

Lesson #25

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

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Day 25: How to Combine Article Marketing with Forum Marketing

In this lesson you'll discover the RIGHT way to use articles on niche forums.

The reason I emphasized the word "right" is because a lot of beginning marketers just join a forum, post an article and hardly ever visit the forum again (except to perhaps post another article).

However, many forum communities view this type of "drive by" posting as a type of forum spam – and at best they'll delete your post and at worst they'll ban you from the forum.

But here's the thing...

Just buzzing through and dropping an article into a forum won't do much good anyway (especially if it's not an article that's optimized for the search engines). And that's because forum marketing works best when you build a reputation on forums.

Remember, people do business with those they know, like and trust – and you can build up this familiarity and trust by becoming a valued member of a forum.

Here's the RIGHT way to post articles on forums...

Step #1: Find busy niche forums and become a member.

You can find forums in your niche by searching in Google. Just enter your niche keywords alongside words like forum, discussion, discussion board and similar.

Example: Search for: "rose gardening forums" or "dog training discussion" (without the quotes).

Register on your niche's busiest forums (those that get lots of daily posts and have lots of members). Fill out your profile so that other forum members can learn a bit about you. Also be sure to create a "signature file" – you can just use your regular article byline if you'd like.

Tip: Be sure to read the forum's terms or service to make sure that signature files are allowed.

Step #2: Lurk and read.

Every forum has certain rules and etiquette, both written and unspoken. In addition, every forum community has certain influential members, certain topics they don't want to discuss, etc. The only way you can learn about these things is by lurking (reading without posting) for a few days.

Step #3: Start posting.

Once you have a feel for the community, you can start posting. Don't post your articles yet. Rather, you want to work to build your reputation as a thoughtful, contributing member of the forum. As such, you should primarily focus on answering other people's questions during the first couple weeks.

Tip: You can save yourself time by answering questions using excerpts from articles you've created. For example, you might answer a question like this: "I just recently blogged about that topic. I'll post a relevant excerpt here to answer your question..."

If it's allowed on the forum, you can then link to your blog post so that forum members can read the entire post. However, be sure you answer the question in full on the forum. Don't just link to your blog post, or it will likely be considered spam.

Step #4: Post your articles (where they're allowed).

As mentioned, you can post article excerpts as answers when you first join the forum, although you should predominantly just answer questions directly when you're new (as this will help you build your reputation).

However, once you've built a good reputation (after about a month), then you can post articles directly on the forum. Don't post your promotional or presell articles, however. Instead, post your "how to" and "tips" articles, and ask for discussion and feedback.

Tip: Some forums have sub-forums especially for the purpose of posting articles. If your forum doesn't have this

feature, then you can post your article directly on the main forum board... but only IF articles are allowed on the forum (double check the written rules as well as the "unwritten rules").

Go ahead and follow Step 1 right now to seek out (and register on) forums in your niche. And then get ready for the next lesson, where you'll learn about one of the BEST places to post your articles!

Day 26: Posting Articles on Your Own Blog

If you follow the instructions I've provided so far for distributing your articles, you'll bring in lots of traffic and get backlinks. But now you'll learn how to post your articles on one of the most important sites. Namely, your own blog.

Here's how...

Step #1: Install your blog.

The easiest way to get your own blog up and running is to go to WordPress.org, download the latest version of the software, and follow the instructions for their quick and easy install process.

Tip: As easy as it is to install WordPress (WP), you can do it even faster than five minutes. If your host has Cpanel installed, then log in and go to "Fantastico de Luxe." In about a minute and with just a couple clicks you can install a new blog on your site.

Step #2: Customize your blog.

Your blog is functional now, but you can improve both its form and function by customizing it. Go to Google and search for "WordPress themes" to find a design that you like. If you have a specific theme in mind, search for it using keywords (such as dog WordPress themes or fitness WordPress themes).

