

## **My \$15,000 Article Marketing Experiment**

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Dear Reader,

On the left-hand side of my desk, there is a sticky note that is hanging on the wall. I rarely ever even notice this note, but whenever I do look at it, it makes me smile. It doesn't have anything to do with what is written on the note, all that is really there are the numbers 508/1000. It is a reminder, however, of an experiment that I did several years ago that is still putting money in my pocket every single month, and has earned me well over \$15,000 to this date.

Almost all of us have heard about article marketing and it is no secret that the simplicity behind the method makes it possible for almost anybody to make money, if they put their mind to it. I would like to share with you what I did over the course of a month or two that has helped me financially, and really opened my eyes to the different things that article marketing is able to do.

In reality, that sticky note is a signal that I actually fell short of my mark. I intended to write 1000 articles, but I stopped at 508 for some reason or another. Not that I'm disappointed by this shortcoming, but it is an interesting thing to note that I only got halfway there and still earn a considerable amount of money from this "failed" experiment.

This experiment was also one that launched a new business for me, that of ghostwriting articles and although I do not do it full-time, it makes me a full-time income, and it is a primary source of income for me.

## **Article Marketing Basics**

There are plenty of resources that are available which can help to get you started with article marketing, but I thought that I would cover the basics for those that are not familiar with the concept. For this particular type of article marketing, it has more to do with flipping your readers from the article to an affiliate program than with trying to get them on a list or using any other marketing tactics.

This is something that takes a little bit of explaining, and there are plenty of free resources which will walk you through the entire process in detail. It is enough to say, however, that it is article marketing on a primitive level at its very basics and it should not take you much time to grasp the concept and begin using it properly. Whenever you're able to do this, you can open up a world of income to yourself and build the confidence necessary to know that Internet marketing and article marketing in general does work wonders.

In order to do this type of article marketing, you are going to need to do some product research, keyword research and, of course, write the articles. If you are able to keep things on their basic level such as this, it will not overcomplicate things and it can help you to get started as quickly as possible.

## **Researching the Products**

Since you are going to be promoting affiliate products, you're going to need to find products that sell on a consistent basis. The easiest place for you to go about doing this is the [ClickBank marketplace](#), but you can really use any affiliate program that is out there, either through one of the networks or a privately run program.

When you're exploring the ClickBank marketplace, you're going to see a lot of numbers that are thrown at you, but not all of them are going to make a difference in which products you should choose. A good example of this is many of the Internet marketing related products that are available on ClickBank. Although these do certainly sell and it is possible to make money through article marketing, the vast majority of these sales are probably coming through list promotion or other means. This helps to give them a boost in the marketplace, but it does not always translate over into article marketing properly.

You are probably going to see a number of different trends that are inside of the

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marketplace when it comes to some of the top products that are available. One of the best ways that I have found to pick a product that is a winner is to *choose something that people will purchase out of desperation*. When people want something bad enough, they are going to find a way to buy it and this is especially the case whenever you are talking about medical problems or other issues that may cause them stress.

One thing that I would like to mention about this, however, is that you would not want to blindly promote a product without putting at least a little bit of faith in what it has to offer. This is going to be a personal decision, but it is something that is important to me, so I thought that I would mention it. I've seen people come through my websites searching in desperation for how to treat some kind of medical condition, and it always makes me think about the fact that they are real people, with real problems, not just numbers.

I always make sure that the product that I am promoting has good feedback and seems to be all to deliver on its promises. Not only is this important for the person that is purchasing the e-book, it also helps to reduce returns, which can affect your bottom line.

### **Other Products to Promote**

There are a number of other types of products that you can also promote through the ClickBank marketplace. Many of these are not going to fall under the desperation type of product, but they can still make you money, nonetheless. As a matter of fact, my personal best selling product that I am promoting through an affiliate program has nothing to do with desperation at all. Although I am not typically into revealing my niches, I would like to reveal this one to you.

It is an auto auction website that is run by a personal friend of mine. I was promoting another website available through ClickBank and seeing some profit, but when my friend developed his own website, I decided to switch the traffic over to him as a favor. As it turns out, he was the one that was doing me a favor.

With just 3 articles that were submitted, I make well over \$100 a month consistently. This outperforms any other product that I am promoting, some of which I have many more articles that are pointing to it. If you would like to give this a shot on your own, here is the URL for his website. <http://www.carauctioninc.com/>

## Doing Your Keyword Research

It doesn't matter what you are doing in Internet marketing, it always seems to point back to keyword research at some time or another. If you're unfamiliar with how to do keyword research, I will explain the basics to you, but this is something that you should continue to learn and develop a skill for on a continual basis. The better you are at keyword research, the better your overall success will be in many cases.

