

Your Book Publishing Coach Newsletter

*The insider's guide to writing,
publishing, and making money with information products*

Vol. 2, Issue 4



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*****MAIN ARTICLE*****

Build a Business—with Articles!

What if there were one relatively simple way to:

- promote and establish yourself as an expert,
- discover what your market really wants so you can give them more of it,
- give people a taste of what you have to offer,
- get people them interested in your book, other product or service,
- drive them to your Web site to learn more about you,
- make connections with people you never would have met otherwise (sometimes leading to lucrative joint ventures and/or wonderful relationships)
- even get the media to call you?

You can do all that, and more, through one simple strategy: writing and disseminating articles!

I have been experimenting with this, and I can now confidently tell you this practice has done all of the above—and more—for me.

In fact, you can build a whole business starting from articles.

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How?

First, you use your article to establish your expertise. Get lots of articles out there on your topic. It's one way of becoming known as an expert in your area. Publishers have even been known to approach article and blog authors to ask them to write books about their topic.

Second, use articles to test your market. Article directories such as www.ezinearticles.com show you statistics on how many people have viewed it, how many people followed the link for your articles, how many times it's been published in other places, how many times it's been emailed to others, and even how others have voted on your articles. All very valuable information!

Third, use the market information above to create products that you know will sell. Expand the content of your most popular articles into small reports, eBooks, Special Reports, or a printed book that you can sell or use as bonuses with other products you might be selling.

Fourth, repurpose your articles into press releases to attract the media to interview you on your expertise and create even more awareness of what you have to offer.

Fifth—if you're really good at writing lots of articles quickly—you can even set up your own article directory page and get Google AdSense ads on it. All you have to do is open up a Google AdSense account, give them the url (i.e., http Web address) of your article directory page, and they will put the ads on. When people click on the ad, Google will send you a portion of the revenue from the advertiser. Pretty slick, eh?

Of course, articles are also an extremely effective way to drive "targeted" traffic to your Web site, which can lead to sales for you if you sell a product or service through a Web site. If you write a great article and a great resource/bio box that makes people want to know more about you and what you have to offer, you may well get lifelong customers from one article.

Articles are also a great way to connect with people. I met one of my most important mentors through an article. I followed the link to her Web site, bought her eBook, consequently contacted her, and we began a relationship that has been amazingly helpful to both of us both personally and professionally.

If you like to write, this is one of the best strategies I can recommend for building your expertise and your business. Get good at writing lots of articles quickly, submit them to article and ezine directories, and build from there. You'll be astonished at the results!

And if you would like help in getting good at writing lots of articles, I have three resources to recommend.

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One is the article I wrote called "[Two Never-Fail Ways to Overcome Writer's Block](#)." One of my subscribers read this article, tried the second technique, and in two minutes flat she "mind-mapped" the whole restructuring of the book she's working on! I use this technique for all my articles—especially when I'm not sure what I want to say.

The second resource is Jeff Herring, "[the article marketing guy](#)." I've been listening to Jeff's free teleseminars for some time now, and have learned a great deal. All the ideas I've tried from him have produced great results. Jeff also has all sorts of [great programs and resources](#). Plus, if you watch him carefully—not just what he says but how he does things—you will see how he has used articles to build a whole business.

Finally, for an updated list of ezine article directory sites, with links, [click here](#).

One more thing ...

If this idea of building an information business through expanding articles intrigues you, I invite you to check out a free, [Special Report](#) written by one of my mentors, Jimmy D. Brown, who is one of the best teachers I've come across. I've learned more from Jimmy's free stuff than I have from many information products I've paid for. His ideas work! In this free Special Report, Jimmy reveals five simple steps to starting a profitable information business—all beginning with Small Reports which, as I mention in this article, can be created from articles.

To get your free Special Report on how to build a "small reports fortune," simply [click here](#).

*******MARKETING TIP*******

The Easiest and Best Way to Start Your Book

You want to write a book. You have an idea. Great!

But you don't know where to begin.

I have your answer.

Start with an article.

You've heard the expression: "How do you eat an elephant? One bite at a time."

The "elephant" is the book. The "bites" are the series of articles that will eventually make up the book—each article a piece of a chapter.

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You can assure yourself of finishing the book if you just tell yourself you will work on one little piece—one article, with one thought—at a time.

Set a realistic goal. If an article a week isn't realistic, then try an article every two weeks, or one a month. Either way, you'll be making progress.

The Hidden Treasure in Your Articles

Once it's written, don't just move on to the next one. Whether you know it or not, your article contains a hidden treasure. There is extremely valuable information about your audience locked up in that article.

You can unlock the treasure and put that article to work for you to actually shape your book into something you *know* people will want to read.

How?

By publishing it online, and using the feedback that's available to learn more about your audience.

