

# Writing Articles

Writing Articles Effectively For Exposure & Traffic

# WRITING ARTICLES



## Table of Contents

Don't Make These Blunders .....	3
Top 10 E-Mail Marketing Mistakes To Avoid .....	3
Grabbing Readers Attention .....	14
What Are You Selling?.....	14
Anatomy Of An E-mail Message.....	17
Headline (Subject) .....	17
Effective Headline Types.....	18
Benefit Headlines .....	18
Problem Headlines .....	18
Question Headlines .....	19
Guarantee Headlines .....	19
Offer Headlines .....	20
Message Body.....	20
Anatomy of A Call To Action .....	22
Writing That Captivates Readers .....	24
Writing Articles For Your e-mail Campaign .....	24
Article SEO Tools.....	29
Determining Keyword Supply And Demand.....	29
Before You Send Your Article Out .....	31
Proofreading Checklist.....	32
Building Friendships Through Your Writing .....	34
Bedroom Marketing Tips.....	34
Eight Sure-Fire Tips for Building Trust.....	40
Creating eMail Copy/Articles That Works .....	41
The Science of Writing An e-mail Advertisement .....	41
How To Write A Headline .....	41
The 3 Responsibilities Of A Headline .....	42
Headline Secrets.....	46

## **Don't Make These Blunders**

I finished up Chapter 1 by writing this:

***"There's a lot of money to be made with properly prepared and correctly executed e-mail marketing."***

The key words in that statement are: properly prepared and correctly executed.

It doesn't matter how good your intentions are and it doesn't matter how butt-kicking good your offer is. If you blow the basic rules of e-mail marketing, you're headed for disaster.

Here's a checklist of what NOT to do when you're depending on e-mail to boost your revenue:

### **Top 10 E-Mail Marketing Mistakes To Avoid**

#### **1. Failing To Obey The CAN-SPAM Act**

The CAN-SPAM Act of 2003 (Controlling the Assault of Non-Solicited Pornography and Marketing Act) was passed into law by the United States Congress to establish rules for companies that use e-mail for marketing or other commercial purposes.

The law affects any U.S.-based company or person that sends e-mail containing advertising that promotes a product or service.

Transactional e-mail, which is e-mail that is used solely to update a customer with information that is relative to his or her account or order, is generally exempt from most provisions of the Act except that it may not use "false or misleading routing information."

The United States Federal Trade Commission (FTC) is charged with the responsibility of enforcing the CAN-SPAM Act and the United States Department of Justice (DOJ) is authorized to pursue criminal actions against violators of the Act.

#### CAN-SPAM Act Overview

You can read the entire Act at the FTC's [web site](#) if you want to. Here's is an in-depth summary of the provisions:

- **No False or Misleading Headings**

This means that the "From" and "To" message headers, as well as the routing information that shows the originating mail server address, must accurately represent where the mail was sent from, who sent it, and to whom it is addressed.

- **No Deceptive Subject Lines**

You are not allowed to create mail subject lines that are deceptive or that mislead the reader as to what the body of the e-mail contains.

- **Unsubscribe Link Required**

You must provide a mechanism such as a return e-mail address or a clickable link that enables the e-mail recipient to be removed from your mailing list. It is permissible to create a web-based form that provides the recipient with e-mail management options such as the ability to opt out of only certain types of messages as long as there is also an option to be removed from the list entirely. Once you receive an opt-out request you have 10 business days to make sure that no more mail is sent to that address.

The Act also prohibits you from selling or otherwise giving that e-mail address to anyone else for marketing purposes.

- **All Commercial E-mail Must Be Identified As Such And It Must Contain The Sender's Postal Address.**

Any commercial e-mail must contain a statement indicating that it is an advertisement as well as instructions on how to opt out from receiving future e-mail. You must also include your complete physical address somewhere in the body of the e-mail message.

### **Penalties For Violation Of The CAN-SPAM Act**

Every violation of the Act, which means every individual e-mail you send that is not in full compliance, makes you subject to a fine of up to \$11,000. Certain violations may also make you liable for additional fines and penalties under laws that regulate false or deceptive advertising.

In addition to all of the provisions listed above, the Act provides for additional fines and penalties for anyone who does any of the following:

- Collects or "harvests" e-mail addresses from any Web site containing a notice prohibiting the collection of e-mail addresses from the Web site for the purposes of commercial mailing.
- Automatically generates e-mail addresses using a random or systematic combination of alphanumeric characters designed to eventually "discover" actual e-mail addresses at any domain. This is commonly called a "dictionary attack."
- Uses any automated method to register for multiple e-mail accounts for the purpose of sending commercial e-mail.
- Relays e-mail through any server, network or computer, including the use of open relays or open proxies, without the permission of the owner. Permission from the owner is not a defense against sending e-mail that otherwise violates any provision of the Act.

In addition to all of the above, the DOJ is authorized to prosecute anyone who commits any of the following violations:

- Uses any computer to send commercial e-mail without the permission of the computer's owner. This can include using your employer's computer to send your personal commercial e-mail while you are at work.
- Uses any computer to relay e-mail messages with the intent of providing misleading information about the actual source of the e-mail.
- Creates false headers in multiple e-mail messages and then transmits those messages with the false heading intact.
- Registers for multiple e-mail accounts or domain names while providing false or misleading information about the registrant's actual identity.
- Falsely states that he or she is the owner of multiple Internet Protocol (IP) addresses that are used for sending commercial e-mail messages.

## 2. **Failing To Test Your e-mail Message Before You Send It**

e-mail can be displayed differently in different browsers and e-mail clients. That's why it's important to send a few test messages and to then read those test messages using the most commonly used browsers and e-mail clients in order to make sure that what readers see is what you intended them to see.

### 3. **Failing To Use A SPAM Checker Before You Send Your e-mail**

With so many Internet Service Providers (ISPs) and Internet users running SPAM-blocking software, it has never been more important to see how your e-mail stacks up against the electronic gate guardians that are going to try and stop your reader from receiving it.

There are a variety of SPAM checkers available. Run a search on Google using the term "spam checking software" for a list of them.

