

How to Write Articles That Gets People to Buy, Part 1

Let's face it -

"Everybody knows about writing ezine articles"

It's no big secret that one of the better tools for building an opt-in list or generating website traffic is that of writing ezine articles and letting other publishers reprint those articles in their newsletters, etc

And, of course, if you publish a list of any kind, you want to provide original articles as content for your various newsletters, mini-courses and so forth.

Nothing surprising there.

The problem is this:

"Very few people know how to effectively get readers to take action after reading an ezine article."

- It takes effort to write an ezine article.
- It takes more effort to get someone to publish that article.
- It takes even more effort to get someone to read that published article.

The odds are stacked against you from the beginning. After all, not only does it take effort but there are five gazillion other people out there trying to do the exact same thing you are trying to do.

So if you write the article and you get someone to publish that article and folks are reading it ... *don't you want to take maximum advantage of that moment?*

Don't you want to get the absolute best response you possibly can from your effort?

Most people drop the ball at the critical moment at the end of their article where everything comes together.

Not you. Not anymore. Not after this.

I'm gonna teach you something that maybe - MAYBE - 10% of ezine article authors have mastered.

I'm going to teach you a craft. An invaluable skill that is going to enable you to do a variety of things in your business – drive traffic to your site, build your lists – get people to take action on whatever you choose to put before them.

Now, we're going to cover this session in two parts.

Part 1: The Steps for Writing Ezine Articles.

Part 2: The Secret for Writing Ezine Articles.

I'd be doing you a disservice if I didn't quickly run through the process for writing ezine articles – we have a lot of beginners who are members and I want to make it as easy as possible for everyone to use this technique that I'm going to cover, so I've got to explain the basic process here.

Note: And let me say this, even if you are a seasoned pro with dozens of articles under your belt, I recommend that you listen in to this process anyway because you'll almost certainly hear something that gives you an idea that you haven't thought of before, especially when I talk about transitioning from your article to your resource box because almost no one does this in the most effective way. So there will be several gold nuggets in here even if you already know how to write ezine articles.

The Steps for Writing Ezine Articles

There are seven steps that we're going to quickly run through here – the first one is the longest one and that is...

1. Choose an attention-grabbing title

Let me spell this out clearly from the beginning: Whether or not someone even reads your article at all is dependent upon your title.

And that means even if you have a loyal following -

Seriously – I’m very well-known and have tens of thousands of subscribers ... but if I send out an article with a boring title, many of my subscribers will never read it. And of those who do, they’ll do it because of my reputation but they won’t do it immediately.

When I send out an article I want people to be so interested that they stop what they are doing and read it right then.

It’s especially important to have a title that stands out when you think about submitting it to directories and publishers where there are hundreds of new entries being cataloged every week.

Now when it comes to creating an attention-grabbing title, there is only one thing you need to consider: results.

Primarily – unless you are writing strictly for entertainment purposes – what your audience is going to be interested in are results.

- A dieting audience wants to know how to achieve the results of weight loss.
- A golfing audience wants to know how to achieve the results of a lower score.
- A pet owner audience wants to know how to care for and nurture their pet.
- A backpacking audience wants to know how to achieve the results of a safe and enjoyable trek.

If you publish information articles, **your audience wants results**. Since that’s what they are looking for, it certainly makes sense to entitle your ezine articles in such a way that it hints at the very results they are actively interested in.

5 Criteria for Results-Driven Article Titles

Now, there are 5 criteria that a results-driven article title needs to meet here.

- **Your title should hint at DESIRABLE results.** There's a big difference to me between "*How to Automate Your Business*" and "*How to Setup Your Business To Run on Autopilot While You Play Golf*". There's a difference between "*5 Things You Need To Know About Owning a Cat*" and "*5 Common Mistakes That Will Accidentally Kill Your Cat*".

All things being equal, which would you most likely read? - "*Top 10 Ways to Cure Your Allergies*" or "*Top 10 Ways to Cure Your Allergies and Finally Get Some Sleep*"? Think of it this way: why would someone want to do what your article shares? Play golf? Avoid killing their cat? Get some sleep? Add that to your title.

