

Lesson #22

The 31-Day Guide To Article Marketing Part 1 of 4

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Introduction

Welcome to "**31 Day Guide to Article Marketing**" series!

If you've spent any time reading marketing forums, blogs, newsletters and even traffic-generation products, then you already know that **article marketing is an important part of your overall marketing strategy**. But...

While everyone tells you to write articles, no one tells you how to do it!

Until now...

Inside these 31 lessons you'll discover EXACTLY how to:

- Choose an article your niche members want to read!
- Outline and research a good article that's informative and accurate!
- Write an engaging article that gets your readers hanging on your every word!
- Create a byline that gets plenty of clicks!
- Get wide distribution for all your articles!

And more!

By the time you've completed these lessons (and applied what you've learned)*, you'll have several articles spread all over the web getting clicks and driving traffic to your blog, squeeze page or offers!

*Tip: I created this course with the intention that you'd read a lesson and then immediately follow the steps and instructions in that lesson. If you do that, by the end of this month you'll have several articles created and distributed that are pulling traffic, sales and subscribers to your sites!

Let's get to it...

Day 1: What is the Purpose of Your Article?

Before you can jump in and start creating articles, you need to know the purpose of your article. That is, how does the article fit into your overall marketing strategy?

Let's go over five of the most common article marketing strategies:

- 1. Using articles to drive traffic to a squeeze page.** Here you use articles to help you build your list. Once you have people on your list, then you can use an autoresponder series of messages to build a relationship and sell various products and services to them.

The best way to drive traffic to your squeeze page is to create a byline at the end of your article. This byline isn't an author's biography, but rather a short ad that offers a freebie if the reader clicks through. For best results, choose a freebie that's highly related to the article that the reader just finished reading.

Example #1: If the article is about organic pest control, then you can offer a free report on your squeeze page that teaches people how to make herbal sprays to get rid of pests.

Example #2: If your article is about housetraining a puppy, then the freebie might be a report or video that expands on the housetraining strategy outlined in the article.

- 2. Using articles to drive traffic to a blog.** Instead of using your articles to build your list, you can use the articles to send targeted traffic to your blog.

The best way to do this is to create a two-part article. You place Part 1 of the article in article directories, on social networking sites and other third-party sites. Your byline should encourage people to click through to your blog, where they'll find Part 2 of the article they just finished reading.

Tip: Build curiosity and/or anticipation for Part 2 at the end of Part 1. For example, your article may list a six-step process, with three steps in Part 1 and three steps in Part 2. You can remind your reader that if he just reads Part 1 of the article, he won't have all the information.

You may also list a benefit to help build anticipation and curiosity. For example: "In Part 2 you'll discover the single tip that brought \$24,629 into my Paypal account in just 48 hours!"

- 3. Using articles to drive traffic to a sales page via your byline.** Here you write an article that's highly related to the product you're trying to sell. Then you use your byline to encourage people to click through to the sales page.

Example: If you're selling a book on housetraining, then your article might be an overview of how to houstrain a puppy.

- 4. Using articles to pre-sell articles from within the actual article.** Instead of selling or pre-selling from within the byline, in some cases you might include product links within the actual article.

Example: Let's suppose you're writing an article about how to houstrain a puppy. When you get to the part about dealing with and cleaning up accidents, you include a link for an enzymatic spray that helps eliminate odors.

- 5. Using articles to build backlinks.** Finally, some people use articles just to build one-way, incoming backlinks to their site. They still write a good article and byline just in case a human reader sees it, but mainly they're interested in the search engine optimization benefits of getting a link pointing to their site.

So, which method is right for you? At some point you'll probably use all of them as part of your overall marketing strategy. And that's why this 31-day guide shows you how to write articles suitable for all of these purposes.

Starting tomorrow, you'll discover how to choose products to promote from within article. Stay tuned!

Day 2: How to Choose a Product to Promote

Yesterday you discovered the five main ways you can use articles to drive traffic to your site, get backlinks and pre-sell products. Now if you choose to use your articles to sell (or pre-sell) affiliate products, then your next step is to choose a suitable product. And that's what you'll learn how to do in this lesson.

