



MAGNETIC COPY **MASTERY**

**THE SMALL BUSINESS OWNERS COPYWRITING GUIDE TO
WRITING POWERFUL COPY THAT CONVERTS**

Module 1: How to Become a Magnetic Copywriter

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Welcome

*"Copy is a direct conversation with the consumer."
– Lethia Owens*

Today, in our digital world of visual content and immediacy, the ability to rise above the noise with compelling, powerful and relevant content is as important to businesses as ever. Magnetic copywriting is essential for communicating the value of your company's offering to potential customers. Content drives online marketing and sales, and copywriting is at the core of all content, whether it's a long-form sales page or a 140-character tweet.

Magnetic copy can make a significant difference in your sales and online conversions, while boring and mediocre writing can sabotage your marketing efforts. You could hire a cheap virtual assistant to write your copy but you get what you pay for and your brand is far too important to entrust your message to someone who doesn't get you, your customers or your offerings. Companies that understand the importance of copywriting hire professional copywriters, but copywriters aren't cheap. For businesses on a tight budget, being able to write their own copy is extremely helpful.

Luckily, while copywriting is definitely a skill you need to master, it isn't nearly as difficult as it's often believed to be. Much of what goes into it isn't the actual writing, but knowing the target audience well and choosing the right words that will appeal to that audience.

With this understanding of your audience and some of the basic copywriting skills you're going to learn in this program, you can improve your existing copy and write new copy that gets better results for your business. Let's get started!

Lethia Owens

If you have questions about this product or would like to chat with one of our team members about branding your brilliance, monetizing your message or dominating your market, send an email to Support@Gamechangersint.com



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How to Research an Information Product

Do you want to know the key to creating a great information product?

It's this: **You need to start by doing great research.**

Problem is, plenty of would-be writers and product creators really don't know how to properly research a product. Worse yet, some of the advice given on marketing forums could land you in legal hot water.

That's because research is NOT about copying and pasting content and then "rewriting" it to create your product.

If you've ever heard that advice before, I want you to put it out of your head right now. Forget about it. Shun it. Don't even think about trying to use that advice to create your next product, unless you like the idea of spending the next few years and tens of thousands of dollars fighting off copyright cases in court.

So what should you do instead?

Read this report! Because in just a few minutes –

You'll discover the simple five-step process for researching your next information product the RIGHT way.

Not only will this process make researching your product a breeze, but it will also help ensure you have a factually accurate, useful and original product!

I'll get to those five steps in just a moment. But first, let's go over the basic rules every product creator ought to know...

Understand the Golden Rules of Good Research

You've got a topic in hand. You've probably created a rough outline so that you know what to research. But before you jump in, I'd like you to read, understand and use these three rules of good research...

Rule 1: Use Credible Sources

Just about anyone can stick a site up on the internet. Some of these sites will even look impressively professional, credible and trustworthy. If you were to judge these sites just based on appearances alone, you'd assume they were credible.

Yet people can say anything they want about their qualifications. They can say anything they want about the topic – even if it’s completely inaccurate or even fraudulent. Some people do it because they confuse their facts as opinions. Others do it because they’re lazy in their own research. And others do it intentionally for whatever reason.

That’s why you need to stick with credible sources only. Here’s what I’m referring to:

- **News sites.**

These are known journalistic sites like the New York Times, the BBC, CNN, the Washington Post and a whole host of others. There are perhaps thousands of these sites online. Just be sure you’re looking at factual articles from journalists, as opposed to the editorial (opinion) pages of these sites.

- **Academic and research journals.**

You can find these scholarly articles here: <http://scholar.google.com/>.

A word of warning: Some people attach the name “journal” to their sites and publications in hopes that their information appears more credible. The journals I’m referring to are well-known journals, such as the Journal of Psychology or the Journal of Exercise Physiology.

The key here is that the journal is full of scientific research from university professors and other qualified researchers. And better yet, the journal should be “peer reviewed” – that means that other professors and researchers review the studies and papers contained within each issue of the journal.

- **University sites.**

Yet another good place to get good information is from university websites.

Tip: Keep in mind that only recognized educational institutions get the .edu extension on their domain name. So if you’re looking at two sites – one called Harvard.com and the other Harvard.edu -- ignore the .com name and go to the .edu site, because that’s the official university site.

Keep the following two points in mind:

1. Visit credible university sites online. Not every .edu website contains credible information. That’s why you need to focus on websites from

known institutions, like Harvard, Yale, the University of Michigan, the University of Chicago, MIT, Stanford, Princeton and so on.

Avoid universities and schools that you've never heard of, especially those that offer online courses only.

2. Refer to credible pages only. Keep in mind that many universities offer their students a free web page on the university's website.

Example: You might see a Harvard.edu web page, but the page could just be a student's personal page. These pages aren't monitored nor reviewed by anyone. Thus these pages aren't any different than some unknown person putting up a blog at LiveJournal.com.

Point is, make sure the pages you're reading were created directly by professors, researchers or other known experts in the field. Usually there's some indication on the page about who wrote it, such as a byline at the end of an article that includes a professor's name, credentials and department.

- **Other known authority sites.**

No matter what niche you're in, there are probably several known authority sites in your niche. These are sites that you know will always give you good information.

Example: If you're writing about health topics, then you can get good information from hospital sites (like the Mayo Clinic site) as well as known authority sites like WebMD.com. You might also visit the online version of notable print publications, such as Health magazine's health.com website.

- **Sites from known experts.**

Finally, you can also visit the individual sites of known experts in the field.

Example: If you wanted to learn about dog training, you might visit the site belonging to Cesar Milan (the Dog Whisperer). Or if you wanted to know about bodybuilding, you could visit sites belonging to the men who've recently won Mr. Olympia competitions.

Rule 2: Refer to Multiple Sources

The point here is that you can't just visit one credible site, grab the information and create your product. There are two problems with this:

- 1. You won't get the full picture.** Common sense, right? If you just go to one source, the author probably left bits and pieces of information out. And if you're not very familiar with the topic, you may not even realize anything is missing. Thus you'll pass on bad, incomplete information to your readers.

Point is, go to multiple sources in order to learn as much about the topic as possible. Just be sure all these sources are indeed credible.

- 2. Your product might sound like the source.** If you read just one source and then start writing, that one source is going to be floating through your head. Even if you take notes on this source and close your browser window, it's still going to be there in your head, fresh as ever. And that means you're likely to structure your writing in a way that looks very familiar to that source.

Instead, go to multiple sources and read a LOT of information on the topic. Then the topic will become yours. You'll become the expert. And that makes it easier for you to write from scratch, completely in your own words, without even a hint of being influenced by any single source.

So what do I mean by "multiple" sources?

Well, let's say you're writing a short section, such as 1000 words, on a sub-topic in your report. You should read and absorb at least three to six sources before you write this section.

Yes, that means that by the time you're finished with your product, you'll likely have consulted dozens of sources. That's a good thing.

Rule 3: Separate Fact from Opinion

I alluded to this just a bit earlier. Certain sites (like news sites) actually have separate editorial pages.

Sometimes the authors of these articles even state their opinions as facts, as a means of swaying you to their side of the argument. And likewise, sometimes you'll even see researchers or known experts stating opinions as facts, perhaps as a means of further establishing themselves as leaders in the field.

When you research your product, you want to stick with known facts. But in order to do this, you need to be able to tell fact from opinion. Here's how:

- **Look for evidence to support claims.** If a person makes a questionable claim and then sites a credible source, such as a scholarly article, then go directly to the scholarly source to verify the facts.
- **Keep an eye out for generalizations, exaggerations and hype.**

Example: If you see "black and white" statements, such as "All dieters do this..." or "NO dog will ever do this...", then it might be opinion. Truth is, things aren't always so black and white in the real world, as exceptions do exist.

- **Check multiple sources.** Again, if you're checking multiple credible sources, then it will become clear to you what's opinion and what's fact.

OK, now that you know the three golden rules of research, let's get down to the task of actually doing the research...

Research Your Product in Five Easy Steps

If you don't yet have an outline for your product, then you're actually going to go through these research steps twice. Specifically:

- 1. Do general research.** Let's say you want to create a product about bodybuilding. If you don't know anything about bodybuilding, then you're going to need to research the topic, in general, just to be able to create a basic outline. In other words, you're going to read all sorts of articles and other information that give you an overview of bodybuilding.

Once you have your general outline created, then you move on to the second phase...

- 2. Do specific research.** Now you need to research all the specific topics and sub-topics on your outline.

So, to continue with our bodybuilding example, you'd need to now research the various chapters of your product, such as bodybuilding nutrition. You'd then look even more closely at your sub-topics, such as the importance of protein for bodybuilders, the importance of water, the importance of meal timing and so on.

Tip: As you do this research, you'll become more familiar with the topic. That means that your original outline will likely get expanded a bit, because you'll become familiar with the broad range of topics you need to address in order to adequately cover your topic.

So whether you're doing "phase 1" or "phase 2" research, the actual five-step process is still the same. Here's how to do it...

Step 1: Google Multiple Search Words

You can start your search in Google, since this will help you uncover a wide range of sources. But again, just be sure that you're focusing on getting your materials from credible sources.

The key to getting good results is to input a wide variety of search terms, which should result in you seeing a wider variety of sites.

Example: Let's suppose you wanted to research weight loss for your upcoming product. And for starters, perhaps you just want to get an overview of the topic, so for the moment you're just searching words related to weight loss. Here's an example of the variety of related words you'd want to input into Google:

- Weight loss
- Lose weight
- Diet (dieting)
- Lose fat
- Cut fat
- Burn fat
- Dieting and exercise
- Low calorie diet
- Get rid of fat
- Burn calories
- How to lose weight
- How to diet

And so on. The more variety you introduce into your search terms, the more variety you'll get in the results.

Example: Let me give you another example. Let's suppose you're researching how to housetrain a puppy. You might look up these terms:

- Housetraining
- Housebreaking
- Housetraining a puppy
- Housetraining a dog
- Housebreaking a puppy
- Housebreaking a dog
- Potty training a puppy
- Potty training a dog
- Kennel training a puppy
- Kennel training a dog
- Paper training a puppy
- Paper training a dog
- How to housetrain a puppy
- How to housebreak a dog

And so on – once again, you can see that a wide variety of search terms will introduce a wider variety of information and research to you.

Tip: If you want even more sites and references, then input these same search terms into another search engine, such as Yahoo!, which will give you just slightly different results.

Sometimes people or institutions provide great (credible) information, but perhaps they're just not very good getting at getting ranked well in the search engines. That's why you should always dig beyond the first page or two of Google and do some deep research (several pages in). And that's also why you should take a look at the paid (sponsored) ads which appear at the top and along the right side of the regular results.

On the other side of the coin, you may find that some sites rank well in Google for the search terms you're inputting. However, do NOT confuse good rankings with good information. Do not confuse top sites for authority sites.

Take a site like EzineArticles.com, for example. This site is an article directory. The articles tend to be better written than some directories, simply because real human editors look at the articles before accepting them into the directory. However, that doesn't mean that these articles are fact-checked. And so you can definitely get some bogus information from these sorts of sites. Point is, unless you KNOW the author is an expert in the field, don't bother even reading these articles.

Another site you'll see come up a lot in your research is Wikipedia.com. This is a good starting point to get an overview of the topic, but you should NOT depend on this site.

That's because it's member-written and moderated. That means that anyone – even you or I – could go into the site and write an article about a topic.

Now, most of the time the members are very conscientious. If they see that someone has provided false information, they'll change it. If they see that the information is unsupported, they'll ask for people to provide proof or evidence. But nonetheless, you need to always keep in mind that the people who created the articles are NOT necessarily experts on the topic.

You'll note that I did mention that Wikipedia can be a good starting place. That's because many article authors DO cite their references. So if you scan down to the bottom of any article, you'll likely find links to authority sites, such as a link to a scholarly article, an expert's site or another credible reference.

Tip: Just be sure you go to these sites directly and read the information, rather than relying on a Wikipedia author's interpretation of the information.

Step 2: Review Scholarly Journals

As mentioned in the Golden Rules of Research at the beginning of the report, you need to turn to scholarly journals whenever possible.

Let me give you a listing of places you can find information about these journals:

- <http://www.elsevier.com>
- <http://www.academicjournals.org/>
- <http://www.jstor.org/>
- <http://www.oxfordjournals.org/>
- <http://www.doaj.org>
- <http://scholar.google.com/>

Tip: If you have access to a university library's online catalog, then you can also start your research there. These catalogs should contain separate databases where you can search for academic and research journals. Best of all, if you can't find the full journal article online, you can run to the library and get yourself a photocopy of it.

Now, maybe you're thinking that your product is pretty basic, maybe even a "how to" report, so you can't really imagine why you'd need to reference and cite scholarly journals.

Well, for starters, it makes your product more credible. It shows you're willing to go the extra mile to provide good information for your readers. And it establishes you as a trustworthy expert in your readers' eyes.

You can see why it's important. But perhaps you're still wondering how you'd include scholarly works in your particular product. So let me give you some examples...

Examples:

- You're writing a dieting report. You can cite research articles which talk about how caffeine affects weight loss.
- You're creating a product about dog training. You can cite research which talks about how dog's perceive the world differently from us, and how that affects the way you must train them.
- You're writing a report about organic gardening. You can cite research which talks about the harmful effects of using traditional, harsh insecticides and herbicides on plants.
- You want to write a report about online marketing. You might open your report with statistics from economists regarding the state of the current economy as well as forecasts for the near future.

See what I mean?

No matter what your topic, there's a good chance that you can indeed use scholarly works to support and expand on your information. And in particular, these journals are good places to turn to when you need statistics, hard facts and other data.

Step 3: Check Other Credible Sources

Your Google search and search of academic articles likely put plenty of good information in front of you. It probably also made you aware of many of the experts in your niche. Now your next step is to go to other sources, like [Amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com), and see if these known experts have published books on the topic.

The good thing about going to Amazon.com is that many books are already printed in the Kindle marketplace. So if you have a Kindle device, then you can buy, download and start reading the book immediately – no waiting for the book to come by mail.

You'll note that I said you should see if any known experts have published books. That point is important. That's because self-publishing is very easy these days. All one has

to do is go to Lulu.com, CreateSpace.com or countless other self-publishing sites to get their book published.

Problem is, self-published work doesn't go through any type of filter. There's no publishing house checking it for quality. There probably isn't a fact-checker or editor of any kind. Thus anyone can self-publish a book. And indeed, many people do it for the sole reason for establishing credibility in their niche.

My point here is that you should not confuse having a published book with being an expert in the field. That simply isn't the case anymore. That's why you should only pay attention to published books from credible experts and other known authors.

Example: "Jim Bob the Dog Trainer" has a physical book for sale on Amazon.com. If you've never heard of Jim Bob, then skip it. Instead, buy a book from a known dog-training expert, like Cesar Milan.

Tip: Kindle also carries many magazine titles on its device, so you can also turn to credible magazines for information. But again, the word "credible" is the key. Stick with long-established magazines that are known for publishing solid information. For example, Readers Digest may not be a scholarly magazine, but they do publish articles from known experts, such as Dr. Oz.

Step 4: Takes Notes

At this point you should have a wide variety of information and references laid out in front of you for your various topics and subtopics.

As mentioned in the beginning of this report, you need to be very careful that you do *not* merely "rewrite" any of your sources.

Listen, I'm not a lawyer, so if you want to discuss this further, I suggest you chat with your own attorney about this topic. However, the point I want to make is that merely "rewriting" someone else's content does NOT keep you safe from the long arm of the law.

Example: Think "derivative works" here. If I wrote a story about a boy wizard named Larry Cotter, you can bet J.K. Rowling's attorneys would descend on me like vultures on a carcass. No, I didn't name the book Harry Potter. But if it's clear that I'm using Rowling's work, you can bet I'll get a cease and desist (if I'm lucky) or I'll get dragged into court.

The reason I bring this up is because some “writers” offer the advice that all you need to do to be safe is rewrite your source so that it “passes Copyscape” (which refers to Copyscape.com). But that’s not always true. You can get slapped for plagiarism even if your writing “passes Copyscape”.

Sounds a bit tricky, right? And a bit hard to interpret.

So that’s why I suggest you totally forget about any idea of merely “rewriting” someone else’s work. Instead, the goal of all of this research is for you to become an expert of sorts on the topic. You need to read, absorb and fully understand the topic. Because once you know the topic inside and out, then you can simply write about it off the top of your head, completely in your own words.

Now, in order to get to that point, you’ll need to do two things:

- 1. Research multiple sources.** I mentioned this earlier. But the fact is, the more you read on your topic, the better you’ll understand this topic. You’ll have a deeper understanding, rather than just “getting by” with enough knowledge.
- 2. Take notes.** By this I mean you take actual notes. You can open up a fresh word processor and type in these notes. You can also use a tool like Dragon Naturally Speaking, which converts your speech to text. Or if you like to do it the old fashioned way, you can even take notes by hand.

Whatever you do, however, do NOT create your notes by merely copying and pasting other people’s work. The idea here is to read your references, think about them, and then type or write your notes in your OWN words.

You see, you’re going to create your product completely in your own words – so you might as well start by writing your notes in your own words. Plus, writing out notes on a topic helps you remember and process this information. And that means that you’ll gain that deeper understanding that I talked about above.

Tip: Another good way to really understand material is to teach it to someone else. So if you’re not much of a note taker, no problem. Just sit a friend down and “teach” this person all about the topic. Be sure to encourage your friend to ask questions, because this will help you discover the gaps in your research.

As you’re taking notes, I want you to really THINK about the topic. As you do so, take notes about other things you could include in your product, such as:

- **Examples to help clarify complex concepts.** These are your OWN examples, not examples you read anywhere else.
- **Stories to make the content more memorable.** You can tell a story about yourself, you can tell a story about a fictional character, you can even tell a well-known story (such as a Bible parable or a storyline from a movie) to help clarify a concept or even make a point.

Just don't tell the same stories you read somewhere else. Instead, think for yourself – what kind of story could you tell to help drive your point home?

Example: If you're creating a weight loss report, then you might retell the well-known story of the "Tortoise and the Hare." Then you can tie story this into weight loss, saying that "slow and steady wins the race" when it comes to dieting, too.

- **Tips to add value to the content.** Again, the key here is to think up your own tips, not those you read elsewhere. This is easiest if you have some personal experience with the topic you're writing about.

Example: If you're writing about healthy eating, then you may share your tips on what food substitutes are actually worth trying, and which ones can mess up a recipe.

Got it? The key here is independent thinking.

Make this information yours, and you'll come up with a completely unique product, one that your readers might happily describe as fresh and original!

But you're not quite ready to write just yet. Read on...

Step 5: Interview Experts

If you want to truly have a "fresh and original" product, one that really stands out from the competitors' products – then you'll definitely want to take this step of interviewing experts.

Think about it: You don't have to rely on the information that's already floating around the web. Instead, you can get fresh information, directly from the experts who're working in the field every day.

Here's what types of experts I'm talking about:

- **Known experts.** These are the people who're already well-known, credible experts in the niche. These are the folks that have the most popular blogs, books, white papers and other information. These are the folks who're working in the niche every day – and your target market would probably recognize the names of these experts.
- **Researchers and scholars.** These are the university professors, doctors and researchers who're writing the scholarly articles you found during the course of your research.
- **Authority figures.** These people don't necessarily have known names, but they are experts and authority figures nonetheless.
Example: If you're writing a book about a health topic, then you might interview a doctor. Or if you're writing about personal safety, you might interview a police officer.
- **People with good credentials.** These are people who are uniquely qualified to talk about a certain subject, usually because they've had success in the field. They may even have a related degree or won awards.

Example: If you were creating a report about how to publish a book, then interviewing successfully published authors is a good move. Or if you want to write a book about bodybuilding, then interview people who've won bodybuilding competitions. Or if you want to write about gardening, then interview the gardeners in the "Master Gardener" group in your local area.

Get the point? You just need to find people who have plenty of experience and success in the field. Here's how to find and approach these folks...

a. Find the Experts

If you've already completed the first three steps in this report, then you have your initial list of experts. These are the authors of all the credible articles, scholarly papers, books, blogs and other expert information.

However, you don't have to limit yourself to these folks.

Instead, think local. Who in your local area can you contact? This person doesn't even need to have a web presence, a published book or anything else. He or she just needs to be an authority figure or person who's uniquely qualified to discuss the topic (as mentioned above).

Let me give you a few more examples:

- If you're writing a book about the entrepreneur mindset, then talk to local business owners in your area.
- If you're writing a book about dogs, interview veterinarians, dog trainers, groomers, breeders and those who manage rescue shelters.
- If you're writing a book about yoga, interview a yoga instructor. You might also interview a doctor (perhaps a holistic doctor) to discuss the health benefits of yoga.

Point is, there are experts all around you, both online and offline.

b. Request an Interview

The reason I ask you to consider a variety of experts is because not everyone will say yes to your request.

Indeed, those experts who DO have an online presence and/or a popular book are likely to get inundated with requests.

People want to interview them, they want these experts to use their social influence to promote the requester's product, etc. You may even have a hard time reaching them directly, as they'll have "gate keepers" set up to filter all the requests.

On the flip side, your local yoga instructor or veterinarians probably aren't slammed with interview requests. Yes, these folks are busy with their own businesses and their own lives, but getting an interview request is a fairly novel thing. It's actually quite flattering, which makes it all the more likely that this person will say yes.

Regardless of whether you're requesting an interview from the biggest expert in your niche or the small-town business, you need to keep the following in mind: Consider using something other than email to make that initial contact.

You see, people get lots of email. And the big experts in your niche get lots of requests by email. Thus a request coming through another channel often gets more attention.

This “other channel” might include the postal mail, the telephone, Facebook, a private message on a forum or something else that may have less “noise” than email.

Tip: If you want to interview someone locally, then pick up the phone or stop by in person to make your interview request.

Let me give you a sample message you might send to this person. This sample will also give you an idea of what to say on the phone:

Subject line: I'd like to interview you, [name]

Alternative subject line: I'd like to feature you in an upcoming book

Dear [first name],

Hello, my name is [your name], and I'm writing a book about [describe topic here]. Since you're a well-known expert in the field of [niche description], I'd like to interview you to get your thoughts about [specific topic].

In exchange for about 10-15 minutes of your time, you'll get a byline within the book, which will list your name and website.

You can also use this exposure to further build your own credibility, since you'll have an interview published in a reputable book.

We can do the interview via email or on the phone, whichever is better for you.

You can reply to this email or call me at [phone number] to let me know your preference or to ask any questions you might have.

I look forward to hearing from you!

[Your name]

One note: If YOU have some type of credentials that would make it more likely that someone would say yes to your interview request, then be sure to mention these credentials.

Examples:

- Are you a former journalist?
- Are you already known in the niche, such as by publishing a popular blog?
- Have you already published a book in the niche?
- Have you already interviewed other experts in the niche?

Also, note that the above sample email accomplishes the following:

- **Gets to the point quickly.** Your interviewee doesn't need to know your entire life story. Yes, you should mention facts that add to your credibility. However, you need to get to the point as quickly as possible and let the person know why you're contacting him or her.
- **Lets the interviewee know what's in it for him or her.** The interviewee is likely to feel flattered just for being asked to do an interview. But you also want to let him know what else he gets, such as byline in the book, extra publicity, etc. Maybe you'll even offer something extra, like publishing his entire interview on your blog.
- **Makes it easy for the interviewee to say yes.**

First off, you don't want to take up too much of your interviewee's time. As you'll note above, the email requests 10 or 15 minutes. That should be enough to get a few solid questions answered.

Secondly, you should give your interviewee a choice of doing the interview by phone or email. Some people hate talking on the phone. Some people hate typing. So let your experts choose their preferred method.

Overall, just remember that this person is doing YOU a favor. So be courteous, professional and polite in all your dealings with this person. That applies even if the person turns your interview request down.

c. Follow Up With Your Interviewee

For those who do agree to your request, be sure to always follow up with a thank you. An email thank you is okay if the person has a presence predominantly online. But if this is a local expert, then drop a thank you card in the mail.

Before you complete your product, show the relevant section to your interviewee. This includes the interview itself (where applicable, if you intend to present it nearly as-is) or how you summarized your interview with the expert. (This would be the case if you're taking a more journalistic perspective.) It also includes the expert's byline. You'll want to get approval for all of this before you publish your product.

Finally, once the product is complete, be sure to send all your interviewees a complimentary copy of the book. Do take this opportunity to once again thank your interviewee for agreeing to do the interview.

Now let's wrap things up...

Conclusion

And there you have it – the golden rules of research plus my proven five-step process for researching an information product online.

Let's quickly recap these simple steps:

Step 1: Google Multiple Search Terms. You want to use multiple, credible sources. And one way to find multiple sources is to start your search with multiple (related) search terms.

Step 2: Review Scholarly Journals. Preferably, keep yourself focused on peer-reviewed journals with research coming from established universities and other centers of research (like hospitals).

Step 3: Refer to Other Sources. This includes paid products, such as books from experts on Amazon.

Step 4: Take Notes. The key here is to think independently about what you're reading. This starts by taking notes in your own words and adding in your own examples, tips and stories.

Step 5: Interview Experts. Finally, you can make your product really stand out by interviewing experts.

That's your complete blueprint to doing your research the RIGHT way so you end up with a fresh product.

Now there's only one thing left for you to do – put this blueprint to work immediately!

27 Red-Hot Ideas For Your Next Information Product

There are so many different “kinds” of small reports that you can write and when you mix-n-match them with different “topics”, you can create dozens upon dozens of highly desirable resources to sell online.

This short report will examine twenty-seven different “kinds” of small reports (along with examples) that you can create. Use this list to brainstorm ideas for your next small report (and all those to follow!)

1. How-To Tutorial

Our index begins with the classic “how-to” tutorial. This style of report is organized in a systematic, step-by-step approach to accomplishing a task. The steps are most commonly organized in chronological order. (I.E. Step One is..., Step Two is..., etc.). These are generally known as “*systems*”, “*formulas*”, “*checklists*” or “*blueprints*”.

A few examples include –

- 1) How to Design a Web Page in 5 Easy Steps
 - 2) How to Lose 10 Pounds in 10 Days
 - 3) How to Meet The Woman Of Your Dreams
 - 4) How to Make Your First \$1,000 Online
 - 5) How to Teach A Sunday School Class
 - 6) How to Make a Small Fortune Online With Small Reports
- (Sound Familiar? 😊)

2. Frequently Asked Questions

Another style of report is what I’ve labeled, “*frequently asked questions*”. In this model, you would take 10-20 of the most asked questions about a particular topic and answer them in your content. This is one of the easiest kinds of small reports to create because outlining is simple due to the Q&A style:

1. List the question.
2. Answer it.

While you’ll want create a better title than the ones below, here are just a few ideas for how this kind of small report might be created –

- 7) Top 20 Questions About Home-schooling
- 8) Top 20 Questions About Generating Site Traffic
- 9) Top 20 Questions About Saving A Marriage
- 10) Top 20 Questions About Adopting A Child
- 11) Top 20 Questions About Starting A Membership Site
- 12) Top 20 Questions About Self-Publishing

3. Interview

Moving from questions that YOU answer to questions that SOMEONE ELSE answers is another way to write a small report. An "interview" small report is, not surprisingly, a series of questions that you pose to one or more qualified experts to create the content you'll be selling.

(Reasons why experts would do this for you include: free publicity for their web site or business, rights to the completed report or paid compensation.)

Again, these aren't "titles" for your small report, but these are some things you might do for a handful of different topics –

- 13) Ask a fitness trainer questions about weight loss.
- 14) Ask a charity chairman questions about fundraising.
- 15) Ask a travel agent questions about discount travel.
- 16) Ask a loan officer questions about securing a mortgage.
- 17) Ask a real estate broker questions about selling/buying a home.

4. List

Another very popular kind of small report is what I've labeled the "list". It is simply a listing of ways, strategies, tips, secrets, tactics, techniques, habits, exercises, principles, etc. with a detailed description of each entry to the list.

Some examples of this kind of small report include –

- 18) 7 Ways To Automatically Burn More Calories
- 19) 5 Little Known Weight Loss Strategies
- 20) 50 Email Marketing Best Practices
- 21) The 3 "Advantages" You Need To Beat Your Tennis Rivals
- 22) Top 10 Time Management Tips You've NEVER Been Told

5. Case Study

Next on our list of “types” of small reports is the “case study” model. This would consist of you profiling different successful examples of accomplishing a common task. In other words, you’d show how several different people (including or not including yourself) have achieved the desired result. The great thing about this kind of small report is the variety of different methods people use in attaining similar results. Your readers will likely “connect” with one or more of the examples and get a sense of motivation and empowerment to reach their goal as well. Bottom line: you’ve got a satisfied customer.

A few examples include (these are ideas, not titles) –

- 23) Learn How 7 Stay-At-Home Moms Each Lost 20 Pounds
- 24) The Machine Weight Workouts of 7 Top Fitness Trainers
- 25) Outreach Program Plans of the 10 Fastest Growing Churches
- 26) 10 Affiliate Marketing Campaigns You Can Legally “Steal”
And Use to Promote Any Program You Want

6. Resource Directory

The next kind of small report is the “resource directory”. That is, you would include a group of related entries of resources (usually indexed categorically and then alphabetically) along with their contact information such as web site, phone number and or mailing/physical address.

Note: Several years ago when WIFI access to the Internet was almost non-existent, I wanted to travel more – which meant taking my business on the road. I purchased one of these “resource style” reports online which highlighted different resources available for connecting to the Internet, including a listing of major campgrounds (since I was in an RV this was important to me!) that offered WIFI access. I paid around thirty bucks for the short report ... and loved it.

A few examples of this kind of small report would include –

- 27) The New England Bed And Breakfast Guide
- 28) The Wholesaler’s Resource Guide for Import
- 29) The Christian Publisher’s Resource Guide
- 30) The Product Duplication and Fulfillment Source Book
- 31) The 101 Most Fun “Kid Friendly” Web Sites
- 32) The Top 50 Recommended Home-Schooling Resources

7. Idea Generators

Up next we have the “*idea generators*” style of small report. This particular kind of report is a best described as “*a series of prompts to help the reader brainstorm ideas*”.