### 4. **Forgetting About The "Preview Pane"**

Most people have their e-mail clients set up so that all new e-mail messages are displayed in a preview pane. Depending upon their preferences, that preview pane may just display the "To", "From" and "Subject" headers, or it may display all of those as well as the first few sentences of the body of the e-mail.

This means that your e-mail may get scanned for about 1 second by readers before they decide whether they are going to open the message or read it.

Knowing that, you'd better be sure that you've designed your e-mail so that the really good stuff shows up in the preview pane.

### 5. **Failing to Use Enough White Space**

If you make your e-mail message too long, or you try to cram too many words into a paragraph, your readers' eyes are going to instantly glaze over and they are going to hit the delete key.

Keep your e-mail messages short and get right to the point. Keep your paragraphs short as well.

Take a lesson from the way I've written this book. Short sentences and short paragraphs and no "fluff."

Don't make your text message too text heavy, either. Do you like receiving pages of text? Probably not. There aren't too many people who do. Because few enjoy reading pages of promotional copy, keep your e-mails short and to the point. If you want people to respond, be sure your message is sent at the right time and includes a compelling offer.

## **6. Failure To Test All Imbedded Links**

What a waste of time and effort it is to send out an e-mail campaign only to discover that the link to your web site or order page was malformed and it doesn't work. Test, test and then test again before you mail.

## **7. Locking Prospects Into One Contact Method**

Giving prospects only one way to respond to you will cost you sales. Just because you think that e-mail is the best way to communicate doesn't mean that your prospect does. Some people are willing to read e-mail and click on a link to visit a web site, but they're not going to buy unless they can call on the phone or mail in a check.

The CAN-SPAM Act requires you to include your address anyway, so why not add a telephone number as well. In fact, why not add a toll-free telephone number while you're at it.

There are plenty of places to get virtual toll-free numbers for dirt cheap. You can either program them to ring on your home or cellular phone, or you can forward all calls to voice mail and return calls at your convenience.



The appearance of a toll-free number in your e-mail marketing messages is also going to raise your credibility quite a few notches in a skeptical prospect's mind.

## 8. **Ignoring Your Bounce Rate**

If you're sending e-mail, you can bet some of it is bouncing. You need to be aware of not only how many messages are bouncing, but why they are bouncing. Finding out how much e-mail is bouncing and why can be as simple as checking your mail server logs. Most hosting accounts provide them as well as a tool to view them.

If you have access to the actual bounced mail, the reason that mail bounced will usually be included somewhere in the message.

Mail bounces for a lot of reasons, and knowing why yours is not reaching its intended audience can help you keep your mailing list clean and responsive. Although there is supposed to be a uniform list of bounced mail reason codes, far too many ISPs have created their own versions. That's why I'm going to provide you with the reasons why mail bounces and not the codes that you might find in your mail log.

### **Top Ten Reasons Why e-mail Bounces**

#### ***1) Hard Mail Bounce***

This is dead mail. It can't be delivered now or later. This kind of bounce usually means that the person no longer has that e-mail address or the mail server at that domain no longer exists

These dead addresses should be removed from your list right away. If the addresses belong to customers and you have their phone numbers, there's nothing that says you can't call and

invite them to re-subscribe. Even if that person's number is on the National Do Not Call List, you have an existing or pre-existing business relationship. That means you can legally call the person up until the point that he or she asks you not to call anymore.

## **2) *Soft Mail Bounce***

This type of bounce indicates that the mail could not be delivered at the moment but it might be possible to get the message delivered at some time in the future. This is a common bounce message that is sent when someone's mailbox is full.

You should continue to mail this address for two or three more cycles and monitor the progress. If it finally gets delivered, you're all set. If it continues to bounce, there is either a more serious problem that isn't being reported correctly by the ISP, or the user has abandoned that mail account.

## **3) *Transient Mail Bounce***

A Transient Bounce is a message often generated by the **sender's** e-mail server, which indicates that a particular message could not yet be delivered, but that the server is still trying. Usually a Transient Bounce can be safely ignored.

## **4) *General Mail Bounce***

A General Bounce message could be either a hard or a soft bounce. There is no way to tell. This bounce notice is usually created by older mail systems that did not report the difference between the two types of bounces. Handle this address the same way you handle a Soft Bounce.

### **5) *Blocked Mail Bounce***

This message usually means that the recipient's mail server is not accepting mail from your mail server. This might be because your address is on the mail recipient's personal block list, or the ISP has blocked you as an undesirable sender for some reason.

This isn't good news in either event. If the user has blocked you then you might as well delete the address. However, if the ISP blocked you then you need to contact the ISP directly and find out why. You might find out that you're on one or more of the spammer's black lists that ISP uses to create mail filters. Or, you might find out that there is something in your e-mail messages that trigger the ISP's SPAM filter.

### **6) *Out of Office/Auto-Reply***

This type of message is generated when a user has activated the Out of Office feature of his or her e-mail client. Out of Office messages aren't actual bounces. They usually indicate that the receiver has your message in his or her inbox, but they're not available to read the message right now.

### **7) *Unsubscribe Mail Message***

These are also not bounces. They indicate that your reader is no longer interested in hearing from you. Delete the address.

### **8) *Virus Found Notification***

Either the e-mail you sent had a virus, or something about that e-mail fooled the mail server into thinking you had one.

If you're getting a lot of these from different ISPs, chances are the problem is on your end. If they are few and far between, or isolated to just one ISP, your e-mail is probably clean.

Investigate and take whatever action is appropriate. Keep the e-mail address active in the meanwhile.

### ***9) Mail Address Change Notification***

This is a courtesy notification that the user's address has changed. Even though you are being provided with the new address, you can't automatically update it and start mailing. You're going to need to contact the subscriber at the new address and give the subscriber a link to re-subscribe. Don't mail a second time if the subscriber does not respond.

### ***10) Mail Challenge/Response***

This type of message means that the subscriber is managing his or her e-mail using a "white list" or a list of approved senders. Usually a message of this type will also contain a link that you can click to add yourself to that person's list. If one is present, click it and jump through the hoops.

