



Everything You Ever Wanted to Know about Article Marketing

Results of a 30-day Article Marketing Experiment

An InkwellEditorial.com e-book by

by

Yuwanda Black

Is article marketing profitable; how it works; which sites work best; how often to submit; what to submit; results to expect; etc. All of these questions – and more – are answered!

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About the Author

Yuwanda Black is the publisher of <http://www.InkwellEditorial.com>: THE business portal for and about the editorial and creative industries. She blogs at <http://www.InkwellEditorial.blogspot.com>.

Ms. Black has been in the publishing industry since 1987 and owned Inkwell Editorial, an editorial staffing agency in New York City, from 1996-2004.

She repositioned the business as an online information portal for editorial and creative professionals in December of 2004.

As of this writing, Yuwanda has published six e-books, one freelance writing e-course, numerous e-reports/pamphlets and hundreds of articles. For a complete list of her e-books, reports and pamphlets, visit <http://www.inkwelleditorial.com/bizguides.htm>.

In 2000, she wrote and developed a popular Chicago-style copyediting course, attended by Fortune 500 executives and junior execs alike.

Ms. Black also developed and taught a web development and marketing course at Borough of Manhattan Community College in 2001. A serial entrepreneur, Yuwanda has been featured in magazines, newspapers and online outlets nationwide, among them:

Entrepreneur.com's small business magazine, *Be Your Own Boss*
(<http://www.entrepreneur.com/magazine/entrepreneursstartupsmagazine/2005/february/76108.html>)

The Wall Street Journal's, RealEstateJournal.com
(<http://www.realestatejournal.com/homegarden/20041207-needleman.html>);

the highly popular work-from-home site, PowerHomeBiz.com
(<http://www.powerhomebiz.com/vol147/marketing.htm>);

and the noted search site, About.com
(<http://podcasting.about.com/od/monetizingyourpodcast/a/yuwandaarticle.htm>); and

the noted online business journal, GreaterDiversity.com.

Among other accomplishments, Ms. Black has been a freelance writer since 1993; a syndicated small business columnist, and a freelance/entrepreneurial advisor.

Yuwanda holds an AA in English; a BA in Sociology; and took courses towards an MA in Criminal Justice (John Jay College of Criminal Justice, NYC).

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Following are my findings from a month-long article marketing case study (conducted from October 18, 2006 through November 18, 2006).

THE DETAILS – WHY I CONDUCTED THE STUDY

As an overworked freelancer, my goal was to create more passive income.

A little history: I've been in publishing since 1987, and have been a freelancer since 1993. I kind of took freelancing as it came those first few years, never relying on it as my primary source of income.

Inkwell Editorial was formed in 1996 as an editorial outsource firm. The smartest thing I did as a manager was add staffing/recruiting to Inkwell's list of services. That really got the company over the hump, as placement fees ranged from a low of 3K on up to around 12K.

NOTE: In general staffing fees are much higher, but in editorial, salaries are low, so recruiting fees are below what you'd make in another arena, eg, tech.

A handful of placements a year and a few temps on assignment, coupled with my freelance income provided me a very nice living.

Then came 9/11. The arena in which I staffed (editorial) crashed. Ad agencies and publishers cut back their output because no one was spending on ad campaigns, so no need to hire copy editors, creative directors, graphic designers, etc.

However, during the time we offered on-site temps, I built up a pretty good roster of clients and now get most of my work via referral.

Present Day: Having been a freelancer since 1993, I've reached the point where I want to "touch" projects less. So, my goal going into next year is to create more passive income. My hope is that within a couple of years, I can get by on just my product sales alone. Having reached 40, I want to work less and play more.

Now, on to the details!

NOTE: This e-book consists of a series of blog posts, a Q&A session and conclusions drawn from the experiment overall. I hope you find it useful.

WHAT DID THE STUDY CONSIST OF?

My goal was to submit one article a day for 30 days (excluding weekends) to 25 top-rated directories.

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How did I choose which directories to submit to? I used their PR and Alexa rankings. What are PR and Alexa rankings.

What is a PR Ranking? What is an Alexa Rank?

PR Rank: First, PR stands for page rank. Impact-Direct.com defines page rank as:

A method developed and patented by Stanford University and Larry Page [cofounder of Google] to rank search engine results. Page Rank gives a unique ranking to every page on the internet. The ranking number is based on the number of quality inbound links pointing at a page and is represented on a scale from 1-10, with 10 being the optimal rank.

In the article, “*What Is Page Rank?*” by Kimberly Bodane, she describes why page rank is important, as well as what you can do to improve yours.

There is also a very detailed article on problogger.net entitled *Google Page Rank Explained*. It’s at <http://www.problogger.net/archives/2005/07/16/google-page-rank-explained> with helpful feedback from other readers.

Alexa Rank: An article published by e3Server.com on thehostingnews.com, *What is Alexa Ranking*, describes Alexa rankings as “a very powerful tool of viewing and comparing web site traffic for one site to the rest of the web.”