Here are a few different examples –

- 33) 101 Idea Prompts for Fiction Writers
- 34) 75 Starter Questions for Small Group Discussion
- 35) 97 Winning Ad Headlines For Your Salesletter Swipe File
- 36) 101 Best Prayer Starters For New Christians
- 37) 101 Fill-In-The-Blank Internet Auction Templates
- 38) The Ultimate Book of Ideas for Home-Schoolers

8. The First Year

Up next is what I’ve labeled “the first year”. In this kind of small report, you’d walk a newcomer through the first 12 months of a particular endeavor. What beginner standing on the threshold of something completely new to them wouldn’t want the wisdom of what to expect and how to successfully navigate through the foundation period?

You could chronicle the first year with a calendar of milestones and guideposts, pitfalls to avoid, shortcuts to take and so forth.

Some examples are –

- 39) The First Year of Parenting
- 40) The First Year of Home-schooling
- 41) The First Year of College
- 42) The First Year of Internet Business
- 43) The First Year of Life After Loss of Loved One
- 44) The First Year of Teaching
- 45) The First Year of Youth Ministry
- 46) The First Year of Living With M.S.

9. Niche Business

One of the biggest mistakes that most “internet marketers” make is trying to create information products to sell to other internet marketers. It’s a cycle that just loops over and over again. Fortunately for you, while everyone else is competing with each other, you have an opportunity to teach “niches” how to market. Instead of selling

marketing information to other marketers, teach niche business owners how to market. ALL business owners, regardless of what their business is, need more customers.

Note: What's interesting about this "kind" of small report is the fact that you can make a few changes and "niche it" for numerous different topics. (I.E. "Bookstore Owner's Guide to Marketing", "Real Estate Agent's Guide to Marketing", "Hair Salon Owner's Guide to Marketing", etc.)

Some examples are –

- 47) The Christian Bookstore Owner's Guide To Marketing
- 48) The Pet Store Owner's Guide To Marketing
- 49) The Personal Trainer's Guide To Getting More Clients
- 50) How To Quickly And Easily Get More Real Estate Referrals
- 51) A Crash Course In Free Publicity For Independent Singers
- 52) A 10-Day Plan For Promoting Your Craft Show

10. The Bridge

I've labeled this next kind of small report "the bridge". The idea is to combine two unrelated topics into one small report. Think of it this way: there are universal wants and needs (I.E. To lose weight and get in shape) that are applicable to virtually ALL markets. Most people want to make more money, be successful, live happily, have great relationships, etc. These are universal pursuits. The idea here is to bring those universal pursuits into the arena of your specific field of interest or expertise.

Some examples are –

- 53) Time Management For Single Parents
- 54) The Internet Marketer's Diet
- 55) How To Make Money Selling Baseball Cards on Ebay®
- 56) The Educator's Guide to Becoming A High-Paid Public Speaker
- 57) Success Secrets For Small Business Owners
- 58) The Home-Schoolers Guide To Working At Home

11. Shortcuts

Who among us wouldn't like to take shortcuts (assuming they don't have drawbacks) to achieve a desired result faster, easier or better? The short answer is: no one. With this kind of small report you would focus on ways to save time or effort in accomplishing a specific task without sacrificing any benefits or quality.

Some examples are –

- 59) 17 Money-Saving Shortcuts For Buying A New Home
- 60) 10 Shortcuts To Mastering Your Golf Game
- 61) Top 10 Shortcuts For Using Adobe® Photoshop®
- 62) 5 Simple Shortcuts For Acing The SAT
- 63) 7 Shortcuts For Planning The Perfect Wedding
- 64) Shortcuts For Writers: How To Write Faster, Easier and Better

12. Advanced Guide

To an extent we've already talked about focusing your small report on "beginners" (See "The First Year" above), but what about those who have an elevated state of experience or knowledge? There is a huge market for "advanced" information in just about every field. In the internet information age this is especially the case as more and more people have access to basic steps (that have usually been rehashed, restated and repackaged in a thousand different ways!) creating a sort of traffic jam with little higher learning available in many areas.

So, creating a small report focused on providing information for the experienced or advanced user is another great idea.

Note: To create a great one-two punch, why not write a "beginner's" report on a topic and then create an "advanced" report on the same topic. Then, you are able to "graduate" your beginners to the advanced report after they've read the first one.

Some examples are –

- 65) A Field Guide To Advanced Bird Watching
- 66) The Advanced Guide To Playing Poker
- 67) Advanced Affiliate Marketing Strategies
- 68) Tennis Drills For The Advanced Player
- 69) 7 Advanced Selling Strategies For The Car Industry
- 70) Advanced Madden 07® Strategies: How To Beat Anyone, Anywhere, Anytime!

13. Time Frame

With this kind of small report you would focus most of your "positioning" on the TIME FRAME in which the task can be completed. Everything would be structured towards seeing results within a specific period of time; that would be the selling point. More

important than getting results is knowing how long it's going to take to get those results (assuming it's not long! ☺).

Case Study: My friend Jim Edwards did this when he created a course entitled, "How To Write An Ebook In 7 Days". It was a huge smash hit. There were NUMEROUS courses available at the time that taught how to write ebooks, but his was the first that emphasized a specific time frame. The point: you can sell the same topic to a crowded marketplace if you stress a time period!

Some examples are –

- 71) How To Make Money Online In 10 Days Or Less
- 72) The 7-Day Weight Loss Plan
- 73) Rapid Restoration: Save Your Marriage In The Next 24 Hours
- 74) The Ultimate Guide To Writing Your Book in 30 Days
- 75) 21 Days To Breaking Any Habit, Addiction or Weakness
- 76) How To Sell Your House In 2 Weeks Or Less

14. Personal Profile

What's more likely to get your attention: an overweight friend who says "I've got some great information on losing weight" or a thin friend who used to be overweight who says "let me show you how I lost the weight?" Obviously unless you're suffering from delirium, the thin friend gets your vote. Why? Because when we see that someone has achieved the results we'd like to achieve, there is credibility.

By creating a small report that reveals and explains how you accomplished a specific task that others want to accomplish you should have an instant hit on your hands. In this kind of small report, simply chronicle what you did.

Some examples are –

- 77) How I Lost 20 Pounds Without Pills, Potions and Plans
- 78) How I Made \$26,234 In One Week As An Unknown Marketer
- 79) How I Shaved 10 Strokes Off My Golf Score...And You Can Too!
- 80) How I Got My First Book Published And Into Bookstores Everywhere
- 81) How I Raised \$1,000,000 For Our Local Charity
- 82) How I Beat Cancer Naturally And Safely

15. Planner

Some of my most popular small reports ever have been “planners”. For our purposes, a “planner” is simply a set of activities arranged in a daily schedule as a sort of checklist to work through. Why do people love them? Because it allows them to stay on track. They see a set of action steps to complete for Monday, then Tuesday, then Wednesday and so forth. Most people find it much easier to actually do something when it’s arranged in this kind of order.

Note: This is one of my top recommendations for a small report.

Every small report author should write at least one of these “planners” to sell online.

Some examples are –

- 83) The 7-Day Checklist For Writing A Small Report
- 84) The 31-Day Guide To Powerful Prayer
- 85) The Navy Seal’s 7-Day Ab Workout
- 86) The 4-Week Wedding Planner And Organizer
- 87) The Smart Home-Schooler’s Daily Schedule
- 88) 33 Days To Internet Marketing Success

16. What To Do When

This is another classic example of the “problem / solution” format. It’s just expressed in a different way. The idea here is to inform the reader what they should do when they find themselves facing a specific problem that can still be remedied.

A key is to focus on as specific information as possible in your title.

I.E. It’s not “What To Do When You Want To Lose Weight”, but rather “What To Do When You Want To Lose That Last 5 Pounds”.

Some examples are –

- 89) What To Do When You Need To Lose That Last 5 Pounds
- 90) What To Do When You’re Raising A Strong-Willed Child
- 91) What To Do When Your Spouse Wants A Divorce
- 92) What To Do When You Worry Too Much
- 93) What To Do When Someone You Love Is Battling Addiction
- 94) What To Do When You Can’t Get Pregnant

17. Pop Culture Lessons

This kind of small report is for the creative writer. If you're not creative, then feel free to move on to #18. ☺ The idea here is to share lessons that you've gleaned from pop culture. (I.E. Movies, music, lifestyles, fashion, entertainment, cooking, etc.)

One of the reasons why this is usually a very good seller is because of its inherent ability to create curiosity.

- What email marketer wouldn't want to know Santa Claus' secrets of list-building?
- What dieter wouldn't be interested to learn how watching American Idol can help them lose weight?
- What golfer wouldn't be enticed enough to see what the "Captain Jack Sparrow techniques" are?

The point is, there are built-in opportunities to grab attention (and get sales!) by including pop culture lessons as the focus of your small report.

Some examples are –

- 95) 3 Word-Of-Mouth Marketing Lessons From The Academy Awards
- 96) What I Learned From Victoria's Secret About Wooing Women
- 97) The American Idol Fan's Guide To Relationships
- 98) The Survivor Success Model For Achieving Your Dreams
- 99) How To Turn "You're Fired" Into "You're Hired"
- 100) Everything I Know About Dieting I Learned From Shrek

18. Current Events Tie-In

Another great idea for your next small report is to tie-in the content to an upcoming holiday or event. The reason this is such an effective report is because it has a natural "urgency" trigger. In other words, the potential customer needs to buy your small report NOW in order to reap the benefits by the imposed deadline (I.E. The date of the event or holiday).

Some examples are –

- 101) How To Lose 10 Pounds Before Spring Break
- 102) 17 Ways To Save Money On Christmas Gifts
- 103) How To Take The Summer Vacation Of Your Dreams ... For Free
- 104) How To Land The Deal Of A Century At This Year's Convention

- 105) 10 Ways To Raise Funds Before April 15th
- 106) The Last-Minute Shopper's Guide For Planning A Great Anniversary

19. Save Money

There are two big opportunities that I feel are missing in most "niche" marketing as far as topics for any kind of product (especially "small reports"). I'll discuss the second one next. For now, I want to mention the category of "save money". The idea here is to create a small report that teaches the reader how to save money or completely eliminate the cost that is associated with a particular activity.

Think about the appeal of this particular kind of small report –

***You're offering the reader the opportunity
to reduce (sometimes GREATLY reduce) the costs
associated with something they are going to do anyway!***

Who wouldn't pay \$10 for your small report if it's going to save them \$20, \$50, \$100 or even more? Who wouldn't pay \$10 for your small report if it's going to allow them to reduce their costs EVERY TIME they complete a particular task or participate in a particular activity?

Two words for you: gold mine.

Some examples are –

- 106) How To Save At Least 25% On Your Grocery Bill
- 107) How To Take A Cruise Without Spending Any Money
- 108) 7 "Tricks" For Getting A Homeowner To Lower The Asking Price
- 109) How To Buy A New Car Below The Dealer Invoice
- 110) The Golfer's Guide To Buying Equipment At Wholesale Prices
- 111) 5 Sure-Fire Ways To Save Money On Your Home-Schooling

20. Make Money

The other untapped opportunity is teaching people how to "make money" doing something they are already going to do anyway. Who wouldn't want to make money with their favorite hobby? Who wouldn't be interested in generating cash doing something they enjoy? Who wouldn't want to get paid to do something they are already going to do?

Two more words for you: gold mine.

When you find a passion of your target audience and then deliver a small report that teaches them how to make money from that passion, you're certain to have a hit on your hands.

Some examples are –

- 112) How To Make Money Selling Baseball Cards On Ebay®
- 113) How To Make Money Selling Hard To Find Books On Ebay®
- 114) How To Write An Infoproduct About Lowering Your Golf Score
- 115) How To Start A Christian Bookstore With Virtually No Budget
- 116) How To Turn Your Hobby Into An Internet Business
- 117) How To Publish A Home-Schooling Newsletter For Fun And Profit

21. Faster And Easier

Another kind of small report is what I've labeled "faster and easier". The idea here is to position your report as a resource that reveals information to enable the reader to accomplish some task faster and/or easier than they were previously able to do.

Case Study: There are numerous information based products out there that teach you how to quickly get listed in the search engines. Traditionally, this took weeks even months to accomplish, now it can be done in days and even hours based on techniques shared in some of these courses.

Some examples are –

- 118) 7 Ways To Get Faster Results From Your Loan Request
- 119) How To Re-String Your Tennis Racket In Half The time
- 120) The Easiest Way To Get Traffic To Your Web Site
- 121) The Easiest Way To Lose 5 Pounds
- 122) 5 Simple Strategies For Reaching Your Goals Faster
- 123) How To Skip A Few Rungs As You Climb The Corporate Ladder

22. Barriers And Mistakes

With virtually any pursuit in life there are potential pitfalls and common blunders associated with that pursuit. The old adage is, "an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure" and there is some truth to that. A properly positioned small report highlighting barriers and mistakes (and how to avoid them!) would be another great option for you to consider.

Case Study: Chuck McCullough created an entire product (not just a "small report") around the concept of common mistakes that affiliate marketers make. It was a hugely popular product upon its release at AffiliateMistakes.com. (I have no affiliation whatsoever, just wanted to mention it as an example.)

Some examples are –

- 124) 7 Common Mistakes Homebuyers Make ... And How To Avoid Them
- 125) 10 Most Common Chess Mistakes ... And How To Fix Them
- 126) How To Overcome The 7 Barriers That All New Marketers Face
- 127) The 10 Hidden Barriers To Weight Loss No One Told You About
- 128) 7 Barriers To Healthy Relationships ... And How To Overcome Them
- 129) 5 Stupid Things People Do When Trying To Fix Their Finances

Note: Your mini-salesletter is very important for this kind of small report. You'll want to stress how easy it is to make mistakes and what kind of disadvantage the reader will face if they don't apply the strategies you share in the small report.

23. Turn Into

It's almost like magic: take something you've already got and turn it into something much more desirable. That's the idea behind this kind of small report. It's presented in the classic "how-to" format (I.E. Arranged in chronological steps).

Some examples are –

- 130) How To Turn 5 Paragraphs Into \$500 Month
- 131) How To Turn Your Hobby Into A Thriving Business
- 132) How To Turn An Interview Into A Job
- 133) How To Turn Your Worst Enemy Into Your Best Friend
- 134) How To Turn Your Worship Service Into An Everyday Lifestyle
- 135) How To Turn Your Relationship Into A Lifelong Romance

24. The 5-Minute Guide

The concept of "5-minutes" carries several highly desirable elements to it:

- (a) relief to a problem can be gained in just a few minutes,
- (b) slight changes that bring desirable results can be made in just a few minutes,

(c) an overview “working knowledge” of a process can be learned in just a few minutes.

With so many of life’s activities, we’d like a digest version ... we just want to know, in as few words as possible, how to do it. (Why do you think :08 Minute Abs® was so popular!)

Some examples are –

- 136) The 5-Minute Guide To Relieving Migraines
- 137) The 5-Minute Guide To Freeing Up Your Time
- 138) The 5-Minute Guide To Burning Extra Calories
- 139) The 5-Minute Guide To Using Your Digital Camera
- 140) The 5-Minute Guide To Influencing Others
- 141) The 5-Minute Guide To Organizing Your Life

25. Survival

There are times in life when, quite frankly, a solution to a problem isn’t possible. All marriages aren’t reconciled, all finances don’t recover and all heart attacks can’t be avoided. Sometimes difficult times do come and they must be dealt with. In the “survival” type of small report you would teach your readers how to deal with a problem that they cannot avoid.

Some examples are –

- 142) How To Survive Divorce And Learn To Love Again
- 143) How To Survive Bankruptcy And Rebound Financially
- 144) How To Survive A Heart Attack And Live Without Fear
- 145) How To Survive The Can-Spam Law And Still Profit With Email
- 146) How To Survive Menopause Without Destroying Your Relationships
- 147) How To Survive A Church Split And Still Lift Up Christ

26. Top Picks

With so much information available (we’ve got more flavors available than a Baskin Robbins® store on steroids! ☺) it can become difficult knowing what’s best. That’s why a “top picks” kind of small report is another solid idea for you to develop.

Stated simply, you would give your opinion as to what the top picks are within your topic. Obviously, it’s all about your unique sales proposition in selling the content. There’s a big difference between these two small report titles...

- 7 Places To Take Your Spouse In New England
- 7 Romantic New England Getaways Almost No One Knows About

Two words come to mind when I think of this option: Consumer Reports®. They are incredibly popular because people want an unbiased review and recommendation for something they are considering buying.

Some examples are –

- 148) 7 Romantic New England Getaways Almost No One Knows About
- 149) How To Spend Your \$100 Advertising Budget For Max Results
- 150) The 3 Best Ways To Increase Your Auction Bids
- 151) My Top Tips For Getting Traffic To Any Site
- 152) The Top 10 Ways To Find Anything Using Google.com

27. Age Specific

The final idea I want to share for you to consider as an option for your next small report is simply what I'm going to label as "age specific."

What you would do is develop a small report on a specific topic for a specific age group. Let's face it, you wouldn't deal with a toddler the same way you would a teenager. Different ages require different approaches, which makes this a wonderful way for you to nichefy your small report (and, in many cases, continue to "graduate" your customers from one report to the next as they or someone they know continues to grow older).

Some examples are –

- 153) Your Complete Guide To Home-Schooling Any 3-8 Year Old
- 154) Soccer Practice Sessions for 8-12 Year Olds
- 155) How To Retire By Age 35 And Never Work Again
- 156) The Senior Citizen's Guide To Starting An Internet Business
- 157) How To Raise A Strong-Willed Child
- 158) How To Deal With A Strong-Willed Teenager

Closing Thoughts

So, there you have 27 different ideas for your next small report, along with 158 title topics you can modify for your own use in coming up with an idea for your next small report.

Just as a quick reference, I'm going to insert a section, which shares 7 ways you can find specific ideas about YOUR TOPIC that you can use in conjunction with the different categories we've looked at in this report.

- **Keep an eye out on Clickbank's Marketplace.** Products that range in the top 5 positions within a particular category are usually selling very well. I'll give you a quick hint: they wouldn't be selling well if there wasn't interest. :-) Look for categories in the marketplace that are related to your particular target audience and scan through the top 5-6 products listed. You're certain to find some great ideas for your small report right there. (And you might even find a great product to promote as your "backend" - more on this in a future lesson). Clickbank's Marketplace can be found at <http://www.clickbank.com/marketplace>
- **Scan the best-sellers list at Amazon.com.** Do a search at Amazon.com (in the "books" section) for keywords and phrases that are related to your particular market. (I.E. "weight loss" or "homeschooling" or "golf") You should find a nice list of books ranked in order of popularity. This is another built-in research spot for you - and loaded with great ideas for your next small report.
- **Search in Google.com to see what topics your "competition" has created products on.** Pay attention to those listed on the first page and those who are advertising in the ads on the right hand side of the screen. These will almost always provide you with numerous ideas for your small report - and can potentially be a great starting point for joint venture partnerships in the future.
- **Look in the market-related forums for "Hot-Topics" that might lend themselves to report ideas.** There are forums (Aka "message boards") for just about every market imaginable. Look for discussions at these forums for ideas. Specifically, look for topics where there is a LOT of discussion (I.E. Numerous posted messages and replies). Pay special attention for people who are complaining about problems or limitations that you might be able to provide solutions for in your small report.
- **Look in popular article directories for existing interest.** Drop by article banks and look at articles related to your market for brainstorming ideas. Pay special attention to the "most viewed" articles as they are a good indicator of which topics are hot and which topics are not.
- **Find offline magazines related to your market.** Drop by your favorite bookstore or newstand (or visit Magazines.com online) and look at their articles for small report ideas. This is another tremendous way to find great ideas - especially because you get the benefit of THEIR research. They've already invested time in deciding WHAT to write about based on their market's interest. You don't need to do this kind of research ... simply write about what they are writing about!

- **Ask subscribers on a mailing list in your market (either your own opt-in list or one that you rent) which topics interest them most.** It's a simple process: (1) Ask your list members what topics interest them the most. (2) Take the topic that gets the most mentions and write your small report about it. Who better to give you ideas about what to write than those who are most likely to buy the small report upon its completion?!

Two of my favorites from this list are Amazon.com and Magazines.com. Let me quickly share a couple of additional insights that I recommend you do RIGHT NOW in relation to these two resources.

- 1) [Amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com). Go to the site and type your keyword(s) into the search box upon your arrival. Browse through all the listings. If you use a broad enough search phrase, you should find DOZENS of listings which will almost certainly cover "angles" you've never even thought of.
- 2) [Magazines.com](https://www.magazines.com). Visit the site and find the category of listings that is related to your field of interest. Look at the magazines listed in that category and click on the graphical image of the various magazine covers. You'll see actual covers with REAL featured articles and contents displayed. You should find many solid ideas just looking at the cover pictures.

So, with all of this you should have ample ideas to get started working on your next small report!

How To W.R.I.T.E.™ Content

I use the acronym “W.R.I.T.E.” to describe each of the necessary steps for

- W - WEIGH your idea options.
- R - REACH a formatting decision.
- I - INTRODUCE supporting points.
- T - TELL the relevant details.
- E - END by polishing document.

Let’s take a quick look at each of these five steps...

1. WEIGH Your Idea Options

Every lesson begins with determining what you’re going to write about for that specific lesson. As a general rule, there should be ONE primary focus in terms of your lesson topic. What will you write about?

While you probably have many ideas to begin with – and we’ll cover how to find COUNTLESS ideas in future lessons – I do want to give you four quick ways to find ideas to write about that you can use for any of your lessons...

- **Competitor’s bullet points.** That is, you find an existing sales page for a product (ebook, membership site, special report, etc.) that is related to yours and you look at their bullet points. Usually this will spawn many ideas to use as topics for your own lessons.
- **Magazine cover stories.** Another method is to look at the covers of magazines related to the topic of your membership site. This will also yield ideas to write about ... and fresh ones come with every new issue! (Note: You can also check your library for past issues or hunt for them online)
- **Bookstore lists.** Drop by your favorite bookstore (or browse online for every greater convenience at Amazon.com or BarnesAndNoble.com) and search for books within your category/topic and look for (1) The subjects of the books themselves and, (2) additional ideas in the table of contents or on the back covers.
- **Ezine article subjects.** You can also visit your favorite online ezine article directory (EzineArticles.com, GoArticles.com, etc.) and look within categories related to your topic for existing ezine articles. Many of these will serve as suitable ideas to build lessons upon.

Of course, I tell you to do this to find IDEAS. Obviously, you don't want to copy their content or even use a similar format or structure in organizing your lessons. Just use these methods to brainstorm ideas to write about.

2. REACH a Formatting Decision

Next, you'll want to decide how you'll organize the content of your lesson. While there are many different methods of doing this, I personally recommend one of the "big three" when it comes to sharing information ...

- **List.** A list is simple that: a set of ways, tips, keys, suggestions, ideas, methods, techniques, hints, etc. (I.E. 20 Membership Site Ideas. Ring any bells? ☺)
- **Tutorial.** A tutorial is a set of chronological steps to complete a process. If the topic of your lesson can be described in "how to" format, then it is a tutorial and should be organized in sequential steps. (Most of my lessons are arranged in this format.)
- **Q&A.** A "questions and answers" format is used when you identify a series of key questions related to your topic and then provide answers to them. (I'll talk specifically about this kind of lesson later ... you will want to use these at specific times within your sequence, but don't worry about that now.)

After you have decided which of these three formats works best for the lesson you're about to write, it's time to move on...

3. INTRODUCE Supporting Points

That is, come up with the appropriate list, steps or questions that you'll be using as the foundation for your lesson.

- If you are going to use "list", then share as many as you can possibly think of ... up to twenty. When you are sharing "ways" or "tips" or "ideas", the more you can share the better. Why? Because not all of the ideas will be relevant or interesting to the individual reader. But, if you include numerous ways to do xyz, it's likely one or more will strike a chord and keep them happy.
- If you are going to use "steps", then I recommend you keep it to single digits. The more steps there are to complete, the less likely your reader will actually do them. Less is more. Keep it

to 9 steps or less, preferably 3-5 steps.

- If you are going to use “questions”, then I recommend that you keep it to 10 questions or less. And it’s important that you organize your questions in the best way so they are chunked together by topic.

As a general rule of thumb, I also recommend (and do myself!) that you try to share at least 2-3 tips or examples for each of your major points.

(Notice that I do this a lot and people respond with emails of gratitude on a daily basis – it really is beneficial to the reader to get as many different perspectives on information as possible.)

Look back over the first three steps that we’ve covered so far ... each of them have additional “sub-points” that further clarify or illustrate the major point.

After you have determined your format, it’s time to...

4. TELL the Relevant Details

That is, fill-in-the-blanks for the points and sub-points that you’ve mentioned in your outline.

Write 1-3 paragraphs for each of your points/sub-points and you should have a nice lesson fleshed out.

Just to give you some additional ideas on “telling” the relevant details, I’m extracting a short brainstorming tool that I shared in my [Small Reports Fortune](#) course...

One of the things that you’ll find invaluable to you as an information writer is what I have labeled as a “starter swipe file”.

Just to further prove that I “practice what I preach” about using definitions as “enhancers”, here is one ☺...

DEFINED: “Starter Swipe File”

A “starter swipe file” is a collection of ideas to write about written in a single sentence formatted template.

Example: One of the biggest reasons people fail in ___ is ___.

I could use this starter sentence to create paragraphs of content about virtually any topic in the world –

- One of the biggest reasons people fail in marketing is...
- One of the biggest reasons people fail in dieting is...
- One of the biggest reasons people fail in reaching goals is...
- One of the biggest reasons people fail in homeschooling is...
- One of the biggest reasons people fail in relationships is...

These starter sentences allow me to quickly find something to write about anytime I want to build content into a document –

- 1) At the beginning as I outline it,
- 2) During the writing process as I struggle for ideas, or
- 3) At the conclusion of the document when I find portions of the document need more information.

Now, I encourage you to build your own swipe file of sentences that you can use to get you started on writing. You'll find that you have favorites that you refer to in EVERY lesson you write, while there will be others that are just perfect for certain scenarios.

Like I said, I encourage you to **build your own** swipe file. But, because I've been doing this for a long time and have a very good index already created, I'm going to share fifty (yes, that's 50!) of my own starter sentences that you can use as a catalyst for your own writing.

At the conclusion of this list, I'll use several of them as examples just so I know you've got a good grasp of what I mean here.

Note: You'll probably want to print these out on a separate sheet of paper (maybe even laminate them) to refer to anytime you write.

1. One of the biggest reasons people fail in _____ is _____.
2. The greatest lesson I've learned about _____ is _____.
3. The biggest mistake in _____ is _____.
4. Here are the top seven reasons why you should _____.
5. If I had to narrow it down to five steps, they would be...
6. The real secret to _____ is _____.

7. One thing that almost no one knows about _____ is _____.
8. Three of the best web sites for _____ are _____.
9. The absolute worst way to _____ is _____.
10. A secret weapon I use for _____ is _____.
11. Here's why you should never be afraid to _____...
12. Five proven ways to _____ are _____.
13. The best model I've seen for _____ is _____.
14. Two questions to ask when making this decision are _____.
15. The best example of _____ is _____.
16. Here's what you do when _____ happens...
17. The one thing you've been told that's wrong is _____.
18. New evidence suggests this about _____...
19. The one lesson I wish I had learned years ago is...
20. Here's how to protect yourself from _____...
21. The one question you must ask before _____ is...
22. Three simple exercises to help with _____ are _____...
23. A simple way to organize your _____ is _____.
24. An easy to follow system for _____ is _____.
25. An effective way to speed up your results is _____.
26. Here's a simple 10-step checklist for _____...
27. An often overlooked way to _____ is _____.
28. When you face this problem _____, here's what to do...
29. Should you _____? Take this quiz...
30. If you're a beginner, then the first thing to do is _____.
31. If you're experienced, then here's an "advanced" tip...
32. Seven warning signs of _____ are...
33. Your three best options for _____ are...
34. A way to get faster results from _____ is _____...
35. It only takes a few minutes to _____.
36. Five things you can do today are...
37. For _____, this works like crazy...
38. Why your _____ won't work.
39. Something every _____ needs to know is _____.
40. The best way I know to _____ is _____.
41. A simple shortcut for _____ is _____.
42. Here's a "rule" about _____ you should BREAK...
43. The biggest waste of time for _____ is _____.
44. If I could only do one thing for _____ it would be _____.
45. You can actually cut _____ by _____.
46. The eleven key ingredients of _____ are...
47. My best advice for _____ is _____.
48. Five ways to improve your existing _____ is _____.
49. A good way to reduce costs is _____.
50. Here is a daily schedule you can refer to for _____...

What an incredible resource this is for you! (It's invaluable to me.) There are so many different "angles" represented in this list (*the fastest way to do something*,

ways to improve, shortcuts, schedules, questions, exercises, lessons, mistakes, etc.) that you could mix-n-match and never stop coming up with ideas to write about in your next lesson.

Now, just to make certain you understand how to use these templates, let's work through 3 of them together...

Example: "The biggest mistake in _____ is _____."

If you were writing a lesson on homeschooling, you might use this template as "the biggest mistake in homeschooling is choosing the wrong curriculum." You would then go on to explain why that's the biggest mistake and how to avoid it.

Example: "The one question you must ask before _____ is _____."

If you were writing a lesson on hiring a ghostwriter, you might use this template as "the one question you must ask before hiring a ghostwriter is 'do you have references?'" You would then write as many paragraphs as needed to explain why references are important, address what the reader should look for in a ghostwriter's references, and so forth.

Example: "Here's how to protect yourself from _____."

If you were writing a lesson on "setting up a web site", you might use this template as "here's how you protect yourself from FTC compliance penalties". You would then explain ways to avoid potential problem with unsubstantiated claims, hype, etc.

You begin with one of the template sentences and, then, you simply take as many paragraphs as you need to thoroughly explain things.

It's a writer's secret weapon, a cure for writer's block, and a brilliant way to brainstorm ideas anytime you want all rolled into one.

5. END by Polishing Document

Once you've written the content for your lesson, you'll want to fine-tune it. Generally speaking, there are three things that I recommend you do in putting on the finishing touches for your lesson...