## **9. Taking Down Your Landing Page Or Other E-mail-Connected Items Too Soon**

It can sometimes take a few weeks for someone to get around to reading your e-mail for any number of reasons including illness or vacation. If you take your landing page down too soon or you delete any supporting graphics that the e-mail needs, you'll lose sales. Don't be in too much of a rush to end the campaign.

If the mailing you sent included a time-sensitive offer, leave the landing page up for a few weeks or more after the campaign ends. Simply replace the content on the landing page with content stating you are sorry they missed the offer but keep checking their mail for new ones.

This will keep you from alienating or confusing your customer. It also allows you to reinforce to your customers that your time limits are real. They'll respond quicker next time.

#### 10. **Not Taking Time To Proofread**

Nothing makes you look more unprofessional than sending out an e-mail that's full of spelling and grammar mistakes. Don't depend on your spell checker alone. Print the message out and read it carefully, one word at a time. Then give it to at least two more people and have them do the same thing.

The things NOT To Do list may seem long, but you're just fooling yourself if you think you can ignore these items and just blow out an e-mail campaign any time you want to. Well that's not entirely true. Nothing says you can't blow the campaign out without following the list, but what good is doing so if you don't make any sales in return?

## Grabbing Readers Attention

### What Are You Selling?

Before you can write effective e-mail copy you need to be sure that you understand what it is you are *really* selling. I emphasized the word *really* for a reason.

Let's take a short quiz. Answer this question:

"What am I selling?"

If you answered that question with a product name or a service description, you're only half right. Yes, you are selling a product or description ultimately, but that's not what the e-mail should be promoting.

It's not likely that you're going to make a sale directly from your e-mail. Most marketers know this and that's why they craft their e-mail messages to strike directly at the heart of what e-mail is supposed to do.

e-mail is supposed to hit one of the psychological *triggers* that will cause the reader to be interested enough in your offer to click on over to your landing or sales page where the *real* selling is taking place.

So, the right answer to the quiz question is: "I'm selling emotion." Here's why I say that:

There are certain psychological triggers or "pain triggers" that make people want to open their wallets and buy. It is important for you to know which of these "pains" your product or service targets in order for your e-mail to be effective.

Now, unless you are selling a healthcare product, the word “pain” doesn’t refer to physical pain. It refers to one of the over 50 psychological “pains” that people feel.

Although there are 50 of these triggers, they are all some variation of these six fundamental ones:

- Greed or Desire For Personal Gain
- Love or Affection
- Self-Indulgence
- Self-Preservation or Survival
- Pride
- Sense of Duty or Honor

No matter what it is you are offering you can bet that it is covered by one or more if these basic psychological triggers.

Let’s look at each one more closely:

### **Greed or Desire For Personal Gain**

This category covers products or services that are designed to help the reader make more money, save more money, plan for retirement security, etc.

### **Love Or Affection**

This category is perfect for products or services that enhance the reader’s sex life or love life, or that will make someone they love feel happier and/or more fulfilled.

## **Self-Indulgence**

This is the trigger to use when selling high-end luxury items, vacations, comfort foods, etc.

## **Self-Preservation or Survival**

Along with the obvious choices such as self-defense products and services, guns and ammo, etc., this trigger also works well with health products, senior citizen-focused products and services, and family protection devices and services.

## **Pride**

Pride is a very strong trigger that can also be combined with the Greed trigger for a double-whammy. The pride trigger works well with high-end luxury items when "exclusivity" is featured. It's also a good choice for any product or service that you can use any variation of the "Be the first one in your group to own..." or "Everyone will be impressed when they see..." statements.

## **Sense of Duty or Honor**

This trigger is all about guiding the reader to "do the right thing" simply because it IS the right thing. This trigger works well when soliciting donations for charitable causes, but it can also be worked into almost any self-improvement product or service, investment product, or anything else where you can demonstrate that NOT doing this is harmful to self, loved ones or society in general.

"Don't your children deserve to live in a smoke-free home?"



Once you have selected the correct trigger or triggers, you can move on to writing the actual e-mail.

### ***Anatomy Of An E-mail Message***

An e-mail message is divided into these three separate and distinct parts:

1. **Headline (Subject)**
2. **Message Body**
3. **Call To Action**

It doesn't do any good to get just one or two parts right. You need to hit all three squarely on the head if you want to make sales.

I already covered the fact that it isn't the "job" of the e-mail to make the sale. Its job is to simply get the person to the point where he or she clicks on the link ("Call to Action") that takes them to the sales or landing page.

Here's a more in-depth look at each part:

#### ***Headline (Subject)***

The subject of an e-mail message is exactly the same as a headline in a classified ad. They both share the same properties and they both share the same goal of enticing the reader to read more.

Because so many people scan the subjects of their e-mail in order to decide whether or not they are interested in reading more, you need to put as much work into writing that one sentence as you will put into writing the body of the mail.

Before you even begin writing your subject headline, stop and think about which of these headline types will work best with your offer:

## ***Effective Headline Types***

### **Benefit Headlines**

Benefit headlines should clearly state whatever the benefit is of the product or service that you are promoting, or the benefit of reading the body of the e-mail.

Avoid using hype, buzz words, ALL CAPS, or lots of exclamation points!!!!

None of these tricks work and you'll only turn your reader off.

### **Example Benefit Headlines:**

- Save 50% on most printer supplies
- You can lose 10 pound in 10 days
- "Erase" Wrinkles Instantly

These headlines clearly demonstrate to the reader what the benefit of reading your e-mail will be. People who are interested in gaining that benefit will read your message. Those who are not, will not.

### **Problem Headlines**

Problem Headlines are similar to Benefit Headlines in that they do convey an "assumed" benefit. The headline works by asking a pointed question and then leaving the reader to conclude that the answer to the pain that question elicits can be found in the e-mail message.

### **Example Problem Headlines:**

- Embarrassed By Age Lines?
- Is Your Vocabulary Holding You Back?
- Does Sexual Intimacy Embarrass You?

Problem headlines should never beat around the bush. The reader has a pain and you have the cure. All you've got to do is stick your finger right in the middle of that pain and give your finger a good twist. You'll be rewarded with more sales as a result.