Tip: To install your theme, upload it into your WordPress Content (wp-content/themes) folder either using cPanel's file manager or using FTP software. Then log into your WP dashboard, click on "appearance" and choose to activate your new theme.

While you're in your dashboard, go through the other menu options to customize the blog to your preferences (such as by creating categories and deciding how the front page of your blog will look).

Step #3: Start posting.

Now you're ready to start posting. Ideally, you should optimize at least some of your posts for the search engines, since Google likes the way WP displays its posts. However, you can post all of your best content on your new blog, including all eight of the article types we've talked about.

Tip: When you first launch your blog, populate it with about half a dozen posts, and then commit to posting to it a 3-5 times per week for the first month and at least once per week thereafter. That way your blog looks "busy" to those who visit your blog while it's still young and it doesn't ever look abandoned.

That's it! That's all it takes to start blogging. Tomorrow you'll discover other ways you can blog with your articles.

Day 27: Posting Your Articles to Your Secondary Blogs

Yesterday you discovered the quick and easy way to install your own blog, which is where you should post your BEST articles. However, this isn't the only blogging you should do. That's because there are plenty of third-party sites that allow you to create a blog that they host.

That means you'll not only get links back to your main site, but your articles will get more exposure through search engine traffic as well as internal blog community traffic.

Below you'll find the best places to host a third-party blog.

Note: Some third party blog hosting sites don't allow commercial blogs of any sort, so read the terms of service first.

1. Blogger.com

This is Google's blogging platform. So as you might suspect, these blogs get indexed easily in Google.

Note: This platform seems to have an automatic bot that scans blogs for certain words and links, and then "flags" the blog as a possible splog (spam blog). If this happens to your blog, all you have to do is click a link to alert a human editor to review your blog. Just be sure to click the link right away, otherwise your blog will be deleted within a week or so.

2. WordPress.com

WordPress.com doesn't allow spam or *"unwanted commercial content designed to drive traffic to third party sites or boost the search engine rankings of third party sites."*

As such, if you create a blog on this site, you shouldn't point every article back to your site. Instead, post articles on the site and include your name for recognition

and branding purposes. Occasionally (ever five or six articles) you can include a link to your site. In addition, don't post promotional or presell articles.

3. LiveJournal.com

Like WordPress, LiveJournal's Terms of Service prohibits commercial content. As such, use links sparingly and don't post promotional or presell articles.

4. Niche Blogging Communities

Run a search in Google for your keywords alongside the phrase "blogging community" or "blog hosts" to find niche blog hosts. For example, "dog blogging communities."

If you enjoy posting to and creating a mini-network out of third-party blogs, you can even more blog hosts by running a search for just "blog host" or "blogging community."

Tip: Always keep a separate copy of all your third-party blog posts. That way if the site ever goes down or gets hacked, you'll still have all your content, which you can post elsewhere.

The above blog hosts are communities just for blogging. However, there are other sites where you can get a blog and post your articles (even though these aren't strictly blog communities). You'll discover these sites tomorrow...

Day 28: Posting Your Articles on Social Media Sites

Social media sites are places where people can share information while networking with people who have similar interests. We've already talked about four such sites: Squidoo.com, HubPages.com, blogging communities and your niche forums.

In this lesson you'll learn about even more sites where social networking is just as important as sharing information.

Below are five suggestions for places where you can post your articles, get traffic and grow a network of friends in the process. In some cases, you may even be offered an onsite blog...

1. MySpace.com

While a wide variety of people use this site, there are a lot of music-loving users. So if you're in a music niche, be sure to join MySpace and post your content on the onsite blog.

Tip: Use the search feature to find people with similar interests and invite them to be your friend.

2. Facebook.com

This site is similar to MySpace, although this one tends to have a lot of users who're looking to connect with people they already know. Indeed, you can do the same. That is, invite your newsletter subscribers, blog readers and other people to connect with you on Facebook.com. Then share your articles on your page.

