



TREME
INTERNET MARKETING PROGRAM

WEEK 8

CONTENT CREATION: HOW TO CREATE ARTICLES
THAT ATTRACT USERS AND INCREASE SALES

For a step by step video tutorial detailing everything in this guide and more check out The ShoeMoney System.
<http://www.ShoeMoneySystem.com>



Knowing the combination to a safe is a lot better than trying to force your way through the safe with drills and blowtorches. In the same way, follow the steps for generating content in this order and you'll have a good shot at driving massive traffic in your niche. I've applied this formula in verticals as varied as ringtones, twitter marketing, local lead generation, and entertainment—all with success. Follow the steps. You're getting priceless information for free here—no need to subscribe to [Shoemoney Tools](#),

but it will probably help you get there faster.

If not, no problem—there are literally hundreds of thousands of niches out there where you can make a great living and I have no intention of trying to compete with you. There's just not enough time, plus it would take me away from the projects I already have.

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STEP 1: WRITE HEADLINES THAT AROUSE CURIOSITY

Even if you're not a professional writer, you can mimic the experts. Pick up a copy of *Teen Magazine* or any of the supermarket tabloids:

- **37** ways *you* can please your girlfriend like never before
- Drop **5 waist sizes** before summer—*Celebrity tells all!*
- 12 secrets that funeral homes **Don't want you to know!**



People are naturally curious, so use reverse psychology to draw them in. Your “insider’s guide” gives them what they’re not supposed to know. It’s top secret, in fact. So maybe the government, your spouse, your doctor, or someone else doesn’t want you to know—and therefore, it must be juicy!

How do you think David Letterman got so popular with his Top 10 Lists? It’s just a formula that he’d repeat every night. There are thousands of them here - http://lateshow.cbs.com/latenight/lateshow/top_ten/archive/, between 1993 and 2009, if you want to read them. A little humor doesn’t hurt.

Even if you’re talking about something bland or serious, the tabloid headline approach works well:

- If you’re promoting [estate management attorneys](#)—“37 things that estate management attorneys don’t want you to know!”.
- Or if you’re promoting [liposuction leads](#)--- “The truth about liposuction”.

You get the idea? Insert your name into these headlines:

- 53 reasons why [your keyword] is not a good idea.
- 47 ways that you can easily do [your subject].

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Notice that having a specific number is good—especially if it's an odd number for some reason. The same things you use in email marketing subject lines will work here, too. Same is usually true for PPC headlines.



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STEP 2: BE PROVOCATIVE

Yes, make sure you are opinionated. **Say something that will offend people, but intelligently.** There's a fine line between just insulting others versus saying something insightful, slightly controversial, and with a bi of edge.



Look at what [TechCrunch](#) (Michael Arrington) and Jason Calcanis do. They intentionally choose angles that will get press attention. Sometimes they will even seed the conversation by pre-determining what angles folks will come at—**they are staging a fake argument!** And then the pawns, usually the press, come in, see the

“controversy”, and get the hot scoop. Is that ethical? Who cares. **The point is that you've duped the press into promoting your site for free.** This is way better than advertising—it's free, your site is deemed more trustworthy because it's referenced by respected people (not ads), and you can get a ton of traffic.

That starts with coming up with something that you know will be a topic people are passionate about, in which you can lob a bomb into the conversation to get folks to start to argue with one another. **Remember that it's not about insulting people—it's about getting innocent bystanders to argue with one another.**

For example, if you want to ride the traffic wave of Michael Jackson's death, write something about “5 influential sources show that Michael Jackson's death was faked”. Yeah, he probably did die, but there are conspiracy folks who might claim that he did it to get his family out from debt, collect on an insurance policy, come back as someone else with the most amazing plastic surgery job, and so forth. Either way, **it's interesting and will attract participation.** I totally made this example up just now—but if you're writing, you should actually **do the research.**

STEP 3: SURF THE WAVE

It's hard to come up with your own stuff to write about, so take advantage of stuff that is already popular. In Week 6, we talked about how to set up Google Alerts to feed you a steady stream of what's news, so you can then piggyback on what's trending for your topic.

Even if your topic has very little to do with the hot news, you can often find a way to tie yourself into things and steal some attention. For example, one affiliate blogged about the Michael Jackson skin whitening rebill, when really he was promoting teeth whitening.



It's an interesting topic (did it make you laugh and would you click to read that article?), arouses controversy (profiting on someone's death is going to get folks to comment, and it takes advantage of current events.

