information resources that maintain a constant demand for fresh material in a wide variety of subject areas. That's the good news. However, in order to place your articles on as many sites as possi-

ble, you have to decide just how you're going to do that. You could certainly do it in a more manual fashion by going to each one separately and posting in that way, but that's not a terribly efficient use of your time. Your time is much better spent actually creating the articles and other content to be posted, rather than on being involved in the posting mechanisms themselves. However, in order to get your articles into the public domain in a multitude of places, you need the assistance of an *article distribution* service, if you're not going to do the legwork yourself. Article distribution services have been popular as article marketing itself has become popular, providing a valuable service to the writer who is willing to pay a little money in exchange for having someone take over the responsibility of getting his articles placed for him at the sites of many different online magazines and article aggregators. In just a bit, we're going to discuss one article distribution service, in particular, that is highly rated and which was present at the AffCon 2010 Internet marketing event in Miami that Jim wrote so much about in last month's edition of the newsletter.

One of the hurdles that Internet marketers have faced over the years as they've chased the goal of gaining as much exposure as possible is the sometimes-thorny issue of duplicate content. Duplicate content, in terms of Internet marketing, refers to articles that are unethically presented to multiple online ezines and other publishers as originals created for that one lone site. Duplicate content has historically been more narrowly and strictly defined, thereby making life difficult for Internet marketers who have wanted to distribute their articles to a variety of sites. However, it is no longer frowned upon in

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Quick Reminders About Article Structure & Format

with input from Chris Ellington of Distribute Your Articles.com!

By

Robert G. Yetman, Jr.

It's important to pay special attention to the structure of those articles you seek to distribute throughout the Internet at multiple ezines and article aggregators. Of course, *anything* you write for public consumption needs to follow the appropriate rules, however unwritten, that ensure it will be as best-received as possible by both the receptor sites as well as by the individuals who will actually be reading them. On that note, I wanted to take a little time here to go over some of the more important rules that a writer should follow.

To that end, note that I had the opportunity recently to speak with noted article marketing expert Chris Ellington of Distribute Your Articles.com about these rules, to gain his insight about some of the more important guidelines to follow when one is actually structuring an article for publication. Ellington, whose company is spoken about elsewhere in this edition of the newsletter, has become regarded as an outright "guru" in this (relatively) new but all-important area, and his insights will always be highly valued by anyone looking to be successful at article marketing.

Shorter is Better

For those who are familiar with the numerous Internet coaching webinars that Jim Paris and I have taught over the last few years, we speak a lot about making sure that the content you develop for online consumption is, while informative, still relatively brief. I discussed this with Chris Ellington, and he readily agrees that far too much of what is created online is too lengthy, and that's a problem for both you the author, as well as for

your audience. It's a problem for you on two fronts: First, lengthy pieces require more time to develop, and second, they are less likely to be read fully by your intended audience.

Let's speak more about the first point. One thing of which you have to remain ever-mindful when you create content is that the number of separate pieces you create is far more important, from a marketing standpoint, than is the length of any one particular piece. Think about it logically: When the search engines go to work on your name or your keyword phrase, do you want them to have the opportunity to find 100 different articles, or 10 long ones? Remember that article marketing is not about the marketing of your *articles*, but about the marketing of your website or blog *through* your articles.

Second, if your article, at first glance, looks to be very long, there's less of a chance that the reader will end up making it through the whole thing, and may even decide against reading it at all. That's a problem for you because you want the reader to become more interested in who you are and what you do from the article, as well as make it to the end to see your resource box and visit your own proprietary website or blog. If the prospective reader is put off by the length, it won't happen. From the reader's perspective, reading online is different from sitting in an easy chair and reading a traditional book. Brevity and efficiency are two of the hallmarks of reading online, particularly when it comes to articles that are specifically created for consumption by the online community. People who read online simply do not come to the

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article with the same degree of patience and anticipating the same level of comfort they can derive from more traditional reading, so you need to be mindful of that.

So what is the appropriate length for an online article? The “range” that has become popular is 400 to 800 words, but according to Chris Ellington, the “perfect” length is 500 to 600 words; at that length, the articles are long enough to provide some decent information to the reader, while not being so long as to run the risk of having the reader decide that he doesn’t want to be bothered.

Another reason to remain mindful of length is because many ezines and article aggregator sites have specific limitations with regard to article length. While it’s unlikely you’ll run much risk of violating the upper end of the limit, note that many will insist on a minimum of around 400 words, so you need to be prepared to generate at least that much in content.