3. Yahoo! Answers

This isn't a social networking site like the previous two. Rather, it's a content sharing site with a very strong social component. And because of this, you can and should build a network of "friends" on the site.

To use this site, browse or search your niche categories to find questions you can answer. Then use your articles or article excerpts to answer the questions. You can leave a link to your blog as the "source" of your answer.

Tip: Only leave links to non-commercial pages such as your blog, otherwise you risk having people flag your answer or rate it as a bad answer.

4. [Ning.com](#)

Ning.com isn't just one social networking site. Rather, it's a place where you can join niche social networking sites or start your own networking site. I suggest that you both join relevant sites as well as create your own. Then post your articles on the onsite blogs.

5. Niche Social Networking Sites

Finally, you can find other niche networking sites where you can create an account and upload your articles.

Simply go to Google and search for your niche keyword sites alongside the word "social networking" or "community."

Example: A search for "dog social networking" will turn up a site like [dogster.com](#), a search for "real estate networking" returns sites like [ActiveRain.com](#), and a search for business sites will show [LinkedIn.com](#) or [Ryze.com](#).

These five types of sites will keep you busy for days as you register for your accounts and start posting content. Remember: They're all social networking sites, so don't just post your articles and disappear. You'll have much more success if you network with others.

Back on Day #19 we talked about how to write press releases. Tomorrow you'll learn how to distribute these releases...

Day 29: How to Distribute Your Press Releases

Back on Day #19 you discovered how to write a very special type of article: Namely, the press release. And I mentioned how you can submit your release directly to your local media, such as newspapers, niche publications, etc.

Tip: To submit a release directly to your local media, address your release to the editor of the appropriate department. For example, if you're submitting a business press release to a newspaper, then find the "business editor" (or similar). Read carefully, as some editors only accept releases in certain forms (such as by snail mail or fax).

Submitting a release directly to local media is a good way to increase your chances of getting published. But you can also get wide exposure and even backlinks by using online distribution services such as:

- www.prweb.com – This is one of your best services, especially if you're interested in getting backlinks and plenty of exposure.
- www.pr.com – Offers both a free service and a paid distribution service.
- www.prlog.org – Offers both free and paid services.
- www.prnewswire.com – Alongside PrWeb, this is one of the more well-known online distribution services.
- www.Pressbox.co.uk – UK-based online distribution service. Also offers press release writing services.

Those are the top sites. Here are ten other distribution sites that I offer to you without comment:

- www.pr9.net
- www.pressrelease.com
- www.addpr.com
- www.ecommwire.com
- www.prwebdirect.com

- www.betanews.com
- www.1888pressrelease.com
- www.prleap.com
- www.theopenpress.com
- www.free-news-release.com

Go ahead and submit your press releases to one or more of the following sites today. Tomorrow you'll discover how to create unique articles out of your PLR content...

Day 30: Rewriting PLR Content to Create Articles

So far, you've learned how to write unique articles from scratch.

However, you can save yourself a little time by rewriting quality PLR (private label rights) content. If you start with a well-researched article, you won't have to do any research yourself – all you have to do is rewrite the content to make it unique.

If you refer back to Day #20's lesson, you'll recall that I've already given you several tips for rewriting content, such as:

- Create a new introduction.
- Add tips, elaborate on tips, reorder tips and delete tips.
- Add in your own examples to make the article unique.
- Rewrite the content to make it more engaging, such as by adding in metaphors and analogies.
- Completely rewrite the conclusion to make it unique.

All of these steps and tips apply to rewriting PLR content to make it unique. Here's what else you need to know about PLR content...

- ➔ **Find PLR content online.** You can find PLR content in your specific niche by running a search in Google for your broad keywords alongside the words "PLR" or "private label."

Example: weight loss PLR.

- ➔ **Do your due diligence.** Before you purchase PLR content, run a search for the PLR seller's name, website and email addresses to make sure he or she has a good reputation online. That's because some shady people unlawfully sell the private label rights to other peoples' content. Even if you unknowingly buy illegal PLR content, it can still land you in court. As such, do your due diligence first and stick with reputable sellers.