### **Question Headlines**

Although Question Headlines may appear to be identical to Problem Headlines, there is one important difference. Problem Headlines are designed to make people squirm, while Question Headlines are designed to make them dream or say "aaahh."

#### **Example Question Headlines:**

- Would you like more money on your paycheck?
- Want to retire in 2 years?
- Need An Affordable Vacation?

Question Headlines should be structured so that a "Yes" answer is a good thing and a "No" answer is a bad thing.

### **Guarantee Headlines**

Guarantee Headlines are designed to remove any doubt from the reader's mind that what you are offering is the sure-fire cure for what ails them.

#### **Example Guarantee Headlines:**

- Stop Smoking – Guaranteed
- Guaranteed Mortgages
- Earn A Guaranteed Income From Home

It's important to note here that you need to make sure the product or service you are selling really does have a guarantee that matches what you promised in the e-mail.

### **Offer Headlines**

Offer Headlines are designed to entice the reader to take action now in order to avoid missing out on a limited-time opportunity or a special opportunity.

#### **Example Offer Headlines:**

- Free Shipping Today Only
- Buy One DVD get One Free
- Free Upgrade To Deluxe Cabin If You Book By Tomorrow

If you make sure your offer is a strong one, you will increase your chances of getting a good response.

### ***Message Body***

The body of the message is the area where you build upon the emotions that you touched upon with the headline.

The way to start is by repeating the exact headline at the top of the message body. When you repeat the headline exactly, it reinforces the headline and it reminds people of the reason why they are reading the e-mail.

It's never a good idea to load the message body with a bunch of hype or too much text. Remember that the real job of the message body is to lead the person to the landing page or the sales page which is where the actual selling is going to take place.

If you load the e-mail up with too much content you'll simply lose the reader's attention and if you lose their attention, you're going to lose sales as well.

Here's a good example of a headline and message body that are short and to the point:

**Subject: "Erase" Wrinkles Instantly**

**Message Body:**

**"Erase" Wrinkles Instantly**

**Clinically tested and Dermatologist approved, *Wrinkle Eraser* is a cosmetic product that instantly removes the appearance of wrinkles around the eyes, mouth and forehead.**

**Discover why over 3,000 women swear by *Wrinkle Eraser* and why they swear AT other products.**

In the above example we started right out by establishing the product's credibility. It tells readers that the product has been tested in a clinical setting and that one or more Dermatologists have endorsed or approved the product for its intended purpose.

We went on to challenge readers to learn more about the product by telling them that over 3,000 women already are using it. Finally, we imply that readers will learn the reasons why these women were unhappy with the other products that they tried before they tried this one.

At this point we already have 2/3 of the e-mail written. The first 1/3 is the headline. The second 1/3 is the message body. All that needs to be written now is the "call to action."

## ***Anatomy of A Call To Action***

The purpose of a Call to Action is to tell your readers exactly what you want them to do next. You should never assume that they already know what to do, and you should never assume that they will decide to visit your web site all on their own.

You need to design your Call to Action so that it takes them by the hand and leads them to where you want them to go.

If it's at all possible, you should combine your Call to Action with a free offer. This takes the pressure to respond off of them. After all, you're not selling anything, you're giving something away.

Here is an example of a call to action that works with the above example:

Now that the final 1/3 has been written, let's take a look at the e-mail letter in its entirety:

**Subject: "Erase" Wrinkles Instantly**

**Message Body:**

**"Erase" Wrinkles Instantly**

**Clinically tested and Dermatologist approved, *Wrinkle Eraser* is a cosmetic product that instantly removes the appearance of wrinkles around the eyes, mouth and forehead.**

**Discover why over 3,000 women swear by *Wrinkle Eraser* and why they swear AT other products.**

Did you notice that the entire letter accomplished its intended purpose in just 55 words? This is proof that you don't have to write a wordy sales letter in order to convey your message.

The best way you can end up with a sales letter that is short and to-the-point is to start by writing one that is as long as you have to make it in order to tell your story.

Then you take out your electronic scissors and you start cutting and rewording the text until you have an e-mail message that's no more than 100 words. Remember – less is better!

## **Writing That Captivates Readers**

### **Writing Articles For Your e-mail Campaign**

A variation of e-mail marketing that is producing good results for many involved is writing articles instead of sales copy. These articles can then be sent to your subscribers just like you would send them a newsletter. You can also use the content to start your own blog as well as to post the articles to the many public article directories that are visited by millions of viewers every year.

The best way to approach writing an article is to take a "soft sell" approach. This means that you don't actually try to get an order directly from inside the article. You simply present readers with clear and concise information on the particular topic and then invite them to visit your web site for more information.

An article has the same basic makeup of an e-mail message in that it requires a good headline, well-written body copy and a call to action. Word counts can run as high as 500 words without causing the reader to lose interest.

A friend of mine earns her living in part as a freelance Press Release writer. She takes advantage of people's lack of knowledge about how to write Press Releases by creating interesting and informative articles that she distributes around the Internet. She is careful not to fully disclose the techniques that she uses when she writes Press Releases, however, because her intent is not to actually teach someone how to do it. Her intent is to establish herself as an expert Press Release writer so people who read her articles will hire her. She gets great results.



Let's take a look at one of her articles that she has written exclusively for me to use in this book. After you are through reading it I will show you some hidden concepts that she is employing in order to get her articles indexed in the major search engines. You can use her same techniques to drive more traffic to your web site.

Notice that she does no selling at all in the article. The call to action is actually in the About The Author section. That's a clever way to get articles distributed without having them appear to be sales materials.

### **How to Hire a Press Release Financial Writer**

#### **What to look for in a Press Release Financial Writer.**

If you want to attract media attention to your quarterly or annual financial reports, and drive new investors to your company as a result, you are a perfect candidate for hiring a Press Release Financial Writer.

Because you want your Press Release to stand out and be accepted by the media, it is important that you hire a Press Release Financial Writer who has a great deal of experience at getting financial Press Releases published.

#### **Here are the Top 6 Things To Do When You Hire A Press Release Financial Writer:**

- Ask the Press Release Financial Writer to show you actual copies of previously written Press Releases.
- Go to Google and enter a randomly chosen paragraph from each release and see how well distributed the PR actually was. It should show up on multiple news sites and possibly other types of

web sites including article directories.