Keep Content “Punchy” & Easy to Read

For a lot of people, reading online is more difficult. For one thing, although the world is gravitating more to tablets and other online readers as a way to consume written information out of deference to portability and efficiency, this innovation doesn’t change the fact that the actual act of reading in this fashion can be more tedious.

It’s important for you, the author, to understand that and deal with it. Again, you want people to actually read what you’re writing. To help them out, Ellington suggests making an extra effort to make your content more alive. One way to do that is to make greater use of assists like headings and bullet point

formatting than you might otherwise when writing something that is to be consumed in a more traditional way. People who read online are generally less interested in the reading experience, and more interested in extracting the information, so the easier you make it for them to do that, the better.

Keep Your Article Focused On One Topic, & Break It Down into Easy-to-Read Parts

One of the mistakes made by neophyte article writers is to give in to the need to make each article so informative and comprehensive that you cover multiple topics in a single article. There are two problems with that: First, the more you cover, the longer your article, and second, the more you cover, the greater the likelihood that your reader will finish the article without a clear, solid understanding of any one topic. Remember, too, that you want to always have a seemingly-endless list of topics on which you can write individual articles, and if you cover too many topics at one time, you may end up repeating yourself too frequently.

Title Quality is Key

Lastly, let’s talk about titles. Obviously, the title of an article is going to be the best chance for you to draw in a prospective reader. Chris Ellington points out that by getting lazy about your title, after creating a good article, is suicide. For example, Ellington points out that a title should never be just a noun, like, “Spark Plugs;” rather, it should be something like, “A Do-It-Yourself Guide to Changing Spark Plugs for the Car Dummy.” You should even obsess over your titles a little, to be sure you’re doing what’s necessary to come up with a great one. After all...you want your article read, do you not?

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quite the same way as it once was, and that has as much to do with innovations in article marketing as with anything else.

It's not so much that duplicate content is more highly regarded, as it is that what has been relaxed is the definition of what actually constitutes duplicate content within the realm of article marketing. As the Internet, and Internet marketing, gained the traction that it has, and the wide variety of ways that a site can make money continues to grow, the protocol on the matter of duplicate content has changed somewhat. In the earlier days of article submission and distribution, the traditional standards by which duplicate content was judged were held more firmly. Basically, if you submitted an article somewhere, that was it—you were not then free, under any circumstances, really, to submit that article in that same basic form anywhere else. Oh, not that you absolutely could not do it, of course, but the point is that if you were *caught* doing it, it was regarded very negatively by any and all publishers.

Now, things have lightened up, somewhat. A big reason for this has to do with the fact that many sites now offer content for free; as mechanisms like Google Adwords have taken shape as a means by which sites can earn revenue, online publishers and ezines don't have to charge subscribers to read material, and so neither do they have to pay writers for content that is terribly unique or special. What they rely on now is a high volume of traffic to their sites, and that means making as much material available as possi-

ble. Consequently, the overall standards of what is acceptable for publication have relaxed, in some areas. This is one of them.

Now, what does this change mean, for all practical purposes? It basically means that unless you are writing an article that is clearly intended to be a unique, stand-alone offering for a specific publication, you are free, in this new era, to submit your article, in a mass format, to multiple online ezines and article aggregators. The view has become that submitting short articles online is a little like syndication; a syndicated writer will write one article and have it appear in hundreds of newspapers across the country through his syndication service. That's sort of what's going on here.

Spinning

Another, very helpful result of this new way at looking at duplicate content is that it has greatly reduced the "need" for article "spinning." Spinning is the quasi-acceptable technique of changing an article from its original form by using synonyms for the words in the original. In other words, the article is essentially the same in substance, but is made technically different through substitute word usage. Spinning has been controversial, because, again, the article that results from spinning is not materially different from the original—it simply uses alternative words. However, it was more controversial before the days when looking at duplicate content a little more benevolently came upon us; now, the need for spinning, in terms

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of garden-variety article marketing, is not as important.

Article “Auto-Distribution”

Article marketing is certainly something that can be done by placing your articles one-at-a-time at online publishers of various shapes and sizes. That’s how a lot of people still do it. However, remember that the key to article marketing is *marketing*; in article marketing, while the quality of what you create should always be good, you want to put as much or more thought into the best, most useful way that article can be disseminated throughout cyberspace. Enter the article distribution service.