Google provides a keyword research tool that is free for public use. It is known as the [Google External Keyword Tool](#), and many of us use this on an exclusive basis in order to find the keywords that we are going to target. There are also several tools that are available to help you manipulate these results in some way or another, but basic keyword research does not necessarily require you to have any of these tools at your disposal. Your Internet browser and a notepad are going to be enough to get started.

On the main page of the [Google External Keyword Tool](#), you are going to see a place where you can enter some seed keywords that will help to get you started. Enter keywords that are directly related to what it is that you are going to be promoting. For example, if you are going to be promoting a dog training guide, enter "dog training" and see what kind of results come up. Use the results to gain additional keyword results that are targetted to your niche.

The real key to being able to be successful with article marketing is that you need to choose keywords that are realistically obtainable. Although it would be nice to be able to rank number one for the keyword "dog training", that is not likely to happen with basic article marketing. Rather, you will want to look down through the list and find some obscure phrases that get enough traffic to make them worth targeting, but not enough that is going to make it worth targeting by everyone. Personally, I like keyword phrases that are at least three words long, directly focused on what I am offering and have some kind of a "sale" feel to them.

What I mean by a sales feel it is that I like to use keyword phrases, whenever possible that have been typed into the search engines by somebody who may be looking for the product that I am offering. This is something that will take a little bit of time for you to develop a knack for, but once you get the hang of it, they are fairly easy to identify. Just try to put yourself into the mind of the person doing the search, and that is half the battle.

One other part of keyword research is to check for competition in the search engines. There are a lot of variations as far as this is concerned, but if you really want to keep things simplistic, and I like things that are simple. All that is really necessary to do is to run a search on Google for the keyword phrase in quotes. This is not going to give you the absolute figures of how many people were targeting that particular keyword, but it will give you a well-rounded idea of your competition. Typically, I look for competition that is under 100,000 competing webpages, preferably under 50,000.

### **Choosing Your Article Directories**

After you have done your keyword research and you have the phrases that you intend to target, it is time for you to make a choice on which article directory you are going to use. There are thousands of choices that are out there, but in reality, there is only a handful to really choose from.

Personally, I love [ezinearticles.com](http://ezinearticles.com). As a matter of fact, I drink coffee every morning out of a coffee mug that they sent me a few years ago that states that fact. They tend to rank well in the search engines, and it is an obvious choice, as that is what you're really trying to do.

The only reason why you would not go with [ezinearticles.com](http://ezinearticles.com) is because you are trying to promote something that they do not permit. You can read a [list of their guidelines](#) on their website which will let you know what these subjects are. If you intend on promoting one of those niches, there are other article websites which also rank well in the search engines, and you will generally see some success with them.

### **Setting up Your Website**

Setting up a website for this type of article marketing is not difficult. You simply need to purchase a domain name, preferably a .info domain, as they are relatively inexpensive for the first year. You would then cloak the domain so that it automatically redirects to the affiliate link that you are provided from ClickBank. There are a number of cloaking scripts that are available, and you can [pick one up on eBay](#) for a dollar or two.

If you intend on promoting multiple niches, you will need to buy a domain for each niche. It would be a good idea for you to set up an account with a hosting company that allows you to host multiple domains on one account. Most people like host gator.com, but there are a number of different choices that are available for you. It should only

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cost you about \$10 a month for a basic account that will allow you to do this.

### **The End of the Brief Tutorial**

This ends the brief tutorial on article marketing. There is plenty of information out there that will help you to get more advanced with it, if you desire. The only other stuff that is necessary is the writing of the articles and pointing them to the domains that you have established. That is what will be discussed in more detail through the rest of this report.

### **How My \$15,000 Experiment Worked**

This is really the meat of this short report, giving you the information that will help you to duplicate my \$15,000 experiment for yourself. If you have the gumption, you may even be able to duplicate it multiple times and to make a considerable amount more. Here it is, step-by-step how I went through the process.

The first thing that I did was to go out and find the products that I was going to promote. I added each of these products to the top of the spreadsheet and then did my keyword research for each of them before I started anything else.

Initially, I had about 20 different products that I was promoting and for each of those products, I had anywhere from 15 to 30 keyword phrases. The reason that I did it this way, is because I did not want to flood one particular section of ezinearticles.com with a lot of related articles.

Whenever you submit articles in this way, you will get a flood of traffic in the first few days, as long as your articles remain high on the topic pages at ezinearticles.com. After they begin to drop, the traffic will slow to a trickle until they are picked up by the search engines. At that point, you will begin to get a steady stream of traffic from some of the articles and from others, you will get a slight trickle at best.

I would write five articles for one topic and submit them. Immediately, I would begin writing five additional articles from a different topic and preparing them to submit. This seemed to be ideal, as I was able to get traffic to a number of niches at the same time. I was also not burning all of my articles simultaneously, by stacking them in the same niche.