- Ask the Press Release Financial Writer how long it will take to complete the project for you.
- Ask the Press Release Financial Writer how much the PR will cost and how many revisions are included in the price.
- Determine if the Press Release Financial Writer will also distribute your Press Release and how much you will be charged for that additional service.
- Ask the Ask the Press Release Financial Writer to tell you specifically which of the various Press Release Distribution Services she will use to distribute your Press Release.

A poorly written Press Release or one that is not distributed to targeted media outlets that are interested in your announcement will not give you the results you are hoping for. In fact, one mistake could end up hurting your reputation with the Press and that may cause them to ignore any future Press Releases from your company.

That's why it is so important to choose the correct Press Release Financial Writer the first time.

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### **About The Author**

**Lisa G. is a freelance author and operates a Press Release Financial Writer business.**

OK, let's take a closer look at my friend Lisa's article and see what's going on behind the scenes:

- **She uses a strong headline: *How to Hire a Press Release Financial Writer***

"How To" headlines are always very effective, but this one is even more so. I'll show you why in a moment.

- **The article is short and to the point.**

Lisa gets the message delivered in just 325 words. Plus she uses short sentences, small paragraphs and lots of bullet points. This creates "white space" that doesn't scare the reader into thinking that the article is too long to bother reading.

- She doesn't spoil the article by making it a sales piece. In fact, the only selling she does is in the "About the Author" section where she has identified herself as an expert and where she has created a call to action inviting the reader to visit her online portfolio.

This is an excellent example of how you can promote your product or service using articles. But there is one thing left to look at.

If you go through the article you'll see that Lisa uses the phrase "**Press Release Financial Writer**" frequently. In fact, she uses it 11 times. Ten times in the article and once in the About the Author section. There are 325 words in the article, and 32 in the author section, for a total of 357 words. This means that the phrase Press Release Financial Writer accounts for 3% of the words in that article.

Let's see why we care about that number.

You may recall that at the top of this chapter I mentioned that not only can articles be sent out as e-mail, but they can do double-duty for you by posting them to article repository web sites.

Lisa knows this and she knows why and how those article repositories work. Many of them have a high Google page rank which means Google considers them to be *important* sites and the Google spiders return often to find new articles and add them to the Google search engine database.

As you probably know, Google and all of the other major search engines work by indexing key words and then displaying matching web pages when search engine users enter those key words.

When Lisa decided that she wanted to use articles to promote her skills as a Press Release writer, she used various tools that told her which key words were popular for her specialty.

Of all the key words she researched, she determined that the phrase **Press Release Financial Writer** had a high demand and a low supply. This means that there are a lot of people searching under that term and not a lot of web sites using that term on their pages.

She used a common Search Engine Optimization (SEO) formula whose rules state that a key word phrase should appear in about 3% of the copy. And that's what she did.

Now, if she had published this article in the various article directories instead of giving me the exclusive right to use it for my book, there's a good chance that people who searched on that phrase would find and read her article. And, out of everyone who did read that article, there's a good chance that some of them would go on to visit her portfolio.

Once they reached her portfolio, some people would hire her to write a Press Release. Of course, the same chain of events would happen if Lisa gave that article to newsletter editors who added it to their newsletter content.

Finally, Lisa could mail that same article to her own list where it would function exactly the same way as any other e-mail marketing campaign would.

That's getting triple duty out of one piece of copy. And that's a smart thing to do.

## **Article SEO Tools**

Lisa knew that she wanted to write about her Press Release Financial Writer so all she had to do was find a good keyword phrase that she could use to wrap her article around. Here is how you would go about finding your best keywords and keyword phrases for the article you want to write.

## **Determining Keyword Supply And Demand**

Since Google is the #1 search engine in the world, it already "knows" what keywords people are searching for (the demand) and it also knows how

many web sites are using those keywords (the supply). Let's now see how we can get Google to share that information with us.

Introducing the [Google Keyword Planner](#).

This free tool provides you with a list of key words that are made up of the root phrase that you enter. The tool provides you with a graphical indication of how many individual searches were performed for each of the words (demand), and how many Google AdWords advertisers are bidding on those keywords (supply).

Let's see what Lisa saw when she used this tool:

1. [Login here](#) (create an account if you don't have one)
2. Enter the keyword: Press Release.
3. Make sure that the "Use synonyms" box is checked.
4. Choose "Keyword Popularity" from the drop-down menu labeled "Choose data to display."
5. Click the "Get More Keywords" button.

Now scroll down about half a page and you will see something that would make any Internet Marketer's mouth water.

Notice that there is absolutely no one bidding on the keyword phrase "*press release financial*" even though there is a reasonable amount of demand! Now all Lisa has to do is buy that keyword and the link to her article will come up any time someone searches using that phrase.

There is one more great free SEO tool that you can use to pick your best keywords. Let's look at this now.

[SEOBook](#) takes a look across a number of search engines besides Google and provides more in-depth information. Here the tool reports that “Press Release Financial” gets around 350 hits per month across the major search engines.

### **Before You Send Your Article Out**

Don't be in a rush to post your article or send it out to your list. What you need to do is to follow this checklist every single time you write an e-mail message or article. This is not the time to take any shortcuts!

1. Read and re-read what you have written several times to make sure you have said everything you want to say.
2. Make sure you do not have any incomplete thoughts. You especially want to double-check that you have fulfilled all of your “promises.” Very often someone will touch upon a concept somewhere in an article and then tell the reader that the complete concept will be addressed later on in the article. It's easy to overlook that “promise” and forget to add the missing content.
3. Read your article out loud. You'll immediately notice if you have any sentence structure errors or if your copy is wandering off topic, and you'll even get a sense of how well the content flows.
4. While you're reading (or when you're through reading, whatever works better for you), be sure to rewrite anything that you're not happy with. When you're done, go back and repeat steps 1 - 4 until you are satisfied. While you are rewriting you should look for ways to cut your article's length if it's running longer than it should.

Once you have completed these steps it's time for proofreading. It's not easy to proofread your own work, especially if you've re-read the article or e-mail so many times that you're tired of looking at it, but it has to be done.