See how that's an example of using the first 3 steps that we've mentioned so far? **You can apply this to any topic you're writing about—find the angle, tie it into current events.** Selling weight loss pills? If you wanted to go so far, speculate on what Michael Jackson would look like had he taken your products—then have your designer Photoshop a few images. Put him in different costumes, maybe paste his face on other bodies. Be creative, but don't go so far as to be vulgar, That's a fine line.

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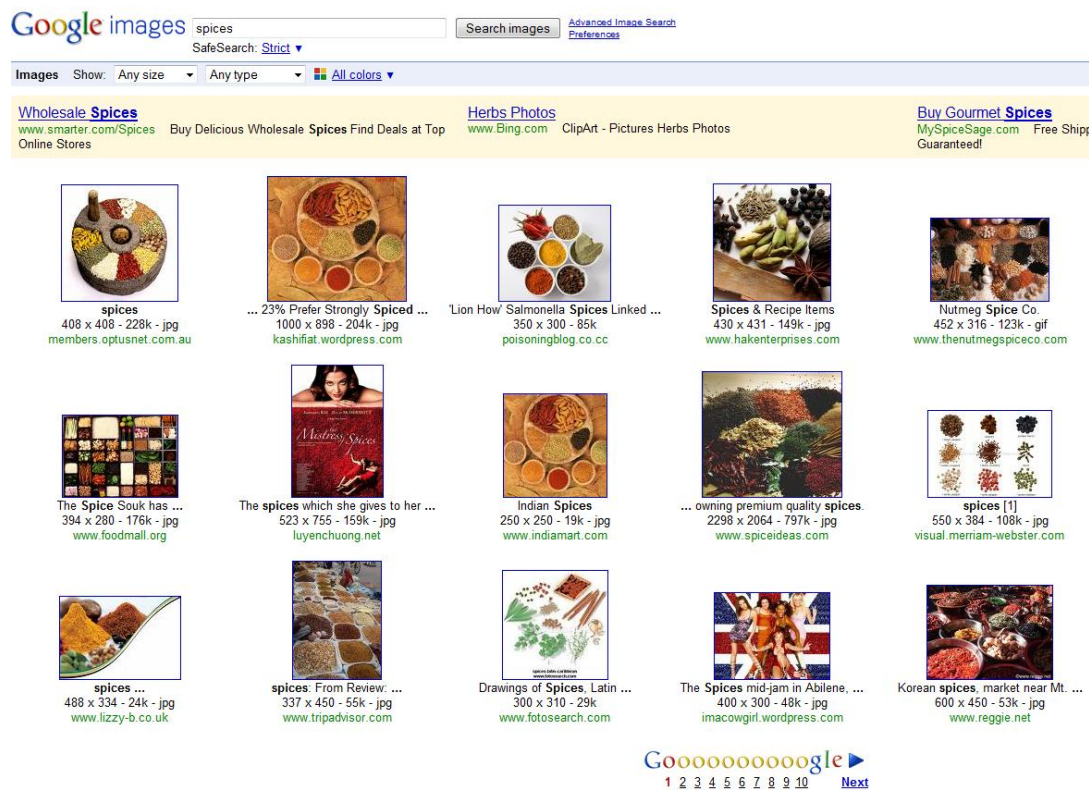
<http://www.ShoeMoneySystem.com>

STEP 4: SPICE UP YOUR ARTICLES

I'm surprised how many folks don't take the time to insert a main image for each article. If there were 10 commandments on article writing, I'd say this is one of them.

You know what really drove fast food sales in the last ten years? Besides the 99 cent menu, it was picture menus. If that drives sales at McDonalds and Denny's, then it will drive engagement on your articles. **It's not just kids that like pictures, So make it interesting**—highlight key points, put in a section with bullets, add little graphical flourishes here and there - Anything except for giant blocks of plain text—*bor-ring!*

I like to do a quick search on [Google Images](#)—takes you less than a minute and you can drop that into your [Wordpress](#) blog. Here's what I found for "spices"



Just make your articles easy on the eyes of your readers. If it feels like they are reading a textbook, they're going to bail. Having images in your article will also drive traffic from image searches. You'd be surprised how much it can get you—perhaps even 20-30% more traffic on top of the regular search. Plus the images will show up when your post is tied into your Facebook feeds.

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STEP 5: WRITE ON THE SAME TOPIC (KEEP A CONSISTENT STRUCTURE)

“This is my blog and I can write about whatever I want” - Yeah, if you’re John Chow or Lance Armstrong. Then people want to know what you had for lunch or other random details. If not, then you want to keep your articles on the same topic. **If you want to write about 2 topics, then you need 2 blogs.**

Blogs are like radio stations—if you play classical, rap, and country on the same station, you won’t satisfy anyone.

