

How to Create Your Ezine Ad Campaign: Part 1 - Evaluating Ezines

By Vincent Gomory

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How to Create Your Ezine Ad Campaign: Part 1 - Evaluating Ezines

Follow these steps to select the appropriate ezines for your product or service:

- 1) Identify the appropriate Ezines to advertise in
- 2) Evaluate available Ad options
- 3) Evaluate content - is it fresh or recycled?
- 4) Create a table and prepare a comparison of the content

- 1) Identify the appropriate Ezines to advertise in.

The ezine market is exploding. New ezines are published everyday and many if not most, have the same look and feel. You can separate all ezines into two categories:

- _ Ad sheets or classifieds
- _ Content newsletters with balanced advertising

Ad Sheets

The first type of ezine is the ad sheet. This is an ezine that is heavily weighted towards advertising and provides a minimum of real content. Many ezines in this category run recycled unoriginal content as filler. The purpose is selling ad space and showcasing ads. Ad sheets provide the advertiser with free and paid classified ads. Most ad sheets do not offer ad options.

Content Ezines

The content ezine informs and teaches the reader something new.

The ezine usually contains more than one article and the articles are longer in length. Articles are segued by advertisements, but the reader does not feel overwhelmed with ads. Content ezines offer the advertiser ad options such as: Top Sponsor, Middle Sponsor, Bottom Sponsor and classifieds. The purpose is to showcase both the content and the ad. More effort is taken by the publisher to integrate the information and provide a more professional presentation for the reader.

- 2) Evaluate available Ad options

Classifieds

Both Ad sheets and Content Ezines sell classified advertising. This is the cheapest form of advertising and usually appears at the bottom of the ezine.

Top Sponsor, Middle and Bottom

Content Ezines provide the discriminating advertiser a choice. Top Sponsor ads are the most expensive, but position the advertiser at the top of the ezine. Middle and bottom ads are cheaper respectively, and provide the segue between content and advertisement. I cannot tell you whether a Top, Middle or Bottom ad is the best. You will need to run a series of test ads to determine this. But, individual ads like these, will grab the readers attention more than a small classified listed in a group at the very bottom of the ezine.

Solo Ads

Many ezine publishers who want to sell additional products publish solo Ads. The ad is sent out to the subscriber list as a private mailing. This option may work for you if you are willing to spend more money. Before running Solo Ads it is important to test your ad in cheaper venues within the same ezine. For example, before I placed a Solo Ad, I would place a classified, a bottom ad and a middle or top ad in the same ezine to gauge the response.

All Ezines Look Alike: How to Tell the difference

Unfortunately, the difference is not clear-cut. There is considerable overlap in ezines. Here is a sample of the table of contents of what I believe is an ad sheet and a content ezine. You need to exercise judgement in your choices.

One ethd is to count the number of articles and compare that to the number of advertising sections.

Look at this example below:

- Sponsor Ads - (Ad)
- Feature Article (Content)
- Ad Contest (Ad)
- Classified Ads (Ad)
- Free Classified Ad Contest (Ad)
- Free Ad Submission Guidelines (Ad)
- Ask the publisher (Content)
- Disclaimer (N/A)
- Privacy Policy.(N/A)
- Subscribe/Unsubscribe information (N/A)

In the ezine above there are seven sections, five of which are Ads. This ezine is heavily weighted to ads.

Now, check this one:

- Editorial (Content)
- Tips and Tricks (Content)
- Sponsor Ad (Ad)
- Lead Article (Content)
- Site review (Content)
- Sponsor Ad (Ad)
- Feedback (Content)
- Contact the Publisher (N/A)

Out of seven sections, five are content related. This is the opposite of the example above. Most ezines fall within this range. Again, it is up to you to use judgement and discretion here. This is not a science, it's a gut feel.

3) Evaluate content - is it fresh or recycled?

One way to separate what I believe are the quality content sites from the Ad sheets is to measure the amount of fresh content the publisher provides for the readership. Recycled content is easy to find. I can spot several recycled articles in each issue cycle of the 30 - 40 ezines I receive. .

Now, just because publishers recycle doesn't mean the quality of the article is suspect. But, it does have the effect of turning off an audience. Savvy readers will pick up on recycled articles and gravitate to fresh content. If you want to advertise in the most sophisticated ezines, look for fresh editorials and a healthy mix of authors. A healthy mix of authors will more than likely provide a greater variety of issues and decrease the level of recycled content.

4) Create a table and prepare a comparison of the content

Ultimately, you need to do your homework. There is no substitute for hard analysis. Here is one method that works for me:

Create an MSExcel or MSWord table with four or five columns.

Enter the ezine name in column one, the issue date in column two and use the remaining columns to list the titles and authors of each article in that issue. Document the results in four or five issues and evaluate.

You should be able to identify:

- 1) The diversity of authors
- 2) The diversity of subject matter
- 3) The ezine with the most fresh or original content
- 4) The ezine with the highest level of recycled content

If you can document this information, you will be able to select the right group of ezines for your advertising campaign.

Summary

Follow these steps to select the appropriate ezines for your ad campaign::

- 1) Compare the table of Contents to separate the Ad sheets from the Content ezines
- 2) Compare and analyze the types of Ad packages that are offered
- 3) Evaluate the content - is it fresh or recycled?
- 4) Create a table and prepare a comparison of the content of articles in the ezines you have selected.

Next column:

How to Create Your Ezine Ad Campaign: Part 2 - Placing Ads

See you in the ezines,

Vincent Gomory

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