Many new article marketers write an article first and then go looking for a suitable product to promote from within that article.

That's a mistake.

Instead, what you want to do is:

**Find a hungry market and an in-demand product FIRST...
and then write an article that fits that product like a hand to a glove.**

The best way to find an in-demand product is to find out what people in your niche are ALREADY buying. Here's how:

- ➔ **Enter your broad search terms in Google** (like "houstrain a puppy" or "online marketing"). Review the top sites in your niche to see what they're selling. If you see multiple sellers promoting a similar product, you can bet it's an in-demand product.
- ➔ **See what's being advertised in paid venues.** If people pay money to advertise a product, the product is probably selling. Check out the sponsored results in search engines as well as classified ads in niche publications.
- ➔ **Go to the [ClickBank.com](http://www.clickbank.com) marketplace**, enter your keywords and see which products are listed first. Those products at the top of the results are your best-selling products.

Tip: The Clickbank marketplace provides you with a number that's referred to as the "gravity." Basically, this is a number that reflects how many others are selling it. The more people who are selling it, the

higher gravity. You want to choose a product with other sellers but not TOO many sellers. In other words, one that's proven to be popular but doesn't have too much competition. To that end, look for products with a gravity number between 50 and 120.

→ **Go to [Amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com)** and do the same thing as you did in the Clickbank marketplace. Again, those products listed at the top of the search results are the in-demand products.

If you are selling downloadable information products, then you can choose your products from the Clickbank marketplace. If you're selling physical information products, you can go with a trusted affiliate program like Amazon.

If, however, you're selling any other type of products (such as physical products services, workshops, etc), then you'll need to find a reliable affiliate program. You can do that by searching the directory of affiliate centers like [CJ.com](https://www.CJ.com), [ShareASale.com](https://www.ShareASale.com) or [LinkShare.com](https://www.LinkShare.com).

If you can't find what you're looking for on those sites, then Google your product name followed by the either "affiliate," "associate" or "affiliate program."

Example: You may Google "organic gardening affiliate" (without the quotes).

Now that you have an in-demand product to promote, you can start writing articles that are related to this product.

In just a few lessons (days) from now I'll show you exactly how to do it. But first, I'll show you how to use your articles to promote a free offer!

Day 3: Promoting a Free Offer

Last time you learned how to choose an in-demand product first, since it's easier to sell a product that your market is already buying (as opposed to writing an article and then trying to figure out what to recommend from within the article).

However, the alternative is to use your article to promote a freebie or drive traffic to some other non-product page.

For example, you can use an article to promote:

- **Your blog.** As mentioned before, you can entice people to click on your link by giving them "Part 2" of the article on your blog.
- **Your squeeze page, where you offer a free report, video, audio, software, tool or other resource in exchange for an email address.** Your article and freebie should be highly related. So an article on setting up a WordPress blog might promote your free WordPress themes and plugins.
- **A physical freebie, where you request a mailing address so that you can send prospects something in the mail, such as a DVD.** For example, your article on grooming a show dog might encourage people to request your free DVD, which shows people exactly how to shampoo, clip, trim and groom a dog.
- **A downloadable freebie with no subscription required** (i.e., direct download). Same as the other freebies mentioned above, except that the prospect doesn't have to give you their contact details.
- **A page on a third-party site**, such as a [Squidoo](#) lens, [HubPages](#) hub or a video on [YouTube](#). If you're setting up a network of highly related pages, you may link your articles to your off-site niche pages occasionally.
- **Access to a free teleseminar or webinar.** As usual, the article should be highly related to the freebie. So if your article is about affiliate marketing, then your free teleseminar might be about how to build a list and sell affiliate products through the list.

- **Your affiliate program.** You can also use articles to help you attract affiliates and joint venture partners. For example, you can write an affiliate-marketing article about how to choose high-converting affiliate products to promote, and then mention your affiliate program

Between today's lesson and yesterday's lesson, you've learned how to choose and promote both paid and free offers.

Over the next few days you're going to learn how to outline, research and write an engaging article. After that, you'll learn how to write very specific articles for all the specific purposes we've talked about.