You need to proofread the article even if your spell checker did not find any problems. Spell checkers can be fooled and they often miss common errors such as using the word "to" instead of "too."

Follow this proofreading checklist and you'll do just fine:

### **Proofreading Checklist**

1. Run your spell checker and correct all the errors it finds if you're certain the word is misspelled. Sometimes the word is spelled right, but if it's not in the spell checker's dictionary, the spell checker will flag it as incorrect. If you need to double-check the spelling, get out your paper dictionary or look the word up in [dictionary.com](http://dictionary.com).
2. After that, print the copy to paper and then read it out loud. Many of the most successful writers will read their copy backwards by starting at the last word of the last sentence and reading each word straight through to the first word of the first sentence. Because you know what you intended to say, your brain is likely to fill in missing words and compensate for misspellings. Reading backwards forces you to concentrate on every single word individually rather than having your brain interpret the "concept" of what your eyes are seeing.
3. If you have the luxury of time, put the article or e-mail aside after the first round of proofreading and come back to it for another round in a day or so. That way, you'll be able to look at what you've written with "fresh eyes."



4. Once you think the copy is good to go, you should have someone else read it. Ask the reader to point out any spelling errors as well as any sentences or concepts that are not clear. Emphasize that you are not looking for editorial opinions.

Yes, proofreading is a lot of work but it's a lot easier to do than suffering through the embarrassment of looking ignorant because you sent something out that was full of errors or that had even one error in it. Believe it or not, errors in your article can lessen its credibility, no matter how good it is.

Articles are a great way to raise your visibility and drive traffic to your web site. Once you get into the habit of writing them there's no reason why you can't put out one or more articles every week.

Check Appendix "A" for a list of the top article posting sites.

## **Building Friendships Through Your Writing**

People buy from people they trust. And while it's not likely that you will ever build a one-on-one personal relationship with every client or prospect, you will not see constant and steady sales growth until you manage to create a relationship of trust with your prospects and customers.

An Internet marketer I know wrote the perfect article on the subject of building relationships and he's given me permission to produce it here. While I could come up with my own examples, I think this article says it in a way that nothing else can. Here it is:

### **Bedroom Marketing Tips**

Hopefully we are all adults here, so let's talk about sex for just a minute. No, I'm not talking about porn sites; I'm talking about taking a look at what I call *Bedroom Marketing* and applying the same principles to Internet marketing.

I don't care if you're a female or a male. Play this scenario out in your head:

You walk in the door and yell, "**Honey, I'm home. Take off your clothes and jump into bed because I really want you and I know that you want me too.**"

I don't know how things work around your house, but over in my neck of the woods it's going to be "No Sale." And why would you expect anything different? Let's take a look at what was done wrong.

1. This was a high-pressure attempt to "make the sale" without any regard for the feelings or state of mind of the other party.

2. It was assumed that the other party was in the mood to "buy" and the pitch did not give the person any other option but to say "Yes" or "No" when a "maybe later" would have given the desired results.
3. There was no attempt at rapport building. (OK, Dr. Ruth doesn't call it "rapport building" but you know what I mean.)
4. There was a failure to build the other person's interest in and excitement level over the offered "product or service."

So, if you wouldn't expect that kind of approach to work with someone who hopefully loves and trusts you, why in the world would you think it would work with complete strangers?

You know what I'm talking about. We've all received an e-mail that says something like:

**"Wow, I just discovered the most amazing program. My sponsor has only been in for 14 days and he's already made \$144,000!!!!!!!!!! This is so good, trust me I know a good thing when I see one.**

**THIS IS NOT A SCAM!!!!!!!!!! Just click here and pay a one-time \$19.99 NO SPONSORING!!!!!!!!!! I'll help you make money. This CAN'T FAIL!!!!!!!!!! Just sit back and let the money roll in!!!!!!!!!! I joined Monday and already I've made over \$2000!!!!!!!!!!"**

The so-called marketer blows this ad out to 155,000 Safelists, FFA and Classified sites, and maybe SPAMs a few news groups along

the way. Two days go by and no sales. The Marketer quits in disgust and tells everyone that Internet Marketing is a scam and no one is making any money. "Trust me," he says, "I know, I tried."

You think I'm exaggerating? One of the sites that I own is an e-mail list management company. We provide a platform enabling our users to build lists and send mail to their prospects.

Anyway, whenever someone cancels their subscription we automatically send an e-mail containing an Exit Poll form. We offer the chance to win \$50 in return for telling us why they quit. (We also recommend one of our other sites that may be better suited for them, but that's another article.) We learn a lot about how to make our program better, but we also get to scratch our heads in wonder over responses like this one:

**"I've been a member of your site for 10 days now and I haven't sold a thing. The Internet is full of thieves and liars and you're just one more of them."**

Out of curiosity, I checked the sales letter he's been sending. Here's what he wrote:

**"You are paying too much for your long distance service. Send an e-mail to (address deleted) and see HOW MUCH IT WILL COST YOU with mine."**

Ok, let's take a look at what he did wrong besides failing to run his spell checker.

First, he made a high-pressure attempt to "make the sale" without any regard for the feelings or state of mind of the other party. Not

only was it high pressure, but it held his offer out in a negative fashion when he said,

**"Send an e-mail to (deleted) and see HOW MUCH IT WILL COST YOU with mine."**

Sheesh, at least he could have said "how LITTLE it will cost you."

What he did was the equivalent of saying:

**"Honey, I'm home and I'm dirty and sweaty and I had a garlic, onion and liverwurst sandwich which I'm still burping up every five minutes."**

**"Take off your clothes and jump into bed because I really want you and I know that you want me too."**

Sure, that's a home run proposition waiting to be hit out of the park.

Next, he assumed that his prospect was in the mood to "buy" and did not give any other option but to say "Yes" or "No" when a "maybe later" would have given the results he was seeking.

In fact, he really didn't give his prospects any option at all when he said:

**"Send an e-mail to (deleted)."**

No one in their right mind is going to respond to an offer from a total stranger and give that stranger their e-mail address. It's no wonder he didn't make any sales.