Read full article here: <http://www.thehostingnews.com/art-what-is-alexa-ranking.html>

The lower the ranking, the better. Sites that rank 100,000 or lower are considered extremely popular.

To learn more, type “alexa ranking” in the search engine of your choice and do some reading. You’ll be able to get a full understanding by reading a few articles of detailed information.

To find out your site's PR, go here: http://www.prchecker.info/check_page_rank.php

To find out your site's Alexa's ranking: Go here: <http://www.Alexa.com>.

Case Study Notes: I missed 3 days submitting. I also added and deleted approximately 4 directories from the list as I went along. Why? Because they either went offline (in one case), were not uploading articles in a timely manner, and/or were not suitable for the type of article I had written that day.

Overall, though, I consistently submitted and was able to glean some good findings, which will be discussed later.

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Here I will lay out a series of blog posts, because they detail what was happening at the time, giving valuable insight and details about the study as it was unfolding.

THE BEGINNING OF THE ARTICLE MARKETING CASE STUDY

I posted the following comment to another blogger's blog – as he had written an article entitled, *Is Article Marketing Worth Your Time?*

It was a few days after I had started my article marketing experiment. You can view the article here: <http://www.entrepreneurs-journey.com/405/article-marketing-ezinearticles-review> (my post to it is almost at the bottom of this page; for ease I've pasted it below).

My Blog Post to <http://www.entrepreneurs-journey.com> on October 26, 2006

Yaro,

I read your post with great interest because I am one week into doing this very same test. [*Note:* I started the experiment on October 18th. I don't submit on the weekends and have missed one week day so far.]

I have been a freelance writer since 1993 and have been had a niche site online since 1999.

I've been a part of the Google AdSense program for about a year and a half. I've made decent pocket money with this program, without putting any effort into it. All I did was slap the ads on the pages and forgot them.

I've also been marketing with articles for about 3 years now — submitting to a few major directories a couple of times a month (mainly ezinearticles.com and ideamarketers.com).

Upon deciding that I wanted to create more passive income, I decided to give article marketing a REAL try. I decided to submit one article to 25 top-rated directories for 30 days straight.

Only a week into it, my Google AdSense income has quintupled (increased 5 times) and my subscriber rate has increased 3 fold. And this is after ONE WEEK.

Now, my site has been around a while, but my Alexa rank sucks (although my site does have a PR rank of 6).

[NOTE: The highest ranking I've ever enjoyed in Alexa is in the 800,00s. Now it's at 6,000,000+. But, I've never really understood SEO and don't worry about these things.]

Anyway, given these very early results, I'd say that article marketing does work. BUT, you only get out of it what you put into it. I've been submitting articles manually and it

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does take up a chunk of time — about 2 hours a day.

I'm always skeptical of “easy” money-making techniques, but I'd read so much about article marketing and had experienced newsletter growth from limited efforts with it in the past, so I wanted to see what it would be like if I really pushed it.

Now, if I could just get some feedback from users on which article submission software to use — that would be great.

Sorry to be so long-winded, but I wanted your readers to have a complete picture so they could understand my conclusion about article marketing.

Continued success to you, and thanks for the post.

Sincerely,
Yuwanda Black,
PubliserInkwellEditorial.com
InkwellEditorial.blogspot.com
###END OF POST###

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POSTS TO INKWELLEDITORIAL.BLOGSPOT.COM

The following posts are from my blog (InkwellEditorial.blogspot.com). They detail, more or less, what was going on during this time. Insights and findings come later.

Blog Post (InkwellEditorial.blogspot.com): Thursday, October 26, 2006

Article Marketing Experiment: Does It Work, or Not?

I was going to give an update on this next month, as I'm only a week into my experiment, but I got so excited about the results so far that I wanted to share.

Also, I posted a comment (listed below) on another blogger's site (<http://www.entrepreneurs-journey.com/405/article-marketing-ezinearticles-review/%23comment-24716>). As it so happens, he had conducted a similar experiment in March of this year [2006].

What was the experiment? Article marketing. I've been a user of this technique to a limited degree for the last 3 years or so. Wanting to create more passive income and having read so much about article marketing, I decided to give it a real try.

What prompted this whole thing is that I've been so swamped with projects this fall that I'm literally at the point where I realize that to keep the same income (gotta pay the mortgage!) and still have a life (ie, work less), I need to create more passive income.

With all that being said, read on for the results.

Be sure to click over to Yaro's blog to read a lot more on this if you're really interested.

Blog Post (InkwellEditorial.blogspot.com): Thursday, October 26, 2006

Case Study Details: How article marketing is significantly increasing my income

I recently wrote an article entitled, *Article Marketing: Long or Short Articles -- Which Is Better?* [<http://inkwelleditorial.blogspot.com/2006/10/article-marketing-long-or-short.html>]. As you know from my current little article marketing experiment, I've been submitting to a lot of sites. Hence, reading a lot of submission guidelines.

