

Article Marketing Tips – Constructing Your Article

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Article marketing is a powerful way to drive traffic to your money pages. The beauty of writing properly constructed articles centers around the fact they are not one hit wonders. By this, I mean they don't just produce a one-off result.

One well written article can continue to produce results for months if not years. Imagine what an army of well written articles can do. I call them my own personal team of salespeople who will continue to attract interest to your offers long after they have been written.

You cannot underestimate the importance of squeezing every last ounce of juice from your piece. One of the problems I have noticed with people taking on article marketing is they write one, maybe two articles and expect an avalanche of traffic. Like everything relating to getting results, the 80/20 rule also applies with articles. You're going to get more failures than successes; however, the successful articles will more than likely make up for any shortcomings of those which let the side down. To this end, I believe in the concept of quantity. The more articles you get out there the more leverage you'll have in attracting visitors to your sites.

So how many articles should you write? As many as you can.

For example, if you're promoting an eBook from the Clickbank category and article marketing is going to be your main catalyst for promotion then don't be shy...promote it! I like to start off with a barrage of articles, usually one a day for the first ten days. Once the initial onslaught is complete, I then ease it off to two a week for the next month before assessing my campaign. Provided you've done your research successfully and your product or website provides the necessary solution in its given niche, you'll begin to see results shortly after the initial flurry.

How To Start Your Article Marketing Campaign

So what do you write about? That's easy. I treat an article marketing campaign the same as I would when I'm constructing a portal. You've found your topic; you do your keyword research and you come up with a list of longtail keyword phrases.

The same principle applies when working within any niche - avoid writing around heavily targeted keywords. Your bread and butter in article marketing is the long tail stuff. It's targeted marketing and while they don't attract as many searches as the more popular broad terms, the traffic they do attract is usually highly targeted.

Here's an example. Bass fishing is a very popular term. An all-in-title search on Google yields nearly 300,000 results. Too competitive for most. However, bass fishing gear yields just on 1000 results which is more than acceptable when trying to rank well for your term. Bass fishing gear is a long tail phrase we can easily optimize an article for and the good news is there are plenty of ads competing for this term so the market is strong.

Now you have one term, look for others. I like to have a list of at least 20 to start with. Depending on how strong your niche is, finding 20 long tail keywords shouldn't be too much of a problem. Some might be saying well, writing an article a day for the first 10 days and then two a week for the next month might sound like a lot. Let me emphasize this point. There are many ways to drive traffic to your offers. The secret is finding one way and becoming good at it. One of the problems I see online is people trying to use a host of different methods and failing to become proficient at any one of them. Pick one and become an expert at it. When you do, look at another source. This report is about article marketing and that's what I do best. If you really want to become a serious article marketer then you need to become an expert at it.

Writing Your Article

Now that you have your list of keywords it's time to write your article. Here's a very important point to remember. You're just about to enter the realm of being a solutions provider. Yes, you're about to become the person who is going to make a reader pretty happy because you're about to answer one of several questions they may have. One of the problems I ran into when I first ventured into article marketing was writing as a journalist would. That's natural because that's what I've spent most of my working life as. Big mistake!

It didn't take me long to figure out the reason no one was visiting my websites was because I was writing a story style article instead of a "how to/tip/trick" type article. The moment I started offering "how to" and "tips" in my articles I saw a significant increase in traffic.

Very important lesson here is if people want to read a journalist's view of something they'll pick up a copy of the local daily. When people go online, the majority of them are looking for answers and solutions. The majority of those will be looking at spending a certain amount of money if they find the right solution. Your job is to attract them to your offer by being the solutions provider. In other words: - you need to first wow them with your article - impress them enough with your content to leave them with the impression you're somebody who knows what they're talking about and - then guide them to that magical blue, red, orange or whatever color link is used in the resource box and to your offer or review page.

When first assessing what mode the article should be written in the following are the three I immediately look at:

- how to article
- a why article or
- a review

The third is a little tricky especially if it's a review of a commercial product you're promoting. Many of the major article directories and submission services like Article Marketer are 50/50 in letting product reviews "through the net." I'm not sure why but anytime I get an email letting me know an article hasn't been accepted the reason is because it's commercial content. I'm then advised to edit the article and consider whether it's actually going to benefit the reader in its present form. There was a time when this would literally "peeve" me but when I began to understand the phrase..."consider whether it's actually going to benefit the reader" a light bulb went off in my head.

What at first appeared an annoying inconvenience suddenly became a valuable lesson in article marketing. "To benefit the reader"- that was the key.

It wasn't about me it was about the reader. When I understood this, my article marketing took a giant leap forward and my traffic increased.

So if you're going to write a review of a commercial product make it as subtle as possible and make sure the information you give benefits the reader in some way.

Now let's construct an article from the title to the resource box.