- **PAD.** That is, look for areas of your lesson that need further explanation. Are there any areas that are not clearly explained? Are there areas that are
-

noticeably weaker than others? Make sure your points are understandable. Try to add in as many examples as possible to better illustrate the points. Toss in a few more tips here and there where needed. You can add interview transcripts, quotes, research and other bits of information to get the points across better and add a bit more meat to the report.

- **POLISH.** Use different fonts to distinguish areas of your content. Change colors. Use alternative styles such as bold face, italics and underline. Indent text where appropriate. Use bullet points. (Especially on lists.) Insert headers, footers and graphics (just don't overdo it!)

- **PROOFREAD.** The final "smoothing out" you need to make certain you do is to proofread your entire document for typographic and grammatical errors. Better still would be to allow someone else who is qualified to do it for you. While this isn't a deal breaker by any means (quality of content is MUCH more important than quality of grammar in information based lessons), it certainly is a good idea to put your best foot forward.

Well, that above covers it! Now the only thing left to do is get writing! 😊

7 S.O.U.R.C.E.S™ for First-Rate Content

As the so-called “King of Acronyms”, I use the acronym S.O.U.R.C.E.S. to note the following seven sources of great content...

- S - STANDALONES
- O - OUTLINES
- U - UNIONS
- R - RESOURCES
- C - COLLECTIONS
- E - EXCERPTS
- S - SERIES

Let’s take a look at each of these in greater detail...

S.O.U.R.C.E. #1: Standalones

There are a variety of different kinds of “standalones” that you can offer in exchange for a “regular” lesson.

These are usually materials that are related to the topic of your FTM site and are used to enhance the content for a better understanding and application of your lessons.

A few examples include...

- Worksheets
- Templates
- Quizzes
- Calendars
- Checklists
- Planners
- Illustrations
- Mindmaps
- Tools
- Vendor List
- Documents (Legal, Business, Etc.)
- Forms
- Charts

And so forth. Anything that can be created to improve upon your existing content is an idea option here.

I recommend that you use one of these as a substitution for your regular lesson at least once every other month.

S.O.U.R.C.E. #2: Outlines

While this is “technically” something that you write yourself, it’s a bit of a twist on the usual path most people take in creating content.

The idea is simple –

***Create an outline and record yourself “filling in the blanks”.
Then, get it transcribed to create a lesson.***

I’ve used this method to create entire products before, so I know it works.

All you need to do is create a loose outline of some things you want to talk about, turn on your record and start talking. When you’re done, hand the recording off to a transcriptionist at Elance and let them get you a word-by-word transcript. Polish it up a bit and you’ve got a lesson the easy way!

Let me give you another variation that I’ve used in the past...

***Have a “live chat” with someone and use
the edited chat transcript as a lesson.***

You can login to an instant messenger with a friend (or group of friends!) and talk over a topic in real time. Copy and edit the completed text and you’ll have a lesson ready to go.

I’ve had some amazing ideas come out of these kinds of chats due to the brainstorming and bantering back and forth. You might be surprised at how many golden nuggets surface!

S.O.U.R.C.E. #3: Unions

Another great way to get lessons for your FTM site is to create a “union” with others. That is, you get one or more additional contributors for the lesson.

Let me give you a couple of great examples...

➔ ***Find a Co-Author.*** Look for someone to co-author a lesson with you. Divide the lesson into sections (Point #1-5, Part #1-2, etc.) and both of you contribute a portion of the lesson. In exchange for the other person

providing half of the content, you (a) return the favor for them by contributing content to their project, and/or (b) give them a glowing endorsement in the lesson for their own product or service. (Hint: You can use your affiliate link to earn backend commissions!)

➔ **Find a Collaborator.** Choose a topic and then find 10, 15 or even 20 people to collaborate on the project by providing their response. "What is your best tip for XYZ", "what have you found to work well for XYZ", "If you had to recommend ONE tool for XYZ...", etc. Not only will you get a lot of great content, but it will come from a variety of different backgrounds. A great lesson awaits!

S.O.U.R.C.E. #4: Resources

At least one lesson every 5-6 weeks can be a "resource" lesson where you do nothing but provide links to existing free and low-cost materials (emphasis on FREE) including: articles, reports, tools, services, etc.

The key to doing this is to share it in "checklist" form. Let me give you just a quick example of the basics of what one of these lessons might look like...

How To Build An Effective Email List

Today's lesson is a collection of my all-time favorite tutorial articles for building an email list. Several of these are those that I've written myself, while most of them are from other sources that I've discovered through many hours of browsing the internet.

I've arranged them in a step-by-step format for you to follow along...

- 1) How To Choose A Topic To Build A List Around. [Click Here](#)
- 2) How To Start Your Own Newsletter. [Click Here](#)
- 3) How To Select An Autoresponder. [Click Here](#)
- 4) How To Build A Successful Squeeze Page. [Click Here](#)
- 5) How To Write A Solo Mailing. [Click Here](#)
- 6) How To Get Traffic To Your Squeeze Page. [Click Here](#)
- 7) How To Make Money From Your List. [Click Here](#)
- 8) How To Build A Relationship With Subscribers. [Click Here](#)

Additionally, there are a couple of great reports that I'd like to pass on to you today...

Report #1: 6 Steps To 6 Figures With List Marketing. [Click Here](#)

Report #2: How To Triple Your Optin Requests. [Click Here](#)

Finally, here is a great set of 3 videos that will walk you through the steps for setting up your first list. [Click Here](#)

Enjoy the resources. I'll be back with your next lesson in a few days.

Now, to be sure, this is just a brief overview to throw into this lesson to show you the idea. But, the point is well made.

It's okay to use "resource" lessons from time to time to highlight existing free materials that are useful to your readers. You don't have to reinvent the wheel or even rewrite it. You can simply point to it.

Yes, these resources are free and your customers are paying you for lessons. But how much is there time worth? In my experience, most people would LOVE to pay a couple of bucks to find a well-organized, filtered (no junk to sift through!) list of quality resources they can refer to.

S.O.U.R.C.E. #5: Collections

As you probably are aware, I'm a BIG believer in "recycling" content. (Some call this "repurposing".) There are a variety of ways you can "collect" existing content and put it into a lesson to provide for your members.

Let me pass on two for you here in this "collections" segment...

- ➔ **"Best Of" Segments From Your Free Materials.** Copy and paste your best tips for past copies of your newsletter, blog posts, mini-courses, articles, interview transcripts, etc. This would be a digest form of the best insights you've shared during the past. (You can actually use this for several lessons over time). Again, you're giving them "free" content that they can find elsewhere ... but, again, it's trimmed so it's just "meat" and put together in one handy reference lesson. Nobody's gonna complain if it's done right.
- ➔ **Responses To Customer/Client/Subscriber Enquiries.** I find that I dish out a lot of valuable information in responding to customer, client and subscriber email inquiries. I'll answer an email and think "wow, that was a great tip!" and instead of patting myself on the back on moving on ... I copy and past that golden nugget for future use! This is a practice that you should begin using yourself. You can go back to your outgoing emails and

select great responses you've made and put them in a lesson "collection". (Just make sure you remove any personal, specific and / or private information prior to publishing.)

S.O.U.R.C.E. #6: Excerpts

Back in one of our earliest lessons of this series I excerpted a complete lesson from a paid product of mine. Do you remember it? (I actually even said in the lesson, "I've excerpted this.")

It was the lesson on writing a salesletter. I excerpted that lesson (and made a few small changes) from my [Small Reports Fortune](#) course. It was a point in our series that required you to write a salesletter in order to get your FTM site functional. Why rewrite something that I already had prepared?

By excerpting from my previous course I was able to do two important things...

- ➔ Get a ready-made lesson that didn't require me to write from scratch ... always a welcomed thing!
- ➔ Reference (and indirectly promote) my existing course ... as a result new sales came in.

If you have existing products, then you can excerpt portions of them (when applicable and relevant) to use as lessons for your FTM site.

There are three basic ways to do this...

- 1) When A Concept Is Explained. If a lesson that you need to include in your series has already been explained in an earlier product, why not extract it from the existing work and include it? That's what I did with the chapter on writing salesletters.
- 2) When An Example Is Given. If you have a great case study in an existing work that is relevant to your lesson, why not refer to it again as a part of your FTM series?
- 3) When A List Is Available. This is a big one. If you have an existing work that shares "24 Ways to XYZ", then why not take 3-5 of those "ways" and include them as a lesson? This is a great way to get instant content and easily refer to the completed work for additional ideas.

Now, let me give you a BIG HEADS UP here...

***It doesn't have to be YOUR product
that you excerpt portions from.***

Now, I'm not giving you authorization to just take something from someone else's product and copy it as a lesson. That's a violation of all kinds of laws including copyright and will land you in serious trouble.

That's not what I'm saying at all.

What I'm saying is ... ask for, and gain, **permission** to excerpt portions of someone else's product or service to use as lesson material.

Let me give you an example:

One of my older products was showcasing 2s4 ways to make sure your emails get delivered and read. If someone contacted me and said, "Lethia, may I copy 3 of those methods to include as a lesson and I'll strongly promote your entire course for the remaining 21" I'd be VERY OPEN to the idea. Why? Because I stand little to lose (3 of 24 isn't copying much) and a lot to gain (every person who reads the lesson will be informed of my complete product).

Take a look around for existing products (especially those that you own and consider to be great works) and look for things that would be useful as lesson material.

Contact the owner of the work and ask for permission to use part of it as a lesson as you give them full credit and a strong endorsement.

S.O.U.R.C.E. #7: Series

Want to know where some of the best information is shared? At forums. Tips, insights, resources, suggestions, variations, ideas and many other forms of great information are passed along at forums.

***Why not put together a "best of" series where you
collect the best of the best to include as a lesson?***

Now, there are a couple of things that I want to mention here before I continue on with this line of thinking...

- 1) You can't take what isn't yours.** That is, you can't simply go to forums, find great tips and just swipe them. Even though the information is often shared freely, it isn't free to share. That is, someone owns the copyright to the

material, usually the owner of the forum.

2) You probably can take what is yours. If YOU own the forum, you probably can use any post to the forum as you see fit IF you have this included in your legal documents (terms of use, etc.) Make sure you have made it clear that any posts to your forum become YOUR intellectual property and may be used at your discretion.

In the absence of either of these two things ... ask for permission. You'll find that many contributors will be flattered to be included, and many forum owners willing to allow copying of the posts in exchange for a link back to their site.

One great variation...

One of the things that I highly recommend you do is create a SWIPE FILE of your OWN posts. That is, whenever you make a great post to a forum, COPY IT FIRST to a file on your computer for safekeeping, and then place it on the site. That way, it's your comments to use as you see fit at a later date.

This is great lesson fodder.

So, there you have 7 "S.O.U.R.C.E.S." for ready-made content for your lessons. Enjoy! 😊

6 M.O.D.E.L.S. For Content Structure

I use the acronym M.O.D.E.L.S. to note the following six kinds of lesson structure...

- M - MISTAKES.
- O - ORGANIZES.
- D - DIFFERENCES.
- E - EXPERIENCES.
- L - LANDMARKS.
- S - SHORTCUTS.

Let's take a look at each of these in greater detail...

M.O.D.E.L. #1: Mistakes

The entire arrangement of this particular type of lesson is to reveal mistakes you've made, or mistakes that are commonly made among those participating in whatever pursuit your FTM site covers.

This is an especially great lesson when you can share mistakes, problems and potential pitfalls that usually aren't forecast.

In other words, share those things that might sideswipe your readers because they never see them coming.

A few possible lesson titles include...

- ➔ What To Do When _____ Happens
- ➔ 7 Warning Signs That Show You're _____
- ➔ 5 Problems No One Prepared Me For (And How YOU Can Avoid Them)
- ➔ Three Ways To Overcome The Common _____
- ➔ Are You Headed For _____ Disaster? Take This Quiz.

There are undoubtedly some things you've done wrong, some insights you've learned the hard way and / or some tips you wish you'd known ahead of time in terms of getting past barriers (both seen and unseen).

A lesson detailing these "mistakes" is a great idea for a future entry into your series.

M.O.D.E.L. #2: Organizes

This is a MUCH-NEEDED and MUCH-WANTED lesson in virtually every major market and niche – so it's a given that you should incorporate it into your lesson mix.

The idea is simple –

Create a weekly planner or schedule that details activities the reader should complete for each day of the week.

One of the most asked questions that I've received over the past 8 years I've been online is this: *what should I do each day?*

This lesson answers that question.

Some examples include...

- ➔ 3 "Things To Do" Every Day For _____ Success
- ➔ The _____'s Weekly Activity Schedule
- ➔ The _____'s Week At A Glance Planner
- ➔ How To _____ in 1 Hour Each Business Day
- ➔ Your Daily, Weekly and Monthly _____ Checklists

When you hand your readers an action plan broken down into daily activities, you do them a great service. You break things down into reasonable, reachable tasks. And your customers can visualize actually getting them done simply because they are no longer looking at the whole, but at the parts.

And, in addition to that, you receive a great benefit as well. You've just brainstormed ideas for half a dozen or more future lessons. That's right, future lessons can be written to further explain or enhance each of the activities that you include on the schedule!

Another great lesson to include in your FTM series.

Note: Just as an aside for you grammar geeks, I realize that "organizes" is a verb and not a noun as the other "models" are. But it fits my outline and this is my lesson so I'll use it in this manner if I want to. 😊

M.O.D.E.L. #3: Differences

Every single one of us likes to see improvement in whatever pursuit we have on our agenda.

- If I'm trying to compete as a tennis player, I want to improve my shot-making and strategizing.
- If I'm trying to make money with an FTM site, I want to improve various aspects from opt-in rate to conversion rate to click-thru rate.
- If I'm trying to raise my kids right, I want to improve their behavior! 😊

The point is: we all want things to be better. Even if we're completely satisfied and content, we'd still welcome anything to make a good situation great and a great situation the best it could possibly be.

That makes the sharing of "differences" ... small changes, tweaks, adjustments, variations ... that can improve our experience or results from the experience.

Some ideas include...

- ➔ 5 Simple Changes To Get Better _____ Results
- ➔ 3 Things You Can Do Today To Speed Up Your Results
- ➔ How I Cut My _____ Time In Half With Even Greater Results
- ➔ 12 Tiny "Extras" That Automatically Improve Your _____
- ➔ Built-In Triggers For Doubling Your Output

If you can share any kind of simple, effective changes that your clients can make in order to achieve faster, easier or better results ... they'll thank you by staying with you.

M.O.D.E.L. #4: Experiences

You probably have some unique experiences that you can share that others haven't gone through. This is especially true for those of your customers who are just starting out.

A lesson devoted to sharing things you've learned is another wonderful option for you to offer as your weekly content.

If you recall a lesson from just two weeks ago, that's exactly what I did. I shared "10 Things I've Learned About Running An FTM Site". In it, I highlighted some past

experiences that I've had. Included were things I discovered only after I had tested some things, things that I "lucked" into, things that I learned "the hard way", etc.

Example: I'll give you an example of an experience that I'd quickly share if I had a "running" FTM site. After several weeks of following a training program for running a marathon, I developed several problems. Plantar fasciitis, ankle soreness, displaced knee cap, swollen IT band, etc. All of these were on the same leg ... my left leg. I talked with my next door neighbor about this as she's a physical therapist. Her first question was: do you run on the same side of the road all the time? I replied, "yes" and she said "there's your problem". Roads are sloped down to allow water to run off the edges. By running only on one side, I was forcing my leg to be positioned in an unnatural way. Not one of the 10 books that I've looked at on running have ever suggested that you should run on both sides of the road. I started doing this and haven't had trouble since.

My point is this: I wish someone had told me about this before I had to experience it myself.

That's what this kind of lesson is all about ... sharing those things that you wish someone had told you about before learning it by your own experiences.

I guarantee you that your members would much rather you say, "Look, here's what I learned, here's what I recommend based on this", than they would like to learn it themselves.

Some example lesson ideas are...

- ➔ 10 Things I've Learned About _____
- ➔ The Most Valuable _____ Lesson In The World
- ➔ 5 Case Studies For Figuring Out How To _____
- ➔ 3 Things Nobody Told Me About _____ (And I'm Still Mad!)
- ➔ The Top 7 Coolest Things I Discovered About _____
- ➔ Off The Beaten Path: 5 Things No One Knows About _____

Do you see how you have so many lessons inside of you? You just need to see HOW to share this information by looking at some different "models" for structuring your content.

On to the next one...

M.O.D.E.L. #5: Landmarks

Here's another lesson idea that most members are sure to appreciate. With this one, you simply share some "landmarks" for readers to identify on their trek to the completion of whatever it is that you're teaching them.

In other words, you provide a timeline of events, milemarkers, activities and results that the reader can look for to track their progress.

Consider it the GPS for your FTM. It's a positioning lesson to let the reader know what to expect along the way and how to know they are headed in the right direction in their pursuit.

No one wants to look back weeks into an endeavor and realize they made a wrong turn someone along the way. Instead, we want to know that we are making progress and headed towards the intended destination.

A few examples include...

- ➔ What To Expect Your First Year In _____
- ➔ How To Know You've Made It As A _____
- ➔ 3 Indicators You're Headed In The Right Direction
- ➔ Your Week-By-Week _____ Timeline For Success
- ➔ A Printable Look At Your First 90 Days

One of the real needs within most information based businesses is to not only hand the reader a roadmap that illustrates how to get from here to there, but also to tell them "You Are Here" repeatedly throughout the trip so they can see progress.

Progress usually translates into persistence. That's a good thing because you're customers are getting what they paid for. And you're getting a satisfied customer.

One more "model" to go...

M.O.D.E.L. #6: Shortcuts

This is one of my all-time favorite kinds of lessons ... and is by-far one of the best received lessons for obvious reasons as you're about to see.

The idea for this lesson is to share "*shortcuts*" to success.

***We live in a microwave world.
We want results.
And we want them NOW.***

I don't know any dieter who wants to lose 10 pounds slowly. And I don't know any parent who wants years of struggles before their kid learns to behave. No one comes to mind when I try to remember someone saying at a stop light, "Wow, I wish that red light hadn't ended so soon."

Unless there is some kind of enjoyment in the process itself, we'd just as soon skip it (or speed it up) so we can get to what we really want.

A lesson detailing shortcuts to the desired result is yet another solid consideration.

A few examples include...

- ➔ How I _____ Faster Than Anyone Else I Know
- ➔ 3 Shortcuts That Save Me Hours Every Week
- ➔ The Real Secret To Getting _____ As Quickly As Possible
- ➔ How To Get The _____ Results You Want In Half The Time
- ➔ 5 Things You Can Do To "Speed Up" Your Results
- ➔ Is It Taking Too Long? Try These Time-Savers...

I don't know about you, but I'd love to get the results I want faster than I've been getting them. Build a better microwave and you'll rule the world.

With that, we come to the conclusion of our "models".

How To Write P.A.G.E.S.™ of High-Demand Content

In this section, we're going to examine, "*How to Write P.A.G.E.S.™ Of High-Demand Content*".

Here is a simple five-step formula that you can use for creating lengthier pieces of content (I.E. reports and products) which has rarely been shared before in the format I'm about to give to you in this lesson.

The system is called "P.A.G.E.S." Each letter (P - A - G - E - S) stands for one of the five steps in the system...

- P - PLAN out your report by brainstorming ideas.
- A - ARRANGE your ideas sequentially or systematically.
- G - GROW your content by "filling in the blanks".
- E - EXTRACT bullet points for your ad copy while you write.
- S - SMOOTH out the rough spots to complete the report.

What I'm going to do in the remainder of this session is briefly explain to you how to put each of these five steps - these five parts of the P.A.G.E.S. system - into action so you can quickly and easily create your own 7-15 page reports to sell.

So, let's go ahead and begin with step 01...

1. PLAN out your report by brainstorming ideas

Obviously, by this time, you should have chosen a topic to build the content of your report around. So, where do you start? You start by simply brainstorming ideas for possible inclusion in your report. The easiest way that I've discovered for doing this is to simply...

Write a list of everything you want to share.

That's right, just write down everything you want to share in your report. I'm talking just start rambling on paper (or your computer screen). Everything you can think of that relates to the subject of your report. Just a list of "ideas" you want to share.

Here's what I want you to understand about writing: writing is...

THINKING ON PAPER.

That's all writing is. It's putting your thoughts down on paper. Or, onto your computer screen. That's all you need to do – write your thoughts down.

Don't worry about relevance or whether or not you'll even use all of these ideas. Just get them down. Think on paper.

Jot down as many of these as you can find...

- Ideas
- Notes
- Lists
- Questions
- Reminders
- Personal reflections
- Thoughts
- Things-To-Do
- Checklists
- Details
- Steps
- Facts
- Reasons
- Comparisons
- Contrasts
- Statistics
- Quotes
- Illustrations / Stories

Write down everything you can think of or find during your research.

Don't worry about whether or not it makes sense. Don't worry about how well it's written. Don't worry about that it doesn't fit with anything else. Just write down everything you can possibly think of concerning the topic of your report.

Now, I want to give you one of the most invaluable brainstorming exercises you'll ever use for generating ideas for your report. I call it "*alphabetizing*".

Starting with the letter "A" in the alphabet, literally begin thinking of events, places, people, items, verbs, ideas, etc. that begin with that letter and are related to the topic of your report. The goal is to go all the way to "Z". This is a great way to brainstorm ideas.

FOR EXAMPLE: If you are writing a product related to traveling to Orlando, you might

have...

A = Airports
B = Business travel
C = Choosing hotels
D = Dining
E = Epcot
F = Free tickets
G = Golfing

After you've gotten keywords for each of the 26 letters of the alphabet, jot down any notes about each of those entries that you want to mention in your report. And just like that you've got 26 ideas to write about in your report. If you just wrote 1/4 page on each of them, you'd have almost 7 pages of content!

So, that's how you "*plan out your report by brainstorming ideas*". That's the "P" of the "P.A.G.E.S." system. Now, let's move on to step 2 which is...

2. **ARRANGE** your ideas sequentially or systematically

This step doesn't require a lot of explanation, but let me go ahead and just touch on this a bit for clarification purposes.

There are two basic ways to "arrange" your ideas once you have them all jotted down - in other words "organize" them so they make sense. These two ways are "sequentially" and "systematically".

Sequentially: That is, you would organize your ideas in chronological steps. In any kind of "how-to" information there is a logical order in which steps occur.

You would simply outline your report based on what comes first and then what comes after that. Step 1 is... Step 2 is... Step 3 is...

Now, as a rule of thumb, I recommend that you keep the total number of steps to something in SINGLE DIGITS. No more than 9 steps. Anything more than that could be viewed as "too much work" in the eyes of your readers. So, organize all of your ideas in 9 or less steps, beginning with the step that comes first and ending with the step that comes last.

Systematically: The other option is to organize things "systematically". In other words, you'd group ideas together based on their logical relationship to each other.

Example #1: If your title is "5 Keys to Saving Your Marriage Now", then that's the basic framework for your outline. You divide things into sections or parts, whatever you want to call them, one for each of the 5 keys. Key #1 is a section. Key #2 is a section. Key #3 is a section. And so forth. All of your ideas would fall into one of your 5 keys.

Example #2: If you have a LOT of different ideas, such as "101 Homeschooling Tips for First-Time Parents", then find 5-9 main topics to group them into. For example, "tips for finding the right curriculum", "tips for planning field trips," "tips for creating a learning environment," "tips for social interaction" and so forth.

Note: Now, let me give you a recommendation on arranging ideas that I've found to be very important over the years. While you want ALL of your report to be quality content that's useful to your customer, let's face it, some points are stronger than others. There are some things you'll be sharing that are just better or more important or less known than others. It's important that you fire these FIRST and LAST. That is, you want your best work (if possible, understandably "steps" come in whatever order they appear) to be in the first few pages and then finish strong in the last few pages. If you have any content that's "weaker" than the rest, then you'll want to include it somewhere in the middle if it's important enough to share at all. It's not that you're trying to "hide" anything, it's simply that you want to minimize your weaknesses and showcase your strengths.

That same rule of thumb can be used with any "sub-ideas" you have for each of your main points (your "ways" or "steps", etc.): your strongest sub-ideas come first and last with the others mixed in the middle somewhere.

And with that, we're on to step 3...

3. GROW your content by "filling in the blanks"

By this point you should have a nice outline created from all of your ideas. Now, it's simply a matter of "filling in the blanks". That is, write a few paragraphs of meaty information for each of your points listed in your outline. That's all it takes. (You should have at least 26 "points" listed from the alphabetizing exercise.) Remember, this is only 7-15 pages that you're striving for.

You just need to do a little math. You take the total number of pages that you want and divide it by the total number of ideas that you've written down so you can see how much you need to write for each point.

Example: Let's suppose you want to create a 10 page report on your topic. Let's further suppose that you have 20 "ideas" that you've brainstormed to share in the report that you have arranged in 5 different sections. Doing the math, we find that you need 1/2 page of content per idea in order to meet the page requirement. So, you just begin writing the first point and when you reach 1/2 page, you know you can quit anytime you finalize the thought you're sharing.

Some of your points will require less space to share than the numbers would demand. That's okay, because some of your points will go over. It all balances out in the end, and it's not an exact science. It's just a way to keep things balanced.

It really doesn't even matter that you do the math ... as long as you do the writing. Simply write a few paragraphs explanation for each of the points. Don't be afraid to mix in some humor. Inject your own personality into the writing.

Now, what I want to do for you before we move on to the next steps is to share some "content templates" with you now that will also help you with the writing part of content creation.

Basically, here's how it works. I'm going to provide you with five content templates. Each one consists of an opening sentence that you can apply to any portion of your product where you might need some additional ideas for content.

Content Template #1: If I could sum up _____ in _____ steps, here is what they would be _____"

Where you see the "blanks" you just complete the blanks with whatever topic you are going to be discussing in that section of your product.

For example: "If I could sum up **doing business online** in **3** steps, here is what they would be..."

I might choose...

Step 1: Develop a product.

Step 2: Build a website.

Step 3: Promote.

So, you begin a section by opening with the above provided sentence by completing the blank sections with whatever topic you plan on discussing in that section.

*"If I could sum up **creating an ezine** in **5** steps, here is what they would be..."*

*"If I could sum up **losing weight and getting in shape** in **4** steps, here is what they would be..."*

*"If I could sum up **learning to play guitar** in **3** steps, here is what they would be..."*

*"If I could sum up **restoring antique vehicles** in **5** steps, here is what they would be..."*

Your opening sentence sets the stage for that section. Just insert your own topic in the template and you're ready to begin. Next, you write supporting paragraphs for each of the three steps, which can be as little as one paragraph, but should be preferably 3-4 paragraphs per step.

Content Template #2: One of the things that the majority of folks find most challenging about _____ is _____...

For example: *"One of the things that the majority of folks find most challenging about **selling online** is to **generate website traffic**."*

Some other examples might include...

"One of the things that the majority of folks find most challenging about **losing weight** is to **stay motivated**."

"One of the things that the majority of folks find most challenging about **playing guitar** is to **memorize where their fingers go for each chord**."

"One of the things that the majority of folks find most challenging about **the game of golf** is to **hit a good chip shot**."

"One of the things that the majority of folks find most challenging about **buying a new car** is to **make certain they get the best price**."

That section of your report is then super easy to write.

First, I'd briefly describe the challenge itself. Why is it so difficult? What problems do most folks face when attempting to do it? What makes it challenging? Spend 2-3 paragraphs describing the challenge itself. Then, suggest a solution. Yep, you've got the answers. And you're willing to share them. So, offer some advice on how to

overcome the challenge. Outline 4 or 5 tips for solving the problem. Each tip only needs to be 1 paragraph in length, but it all adds up to a great deal of content.

Content Template #3: "A little known secret about _____ is _____"

Some variations on this theme include...

A seldom used tactic
An often misunderstood
An often overlooked
The best kept secret
One of the most powerful

An example might be: "A little known secret about **buying a new car** is to **understand the sticker price.**"

*"A little known secret about **hiring a ghostwriter** is to **NEVER accept the lowest bid.**"*

*"A little known secret about **losing weight fast** is to **eat smaller meals throughout the day**"*

*"A little known secret about **creating a budget** is to **allot money for entertainment**"*

Content Template #4: "Perhaps one of the biggest reasons that people fail in _____ is _____"

An example would be: "Perhaps one of the biggest reasons that people fail in **business online** is **a lack of training.**"

*"Perhaps one of the biggest reasons that people fail in **building a list** is **they don't have a good squeeze offer.**"*

*"Perhaps one of the biggest reasons that people fail in **losing weight** is **a lack of discipline.**"*

*"Perhaps one of the biggest reasons that people fail in **house breaking poodles** is **the wrong approach.**"*

After exposing what is perhaps the biggest reason that people fail in achieving their desired outcome, give the reader several quick tips on how to avoid failure, specifically mentioning how to achieve success.

See how easy this is when you just have a starting point?

You could probably easily work in 4 or 5 tips about achieving success in a particular area. You could probably weave in a short 3-5 step system for achieving success in a particular area. You could probably pose and answer several questions relating to success in a particular area.

It's all about having something to begin with, which is the purpose of our content templates here.

Content Template #5: "The one thing I always get asked about _____ is _____."

An example might be: "The one thing I always get asked about **dieting** is **can I lose weight fast?**"

*"The one thing I always get asked about **homeschooling** is **will it hurt my child's social skills?**"*

*"The one thing I always get asked about **online dating** is **is it safe?**"*

*"The one thing I always get asked about **relieving headaches** is **what can I do to avoid them altogether?**"*

Fire away your most asked question and then answer it. Provide them with as many tips or steps in your answer as you can.

So, those are the five content templates. Plug in your responses and you're off and running.

Now, let's move on to step number 4...

4. EXTRACT bullet points for your ad copy while you write

In an upcoming session in this series, I'm going to share with you how to write a "mini-salesletter" to convince your list members to buy your special report. What is going to be invaluable to you in that part of the process is what you do right here in step four of your content creation.

With any good salesletter, there will be a "bullet list" of benefit statements. You've seen them at salesletters online. They offer encapsulated glimpses into what the product or service being offered means to you in terms of its benefit to you.

What I like to do is develop these bullet points as I'm writing the content. Over and over again, I've found myself writing things in my reports like, "the fastest way I know to..." or "3 of the easiest ways to..." or "my own secret weapon for..." or "if you don't do anything else, make sure you do this..."