➔ **Look beyond articles.** Even though you want to create articles, that doesn't mean you need to create these articles out of other articles. Indeed, you can create your articles out of ANY kind of PLR content.

Example:

- Take a chapter out of a short report and turn it into an article. All you have to do is write an introduction, write a conclusion and perhaps add your own tips or examples.
- Take a chapter out of a full-size PLR ebook and turn it into multiple articles. Again, just write an introduction and a conclusion and add your own tips or examples.
- Transcribe a PLR video or audio and turn this information into articles. Be sure to clean up the "ums or ahs" if they are included in the transcript. (TIP: Most transcribers will take out these "noises" that don't add to the content.)

One final note...

Many of the top article directories (like EzineArticles.com) won't accept PLR content. As such, you'll need to completely rewrite it if you're submitting it to that directory. Otherwise, if you're just polishing it a bit, then you can post it on your own blog.

Tomorrow you'll learn how to save yourself time by letting someone else do all the hard work...

Day 31: Outsourcing Article Writing and Distribution

By now you've discovered how to write articles, distribute them all over the Internet, and get clicks, sales, readers and subscribers using your well-crafted byline.

In short, you're an article marketing expert now!

But as you start pulling in cash for your article marketing efforts, you might not be so keen on creating and distributing the content yourself.

Maybe you prefer to work on your campaigns rather than on your content. If so, then it's time for you to outsource your articles.

Here's how...

Step #1: Search for a freelancer.

Your first stop is on the well-known freelancing boards as well as business forums where freelance writers tend to congregate. Here are some of the top places to begin your search:

- www.elance.com
- www.guru.com
- www.getafreelancer.com
- www.warriorforum.com
- www.wahm.com
- www.craigslist.org

Next, you can search in Google for a freelancer. One note, however: Freelancer writers label themselves several different names, including article writers, ghostwriters, writers, content creator and freelancer writers. So be sure to search for all these names.

Next, ask your colleagues and business associates for their recommendations.

Finally, don't forget to look offline. You can check with the English department at your local university to uncover talented student writers. You can also place classified advertisements in the campus newspaper as well as in your local newspaper.

Step #2: Screen the candidates.

You'll likely uncover dozens of possible freelancing candidates using the suggestions in Step #1.

However, now you need to narrow this list by doing your due diligence, including:

- Review the freelancer's portfolio (samples) to see if he or she can write the type of articles you need.
- Check the freelancer's references to see if they still recommend the writer.
- Search Google using the freelancer's name, aliases, email addresses and websites. Look for an established history of providing good service online (e.g., look for someone who's been established for at least six months or more). Be wary of those with complaints of any kind or those who show unprofessional behavior on forums and elsewhere.
- Check Elance.com or other freelancing board feedback (where applicable). Again, you're looking for someone who has a long history and a good reputation.

Once you've found someone you'd like to work with, then...

Step #3: Select a freelancer, sign agreements and start small.

Draw up agreements that outline things such as scope of the project, payment and deadlines. Then start small, perhaps as few as five articles just to see if you work well together with your freelancer. As you gain each others' trust, you can start working on bigger projects together (e.g., you can request 20 articles at a time or more).

In sum: Yes, it does take some time up front to find the right ghostwriter for the job. But this investment will pay for itself many times over in quality articles completed on deadline. And it will save you plenty of money in lost fees and time taken by shady freelancers.

Bonus Day: Getting Others to Reprint Your Articles

We spent a few days talking about how to distribute your articles to the top article directories. In some cases, webmasters, bloggers and newsletter publishers may find your articles in these directories and publish them.

However, most of the traffic you receive from these articles will be from your search engine optimization efforts.

In other words, don't count on publishers finding your articles and reprinting them.

If you want this sort of wide distribution, you need to find content publishers and specifically ask them to reprint your article.