Also, you want to structure your content into a pyramid. The top of your pyramid is the main keyword you’d like to rank on as well as the general



category you are writing about—“widgets”, let’s call it. One level underneath, you might have “blue widgets”, “big widgets”, “widget prices”. One level below—under “widget prices”, you might have “best widget prices”, “widget deals”, “most expensive widgets” and so forth. The idea is that your content is structured into a pyramid to roll up into your main keyword.

Use Google Wonder Wheel and your common sense to determine what those

categories are that you set up in your WordPress site. Of course, you can change the structure any time you like, especially if you see that one of your categories is becoming popular. If it’s not, then you can remove that category. Use tags as the third level. In other words, your site is first structured into categories—not more than 6 to 10 of them. Each of your articles will be under one or two categories, but may have 5 to 10 tags. The tags are the keywords that you’d like to be found under. **These categories and tags pass around link juice and also create individual pages within your site,** so you want to be careful how you set that structure up. Don’t waste the great link juice that you’re building up over time.

The first 4 steps we covered were about getting the right posts in place—a great headline, a good topic, formatting it nicely. This 5th step about organization is to make sure that you can tie these blog posts together to concentrate rankings. It will also help you structure what topics to write about—since most bloggers write a random sequence of posts. That’s about as effective as preparing a meal by selecting random ingredients, then shoving it into the oven at a random

temperature for a random amount of time. And they wonder why they don't get any traffic.

STEP 6: ASK FOR PARTICIPATION

Now that you've gotten people to your articles, you want to get them to take action. Do that by posing a question in your article. Ask people what they think. Do they have a different experience to share? **Write in such a way that you give openings for folks to comment.**



This serves several benefits:

- **Users are writing content for you:** Do it right and you'll get a ton of comments. All of those comments are helping your SEO. If you're lazy, then you want to maximize the ratio of the content others write versus what you write. It's unique content, too, so here you have the benefit of "automated" content without the penalties of duplicate or scraped content. And you get it for free!
- **People will tell others:** When you have a great article, not only will people comment, but others will reply to those comments, so you can effectively pour gasoline on the fire. So don't just delete the haters on your blog. They are actually helping you out, since they'll draw out the defenders of whatever the opposing opinion is. If you're really clever, you may even stage these dramas, as mentioned earlier, so you can pull in unsuspecting readers into the conversation. Tie in Facebook Connect and now you've really got something going—provided you don't have bugs in your implementation.

The net result of all this is that **you have created an army of people who are writing for you**—not just in comments, but also blogging about it, telling other friends to join in and see how "crazy" your viewpoint is, or maybe to just come in and defend their view. You know the topics that people get argumentative about in your particular niche—make sure to focus on writing about those issues first.

STEP 7: OFFER SOMETHING FREE OR HAVE A CONTEST

This is a more advanced form of soliciting feedback. It can be as dumb as anyone who leaves a comment will be entered to win an iPod. **The affiliate network likes to promote a giveaway for the new affiliate that drives the most sales or does whatever.** Any reason to get people to enter.



Most people on the web will gladly trade their privacy in exchange for a chance at some prize.

Better yet, you can ask them to enter their email to receive some guide that you wrote—for example, the guide that you're reading right now. Make it of decent quality and the users will tell their friends.

The reason this is Step 6 is that **you have to have built up a sufficient base of articles to be able to offer a guide.** Pick and choose snippets of the best stuff you wrote, illustrate it, and turn it into a PDF with your watermark in the background. That way, if users forward it, their friends will know it's from you and they may want to come check out your site for more articles. Plus, there are people who will shamelessly rip off your content and pretend it's theirs.

Combining the email autoresponder (I use bronto.com, but you can just as easily use aweber, constantcontact, or mailpress—free plugin for wordpress) and the free guide is the most powerful form of content promotion. Other people like to argue about whether it's better to charge a few hundred bucks—which we could easily do with this guide—versus just give it away for free and drive a ton of traffic. I believe in the latter, since you're going to make more money getting folks into your monthly tools subscription than a one-off guide purchase, even if not many people want to take the next step and sign up for your tools. Plus, it's just cool to help out folks who are trying to quit their day jobs and get started in internet marketing.

STEP 8: TOP 100 LIST AND BADGE CAMPAIGNS

This might sound like the same thing as the top 10 lists we talked about at the beginning. It's not. Here you are assembling your list of the top experts in your niche. You're ranking them 1 through 100.



