

# Interview With An Ezine Marketing Pro: Alexandria K. Brown

By Joshua Rose

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Joshua: I've been very much looking forward to this, Alexandria. Can you start by telling us a little about your Internet background? You know, sort of a summary of how you got started and what you are doing now.

Alexandria:

Sure thing! About four years ago, I left my NYC advertising agency job and began my own freelance writing business. I needed an easy way to stay in touch with past associates, current clients, prospective clients ... everyone. I wanted to be seen as an "expert" in their eyes, to encourage them to hire me and/or refer me to possible clients. So, I started my own e-mail newsletter, or "e-zine."

As my subscriber numbers grew, I began getting calls from people who had been getting my e-zine, and some of them turned into well-paying clients. And that's when I realized how powerful my little e-zine was. So I started madly researching all about e-zines and Internet marketing. I downloaded tons of information about e-zines, but most everything I found was full of hype. So I wrote my own manual, "Boost Business With Your Own E-zine". It's written especially to help other entrepreneurs and small business owners publish and prosper. I'm excited to share that it even won an international APEX Award this year for "how to" writing!

Joshua: That's wonderful, congratulations! It sounds like your e-zine has been a very important element in your success, but how about the "average" internet business? How important do you think publishing an e-zine is to someone's success on the Internet?

Alexandria:

I've learned that building a marketing list is a big key to success. You can have all the people in the world visit your Web site, but if they're not ready to buy, you've lost them forever - unless you get their e-mail addresses. Inviting them to sign up for an e-zine is the most effective way to do this, because you're offering practical, free information that your prospects can really use. Then you've got a \*targeted list\* of ideal prospects to market to over and over again.

Joshua: This raises another question. Building a subscriber list is only the first difficult challenge. The second is actually writing one that keeps readers interested and responsive. What do you think are the key ingredients to a responsive e-zine?

Alexandria:

Content, content, content. Keep about a 75/25 ratio of useful content to self-promotion. We all get so many e-mails every day, that your e-zine had better be good, otherwise people won't stay on your list! You'll be amazed at the content you can come up with once you've "lit the spark," so to speak. Keep your customer in mind always, and think about what type of information she's interested in and would make her life better.

Joshua: How about for people who feel they're not great writers? Is it really possible for the \*average\* person to publish a growing and thriving newsletter?

Alexandria:

The best thing is that almost anyone can do this - you don't have to be a great writer. Writing an e-zine is more like talking. It's conversational, not formal. So just write to me like you'd talk to me. If your grammar and spelling aren't up to par, hire someone just to proofread each issue before it goes out. (If you don't want to pay someone, have a friend who's an English whiz look it over.)

You don't even have to write whole articles. Instead, just offer a tip of the week or month. The simpler the better! There are also several places on the Web where you can pick

up free articles that you can reprint in your e-zine.

Joshua: Okay, so we have a list and we have content. The next question then is how often do you think people should publish? How much subscriber contact should we have?

Alexandria:

I'd recommend to start off publishing monthly, and then increase to no more than weekly. Publishing \*does\* require some work, so plan accordingly. Try to interact with your subscribers as much as possible through Q&As, polls, and asking for feedback. This not only leads them to trusting you more (and therefore being more likely to hire you or buy your products), but it will help you learn more about them and what type of information they're interested in.

Joshua: Let's finish off with some promotional ideas since we all want to grow our subscriber bases. What are some of the important marketing things we should be doing?

Alexandria:

This is the fun part. I give dozens of ideas on this in my manual, but here are three things you should do right away:

(1) Invite people to subscribe on every page of your Web site, as well as a pop-up box.

(2) List your e-zine in all of the major directories and announce lists on the Web. (There are more than 200 of these listed in The E-zine Queen Resource Report.)

(3) Send out a sample issue with an invitation to subscribe to everyone you know (but don't sign them up without their permission).

Joshua: This has been a great pleasure for me, Alexandria. Thank you.

Alexandria:

You're very welcome! Anytime.

Joshua: Any last tips or comments?

Alexandria:

I'd really like to emphasize that no matter what services or products you sell, an e-zine will help you attract new customers and increase sales from current customers. No buts about it. But you can't just start publishing blindly - take the time now to plan a quality publication from the start, and you'll be amazed at the long term benefits. I made a lot of mistakes in the beginning because I had no guidance, so that's why I share all this information in my manual and report.

Joshua Rose is the Editor of The Internet Profit Wizards Newsletter. To subscribe, or to read more articles, visit <http://www.internetprofitwizards.com> . For more information about Alexandria K. Brown's award-winning manual and free newsletter, visit: <http://www.internetprofitwizards.com/NewsletterMark.html>

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