When you publish an article in an online ezine directory such as ezinearticles.com, the directory keeps track of how times people have viewed your article, how many times it's been published in other places or emailed to people. People are also allowed to vote on your article, and to comment.

As you write your book, article by article, chapter by chapter, you can get a feel for which topics are most interesting to other people. You may find out that some articles receive a lot of votes and comments, others get none. This will help you reshape your book so that you give people more of what they want, and don't bore them with what they don't want.

This really gets me excited. Never before has something like this been available to writers. Before, it's always been a crapshoot as to what people really will want to read. The Internet tools available now have changed all that—to writers' everlasting advantage.

You just have to know how to use the tools.

What to Do with Your Article

Once written, submit your article to ezine directories. Start with ezinearticles.com, the biggest and best directory. Look through the categories and find the one that most closely fits your audience's needs. Go as far as you can.

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For instance, this article could go in the "Writing and Speaking" category, but it's best if I go further and put it in the "Writing and Speaking—Writing" category. Now, I could put it in "Writing and Speaking—Writing Articles" category—but I won't. Why not?

Because you, the reader, are probably most interested in this point in writing a book, right? I'm telling you the best way to do that is to start by writing articles, but that's not what's on your mind at first. See how it works? You always start with your audience. It's all about them—not you!

People will find online articles through keying in words or phrases in the search box, so you will want to figure out what kind of keywords people will use to find the information in your article. All ezine directories will ask you to submit keywords. Make your title and your first paragraph, especially, rich with keywords.

In addition to keywords, you need to submit a summary of your article. This is like a little ad to get people to read it, so you want to make sure it summarizes well what you want to say, while enticing them to read more.

The next unique thing about an ezine article is that you can include an author's bio box, also called a resource box. Here is where you can put something in about yourself. Here is where you can also ask them to take some action—sign up for your newsletter if you have one, or your blog, or go to your website to read an excerpt from another book you have, etc.

I suggest you put up a simple blog where you can post your other articles, and say in the resource box, "To read more articles on this topic, visit <http://www.yourblogurl.com>." Blogs are great because they're free, quick and easy to put up and maintain, search engines like them, and people can comment on them as well. Just make sure that the articles on your blog and the ones in the ezine directories are at least 20 percent different.

Use the information you're learning about your audience to rethink your book's content as necessary.

Caution

One caution about using this technique: Do not submit the content of every single chapter to online directories!

Two reasons for this.

One, a chapter is probably too long for an article anyway. One chapter may end up being the equivalent of several articles. You'll want to submit only 500-900 words tops as an ezine article. Use something that's representative of the chapter. All you need is a sense of how people like your content.

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Second reason you can't submit all of what will eventually be your book's content is—no publisher will touch it if it's already been published.

However, if you can approach a publisher and say, "pieces of several of these chapters have gotten 10,000 views, been picked up by 2000 other ezines, and received 300 comments"—well, let's just say a publisher is likely to be convinced you have an audience, even if you're trying to sell your first book.

***** **ON THE BLOG** *****

Here are a few articles from my blog this month. Click on the link to read the post:

- Several articles on the [duplicate content issue](#) (very important if you write/submit articles online and also on your own website)
- [The Influence of Words](#) (how the great copywriter Gary Halbert's words led to my meeting one of my best friends)
- [You Really Can Start Your Book Today](#) (what happened to people who used my special brainstorming technique)

Plus time-sensitive notices of special deals on great resources, such as Jeff Herring's Article Marketing Secrets course. You won't miss these announcements if you [sign up to receive news of new posts](#).

***** **INSIDER'S TIP** *****

Avoid This Trap When Submitting Articles

If you want to write a book, one of the best ways to start is by writing articles and submitting them to online article directories. Not only do you build some momentum in terms of writing your book, you can test how people respond to your ideas. Also, if you have a website, you can begin to attract visitors who want to know more about what you have to say.

Article syndication, which is what this process is called, has been a key way for me to get traffic to my site. In the process of learning how to use articles most effectively, I discovered there is a potential trap to avoid. If you fall into this trap, your website could fall lower in the search engines than you would want. The trap is called "duplicate content."

The Controversy Over Duplicate Content

There's actually some controversy and lots of confusion over this whole issue, so I did some research (with the help of some readers of my blog). The controversy is over whether your website would somehow be penalized by the search engines if you have the same content on your site as there is on lots of other sites that pick up your article. People

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were saying that Google would give you a lower page rank for duplicate content. Others were saying it was all hogwash.

The truth seems to be that Google is in fact concerned about duplicate content. Their complex algorithms search for relevancy. They will list first the content they feel is most relevant to the search for a particular keyword or phrase. That means if your article appears on someone else's website and seems more relevant to Google, it will list it higher than that same article that's on your site.