- **Your title should hint at SPECIFIC results.** Equally as important is to share exact details in your title. It's not "*How to Sell More of Your Product*", it's "*How to Sell 300% More of Your Product in 72 Hours Than You Did All Month*". Instead of "*How to Find The Man of Your Dreams*" – it's "*How to Find The Man of Your Dreams and Get Him to Fall in Love With You*". Don't say "*7 Ways to Raise Your Metabolism*", say "*7 Ways to Drop 10-12 Pounds by Raising Your Metabolism*."
- **Your title should hint at REAL results.** Never, never, never just make things up for the sake of getting attention. Whatever title you choose, your article better deliver. Nothing will ruin you quicker than creating false claims and delivering hype instead of substance. Don't exaggerate. Be desirable. Be specific. Be real. These three are mandatory in my opinion when it comes to creating titles that grab attention. The last two that I want to mention are "optional" but certainly worth mentioning and using in some of your articles.
- **Your title should hint at INTRIGUING results.** That is, create something that creates curiosity. "*How I Average 2-3 Sales A Day With My Signature File*". "*How to Lose 1-2 Pounds Each Week While Watching TV*". (This could be an article on doing simple exercises during commercials – wouldn't it get your attention?) "*How to Get*

Your Boss To Give You Any Day Off You Choose”, “How to Take The Vacation Of Your Dreams For Free” and “How to Relieve Headaches With A Microwave”. (This could be an article on heat packs or brewing herbal tea, for example) The difference is in the intrigue of the title. Curiosity alone will get prospective readers to take a look.

- **Your title should hint at TARGETED results.** And finally, you may want to mention specific groups or person’s in your title. For example, “*The Beginners’ Guide to Building an Internet Business*” or “How to Lose Weight While You’re On Business Trips” or “7 Ways Any Stay At Home Mom Can Free Up Extra Time” or “Top 10 Financial Tips for Senior Citizens”.

Now pay special attention here, because here’s a very cool strategy that very few people think about. Here’s the great thing about this: you could take an existing article and change a few references inside and submit both of the articles to directories and the articles to different publishers. For example: “*Top 10 Financial Tips*” article might not get any attention among homemakers’ publications - but what if you changed it just a bit and made it “*Top 10 Financial Tips for Busy Moms*” and then submitted it to ezine publishers who target homemakers – now it’s much more likely to get published. Tweak it again to make it “*Top 10 Financial Tips for Christians*” and submit it to publishers who have Christian newsletters. With a few targeted changes you could have your article published in a variety of other niches where access might have previously been off limits.

I’m telling you the truth here – folks will lock their eyeballs on these kinds of article titles and they will take a closer look.

I also want to share this with you that very few people think about. **“Create a series of similarly titled articles.”** Then you can use your resource box to drive visitors to a website or get them to join a list so they can access all of the articles in the series. When someone reads one of your articles and enjoys it, they’ll likely want the remainder of the articles in a series.

The Quick and Easy Formula _____

- The Quick and Easy Formula for Building a List
- The Quick and Easy Formula for Finding Affiliates
- The Quick and Easy Formula for Creating a Product
- The Quick and Easy Formula for Starting a Blog
- The Quick and Easy Formula for Generating Site Traffic.

Top 3 Ways To _____

- Top 3 Ways to Raise Your Metabolism
- Top 3 Ways to Cut Your Calories
- Top 3 Ways to Exercise Effortlessly
- Top 3 Ways to Trim Your Waistline
- Top 3 Ways to Increase Your Stamina

I want to move on here, but I'm also going to just list 10 quick templates that you can "fill-in-the-blanks" on to get you started with your title. Obviously you'll want to tweak these based on the keys that we mentioned.