In short: Hang on to your hat, because we're just getting started!

Day 4: Tapping Into an Infinite Number of Article Ideas

You've already found out that if you're promoting a particular product, page or offer, your article should be highly related to that product, page or offer. That's because if the person is interested in your article, they'll be interested in reading more on the topic.

But what if you're not promoting a particular page?

Example: What if your goal is to get backlinks? Or what happens when you run out of article ideas to help you promote a particular offer, product or page?

No worries.

In this lesson you'll find out how to come up with a nearly infinite number of article ideas any time you want.

Here's how...

➔ **Find out what your market wants to read about.** One of the best ways to do this is to find out what type of information they're buying. If they're willing to buy it, then they'll be happy to read about it for free.

Tip: Go to the Clickbank.com and Amazon.com marketplaces, enter in your broad niche keywords (like "rose gardening") and take note of the products at the top of the search results - those are your best sellers.

Then look at the sales pages or the table of contents of these products to get ideas for specific articles. You can get at least one article idea (usually more) for every sales page bullet point or for every chapter listed in the table of contents.

➔ **Use keyword tools.** Enter your broad keywords (like "dog training") into a keyword tool like [Google's Keyword tool](#). Then look for keywords like articles, tips, how to, etc.

Example: "miniature pinscher housetraining tips."
These words will let you know what kind of information your market is actively searching for in the search engines.

→ **Browse niche forums and blogs.** You can find these sites by entering your broad keywords in Google alongside search terms like forum, discussion, board, and blog. For example, "dog training forum."

Next, browse these venues looking for "hot" topics. On forums, these are topics that get a lot of views and discussions. These are also topics that tend to come up repeatedly. On blogs, these are topics that garner lots of discussion (and even discussion across multiple blogs).

Either way, viewing forums and blogs to see what's being discussed should give you dozens of article ideas. You can even take a major topic you see on a forum (such as "how do I make \$1000 a month online?") and break it into a series of articles, perhaps sharing one major method per article.

→ **Check out article directories.** Another way to find hot topics is to see what's popular in the article directories. For example, if you read any article in any category on EzineArticles.com, you'll see a link to the "most viewed" articles in that category.

→ **Ask.** Finally, you can survey your market and ask them what information, secrets and solutions they'd like to read more about. If you don't already have a subscriber list or regular blog readers, then go on niche forums to ask what types of information your readers want.

Five simple tips. But if you use them all, you'll NEVER run out of article ideas and you'll never have to guess what your market wants to read.

Once you select a topic, your next step is to start researching your article. You'll discover how to do that in the next lesson!

Day 5: How to Research a Topic to Produce High-Quality Articles

In order to write a good article, you don't necessarily need to be an expert in the topic.

Instead, you need to be an expert at researching the topic. And by the time you finish this lesson, you will be!

It's simple. Here's what you need to do:

Step #1: Approach it from multiple angles.

Since you're an online marketer, you'll probably do most of your research online. But don't forget that you can go offline too.

Read niche publications. Go to the library and pick up a few niche-related books. Talk to a few experts in your niche. Once you get online, then you'll want to use multiple search terms to uncover different sources.

Example: If you're looking for information on housetraining a dog, then you might search for a variety of similar phrases such as:

- Housetraining a dog / puppy
- Housebreaking a dog / puppy
- Potty training a dog / puppy
- Paper training a dog / puppy
- Kennel training a dog / puppy
- Litter training a dog / puppy
- Walking a dog / puppy
- Teaching a dog/puppy to go outside
- Teaching a dog/puppy to eliminate outside
- Dog/puppy accidents

See what I mean?

That's just one main topic, but I've listed ten different searches. Likewise, you should search for your topic in multiple ways to uncover as many viewpoints as possible.

Tip: In addition to searching in Google, you can search directly on sites like Wikipedia.com, on the blog of your favorite niche expert, on EzineArticles.com, etc.

Step #2: Choose multiple, credible sources.

Just because it's written on the Internet doesn't mean it's true. And that's why you should only deal with credible sites (like WebMD.com for medical information, AKC.org for dog breed information or other authority sites in your niche), or any information created by authors you trust (like the known experts in your niche).