Guess what? It seems that **I'm not the only one to realize that longer articles are better**. I remember when I first started marketing with articles about three years ago, guidelines generally called for articles between 400-600 words. Many did NOT want you to go much over that.

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Many of the sites I'm currently submitting to now request articles of AT LEAST 500 words. One even had a minimum requirement of 700 words. I think this bodes well for the quality of material to be found on the web.

In reading submission guidelines, I got the distinct feeling that directory owners were sick and tired of the poor quality of many articles.

So, you may be thinking, **how long should an article be?**

Personally, I've found that between 700-900 words allows you to cover a topic in-depth enough to give the reader enough information so that they feel like they've learned something. Or, at least to make you feel like you've dispensed some helpful, useful information.

Now that article marketing seems to have settled in as a viable marketing tactic, and many are using it, **how do you differentiate yourself from the pack?** I covered this in the previous article, but following is a quick recap:

1. Sincerity: It can be sensed, even via the written word. Human nature can sense when someone is dumping a load of bull on them. Quit thinking about what you want to sell a prospect and think about how you want to help them.

Ostensibly, you created your product/service because it fills a need. So, look to why you originally started doing whatever it is that you do. Spell out the benefits the customer receives (eg, it will make you happier, save you time, etc.), not the features you want to sell them (eg, it has a fancy top, it goes really fast, etc.).

2. Be Yourself: Nothing sells like personality. Personality helps in developing a relationship. People buy from those they know, like and trust. Once a relationship is developed (no matter how peripheral at first), these sentiments can easily be built upon.

When you consider that **most prospects have to see your ad 7-28 times before they will purchase from you**, then the sooner you can start that relationship, the better.

So, if you're quirky, let that show through; have a wicked sense of humor, bring it on; have an interesting hobby, are a world traveller -- let readers know a little about you!

A recent post explains how to go about this: *Increase Your Freelance Income by Finding Your Unique Voice* [<http://inkwelleditorial.blogspot.com/2006/10/increase-your-freelance-income-by.html>]

3. Give details, details, details: Some studies cite that up to 86% of web surfers are looking for information when they go online. Don't disappoint by glossing over a subject. Give details -- and this includes recounting what DIDN'T work, as well as what did.

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If you follow these three rules, you will create a loyal following of readers who will be happy to not only see your article in their inbox, but forward it to their readers. And that, after all, is what you're after.

Blog Post (InkwellEditorial.blogspot.com): Monday, October 30, 2006

Case Study: How article marketing is significantly increasing my income (Part 1 of 5)

Last Thursday, I reported on an article marketing experiment I am in the midst of conducting. Specifically, I wanted to create more passive income, so I decided to give article marketing a real try and see how it went.

All this week I will be dispensing details about this on-going experiment. For details on the beginning, click [here](http://inkwelleditorial.blogspot.com/2006/10/article-marketing-experiment-does-it.html) [http://inkwelleditorial.blogspot.com/2006/10/article-marketing-experiment-does-it.html].

Following are the sites I'm consistently submitting articles to. I chose them because they had good PR and Alexa rankings. If you don't know what a PR or Alexa rank is, it is explained briefly below, with links to other sources for in-depth information.

1. EzineArticles.com: This directory has a PR rank of 6 and an Alexa rank of 552.

This is perhaps the number one article directory on the net. You can submit across a number of categories and the submission process is very easy.

You must create an author account to submit. The thing I like the most about this site is that you can track your articles and it gives you a wealth of information like how many ezines picked up the article, how many hits it's gotten, when you submitted, etc.

To me, the best part of this directory is that they post your article within 4-6 hours, once you've achieved platinum status, which is not hard to do.

2. ArticleDashboard.com: This directory has a PR rank of 6 and an Alexa rank of 3,461.

Again, you must create an author account to submit. It's easy to submit once you do this. This directory also gives some article stats (eg, how many times the article has been downloaded, emailed to others, etc.).

3. IdeaMarketers.com: This directory has a PR rank of 4 and an Alexa rank of 8,897. You must create an author account and article stats are provided.

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4. EasyArticles.com: This directory has a PR rank of 6 and an Alexa rank of 52,143.

You must create an author account to submit. Beyond providing a list of articles you've submitted, this directory doesn't provide article stats. The submission process is very easy once you've set up an account.

5. PowerHomeBiz.com: This site has a PR rank of 6 and an Alexa rank of 25,152.

NOTE: This is not an article submission site, but a small business portal of sorts. I submitted to this site because they don't publish "fluff" articles. There is a certain level of professionalism that you must have to get published on this site. They don't publish just anything and it gives you a certain level of prestige if you're lucky enough to be published here.

I got good e-zine subscription rates from an article that I had published on their site a couple of years ago. The article was entitled, *Why You DON'T Need National Media Attention to Grow Your Biz* [<http://www.powerhomebiz.com/vol147/marketing.htm>].

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