What's the criteria? Totally up to you—whoever you like best. Most of the “review” sites out there (for example, dating review sites) rank the sites based on what's driving the most affiliate commissions, not which sites have the best user experience.

Assemble the list of the folks you think are the most knowledgeable and popular in your niche. And then create a page that lists them in order, showing a thumbnail, their site name, a sentence or two with your opinion of their site, and perhaps a rating (0 to 100). If you're not sure—just be really specific. A rating of 90.4 sounds way more specific than a rating of 90. 90.4 sounds like there was some sort of calculation involved.

Now that you have that list—and formatted it so that it looks like the result of some official study, **start reaching out to those guys and let them know they were voted to the top 100 list of whatever your niche is.** Then include a badge they can place on your site. They will be honored—tickle their ego a bit.

Often, the site owner is happy to put in the badge. Maybe you'll get a PR7 link from Google, if you're lucky. For example, look at this page:

<http://www.google.com/press/awards.html>

2005

[PC Pro Editorial Awards \(UK\)](#)

Technology Innovator: Google (DECEMBER 2005)
Best Web Application: Froogle (DECEMBER 2005)

[CNET - Editors' Choice Award](#)

Google Maps for Mobile (NOVEMBER 2005)

[Popular Science - Best of Computing 2005](#)

Google Local (NOVEMBER 2005)

[CHIP Online User's Pick Award](#)

Google Earth (JULY 2005)

[CHIP Online 5-Star-Award](#)

[Most popular download: Google Earth](#) (JULY 2005)

[PC Magazine Editors' Choice Award](#)

[Best Browser Toolbar: Google Toolbar 3.0](#) (JULY 2005)

[Best Browser Toolbar: Google Toolbar](#) (MAY 2005)

[BtoB Magazine's Media Power 50](#)

No. 2 business-to-business media property (MAY 2005)

[9th Annual Webby Awards](#)

Webby Award: Best Practices (MAY 2005)

People's Voice Award: Best Practices (MAY 2005)

People's Voice Award: Best Navigation/Structure (MAY 2005)



You can make badges just like any of those guys. If you were voted into the Top [your keyword] sites on the web, wouldn't you want to talk about it? You could even go find that website and put in a couple positive comments on their blog, just to warm them up and increase the odds that they'll place a badge there. Hit them up on Facebook and include a link to your review of their site. Tweet about it.

They'll probably want to tell others—it's human nature.

For this to work, **you have to really know your stuff and have already built a site that has a decent amount of content.** These other guys are not going to link to you if you're got the default blue wordpress theme still there and only a couple posts (one of which is the default "hello world"). Just think if you were them—it's gotta look good enough to link to and you need a nice looking badge which points to a well-written review page.

You'll have to put in a lot of time on this page- this is not some random blog post. But the rewards are huge—it could then make you the authority in your niche and people will link to that page over and over because it has the best collection of information for that topic. Make this page really high quality and well-written.

STEP 9: POLICE FOR THIEVES

Rule #1: In internet marketing, people steal.

Rule #2: If they say they don't steal, see Rule #1.



So every few days, grab a snippet of text from some of your blog posts and just paste it into the Google search box. Literally just copy a whole sentence and search on that. If you see others pages come up, then you've nailed the thieves.

No need to tell them about it. Just file a spam report here: www.google.com/contact/spamreport.html

Google™ **Report a Spam Result**

[Home](#)
[About Google](#)
[Contact Us](#)
[Share Success](#)
[Google Newsletter](#)

Find on this site:
Search

Report a Spam Result

Help us maintain the quality of Google search results.

We work hard to return the most relevant results for every search we conduct. To that end, we encourage site managers to make their content straightforward and easily understood by users and search engines alike. Unfortunately, not all websites have users' best interests at heart. Violating our [Webmaster Guidelines](#) by means such as hidden text, deceptive cloaking or doorway pages compromises the quality of our results and degrades the search experience for everyone.

We think that's a bad thing, and so we request that, if your Google search returns a result that you suspect is spam, you please let us know. Our spam report forms are provided in two different flavors: an [authenticated form](#) that requires registration in [Webmaster Tools](#), and an unauthenticated form below. Currently, we investigate every spam report from a registered user. Spam reports to the unauthenticated form are assessed in terms of impact, and a large fraction of those are reviewed as well. We take appropriate action when we uncover genuine abuse. In especially egregious cases, we will remove spammers from our index immediately, so they don't show up in search results at all. At a minimum we'll use the data from each spam report to improve our site ranking and filtering algorithms, which, over time, should increase the quality of our results.