Be sure to find at least three credible sources saying the same thing before you believe it to be true.

Tip: Once you start writing, shut your browser windows so that you no longer have access to your sources. That way, you're writing about the topic completely in your own words.

Step #3: Read all you can on the topic.

Once you've found multiple credible sources, read all you can on the topic. Don't just stop when you hit three credible sources – keep reading until you thoroughly understand the topic.

Tip: Not only will this step help you become a "mini expert" on the topic, it will also likely spawn ideas for even more articles.

Step #4: Outline.

Now that you have all your research lined up, your next step is to outline. You'll learn how to do that in the next lesson!

Day 6: How to Quickly and Easily Outline Your Article

You've chosen your topic and researched it using multiple, credible sources. Your next step is to create an outline.

Obviously, the structure of your outline is going to largely depend on the type of article you're writing. For example, the outline for a "tips" article is a bit different than the structure for an "inspirational story" article.

Nonetheless, here's a general overview of how to create your outline...

Step #1: Pick your format.

Before you can write your article, you need to choose its purpose and then the format. We'll talk about these specific types of articles later, but for now here are two examples:

- The purpose of your article is to pre-sell a product, so you write a product review.
- The purpose of the article is to send people to your blog, so you choose a tips-style article.

Generally, you should have two to seven tips/topics in your article.

- If you're explaining a complex concept, stick with just one or two concepts.
- If you're mainly offering tips (with minimal explanation), you can offer up to seven or more.
- If you're offering a "step by step" article, then you'll likely have somewhere in the range of three to five steps.

Step #2: Decide approximately how many words in your article.

Most articles range from 300 to 600 words. Here's a good example of how you'd allocate the words in a 400 word step-by-step article:

- Introduction: 50 words
- Step 1: 100 words
- Step 2: 100 words
- Step 3: 100 words
- Conclusion: 50 words

Step #3: Outline the article.

Now you can outline your article based on the topics you want to cover and the total word count you've allocated for each topic. Here's an example of a three-step article about search engine optimization:

- Introduction: 50 words telling readers about the benefits of SEO and the three steps they're about to learn.
- Step 1: Choose your keywords (100 words)
- Step 2: Write content around these keywords (100 words)
- Step 3: Get links (100 words)
- Conclusion: 50 words summarizing what the reader just read and reminding them of the benefits of taking action on this information.

Tip: If you're not writing a tips or steps article, then figure on a short introduction, a short conclusion and three to five paragraphs in the middle.

Now that you've done your research and created your outline, you can start writing. Your next step is to create a compelling title, which you'll learn about in the next lesson!

Day 7: How to Create an Attention-Getting, Eyeball-Grabbing Title

Some people slap a title onto an article almost as an afterthought.

That's a big mistake! And that's because the title is the most important part of your article.

If the title doesn't grab your potential reader's attention, he's not going to bother reading your article!

Side Bar: Just think about your own reading habits. For example, think back to the last time you visited an unfamiliar blog or article directory. Chances are, you skimmed through the titles of the articles and only clicked through to read those that sounded interesting.

The same goes for your prospects. They might skim your article title in a list of 100 article titles on a site like EzineArticles.com, or they might be skimming Google search engine results, or perhaps they're skimming your blog.

Point is, your title's #1 job is to get attention so that the person starts reading your article!

So, how do you write a title that draws eyeballs to your article?

Simple: **By offering your reader a benefit, making them a promise and/or arousing their curiosity.**

Tip: It also helps to include "trigger words" in your titles, such words and phrases like: you, free, amazing, secrets, discover, how to, reveal, announcing, new, news, tips, guaranteed... etc.

Let me give you a few specific examples to show you what I mean.

First I'll present you with a bland, boring title. Then I'll spice it up by presenting a benefit and/or arousing curiosity...

Example #1:

Bland title: Dog Training Tips

Better title: Three Dog Training Secrets Your Dog Trainer Doesn't Want You to Know!

Note: This one uses the powerful trigger word secret, which also elicits curiosity.