- How to _____ In _____ Steps.
[How to Lose 10 Pounds in 3 Easy Steps]
- How to _____ In _____ (Time Frame).
[How to Get 1,000 New Subscribers In 7 Days]
- The Real Secret to Quickly _____.
[The Real Secret to Quickly Potty Training Your Child]
- Top 2 Ways to _____.
[Top 2 Ways to Avoid Spam]
- 5 _____ Mistakes That _____ (Undesirable result).
[5 Dieting Mistakes That Actually Cause Weight Gain]
- 3 Little Known Tips for _____.
[3 Little Known Tips for Cutting New Car Prices By Up To \$10,000]

- _____ Checklist: Are you _____?
[Dating Checklist: Are you headed for heartbreak?]
- The Hidden Costs of _____.
[The Hidden Costs of Traveling to Yellowstone]
- 7 Simple Steps to _____.
[7 Simple Steps to Selling Your Home In 30 Days]
- (Acronym): A Proven System for _____.
[A.B.L.E.: A Proven System for Success Online]

The bottom line is this: your title is absolutely critical.

That's why we've spent so much time on it and that's why you need to give special attention to it when you begin writing your article.

2. Determine 3-5 points of interest

This one is self-explanatory. Choose 3-5 (or you can go to Top 10 or whatever 3-5 is usually easiest) – but choose these points of interest that you'll be sharing in your article.

- If it's a "how to" article, then outline the 3-5 steps in the process you'll be explaining.
- If it's a list, then determine which items you'll be sharing – such as keys, ways, questions, resources, tips, case studies, etc.

You'll want your article to be 500-750 words, so just divide the word count up among the number of points you're identifying, along with a short opening and closing and that's how long each of these sections will need to be. Try to keep it relatively evenly spaced.

3. Write an interesting opening sentence

Your title gets them to take a look and you want to immediately get them into the main body of your article. There are several things you can do in this opening sentence to lure readers in deeper...

- Ask a question.
- Reveal something startling.
- Inject emotion.
- Provide proof or facts.
- Present a problem.
- List an overview.

Let me quickly give you a quick swipe file of some opening sentences that I've created which you can modify as you see fit for your own articles that are proven to get readers further into your content:

Question

- Did you know _____?
- Be honest – are you one of those people who _____?
- How many of these mistakes are you making?

Revelation

- I've got a confession to make.
- This may come as a surprise to you...
- Everyone want to know how to _____, well here's how I do it...

Emotion

- I bet you're frustrated over...
- If this doesn't get you excited, then nothing will.
- It's annoying, I know, but it certainly is effective.

Proof

- According to new studies...
- When you see the results, you'll probably be as surprised as I was.
- 4 out of 5 people / 27% of all participants / only 3 said "yes"

Problem

- One of the biggest problems _____ face is _____.
- Possibly the most misunderstood part of _____ is _____.
- There's good news - _____ can be fixed with very little effort.

Overview

- If you really want to _____, you'll need to _____.
- Yes, you really can _____ if you _____.
- Here's a really simple way to _____.

Moving on...

4. Fill-in-the-blanks for each of your points

Simply put, just write your article. Write a paragraph or two for each of your points and move on. Clearly express your point as briefly and thoroughly as you can so the reader understands what you're sharing.

Without going into great detail, here are four keys to writing useful content in your article:

- **Personal.** Write with one person in mind. Use the words "you" and "your" as often as possible. The reader should think you are speaking personally to them. After all, you are.
- **Positive.** Be motivating. Empower your reader. Let her know that she – not the nameless, faceless many out there – but SHE has the ability to accomplish whatever you are sharing in the article.
- **Practical.** Nothing should ever be a substitution for usefulness. Nothing. Ever. If someone can't use your content, you've taken a detour somewhere and you need to get back on course immediately. 😊 Seriously, usefulness is the measuring stick by which all ezine articles are judged. Does it have some kind of practical impact upon the reader?
- **Pointing.** Your content should "point" the reader towards whatever you hope to get them to do in your resource box. We'll talk about this more in a moment, but bear in mind you've accomplished nothing with your article if you don't get them to take action. Speaking of action, that brings us to step #5...

5. Close with a call to action

We're going to talk about these last few steps as the focal point of our "advanced" part here in a moment, but I do want to mention them quickly.

The end of your article is the moment you've been waiting for – that point when the reader has consumed your article and is about to move on.

***Your mission is to get them to
move on to your desired action.***

Here's the thing: When they finish reading your article, they are going to do something other than just sit there and stare. They're going to move on to other articles. Go to the bathroom. Feed the kids. Play a game at Yahoo.com. Something. They've got a gazillion options and **only one of them** is to do what you want them to do.

