

But, What If I'm Not A Writer?

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But, What If I'm Not A Writer?

By Denise Ryder

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"Ah...but you are...lil grasshoppa...you just need to to apply yourself!"

Ok, perhaps I was pushing the limit just a bit. As I was writing this, I had a picture come to my mind of a movie I once saw, I don't remember the name of it, but a young boy said "But...what if I can't" to his teacher and that was how the teacher responded.

This does not negate the fact that we are ALL capable of writing and if you hang with me for a few minutes I will show you 3 types of articles you can write, with very little effort at all...sound good??

First though, what is all the fuss about writing articles anyway? I mean, every guru you see lists writing articles, if not in their top 3 marketing strategies for building success, it's at least in the top 5. Let me tell you quickly why articles can be such an effective marketing tool for you.

Writing articles is a fantastic way of creating trust and building rapport with a target audience. Use this strategy consistently and provide good valid information it, eventually, will also peg you as an "expert." It's also a subtle way of getting your message out, well let's be honest here...it's free advertising. (I'll show you how that works in a sec).

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Ok...so you know why articles are an effective marketing tool what about the how?? Glad you asked (lil grasshoppa).

3 Types of Articles

Tips List

If you subscribe to a few newsletters you may notice (and if you haven't you will now...) that many of the articles are made up of a tips list. This is the most widely used form of all article types.

15 Things You Wish Your Wife Knew About Football,
12 Ways to Losing Weight Fast,

101 Off the Wall Marketing Ideas...and so on.

The "Tips List" is the easiest article to write, which of course is why they are so popular. Each tip consists of around 2–4 sentences, nothing too earth shattering, just good quality information. All you need is a basic knowledge of the subject on which you wish to write. From there you write a sentence outlining the tip and 2–4 sentences to explain each tip.

Once you write a tips list that is current and focuses on a new idea or new concept, well champ..."you're in there" because everyone will be interested in reading it.

Step–By–Step Tutorial

Another "bang on" form of article that is ALWAYS read. If "step–by–step" scares you a little (I may be wrong here, but I thought I heard you suck in your breath there...) then how about refering to it as the "How To" article?

Everyone and their dog wants to know "How To" do something. We want to have instructions broken down into little bite sized pieces that we can easily understand and follow. For example, if you were writing a "How To Write an Effective Auction Listing" your first step would be to explain the headline and continue with as many steps as it took to complete the task. Pretty easy stuff, huh??

Interview

Another good form of article and again this one which takes very little time. Write 10–15 questions on a particular topic

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you know is hot right now, approach an "expert" that is well known in that area and ask them if they would mind taking the time to answer you questions.

For example, you have done some research and found that the hottest topic online with respect to running an eBusiness is how to build traffic. You know there are a few good "experts" out there, so you design 10–15 questions and then go to one "expert" and explain what you are doing – send them the questions...and Voila – it's a done deal!

If you're eBusiness happens to deal with health issues, find out what the hot health issue is right now, design the questions and go to the "expert" in that area.

The best thing about this form of article is that all the work is basically done for you. The 10–15 questions are answered by your expert and all you have to write is the introduction

and conclusion.

And you didn't think you could write...

Now...where does the free advertising come in? It comes in the form of the Resource Box. A resource box is about 3–5 lines and follows your article. This little box lets people know who wrote the article with a bit more info on what you do and where you can be found. That my friend, is an advertisement promoting you and your business.

After you have written your article, let it start working for you. Get it into the hands of as many ezine publishers as you can. Publishers are always looking for new, quality content for their issues. Approach them with your article!

The end result?

You are building trust, creating rapport and being pegged as an "expert." Plus the more exposure that article gains...the more people visit :o)

So... Are you just going to sit there "lil grasshoppa" and join those who have said they can't write?? Or are you going to try your hand at one or all of the forms of articles I just showed you and get them working for you?

What Publications Should Look for in a Technology Writer

By David Geer

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What to look for in a technology writer.

A good technology writer has a good portfolio. The writer you want will have samples that parallel the content you're looking for. A good portfolio sample can be found at <http://www.GeerCom.com/samples.html>.

A good technology writer is a good investigator. A professional technology writer takes time to get to know you, your publication, and your goals. What do you really want to get out of this project? A great writer will ask because a disciplined professional needs to know.

A good technology writer is a team player. Professional writing requires top-notch communications skills on all levels, not just in the text of your articles and features. The writer you want should be able to carry on a dialogue with you and your team to discover your needs, and to make sure that they are met.

A good technology writer is prepared to work with you and your team until you're satisfied. Consultations, revisions and changes should be built into the fee. These are part of the process and should be foreseen by the writer.

Finally, a good technology writer instills confidence. After providing the necessary requirements and information, you should feel comfortable letting the writer drive where the story is concerned. You should be able to rely on their responsiveness to your queries. You should be assured that they will deliver all that you expect and more.

About the Author David Geer is chief technology writer, technical journalist and owner of Geer Communications, which helps print and electronic publications meet their content needs. E-mail him at David@GeerCom.com, call him at 440-964-9832, or check out the Geer Communications Website at www.GeerCom.com.

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