

Getting Published

By Bob Osgoodby

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How many times have you been told that a great way to gain exposure for your business or website, has been to write an article, and get it published in various Newsletters or E-zines?

Let's assume you write a timely, interesting article, and take the time to figure out who to submit it to, but it never gets published. Why?

Publishers are busy folks, and most are cautious. If you send your article as an attachment, many won't even open it. With all the viruses being circulated on the web, a cautious publisher won't open an attachment - even from someone they know. So, if you are serious about having an article published, forget that approach.

Let's talk about the busy part. Some authors place their articles on an auto-responder, which if you simply respond to their e-mail, delivers it very quickly. But it is a two step process. If the author gives no clue as to what it is all about or its length, many publishers will not take that extra step.

Others simply send out an announcement that there is a new article on their web page. Now the publisher has to go to the web page to see if the article fits their needs - very few publishers have the time to do this.

So what is the best way to submit an article?

As an E-mail of course! Give the publisher permission to use your article in the E-mail, any quid pro quo's that you desire, followed by the article. You should always give a word count and a short synopsis of the article. Publishers appreciate this touch - I know I do.

Your authors credit box should be short and to the point. This is basically an ad that you are putting at the end. Your goal should be to get them to visit your web site. Do your selling there and not in the credit box. Many publishers will reject an article if the credit box is a blatant sales pitch for a product or service, or if it's too long.

Formatting of your text is important. Your best bet is to send it with a blank line between paragraphs, with no indenting. The most popular format is 65 characters per line. You can write your article using your favorite word processor, and reformat it prior to sending. This can be done easily with a product called "Ezine Assistant" which is free software that reformats text to any line length desired. You can get this software at: <http://www.ezineassistant.com>

One final thought. Most publishers have a limited amount of space for your article. Shorter articles (500-700 words) have a better chance of being published than longer ones (1,000 words or more).

Articles less than 500 words have a great chance of being published. Publishers are always looking for "fillers". Dr. Kevin Nunley (See <http://DrNunley.com>) is the "King" of these types of articles, which average about 200 words. Kevin can get his point across in a short article that might take a less talented author several thousand words.

Face it - most articles have a key point to make. If subscribers have to plow through tomes of information to get that point, they usually page down to the next article - publishers realize this.

Did I mention spelling and grammatical errors? Do I have to? Get someone else to proof your work. These types of errors are normally the "kiss of death" as many publishers will reject an article that has them.

You should never "dash off" an article and send it out right away. Let it rest for a day or so, and read it. Make revisions if necessary, and let it rest for another day. Finally, format the article to the required line length, and clean up any awkward sentences. Do your final proof just before sending it.

If you have written an interesting article, and have paid attention to these important details, you have a good chance of getting published.

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