So you've got work cut out for you.

What you want to do with your call to action – *and please pay attention here, this is THE KEY to your success* – what you want to do is **LEAD the reader to your resource box**. You do this by bridging the gap between your article and your resource box – you create a "transition" between the two.

While the article is going to end, you don't want their encounter with you to end. You want them satisfied with what they've learned but eager for something more.

I've been using a phrase "*useful but incomplete*" for several years now and it simply means this: *you want your content to be useful enough on its own that it is helpful to the reader but incomplete in that they need to click on the link in your resource box in order to gain something more.*

Well here's where it all comes together. Your closing to the article must transition the reader from the "useful" content you've shared to the knowledge that it can be completed with your resource in the byline.

That is, whatever you want them to do in your resource box– request an autoresponder, access a mini-course, download a report, visit a site, etc. – whatever you want them to do must be encouraged, motivated and even challenged in the closing of your article.

Let me give you an example: Let's suppose you want your reader to visit your site and join a mini-course list you've created entitled "*How to Setup Your Internet Business To Run On Autopilot While You Relax*". Your ezine article shares "*Top 3 Shortcuts To Success With Your Internet Business*". In your closing you say this:

By applying these 3 shortcuts you'll free up some extra time to spend enjoying life.

Internet marketers sometimes forget that the reason we start online businesses is to free up time to do what we don't have time to do in the first place!

Apply the shortcuts – and enjoy yourself today.

And then what's the next thing they see?

Nick James is the author of the free 22-page report "*How to Setup Your Internet Business To Run on Autopilot While You Relax*". Drop by <http://www.blahblahblah.com> for your free copy.

Who could resist that?

Your closing call to action should transition the reader from article to resource box. It should reference what you offer in the resource box without specifically mentioning it. A nice blend of the two will almost always get a response from the reader.

6. Create a response-producing resource box

The #1 goal of your ezine article should be to get a subscriber onto a list.

- When you allow others to reprint your articles in their publications,
- When you submit your articles to directories,
- When you post your articles at your website to get spidered by search engines,
- When you insert your articles into viral ebooks to be passed around the web.

When you do these things, ***your #1 goal is to get subscribers onto a list.***

Don't ever forget that.

When you get them on a list, you can always get them to your site or an affiliate link or anywhere else you want them to go after they've joined. When you get them on a list, they get MULTIPLE opportunities to buy from you.

And – listen up here – if you set things up correctly, you can get them on a list AND in front of a salesletter offer at the same time.

Here's how:

- Give away a free report or mini-course in your resource box.
- Place that freebie at the top of a salesletter or embedded in the copy of the salesletter or redirect them to a salesletter after they've joined a list.

That way they join your list and IMMEDIATELY are directed to an opportunity for them to make a purchase right then.

7. Put on the finishing touches before publishing

Finish up by checking for misspelled words and improper grammar. Format your article at 60-65 words per line. Make certain your word

count is within the acceptable range of 500-750 words. (This is going to vary with publishers – so check with those you plan to submit to for exact specifications).

And don't forget to check your Spam rating. You may need to substitute some of the words in your article to make it more email friendly so it doesn't get filtered. Most of the more popular autoresponder systems such as Aweber, which I use, have a check that you can use. Or you can go to:

<http://www.internetmarketingtrainingclub.com/spamchecker.html>

and use a free tool there.

After you've finished your article, of course you'll want to distribute it to the major directories, publishers, your affiliates, your list, your site, etc.

Now that we've covered the basics – and really, I threw in some stuff there that most people ... even those who regularly use ezine articles ... likely didn't know – particularly in talking about how to transition the reader from your article to your resource box, so there was some advanced stuff in there too – but now that we've covered the basics, let's move on to part two where I'm going to teach you a craft here that is just amazing.

It's the best way that I know of to get people to take action with your ezine articles and I've seen just some tremendous results.

It builds upon my "*useful but incomplete*" model that I've been using for years and just takes that to the next level.

Read Part 2 of 2 for the "rest of the story".