In a nutshell, article distribution services allow you to submit an article to them so that they will take over the responsibility of getting the article placed with numerous (and when I say numerous, I mean hundreds and even thousands) online publishers and other article directories and aggregating sites throughout the Internet. While these services charge you directly for what they do...rates often start at around \$40 per month...the service they provide can be invaluable for someone who’s serious about making article marketing a cornerstone of his efforts at achieving high visibility for his website or blog. When you consider how long it would take you, on a piecemeal basis, to place a single article with hundreds of sites, the value of paying \$40 per month or so to have a service take that off of your hands becomes readily apparent. In the end, the real value of these sites comes in the form of freeing you up to actually create the content; if you’ve ever placed an article with an online publisher or directory, you know it can be a little tedious. With an article distribution service, you have

to go through that tedium only once with each article...placing it at the distribution site...and then they will be able to take over from there and get your article moving at a huge number of different sites.

What to Look for in a Good Article Distribution Site

Access to “niche” websites and blogs. This is important. All article distribution is not the same. It’s important to understand the difference between article marketing, in general, and article marketing that distinguishes between niches. Historically, article marketing didn’t always have the highest level of usefulness because your article would be posted to directories that contained thousands upon thousands of articles that covered a wide spectrum of topics. In other words, sure, your article is posted at a directory, but if that directory is swamped with articles about everything, it is more difficult for publishers in your topic area to find your article and publish it on their site, for the benefit of readers who also have that interest and therefore *will be more likely to want to learn more about your site*. Additionally, the links back from a generic directory site to your own will be almost useless, because the directory, overall, will have little relevance to you and what you do.

Accordingly, a good article marketing service is one that has in its network a good supply of niche websites and blogs to which the service can send your article directly.

Relationships with thousands of quality, online publishers. A good article marketing service needs to have literally thousands of online publishers in its network in order to make it worthwhile for you to spend your

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money. The chief reason for this has to do with the previous point; the more publishers it has in its network, the greater the likelihood that a good number of niche publishers in your topic area are contained therein.

The ability to have your articles distributed in a more measured fashion, over time. It has been found that your articles enjoy better search engine optimization results when they're distributed in a more measured fashion, over a longer period of time. Although it takes longer for links to build up, they do so with more traction, improving the quality of the links back to you.

There are other features of good distribution sites, as well, to include the ability for you to publish under multiple pen names, have your articles scheduled for release on your time frame, and genuine customer service that is responsive to specific questions or concerns you may have. The point is that when you decide to go with an article distribution site, you want to be sure that you're getting much more than simple distribution, and, instead, something that provides substantial value.

Distribute Your Articles.com

The website [Distribute Your Articles.com](http://DistributeYourArticles.com) (www.distributeyourarticles.com), or **DYA**, is the invention of Chris Ellington, an article marketing expert who is generally regarded as one of the best resources on the subject, overall. **DYA** is an article distribution service that features all of the benefits (and more) that I've mentioned here, and Chris Ellington was one of the featured speakers at the **AffCon Miami 2010** convention who became known to both Jim Paris and me when we attended. I want to take a few minutes to outline what they have going on at **DYA**

presently, and suggest that you give them a look on behalf of your own article marketing needs.

As for pricing plans, **DYA** has recently changed how they do things. Previously, they offered three separate subscription levels that varied primarily on the basis of how many pen names you wanted available to you. Now, while they still have three plans available, the plans are no longer configured on the basis of features, but on the basis of subscription length. Going a month at a time means you will pay \$49.99 per month; three months at a time results in a subscription cost of \$99.99, or \$33.33 per month; and subscribing for a year costs \$299.99, which comes out to \$24.99 per month. While the deal is better when you subscribe for a longer period, I would encourage you to consider, with any such plans, to subscribe for a month at a time first, and then if you're sufficiently happy, to take advantage of better prices through a longer subscription period. Although **DYA** offers a 30-day money-back guarantee, one that reads that if your articles aren't distributed as promised that you can have your money back, I would still start with a short subscription, just to give yourself the greatest peace of mind at the outset.

There are, of course, plenty of other like services for you to check out, as well, including the popular [Submit Your Article.com](http://SubmitYourArticle.com) (www.submityourarticle.com), which I think is also very good. The point is that there is now available to you an important, useful mechanism that frees you up to create content while it does the article placement for you. I would encourage you to investigate one or more of these as soon as possible, and substantially revolutionize your article marketing efforts going forward.