It took quite some time to work through 500 articles, as I'm sure you can appreciate. During that time, I was typing my articles instead of using Dragon NaturallySpeaking, and I was just an average typist. Even so, I was able to do multiple articles during the day and at times, I would reward myself whenever I hit a certain goal. I can't tell you the number of times that I fell asleep in the middle of an article and then finished it whenever I woke up.

Even though I was able to write all 500 articles in a relatively short period of time, not everybody is going to have the opportunity to do that. I've been working full-time on the Internet since 1999, so I was able to concentrate fully on this effort. Perhaps you only have an hour in the evenings and a little bit of time on the weekends, that's plenty to be able to duplicate what I did. If you can write one article every day during the week and then two articles on Saturday and two on Sunday, you can easily write that many in a years time. Looking back on that year, you will be happy that you took the effort and were consistent with it.

Something that I could also have done is to pay somebody to write these articles for me. I regularly write 250 word articles so that people submit them to Ezinearticles, and they keep coming back for more regularly. For 500 articles, I would've paid approximately \$1500. That means, I was able to make 10 times my money back, had I gone that route.

### **Getting Some EzineArticles Love**

If you do not yet have an established account with ezinearticles, now is the time to start one. Whenever you first start submitting articles to this directory, you are going to go through a probationary period and they will be looking through your articles with a fine toothed comb. It will take longer for your articles to be accepted, and you will have to go up through several levels before you finally reach platinum status.

If I can give you one piece of advice on starting an account with this directory, it would be to take it easy at first. Don't try to push the envelope and don't try to promote products with your articles outside of promoting yourself. This is especially important during the first 10 articles, as you would want to make yourself look as good as possible to the editors.

Write about things that you know and enjoy. If you want, including a link back your biography on ezinearticles.com, instead of linking to an outside source. Keep your



articles short and concise, paying particular attention to punctuation and grammar. This will pay off tenfold in the long run.

## **A Look at My Articles**

I like to break down my articles into three different sections. Whenever I am submitting articles to the article directories, I concentrate on the title first, the body second and then I spent a considerable amount of time crafting a proper biography. Each of these, whenever they are written properly, will have their place and will contribute to how successful you are with your article marketing.

### **The Title**

The title is probably the most important part of the article, as it will be the part that is visible in the search engines. It is not always going to be possible for you to rank number one on Google, but you may find that you are ranking number two or three for your articles. Whenever you have an article title that is crafted properly, you can still get a decent amount of traffic.

I always use the primary keyword phrase in the title, and this is done for a number of different reasons. First of all, when somebody searches for that keyword phrase, it is going to show up as bold in the clickable link that is displayed on Google. Secondly, it gives you a boost in the search engines and it is SEO 101 to include your target keyword phrase in the article title.

You also want to entice the person to click on the link by the words that you are using in the title. Many people find it beneficial to ask a question, perhaps getting the person to click on the link because they want to know the answer. Other article titles that tend to work well use specific numbers, such as "3 tips to..." or "the top 7 ways to...". Get at least a little bit of thought to the article title, as they can really make an impact on your overall experience with article marketing.

### **The Body**

The body of the article is also something that needs to be crafted properly. You can break the body down into three different sections, the introduction, the main body and the conclusion. When each of these three things are put into place, you will have a

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well-crafted article that is easy for the reader to follow.

That is important, because the link that leads to your website does not show up until the end of the article. If you write an article that is ignored or abandoned before they reach the end of it, you stand no chance of making a sale. On the other hand, if you lead them through the article by crafting it properly, you will get an amazing click through rate.

I also like to keep my articles short and concise. The minimum amount of words that is required to get an article approved by ezinearticles.com is 250. I do not like to go much further over that, as the reader may become bored in the middle of the article and leave. If it is a quick read, I stand a better chance of getting them to click on my link at the end and see what else I have to say.

During the opening paragraph of your article, try to connect with the reader in some way or another. If it is an article about migraine headaches, for example, try to get on the same level by talking about migraine headaches in a way that will be comforting to them. On the other hand, if your article is about dog training, perhaps you could discuss the frustration of having a dog that does not listen to you. The first few sentences of the article is your opportunity to connect with the reader and to establish a level of trust. This trust will lead them through the rest of the article, provided it is crafted properly as well.

In the middle of the article, you are going to want to discuss something that deals with the primary keyword phrase. Do not over-think this and don't think that you need to give them absolutely all of the information that is available about the subject. As a matter of fact, if you leave them hanging a little bit, you actually stand a better chance of them clicking on your link to see what else you have to say on the subject.

It is also important that you do not branch off on any subtopics while crafting your article. Be as specific as possible, and remain focused, your article will be much easier to read.