So, when I find myself writing those things, I stop at the completion of my thought process and I write down a variation of the statement that I made for use as a bullet point. Some examples include:

- The hands down, fastest way to double your affiliate commission checks!
- 3 of the easiest ways to turn private label content in your own multiple streams of profit empire in about 30 minutes per week!
- Revealed: my own secret weapon for getting completely free search engine traffic without any tricks or gimmicks! (Hint: You can download it from a freeware site and virtually NO ONE knows you can use it this way!)
- Warning: If you don't do anything else with your blog, make sure you do this one "trick" for getting bigger AdSense® commissions. (Unless, of course, you just don't like extra money with no extra work!)

Notice, of course, that they are in bullet form. ☺

You'll undoubtedly notice that you make similar statements throughout writing the content for your special report. Take just a few seconds to extract those statements so you can use them on your salesletter as bulleted benefits. I recommend that you grab about 10-12 of them for the sales page for these kinds of special reports.

And then, it's off to the final step...

5. SMOOTH out the rough spots to complete the report

Once you've written the content for your special report, you'll want to fine-tune it. Generally speaking, there are three things that I recommend you do in putting on the finishing touches for your report...

- PAD. That is, look for areas of your report that need further explanation. Are there any areas that are not clearly explained? Are there areas that are noticeably weaker than others? Make sure your points are understandable. Try to add in as many examples as possible to better illustrate the points. Toss in a

few more tips here and there where needed. You can add interview transcripts, quotes, research and other bits of information to get the points across better and add a bit more meat to the report.

- POLISH. Use different fonts to distinguish areas of your content. Change colors. Use alternative styles such as bold face, italics and underline. Indent text where appropriate. Use bullet points. (Especially on lists.) Insert headers, footers and graphics (just don't overdo it!) Make your special report look, well, special! 😊 (We'll talk more about this in our next section.)
- PROOFREAD. The final "smoothing out" you need to make certain you do is to proofread your entire document for typographic and grammatical errors. Better still would be to allow someone else who is qualified to do it for you. While this isn't a deal breaker by any means (quality of content is MUCH more important than quality of grammar in information based reports), it certainly is a good idea to put your best foot forward.

So, there you have it, the "P.A.G.E.S." system. Each letter (P - A - G - E - S) stands for one of the five steps in the system...

- P - PLAN out your report by brainstorming ideas.
- A - ARRANGE your ideas sequentially or systematically.
- G - GROW your content by "filling in the blanks".
- E - EXTRACT bullet points for your ad copy while you write.
- S - SMOOTH out the rough spots to complete the report.

Well, that's a wrap for this section.

How to Write Compelling Content That Keeps People Reading

There must be a reason why some content is very good and some content is very bad; why some information is so enthralling that you can't stop reading while other information is the cure for a sleepless night; why some words cause you to frantically take notes and some words cause you to take a break; why some lessons keep members subscribed to an FTM site and some lessons show members the exit door.

There must be a reason.

There is.

And that reason is this -

"Quality" writers approach content creation as a craft.

To be sure, some writers are just naturally gifted. They swing words like Tiger Woods swings a 5-iron. They can spot a good paragraph like Warren Buffet spots good investments. They write like Tom Hanks acts. Even though they practice their art form, it comes easy to them.

Then, there are those that swing words like Lethia Owens swings a 5-iron. Paragraphs are like Black Tuesday. Their writing is the equivalent of the acting in a kindergarten cantata ... and they aren't nearly as cute and lovable as those 5 year olds. Content creation is a struggle.

The good news is this: by focusing on two key components **all writers** can create the kind of content that generates interest and demand.

Whether you're writing ezine articles or paid products or anything in between, there are two components that you need to develop in writing your content. This especially applies to your FTM lessons.

Before I explain how to weave both of these components into your content, let me first explain the reality of why these components are necessary in the first place.

People read for two basic reasons -

- 1) They want to be ENTERTAINED. Many people read because they enjoy a good story. They settle into their favorite chair and John Grisham

whisks them off to the courtroom for a legal adventure or Sue Grafton captivates their mind in a "whodunit" or Nicholas Sparks unlocks the emotions with a love story. Or, maybe they head to the bathroom with a copy of National Enquirer to read about a three-headed alien who's been dating Lindsay Lohan, whatever, they read to be entertained.

- 2) They want to be EDUCATED. There are other times when people read because they want to learn something. That drain beneath the kitchen sink is leaking again; a dormant website needs traffic; mom is coming to her house for Thanksgiving. Whether it's a do-it-yourselfer looking to improve his home or an internet marketing looking to drive visitors to her site or a young wife looking to impress her mom with a mouth-watering turkey, people read to be educated.

So, those are the two basic reasons why people read.

There will now be a test. Close your books. Put away your notes. No talking or looking at anyone else's paper.

What are the two reasons why people read? (No peeking!)

If you said "to be entertained" and "to be educated" then you get to continue. If you said anything else, it's time for an Xbox 360 break or a stiff cup of java or whatever it is you do to get your mind in gear. ☺

People read to be entertained and/or educated. And when it comes to the art of sharing information as a part of your business, including BOTH parts are important.

Listen to me carefully. This is the "ultimate" mastery of your craft -

To teach readers something desirable to them in a way that they find enjoyable.

That's the goal. Put a great big bull's eye right there. And fire away.

So, let's talk about some specific practices for each of these two components. How can you make your content entertaining? How can you make it educational?

Content Component #1: Entertain

There are many, many ways to make your writing a form of entertainment. Briefly, let me point you towards 6 methods of engaging your reader and making the consumption of your content an enjoyable experience for her...

- Analogies. A great way to keep your content flowing is to use a few analogies. That is, you compare one item to another item. Sure, I could have said earlier "writing is easier for some than others". But, with just a few extra words I instead said, "They swing words like Tiger Woods swings a 5-iron. They can spot a good paragraph like Warren Buffet spots good investments. They write like Tom Hanks acts. Even though they practice their art form, it comes easy to them." Honestly, which is a better read?
- Humor. A little chuckle goes a long way when it comes to the enjoyment factor of reading. Most everyone likes to laugh. (My apologies to those of you who don't enjoy laughing. You may skip this and go immediately to the section marked "Don't Have A Sense Of Humor"). Earlier, I built upon the analogy of Tiger Woods by comedically adding, "They swing words like Lethia Owens swings a 5-iron." By affording them the opportunity, you naturally make the reading experience more enjoyable. Does this mean you should make every attempt to be Jay Leno? Of course not. It just means when you have a chance to say something in a funny way do it. Don't use too much humor and stay away from offensive humor, but by all means insert light-hearted fun when applicable.
- Acronyms. Another idea is to organize your content by using an "acronym". I've used many in the past: "How To Keep Affiliates A.C.T.I.V.E. In Your Program", "How To S.E.T.U.P. A Web Site" and "How To I.M.P.R.O.V.E. Your Writing" are just a few. In these instances, the words "Active", "Setup" and "Improve" were used to reveal the various parts of the content. Not only do people love them (I've always gotten great feedback), but it also allows you to have something original that is uniquely yours.
- Storytelling. In a recent paid report I wrote, I opened with a story about me selling Grit newspaper back in the early 1980's and I tied it into the fact that this was an early form of the modern affiliate program model. A good story always engages the reader. Especially when it is relevant to the point being made. Keep them short (don't launch into the great American novel - this isn't Hemingway for crying out loud!) and lively and they'll only enhance your writing.
- Editorials. Opinions are like noses ... everyone has one. So, why not share yours? To be sure, you may want to steer clear of any controversies that might damage your reputation and business, but don't be afraid to get personal when you write.

Many times I've mentioned my faith in Jesus Christ in my content. I've jumped up on my soapbox and preached about using integrity in your business dealings. I've gave my thoughts on a variety of issues that were relevant to what I was writing. And, you know what, it always gets the reader more involved in the process of consuming information. Either they agree or disagree (sometimes strongly) with what I'm saying, but they continue reading because editorials are interesting. Share your thoughts.

- ➔ Revelations. A simple way to get someone reading deeper into your content is to make a statement of something you'll be sharing later in the content. It's so easy to do. If you read back to something I wrote earlier in this article, you'd find this statement: "Before I explain how to weave both of these components into your content, let me first explain the reality of why these components are necessary in the first place." Do you see how that works? I set the table for what I'd be revealing shortly. I whet your appetite. Consciously or (more likely) subconsciously, you got the point that something desirable was coming later in the article. This isn't a new concept. Think about every newscast you've ever watched: "Coming up later in the hour, we'll show you how..." and "Up next we'll share..." Building interest breeds enjoyment -- especially when you deliver the goods later in the content.

So, those are just a few ways you can "entertain" your readers and make the consumption of your content an enjoyable experience.

But, what about the other component? How do you "educate" them? Let's take a look.

Content Component #2: Educate

Certainly writers of all shapes and sizes know that the essence of "educating" a reader is to explain the subject matter in a way that can be clearly understood. That's a given, right?

And certainly there are many ways to do this effectively. There isn't a standardized formula that all content must adhere to in order to get it right. However, I do believe that there are three basic parts that should be included in virtually every piece of content written as far as those involved in selling information.

- ➔ Action Steps. If someone is intent on learning a process, they want to know the necessary steps involved in completing it. For

example: If I want to learn how to bake a cake, I don't want a list of ingredients with the instructions "Mix these together". I want a detailed, chronological list of what to do, step-by-step. Certainly, not all content is a "tutorial" (The very lesson you're reading isn't in step-by-step format) but, when applicable, always explain things in chronological, reasonable steps. Preferably, in 9 steps or less to avoid the appearance that the process is too difficult to be accomplished.

- ➔ Brainstorming. Two of your favorite words as a writer should be, "For example". The missing element of most information products and associated content that I've read is the use of "examples" and "ideas". Most people present some information and then leave it to the reader to figure out how to apply that information for their own use. That's usually not a good thing. Instead, it's important to provide as many different examples, case studies, ideas, etc. as possible to give the reader a good idea of how to accomplish what you're suggesting. For example (Hmmm, bet ya didn't see that coming, huh?): I could have simply said, "You need to entertain your readers" and "You need to educate your readers" and left it at that. Instead, I've been giving examples and ideas for doing each of these things. More than just information, readers crave application. They want to see the content in action; they want to see how they can use it themselves.
- ➔ Tips. Everything you write should have tips included. Everything. Tips come in many shapes and sizes: keys, tactics, techniques, ways, methods, options. As many of these as you can include in your writing, the better. All it takes is for one good idea that you've shared to satisfy the reader. If you share 10 ways to do XYZ and number 7 clicks with the reader, they'll love you. It doesn't matter what else you write in the content, they are happy because they learned something useful. Tips are the information publisher's best friend. A veteran might read your material and already know 99% of what you've written, but that one tip on page 47 just floored them and they are ecstatic. Share as many different tips as you can. Your readers will thank you later. Well, the grateful ones will.

So, there you have it, the two key components of your content. Don't forget the goal with these:

To teach readers something desirable to them in a way that they find enjoyable.

That's how you create your own original content that people can't get enough of. And that's how you keep your subscribers active long-term!

How to Prepare Content Super F.A.S.T.™

In this section I want to share how to quickly write content without sacrificing quality and without overtaxing your brain.

I've been using this concept for years.

It's called "recycling" or "repurposing".

The idea is fairly simple –

The process of taking existing content and using it in another format or fashion.

A few quick examples include –

- ⇒ Recording mp3s of the content from an ebook and selling it as an audio product.
- ⇒ Extracting content from an ebook to create ezine articles.
- ⇒ Converting the content of an ebook into a workshop or seminar presentation.

I've always been a big believer in getting the most mileage from your effort. Done correctly, this can be a big asset for you, as well as a big time-saver. Done incorrectly, and you become the king or queen of "rehashing".

There's a big, big difference between recycled content and rehashed content.

That's what we'll be talking about today.

Let me explain it to you by using a simple acronym...

How To Prepare Lessons Super F.A.S.T.™

There are four basic ways that I use the concept of "recycling" content in my own business which I describe by using the acronym F.A.S.T.™...

F - FIND appropriate excerpts.
A - ADD to free materials.
S - SWIPE other people's content.
T - TRANSCRIBE your rants.

I've even used several of these in preparing [Membernaire](#)TM lessons!

Let's talk about each of these four options and how they can be use to create your own FTM site lesson super "fast"...

1. FIND appropriate excerpts

Do you have existing products related to the topic of your FTM site? Feel free to excerpt portions of those products as lesson materials.

For years I've been teaching people to NEVER "find a niche and then move on to the next niche". Instead, it's important that you choose a MARKET and then feed that market a variety of related offers. There are many reasons why this is a crucial part of success and this strategy is just one of those reasons.

If you already have full blown products, reports, workshop presentations, physical products and/or other existing offers that are related to your FTM site topic, then it is easy to extract 3-5 pages (and even more) to use as part or all of a lesson.

Think about it -

⇒ *If you've written a 100 page course on "Weight Loss" how easy would it be to extract the chapter on "7 Ways To Raise Your Metabolism" to use as a lesson?*

Once I had a course where I teach how to start and grow a successful affiliate program. It would be easy (and appropriate) for me to extract 5-7 ways to find affiliates (out of the 30 that I mention in the course) and use it as a lesson in this series to explain how to find affiliates to promote your FTM site.

The basic method of "recycling" content is to simply extract it from your existing paid products and offers.

In fact, you can use the ENTIRE CONTENT in some cases.

I've done this twice so far in the MembernaireTM lessons...

- 1) Remember those two lessons on outsourcing ... "Hiring a Ghostwriter"? That was originally a product that I sold entitled "Autopilot Commissions".
- 2) Remember those two lessons entitled, "The CIA Report"? That's actually a report that I was selling till recently.

In those two cases, they aren't just "excerpts", they are the entire volume of content!

Now, before you think to yourself, "I've just hit the mother lode here", let me give you a couple of cautions.

Firstly, don't overdo it. If you offer nothing original in your FTM site, you'll likely lose your customer base very quickly. If it's all content that they've gotten from you before (I.E. As existing customers) then they'll likely ask for their money back and move on to something else.

Secondly, expect a few refunds. From time to time I'll get someone who emails me and says, "Lethia, I've purchased XYZ in the past from you and notice that you've included it free in XYZ. Can I get a refund on my initial purchase?" I grant the refund and move on. The overlap is minimum and the reward (getting "fast" content to an entire database of members) far outweighs the risk (giving a handful of refunds).

2. ADD to free materials

The next option that I use is to "add to free materials".

In other words –

You take existing content that you've previously made available for free and you contribute additional content to further explain and enhance it.

What is this "existing free content"? Here are just a few ideas...

- Ezine articles
- Blog posts
- Quick tips
- Customer support responses
- Instant messages
- Forum posts
- Chat conversations
- Short reports

I can't tell you how many times that free content has been converted into paid

content simply by expanding on the information shared previously.

It's actually quite simple. Let me give you a couple of quick suggestion for doing this to your own existing free materials...

- 1) Add More MEANING.** The first – and easiest – way to add more content to an existing work is to “add more meaning” to your explanation of the points. In other words, you explain things more thoroughly. You add more details. You clarify things. You include more commentary. If you have a 500 word article with 3 points in it, you add more “meat” to those points and convert it into a 3-5 page lesson. Throw in case studies, examples, strategies, stories, options and more to better explain the original work.
- 2) Add More METHODS.** The second way to do this is to “add more methods”. That is, you include more ways to accomplish whatever you shared in your original free material. If you have a blog post that shared, “3 Ways To Cut Vacation Costs”, then convert it into a lesson entitled, “10 Ways To Cut Vacation Costs”. If you've written a customer support email where you share, “My Two Favorite Places To Find Freelancers”, then add to this and make it a lesson entitled, “The 7 Best Places To Find Freelancers”.

Take a quick inventory of your existing free materials. Which of them are related to your FTM site? How can you “add more meaning” or “add more methods” to them to quickly update them into a new lesson?

3. SWIPE other people's content

Why not ask for permission to “borrow” a portion of someone else's content in order to create your lesson? That is, you find a 3-5 pages of information from someone else's paid product and ask the copyright owner (aka “author”) if you can include it as a lesson for your FTM site.

Instant high quality content. Now that's super fast!

So, why would they allow this?

It's simple: free promotion for the complete product from which you've excerpted the content.

When you include their content as a lesson, you'd open the lesson with a comment like this...

“Today's lesson is a real treat. I've secured permission from

Lethia Owens to include the following chapter taken from his [Small Reports Fortune](#) course. It's a superb tutorial for writing a mini-salesletter. Please drop Lethia a quick email to say 'thanks' for letting us use it today. Or, better still, show your thanks by taking a look at his complete course that teaches you how to write and sell 7-15 page small reports. [Click Here](#) for all the details. Enjoy the lesson!"

Now do you see what the author has to gain from allowing you to use a portion of their content? They get a free plug for their product every time one of your members reads the lesson.

And – get this – you've got more to gain as well. Not only do you get free content for your lesson, but you can insert YOUR AFFILIATE LINK into the promotional piece that leads to THEIR PRODUCT. You earn a commission if anyone buys through your link.

The key to this is "not asking too much".

If you only want to reprint a few pages that does not give away some "secret" that is the main point of their paid product, many people will grant you permission.

Note: A "variation" on this them is to collaborate on the extracted content. In other words, you weave your own comments throughout the borrowed information. Your comments would be separated by including them in a box or indented in a different font. There would need to be some distinction showing that the additional comments were YOURS and not the original author. And you'd need to secure permission from the author to use them in that manner. Or, you can just make some "before and after" comments preceding and following the excerpted content. Either way, it's a way to blend things together so that the lesson has an air of "you" to it.

4. TRANSCRIBE your rants

And the final method I want to share is to "transcribe your rants". That is, record yourself talking about a topic related to your FTM site and then have it transcribed into the actual lesson document you'll be distributing.

Don't discount this idea. Even if you feel disorganized talking off the cuff and like to have everything scripted in advance (that's me!). You might be amazed at how much content you can create by just talking.

The best way that I've discovered to do this is to create a simple outline.

Here's a sample outline that I could use for my own "rant"...

How To Have A Meaningful Prayer And Bible Time

Open with the fact that most people aren't satisfied with their "quiet time" each day. (Tell my story about Paula)

Answer the three questions that I get often...

"Why do I have a great time with the Lord for days and even weeks and then go through a time when I don't want to pray?"

"What are the keys to having a quiet time?"

"How long should I pray and read the Bible each day?"

Talk about barriers such as...

1. Distractions.
2. Deadlines.
3. Demands.

Offer some insights into how to overcome those barriers such as...

1. Establishing a specific time and place.
2. Making it a priority and firm commitment.
3. Creating an environment. (Don't forget to talk about praise music in the background)

I could add more things to the outline, but that just gives you an idea of what one might look like.

In looking at this outline, I could talk for 20-30 minutes easily by just rambling on what I know and feel about the entries. Once transcribed, I've got a 5-7 page lesson ready to go without WRITING a word of the lesson itself.

Chances are you are working on a new lesson right now. If not, you will be soon enough. And you'll likely create an outline from which to write.

So, once you have that outline, record yourself explaining what you've outlined INSTEAD OF WRITING IT.

Have it transcribed and you'll have a lesson ready "super fast".

- Note your main points of the lesson.

- Insert some questions to answer.
- Share a few stories.
- Input a few extra tips for each point.

Take the outline and just talk.

Seriously, try it once and see what happens. Then, post a project at [Elance.com](https://www.elance.com) for a transcriptionist. Lessons made easy!

How to Improve Your Information W.R.I.T.I.N.G™

Let me begin by making what may be a shocking statement to you if you are the type of writer who feels it is of paramount importance to avoid dangling participles and fragmented sentences like they were a charging grizzly bear.

Traditional grammatically-correct writers brace yourself:

Information trumps grammar in this business.

***That's why they're called "information" products
and not called "grammar" products.***

Back up a few sentences.

I wrote "*traditional grammatically-correct writers brace yourself*". Technically, that should have been "*traditional grammatically-correct writers brace yourselves*". Since I used the plural word "*writers*", I should have used the plural word "*yourselves*". I didn't. And if that bothers you, then you should probably stick to teaching English or find a career as a proofreader. ☺

The point I want to make is this -

Your content is what people are going to buy.

To be sure, you want to be as professional as possible. Use spell-check. Have someone proofread your completed document. Correct any obvious mistakes. Write in such a way that it's easy – even enjoyable – to read.

But don't worry about trying to create a small report your high school English teacher would be proud of. Unless she's a customer, her opinion doesn't count on this one. ☺

I say this because if you're a traditional writer this may be a bit foreign to you. You've been beat over the head with the MLA style 2"x4" so many times you've got splinters sticking out of your head!

Let me sum it up for you in one quick comparison –

How To Ace Your Next Interview

is not the same as

A Midsummer Night's Dream

Don't write as if it is.

In the coming pages of this report, I'm going to share seven ways to improve your information writing. I'm not going to talk about how to use proper verb tenses, structure sentences or transition from one paragraph to the next.

Instead, I'm going to share some useful tips to help you in the writing process – the experience – so you'll be able to create information products faster, easier and, ultimately, better.

I use the acronym "W.R.I.T.I.N.G." to describe the 7 ways to improve your information writing. Each letter (W – R – I – T – I – N – G) represents a unique way to become a better information product author...

- W - WORK in content enhancers.
- R - REFER to a starter swipe file.
- I - INCORPORATE examples for major points.
- T - TRY to answer the infinite question.
- I - INSERT two additional sub-points.
- N - NEVER forget to be creative.
- G - GRANT an interview.

With that said, let's get started. The "w" of W.R.I.T.I.N.G. is...

1. WORK in content enhancers

There are numerous ways to add extra content to your small report as you are writing it that will both improve the quantity and quality of your information.

⇒ Quantity. By using what I will refer to as "content enhancers" you can quickly create additional pages of information for your small report which will (a) allow you to more quickly write a full report, and (b) increase the perceived value of your report due to its increased size.

⇒ Quality. More than just a subtle way to add more length to a report, by using these "content enhancers" you'll do just that ... enhance the content. In other words, you'll improve it; make it better. Ultimately, you'll have a much higher quality version of your small report upon completion.

Now, before I share nine specific kinds of "content enhancers", let me just quickly give you a definition so we'll both be working with the same thing in mind –

DEFINED: "Content Enhancers"

A content enhancer is any piece of information that clarifies, illustrates, supports or improves the level of education and enjoyment a reader experiences as they consume your small report.

Now, having said that, let's look at 9 different "kinds" of enhancers you should consider using in your next small report -

- **DEFINITIONS.** Look two paragraphs above – what do you see? You see a box with a definition in it. To be precise, it takes up 1/6 of a page and took about 10 seconds to write. The important thing is – it gave me SOMETHING to write about ... and it allows me to clarify a concept I'm sharing so you better understand. The point: definitions are a great way to add extra content while further explaining important points in your document.

Note: If you're creative, you'll find that you do what I often do – make up phrases like "content enhancers" – which is a perfect spot to insert a definition.

- **QUESTIONS.** Another great "enhancer" is to insert questions for your reader to answer as they make their way through certain areas of your content. Think in terms of a "workbook" – how can questions be used to aid the reader in making decisions, examining their lives, reviewing criteria, etc.?

Example: If you were writing a small report about "weight loss" you might ask questions like: (1) Which of the following emotions most often produce overeating? (2) What dieting "rule" do you find most difficult to follow? (3) Based on the formula I just shared, what changes do you need to make in your eating habits?

- **QUOTES.** Perhaps one of the easiest kinds of "enhancers" to use is a quote. They can be used at anytime during your small report, but are especially appealing at the beginning of a new section or to expand on an important thought. You can drop by Google.com and search for "quotes" or "famous quotes" and you'll find several great directories you can visit to find appropriate quotes.

Example: In one recent project of mine I was encouraging my readers to take action. I quoted Wayne Gretzky to illustrate the point: "100% of the shots you don't take don't go in". Perfect.

- **EVIDENCE.** You can provide supporting proof for statements that you make to validate your claims. Documented research, statistics, magazine stories, reference materials, archived news, current events, speeches, presentations, trivia, and other similar resources can be referred to as evidence. (Be sure to carefully document the sources from which you obtained your evidence.)

Example: If you were writing that same small report on "weight loss" you might cite Jorge Cruise's "3-Hour Diet" for suggestions on eating frequency. "In fact, noted fitness guru Jorge Cruise stresses the importance of six meals at equal intervals throughout the day - every 3 hours." (Note: You could even link "3-Hour Diet" to your Amazon.com affiliate link for that book and earn referral commissions!)

- **EXERCISES.** As a writer, what is your ultimate goal? If you're honest, it's probably "to make money". Okay, what is your SECOND ultimate goal? ☺ Again, if you're like me, your secondary goal is probably to help people. In other words, you'd like your customers to actually gain some value from purchasing your small report. Sure, we want to make money - but we also want to make a difference. So, another "enhancer" to include in your small report is one or more "exercises". That is, give your reader instructions on specific things they should do in order to aid them in accomplishing what it is they hope to accomplish after having bought your small report. You might offer brainstorming exercises, internet research tasks, "homework" assignments, etc.

Example: If you're writing a small report on "success", then you might have the reader write down their ten biggest goals in life.

- **STORIES.** If you've read the main manual in this course then you'll find that I tell stories here and there. (If you've read any of my other materials, you'll find this to be true as well.) Why do I do this? There are actually three distinct reasons why I share stories that you'll find relevant to your own small report creation process -

1. EDUCATION. The first and foremost reason is to "educate" the reader. That is, I use stories to better explain or illustrate a concept that I'm sharing. When readers can "see" what you're trying to convey, it goes a long way to engraining the thought into their mind in a useful way. A good story that helps the reader visualize a core concept you're explaining is another great enhancer to sprinkle into your small report.

2. ENTERTAINMENT. One of the things I hear over and over again is how "enjoyable" my writing is. Why is this important? It's important because very few people have the discipline to finish reading something that is boring. And if they don't finish it, they won't use it. I've failed as a writer if that happens. I want to educate the reader AND entertain them - when that happens good things always follow.
3. EXPRESSION. The third reason why I tell stories is because it allows me to express who I am. People get to know me and my beliefs. I can't tell you how many "friends" I've made over the years because we connect on spiritual and relational levels due to our common interests and viewpoints. When you inject your personality into your writing, you'll build a "trust" relationship with your readers which will translate into loyalty. That always pays dividends over time.

- **TIPS.** One of THE "best" kinds of enhancers you can ever use is a "tip". The more you can insert, the better your document will usually be. Tips are the building blocks of information. People love them simply because every tip offers another opportunity to reach a desired result. Here are two great ways to use tips as you write your small report ...

1. DIFFERENT WAYS TO ACCOMPLISH.

One thing you can do is to share tips for multiple methods of accomplishing a specific tasks. If I tell you to "search Google.com for joint venture partners" I might go on to share "5 different ways to find JV partners".

2. DIFFERENT WAYS TO IMPROVE.

Another idea is to reveal several different suggestions for improving a process. If I tell you to "take a digital photograph for your eBay® auction" I might explain 3-4 ways to improve the pictures (I.E. Use a white background, take at an angle, use side lighting, etc.) And I could even give 3-4 tips for one or more of those tips! (I.E. 3 ways to get better lighting with less glare)

Back up – did you see what I just did? I shared two "tips".

- **VISUAL AIDS.** Sometimes it can be very helpful to insert a diagram such as a chart, drawing, screenshot, graphics, picture, video link or other visual aid in order to thoroughly explain a concept.

Example: If you were explaining how to use a software program in your small report, it would be helpful to see a screenshot of the software interface to “show” the buttons, menus, etc. that you are referring to in your text explanation.

- **LISTS.** The final “enhancer” that I want to mention to you is a “list”. That is a “list with a full description of its entries”. Think about this. I could have simply made the following list for this index of “9 content enhancers”...
 - Definitions
 - Questions
 - Quotes
 - Evidence
 - Exercises
 - Stories
 - Tips
 - Diagrams
 - Lists

I could have simply listed it just as you see it above with no explanation. And you probably could have figured most of it out. However, by sharing complete details on each of the items contained in this list I’ve gotten five pages of content and you’ve got all the information you need (along with numerous examples!) to actually make use of this method of improving your information w.r.i.t.i.n.g.

Whenever possible, create lists of ideas for a concept you’re sharing in your small report – and then provide as many details for each entry on the list as possible.

When you “*work in content enhancers*”, it will not only make your writing easier to complete, it will make your small report better when it is completed.

That brings us up to our second strategy here, the “r” of W.R.I.T.I.N.G. is...

2. REFER to a starter swipe file

One of the things that you’ll find invaluable to you as an information writer is what I have labeled as a “starter swipe file”. Just to further prove that I “practice what I preach” about using definitions as “enhancers”, here is one ☺...

DEFINED: "Starter Swipe File"

A "starter swipe file" is a collection of ideas to write about written in a single sentence formatted template.

Example: One of the biggest reasons people fail in ___ is ___.

I could use this starter sentence to create paragraphs of content about virtually any topic in the world –

- One of the biggest reasons people fail in marketing is...
- One of the biggest reasons people fail in dieting is...
- One of the biggest reasons people fail in reaching goals is...
- One of the biggest reasons people fail in homeschooling is...
- One of the biggest reasons people fail in relationships is...

These starter sentences allow me to quickly find something to write about anytime I want to build content into a document –

- 4) At the beginning as I outline it,
- 5) During the writing process as I struggle for ideas, or
- 6) At the conclusion of the document when I find portions of the document need more information.

Now, I encourage you to build your own swipe file of sentences that you can use to get you started on writing. You'll find that you have favorites that you refer to in EVERY small report you writing, while there will be others that are just perfect for certain scenarios.

Like I said, I encourage you to **build your own** swipe file. But, because I've been doing this for a long time and have a very good index already created, I'm going to share fifty (yes, that's 50!) of my own starter sentences that you can use as a catalyst for your own writing.

At the conclusion of this list, I'll use several of them as examples just so I know you've got a good grasp of what I mean here.

Note: You'll probably want to print these out on a separate sheet of paper (maybe even laminate them) to refer to anytime you write.