The Title

The title is so important it cannot be understated. It's your shop front window. It's where your main display is going to be presented and needs to be compelling enough to make the reader want to click through to read your article. Remember, you've written your article around your main keyword phrase. In our example, we're using *"bass fishing gear."* If your reader has come across your term in the search results your title is usually going to be listed in bold. It's your lead-off batter and if it's weak, it will get struck out.

Okay, here's what I do to maximize my title for both the search engines and to peak a reader's interest in clicking through to the article. The title not only has to be keyword specific but should give the reader some hint of what the article is about. Here's an example:

*"Bass Fishing Gear - The Secret To Finding Cheap Quality Fishing Gear"...or
"Bass Fishing Gear - Guaranteed Secrets To Locating Cheap Fishing Gear"*

Notice I've optimized strongly for the main keyword phrase and then emphasized it with the term fishing gear. There's no mistake what this article is about. Some searching for *"bass fishing gear"* or *"cheap bass fishing gear"* or *"cheap quality fishing gear"* or even *"cheap fishing gear"* has a strong chance of finding my result in the search engines.

I'm not only giving a searcher one chance of finding my article but I'm trying to make it as easy as possible for them by giving them several options. And with titles like the ones above, when you've optimized for targeted readers, then there is every chance they'll be presented with your title even if they type in a search term which is only about 60-80% of what you've optimized for. Very powerful stuff.

When your reader finds your title in the search results, it should also give them some idea of what the article is about. If they are on a budget, then *"Bass Fishing Gear - The Secret To Finding Cheap Quality Fishing Gear"* is something they are likely to click through and read. It's both a well optimized and targeted title and targeted searchers are more likely to spend money.

One more thing, if your title alludes to the fact that you have a secret method or a tip on how to find cheap quality fishing gear then you better make sure you give the reader what they want otherwise they'll quickly hit the back button when they realize the article is nothing but fluff.

The Content

Many will argue that an article needs to contain an opener, the main body and a closer. If you read my previous report, *"Article Marketing Tips"* then strike out the closer.

As far as article marketing is concerned, a closer is the death knell of your article when writing for profit.

It's telling the reader:

"Okay, hope you've enjoyed the information within the article and have a great day."

That's article marketing suicide because you've given the reader a license to leave your article and go somewhere else. Never close the article in the main body of the article. That's the job of your resource box and we'll get to that in a moment.

Firstly, your opening paragraph should really get to the point. Why? Because you've got a hungry reader who is likely a very targeted prospect.

He/she was tempted to click through to your article because the title suggested you had a secret to finding cheap quality fishing gear. In all likelihood, they don't want to spend time or haven't got much time going through a heap of fluff before they get to your secret method.

Your opening paragraph needs to get them interested right away. It could go something like this:

"Ever felt like you get ripped off every time you walk into a tackle shop looking for bass fishing gear. Fishing is a popular past time for many yet at times, it seems like anglers pay for this popularity by being asked to fork out outrageous prices for equipment. Shopping for fishing gear is no different to shopping for the cheapest air fares. There's a time and a place and we're going to give you five surefire ways to find the cheapest gear and never have to pay full price again."

Two things with this opening salvo:

1. You've touched the emotional side of the reader by expressing concern at the often inflated prices being charged by fishing gear retailers.
2. You've also invited them to stay tuned as you're about to solve their need to keep within a budget by suggesting you're about to give them five tips on how to save money when shopping for fishing gear.

You've now got them to a stage where if they don't continue reading they'll feel like they're missing out on finding out how to score some great bargains on fishing equipment. Now if you're completely new to article marketing and you feel writing a 300-400 word article is a daunting prospect consider the opening four sentences. They total 93 words in length so you're at least 25% of the way through your article.

Believe me, it doesn't take much to put 300-400 words on paper. The key is making it interesting and beneficial enough for the reader to want to keep reading.

Next, start off with a sub headline such as *"Cheap Fishing Gear Solutions"* or something similar.

"Cheap Fishing Gear Solutions

Let's take a look at five ways you can cut down your bass fishing gear expense so you'll have extra money to spend on those much needed refreshments when you're sitting in the middle of a lake somewhere in your tracker boat."

At this stage, you can decide to use the numbered system (1,2,3), the point system which would meaning placing a hyphen (-) in front of each point, or you could simply decide to write

a paragraph for each tip. The numbered option looks like a great strategy for this particular article. So you would continue like this:

1. *Get on a mailing list. Many major fishing gear retailers offer a mailing list service and will keep you up-to-date on discount fishing equipment.....*
2. *Like shopping for cars, look for "run-out" model equipment. End of season stock and stock take sales are great times for.....*
3. *Shop online. Competition for bass fishing gear is extremely competitive and one of the best places to find discounted equipment is online.....*
4. *Scan your local newspaper classified ads. If you could get a dollar for every fishing rod that was bought as a gift for someone and was never used you'd make a fortune.....*
5. *Join an online fishing forum. These are literally goldmines for bargain hunters, not as a source for purchasing fishing gear, but as a guide on where to shop for equipment. Look for a forum which is reasonably busy and simply ask the question.....*

Now you're in the home straight and as they would say in horse racing parlance... "The whips are cracking." If you've got your reader this far, then don't scare them off by putting in a closing paragraph.