We appreciate your taking the time to help us improve our service for your fellow users around the world. By helping us eliminate spam, you're saving millions of people time, effort and energy.

Report a Spam Result

Exact query that shows a problem (copy this from the Google search box):

Resulting Google page that shows problem (copy the Google URL):

The specific web page or site that is misbehaving:

Type(s) of problem (check all that apply):

- Hidden text or links
- Misleading or repeated words
- Page does not match Google's description
- Cloaked page
- Deceptive redirects
- Doorway pages
- Duplicate site or pages
- Other (specify)

Additional details:

Submit



For people who do competitive webmastering for a living—also called SEO—this is the best kept secret. But don't abuse it. Only file a spam report if you can concretely prove they're doing something shady—stealing content, cloaking, whatever. If you file a report on a competitor just because you don't like them, Google won't take you seriously next time around.

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You should be searching on your keywords and snippets from your blog posts anyway, just to see who else is out there and how you're shifting in the rankings versus how much traffic you're getting.



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THINGS NOT TO DO

Here are some common ways that people fail. Make sure you are not doing these things:

- **Overly self-promotional tone.** Do this just once and the rest of your articles will be suspect. You want others to toot your horn for you—you get way more credibility that way.
- **Mass article submission.** Blast your article out to 50 article submission sites. That used to work a year ago, but now the engines are more sophisticated in weeding out spammers. This is especially important, as the number of pages indexed on the web is approaching 100 billion. Endorsements from trusted sites are what count—not just from a SEO perspective, but because you want to develop relationships with human beings that matter.
- **Auto-generating fake content.** We covered this in more detail in Week 7 on building your website. Don't believe people who tell you that they're successful in getting traffic because they programmatically re-combine RSS feeds and don't have to write real content. The idea that having a million fake pages is somehow better than one real article is laughable. If you're a high volume email deployer (link to scott-richter.com), then perhaps it will work, but you will also burn every other channel for traffic in doing so.
- **Buying software that makes promises too good to be true.** There's a saying that if you don't know who the fool is in the group, then it's probably you. Perhaps poetic justice that affiliates who promote get rich quick schemes often fall for other people's get rich quick schemes. Don't use software that will pretend to generate content, automatically build backlinks, automatically get you ranked on Google, or so forth. You might as well buy a bottle of Acai to lose weight. This is not to say that all software is bad—there are great tools out there that will help you do research and build your sites. Not the same thing.
- **Keyword stuffing.** This is the practice of repeating a keyword a zillion times in the hopes that engines are fooled. Just as moronic is to subscribe to theories about LSI (Latent Semantic Indexing) or keyword density ratios. There are clowns out there saying that you should try to keep your



keyword density right around 5%-- thus, you say your keyword once every 20 words. If you're focusing on writing good content, you're not doing the math to make sure you are repeating your keyword in mechanical proportion.

- **Copying someone else's content.** Whether you rip off someone else's stuff or just use a feed, you can get in trouble by the person who wrote the content—or more likely, the search engines will penalize you for having duplicate content. They'll notice that you have the same page as someone else and then decide who they think is the real one versus copycat. If your site is new and isn't authoritative (at least Google PageRank 5), guess who loses that contest?

There you have it—**9 steps you can follow to write articles that get traffic and will make you money, plus bonehead things not to do.**

Next week, we'll talk about how you can use social media to spread your brand. Everyone is talking Facebook this or Twitter that—and it's accompanied by the rise of self-proclaimed experts. The reality is that **99% of people who are doing social media are just yelling in an empty room**—nobody hears them. Same is true for blogs. Most folks will post a ton of stuff and then wonder why the money isn't just rolling in.

Just like we covered article writing this week, we'll talk next week about strategies you can use to actually drive traffic in social media. Meanwhile, here's your checklist for this week.



By the way, if you're not getting these lists complete, **I'd highly recommend that you not move onto the next week.** It would be like building a house by only half pouring the concrete foundation and then jumping straight to adding the plumbing and kitchen cabinets. Hold off on the next phases until you get these pieces done—else your web strategy will be shaky.

SHOEMONEY ACTION PLAN: WEEK 8

- Choose a specific topic to blog about
- Come up with a few attractive headlines that include numbers
- Make a controversial post that starts an argument between readers
- Find a few trendy topics and write about them
- Make sure all of your articles have a main image
- Structure your blog posts into levels of keywords
- Build a list of 100 knowledgeable people for your category, then reach out to them and let them know that you've chosen them