He didn't take any time to build rapport. He tried (and failed) to pull off a full-court press and fell flat on his face.

He failed to build an excitement level over his product or service. He didn't even build a mild curiosity level. In fact, his letter doesn't even rate a twitch of the right eyebrow.

Hmmm, does all of this sound familiar? I wonder what would happen if he tried that on his spouse when he arrived home from work?

I see so many people fail in their attempts to advertise their product or services. A lot of them tell the same story as in the example above. Keep this in mind -- Even though the Internet offers an instant medium for reaching people all around the world, the basic laws of sales have not changed. In order to close the deal you must follow these steps:

1. Eliminate any high pressure attempts to make the sale. Stop using hype and, for Pete's sake, use the exclamation point sparingly! Not only educated prospects more likely to buy, but they are also more likely to refer others to your site, and they are more likely to respond to future offers that you make to them.
2. Give the customer an option of saying "Maybe Later." Some truly interested prospects just won't be able to buy right now for a variety of legitimate reasons. Make sure you offer them the opportunity to join your e-zine or newsletter, or sign up for an autoresponder series. Do something that gives you the

opportunity to stay in front of that customer until he or she is ready to say "Yes."

3. Go slowly and get your prospect in the mood to buy. Don't rush in there and yell "Give me your money." Take time to determine the reasons that someone will buy your product and weave those reasons into a word picture that elevates the prospect's curiosity and enhances the buying mood.
4. Build a rapport with your prospects. People want to be talked to, not at. Show them that you are a friend and an expert in your field by EDUCATING them and not SELLING them. Combine this step with step #2, and you can write as long of a sales letter as you need (but not ONE WORD LONGER) without fear of losing the truly interested prospect.
5. Create a level of excitement over your product or service by explaining how it's going to change their life, or save them money, or make them look more attractive, or whatever your USP (Unique Selling Proposition) may be.

What works in the bedroom works in the market place. Try it!

While my friend may have put an unusual slant on his examples, his message is straight on. Relationship selling is the only type of selling that is going to build a long-term sustainable business model for you.

Here are some more useful tips for building trust when you send e-mail:

## **Eight Sure-Fire Tips for Building Trust**

- Send only relevant information that will help your readers see you as an expert in your field.
- Create an online persona that sets you apart as a live person and not just some plastic corporate face. Provide anecdotes, tell people what's going on in your life, from time to time, and give them other ways to come to know "you" and not just your company.
- Do not constantly throw sales pitches. Some of your e-mail should simply be interesting and timely.
- Create free offers that are relevant to your products or services and give them away with no strings attached.
- Always be truthful.
- No hype allowed.
- Never recommend someone else's product or service unless you have used it yourself and find it to be all that the manufacturer or service provider claims that it is.
- Respect your reader's time. Keep your messages short yet punchy.

Don't expect to build a relationship overnight. It's a time consuming process that will pay off well once it begins to happen. If you think you don't have the time, think again. The fact is: The exact amount of time that it takes to build a relationship is going to pass whether you take the steps to do it or not. The only difference is going to be how profitable your business is at the end of that time. It's all up to you.



## **Creating eMail Copy/Articles That Works**

Writing an effective e-mail advertisement is part art and part science. The science portion is pretty straight-forward and can be easily taught. The art portion takes a bit of practice to get right. Fortunately, there are some great ways to test your e-mail response so you can continually hone the words until you get it right.

### ***The Science of Writing An e-mail Advertisement***

Chapter 3 taught you about these three essential parts of an e-mail advertisement:

- 1. Headline (Subject)**
- 2. Message Body**
- 3. Call To Action**

You also saw examples of each headline type along with some samples. Now it's time to go deeper into each of these three essential parts and learn how to construct each of them in order to receive maximum results.

### **How To Write A Headline**

The hardest part of writing a headline is figuring out what it is you want to say. Don't laugh! You can create the most grammatically perfect headline using the most proper English possible and the e-mail campaign will probably fall flat.

### **Saying the wrong things with the right words = No Sale**

You need to convey your point in as few words as possible and not worry about your High School English teacher grading your paper. It's not going to

happen. Your goal is not to show the world what a talented and eloquent writer you are. Your goal is to make the cash register ring!

Don't start out focusing on "how" you are going to say something, start out focusing on "what" it is you want to convey to the readers and which of their "pain" buttons you want to push.

Give your headline the respect that it deserves. After all, it is your best salesperson. It's your attention getter. It's the one chance you have to get your offer out in front of your audience. If your headline fails to do its job properly, the remaining portions of the e-mail message will never get their chance to shine.

In order to write a powerful headline you have to step out of your shoes and into the shoes of your prospect. You have to know which buttons need to be pushed. You have to know which words will excite them and which ones will put them to sleep.

But most of all, you have to know how to use those words to make it impossible for them not to want to read the remainder of the message.

## **The 3 Responsibilities Of A Headline**

### **1. Attract Attention**

Your ad needs to stand out from the crowd and it's your headline that's going to make that happen. Unless you attract the reader's attention right up front you can count on having it hit the trash can in about 3 seconds or less.

That's about all the time your headline has to make a difference. The only way to attract attention is to hit one or more of the pain buttons described in Chapter 3.

## **2. Act As A Funnel**

If you are the least bit realistic you already know that not everyone who receives your ad is going to be a prospect. Some people don't want or need your product or service and there's little that you can do to convince them otherwise.

Your headline should weed these people out in advance by not being deceptive in any way. A "Free Offer" should be a Free Offer. If it's not, don't say it. Don't trick people into reading your e-mail; they won't appreciate it.

A few years ago it was popular for people selling business opportunities to use a headline that read: "Notice of payment received."

That headline really grabbed attention because it was the exact same headline that PayPal used to notify someone that he had received money via PayPal. The open rate for a message bearing this headline was nearly 100%. However, the click through rate to the landing page was near zero once people learned that they had been deceived.

This illustrates the point that attracting attention alone is not sufficient. The headline did not act like a funnel. It did not draw the attention of potentially interested prospects. It drew everyone's attention yet the campaign was a failure.