The Word from Google

Here's what Google says about syndication:

"If you syndicate your content on other sites, make sure they include a link back to the original article on each syndicated article. Even with that, note that we'll always show the (unblocked) version we think is most appropriate for users in each given search, which may or may not be the version you'd prefer."

(For a more in-depth discussion of this, read my blog post, which also contains links to the [Official Google Web master Central Blog](#) and a thread with a lot of questions and answers about various issues.)

The bottom line seems to be that Google doesn't apply a penalty so much as they filter and decide which one will be the article/site they choose to list highest. Of course, you want them to list your site highest, not someone else's.

How to Keep Your Search Engine Rank High

Here's what I do to deal with this issue and help rather than hurt my search engine ranking:

- I only have the full article on my site once instead of in the newsletter archive page and a separate article page
- The article on my site is at least 20 percent different from what I submit to the article directories. Usually this means the headline and lead, the most important parts of the article anyway.
- Before submitting an article to the ezine directories, I make sure the article on my site is first indexed by the search engines. This is easy to do: Simply paste the entire page url, in quotes, into the major search engine windows. (For example, I would put "<http://www.yoursitename.com/nameofpage.html>" into Google, MSN, Yahoo, etc.). In a few days, I'll check the search engines by putting the article title into the search engine search box (in quotes so it searches for the exact title). If it shows up from my site, then I'm ready to syndicate the article.

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Start Your Book Right—Avoid These 7 Common Mistakes 95% of Authors Make

Nearly all authors, published or not yet, make at least one or two mistakes that, if it doesn't ensure failure to get published in the first place, it definitely hampers their ability to sell their books.

I know. I've made all of them at one time or another. As an editor and book publishing coach, I've also seen countless other authors make one or more of these mistakes.

We made these mistakes because we didn't know any better. You will know better, once you've read this article. That means you'll put yourself ahead of 95 percent of other people who will continue to make these mistakes. Knowledge is power, as the saying goes.

Mistake #1: Starting your book too soon.

While I'm all for taking action rather than just dreaming that "someday I'll write a book," most people get an idea and immediately start focusing on that idea. They never stop to ask some key questions, such as, "Who will read my book? What else is out there on this topic? What can I contribute uniquely to what's already out there? Why do I want to get this book published?"

In fact, there are twelve key questions I believe authors should ask and answer for themselves, ideally before they even write their first word. Thinking through key questions, doing some research on your topic and your market, will ensure a salable book.

Mistake #2: Not knowing who their audience is.

This one is very, very common. Many people want to write a book that appeals to "everyone."

"This is a book on leadership," says one client. "Everyone needs to know these principles."

Yes, but not everyone feels a need to know these principles. My own book, [MotherStyles: Using Personality Type to Discover Your Parenting Strengths](#), could be said to appeal to any mom. Realistically, however, only moms who are motivated to understand themselves and others are likely to buy it. In fact, when Janet Penley and I wrote the book proposal (before writing the book, I might add), we delineated eight key characteristics of the kind of mother who would be likely to buy this book. In addition, we identified two niche markets for whom this book would be of special interest.

When you know your market, when you can picture your ideal reader, it makes it easier both to write and market the book.

Mistake #3: Focusing solely on the book, and not considering what else they can do.

Now, this is only a mistake if you want to make money from your book. If you don't care if you make any money from all your hard work, then you can skip on down to the next point.

Seriously, most authors do not make any kind of significant income from their book itself. This is because a book has a perceived value of between \$10 and \$25. No matter how much expertise you pack into your book, the public is conditioned to pay only this amount of money for it.

On top of that, the royalty structure is such that an author will only make between a few cents to a few dollars on a book. The royalty amount a publisher pays is only around 10 percent of net. Net means what they get after they've given a retailer or other distributor their discount, typically at least 45 percent. If your book retails for \$24.95, the net the publisher receives might only be \$13.72. Your royalty from that would be \$1.37. If you had an agent involved, they would get 15 percent off the top of your cut. That brings your royalty, per book, down to less than \$1.17 per book.

Do you see now why you can't get rich on the book itself (or even pay your rent or mortgage)? You'd have to sell 1000 books a month—which is very unusual—just to make a little over \$1000.

That's why you need to figure out other ways to package your expertise, and structure the book so that it is the beginning point of how people find out about you and get involved with you. (See my article, "Your Book is Only the Beginning," for ways to do this.)

Mistake #4: Trying to do it without help.

There's so much to learn about just about everything nowadays, that the only way to succeed in anything is to get help from someone who's been there, done that. Someone who knows the pitfalls and shortcuts and even where the likely detours are going to be, and how to get back on track.

Barbara Stanny, in her books [Secrets of Six-Figure Women](#) and [Overcoming Underearning](#), talks about two kinds of helpers. There are the Way Showers who show you where to go and how to get there, and the Messengers who have the information, ideas, referrals and lead you need to get to where you want to go.