Here's how to get your articles published by others:

Step #1: Find Content Publishers

The first thing you need to do is to find other bloggers and newsletter publishers in your niche.

If you've done your regular market research, then you probably already have a fairly good idea of the best newsletters and blogs in your niche. You can start off your list of potential publishers by including these top marketers.

Next, generally you'll find that MOST marketers who sell products tend to have a blog, a newsletter or both.

Indeed, just going to the ClickBank.com marketplace and browsing product categories in your niche will uncover the best selling products in your niche. Just click through to the product sales page to check if the marketer has a newsletter and/or blog. If so, add him to your list.

To find those blogs or newsletters you don't yet know about, go to Google and enter your niche keywords (like "weight loss") alongside search terms such as blog, newsletter and ezine.

Finally, you can search popular ezine directories (like www.ezine-dir.com) and blog directories (like www.blogcatalog.com) in your niche.

Step #2: Ask Them to Reprint Your Article

Once you've completed Step 1, you should have several dozen content publishers on your list. Your next step is to approach them to inquire about reprinting your article. But before you do that, you need to get on their newsletter list and read their blog so that you understand what sort of content they print.

You're going to find two types of content publishers:

- 1. Those who regularly publish other peoples' content.** When you encounter these publishers, all you have to do is submit your article for consideration. Be sure to submit an article that's matches the style and topics of articles previously published.
- 2. Those who usually only publish their own content.** Now, since these folks don't solicit content from other people, just submitting your article for consideration won't work. Instead, what you need to do is propose a JV (joint venture). In essence, you propose "swapping" articles – basically, you become guest authors on each others' blog or newsletter.

Here's a sample email template you can use:

```
-----  
Subject: I'd like to feature you on my blog, [FirstName]...  
  
Dear [FirstName].  
  
[Your name] here from [your website]. Because you're the  
premiere [niche topic] expert in this niche, I'm asking if you'd  
be willing to guest author an article on my blog. Naturally,  
you'll get a backlink of your choice and publicity from the  
byline you include.  
  
In return, I'd ask that you consider hosting me as a guest  
author on your blog. I've created an article that's a response  
to your [date] blog post where you talked about [enter topic]. I  
think your readers will enjoy the article - you can see it here  
[link].
```

Please hit reply now or call me at [phone number] to discuss this proposal further. I look forward to hearing from you!

[your name]

P.S. My blog gets [number] unique visitors per day and has [number] of RSS subscribers, so I can guarantee you plenty of exposure.

Step #3: Encourage Others to Reprint Your Content

Finally, one last tip – whenever you post one of your articles on the `Net, whether on your own blog or on a third-party site, always encourage others to copy and paste the entire article – including your byline – and reprint it on their site.

Conclusion

Congratulations, you're now an article marketing expert!

Just look at what you've learned over these past 31 days:

- ✓ You discovered the many ways you can use an article, such as to promote a paid product, promote a freebie or even just to get backlinks for search engine purposes.
- ✓ You learned how to research, create an outline and write an engaging article.
- ✓ You found out how to write eight specific types of articles, including SEO articles, tips articles, presell informative articles and five others.
- ✓ You found out the top 20 article directories plus dozens of other places you can distribute your articles.
- ✓ You found out how to save yourself time by rewriting PLR content or hiring a ghostwriter.

And more!

In short, you now know how to turn your article content into CASH!

My hope is that you've been completing the steps in each lesson as you've read the lessons over this past month.

If so, then congratulations because you're already getting clicks and traffic.

But if not, then please get started immediately. Return to Lesson #1 to refresh your memory, choose your topic, outline and then write and submit it according to the instructions I've given you.

The sooner you start, the sooner you'll see results.

Now let me leave you with this bit of motivation...

Just think: If you write just one article per day, in another month you'll have about 30 articles working hard for you.

If you write just three or four articles per day, at the end of a month you'll have 100 articles or more!

Just imagine how much traffic and sales those articles will bring you...