1. One of the biggest reasons people fail in _____ is _____.
-

2. The greatest lesson I've learned about _____ is _____.
3. The biggest mistake in _____ is _____.
4. Here are the top seven reasons why you should _____.
5. If I had to narrow it down to five steps, they would be...
6. The real secret to _____ is _____.
7. One thing that almost no one knows about _____ is _____.
8. Three of the best web sites for _____ are _____.
9. The absolute worst way to _____ is _____.
10. A secret weapon I use for _____ is _____.
11. Here's why you should never be afraid to _____...
12. Five proven ways to _____ are _____.
13. The best model I've seen for _____ is _____.
14. Two questions to ask when making this decision are _____.
15. The best example of _____ is _____.
16. Here's what you do when _____ happens...
17. The one thing you've been told that's wrong is _____.
18. New evidence suggests this about _____...
19. The one lesson I wish I had learned years ago is...
20. Here's how to protect yourself from _____...
21. The one question you must ask before _____ is...
22. Three simple exercises to help with _____ are _____...
23. A simple way to organize your _____ is _____.
24. An easy to follow system for _____ is _____.
25. An effective way to speed up your results is _____.
26. Here's a simple 10-step checklist for _____...
27. An often overlooked way to _____ is _____.
28. When you face this problem _____, here's what to do...
29. Should you _____? Take this quiz...
30. If you're a beginner, then the first thing to do is _____.

31. If you're experienced, then here's an "advanced" tip...
32. Seven warning signs of _____ are...
33. Your three best options for _____ are...
34. A way to get faster results from _____ is _____...
35. It only takes a few minutes to _____.
36. Five things you can do today are...
37. For _____, this works like crazy...
38. Why your _____ won't work.
39. Something every _____ needs to know is _____.
40. The best way I know to _____ is _____.
41. A simple shortcut for _____ is _____.
42. Here's a "rule" about _____ you should BREAK...
43. The biggest waste of time for _____ is _____.
44. If I could only do one thing for _____ it would be _____.
45. You can actually cut _____ by _____.
46. The eleven key ingredients of _____ are...
47. My best advice for _____ is _____.

48. Five ways to improve your existing _____ is _____.
49. A good way to reduce costs is _____.
50. Here is a daily schedule you can refer to for _____...

What an incredible resource this is for you! (It's invaluable to me.) There are so many different "angles" represented in this list (*the fastest way to do something, ways to improve, shortcuts, schedules, questions, exercises, lessons, mistakes, etc.*) that you could mix-n-match and never stop coming up with ideas to write about in your next small report.

Now, just to make certain you understand how to use these templates, let's work through 3 of them together...

Example: "The biggest mistake in _____ is _____."

If you were writing a small report on homeschooling, you might use this template as "the biggest mistake in homeschooling is choosing the wrong curriculum." You would then go on to explain why that's the biggest mistake and how to avoid it.

Example: "The one question you must ask before _____ is _____."

If you were writing a small report on hiring a ghostwriter, you might use this template as "the one question you must ask before hiring a ghostwriter is 'do you have references'?" You would then write as many paragraphs as needed to explain why references are important, address what the reader should look for in a ghostwriter's references, and so forth.

Example: "Here's how to protect yourself from _____."

If you were writing a small report on "setting up a web site", you might use this template as "here's how you protect yourself from FTC compliance penalties". You would then explain ways to avoid potential problem with unsubstantiated claims, hype, etc.

You begin with one of the template sentences and, then, you simply take as many paragraphs as you need to thoroughly explain things.

It's a writer's secret weapon, a cure for writer's block, and a brilliant way to brainstorm ideas anytime you want all rolled into one.

So, up next we have the first "i" of W.R.I.T.I.N.G., which is...

3. **INCORPORATE** examples for major points

This is actually a “content enhancer”, but it is so important to your small report that I’ve chosen to give it a letter of its own in the w.r.i.t.i.n.g. acronym.

Doesn’t it feel special? ☺

I don’t know of anything more useful to the education process of a reader than providing information in such a way that she can actually visualize how to use it in her own pursuits.

Perhaps the best way to do this is to provide “examples” to illustrate your points, especially your **major points**.

At this stage of the very small report you’re reading I’ve already shared 12 examples to clarify statements that I’ve made.

I recommend that you use at least one example for every major point you introduce in your small report.

Examples do one very important thing that your small report can’t do without: they help the reader understand how the information you just shared can be applied in a useful setting.

Examples do more than simply let the reader see what you’re talking about (although they do that too!). Examples let the reader see what you’re talking about in such a way that they grasp how they can actually do what you’re talking about. And that’s what they’re looking for.

Example: (You had to see that coming. ☺) If you’re writing that same small report on “weight loss” that we’ve been referring to, you might make the statement, “try to take extra steps throughout the day.” You might then say, “For example: Park as far away from the front door of your office building, grocery store, church, shopping center, etc. as you can to build in extra steps.”

Just like that, you have important (if not necessary) content built in to your small report. As with all of the other “enhancers”, this allows you the opportunity to write **MORE** and create a **BETTER** document.

I assure you, if there is one thing your readers will love you for it is this. Adding examples into your document is something I consider to be mandatory because of their usefulness.

Try to incorporate examples for every major point you share. And don't be afraid to share many more examples than that. I've never heard anyone complain to me before –

"Gosh, I wish you hadn't made it so clear how to use this information. I would have preferred to have no idea what you were talking about." 😊

Give your readers as many examples as you can.

Let's move on. The "t" of W.R.I.T.I.N.G. is...

4. TRY to answer the infinite question

There is a one-word question that simply cannot be completely answered. Regardless of your response to this question, it can always be asked again to whatever you say. That question is, "Why?"

Imagine you are sitting in your living room with your 5-year-old and you've just told him it's time for him to go to bed. His response?

"Why?"

"Because you need to get some sleep."

"Why?"

"Because it will help you to be refreshed for tomorrow."

"Why?"

"Because God designed our bodies to recuperate while we are asleep."

"Why?"

"Because He's God and He knows best."

"Why?"

Have you ever played that game before? 😊

So, another way to "improve your information w.r.i.t.i.n.g." is to TRY to answer that question. You can carry out the "why" response and answer as long as you want.

I personally use the “why” approach to writing at two specific times during the writing process that you may want to consider –

- 1) In times of RESISTANCE. Let’s face it, there are times when the words just aren’t flowing. Call it “writer’s block” or “lack of motivation” or whatever label you want to slap onto it, but the result is the same: we get stuck. So, asking “why” is a great way to lower the bucket into the words well and get the ideas gushing again. When you find yourself not knowing what to write next, ask yourself “why” in response to the last thing you wrote. Answer. And repeat as often as you need.
- 2) In times of REVISION. When I look back at things that I’ve written (sometimes after a chapter or segment is completed; sometimes after the entire project is completed), if there are any areas where I think I haven’t explained the concept well enough, I’ll ask the question “why” which allows me to provide additional information in otherwise fuzzy areas. When you find yourself at a stopping place – a place of revision – take a look for portions of content that may need a deeper explanation and ask yourself “why” to prompt additional ideas.

Now, what I want to do is give you an example in “real time”. I’m going to write this as I go. I haven’t thought this out at all. And I won’t revise it. What you’re about to see is a real example of how to use “why” to get ideas flowing.

Example: By questioning “why” you’ll be able to improve your information writing.

“Why?”

There are a couple of good reasons –

1. YOU’LL BRAINSTORM IDEAS AS YOU GO.

You’ll almost certainly come up with more things to write about than what you originally outlined. That’s what I’m doing right now as I write this. ☺

2. YOU’LL EXPLAIN YOURSELF BETTER.

Because we, as the writers of our small reports, know the information we’re sharing intimately, we often forget to “connect the dots” for those who are reading our work. By using the “why” question you’ll find that you generally explain things more completely.

"Why?"

Let's face it, it's almost impossible not to provide more details when you begin considering the impact of "why" something is what it is.

"Why?"

You begin thinking about the smaller details that often go unmentioned which are so important to the process being explained. Important steps and instructions are shared which only provide further value to the reader.

"Why?"

That's important to satisfying your customer. Satisfied customer = more sales in the future.

"Why?"

Let me explain it this way: one of the biggest reasons why most people fail in acting on the information they consume (did you notice that I'm using one of the starter sentences from earlier?!) is because the writer of the information left out important details which led the reader to feel as if they were unable to complete the process. So, they give up.

"Why?"

There are a variety of causes for writers leaving out relevant details ranging from haste to poor outlining to assuming the reader knows certain things in advance.

I could go on and on and on like the Energizer® bunny.

Note: Just as a slight variation to this idea you could also repeatedly ask the question "how" if you want to do so. You'll find that you end up explaining a lot more "steps" by asking it.

Now, if I wanted to do so, I could just remove the "why" from the dialogue you just read and include it right here in the very section you're reading and you'd have no idea that I ever asked myself "why". All you'd see as the reader is a logical progression of thoughts that further explain the strategy I've identified in this section.

And that's the point.

When using this strategy, simply remove the “why” from your dialogue, polish up your organization as needed, and you’ve got some great content in place for your readers.

That brings us up to the second “i” of w.r.i.t.i.n.g. ...

5. INSERT two additional sub-points

I call this the “power of 2”. The idea is simple –

***For every point you have in your outline, insert 2 sub-points;
For each of those 2 sub-points, insert 2 more sub-points;
Repeat this process until you have ample ideas to write about.***

This is a great way to break things down into bite-sized chunks which (a) provides your reader with every major detail they’ll need, and (b) provides you with an easy-to-complete, fill-in-the-blanks outline.

When you continue adding (at least) two sub-points to each of your existing points/sub-points, you’ll soon brainstorm and arrange almost everything you can think of related to the topic.

Now, at first glance this may not seem like it’s that important. Fair enough. Let me walk you through an example to illustrate how effective this can be.

And just to prove to you that it really works for ANY topic you might pull out of your hat, I’m going to use this simple technique on one of the most absurd topics you can think of – “***How To Order A Pizza While Staying In A Hotel.***”

Stay with me here. 😊

Here’s my original outline for the above referenced small report ...

How To Order A Pizza While Staying In A Hotel

Step 1: Choose A Pizza Place To Order From

Step 2: Choose What Kind Of Pizza To Order

Step 3: Order Chosen Pizza From The Chosen Pizza Place

Now, let’s take that first step and add 2 sub-points...

How To Order A Pizza While Staying In A Hotel

Step 1: Choose A Pizza Place To Order From

- 1.1 See What's Available In Your Area
- 1.2 Decide Your Favorite Among Those Available

This time, let's take step 1 and sub-point 1.1 and add 2 sub-points...

How To Order A Pizza While Staying In A Hotel

Step 1: Choose A Pizza Place To Order From

- 1.1 See What's Available In Your Area
 - 1.1.1 Look in the Yellow Pages
 - 1.1.2 Look in the Hotel Directory

Let's don't stop now! We're gonna take sub-point 1.1.1 and above and add 2 more sub-points to the mix...

How To Order A Pizza While Staying In A Hotel

Step 1: Choose A Pizza Place To Order From

- 1.1 See What's Available In Your Area
 - 1.1.1 Look in the Yellow Pages
 - 1.1.1.1 Search under "Pizza"
 - 1.1.1.2 Search for coupons at the back

I could keep going forever! ☺ One more time just for good measure. We'll add a couple more sub-points just below 1.1.1.1. ...

How To Order A Pizza While Staying In A Hotel

Step 1: Choose A Pizza Place To Order From

- 1.1 See What's Available In Your Area
 - 1.1.1 Look in the Yellow Pages
 - 1.1.1.1 Search under "Pizza"
 - 1.1.1.1.1 Look for local "flavors"
 - 1.1.1.1.2 Look for major chains

You can continue to add 2 more sub-points until you've adequately brainstormed and covered a satisfactory number of ideas.

Note: It doesn't have to be "2" sub-points. It can be 3, 4, 5, etc. – there isn't a set number, nor is it necessary to uniformly add the same number of sub-points.

Do you see how powerful this can be?

When you consider all the different KINDS of "sub-points" you can insert into your small report, it can be a tremendous strategy...

- ⇒ Tips
- ⇒ Strategies
- ⇒ Questions
- ⇒ Ideas
- ⇒ Options
- ⇒ Reasons
- ⇒ Resources
- ⇒ Notes
- ⇒ Examples
- ⇒ Exercises
- ⇒ Case Studies
- ⇒ Illustrations
- ⇒ Memos
- ⇒ Quotes
- ⇒ Research
- ⇒ Reflections
- ⇒ Rules
- ⇒ Guidelines
- ⇒ Tactics
- ⇒ Principles

You can add these two additional sub-points in at a variety of stages in the development process of your small report -

- 1) As you outline your small report. As you create your outline, insert two additional sub-points in as many times as you feel necessary to get enough ideas to write about.
- 2) As you write your small report. This is actually when I usually do it – as I am actually creating content. I'll get to areas where I feel like I need some additional information and I just add two more sub-points in until I feel I've adequately covered the topic.

- 3) As you review your small report. You can always add them in to sparse areas as you are looking back at your semi-completed document.

Again, it's a really good way to "improve your information W.R.I.T.I.N.G."

Which reminds me – it's time to move on to the "n" of our acronym...

6. NEVER forget to be creative

Writing should be an enjoyable experience for both you and the person reading your finished work.

If it's a task or a chore, then **you're not doing it correctly**. Writing should be adventurous, dare I say ... FUN!

If this is just another gig that pays the bills, then it's time to re-evaluate things a bit. I want you to remember that "improving" your writing begins and ends with **getting the best out of you**.

For most of us, we give our best to things we enjoy.

Listen, have fun with your small report. *Never forget to be creative*. Sure, you'll be writing a lot of "technical" information (I.E. "How to do XYZ" or "50 ways to XYZ", etc.) but that doesn't mean it has to sound like a user manual for a digital camera.

Let me quickly share five ways to inject a little creativity into your writing...

- 1. ACRONYMS.** I love to use "acronyms". Look no further to the very report that you're reading for proof.

I use the acronym "W.R.I.T.I.N.G." to share 7 ways to improve your information writing. In Sunday School I once used the acronym "B.A.R.R.I.E.R.S." to describe 8 different kinds of roadblocks we face in pursuing Godly goals.

Don't overdo it where everything is an acronym, but don't be afraid to inject a creatively organized word into your outlining and presentation.

Come up with a
Really helpful and
Entertaining way to
Arrange your
Thoughts with
Insight for a

Valuable
Experience for your reader.

- 2. ADJECTIVES.** That is, make up words and phrases to describe a concept that you're talking about.

Remember back to the "w" of this report that you're reading: what did I call the different kinds of ways you can add content to your small report to make it better? I called them "content enhancers". I made that phrase up. In one of my other information product courses I listed several places to find ideas for your own products – I called these places "idea hangouts".

Listen, this is YOUR small report ... you make the rules, which means you can make up words and phrases if you want to!

- 3. ANALOGIES.** Again, let me refer back to something I did earlier in this report. I wrote, and I quote, *"I say this because if you're a traditional writer this may be a bit foreign to you. You've been beat over the head with the MLA style 2"X4" so many times you've got splinters sticking out of your head!"*

That's an analogy – I'm comparing repeated instruction in style with getting head over the head with a piece of lumber. (Now that's creative! ☺)
Don't be afraid to mix in creative comparisons to hammer home a point (I chose "hammer" to keep with my lumber analogy. ☺).

- 4. ATTITUDE.** Reflect your own personality (as long as you're likeable, of course...if you're a jerk in real life, you should probably hide behind a mask when you're writing ☺) in your small report.

Be witty – sincere – humorous – parental – loving – sarcastic – motivational. Let people get to know you in your style of writing. And if you don't like who you are in real life (you know, if you really are a jerk) then pretend to be someone likeable in your writing.

Hint: You can pick me as a model if you want. See how funny I am. ☺

- 5. ALLITERATION.** Technically, I suppose if you want to be that way, technically "alliteration" is two or more words of the same word group beginning with the same letter. (I.E. apt alliteration's artful aid) But, in keeping with the "this is my small report and I'll make my own rules" mantra, I'm going to stretch that definition just a bit to include grouping bulleted words together with the same first letter.

Look at what you've just read. For the five "ways" to be creative in our writing I've used the following words: acronyms, adjectives, analogies, attitude and alliteration.

Each of these words begin with the letter "a". They didn't just fall into place like that. I chose these specific words because I wanted to alliterate. Whenever possible (don't slave hours over this!) use words that begin with the same letter when you outline sections of your small report.

It's just another reflection of your creative side. (Note: I use Thesaurus.com to find words that begin with the same letter by searching for a word with the meaning I want and then looking at their listing of synonyms to see if one is available with the beginning letter I want.)

So that's another way to improve your information "W.R.I.T.I.N.G." One more to go. Last up is the "g" of our acronym...

7. GRANT an interview

Last, but certainly not least, is the idea of having someone else interview you to use as part of your small report.

This one doesn't require a lot of explanation –

1. Choose your topic for the interview. (It can even be a "sub-topic" from one of your points)
2. Choose a handful of starter questions. (These should be generalized questions about the topic of the interview to be used as a foundation for the interview)
3. Choose a person to interview you. (Provide them with the starter questions and ask them to determine 10-15 more questions they'd like to ask)
4. Choose a time and place to conduct the interview. (It can be a telephone call, a chat room, in person or even via email.)

Conduct the interview. It's that simple.

Now, there's a very good reason why I think this is a great way to "improve your information W.R.I.T.I.N.G." and here it is –

When someone interviews you, they'll likely think of questions that you've never even considered.

This is especially true of “follow-up” questions. (I.E. You answer a question and they ask another question for clarification or for an example, etc.)

That’s the mother lode of thinking outside the box – when someone asks you something **related** to an idea you’re sharing that launches into an entirely different thought process.

Those kinds of discussions can be a gold mine of useful information. And they usually start innocently when someone asks you a simple question that comes to THEIR mind during an interview that you’ve not even thought about.

Have someone interview YOU and see where it leads. You’ll surely glean additional useful information to include in your small report that otherwise wouldn’t have been discovered.

Closing Thoughts

If you work the seven strategies we’ve examined here into your next small report (and any other kind of “information writing”), you should find that you have more ideas to write about, it’s easier to write about those ideas and, ultimately, you have a better completed product when you’re finished.

I hope you’ve found this report useful and informative.

It’s been my privilege to share with you and I trust that it will be more than just words in a document. I trust it will be information you can ***act on***... that it truly does make a difference in your writing and in your life.

After you’ve put this into practice and have your small report completed, I’d love to hear from you. It would be my honor to rejoice over your accomplishment with you.

7 Writing Helps For Every Content Creator

1. How to Create a Great Outline

One of the keys to creating a great piece of writing is to start by creating a great outline. And yet many writers completely overlook this step, particularly when they're writing short pieces like articles and reports.

However, creating a good outline ensures you focus your writing on the most important topics, which makes the piece more enjoyable for your readers.

So here's how to create this outline...

Step #1: Pick Your Topic

You're already working in a specific niche, so now you just need to pick a topic for your article, report, ebook or other content piece. Obviously, you want to choose a popular topic.

You can do this by:

- Looking at paid products (on sites like Clickbank.com and Amazon.com) to see what topics are selling well.
- Check out niche forums and blogs to see which topics generate a lot of interest and discussion.

Step #2: Choose Your Primary Goal for This Piece

Once you've picked your topic, then you need to decide what your goal is for this piece. You can also decide the approximate length.

Examples:

- Is it an article for your blog? If so, what is the goal of this article? E.G., is it to get people to join your list?
- Is it a presell report? If so, then the goal is to "warm up" prospects and get them to click your links.
- Is it a paid ebook? If so, then the goal is to give your readers in-depth instructions and encourage them to take action.

Knowing your primary goal will help you keep your writing focused on the goal.

Step #3: Do Your Preliminary Research

If you're not an expert in the niche, then you'll need to do some initial research in order to determine what steps, tips or topics you need to cover in your piece.

Note: A simple keyword search (such as "how to teach a dog to sit") will uncover hundreds of similar content pieces, so you can look at these pieces to determine which topics you need to include in your article, report or ebook, too.

Tip: If you're writing a book, go to Amazon.com and search for similar books. That's because Amazon lets you take a peek inside the book to see the table of contents. These tables of contents will give you plenty of ideas about what topics to include in your book.

Step #4: Create Your Outline

Once you have a good idea about what topics to include in your content piece, now it's time to create your outline.

If you need guidance as to how to order your topics, just go back to your research to see how other popular content pieces ordered their topics. Otherwise, here are a few general guidelines:

- Logical order. If you're describing a step-by-step process, then obviously your outline will list the steps in order.
- Beginner to advanced material. Self-explanatory – put the easier material at the beginning of your piece.
- Fastest results to slower results. If you're listing different tips or strategies, you might order them from those that get quick results to those that take longer to implement.
- Mix of tips. Here you might put one or two of your BEST tips in the beginning and then put another one or two of your best tips at the end.

Next, you should assign an approximate word count to each section, which will help you stay focused on the most important parts of your content piece.

Finally, don't forget to look at your outline to ensure that it helps you meet the goal of your content piece (such as preselling a product or teaching your readers a process). If your outline looks good, then you can start writing!

2. Great Writing Begins With Great Research

If you're already an expert in your niche, then you can probably sit down and write an article, report or ebook without having to consult any sources. But if you're like most people, then you need to do some research before you start writing. And if you want to end with an accurate, useful article, then you better be sure you do your research the right way.

Here's how...

Create Multiple Searches

You'll get a wider variety of sources and information if you complete several Google searches. Let's suppose you're looking up information about housetraining.

You'd want to do several searches, such as:

- Housetraining a dog
- Housetraining a puppy
- Housetraining
- Kennel training a puppy
- Potty training a puppy
- Housebreaking a dog
- Housebreaking a puppy

Use Credible Sources

Anyone can put just about anything online. And that's why it's so important for you to get your information from credible sources only. This includes:

- **Well-known experts.** For example, you can trust people like Lethia Owens in the online marketing niches, Cesar Milan for dog training and Tiger Woods for golf tips.
- **Established authority sites.** These are sites like WebMD.com, which are known for providing high-quality information.
- **News sites.** Stick to major news sites, like major newspapers or other media sites (e.g., CNN.com).

- **Academic and research sites.** These include official university websites as well as research papers in peer-reviewed journals.

Verify With Multiple Sources

Even if you are going through credible sources for your research, be sure to use multiple sources.

In other words, verify all facts with at least two or three credible sources.

Make Notes

As you're doing your research, take notes about important points. If you think of your own examples, stories or tips, write these down too.

That's because you're going to want to close all your sources before you start writing to avoid accidentally plagiarizing anyone else's material.

Thus you'll refer to your notes rather than referring directly to a source.

Tip: In order to create truly original content, it's best if you find your own fresh angle for the topic. For example, many copywriting books and articles refer to the AIDA (attention, interest, desire, action) formula. And so this is what you'll find when you start researching how to write a sales letter.

Want to be unique? You could present a fresh angle on copywriting by talking about how writing a sales letter is a lot like writing a love letter.

Credit Your Sources

If you're using multiple sources to do your research on something common (like the steps for housetraining a puppy or the steps to transplant a tomato seedling), then generally you'll find that the procedure is the same across these sources.

Thus you just need to write the procedure in your own words and add in your own unique tips, examples and stories.

However, if you're gathering research on something specific – like the results of a university study – then you need to cite your source.

In this case, you'd track down the original scholarly journal and cite this journal at the end of your article, report or ebook.

In summary...

You need to make sure your information is accurate by researching a variety of credible sources. However, you also need to make sure that any content piece you create is completely original.

So while you can certainly use a content piece for inspiration and research, you CANNOT copy or merely “rewrite” other people’s work. Instead, you need to write all your content in your own words, preferably adding in your own experiences whenever possible.

3. The Secrets of Writing Good Content, Fast

Your content is your livelihood. So whether you’re using your content to pull in traffic or you’re selling content to fill up your bank account with cash, your business depends on your ability to create a lot of good content. And the faster you can create this content, the more quickly you’ll enjoy the extra traffic, subscribers and sales.

Here then are three surefire tips for creating good content, fast...

Create a Good Outline

If you start with a good outline, then you’ll stay focused because you know exactly what you need to write about. And this focus will help you write more quickly.

This is particularly true if you’re writing something longer, like a report or ebook. That’s because it’s easy to get overwhelmed with the thought of writing something so long. However, when you have a good outline, then you can think of each section on your outline as an article.

Thus you can think of it as writing a series of articles rather than writing a book. Psychologically this makes it easier to write, so you’ll complete your content piece much faster.

Use Speech-to-Text Technology

Run a search in Google and you’ll uncover several different software products to convert your speech into text. However, one of the most well-known of these is *Dragon Naturally Speaking*, which you can find at Nuance.com as well as your favorite retailers like Staples.com and Amazon.com.

No matter what software solution you choose, you will need to do two things:

- Get a good microphone. Your software will work better if your words sound clear as you say them into your microphone. If you prefer, you can get a headset microphone for convenience.
- Train the software. Yes, you will need to spend some time training the software to recognize the way you speak (your voice, accent, etc). So while this does take some time upfront, in the long run you'll save time once you've gone through all the training with the software.

Write Fast Without Editing

One reason that people often can't write very fast is because they stop and edit nearly every sentence as they go. However, while editing is necessary, it's something you should do AFTER you've created the piece (not during the writing process). Think of it this way...

Editing is a bit of a logical, left-brain activity. That's because it requires you to remember grammar rules, look at your sentence structure and make decisions about whether you've written a sentence or paragraph correctly.

On the other hand, the actual writing itself tends to be more of a creative process where you come up with unique ideas and interesting ways of expressing these ideas. Thus if you stop midway through the writing process to think logically about things like grammar rules, then you'll just end up stifling your creativity.

If you're used to editing as you go, then it's going to take practice to write without editing. Best thing you can do is set a timer for 15 minutes and write as fast and furiously as possible during the allotted time. When the time is up, take a short break, reset your timer and do it again. You can even make a game out of it by challenging yourself to write more words during each 15 minute block of time. When your content piece is all finished, then you can edit it.
In Sum...

If you can learn to write faster, then you'll get more done in less time. And the more content you can create, the faster your business will grow. So give these tips and try and see if they don't help you increase your writing speed!

4. How to Overcome Writer's Block

Has this ever happened to you?

You're all excited about writing an article, report, or ebook. You open up a fresh document on your word processor. You type in your file name, maybe a title, maybe even a few sentences.

But then it feels like your brain shuts down. Suddenly you find yourself just staring at a nearly blank screen. The words don't come. Uh oh, you have writer's block.

If you do any writing at all, you'll probably experience writer's block from time to time.

Here's how to overcome it...

Get Inspired

Sometimes you get stuck simply because you're tired of looking at the same four walls, the same computer screen, etc. It helps if you can do something to kick start your creativity and give your brain a change of scenery.

For example:

- Put on music that inspires you.
- Get out of your usual office and go someplace completely different, like a park or a coffee shop.
- Spend 15-30 minutes doing something different, such as exercising (which will make you feel better).

Copy a Good Piece of Text

This is a way to force your brain to get in the "groove" of writing well. Simply take a passage from one of your favorite authors and start copying it by hand. You can also copy poetry, good sales letters, or anything else that's well-written.

Naturally, you're not using this content for anything. You're just jump starting your own creative process by really thinking about someone else's well-written piece.

Write Anything That Comes to Mind

Another way to get over writer's block is to just start writing anything that pops into your head. If you have to write about this week's grocery list, fine.

If you have to start off writing, “I don’t know what to write” two dozen times across the top of the page, fine. But the point is, just get your fingers moving across the keyboard. After about 20 minutes, your mental “log jam” should be broken up and your creativity released.

Create a Piece About Something Else Entirely

Sometimes it helps to write about something else that isn’t even remotely related to the thing that you need to write about.

So if you need to write an article about weight loss, you can start by writing an article about how to tie your shoes. Or if you need to create a housetraining article, then write a story about how you met your significant other.

Again, this is just a way to loosen up your creativity and get those fingers moving across the keyboard. Once you turn to the piece you do need to write, it will likely go much more smoothly.

Start in the Middle

Have you ever noticed that the introduction is often the hardest part to write? That’s because you use it to give a sneak peek at what the rest of the article, report or ebook is about. But if you haven’t yet written the rest of the content piece, then it’s easy to get stuck on the introduction.

The solution is simple: Start in the middle.

Just skip the intro and go straight to the next paragraph or the first chapter. Then you can do the introduction last, which makes it much easier since now you know exactly what all topics you covered in the rest of the piece.

In sum...

Every writer gets the dreaded writer’s block from time to time. However, don’t let it slow you down.

Next time your brain is moving like molasses, just use the tips above to jump start the creative process!

5. How to Really Connect With Your Audience.

Have you ever noticed that a lot of writing in your niche is actually fairly boring?

That’s good news for you. Because if everyone else in your niche is creating dry, mediocre content, then you’ll stand out if you create something entertaining. And if

you really connect with your audience, you can bet they'll want to read every word you publish.

So how do create this connection between your words and the heart and souls of the audience? Like this...

Tell Stories

Stories are good ways to connect with your readers, because a story tends to help you form that emotional connection. It helps the reader identify with you. And a story is much more memorable than simply telling a reader what to do.

You can write this story either about you or someone else. Either way, however, the story will be more impactful if the main character is very similar to your readers.

So if your readers are stay at home moms who're looking for an opportunity to make money from home, then you'll connect to these readers if your story is about a stay at home mom who overcame this same problem.

Another thing a story can do is help demonstrate to your readers that you really understand them and their problems. And when a reader feels like the author understands him, you can bet he'll keep reading.

Create "Reader Oriented" Writing

Your readers have no doubt read plenty of articles, reports and ebook on the same topic as the one you're writing about. However, a lot of this content is "author oriented." That means that it seems to be more about the author rather than the readers.

Example: You might read a book about dog training in which the author seems to boast repeatedly about his credentials or delve into personal stories that actually aren't of interest or relevant to the reader.

One way to quickly check if your writing is author-oriented is to see how many times you've used words like "I" or "me" versus how often you use words like "you" and "yours." You want to use more "you" writing, since this is reader-oriented writing. Let me give you an example:

- Author-oriented writing: "I'm going to tell you about how I lost weight."

