



ARTICLE MARKETING AND SEARCH ENGINE OPTIMIZATION

It has become increasingly difficult to get to the top of the major search engines in recent years as the likes of Google and Yahoo! have changed their criteria for how they rank websites. Many old techniques such as metatags and reciprocal links have lost their effectiveness. However, despite these changes, article submission remains one of the most effective ways to gain incoming links that will boost your website's popularity among the major search engines.

While there are many other aspects to search engine optimization (SEO), article submission can be a cheap and effective way to help you get that coveted spot on the first page of the search engine results for keywords relating to your business.

First let's look at how article marketing works in relation to improving SEO. Basically, every time a link to your website is published on another website your popularity with the search engines increases. These are known as backlinks. In every marketing article you submit to an article directory you can include a resource box with information about you or your product, and a backlink to your website.

So, even just by submitting to article directories you are already increasing the number of backlinks to your website. However, the real value from submitting these articles is that they can be picked up and published anywhere on the web. Every time an article is published you get another backlink to your website. If your articles are published enough times you could see your search engine page ranking rocket. Bear in mind though, that the effectiveness of your campaign will depend on where the articles appear. A backlink from a website that itself has a high search engine page ranking will carry more weight than a backlink from a site with a poor ranking.

Keywords vs quality

Carefully choosing keywords is an essential part of article marketing for a number of reasons. First, you want your articles to be easily found in article directories. If they remain buried under similar articles they will never be published on other websites and your efforts will have been wasted.

Also, you want your articles to get good results on the search engines themselves. If your articles find their way onto the front pages of the search engines you will increase exposure to your website or product, and increase your reputation as an article writer.

However, there is more to successful article marketing than keywords. There has been an ongoing difference of opinion among SEO experts as to whether the quality of articles can be sacrificed for the sake of high keyword density within the text. While it is important to put keywords in the text to help with SEO, quality content is king when it comes to article marketing.

The main aim of article marketing is to get your articles published on as many websites as possible. Quality content is at a premium on the internet so if you can provide good articles that people want to read you will be successful. If you stuff your articles with keywords websites will not publish them and readers will rarely read beyond the first paragraph. So, keep keywords to about two per every 100 words of text and do not let them disrupt the flow and the meaning of the article.

Know your neighbor

The most successful article marketers are the ones who gain a reputation as experts in their chosen field, so try to find your niche and work to your strengths. If you write authoritatively and enthusiastically about a subject that you know about you are much more likely to attract readers.

If, for example, you have a website that sells Mac software you could write about new releases and trends in this field. However, you could also boost your profile by becoming involved in the general online Mac community by posting on forums or even creating your own blog. These can provide extra opportunities for creating backlinks and driving traffic to your website, and as you become better known in your field you will find your articles will be more used more often and more widely.

New Web 2.0 social bookmarking websites are also giving article marketers new opportunities for improving SEO and increasing traffic to their website. If you come up with an article you think could be very popular on the web you could publish it on your website and submit it to websites like Digg and Reddit. If it gains popularity on these sites it could go viral and bring thousands of hits to your site.

Article marketing offers excellent opportunities to promote your product while improving the SEO of your website. Even if you do not have the time or the will to write articles yourself, you should look into having a freelance writer doing the job for you.

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