

Article Marketing – Don't Assume Reader Familiarity

By Denise McGill

Writing articles can be a great source of marketing for your business. *And* if you can write, it's a great source of "free" marketing. Articles should offer valuable content to the reader and give them a tidbit of new information or knowledge that they can come away with after reading your article. If it is rehashed or vague content, you have offered nothing to your reader and probably just lost a potential customer or client as well.

The point of articles is to show your knowledge and educate your readers about a particular subject. For example, if you roast coffee, provide your readers with tips on perfecting a particular roast or provide them with a resource guide on where and how to order green beans. This kind of information shows you are knowledgeable in the subject and will lead potential consumers to your website. You will be given the opportunity at the end of your article to include a brief bio about yourself or company with applicable links to your website or contact info. Consumers can then click on your website to learn more about you and your products.

These tips are a guideline to insuring you write an article that is worth reading and ultimately bring traffic to your website.

Give examples – Don't just tell readers how to do something – show them by providing relevant examples. Never assume your reader is as familiar with the subject as you are. Your readers *and potential customers* will be at various levels of understanding the information you are providing.

Include step-by-step instructions. For how-to articles, provide detailed instructions for your reader and explain the results expected at each step. This assures the reader they are on the right track.

Vagueness is out – details are in. Articles that just touch at the surface of the subject and don't provide any real meat will leave the reader feeling empty. Do your research, dig deep and provide solid, useable information.

Watch the industry lingo – translate for your reader. In other words – know your audience! If you are writing for your own industry, then industry lingo is quite appropriate. If you are trying to educate and attract new customers, it is a completely different story. For articles discussing internet marketing or website development, terms such as SEO, back links, or ecommerce may need just a brief explanation. If your reader has to look up your terms, you will lose their interest and the article won't get read.

Most importantly, remember that your article is Not a sales pitch or advertisement to promote yourself or your business. (Trade magazines, newsletters and ezines will reject

these anyway). Providing useful, informative content will get you much farther ahead, build consumer trust, and ultimately bring traffic to your website.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Denise McGill is a freelance copywriter specializing in catalog product description, copy makeovers, landing pages, promotional materials, sales letters, articles and more. Visit her website at <http://mcgillcopywriting.com> for more information.