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**The Magic Number**

**By Bob Osgoodby**

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Having published a Newsletter for over 6 years we've learned a few "tricks". Probably the most important one is that people want to get their information as quickly as possible. They are not willing to wade through tomes of information, no matter how well written, to get the ideas presented in the article.

If two identical newsletters are published, except one has a rather long article, and the other has a condensed version of the same article, there will be a disproportionate number of "unsubscribes" from the first, and few, if any, from the second. This has got to tell us all something.

The magic number, we have found, is 750 words or less.

Personally, I try to keep all the articles I write (and publish in our Newsletters) under that magic number. If I let my fingers get away from me, and have exceeded that magic number, I take a long hard look at the article. Nine times out of ten, it can either be shortened or made into two articles.

Most modern word processors have a word count feature. As you are developing your article, if you check this on a regular basis, you can achieve the desired size without having to go back and rewrite it.

The second, and equally important "trick" is to word wrap at 65 characters per line. If you don't, people may receive your article in a format that is very difficult to read. Many mail packages default to 65 characters per line, while others default

to a higher number.

If they receive an email that is wrapped at 80 characters, and they are set for 65, they will get 65 characters on the first line and 15 on the next. The entire article will be presented like this – very distracting.

Almost all mail clients (readers) will display 65 characters per line correctly. There is also less eye movement required using the shorter line, making it easier to read. If this is the case, why would anyone consider using a longer line.

If you do not have a sophisticated word processor, "Word Pad" will serve the purpose. First – set your margins using "Page Setup" under the "Files" Tab to .25 inches on the left and 1.5 inches on the right. Select the "Courier New (Western)" font with a font size of 12. This will give you exactly 65 characters per line. Other margins and font sizes will work, but be sure you are getting the correct number of characters per line.

Now, you can estimate your word count. Figure an average of 9 words per line. There will be short lines and blank lines between paragraphs. If your article is around 80 lines long or less, you should be in the ballpark. This article, for example is 56 lines. The actual word count is 506 – close enough? You may vary a bit on the actual count, but at least you'll have an idea of the length of the article and be close to that "magic number".

Bob publishes the free weekly "Your Business" Newsletter Visit his Web Site at <http://adv-marketing.com/business> to subscribe.

### **Magic Show Tips**

**By Preston Houer**

For magic enthusiasts, what could be more fun than being able to organize a magic show of their own, right? However, it might not be an easy task to prepare for one magic show that will bewilder your friends and other speculators. Don't fret. Here are some tips and suggestions that might help one in prepping for one fun magic show that will make all the audience spellbound:

#### Prepare the Stage

A magic show will not be as exciting if it is done in a place where there's no stage. One must set up a stage that could consist of either a piano bench or a small table with a blanket or table cloth.

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Drapes help a lot in seeing to it that the audience don't get a glimpse of your activities before performing a trick. Have a certain spot where all your tricks can be done.

### Prepare the Props

A magician will have a hard time amazing his or her audience without the help of various magic props. Gather all the paraphernalias that will make the magic show successful beforehand to avoid scrambling around at the eleventh hour.

The usual props used by magicians include playing cards, hats, animals, a handkerchief, etc.

### Prepare for the Tricks

What's a magic show without magic tricks? Practicing the tricks well before the magic show will make one magician less doubtful on whether his or her magic show will be a hit or not. Here are some rules that a magician should follow when doing a magic show:

1. Don't kiss and tell a trick.

Magic is made to amaze the audience. Telling how to do a trick will spoil that purpose. A trick that is told how to do will lose its mystery.

2. Trick only once.

When a trick is done for the first time, the audience will be very amazed. Doing it twice will make the audience predict what will happen and the risk of figuring the trick out is not impossible.

3. Practice like there's no tomorrow.

When one is not that comfortable with a certain trick, it is not advisable to perform it. Practicing in front of friends or other people before the show in front of an audience will help a lot in making the magic show successful.

4. Be or look confident.

Acting nervous will make you a laughingstock. When you are going to be the man of the show, it won't help to be stammering and trembling while performing the magic tricks. Practicing will help you in this arena.

Preston Houer has been involved with the art of illusion and sleight of hand for over 30 years. Let Preston show you how to Have Fun With Magic. Visit His Site Today!



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