It is better to let your headline proclaim the truth without giving away so much information that someone doesn't have to read the e-mail message to learn more. Here's an example of a simple headline that will motivate interested people to read more while still telling the truth.

## **Published Author Reveals How To Write A Book In 30 Days Or Less.**

Anyone who is interested in writing a book is going to click to see who this published author is and how it could ever be possible to write a book in 30 days or less. Anyone who has no interest in writing a book is not going to have an interest in your headline.

Here's another example:

## **100 Can't-Fail Creamy Fudge Recipes For Free**

Fudge lovers will click. Interested cooks will click. Even people who are on diets may click if they are interested in making fudge for friends or family members.

### **3. Deliver An Entire Mini-Sales Message**

If you think about it you'll see that your headline is really a stand-alone sales message. It's designed to sell someone on wanting to read the body of the message. If you carry this out to its final conclusion, it becomes obvious that the job of the message body is to sell the reader on clicking on the call to action so they can be transported to the landing page where the real selling gets done.

e-mail readership studies show that 80% of your prospects will read only the headline before deciding whether or not they want to know more. That means you'll lose 8 out of 10 prospects if your headline doesn't "sell."

That's why headlines that simply tease a reader don't work. Here's an example of what I mean:

**"I make \$500 per day on the Internet"**

"Good for you, that's a lot of money," the reader is thinking as he or she clicks the delete button and moves on to the next message in their in-box.

This alternative headline will draw a much better response:

**"Discover the secret to making \$500 per day on the Internet"**

Actually, the chances are that neither headline is going to pull very well because everyone's tired of getting those types of messages only to discover that it's all about one more "no recruiting required, I'll get all your members for you" get rich quick scheme.

Try this headline instead:

**"Earn a good second income by reading this free article"**

## **Headline Secrets**

There is no one fast and firm technique for writing a headline. If the headline works – it's written correctly. If it doesn't work, you'll know.

There are, however, some basic headline rules that always work. All you have to do is learn the rules and then write headlines that obey those rules.

### **1. Keep it Short and Simple (KISS)**

Don't beat around the bush; don't try to use clever word play. Just deliver your message and let the headline do its job.

- "Free Shipping On All Harry Potter Books Ordered By January 31"
- "Save 30% on Authentic Designer Purses"
- "Lose 3 Dress Sizes In 30 Days"
- "Learn How to Increase Your Trading Skills at a No-Cost Online Seminar"
- "Pay Less for Valentine's Day Flowers: Pre-Order Today"

### **2. Keep the benefit out in front of the reader**

Don't make readers wonder what's in it for them. State it up front and state it loud and clear.

- Order 12 months of eBay News and get 10 eBay Store Templates Free!
- Make \$750 per week in your spare time by cleaning window blinds
- Quit Smoking in 30 days WITHOUT Cold Turkey Symptoms
- Learn how to profit from the coming oil shortage

### **3. Try writing a newsworthy headline**

People love a “newsy” headline. Newspaper journalists know that so take a cue from their writing style and watch your sales grow. This type of headline skirts a bit around the “funnel” concept because it doesn’t necessarily weed out the interested from the disinterested, but it’s powerful enough to make it worth trying.

- “Brazilian Botanist Discovers Anti-Aging Nectar In Common Planter”
- “Unemployed Truck Driver Finds Gold In Recycled Garage Junk”
- “Created for his own kids, Dermatologist announces new acne treatment”
- “Home Business Accountant Reveals 50 Legal Tax Deductions YOU Overlooked!”

Don’t be concerned if the product or service isn’t brand new. It doesn’t have to be brand new to be “news” to someone who has never heard of it.

### **4. Use the power of “How To”**

You almost can’t go wrong with a “How To” headline. People love learning new ways to accomplish things and they love to look knowledgeable to their friends.

- “How to Hypnotize ANYONE in 2 minutes or less”
- “How to write killer headlines every time”
- “How to do all the magic tricks you see on TV”
- “How to make money in your spare time with a block of wood and a pencil”

## **5. Give them a juicy question to ponder.**

Pose a question that can only lead them to read your e-mail message to get the answer. People love questions and they'll love your product or service if it answers it for them.

- "Was your last raise as big as you deserved it to be?"
- "Have you ever made THIS mistake on your resume?"
- "What do people think when they hear you talk?"
- "Have you ever been nervous about approaching someone you'd like to meet?"

## **6. Give them a direct command.**

There are plenty of people who are waiting for someone to tell them what to do. You can be their leader if you craft the right headline.

- "Stop wasting time and get the promotion you deserve"
- "Don't let shyness stop you from finding true love"
- "Stop losing at the poker table. Read this article now"
- "Stop looking like you dressed in the dark"

## **7. Offer people life-changing information**

People spend billions of dollars every year on books, magazines, newspapers and newsletters because they want to change their lives. You can tap into that huge market with your life-changing headlines.

- "Ten Steps You Need To Take Now To Terrorist-Proof Your Portfolio"
- "Discover The 5 Easy Steps To Writing Your Own Sales Copy"
- "10 Things You Can Do Right Now To Add 20 Years To Your Life"
- "What Your Dentist Hopes You'll Never Discover About Over-billing"



## **8. Use testimonials to let other people sell for you.**

You don't have to be an expert as long as someone else is willing to praise your product or service. You get a double bang because people want to own or use things that are popular and they want to associate with successful or popular people.

- "Read what your stockbroker is reading and know what your stockbroker knows."
- "Here are the 5 things that all successful Internet marketers have in common."
- "Why Oprah won't leave home without this makeup item in her purse."
- "15 popular Presidents carried a silver dollar with them. Here's why you should too."

## **9. Personify your headline by adding a bit of character to the subject.**

People are naturally distrustful of advertising, especially when it seems a bit hard to believe or when they feel disconnected from what the headline is saying. Add a little "down home" authenticity and watch your response rate soar.

- "N.Y. Cab Driver Discovers Secret To Better Vision"
- "How one Texas ranch hand wins 8 out of 10 poker hands"
- "Swiss Jeweler rocks the world with new simulated diamond"
- "Florida housewife bans roaches using this common pantry item"

Now that you've written the perfect headline, it's time to hand the baton over.