

Special Report:

The Insider's Guide To Article Writing Best Practices

Brought to you by



©Copyright 2009 by Content Crooner.com

All rights reserved. Feel free to distribute this ebook electronically, and post it for download. You are not allowed to charge for this book. You are not allowed to rewrite any portion of this book, or present this content as your own in any way.

Are you ready to start building traffic and search engine exposure with articles? This guide will help you understand the right approach to writing those articles and giving them widespread appeal.

Once your article is written and ready to submit, check it yourself against our handy checklist of 100+ common errors that will limit your distribution.

Follow these best practices and get out there!

Table of Contents

What Makes a Good Article?	5
Where Do I Start?	6
Write Your Own Fresh Content	6
Rewrite Affiliate or Private Label Rights Materials.....	6
Hire a writing service.....	6
Using a Content Distribution System	7
Smart Content Distribution Tips.....	8
Original Content and Copyrights.....	9
Check Yourself! The Article Writing Checklist.....	10
Check Your Title.....	10
Check Your Description.....	11
Check Your Article Body	12
Check Your About the Author Box (Plain Text).....	14
Check Your About the Author Box (HTML)	14

What Makes a Good Article?

Content distribution is a highly effective form of online marketing. Internet marketers and SEO gurus alike know that marketing with articles is a terrific way to build backlinks, drive traffic and improve your search engine results. But it's not magic. It starts with distributing high-quality, informative and well written content that appeals to your target market.

The best approach is to write about what you know. When you write with clear knowledge and passion about a particular topic, it comes through in the finished piece. You don't have to worry that you aren't a "trained" writer; just write from what you know and let it flow.

Of course, it's a good idea to have someone else read over your articles, to catch any mistakes or unclear wording.

If you run a business, imagine yourself talking to a potential customer. What information would you share? What would you want them to know about the industry? What advice would you give? These are all great topics for articles, and you can generally write them without having to do much research.

If your site has an FAQ section, you may already have a great start on a series of articles. Take a few of your top FAQs and write articles thoroughly explaining your answers. This can be a great way to share your knowledge base with potential customers.

Just remember...this is not the place for advertising or blatant self-promotion. The key to a good article is to share useful information. Avoid talking about yourself, your business or your products. Save that copy for the About the Author box at the end of the piece. This is where you get to "advertise" and post a link back to your site.

Where Do I Start?

Write Your Own Fresh Content

You can't get any fresher content than creating your own well-researched 100 percent original articles. Write articles speak to your industry expertise.

Interview others and write an article or report based on their testimonials. Engage in article writing on topics related to the products you sell. Take your white papers or reports and create articles out of them. This "extra" information on related topics provides additional insight into the products and services you market. Customers appreciate this.

Rewrite Affiliate or Private Label Rights Materials

You can take existing information and put it into your own words. In this way, your site does not have the same look and sound as other affiliate websites. This makes your content unique. You are still offering excellent information, but in your own voice. Make sure it is at least 70% original when you are done rewriting. If you're not sure, send it through an online plagiarism checker.

Hire a writing service

No time to write? Consider hiring a professional content writer. Be sure to choose a service that understands content distribution, and knows how to write good, keyword rich (not stuffed) articles. A good writer will be able to create a 500-600 word article on any topic with a minimal amount of information from you. Be prepared to give the writer this info:

- The URL you are promoting
- Your target audience
- The keywords you want to target
- A brief overview of the topic of the article, and any background info or research you may have

A little tip: always ask for samples of the writer's work. Be sure it's interesting and well-written, and makes sense to you. Don't always go for the cheapest! On the other hand, it's possible to find some fantastic writers who will create custom content for you for around \$40/article.