Example #2:

Bland title: Housetraining Your Puppy

Better title: How to Quickly and Easily Housetrain Your Puppy in Just 48 Hours from Now

Notes: This one uses trigger words (how to; quickly and easily) plus it offers a big benefit (housetrained in just 48 hours).

Example #3:

Bland title: Tips for Beginning Marketers

Better title: How a Newbie With No Money Made \$19,274 in 24 Hours

Note: This one arouses curiosity. You could also add "And How You Can Too" to make the title even more compelling.

Example #4:

Bland title: Ten Tips for Affiliate Marketers

Better title: Ten Fast Ways to Triple Your Affiliate Marketing Income

Note: This one made the benefit more clear. Namely, that the reader can triple his income.

Example #5:

Bland title: Restoring the Stingray Corvette

Better title: Transforming an Old Stingray Corvette Into a Showroom-New Car That Turns Heads and Wins Awards!

Note: Here again, this example sharpened the benefit (which plays to the reader's ego).

In sum: What is the MAIN benefit the reader will get when they read your article? Whatever it is, see if you can include it in the article title.

Go ahead and swipe my examples and tweak them to fit your article.

Next up, you'll learn how to write articles that keep your readers' eyes glued to the screen!

Day 8: How to Write Articles That Keep Your Readers Hanging On Your Every Word (Part 1)

As you already discovered in the lesson on outlining, your article should have:

- An introduction that tells people what the article is about.
- About three to five paragraphs in the middle where you share your information.
- And then you end with a conclusion that summarizes the article and encourages people to take action.

However, if you just plug your information into those three parts of the article, you're going to end up with a bland article.

For example: (Bland Article)

Housetraining your puppy isn't hard, but you need to be consistent. (A couple more lines of introduction...)

Here's how to housetrain your dog in three easy steps.

Step 1: Take him out on a schedule. (Explain.)

Step 2: Praise and reward appropriately. (Explain.)

Step 3: Clean up any accidents promptly. (Explain.)

As you can see, it's easy to housetrain your dog. You just need to be patient and consistent. Your carpet will thank you!

BIG YAWN!

Sure that sort of article gives your reader the information they're seeking, but you'll be lucky if your readers don't nod off and fall asleep before they finish the article!

What you need to do instead is write something that keeps your readers "hooked" and excited all the way through.

That way they'll reach your byline and click on your links! Plus they'll be excited to read everything else you've written... meaning they'll read your blog, sign up for your newsletter and buy your products!

Here's how to do it:

→ **Offer information that's useful but incomplete.** Let me put it another way: If you solve your reader's problem completely, he doesn't have any reason to click on your link! And that's why you should provide useful but incomplete information.

One of the easiest ways to do this is to provide an overview article that tells your readers what to do, but not how to do it.

Example: An article on search engine optimization might tell the reader to "choose your keywords," but it doesn't explain how, exactly, to do that.

→ **Be creative with your opening.** Instead of jumping right into a summary of what the article is about, you can hook your readers by opening with a question, fact or a story.

Example Story Opening: "When Marie stepped on the scale that morning, she broke into tears..."

Example Question Opening: "What does brushing your teeth have to do with heart health?"

Example Fact Opening: "Ninety five percent of businesses that start up ultimately fail."

→ **Use cliffhangers.** You know how a good book leaves every chapter right in the middle of the action, so that you feel compelled to read on? You can do the same thing in your article. Simply open with a story, but don't share the ending until the end of your article. And if you want people click

your link, you may not satisfy your reader's curiosity until he clicks through!

Here's how to leave a cliffhanger in the middle of an article:

Example: "In just moments I'll tell you the simple trick I use to boost my conversion rate 212%. But first..." (At this point, you continue on with the article.)

At the end of your article, you satisfy the reader's curiosity by sharing the tip. You might say something like:

Example: "Back to the profit-boost tip I promised I'd share with you..."

Speaking of cliffhangers and building anticipation: This is only Part 1 of this particular lesson! Next time you'll discover three more tips you can use to boost your readership and keep your readers' eyes glued to your article!

To Be Continued Next Week