The Resource Box

Now to the crunch...the resource box. The first rule of crafting a good resource box is to never make it about selling yourself.

You've got to remember that from the time the reader gets to your article he/she is not thinking about you. They are thinking about themselves. Yes, it's all about them. The key to exploding your click through rates is selling the solution or benefit to the reader in the resource box. As soon as they've finished reading your article and it's still fresh in their mind you've got to give them a good reason to want to visit your site or offer page.

One of the best ways to do this is to offer them something of value. For example:

"To get my free report on finding cheap bass fishing gear..." or

"To subscribe to my free bass fishing gear shopping guide..."

If you don't have a free report or course to offer them, then write something like:

"For more guaranteed ways to find cheap bass fishing gear..."

"Put extra money in your pocket with more great fishing gear shopping tips..."

Never do this in your resource box:

"John Smith is the world's leading bass fishermen..." or

"John Smith is a professional angler..."

Not compelling enough!

That first line in your resource box needs to guide them to the link because they obviously like your solutions and are pretty fired up to take some sort of action. Don't lose them with a positive self analysis of yourself.

I'm sorry, but they just don't care.

Length Of Paragraphs

One final thing about constructing your article and this mistake is made over and over again. Avoid making your article look busy. In other words, don't make your paragraphs too long. Here's an example of a busy looking article.

"Ever felt like you get ripped off every time you walk into a tackle shop looking for bass fishing gear. Fishing is a popular past time for many yet at times, it seems like anglers pay for this popularity by being asked to fork out outrageous prices for equipment. Shopping for fishing gear is no different to shopping for the cheapest air fares. There's a time and a place and we're going to give you five surefire ways to find the cheapest gear and never have to pay full price again.

Cheap Fishing Gear Solutions

Let's take a look at five ways you can cut down your bass fishing gear expense so you'll have extra money to spend on those much needed refreshments when you're sitting in the middle of a lake somewhere in your tracker boat.

Get on a mailing list. Many major fishing gear retailers offer a mailing list service and will keep you up-to-date on discount fishing equipment. Like shopping for cars, look for "run-out" model equipment. End of season stock and stocktake sales are great times for finding cheap deals. Also shopping online is a great resource as competition for bass fishing gear is extremely competitive and one of the best places to find discounted equipment is online. You could also consider scanning your local newspaper classified ads. If you could get a dollar for every fishing rod that was bought as a gift for someone and was never used you'd make a fortune. There's also plenty of great information in online fishing forums. These are literally goldmines for bargain hunters, not as a source for purchasing fishing gear, but as a guide on where to shop for equipment. Look for a forum which is reasonably busy and simply ask the question."

All we've done is used the above example and bunched up the article. I cringe when I read advice suggesting you require just four paragraphs for an article. It happens too often and it's a turn-off for most readers.

Coming across an article with little in the way of spacing gives the impression there's a lot of reading to be done and when people are looking for solutions online, they're usually in a hurry.

Normally, the last thing they want to do is wade through what appears to be an extremely long article.

Let's take a look at the above example with spacing:

"Ever felt like you get ripped off every time you walk into a tackle shop looking for bass fishing gear.

Fishing is a popular past time for many yet at times, it seems like anglers pay for this popularity by being asked to fork out outrageous prices for equipment.

Shopping for fishing gear is no different to shopping for the cheapest air fares.

There's a time and a place and we're going to give you five surefire ways to find the cheapest gear and never have to pay full price again.

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Get on a mailing list. Many major fishing gear retailers offer a mailing list service

and will keep you up-to-date on discount fishing equipment.

Like shopping for cars, look for "run-out" model equipment. End of season stock and stock take sales are great times for finding cheap deals.

Also shopping online is a great resource as competition for bass fishing gear is extremely competitive and one of the best places to find discounted equipment is online.

You could also consider scanning your local newspaper classified ads. If you could get a dollar for every fishing rod that was bought as a gift for someone and was never used you'd make a fortune.

There's also plenty of great information in online fishing forums. These are literally goldmines for bargain hunters, not as a source for purchasing fishing gear, but as a guide on where to shop for equipment. Look for a forum which is reasonably busy and simply ask the question."

Looks a much more comfortable read don't you think? Don't be afraid to write one sentence or two line paragraphs. Remember to start a new paragraph with each new point you make.