Using a Content Distribution System

For maximum exposure, consider using an automated content distribution to really get your content out there. A good service will have:

- An extensive publisher list so you can submit it once and get it out there to thousands of places
- A wide niche category list for better reader targeting
- The ability to submit an unlimited number of articles for maximum exposure
- A free article review system to make sure your articles have the best chance of being published
- An easy submission form that makes the process simple

Smart Content Distribution Tips

When you write your content, keep these guidelines in mind to steer clear of any potential issues:

- Make sure it's not too short. Articles under 300 words rarely provide any useful information.
- Avoid self promotion. Don't put your name, your company name or your URL in the article itself. Save the promo for the About the Author Box.
- Using PLR (Private Label Rights) articles? These tired old things have been around. Your best bet is to rewrite them and add some unique content of your own.
- Avoid content with an "expiration date." If you do write about a time-sensitive topic, be sure to set the distribution dates to stop after the event. You don't want your name out there on a lot of outdated information.
- Don't stuff your article with keywords. Yes, it's important to include your target keywords. Just don't overdo it. Write for your readers, not the search engines.
- Grammar counts. So does spelling. If you are shaky on these, have a good editor read your work and clean it up. It will reflect better on your business, and will get you better exposure.
- Don't post press releases through an article distribution service. Use a press release or news distribution service for this.

Think about what you like to read online; new information, good ideas, helpful advice, unusual stories can all make good articles. Get creative. Get passionate about your topic. That passion will show in the quality of your finished piece.

Original Content and Copyrights

Content Crooner (along with the majority of publishers and site owners) prohibits the use of copyrighted that violates the copyright owner's rights in any way. In general, this means that authors should only submit their own original written work to which they have natural copyright. If you hire a ghost writer or article writing service to create content for you, be sure to check with them that YOU hold the copyright and are allowed to distribute these as your own work.

Check Yourself! The Article Writing Checklist

Want to check your own work? Use this handy checklist to check your content and help it get through the review process quickly. It covers 100+ possible issues that might stop your article from being accepted at publishers across the web. These are the actual rules that your article reviewer will check, so your article will be accepted by the widest number of publishers.

Check Your Title

Is your title...

- ✓ in proper title case?
- ✓ no more than 100 characters?
- ✓ written with good grammar, spelling and punctuation?
- ✓ complete, and not cut off?
- ✓ descriptive, interesting and catchy?

Did you avoid...

- ✓ any references to your author name or byline?
- ✓ decorative lines or excessive punctuation?

Does your title...

- ✓ apply to your article content, and make sense?
- ✓ sound like good informative content, and not an ad or sales pitch?

Check Your Description

Is your description...

- ✓ in complete sentences and in proper sentence case?
- ✓ no more than 400 characters?
- ✓ written with good grammar, spelling and punctuation?
- ✓ complete, and not cut off?

Did you avoid...

- ✓ repeating the title in your description?
- ✓ any references to your author name or byline?
- ✓ any links or urls in your description?

- ✓ referencing other parts in a series of articles?
- ✓ starting your article in your description field?

Does your description...

- ✓ apply to your article content, and make sense?

Check Your Article Body

Is your article...

- ✓ in proper sentence case?
- ✓ in paragraphs no longer than ten lines and separated by one blank line?
- ✓ written with good grammar, spelling and punctuation?
- ✓ between the 300-1200 proper word count?

Did you avoid...

- ✓ starting your article with a subhead, list item, or title?
- ✓ any references to your author name or byline?
- ✓ advertising products or websites?
- ✓ stuffing keywords into your article so that it no longer sounds conversational?
- ✓ including reprint rights in your article?
- ✓ decorative lines or excessive punctuation?
- ✓ direct calls to action like visiting a website or emailing the author?
- ✓ reviewing only one product as opposed to three competing or complimentary products from different companies?
- ✓ including information about the author in the article body?
- ✓ leaving a sign-off or signature in the article body?
- ✓ referencing other parts in a series of articles?

Does your article...

- ✓ contain original, informative content?

Check Your About the Author Box (Plain Text)

Is your plain text author box...

- ✓ only in plain text with no HTML tags?

Did you avoid...

- ✓ including reprint rights in your plain text author box?
- ✓ using affiliate links in your plain text author box?

Does your plain text author box...

- ✓ match the author name on your account?
- ✓ include a fully qualified URL (<http://www.yourURL.com>)

Check Your About the Author Box (HTML)

Is your HTML author box...

- ✓ using only anchor tags (a href), bold (b) and italic (i)?

Did you avoid...

- ✓ including reprint rights in your HTML author box?
- ✓ using affiliate links in your HTML author box?
- ✓ using “title” and “style” tags?

Does your HTML author box...

- ✓ have properly closed and embedded tags?

Follow these guidelines and tips, and you'll be well on your way to successful content distribution. For more advice on good article writing, check out the [Content Crooner blog](#).