- Reader-oriented writing: "You're going to discover a weight-loss trick that's worked for me - and it will work for you, too."

Engage the Audience

If you're writing a "how to" article, then it's easy to fall into the familiar pattern of writing a straightforward article: "This is step 1... this is step 2..." Basically, it's the same kind of article everyone else publishes.

Instead, engage your audience by freshening up your writing. This includes:

- Adding in your own tips. In particular, include unique tips and tricks not found anywhere else.
- Using stories to illustrate points. Be sure to engage all five of your reader's senses to really bring him into your story.
- Inserting examples to make things more clear. Just look at the way I gave an example of reader versus author-oriented writing above.
- Including "spiced up" writing. For example, instead of merely describing someone as nervous, you could say "He was more nervous than a long-tailed cat in a room full of rocking chairs." That's much more memorable, impactful and fun!

You're writing with a purpose, whether it's to presell your readers, teach them something or just develop a good relationship with them. However, these goals are not possible if your writing doesn't engage and connect with your audience. That's why you'll want to use the tips above to improve your ability to connect with your readers!

6. How to Find a Freelancer to Create Amazing Products for You

So you want to create a product, such as an ebook or maybe even a piece of software. However, you don't have the time, skills or perhaps the inclination to do it yourself. You'd rather hire a professional to do it for you, which frees up your time to focus on the "money" tasks (like the marketing).

But maybe you're hesitating a bit. Maybe you've heard those outsourcing horror stories of people getting ripped off, service providers missing deadlines, and buyers getting saddled with subpar work. Kind of turns you off the whole idea of hiring a freelancer.

The good news is that you can protect yourself and find the perfect freelancer to start creating amazing products for you. Here's how...

Step 1: Locate a Pool of Prospective Freelancers

Your goal is to start with a big list of prospective freelancers and then narrow down that list to only the most qualified prospects. So, to make that big list you'll do the following:

- Search Google. For example, if you're looking for a writer then you'd search for phrases such as "hire a freelance writer" or "ebook ghostwriter".
- Post projects on freelancing boards such as elance.com, odesk.com and vworker.com. Provide as many details about your project as possible so that you attract the most qualified candidates.
- Post a "want ad" on CraigsList.org or review ads from writers. This is a great method if you're interested in working with a local freelancer.
- Ask for recommendations on marketing forums where freelancers tend to congregate. This includes WarriorForum.com, DigitalPoint.com and SitePoint.com.

Step 2: Look at the Freelancers' History

Your next step is to narrow down your list of freelancers by doing your due diligence on each candidate. Here's how:

- Browse the freelancer's portfolio to make sure he or she does high-quality work.
- Check the freelancer's feedback and ratings on sites like elance.com.
-
- Search for the freelancer's name, business name, website and email address in Google. You're looking for a freelancer who's preferably been in business for at least a year and has an established history of providing high-quality work and good customer service.
- Review the freelancer's rates to make sure they're within your budget.

Once you follow the above steps, you'll quickly narrow your list down to only the most qualified candidates. Pick one and then move on to the next step...

Step 3: Limit Your Initial Projects

You've done your due diligence, so you know your freelancer provides high-quality work on time. But before you hand over your biggest and most expensive projects to your freelancer, you better first check that the two of you work well together.

You need to be sure you have good communication so that you can explain what you need and your freelancer can turn it into a reality.

To that end, you need to do two things:

- 1. Start small.** Give two or three smaller projects to your freelancer first. If he handles them well, then you can start handing over your bigger projects.
- 2. Provide detailed briefs.** Leave nothing out, because you don't want your freelancer to have any room to guess or assume. So if you're writing a brief for a writing project, you'd include details such as:
 - Word count.
 - Working title.
 - Niche (who's reading the content).
 - Purpose of the content (lead generator, paid product, etc).
 - Complete outline of the content, including emphasis on any particular topics.
 - Any examples or samples to demonstrate what you'd like the final product to look like.

Conclusion

Finding a good freelancer doesn't have to be a nightmare. Just cast a wide net, do your due diligence and start slow.

Follow those three steps, and you'll find your perfect freelancer in no time!

7. How to Recruit Experts to Create Content for You – for FREE

When you think about creating a product (such as an ebook), you probably usually only consider two options: create it yourself or hire a freelancer to do it for you. But there's a third option that's free, doesn't require hardly any work on your part, and yet it can boost the credibility of your product.

The answer?

Recruit experts in your niche to create your product for you.

Not only do these experts do all the work, but they might even help you promote the product once it's finished. Plus having your name associated with these experts instantly establishes your own credibility and positions you as a niche expert.

Here's how to do it in three easy steps...

Step 1: Pick Your Product

First you need to decide what kind of product you're going to create, such as an ebook. Then you need to decide how you'll ask your experts to contribute. The possibilities include:

- You interview the experts. In this case, you're asking a variety of questions that are personalized for each expert.
- You ask the experts to write a short article, which will serve as one chapter of your ebook.
- You ask the experts a question and create the product by compiling these answers.

Example: "What's the best way to improve your golf swing?"

Once you know how you want your experts to contribute to your project, then move on to the next step...

Step 2: Find Experts

If you've been working in your niche for any amount of time, then you no doubt already know who all the major players are. If not, you'll just need to spend a couple hours doing research. This includes:

- Searching Google for your niche keywords (like “organic gardening” or “affiliate marketing”) to see who has the biggest and most popular sites in the niche.
- Browsing market places such as Clickbank.com, JVZoo.com and DigiResults.com to see who has the most popular products in your niche.

What you’re looking for are well-known, respected experts in your niche. Preferably, these experts should also have big platforms (such as a big mailing list, busy blog or plenty of social media followers). This is because your contributors are likely to help you promote the finished product.

Step 3: Recruit Partners

For best results, you should seek to develop relationships with these prospective partners first.

You do this by engaging in discussion with them on blogs, forums, social media sites, via emails and at offline seminars and other events. If you build a real relationship first, then it’s easy to later ask these friends if they’ll contribute to your product.

If you don’t develop relationships first, then you’ll need to put together a good joint venture proposal. This proposal should list all the benefits your prospective partner will receive if he agrees to work on your project. For example:

- Backend sales and exposure via a byline within the book, where your partner can promote his products or services.
- Free exposure in all sales materials which promote the product.
- Special perks, such as a free backlink on your blog.
- “Ego” perks, such as being featured in a book alongside other well-known experts.
- A special commission rate (such as 75%) if the partner helps you promote the product.

In other words, tell your prospective partner all the reasons why he should agree to do this project.

Conclusion

And there you have it – a simple three step system for finding and recruiting JV partners to create your product for you.

All you have to do is compile the submissions and, if needed, edit them. You'll do very little actual work, yet you'll end up with a high-quality product!

The Easiest Ezine Article You Will Ever Write Part 1

Writing your own original ezine articles is mandatory if you own a list or run an internet business.

Mandatory. Part of your standard operating procedures. A basic staple. Something you can't do without. You get the picture.

Ezine articles can be used in so many ways that I'd need to write an article just to explain all the ways you can profit from articles. 😊

More on that another day.

In today's lesson I'm going to show you how to write an incredibly easy ezine article that is specifically for beginners within your market. (We'll talk about the experienced segment of your marketer in an upcoming lesson).

The idea in a nutshell is this -

Answer a set of three basic questions related to a topic relevant to your target audience.

If you can answer just three simple questions, you can crank out article after article for newbies in your particular field of interest or expertise.

These three questions are –

1. What is _____?
2. Can you show me an example of _____?
3. How can I get started with _____?

Let me walk you through writing an article with these questions as the backbone of your content.

Before we get into the 7 very easy steps, let's take just a quick look at the schematics of your article. In order to write an 800 word ezine article, your basic needs for the various parts of the article would look something like this...

Opening (100 Words)
Question #1 (200 Words)
Question #2 (200 Words)
Question #3 (200 Words)
Closing (100 Words)

Total = 800 Words

Now, on with the show...

1. Determine Your Title

Most people don't spend much time on their title and that's a no-no. It's a flagrant foul in basketball. A bounced check. A driver cutting you off in traffic. Things that are mindless.

As with everything I ever say about ezine articles, your title is important. Very important. Imagine this scenario...

You're searching through articles at your favorite directory in hopes of finding some useful tips for selecting curriculum for your upcoming homeschooling year.

Which of these would you take a closer look at...

- ➔ The Easiest Way To Choose Your Curriculum
- ➔ Making Your Curriculum Choice
- ➔ 5 Questions To Ask When Choosing Curriculum
- ➔ Homeschool Book Decisions
- ➔ Choosing Your Homeschool Resources

While all of these are related to choosing your homeschool curriculum, "The Easiest Way..." and "5 Questions To Ask..." probably have more appeal. If you're pressed for time, you probably aren't going to read all five ... you might read two.

And the title is going to determine which two gets your attention.

So, first things first, it's important that you create an appealing title. We'll talk more about this in another lesson, but three simple "rules" that I go by in crafting titles that I'd like to pass on to you are...

- 1) **Be specific.** It's not "Questions To Ask", it's "5 Questions To Ask". It's not, "Lose Pounds", it's "Lose 3 Pounds in 7 Days".
- 2) **Make It Simple.** Who would ever read an article, "7 Extremely Hard Ways To Lose Weight"? Or, "Top 10 Most Difficult Ways To Find A Date For Valentine's Day"? Offer SIMPLE solutions. EASY ways to accomplish a desired result.
- 3) **Speak To A Group.** If your article is intended for a specific group (I.E. Beginners, WAHMs, Christians, Senior Citizens, College Students, etc.) then say so in your title. Rather than "How To Write An Ebook", go with "The Beginners' Guide to Writing An eBook" or "How To Write a Christian eBook".

So, determine your title and then begin the writing process.

Hint: Go to EzineArticles.com and review the titles of other articles (paying particular attention to which articles are viewed the most - indicating their popularity) and then use those titles to model your own after. I.E. If you see the popular title, "The Easiest Way To Lose 10 Pounds And Get In Shape Fast!" you could easily entitle your own article, "The Easiest Way To Learn Guitar And Play Songs Fast!"

2. Write Your Opening

You've got about 30 seconds to get your reader's attention if you're going to get them to consume your entire article. That's not much. It's important that you get them interested quickly. I'm going to share three to get you started...

- ➔ **"There must be some reason why some _____ outperform others."** . This opening is all about informing the reader that some people have an advantage over others. And, in order to level the playing field, they need to follow the advice in your article. Example: "There must be some reason why certain tennis players win more matches than others. Said another way, if two equally skilled tennis player compete ... why does one get to go home a winner and the other a loser?"
- ➔ **"I've always been impressed with those who could _____."** . This opening allows you to mention a specific result that is desired to, not only you, but the reader as well. Your article teaches the person how they too can experience the desired result. Example: "I've always been impressed with those who could hit a backhand winner on the run. It never came easy to me and I have marvelled many times when others seem to hit that shot

so effortlessly. Then, I figured out their secret..."

→ **"Do you find yourself _____?"** This opening is a good one because it allows the reader to identify with what you're writing about. When they say "yes" to your question, then they know the article is for them ... and they'll read on to discover what they can do about the problem they face. Example: "Do you find yourself double-faulting a lot? For years I gave away point after point - usually in critical times during my matches - by hitting into the net or just beyond the service box. Finally, I paid for a lesson from the local pro and this is what he taught me..."

Choose one of these openings (or one from the related article coming tomorrow) and write approximately 100 words as your introduction to the article. Be sure to transition from your opening into your first question.

You can do this in one of two ways: (a) Specifically mention that you'll be answering the three most asked questions from beginners, or (b) Simply answer the questions without ever actually posing the questions in the text of your article.

3. Answer Question #1

If you'll recall from earlier, question number one is...

"What is _____?"

Simply plug in the topic of your article into that question ... and then answer it in approximately 200 words.

- What is tennis strategy?
- What is podcasting?
- What is virtual real estate?
- What is forex trading?
- What is retinopathy?
- What is a VoIP phone?
- What is Tai Chi?

Give a brief explanation of the topic in your own words and then move on to the next question which builds upon the first question.

4. Answer Question #2

That question again is...

"Can you show me an example of _____?"

Now the article is taking shape. We go from an introduction to an explanation and now we have an illustration. You've explained what it is and now you'll explain what it looks like. Provide an example. A case study. An illustration. A method. Something the reader can identify with to better understand what you're saying.

- ➔ You've explained what tennis strategy is ... now give a scenario in which tennis strategy is at work.
- ➔ You've explained what virtual real estate is ... now give an example piece of VRE property.
- ➔ You've explained what Tai Chi is ... now share one of the key moves of the discipline.

After providing some sort of example, move on to question number three...

5. Answer Question #3

From earlier in our lesson, the final question is...

"How can I get started with _____? "

It all climaxes with 1-3 simple steps the reader can follow in order to begin practicing your teaching.

By this point the reader knows WHAT the topic is about and they know a basic use or function of the topic. Now, they need a simple explanation of how they can get started with application. How can they use the information?

You can either give the reader ONE action step to take in order to get started (I.E. The first thing you'll want to do is enroll in a class.) or you can provide them with a simple set of THREE steps to put into practice as a sort of mini-system (I.E. Step One is... Step Two is... Step Three is...).

6. Decide Upon A Close

To complete your article, you'll want to use your final 100 words (approximately) to close out your content. There are two components of the article close that I think are necessities if you want to see any results from your efforts.

- **The Spark.** You want to leave the reader with a desire to get started. You want them excited. You want them motivated. You want them to take action. I'm not necessarily talking about giving them a rah-rah pep talk (although that might not hurt either!). I'm speaking of getting them to realize that they can get the desired results they want if they'll get busy doing something. Your job at the close of the article is to encourage them (gently or blatantly) and challenge them to achieve.

- **The Segway.** The other thing you must do during your close is to lead into your resource box. Your article is for the reader. Your resource box is for you. Your content is to provide useful information for the reader. Your resource box is to get the reader to a point where you present an offer. And the closing of your article is the place where the two roads meet. Lead the reader to a decision to make a positive change in their life - to take action. And then use your resource box to provide a means to do just that.

7. Create a Resource Box

Most people use a STANDARD resource box with each of their articles. In other words, it's the same resource box regardless of what the article is about.

That's a big mistake in my opinion.

With an ever-changing audience reading articles about ever-changing topics why would you want to use a never-changing resource box?

Your resource box - in order to be truly effective - must be a continuation of the article itself. It must offer something more that is directly related to the content of the article. I mean, think about it: the reader has warmed up to you at this point. You've shared something useful. They like your style. They are pumped up and ready to take action. Why blow that moment with a resource box that does nothing to really enhance or continue or build upon where they are at this moment in time?

Let me give you an example:

If I've just explained what tennis strategy is about, pointed them to an example of tennis strategy and briefly outlined how they can create their own tennis strategy - which is more effective at this point...

- 1) Lethia Owens is the publisher of Tennis Tips, a free weekly newsletter full of informative helps for tennis players of all

skill levels. For your free subscription, drop by <http://www.LethiasTennisTips.com> today.

- 2) Lethia Owens is the author of How To Outplay Your Opponents By Outsmarting Them, a free strategy report for tennis players of all skill levels. Grab your complimentary copy at <http://www.LethiasStrategyReport.com> today.

Obviously, having just read the article on tennis strategy, you'd be more likely to take action if resource box #2 was in place ... because it's a continuation of the article. It's part 2. The sequel. The rest of the story.

Note: And, upon visiting my site and registering for the free report, you're automatically going to receive my free newsletter as well anyway.

The point is this: a carefully crafted resource box -- one that is specifically relevant to the article itself -- will outperform a standard resource box. You'll get more results by using a resource box that builds upon what's been shared in the article it is attached to.

So, that's an incredibly easy way to write an ezine article.

You can crank out an entire series of these articles for beginners. All you need to do is answer three simple questions.

1. What is _____?
2. Can you show me an example of _____?
3. How can I get started with _____?

It works for any niche. Any topic. Any person.

Below I've included a sample article written with this formula to give you an example to model.

Sample Article Written With This Formula

(751 Words)

The Easiest Way To Beat Your Tennis Opponent
By Lethia Owens

There must be some reason why certain tennis players win more matches than others.

Said another way, if two equally skilled tennis players compete ... why does one get to go home as a winner and the other as a loser?

Is it simply a random occurrence - the proverbial, "that's the way the ball bounces"?

Is it simply whoever played better on that particular day?

Is it simply that one player had a greater desire to win than they other?

To be sure things like luck, opportunity and desire contribute to the outcome of most club level tennis matches, but there is another factor - often unseen - that plays a huge role in determining who gets the "W" when two equally skilled players take the court.

And that factor is "tennis strategy ".

That is -

In a high percentage of matches between two equally-skilled players, the one who plays "smarter" will win the match.

In fact, by playing "smarter" not only will you win most of your matches against equally-skilled players, you'll win a number of matches against players who are "better" than you! (I.E. 3.5 players can beat 4.0 players.)

One thing that I've been guilty of over the years - and a trap I've seen almost every player I know fall into as well - is devoting time, energy and money to improving technically, but not strategically.

In other words: we try to improve our shots without improving our use of them.

I'll give you a perfect example -

Dave has been taking lessons to improve his forehand. He's now able to hit it with precision and pace. It's a thing of beauty. He hits the courts and waits for an opening to rip a winner. He waits some more. And he keeps waiting. While he's waiting, his opponent beats him like a drum. Dave walks off court with a beautiful forehand and a 6-2, 6-2 defeat.

Why? His opponent out-smarted him. His opponent watched Dave during warm-ups and saw that his forehand was a powerful weapon. Because of what he saw, Dave's opponent never gave him a chance to hit his scorching forehands.

So, that's what we're going to talk about during the remainder of this report. I'm going to quickly share the mental strategy that I've developed after 20+ years of playing and watching tennis.

I call it the "How to B.E.A.T.™ Any Tennis Player At Your Level" system. I use the acronym B.E.A.T. to illustrate the four critical steps of this winning system. Each letter "B", "E", "A", and "T" represent one of the four steps...

B - BE systematic in your play.

In other words, come to the court with a gameplan. Have a basic idea of what shots you want to hit - both where and when you want to hit them. Know your opponents strengths and weaknesses - and have a plan in place for the specific player you are facing.

E - ESTABLISH control of the points.

It doesn't matter what "style" player you are, nor does it matter what "style" player your opponent is ... what matters is which of you is going to get to play your kind of game. It's important that you stay in your comfort zone and get your opponent out of his.

A - ATTACK your opponent's weakness.

Every club level player has a weakness. Your job is to determine what your opponent's weakness is and exploit it as often as possible. Does he have a weak backhand? Hit as many shots to that side as possible. Hates to come to the net? Hit drop shots to bring him forward. Out of shape? Run him side to side.

T - TRANSITION as needed.

Gameplans are great to have - and oftentimes they work like a charm. But, what happens when they don't? You go to Plan B, of course! Prepare in advance what to do if certain things are happening. I have a list that includes such entries as, "If my opponent is killing me with a big kick serve, move inside the baseline to take it on the rise."

The important thing to learn is this: if you outsmart your opponent, you'll usually outplay him. Especially if he's at an equal skill level. And even if he's mechanically better than you in many cases.

Head to the courts today, but don't just take your racquet with you. Take your strategy as well. That's your real secret weapon.

Lethia Owens is the author of *How To Outplay Your Opponents By Outsmarting Them*, a free strategy report for tennis players of all skill levels. Stock your tennis bag with your own complimentary copy at <http://www.BeatAnyTennisPlayer.com>.

The Easiest Ezine Article You Will Ever Write Part 2

We've been talking about writing ezine articles by answering some "frequently asked questions" about a topic related to your particular field of interest and expertise.

The question is ... what questions? :-)

I've organized the following swipe file of 30 FAQs that you can answer as the basis of numerous ezine articles. (Heck, you can use them to create mini-courses, special reports, and even full-length products).

Take 3-10 of these and answer them for your next ezine article. And mix-n-match these questions with different topics within your market and you should have more than enough to write about for a long time.

- ➔ What is _____?
- ➔ Can you give me an example of _____?
- ➔ How can I get started with _____?
- ➔ What are some reasons why someone would want to _____?
- ➔ What 's the biggest mistake you've made in _____? How can I avoid it?
- ➔ If you had to sum up _____ in 5 steps, what would they be?
- ➔ Can you share a few "shortcuts" to success in _____?
- ➔ What 's your best advice about _____ for someone just starting out?
- ➔ Can you shared 2-3 "advanced" methods for _____?

- What are some quick tips for _____?
 - Where should I be focusing most of my time in _____?
 - What _____ resources do you recommend?
 - What 's the absolute easiest way to _____?
 - Name some pitfalls that I should be aware of. How can they be avoided?
 - Who have you learned the most from about _____? What have you learned?
 - Why are some people successful at _____ while other people fail?
 - What do you consider to be a complete waste of time in _____? Why?
 - What are some short term and long-term goals to set for _____?
 - I hear the term _____ a lot. What does it mean and how does it affect me?
 - What 's the one thing I should start doing NOW as it relates to _____?
 - What do you see as the next big trend in _____?
 - What are the tools that I need in order to successfully _____?
 - What's the one secret to _____ that you really don't want to share?
 - What can I do to improve what I'm already doing with _____?
 - Give me a timeline of my first _____ days. What should I expect? What should I do?
 - If you had to _____ in the next _____ days, how would you do it?
-

- ➔ If you could go back and change one thing about _____ what would it be? Why? What would you do differently?
- ➔ What are some daily activities I should be doing related to _____? Plan a weekly schedule for me.
- ➔ What is some bad advice that you've seen others give about _____?
- ➔ Nothing off limits ... what's the fastest way to see _____ results?

If you use this swipe file, it will be a tremendous asset for you in coming up with ideas for virtually any kind of content you are writing in the future.

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 gong 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 gotta 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's 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 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 ya 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, 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?

Lethia Owens 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, you 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://spamcheck.sitesell.com/> 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".

How to Write Articles That Get People to Buy Part 2

Now lets get to the secrets...

The Secret for Writing Ezine Articles

I call it the "**Final Point Formula**". It works like this...

1. Write an ezine article that shares a set of points

It doesn't matter if they are tips, keys, steps, ideas, ways, or any other type of list or how-to tutorial. The important thing is to share 3 or more of these related points.

Examples:

- 3 Keys to Greater Email Profits
- Top 10 Ways to Grow Huge Tomatoes
- 5 Steps to Selling More Used Cars
- 7 Quick Tips for Toning Your Tummy
- How to Re-Grow Hair in 3 Easy Steps

Nothing very surprising there. Folks do this all day long – we've just talked about it at length.

Here's where things are different...

2. Make everything you share dependent upon the final point

Your "final" point needs to be the most important. In fact, if you can make all of the previous tips in the article **DEPENDENT** upon completing that final tip, then you can start counting your clicks now.

Let me give you a real life example here:

A while back I published an article entitled, "*3 Keys to Greater Email Profits*".

The three keys were:

- (1) Consistency in QUALITY.
- (2) Consistency in REGULARITY.
- (3) Consistency in DELIVERY.

In key #1, I talked about quality of content and how to provide exactly what your list members want in order to keep them reading.

In key #2, I revealed a HUGE mistake that I had been making in how often I sent PROMOTIONAL mailings to my list. (Believe it or not, I wasn't sending them often enough!)

In key #3, I talked about spam filters and problems with email delivery as I spelled out how CRITICAL it was to get your mailings delivered to the inboxes of your subscribers.

Did you notice how key #1 and key #2 were COMPLETELY DEPENDENT upon key #3? It does you absolutely ZERO good to have content your list members WANT to read and have promotional mailings that your list members WILL respond to if they NEVER receive the mailings!

That's the idea here.

Give them good, useful, meaty information in all of the points leading up to the final one ... and then let your final point be absolutely critical to using any of the previous ones.

(Of course, give them some nugget of useful information in that final point as well ... but not EVERYTHING they need to know.)

3. Offer something related to the "final" point

Now, here's where you get the maximum number of readers to click on your link and actually go to your site - something most of your competitors don't do as well as you will.

The idea is simple: use your resource box to offer something that is directly related to the "final point" that was so critical to success for the reader.

Again, let me refer to an example to show you how this works. In my *"3 Keys to Greater Email Profits"* article, the final point was all about getting your email messages past the spam filters and into the inboxes of your subscribers.

And here are two different resource boxes that I used, one to promote a free report and one to promote an actual product...

Example 1:

Lethia Owens is the author of "How to Get Your Email Messages Past The Spam Filters", a free 17-page report available for a limited time at <http://www.getemailresults.com/past.html>

Example 2:

Lethia Owens is the author of "Get Messages Read" - Learn 24 Ways To Get Your Email Messages Past The Spam Filters And Into Your Subscribers' Inboxes at <http://www.GetEmailResults.com>

Do you see how this works?

You read my article - you enjoy it - you learn that it's all about getting your email delivered and then you read either (a) There is a free report awaiting you to help you get your emails delivered, or (b) There are 24 ways to get your emails delivered.

Could you resist clicking on the link and taking a look?

Probably not. Most can't.

And that's why this works so well.

You get them to a point where they WANT information and even NEED information, and then you offer them exactly what they need in your resource box.

Important Reminder

Let me take just a second to point out something that you probably know, but I feel it important to remind you just in case.

The BEST response you can ever get from an ezine article is to get someone to join YOUR list.

It's important that you remember that. Your number one, primary goal in writing ezine articles should be to get folks to join a list.

In joining your list, you get multiple opportunities to get them to buy something from you.

So, in using this "Final Point Formula", don't forget that your chief objective is to get readers to click on your resource box, go to your site and JOIN YOUR LIST.

Now, I did this with BOTH of my resource boxes. In one, I used the lure of a "free report" to get them to a site where they had to join a list to obtain it. In the other, I got them to a site for a salesletter - and had an opt-in list offer inside the text of the salesletter.

Either way, I got them on a list.

Likewise, you should ALWAYS have a mechanism in place for convincing your site traffic to join a list.

That's priority one.

4 Ways to Use Your Resource Box To Get Readers To Take Action And Click On Your Link

Now, there are four ways to use your resource box with this strategy that will get readers to take action and click on your link. So, let's talk about those for just a few minutes...

- 1. Multiplication.** That is, your resource box offers "*multiple ideas*" for accomplishing that final point. You may have shared one key to getting emails delivered, and your resource box offers 24 more ways to get them delivered. You may have shared a point for getting a discount on a new car and your resource box mentions a report in which you share 11 more ways to get discounts. The idea is to offer something that gives your reader a variety of additional options or ideas related to the point which is most important to them.
- 2. Expansion.** In other words, your resource box "expands" on the final point you referenced in the article. For example, your final point might have been "Protect your assets" in which you shared a quick tip. Your resource box might share "How to Protect Your Assets" or "The Beginner's Guide to Protecting Your Assets". Let's suppose your final point was "Talk To Your Preteen About Abstinence" and your resource box might share, "How to Overcome Your Fear of Talking to Your Preteen About Abstinence" or "3 Ways to Start a Conversation About Abstinence".

- 3. Automation.** The idea here is to offer a resource that automates whatever process you shared in your article, particularly the final dependent point. Let's say your article shared "Submit your ezine articles to the top directories and publishers" and your resource shared a software or service that automated the process, like a free report entitled, "How to Automatically Submit Your Articles To 25 Top Directories" in which you provide a tutorial of a software program. If your final tip is on creating niche products, your resource might lead the reader to something related to ghostwriting. If it's weight loss, then it could refer to a diet tracking or customized fitness program. Anything that automates or speeds up the process.
- 4. Absorption.** Primarily, I'm referring to "cost" absorption. Use your resource box to offer something that either allows the reader to save money on whatever the "final point" referred to, or, if possible, get it done without spending a penny. If your final point is "Drive traffic to your site" you might offer something in your resource box related to "free traffic". If your final point mentions "Send your youth group on a mission trip" your resource box might reference something related to "fundraising". If it's about travel, then use your resource box to talk about getting to travel anywhere for free by getting group discounts and selling them for regular price so yours is free or getting in free when your group reaches a certain size. Any way you can show them how to get something done for free.

Any of these ways will work great for your resource box – just use some kind of resource, either free or paid (although you'll usually get more responses with free) that builds upon that final point that you shared.

Now, follow the process with me...

- A subscriber somewhere reads your article, noting each of the points.
- They arrive at the "final" point and see how everything depends upon it.
- You create a solid transition from your article to your resource box like we talked about in the first session – which is absolutely critical.
- The next thing they see after reading the "final point" and your closing call to action is your resource box.
- Your resource box offers additional information on that "final" point.

- They can't resist finding out what they NEED to know, so they click.
- They arrive at your site - traffic! - now, it's up to you to convert them.

This is just such an irresistible way to use ezine articles and very few people have caught on - when you begin to use this concept in your own ezine articles, I guarantee you'll see a spike in your results.

Now, I'm going to share several examples here to really drive home this idea here because it will make such a huge difference in the amount of responses you get with your articles if you just master this one skill here.

Example #1: Suppose you've written an article about online dating entitled, "*How To Meet The Mate Of Your Dreams Online*". The final point might be, "*Get Them To Fall In Love With You*". See how everything is dependent upon that? It doesn't do you any good to find the mate of your dreams if they aren't at all interested in you! So, your resource box could reference a report that shares "*10 Simple Ways to Get Your Dream Date To Fall In Love With You*".

Example #2: Let's suppose you've got an article entitled, "*How to Write and Publish a Children's Book*". Your final point might be, "*Submit Your Manuscript to Publishers*." Again, everything is dependent on that final point - what good is it if you write a children's book and submit it for publication if it's turned down? Your resource box could mention a report or product that teaches the reader how to get a publisher to accept their manuscript for publication.

Example #3: You've written an article on stopping a divorce entitled, "*How to Save Your Marriage From Falling Apart*". The final point is, "*You Simply Must Rekindle Your Romance*". Once again, everything is dependent upon this final point - mutual affection in whatever way it is shown is a must. The resource box for this article would share a report, mini-course, product, etc. related specifically to bringing back the romance to any relationship.

Example #4: So, you've got an article entitled, "*The Beginner's Guide to Home-Schooling*". Your final point might be, "*Choose Your Curriculum*". One more, everything about the article is dependent upon that final point. You can't homeschool a child without approved curriculum. So, your resource box references a report or product such as, "*How to Choose The Perfect Curriculum For Your Child, Your Beliefs and Your Budget*". Or, how about, "*How to Get A Free Government Grant for Your Homeschooling Curriculum*"?