Look for Way Showers and Messengers from books, reliable online resources, and especially people you know who have already traveled the path. Don't know anyone?

Seek them out. Don't be afraid to write to an author you admire or even an agent. We're all busy people, but most people like to help go-getters who reach out.

Mistake #5: Getting bad advice.

As you seek help, beware! There are many people who promise you that in a few days or weeks, you can finish your book and become a best-selling author. Be very wary of such claims. Check the person out thoroughly.

I once fell for a scam that promised to enable me to "Write a book in 14 days." Although there were a few interesting ideas in the program, it simply didn't work. The worst thing, though, was he never made good on any of his bonuses. I did check out one of his testimonials (he quoted a well-known copywriter I knew), but I should have checked him out further. The "master writer of 45 published books" had no known books mentioned in Google.

If anyone tells you anything other than that writing a book takes work and planning and that success, while possible, does not happen overnight—hang onto your credit card!

Mistake #6: Not having a good plan.

Most authors have no plan! You wouldn't build a plan without a blueprint, would you? You don't start out on a trip not knowing your destination, or without mapping your route, would you? Yet, many authors just think they can write their book and get it published without any kind of plan whatsoever.

I know. I've done it! Don't. Get the advice, devise your plan. Having a plan for anything makes a huge difference.

Mistake #7: Not writing a book proposal.

If you want to sell your book to a commercial publisher, a book proposal is indispensable. The only way you will ever sell a book to a commercial publisher is to send a top-notch book proposal.

Even if you self-publish, it's a great exercise to write up a book proposal. This becomes your plan.

I liken writing a book to painting a room. The most time-consuming part is the preparation: cleaning the walls, taping up the trim, then painting the trim. Writing a book proposal is like these preparation steps. After that, writing the actual book is as easy as rolling the paint on the walls.

Suggestions to Take Action ...

As "Your Book Publishing Coach," I don't like merely to inform ... I like to inspire you to take action on what you've just read. So here are some suggestions:

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1. To avoid all the mistakes above, learn how to map out your plan, and begin your book the right way—guaranteed—check out the . ["Jump Start Your Book: 12 Questions You Must Answer Before You Write Your First Word" Toolkit](#)

2. For more on the correct mindset an author must have to make a living from their book, [sign up](#) to receive the audio class called ["Make a Living from Your Book—Starting Today!"](#) You will not only understand what it takes to become a successful author, but you will actually begin outlining your book idea at the end of the class. Those who took the class affirmed that this is what happened for them—even though they didn't believe they were ready to start their book! So yes, you'll actually start writing your book ... but you will also do it right, if you only avoid the mistakes mentioned above as you go along (especially if you also get Jump Start Your Book).

3. I am putting together a course on how to write a winning book proposal. (I have sold every book I've ever proposed using this approach--11 books in all, plus a reprint despite three agents telling me, "Nobody's buying reprints.") There's no obligation if you sign up--it will just allow me to let you know when the course is available. [Sign up for the notification now.](#)

Get Your Questions Answered ...

If you have a question for Diane about writing, publishing and/or promoting a book, send your question to questions@WordsToProfit.com.

I will be answering all questions on a free upcoming teleseminar. Even if you don't have a question but you would like to tune in, send a blank email to the address above and you will receive notification of the next teleseminar. You can listen in and hear the questions other people have and still learn a lot.

*******RESOURCES*******

Here's a summary of resources mentioned in this newsletter:

For writing and submitting articles:

- My article, "[Two Never-Fail Ways to Overcome Writer's Block.](#)" Shows you how to overcome any block and get started very quickly. Some people end up outlining their whole book in minutes!
- Jeff Herring, "[the article marketing guy.](#)" Listen to his free teleseminars for starters. Also check out his [great programs and resources](#). Watch him carefully—not just what he says but how he does things—and you will see how he has used articles to build a whole business.
- An updated list of ezine article directory sites, with links, [click here](#).

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To help you make a living from your writing:

- [Special Report](#) by Jimmy D. Brown on five simple steps to starting a profitable information business—all beginning with Small Reports which, as I mention in my article, can be created from articles.
- The audio of the teleclass called ["Make a Living from Your Book—Starting Today!"](#)

Information on duplicate content issue:

- My [blog posts](#) on the subject
- The [Official Google Web master Central Blog](#)

To help you get published:

- To avoid all the mistakes authors commonly make, learn how to map out your plan, and begin your book the right way—guaranteed—check out the [".Jump Start Your Book: 12 Questions You Must Answer Before You Write Your First Word" Toolkit](#)
- Sign up to be notified of when the ["Book Proposals that Sell: How to Write A Proposal Publishers Find Irresistible"](#) course is ready. (No obligation.)

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