Finally, we come to the conclusion of the article, which ties all things together. If you want to include a conclusion in the body of your article, you can do so by reiterating what was already stated. If you do it in this way, keep the concluding paragraph short enough so that they can see the link below it easily.

*I'm going to give you another tip on writing the conclusion of the article in the next section about crafting your biography. Make sure that you don't miss it.*

## **Crafting Your Biography**

Article directories will give you the opportunity to link back to your website. This is their way of thanking you for giving them free content that will earn them advertising money. It is imperative that you craft your bio properly in order to get the maximum amount of clicks.

You will see a lot of talk whenever you read about how to write a proper biography that will tell you to talk about yourself and your credentials. I'm going to let you in on a little secret, nobody really cares. It doesn't matter to them if you have a doctorate in dog training and have trained 15 million dogs how to hold a biscuit on their nose without eating it. All they are really interested in is clicking on the link, provided it is related to what they are looking for.

For this type of article marketing, it is not going to be necessary for you to use link text. As a matter of fact, it really does not serve a purpose and may even reduce the amount of clicks that you receive. Whenever it comes time to include your link, make sure that you spell it out so that it looks like a link, such as **<http://www.articletoolchest.com/>** If you do so, you will see more clicks coming your way.

That doesn't mean, however, that you should ignore the words that go in the biography, you just shouldn't spend a lot of time talking about yourself. Mention a little bit about what they are going to receive whenever they get to the next page. For example, if you teach them how to train a dog to sit on command, you could write something similar to the following...

If you are tired of having a dog that does not listen to you, I would like to share the secrets of how to teach your dog to sit on command, each and every time you tell him. Check out our report at <http://www.yoursite.info/>

Something else that you can do which will help you to get additional clicks is to incorporate the concluding paragraph with the biography. This is especially beneficial on ezinearticles.com, as there is not a break between the body of the article in the bio. Stop your articles short of the concluding paragraph, but make sure that the length is at

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least 250 words. Write a short conclusion that attracts attention to your URL and use that as your bio. When you do this properly, your click through rates will soar. You may even want to consider breaking your bio down into two paragraphs, and including a link in each paragraph to your website.

### **Boosting Your Article Rankings**

Whenever you use article marketing in this way, you are actually piggybacking on the success of another website. As a matter of fact, choosing the proper keywords will help you to get to the top of the search engines without any other work on your part. That doesn't mean, however, that you should stop working on those rankings.

One way that you can boost their rankings of your submitted articles is to submit additional articles to other article directories and include a link to them. You would want to use a contextual link, where you are linking the keyword phrase instead of using the full URL, as we discussed earlier.

You can also promote your bio page on ezinearticles and increase its page rank. Set your bio links to all of your interior pages, this will help you to rank quickly and effectively in the search engines. Don't overlook the power of doing this, it can really help you in the long run.

### **You've Got to Know When to Fold Them**

Whenever I first started out on this article marketing experiment, I had quite a few different topics that I was covering. Over the course of a year, each and every one of them had earned their keep, but many of them began to fall by the wayside quickly. It was disappointing whenever I had to let go of domain names, and consequently watch the work that I put into writing the articles for that domain go to waste. That didn't stop the fact, however, that the experiment was a wild success.

Out of all of the topics that I was promoting when I first started, I only have about six or seven left. Most of these make three or four sales each month, and I continue to receive payments from ClickBank, every two weeks like clockwork. The average amount that I make is still about \$5000 a year, and I'm on target to do that again in 2010. Even though this is not my primary source of income, it's nice to know that the money will be there and it will put food on the table, or perhaps take care of a bill or two.

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Make sure that you don't beat a dead horse, for lack of a better term. Whenever these websites stop producing for you, it's time to let them go. It is much better for you to focus on the websites that are making you money and perhaps grow in that niche even further than to try to rekindle the fire of something that is not capable of burning in the first place.

### **Remaining Focused on the Task at Hand**

One of the most difficult parts about this type of article marketing is the fact that the majority of us tend to lose focus at some point or another. This is especially difficult, considering the fact that you are going to be doing a lot of surfing while you are researching these topics.

I find that setting a time limit for the amount of writing that I'm going to do benefits me greatly. It is much easier for me to tell myself that I am going to write from 5 PM till 6 PM and then I will do what I want to do. If I try to spend the entire evening writing without breaking it down and smaller sections, my productivity drops like a rock. There are even times whenever I set an alarm and I will not come up for air until that alarm sounds.

If the thought of going 500 articles seems overwhelming to you, break it down into smaller chunks. I did not earn \$15,000 overnight, but I am still earning from the effort that I put into it several years ago. If you are dedicated to it, there is no telling how far you can take this experiment on your own.

### **Additional Resources**

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