Example 0#: Okay, you've got an article that you've written entitled, "3 Keys to Starting a High-Profit Lawn Mowing Business". Your final point might be something like, "Get The Word Out About Your Business". Obviously, everything is dependent upon getting customers. Your resource box might mention a special report entitled, "Top 10 Ways to Get New Customers For Your Lawn Mowing Business".

Note: Now, I do want to mention something that's important here. If you can't make everything "dependent" on the final point, that's okay - just make the final tip your BEST tip - the one that stands out above everything else. The one tip that the reader is most likely to take action on and actually use. It's the best tip. It's the last thing they read. It's the transition from article to resource box. It will work this way as well. Dependent is your first option, but your strongest tip is also a winner here with this strategy.

Example: You're writing an article on traveling across country on a vacation. Your final point is "Look For Off The Beaten Path Stuff". Not exactly something the remainder of the article is "dependent" upon, but it is something that is important and interesting. Your resource box offers a free report, "101 Really Cool Stops You've Never Heard Of" or "How to Find The World's Biggest Ball of Twine and Other Odd Interstate Attractions".

That's how you REALLY get maximum effectiveness from your ezine articles.

- You provide useful, meaty information.
- You make one tip (the "final one") stand out as most important, or even CRITICAL.
- Your transition the reader from your article to your resource box.
- You use your resource box to provide additional information (free works best) on mastering that critical final tip.

It's the absolute best way to get those who read your ezine articles to actually click your link and go to your site to further investigate. And that is, after all, the point.

Now, obviously, once they join your list or download your report, you'll want to promote your offers to get them to buy. Whether it's your own products or affiliate links or some service - whatever it is that you do in order to generate profit - you'll have opportunities to mention offers inside the free report, on the download page and in follow-up sequences.

The key here is to get them to take action on your ezine article and I've just shared with you just a solid way to get readers to respond to your ezine articles.

You've just learned a technique that very, very few have ever even thought of, let alone are using— so, I encourage you to get started using this simple formula today.

Of course, crafting an article that uses this "*final point formula*" is worthless to you unless you get those readers who click on the link in your resource box to actually join your list.

The Follow Up Formula: 27 Ways To Use Content To Get Sales

Yep, the money is in the list.

But NOT just *any* list.

You need a targeted list. You need a responsive list. And you need to put good content and great offers in front of this targeted, responsive list.

I know, you've heard this before. And maybe you've even tried to apply it to your own list-building efforts. But "offering good content and offers to a targeted list" is vague advice.

It's hard to apply it, because you're left with questions. And perhaps the #1 question: What, EXACTLY, should you send to your list?

If you've been looking for precise ideas to apply to your list, then you're reading the right report. That's because...

You're about to discover 27 different types of content you can send to your subscribers to get them to buy again and again!

Here's how it works...

You build a mailing list of targeted prospects.

You start off by stocking this list with at least a half a dozen email messages. Each of these messages includes good content plus a pitch for a paid product.

Then you keep adding to your list of messages – and you keep promoting additional offers.

Eventually you may have dozens of emails going out to your subscribers automatically. And when that happens, you'll have your own hands-free profit center! All you have to do is focus on continuing to build your list, while your autoresponder works as your 24/7 sales team to drop offers in front of your prospects and profits into your pocket.

Sound good? Then read on....

Boost Your List Profits Using These Tips

Now before I share with you the 27 different ideas for content to send to your list, let me first give you four tips to help you build a profitable, responsive list...

Remember Your Overall Goal

You're building a list because you want to make money, right?

Well in order for you to achieve that overall goal, you need to make sure each message you send does one or both of these things:

- 1. Builds a relationship with this list.** People buy from those they know, like and trust. And your autoresponder gives you an opportunity to build relationships with your subscribers, by offering good content that genuinely helps your subscribers. Don't be afraid to give away your best tips, tricks, strategies and other content for free. When people see the high-quality content you offer for free, they'll eagerly purchase your paid recommendations.
- 2. Promotes an offer.** Obviously, in order to make money, you're going to need to promote offers. And that's what this report is all about – creating an autoresponder series that pushes a variety of offers. Just be sure you're offering high-quality offers with honest recommendations. If you wouldn't recommend the offer to your best friend, then don't recommend it to your list.

Which brings us to the next point...

Pitch Paid Products From Message One

When someone first joins your list, you generally have their full attention. They're eager to hear what you have to say. But as time goes on, their interest wanes. And that's why you should start pitching products from the very first message that you send to your new subscribers.

I know, you've heard about "nurturing" your list, which people generally believe means no pitching offers in the beginning of the autoresponder series.

Don't believe it.

Because if you don't start soft-promoting offers from the first email, you'll just train your list to expect freebies.

Take a hint from any big company

Example: Sign up to the Dell computer newsletter. Yes, Dell does send you PC tips and tricks. But they also start sending you offers for paid products immediately.

You should do the same thing. You don't need to do any hard sells, but you certainly should include a link for a paid product in just about every email you send to your subscribers.

Rotate Offers

One of the keys to making money with your list is to know which offers your list members are most responsive to. And the only way to know that for sure is by rotating and testing offers within your autoresponder series.

Example: If you have a dieting list, and you want to promote a book about cardio exercise, then test out three or four (or more) different cardio-related products to see which one gets the best results for you.

Create Evergreen Content

Imagine this...

You create an autoresponder series, and as time goes on you keep adding email messages to it. Pretty soon you have 28-30 messages in it, or enough content for about seven months if you send the messages out at weekly intervals.

So listen: Even if someone signs up to your list TODAY, they won't see your last email until seven months from now. And those who sign up for your list five months from now won't see that last messages until a year from today. That's why you need to make sure all the content you load up into your autoresponder is evergreen content.

Yep, "evergreen content" is just what it sounds like – it's always green. Always fresh. It doesn't get outdated or stale.

Generally, this is information that's time-tested and proven. Don't even bother mentioning new ideas or fads that are unlikely to stand the test of time.

Examples:

- Cardio exercise and portion control are two time-tested approaches to dieting. You can add these tactics to your evergreen article.
- Talking about a brand-new diet supplement that just hit the market is NOT an evergreen topic. Researchers might discover the pill doesn't work. Worse yet, the pill might get yanked from the shelves because it's dangerous. Either way, it's going to make YOU look bad if you're talking about an ineffective or dangerous supplement.

See the difference?

The first topic was relevant last year. It's relevant today. And it will still be relevant a year from now. That's why it's an evergreen topic.

The second topic (on a brand new diet aid) isn't evergreen. If you want to tell your list about it, you should do so via a live broadcast. But don't add information about it in your autoresponder series, because it's likely to get outdated.

The other thing you'll want to keep in mind is to avoid any language that "dates" your email.

Examples:

- Don't refer to a holiday like Christmas (as if it's happening now), because the reader may be reading your email in July.
- Don't refer to an event that can date your email, like a presidential election, a Super Bowl playoff, the opening of a new movie, the start of the Olympics, etc.

The exception is if you do it in broad, non-dating terms, such as "I'm thinking I'd like to go to the next Olympic winter games" (just don't mention a date, any athletes by name or where the games are being held).

- Don't refer to personal events, like you becoming a first-time parent. If you later talk about your child being "three years old" in a live broadcast email, your readers will know the autoresponder series emails are old.

Point is, don't mention anything that gives your readers any indication of when you're writing the email. Even if you're creating great evergreen content that's still "fresh," your readers will assume it's dated if they think you created the messages in the past.

Quick Recap

There you have it – four good ways to turn a good list into an even more profitable list. Now let's turn our attention to what to write about. Read on...

Stock Your Autoresponder with These 27 Types of Emails

You don't need to stock fully stock your autoresponder before you start building your list. Instead, you can create an initial series of emails (which we'll get to in just a moment) and then simultaneously build your list while adding new messages.

So what kinds of messages should you add to your autoresponder? I've got 27 ideas for you...

Note: You'll find example messages for these emails, which shows you how to weave useful information with good offers. Do note that for consistency sake all examples will be for an online marketing newsletter, and they'll all promote one product (Traffic-Fuel.com). Naturally, your own autoresponder series should promote a variety of offers.

1. Offer a Multi-Part Ecourse

This is actually a series of five to ten emails with which you use to initially stock your autoresponder.

It's a great incentive to give to your prospects to encourage them to join your list, and it's also a good way to "train" your subscribers to open and read your emails.

Example: Let's suppose that I wanted to promote my Traffic-Fuel.com site. I might create a five-part ecourse called "Five Surefire Ways to Drive Targeted Traffic to Your Site." My five messages would include:

Lesson 1: How to Get Free Traffic Using Videos

Lesson 2: A Fantastic Way to Get All the JV Partners You Need

Lesson 3: How to Harness the Power of Facebook

Lesson 4: Traffic-Driving, Sales-Boosting Blog Tricks You Didn't Know

Lesson 5: How to Build an Army of Affiliates

Each lesson would include step-by-step instructions and/or valuable tips for accomplishing what's promised in the lesson title. But inside each lesson I'd also include a promotion.

Example: P.S. If you enjoyed learning how to drive hordes of free traffic using viral videos, then you'll love the other tips and tricks you'll learn inside the Traffic Fuel site. Go to www.traffic-fuel.com to check it out now - you won't be disappointed!

Got it? Now let's move on to the individual messages you can use to stock your autoresponder...

2. Give Away a Free Report

Remember your dual goal of building a relationship and/or promoting a product? You can use this type of email message to easily achieve both goals.

The free report will help you build goodwill and trust with your subscribers. But you can also use this free report to promote a product. Alternatively, you can include a promotion within the actual email itself. Or, of course, you can include a promotion both within the email as well as in the report.

The key to making this particular email work is to give a mini sales pitch so that people will download and read the report.

Let's see an example:

Subject: How to Create a Sizzling Link-Bait Blog Post

Hi [First Name],

You've heard about link-bait blog posts - these are posts with such awesome content that your readers can't help but talk about them and link to them all over the web. But while you've heard about them, no one has ever told you how to create them.

Until now.

Introducing "Link-Bait Leverage," your complete guide to creating blog posts that go viral. Best of all, it's yours free if you click here now.

Check it out right now, because you deserve to have the blog posts that everyone in your niche raves about!

Lethia Owens

P.S. Creating link-bait posts is just one dozens of ways to get free traffic. You can learn about some of the best and most powerful free traffic strategies by going to www.traffic-fuel.com.

3. Share a "How To" Article

You'll probably create and send quite a few content articles, like "how to" articles or tips articles (which we'll get to in a moment).

The key to meeting your dual goal is to create useful, yet incomplete posts.

By useful, I mean that you send a stand-alone article that solves part of your prospect's problem.

This helps you build trust with your prospects. Yet your article should also be incomplete, which means you can pitch the complete solution within or at the end of the article.

There are two ways to create a useful yet incomplete how to article:

1. Describe PART of a process in detail.

Example: You can give an in-depth description of how to exercise to lose weight. But since nutrition is the other key to losing weight, the solution is incomplete. Thus you can pitch a weight loss product in the article.

2. Give an overview of the process. Here you can list the steps of a process and tell people WHAT to do – but not HOW to do it. Then you pitch a solution that offers the full details.

Example: Let me give you an abbreviated example (your actual email will likely be at least 500 words long). Here we're using strategy #1, where you solve PART of the prospect's problem completely...

Subject: How to Quickly and Easily Start Your Own Blog

Hi [First Name]

You've thought about starting a blog. You know you should, because it would be a great profit center for you. But maybe the tech details bog you down.

Not anymore! Read on for the complete step-by-step instructions for setting up your own blog...

Step 1: Get a Domain Name and Hosting. [...Here you'd include complete instructions for this step...]

Step 2: Install Your Blog. [...Here you'd include complete instructions for this step...]

Step 3: Change Your Blog's Theme. [...Here you'd include complete instructions for this step...]

And there you have it – the quick and easy way to set up your own blog in just a couple clicks using your host's control panel.

As soon as you complete the above steps you can start blogging.

But of course a great blog isn't worth much if you don't also have a lot of people reading your content. You need traffic, and lots of it. That's why I suggest you grab your www.traffic-fuel.com membership now.

That's where you'll discover how to get all the traffic you need, for free. Check it out!

See you next time!

Lethia Owens

4. Share a "Top Tips" Article

As mentioned before, another way to create a useful yet incomplete article is by sharing tips. The tips are useful, yet the article is incomplete because it doesn't deliver an entire solution to the reader.

Let me give you an example...

Subject: Top Three Tips for Building a Responsive Mailing List

Hi [Name],

Anyone can build (or even buy) a mailing list. But the key to big profits is to build a responsive list. Here are three tips for doing exactly that...

Tip 1: Be honest. Simple, but true - be honest in your recommendations. If you wouldn't recommend it to your mother, then don't recommend it to your list.

Tip 2: Set subscribers' expectations upfront. Do you know one reason why people unsubscribe from lists? Because the newsletter doesn't meet their expectations. That's why you should set these expectations upfront - on your squeeze page - by telling prospects exactly what kind of content to expect and how often they'll hear from you.

Tip 3: Stay in regular contact. You can't build relationships with anyone (online or offline) unless you stay in regular contact. That's why you should seek to contact your subscribers each and every week.

Those three tips are a good start to building a responsive mailing list. But if you want to also build a big list, then you're going to need traffic. Here's where to get it: www.traffic-fuel.com.

Until next time...

Lethia Owens

5. Send a Text Interview

There are two ways to conduct an interview.

One way is by email, in which case you just send the completed interview to your readers. You can also do a verbal interview – such as on the phone – and then send the polished transcripts to your readers.

The second factor to consider is who's the interviewer and who's the interviewee. Specifically:

- a. Someone interviews you.** This is a great way to establish credibility, because it establishes you as the expert.
- b. You interview someone else.** This is a good way to provide fresh content from an expert. If you sell affiliate products, you can even interview a product vendor (and then use your affiliate link every time you mention the product).

If the interview is short, you can copy it directly into your email message. Otherwise, you may want to link to a downloadable .PDF, or maybe even post it on your blog.

Just as with the free report, you can promote an offer from within the interview. Optionally, you may also do it from within the email you send to subscribers. Let me give you one example of how to do this...

Subject: I spilled my guts about how to get free traffic...

Hi [name],

Last week I did an interview with marketing expert Joe Blow. Maybe he slipped some truth serum to me, because I revealed some of my best-kept free traffic secrets.

You can pick up the interview for free and discover these traffic secret by clicking here. Do it now – you might be surprised.

Sincerely,

Lethia Owens

P.S. Would you like full and uncensored access to all of my best free-traffic ideas? Then go to www.traffic-fuel.com.

6. Compile Your Blog's "Greatest Hits"

If you've maintained a blog for some time, then you no doubt have a collection of at least three to ten posts that are really useful and popular with your readers.

You can do a great service for your email subscribers by listing them all in one place. You can then promote offers from within these blog posts or from within your actual email.

For example...

Subject: Three Secrets to My Success

Hi [name],

I've shared a lot of tips and tricks with my readers both in this newsletter as well as on my blog. But there are three blog posts that stand out in particular. I consider these some of my most useful and popular posts. These are my "Greatest Hits" if you will...

1. The \$1 Way to Make Money:
<http://www.imststitute.com/blog/the-100-way-to-make-money/>. This is making money online, simplified, to two core concepts. Check it out.
2. 52 PLR Streams of Income: <http://www.imststitute.com/blog/52-plr-streams-of-income/>. Running ideas for what to do with your PLR content? Here are 52 - enough to keep you busy doing one a week for an entire year!
3. An Inspiring Story - 10 Years Online:
<http://www.imststitute.com/blog/an-inspiring-story-10-years-online/>. I didn't always lead this lifestyle. I wasn't an instant success in life. I used to be in debt - and worried. Perhaps just like you.

See you next time!

Lethia Owens

P.S. I've also assembled my "greatest hits" of traffic secrets all in one place. Check them out here: www.traffic-fuel.com.

7. Give Access to a Video

A video is another freebie you can offer to your subscribers. And just as with the other freebies, you can promote offers from within the video as well as within the email you send, if you'd like.

Let me give you two examples of what kind of content to offer in a video:

Examples:

- You run a dog training site. You can offer a step-by-step video that shows how to teach a dog to heel.
- You publish a gardening newsletter. You can offer a video that shows people how to create a raised garden bed.

Now let me give you an example of the email you'd send. Notice how this example stirs up curiosity so that people watch the video...

Subject: Shocking Free Traffic Secret Revealed

Hi [name],

This traffic trick is so new that no one's talking about it yet - and hardly anyone even knows about it, much less uses it. But today I'm letting the cat out of the bag so that you can start enjoying all the traffic it brings.

Check out this free video: [link to a YouTube video].

Let me know how it works for you.

Lethia Owens

P.S. Want to discover more ways to get red-hot, targeted traffic? Check this out: www.traffic-fuel.com.

8. Link to a Free Audio

This free audio could be a podcast, where you explain how to do something. Or this free audio could be an interview – either where you interviewed an expert, or someone else interviewed you.

As usual, the key is to present benefits and/or drum up curiosity so that your newsletter readers actually listen to your audio. Let me give you an example...

Subject: What's the deal with rebrandable reports?

Hi [name],

Ever seen those reports that get spread across a niche like a prairie wildfire? Ever wished you knew the secrets of creating these kinds of reports for yourself?

Now you can discover these secrets and more, for free, by listening to my new podcast by clicking here.

It's just 10 minutes long – but it's the best 10 minutes you'll invest in yourself all week.

Lethia Owens

P.S. If you like learning about how to get free, targeted traffic to your site, then you'll love this: www.traffic-fuel.com.

9. Create a FAQ

Have you ever noticed that the same questions come up repeatedly in your niche? Now you can help your subscribers by compiling a FAQ – a list of frequently asked questions – and answering these questions.

What sort of questions should you include? These:

- The ones that pop up repeatedly on niche forums.
- The topics that get a lot of buzz on niche blogs.
- The questions people ask on Yahoo! Answers.
- The questions people ask you on your blog and via email.

Then you can compile a list of questions and answer them in a 500 to 1000 word article. If you have even more questions, you can split your article up and send it out over multiple days.

Let me give you an example...

Subject: Your Frequently Asked Traffic Questions... Answered

Hi [name],

If I had a nickel every time someone asked me a question about how to get traffic, I'd be a millionaire. Indeed, I see these same questions in my inbox and across the niche on a daily basis. Maybe you have the same questions. Here are your answers...

- What do you mean by "targeted" traffic?

All traffic is not created equal. Just as you wouldn't try to sell t-shirts in a nudist colony, it doesn't make much sense to put your dog-training offers in front of quilting enthusiasts. The key to good advertising is to put your ad in front of targeted prospects - these are members of your niche who're eager and willing to buy what you're selling.

- What's better: A Facebook personal account or a FB Page?

If you're already using your personal account for personal stuff (like sharing news and photos with friends), then keep it private. Instead, set up a Facebook Page. Not only does it make you look more professional, the content is also crawled by Google and other search engines.

- Which is better: PPC or SEO?

Which is better depends on your needs. PPC (pay per click) marketing is a good way to get fast traffic. But, of course, you have to pay to play - so you better have a good sales system already in place. SEO (search engine optimization) is free, but it can take time to see noticeable results.

My suggestion? Use both as part of your overall marketing strategy.

- How do you outwit Google?

Forget about outwitting Google or any other third-party platform. Instead, focus on creating good content, which will naturally get you traffic and backlinks. This means creating content that your readers enjoy.

Secondly, diversify. If one of your traffic sources dries up, you'll still have plenty of traffic coming in if you've implemented a diversified advertising strategy.

- What's the best way to get free traffic?

There is no single "best" way, as it depends on what you're selling, your needs, your skills, etc. However, even if there was a single "best" way, I wouldn't recommend it. That's because you need to diversify your traffic strategies.

So here's what I recommend instead: Create a strategy based on at least six to twelve of the most powerful free traffic strategies. You can learn them here: www.traffic-fuel.com.

Sincerely,

Lethia Owens

P.S. I'm serious when I say diversification is the key. People who rely on one traffic source (such as Google) have been known to get wiped out overnight. Don't let that happen to you. Get a Traffic Fuel membership today to protect yourself.

10. Share an Opinion

The key to making this particular email successful is to share an opinion on a popular topic, especially a controversy. Just be sure that the controversy is a long-standing, evergreen topic – otherwise your email will appear outdated.

Here's an abbreviated example...

Subject: Should you dump your long sales letters?

Hi [name],

Have you seen the heated debates on forums and blogs? Seems like every time you turn around there's another discussion popping up about whether to use long sales letters or short sales letters.

And wow, do people get passionate about their stance. I'm talking about people on both sides of the issue - otherwise rational people - who're suddenly jumping up and down, turning red in the face and stomping their feet over this issue.

You know what I say? Calm down. Because the answer is ridiculously easy..

Test it for yourself.

I know that's just what I've done. Sometimes I end up with long sales letters. Sometimes I end up with short sales letters. And sometimes I end up with medium sales letters, like this one: <http://www.traffic-fuel.com/>.

But the key is that I test it for myself. Brilliantly simple, right? And yet wildly profitable.

Sincerely,

Lethia Owens

P.S. The next time you see people throwing a fit over this issue, tell them that the only way to know for certain is to test. And don't rely on anyone else's results, because it all depends on your niche and your offer.

11. Suggest a Twist

Since you're creating evergreen content, you're mainly sharing "tried and true" information.

However, one trick to impressing your readers is to share a twist on these classic strategies. That is, show your readers a new way of using a tool or idea.

Example: You can tell a list of bodybuilders how to use their barbellset to get a cardio workout (as most bodybuilders move heavy weights very slowly, not for cardio purposes). It's not a

groundbreaking twist, but it's showing people a way to use their equipment in a new way.

Let me give you another short example...

Subject: A neat way to use PLR to drive traffic

Hi [name],

If you're like a lot of marketers, you're already using PLR (private label rights) content in your business. And you probably use it in a variety of ways to drive traffic to your site, including:

- Optimizing it for the search engines and then publishing it on your blog.
- Putting it on sites like Squidoo.com
- Using it as "bait" to build a mailing list.

And more.

Now let me share with you an idea you may not have thought of. This is a way to generate leads and get some fresh traffic to your site from a different source.

How? By burning the content onto a CD and selling it on eBay. This is a great way to instantly build a list of buyers.

Naturally, you can include links to your site within the actual content. But even better, you can also include a flyer in the shipment where you advertise a specific offer.

Enjoy!

Lethia Owens

P.S. Need even more fresh ideas for getting targeted traffic to your website? Check this out: www.traffic-fuel.com.

12. Send a Checklist

A checklist is another one of those useful (yet incomplete) freebies that you can send to your readers. If the checklist is short, you can include it directly in your message. Otherwise, you can send it via a printable .PDF.

Examples:

- Send writers a checklist of how to research, outline and write an article.
- Send dog lovers a checklist of what to look for when they're shopping around for a new dog or puppy.
- Send job seekers a checklist of how to prepare for a job interview.

Let me give you another example...

Subject: Use this handy checklist to find a good JV partner...

Hi [name],

Working with one or more JV (joint venture) partners is a great way to create products, drive traffic and get more sales. But this is only true if you're working with a reputable partner. When in doubt, use my personal checklist to make sure you're dealing with honest professionals...

- JV Partner Checklist

Did someone you know and trust recommend this person?

Has this person been in business for at least six months (preferably a year or longer)?

Did you run a Google search for:

- This person's name?
- His products?
- His website?
- His business name?
- His email addresses?
- Other identifiers, such as his phone number?

Did your search reveal any of the following:

- Slow or no refunds, despite a stated refund policy?
- Slow or no payment to affiliates?
- Customer service complaints?
- Complaints about poor-quality products?
- Other customer complaints?
- Other complaints from business associates?
- Serious allegations such as fraud or deceptive business practices?

Yes, it takes a little time upfront to do this research, but it's well worth it in the long run to ensure that you only associate your name with other reputable, honest business people.

Sincerely,

Lethia Owens

P.S. Of course a joint venture partnership is just one of many ways you can use to get free traffic to your website. Discover the other free-traffic strategies here: www.traffic-fuel.com.

13. Create a Mind Map

A mind map is a different way of presenting and organizing information. Rather than presenting information in a linear format (like this report), you can offer it via a mind map.

This is where you start with an idea in the middle of the map, and then create "branches" out from that central idea.

Each branch can have its own branch. Thus at a quick glance it gives the reader an overview of an idea or process, plus it helps you see how all the topics are connected.

Tip: Want to create your own mind map? You can use a tool like www.mindjet.com or any number of similar tools available online (both free and paid).

Here's an example...

Subject: Here's your free traffic strategy..

Hi [name],

I've told you before that the key to creating a great traffic strategy is to diversify.

Except when you start reading about all the traffic methods and thinking about all the steps you need to do to implement the strategy, it can get a little overwhelming.

Not anymore!

That's because I created a mind map which gives you an overview of the best free traffic strategies. Click here to check out.

Be sure to print it off and hang it on the wall by your computer. It's a great tool for staying focused!

Lethia Owens

P.S. If you need in-depth instructions for how to fully apply these traffic methods, then you need to become a member of www.traffic-fuel.com today.

14. Offer Other Free Tools or Resources

Some of the tools you've learned about – like checklists and mind maps – are great gifts to give your subscribers... but they're not the only tools you can offer.

You can build trust with your subscribers by offering them tools such as:

- Spreadsheets.

Example: Offer dieters a spreadsheet to help track their progress.

- WordPress themes and plugins. These are great tools for online marketers and other bloggers.
- Software and apps. Lots of uses here.

Example: Offer an app that locates the best discounts for your niche.

Here's an example of how to offer your freebie while promoting a product...

Subject: Free Sharp-Looking WP Theme...

Hi [name],

When I first started blogging, I spent countless hours looking for the perfect WordPress theme. I wanted one that was flexible, easy to tweak, optimized for the search engines and compatible with the best WordPress plugins.

You know what?

That kind of theme didn't seem to exist - so I hired a top developer and designer to create it for me. And now you can use this theme for free by clicking:

[link to your theme]

Enjoy!

Lethia Owens

P.S. Now that your design problems are solved, it's time to tackle one of your biggest problems: Getting traffic. No worries, I have the solution for that too: www.traffic-fuel.com. Check it out, you won't be disappointed.

15. Reveal Your Blueprint or System

There's something you know how to do that many of your subscribers don't.

It's something they struggle with. And maybe they just need a clear blueprint or system so that they can start enjoying results, too.

That's where this type of email comes in - here you offer a strategy, blueprint or system to help your subscribers evaluate something, complete a process, streamline a process, or otherwise find success.

For example...

Subject: Swipe my Traffic F.U.E.L. system...

Hi [name],

Seems like every other day someone is introducing a "new" way to get traffic. And if you're like most people, you jump into research mode to see if this new product or strategy is all it's cracked up to be.

You know how I decide if a traffic strategy or product is any good? I analyze it using my four-point Traffic F.U.E.L. system. Here are the four points:

Free: The first criteria is simple: the traffic is free.

Understandable: The second issue is that the traffic strategy is understandable. If I don't know where the traffic is coming from, or if I don't understand how any of it works, I don't want to dabble with it. There are too many unknowns that could get me in trouble later.

Effective: This third factor is that the strategy or product needs to be effective. In other words, it has to work. And that usually means it needs to produce targeted traffic. Too many strategies over the years (like "start page" site or "free for all" sites) produce untargeted traffic that's basically worthless.

Lasting: The fourth factor is that the traffic strategy needs to last. It needs to be time tested. If someone is tell me I need to "hurry up" and try the strategy before everyone else knows about it - meaning the strategy or product becomes ineffective if too many people use it - that's not something I want as part of my marketing toolkit.

There you have it - the four-point Traffic F.U.E.L. system for evaluating new traffic strategies. If you'd rather skip the analysis and just go straight to the strategies that actually work, then go to www.traffic-fuel.com.

Sincerely,

Lethia Owens

16. Give Access to a Private Forum

The key here is the word "private". That's because you want your subscribers to feel special, like they're members of an exclusive club (and they are). So you tell them how to join a special forum where you do things like:

- Share tips you don't reveal anywhere else.
- Give access to blueprints, tools and other freebies.
- Offer support and some coaching.

Here's an example of the email you might send...

Subject: Free access to a private forum (for a limited time)...

Hi [name],

Heads up...

I'm thinking about adding a private forum membership as a bonus for anyone who becomes a member of www.traffic-fuel.com. Inside this forum I'll personally share some of my best traffic tips and tricks.

But before I can do that, I need to get a few enthusiastic members into the forum to interact and ask questions. That's where you come in.

For the next 48 hours, I'm offering a 100% free membership into the forum just for asking. All you have to do is click here to get started.

If you don't act now, you can still get in later - you'll just need to become a member of Traffic-Fuel.com first. It's a great deal either way, but it's totally free if you act today.

Lethia Owens

P.S. See you on the inside!

17. Show How to Use a Product

This email is a great way to promote a product. And that's because the idea here is to show your readers how to get the most out a product. You can show them how to use a product in a new way. Or you can just show them tips and tricks for getting the most benefit out of the product.

You can certain present this information via a text-based description (either in your email or as a downloadable .PDF). However, whenever possible or applicable, use a video to really demonstrate how to use the product.

For example...

Subject: How to Use Market Samurai
Hi [Name],

You've probably heard me talking about Market Samurai and the unique way I use it in combination with a Google search to uncover hundreds of little-known niches. But I've never shared my exact strategy - until today.

Click here to see a free five minute video that shows you my three best Market Samurai tips and tricks - I think you're going to be surprised!

Lethia Owens

P.S. So what do you do once you find all those red-hot niches? Build sites around them. And then start sending traffic to them using www.traffic-fuel.com.

18. Compile Your Top Resources

No matter what niche you're working in, you probably have a tried-and-true list of trusted resources that you use to do niche tasks. This list no doubt includes both free and paid resources.

Examples:

- Bodybuilders have a list of supplements and sources of information they use regularly to improve their bodies.
- Gardening enthusiasts need everything from seed sources to blogs which offer tips and tricks.

Here's another example...

Subject: The Best Tools Every IMer Ought to Use...

Hi [name],

If you're an online marketer, then you know that it's important to put the right tools and resources in your business toolkit.

That's why I'm going to share with you my top tools and resources

* Domain names: There are a lot of domain registrars floating out there. But some of them have bad reputations for shooting first and asking questions later. That's why I suggest you stick with www.namecheap.com.

* Web hosting: Same goes for web hosting - you need to find a reputable company who'll work with you and not against you. I suggest you use www.hostgator.com

* Blogging: Need a good, flexible and free blog platform? Then check out www.wordpress.org.

* Outsourcing: Need someone to write content, create your graphics or any other number of tasks? Then try www.elance.com or www.odesk.com.

* Traffic: I like getting free traffic. And that's why I recommend www.traffic-fuel.com.

Let me know your favorite resources!

Lethia Owens

19. Send a Teaser Post

While we've been talking about mainly informational articles to send to your newsletter list, now we're going to turn our attention to articles that are more directly promotional. And the first one is the "teaser" post.

Just as the name suggests, the teaser post teases your readers, usually about an upcoming product launch. It drops hints about the product. It touts the benefits of the offer. It arouses curiosity.

Let me give you an example...

Subject: It's coming in two days..

Hi [name],

You're just 48 hours away from getting the opportunity to change the entire course of your business.

If you're struggling to get traffic, you'll want to listen up. If you have a small advertising budget, you'll want to pull your chair even closer. That's because in two days you're going to lay your eyes on a membership site that will teach you a new traffic strategy every month.

Best of all, every single one of these strategies gets hordes of targeted traffic to your site... for free. No more blowing through your entire ad budget just to get a few clicks. No more wasted money on untargeted traffic. No more endless tweaking, trying to find an ad buy that will create a return on your investment.

Because now the only thing you need to invest in is YOU. And in two days you'll get that chance. Talk soon..

Lethia Owens

P.S. Need a sneak peek? Check this out: www.traffic-fuel.com.

20. Create a "Reasons Why" Post

Here's another directly promotional article, because you actually tell your readers the reasons why they should buy a product.

Hint: Any time you're selling anything, your prospects will have objections. These are reasons why they think they should NOT buy your product. You can use this article to raise and then handle those objections, which allows you to smoothly close the sale.

Here's an example...

Subject: The TRUTH about Traffic-Fuel.com..

Hi [name],

The blogs are lighting up. The gurus are raving. And the forums are buzzing with the news about Traffic-Fuel.com. Maybe all the buzz has your curious. Is it worth it? Should you buy it? My answer is yes to both questions. And here are three good reasons for you to get it TODAY..

Reason 1: These are FREE traffic strategies.

I don't know about you, but I shed a tear every time I watch my ad budget get drained without seeing much in the way of results. That's what I like about Traffic-Fuel.com - you learn about totally free strategies. No deep pockets required to get started today!

Reason 2: These strategies work for ANY niche.

Have you ever seen those reports that talk about doing things like advertising on the Warrior Forum? Sure, that's great if you sell to online marketers. But what if you sell to golfers, homeschooling moms or dieters?

That's where Traffic-Fuel.com comes in. These strategies work in ANY niche, no matter what you're selling. Check it out for yourself to see what I mean.

Reason 3: Traffic-Fuel is a steal (especially today).

If you started up an AdWords campaign today, you'd probably need to start with a \$50 training guide and a \$500 advertising budget. And you might blow through the first \$500 without seeing any results.

That's where Traffic-Fuel.com is different. The strategies are free. And the training guides and your membership is just \$20 per month. Not per day, not per week - per month. That's a large pizza and some Cokes - total bargain.

But that bargain might not last long, so go to www.traffic-fuel.com to lock in this low membership price.

See you inside!

Lethia Owens

P.S. You'll love traffic-fuel.com - guaranteed! Give it a try, and if it's not everything I've promised, then you'll get your money back... no quibbles and no questions!

21. Offer a Discount

If you're selling your own products, then you can easily arrange for a discount for your newsletter subscribers. But even if you're selling an affiliate offer, you can often arrange a special discount with the vendor, exclusive only to your subscribers.

Note: If you do arrange a discount with a vendor, keep in mind that it's going to need to be a permanent, ongoing discount. Since this is an evergreen autoresponder series, you can't offer a "limited time" discount.

Here's an example...

Subject: Special subscriber-only offer..

Hi [name],

Do you need more traffic?

Silly question, I know. If you're selling anything online, then you just about always need more traffic.

More traffic = more customers = more money in the bank.

But the problem is, you don't have deep pockets or a big advertising budget (yet). And so you can't just dig into your bank account or tap into a huge line of credit to buy advertising and traffic. You need to look for low-cost alternatives. Better yet, you need FREE traffic that converts like crazy.

Sound good? Then you need www.traffic-fuel.com. And if you join now, you can also take advantage of a [X%] off discount by using coupon [insert coupon code].

Once in, you'll start discovering the secrets of tapping into some of the most responsive traffic streams online. And your bank account will thank you, because you won't have to pay a cent for any of your advertising.

So join now at www.traffic-fuel.com. See you inside!

Lethia Owens

P.S. Please don't share the coupon code - this is an exclusive offer just for my subscribers.

22. Extend a Bonus Product

This email is similar to the last one, except here you're giving a bonus product to any subscribers who purchase your main offer.

The key to making this email really work for you is to make sure the bonus product is desirable, valuable, and tightly related to your main offer.

Indeed, if the bonus product actually enhances the enjoyment or benefits of the main product, that's even better. But either way, the point is to offer something your subscribers really want, which will help them push the "buy now" button on the main offer.

Examples:

- You're promoting a fly fishing book. You can offer a bonus set of videos that shows people how to tie the flies and cast the line.
- You're promoting a book about blogging. You can offer a free set of blog themes to anyone who purchases the blogging course.

Here's a (fictional) example...

Subject: Get The World's Greatest Traffic Secret... for FREE?

Hi [name],

Have you heard about The World's Greatest Traffic Secret?

If not, just search any blog or forum. Check out YouTube. Ask your friends on Facebook about it. I guarantee you'll hear good things about this exciting report, because people can't say enough good things about it.

That's because this report reveals a little-known way to bring in an amazing amount of traffic in just 48 hours. It works in any niche. It works for any product. And it will work for you too.

Best of all, this exciting report is yours FREE when you join www.traffic-fuel.com today. You won't find a better reason to join than this, so don't delay!

See you inside!

Lethia Owens

P.S. I absolutely recommend that you get yourself a copy of The World's Greatest Secret - so why not get a free copy by joining www.traffic-fuel.com? This is a great deal!

23. Create a Bonus Service

Same idea here as the last one, except in this case you're creating a bonus service.

Examples:

- You're selling a course about how to get into college. You can offer a college application essay critique.
- You're selling a dieting program. You can offer a free personal dieting consultation to anyone who purchases the product.

A warning here: Unless you have some sort of automated (hands-free) service, this is a bonus that's going to actually take time out of your schedule. Thus it may not be worth it to offer this type of bonus for an inexpensive product. If that's the case, then only offer this bonus on higher-priced products.

Here's a (fictional) example of an email...

Subject: Free Coaching From Lethia Owens?

Hi [name],

You read the subject line right - you can get free coaching from me, a marketing expert who's been making his living online for 10 years.

Imagine spending 15 minutes on the phone with me. What would you ask? Would you want me to brainstorm niches with you? Would you want me to critique your sales page? Would you want me to go over your business plan with a fine-toothed comb?

The choice is yours. And these 15 minutes could change your business - and change your life.

So how do you get this free coaching? Simple: Just join www.traffic-fuel.com today.

Once you've been a member for 60 days, you'll get to spend 15 minutes on the phone with me.

Hope to talk to you soon...

Lethia Owens

Note: Again, the above is a fictional example! The offer does NOT exist at this time.

24. Write a Direct Promotion

Earlier you learned about writing a teaser, which is when you whet your prospects' appetites for an upcoming product launch (or even for an upcoming bonus or discount offer). Now this type of an email is a direct promotion.

This is where you send your subscribers an advertisement with the intention of getting them to buy the product ASAP.

Here's an example...

Subject: Here's how to get all the traffic you need..

Hi [name],

The formula is really pretty simple: More traffic = more money. So if you want to pull more money out of your business, then you need to get more traffic.

Simple in theory, yes. But if you've ever tried to increase your traffic, then you know it's not as easy as just flipping a switch.

Sometimes you end up chasing after totally worthless traffic sources. Some get you traffic, but the traffic isn't targeted. Some sources send targeted traffic, but only in the tiniest of trickles. And sometimes you spend entirely too much money on these sources. Money you definitely could have used to grow your business.

What you need are solid, reliable and proven sources of traffic. You need targeted, responsive visitors who're going to buy what you're selling. And ideally you'd like to attract these responsive visitors using free advertising.

Sound good? Then you're exactly the type of person who'd enjoy being a member of Traffic Fuel.

Traffic Fuel is your source for discovering the best sources of free traffic and free advertising. Each month you'll learn about a new way to get traffic. And each month you'll watch your business grow.

Check it out now at www.traffic-fuel.com, because you deserve more traffic AND more money.

Lethia Owens

P.S. Don't waste any more time or money chasing after advertising that doesn't work. Get results by joining www.traffic-fuel.com today..

25. Provide Testimonials from Satisfied Customers

Your prospects want to believe you. But they also know you're biased when you tell them about an offer. They know that you're going to benefit financially if they buy the products and services that you recommend. So while they WANT to believe, there always a tiny bit suspicious and skeptical about the claims you're making.

That's where a testimonial comes in. This is where a satisfied customer comes forward and says, "Yes – the claims are true! This is a great product! It really works!"

And now your prospect believes your claims. After all, this neutral third-party has no reason to lie. He gets no benefit from praising your product.

The other advantage of sharing testimonials is that they work as a form of social proof. This is particularly true if you're able to share several strong testimonials. The prospect thinks, "Wow, all these people bought this product – maybe I should too."

The key is to only share strong testimonials. Specifically, these are testimonials that talk about how well the product works. These are testimonials that specifically back up your claims. So if you claim your product is easy to use, then share those testimonials that say the product is indeed easy to use.

Let me give you an example...

Subject: Here's why everyone is raving about Traffic F.U.E.L...

Hi [name],

Let me be blunt: Join Traffic-Fuel.com today, and over the next several months you'll discover how to get all the free, targeted traffic you could ever need or want.

I know, it's a pretty bold claim. And I know you've heard me make these sorts of claims before, but maybe you've been a little skeptical. The reason I can make these claims is because they're true – and I have proof.

Just look at what John Smith from New Orleans says about the quality of this traffic:

[Here there would be a testimonial talking about how responsive the traffic is.]

And he's not the only one who feels this way. Jose and Suzy feel this way too:

[Here would be two more testimonials talking about how responsive the traffic is.]

And then there's George. George struggled for eight months to get traffic to his site. He used to be ecstatic when he got 20 hits a day. Now he's getting 20 visitors every hour - and it's growing every month! But don't take my word for it - read it in George's own words:

[Here you'd insert a testimonial that reflects what was said above.]

Listen, when I say these traffic strategies work, I'm not kidding. There are hundreds of other satisfied customers who're raving about Traffic-Fuel.com. They're loving all the traffic they're getting. And they're enjoying watching their businesses explode before their eyes.

It's time for you to join them. So go to www.traffic-fuel.com to see for yourself what everyone is raving about.

Lethia Owens

P.S. You can see even more testimonials from people just like you by going to www.traffic-fuel.com.

26. Share a Case Study

Here's another form of social proof. But instead of merely sharing a customer's words of praise, you share his actual results.

Examples:

- You'd track a person for two months as they used your dieting program. Then you'd share before and after weights, measurements and photos to prove your product worked.
- You show the before and after photos as well as the story of a customer who used your "do it yourself" book to remodel his kitchen.

Here's another (fictional) example...

Subject: Russ couldn't believe his eyes...

Hi [name],

Russ joined Traffic-Fuel.com exactly 42 days ago. And he still can't believe how fast his business grew in these first six weeks.

You see, Russ never had more than a trickle of traffic coming to his site over the last two years. Seems like nothing he tried ever worked. And he found himself wasting a lot of money and time on traffic sources that didn't produce results.

Then he stumbled on www.traffic-fuel.com - and he couldn't believe his eyes. Here's what his traffic logs looked like the day before he found Traffic-Fuel.com:

[Here there would be a screenshot depicting poor results.]

Here's what his traffic logs looked like two weeks after joining Traffic-Fuel.com:

[screenshot]

Here's what happened after just four short weeks:

[screenshot]

And - brace yourself - here are his traffic logs six weeks after joining:

[screenshot]

Best of all, this is targeted traffic. Not only did Russ enjoy watching his traffic grow, he also saw his business grown from \$122 per month to \$2199!

Join Russ and countless others by joining www.traffic-fuel.com today - and just imagine how your business will transform in 42 days!

Lethia Owens

P.S. Russ says www.traffic-fuel.com is the best investment he ever made in himself. It can be your best investment too when you join today!

27. Do a Product Review

Let me be clear about this upfront: When you do a product review, you should share both the strengths and weaknesses of the product you're reviewing.

That's because your prospect knows there's no such thing as a perfect product. So if you don't mention the perceived flaws, your prospects will think you're hiding something. They'll view you as dishonest. And when that happens, they won't buy what you're selling.

So let me give you a short example of a product review, one that hits both the strengths and weaknesses of the offer...

Subject: Don't even think of buying Traffic-Fuel.com until you read this...

Hi [name],

You've probably heard people talking about Traffic-Fuel.com. But there's so much buzz that it's hard to separate the truth from the hype. That's why I wanted to share with you my honest review...

It's true, Traffic-Fuel.com isn't for everyone. I'll share with you in just a minute if you're one of the folks who shouldn't buy it. But first, let me hit the high points...

Traffic-Fuel.com is a monthly membership site from Lethia Owens, where you'll learn about a new traffic strategy every month. Here are the best parts of this offer:

- You don't get overwhelmed. You learn about one strategy each month, so that leaves you the rest of the month to work on implementing the strategy.
- These are proven strategies. No untested theory, nothing blackhat, nothing even remotely shady. Best of all, these strategies work in any niche.
- You'll learn from an expert. This isn't some rehashed information. These strategies come directly from Lethia

Owens, who has made his living online for the last 10 years.

- It's extremely affordable (surprisingly so). I've seen memberships of this level cost two or three times as much, so this is a bargain.

However, as mentioned, this membership isn't for everyone. There are downsides:

- * No videos. If you prefer learning from video, you'll be disappointed. But the text manuals are meaty and well-written, so the site certainly isn't lacking for good, solid information.
- * Limited to free traffic strategies. You won't learn about how to use AdWords or media buys here, so the content is limited in that regard. But if you don't want to spend money on traffic, the this is actually a plus for you.

So what's my conclusion?

Join today at www.traffic-fuel.com. The membership's site benefits thoroughly outweigh its downsides, so it's a great choice for anyone who needs more traffic.

[Reviewer's name]

P.S. I almost forgot: If you don't love your membership, you get your money back - so try it out risk-free today at www.traffic-fuel.com!

Whew - you just discovered 27 different types of emails you can send to your list. You'll never run out of content ideas again! That's because you can use each of these 27 ideas multiple times by sharing different strategies and different offers.

Now let's wrap things up...

Conclusion

Congratulations - you now know how to stock your autoresponder with dozens of different types of messages, content and offers! And that means you now know how to get your subscribers to buy from you again and again!

Just remember your dual goal:

- ✓ **Build a relationship with your subscribers.** You do this by being an honest newsletter publisher who offers solid, trustworthy content and recommendations.
- ✓ **Promote offers.** You can slip a link into just about any type of email you send. As you discovered, you can do soft-promotions where you include a link almost as an afterthought in your email. Or you can do a hard-sell occasionally, where you send out a direct promotion.

But of course you're not going to make money just because you now know how to stock your autoresponder with 27 different types of emails.

You need to actually create and upload these emails. And I suggest you do so starting today! So commit to writing at least one email today and one every day for the next month. Then get set to watch your business grow the hands-free way!

3 Copywriting Helps for Every Sales Piece

1. Ten Fill-In-The-Blank Headline Templates

So you're writing a sales letter or other advertisement. And you know that one of keys to writing a great piece of copy is to brainstorm as many headlines as possible.

But sometimes it's hard to get started.

Sometimes you just stare at a blank computer screen, trying to figure out how to hook your prospects. Brainstorm dozens of headlines? Heck, sometimes you can't even write one good one!

That's why I'm offering these templates to you.

Just plug in the required information, and in minutes from now you'll have at least 10 good headlines!

Give it a try...

1. Now You Too Can Discover the World's Best-Kept Secret for [Getting a Benefit]

Examples:

- Now You too Can Discover the World's Best-Kept Secret for Enjoying a Long and Happy Marriage!
- Now You too Can Discover the World's Best-Kept Secret for Shaving Five Strokes off Your Golf Game!
- Now You too Can Discover the World's Best-Kept Secret for Getting Rid of Migraines!

2. Thousands Will [Try to Get Specific Benefit]. Only Those Who Know This [Type of/Niche/Explanation] Secret Will Succeed. Will You Be One of Them?

Examples:

- Thousands of People Will Start a Blog This Year. Only Those Who Know This Profit Secret Will Succeed. Will You Be One of Them?

- Thousands of Dog Owners Will Try to Housetrain a Puppy This Year. Only Those Who Know This Surprising Housetraining Secret Will Succeed. Will You Be One of Them?
- Thousands of People Will Start a Diet This Year. Only Those Who Know This Fat-Loss Secret Will Lose Weight. Will You Be One of Them?

3. How to [Get a Benefit] in Just [Small Amount of Time]

Examples:

- How to Get Whiter Teeth in Just 10 Minutes a Day!
- How to Get Flatter Abs in Just Five Minutes a Day!
- How to Run a Wildly Successful Online Business in Just One Hour a Day!

4. You're About to Discover the Secrets of [Getting a Benefit] – Even if [You Don't Possess Some Pre-requisite or Special Skill or You Do Possess Some Bad Quality]

Examples:

- You're About to Discover the Secrets of Writing a Bestselling Book – Even if You Flunked High-School English!
- You're About to Discover the Secrets of Design a Web Page the Quick and Easy Way – Even if You Think CSS and HTML are Government Agencies!
- You're About to Discover the Secrets of Losing Weight Fast and Keeping it Off for Good – Even if You've Tried and Failed Before!

5. How to Use a Little-Known [Topic/Type] Secret to [Get a Benefit]

Examples:

- How to use a Little Known Persuasion Secret to Get More Dates With Beautiful Women!
 - How to Use a Little-Known Homemade Herbal Mask Recipe to Take Ten Years off Your Face!
-

- How to Use a Little-Known Parenting Trick to Get Your Teenagers to Start Talking to You!

6. Good News! You Don't Have to Suffer [From Specific Problem] Any Longer!

Examples:

- Good News! You Don't Have to Suffer With Back Pain Any Longer!
- Good News! You Don't Have to Suffer From Social Anxiety Any Longer!
- Good News! You Don't Have to Suffer From Insomnia Any Longer!

7. Warning: Don't Even Think About [Taking a Specific Action] Until You Read Every Word on This Page, Unless [You Want Bad Thing]

Examples:

- Warning: Don't Even Think About Starting Another Fad Diet Until You Read Every Word on This Page, Unless You Want Your Metabolism to Slow to a Snail's Pace...
- Warning: Don't Even Think About Starting a Blog Until You Read Every Word on This Page, Unless You Plan on Abandoning Your Blog in Six Months...
- Warning: Don't Even Think About Buying a Car Until You Read Every Word on This Page, Unless You Like Overpaying...

8. Now You Too Can Save [Time/Money/Hassles]!

Examples:

- Now You Too Can Save Hundreds of Dollars on Your Heating Bills!
- Now You Too Can Save Your Self Time, Money and Headaches, Once You Know These Secrets of Successful Outsourcing!
- Now You Too Can Save Time by Using These Simple Organization Secrets!

9. Here's a Surprising Trick for [Getting a Benefit]

Examples:

- Here's a Surprising Trick for Getting Rid of Your Dog's Fleas!
- Here's a Surprising Trick for Erasing Laugh Lines and Other Signs of Aging!
- Here's a Surprising Trick for Getting Rid of Belly Fat!

10. [Getting Benefit] Is Easy When You [Know This Secret/Use This Product]

Examples:

- Capturing Stunning Magazine-Quality Photographs is Easy When You Know These Photography Secrets!
- Losing 20 Pounds is Easy When You Know This Fat-Loss Trick!
- Starting an Online Business is Easy When You Use This Software!

Conclusion

There you have it – 10 templates you can use to quickly and easily create your next profit-pulling headline.

Just remember – once you start brainstorming, don't stop. Because these 10 headlines can easily grow to 20, 30 or more headlines if you let your creativity flow!

2. How to Create Urgency in Your Copy

Your prospect is interested in buying your product. Maybe his mouse is even hovering over your buy button. But then he bookmarks your page and tells himself he'll come back and buy later.

Except later he's not in the buying mood any more. Life gets in the way. Maybe he even forgets about you and your offer completely. And you lose the sale and a customer.

The solution?

You need to create a sense of urgency. You need to get your prospects buying right now.

Here are 10 ways to do it...

1. Offer a limited-time discount.

You can offer these discounts directly on your sales page. Or you can hand out coupon codes with expiration dates. But either way, you need to offer a good discount for a limited amount of time.

Example: Order now to receive \$25 off the regular price - but hurry, this offer ends in 72 hours!

2. Extend a limited-quantity discount.

Instead of having the discount end on a certain date, you can have it end when a certain number of customers have purchased the product.

Example: The next 50 customers who act now will enjoy a 50% discount...

3. Create a limited-time bonus offer.

This is where you offer a free product or service to anyone who buys the main product before the expiration date.

Example: Order this copywriting book before Tuesday at 11:59 PM, and you'll get a FREE headline critique!

4. Offer a limited-quantity bonus offer.

Here you create urgency by only giving a bonus to a limited number of people.

Example: Be one of the first 100 people to order now and you'll get a FREE one-year membership into the iBusinessOwner.com membership site!

5. State that the entire offer ends on a certain date.

While technically you could pull any offer on a certain date, it makes more sense to use this method with products and services that have natural deadlines, such as a live e-class workshop which begin on a certain date.

Example: Hurry and claim your e-class seat today, because the class starts on Monday! You'll kick yourself if you miss the registration deadline...

6. Entire offer ends after a limited quantity is sold.

Again, while you could arbitrarily decide to sell a limited number of any time of product, this method works best if there is a good reason why quantities are limited.

Here are instances where a product is naturally scarce:

- You're selling antiques or limited-edition collectibles.
- You're selling products that retain a higher value if you limit quantities (like private label rights content).
- You're selling workshop seats where you can only accommodate a limited number of people.
- You're selling a service, which is scarce because you're only able to accept a limited number of clients.

Example: There are only 150 private label rights licenses available - and when they're gone, they're gone, so order now to avoid disappointment!

7. Use dime-sale pricing.

The idea here is that you use a script that causes the price to go up in small increments after every purchase. While it's common to have the price go up 10 cents after every purchase, you can choose most any increment (one penny, 25 cents, one dollar, etc).

Generally, once you reach a predetermined price, it becomes a fixed price and the sale is effectively over.

Example: Act now and you can get this amazing course for just \$7.10 - that's an 80% discount! But don't delay, because the price goes up every time someone buys before you do. So order now to lock in the absolute lowest price possible!

8. Utilize fire-sale pricing.

This is a type of sale that usually lasts one or two weeks. On Day #1 you offer the absolute lowest price. Then every day thereafter you increase the price by a set amount. Once you reach the end of the sale, you can either pull the offer off the market completely, or you can leave it at the final price.

Example: Order now and you can get this amazing package of never-before-seen resell rights products for just \$30! But hurry, because the sooner you buy, the more you'll save! Take a look:

Today: \$30 → order today to lock in the lowest price!

Tuesday: \$40

Wednesday: \$50

Thursday : \$60

Friday: \$70

Saturday: \$80

9. Tell prospects why they need to buy now.

The idea here is to remind prospects that the sooner they get started, the sooner they alleviate their pain and start enjoying the benefits.

Basically, you're telling them that if they don't take action, then nothing will change. While you can use this method for any type of product or service, it works particularly well for desperate markets (e.g., people who have a pressing problem they need solved ASAP).

Example: Order the Bride Boot Camp Miracle today - because the sooner you do, the better you'll look on your wedding day!

10. Create a disadvantage if prospects don't buy now.

People like instant gratification. That's why telling people they may have to wait if they don't order now creates a sense of urgency.

Of course you can't threaten that people will have to wait without a good reason. Here are legitimate reasons:

You have a limited quantity in stock. If the prospect waits, the item might be backordered for a week or two.

You're offering a service. Obviously, the sooner someone orders, the sooner you'll be able to complete that service.

You're offering a class or workshop. If they don't order now, then they'll have to wait until the next time you offer that class or workshop.

Example: This class won't be offered again until next spring. So register today to make sure you get into this class, because you deserve to learn how to run a successful business!

Conclusion

You just discovered 10 proven ways to create urgency so that your prospects start hitting the "buy now" button more often. However, you don't have to limit yourself to using just one tactic per sales page. Indeed, you can make your offer even more compelling by combining these tactics.

Example: You can remind people about the benefits of an offer (#9) while simultaneously extending a discount (#1).

So go ahead and use these methods for creating urgency in your copy.

I think you'll like what they do to your sales figures!

3. How to Tell a Story in Your Copy

Do you remember your parents teaching you how to tie your shoes? If so, then there's a possibility that your parents used a story to teach you this task ("first make a bunny ear, then make another...").

And if you were one of the lucky ones who learned shoe-tying through a story, then you probably picked up the skill quite fast.

Why? Because stories are memorable. And they're also great ways to turn a complex task into a simple one.

But stories don't just work on small children. They also work on your prospects to persuade them to your viewpoint, teach them a valuable lesson or to otherwise make a point.

Problem is, a lot of people don't know how to tell a good story, especially in their sales letters. If you do it wrong, the method backfires. Instead of getting people running for your buy button, you'll get them hitting the back button.

Don't let that happen to you. Just follow these three steps for storytelling selling...

Step 1: Determine the Purpose of Your Story

Even though you're writing this story for sales copy, that doesn't necessarily mean the story's purpose is purely for persuasion. You tell a story for a variety of reasons, including:

- **Building rapport with your readers.** A story can demonstrate to your prospects that you understand and empathize with them. And if the story is about you, the story might even show that you used to be just like them.
- **Connecting emotionally with your readers.** People make their buying decisions based on emotion. Stories help evoke emotion. So you can see why telling stories help you persuade your prospects.
- **Making a point.** As mentioned above, a story is memorable. It allows you to make a point that wouldn't be as effective if you just laid out the facts. For example, you can tell someone not to lie. But if you tell the story of the "Boy Who Cried Wolf," your point becomes much more effective.
- **Giving an example.** A story is also a good way to share an example of what you're referring to in your copy. So instead of just saying that many people have problems losing weight, you can share a story about how someone jumped from diet to diet, trying to find something that worked.

Once you decided on the purpose of your story, then move on to the next step...

Step 2: Choose a Story That Suits Your Purpose

Now that you know your story's purpose, you need to come up with a story that will help you achieve this purpose.

There are numerous ways to come up with this story, including:

- **Think about your own life.** This is a great option if you want to build rapport with your prospects and/or show them that you were once just like them.

Example: If you're selling a weight loss book, then you can share a story about how you were once overweight and how being overweight ruined your life.

- **Look to other peoples' lives.** Maybe you have a friend, colleague or other acquaintance with a story worth sharing.
- **Tell a popular story from books, TV or movies.** This includes Bible stories, stories from bestselling novels and stories from popular movies and

television programs. The idea is to pick something really popular, something your market is likely to know about, because your target market will be able to relate to it.

Example: You could share a story about how being business makes you feel like a contestant on the reality show Survivor (outwit, outlast, outplay). A lot of people would relate to that and know what you're talking about, simply because the show has been so popular over the years.

- **Share another story.** This could be a story you make up. Or it could be an observation that you spin into a persuasive or point-making tale.

Example: Let me show you a first-hand example: <http://www.traffic-fuel.com/>. There you'll see how I took a race-car driving story and used it to make a point.

Once you pick out a story, then move on to the last step...

Step 3: Engage Your Readers

The key to making your story work in your copy is to tell a good story. Don't just rush through it. And don't just tell it in a monotone, "just the facts" style. You need to engage your readers. Here's how...

- **Think about word connotation.** Let's say you're telling a story about witnessing a car accident. You can say the cars collided with one another. Or you can say they smashed into each other.

Did you see what happened there? When you read the word "smashed," you get a very different mental image as opposed to when you read the word "collided." Thus you can actually paint different mental images for your readers simply by choosing different words. In other words, you can control how your readers respond to your story.

- **Paint a picture.** Go back to this example again: <http://www.traffic-fuel.com/>. You'll note that I didn't just say that Earnhardt ran out of gas. Instead, I painted a picture of the time leading up to that moment – the crowd going wild, how Earnhardt was so close to victory, etc. In other words, I let readers see why this event was so heartbreaking for Earnhardt and his fans. And in doing so, I evoked emotion in my readers.

- **Engage the reader's senses.** If you can engage your reader's senses, then you can pull him away from his world and into your world for a few minutes. In other words, you can get his attention. And once you have his attention, you'll be in a better attention to "tell and sell."

So what do I mean by engaging his senses? Exactly what it sounds like: when you tell your story, be sure to bring in your reader's sense of sight, hearing, smell, taste and touch. Or at least bring in as many senses as possible.

Example:

Sight: She was wearing a brilliantly colored red and blue button-up shirt.

Hearing: The fireworks went off so loud that my ears were ringing for several minutes.

Taste: My lips puckered as soon as I tasted the sour lemonade.

Touch: I felt a painful sting as the doctor plunged the needle into my arm.

Smell: The room filled with the smell of burnt toast.

Conclusion

A well-told story can work wonders to build rapport, make a point and persuade your prospects.

So use the three simple steps above to start effectively telling stories in your copy too – you might be surprised by the results!