



# The Guerrilla Review

## Just Say No

By Ernest O'Dell – Guerrilla Internet Marketing

Saturday, November 20, 2010

I was finishing up a proposal when a potential client of mine called me on the phone last week. I had just finished an analysis of one of his press releases when he called me and told me that he had a product that he wanted to promote through SEO articles.

He stated that he wanted to make these articles part of his e-commerce website by adding them on a regular basis. "SEO articles?" I thought. "Why would an e-commerce site that sells a lackluster business model need articles about SEO?"

Of course, I knew they weren't talking about writing articles **about** SEO, but writing articles **for** SEO... which is just as silly.

Unfortunately, I hear this a lot because because so many people have been duped into believing that writing *keyword-stuffed* articles is somehow an SEO requirement. How far removed from the truth and reality they are!

They don't even know why they need these articles—only that, for whatever reason, the Google god wants them. Or, the Google spiders... or, whatever. Someone sold them on the idea that they needed to “feed the spiders” with SEO content that was gobbled up by the search engines.

Nevertheless, I asked him, “Who is your potential customer? A human? Or a search engine?”



I'm still wondering if I got my point across to him with my questions.

And so, he churns out a bunch of crappy articles that no one would be interested in reading anyway...

BUT...

...they're chock full of keywords and stuffed to the hilt with crap that nobody understands.

Well, hallelujah! Guess what?

They're getting a butt-load of traffic, but their stats are crap. Nobody is reading the article, and they're damn sure not clicking through on the bios.

**Back to Square One.**

Hey, don't say I didn't tell you so... because I did.

Okay! I'm no "expert" in SEO, but I do know this: you've got to write your articles for human consumption, not Google (or Bing) consumption. The search engines aren't going to produce a dime of revenue for you.

And... I don't care if all those articles give you enough backlinks to produce a PR 9! It won't matter!

I get millions of hits per month from measly little sites that only have a PR 6 or 7, and the articles (and web sites) are written for human consumption.

Guess what?

They're making money!

And this guy—I've been trying to "get through" to him for over three years—is still trying the same old crap and expecting different results each time.

You know what that means, don't you?

I thought so...

...it's called insanity.

But, no “never mind” as my Granny used to say.

And then, he wonders why it's not happening for him. (He's not alone, by the way. I have other clients all over the country that have tried the same thing.) Why? Because they “read it somewhere” on the Internet, that's why.

### **Good grief!**

"Did we not provide Google with the SEO articles they wanted?" he asks me incredulously. "Why doesn't Google show my link to my article when someone is searching for the keywords of my product?"

"Let me explain something to you," I say, and then I ask them to put themselves in the shoes of the potential buyer.

"If you were looking to buy Product A, which page would you rather find in Google? The one with the product information, the price, choice of color/size, information on how to purchase it, and an 'add to shopping cart' button? Or the one that tells you the history of your product?"

The choice, of course, is easy when presented that way. And suddenly – BAM! It all starts to make sense...

...I think.

"That's what I was thinking before we embarked on this crazy SEO scheme!" he replies. "It just doesn't make any sense to me, but I figured that's what the Google bots wanted. Why do so many SEO 'experts' recommend this?"

Right about now, I'm at the point of needing a couple of aspirins, or four fingers of tequila. If I had a ball peen hammer, I would hit something with it...

I said, “Look, most of these so called SEO 'experts' (as you like to call them) don't know what they're doing, much less what they're talking about.”

“Most SEO consultants don't have a good grasp of why they do what they do, or why Google does what it does. Why? Because the geeks over at Google are always rewriting the rules (and algorithms).

“What's an algorithm?” he asks.

More head shaking on my part...

Now, I'm starting to have chest pains.

Once upon a time—a long, long time ago—some of these guys probably stumbled upon some website (or websites) that provided a lot of valuable industry information on SEO. They probably followed a link from a blog or a forum, and noticed that the site also did well in Google.

Then they read somewhere that an Alexa ranking below 100 grand was supposed to be good, too. (Another rant for another time...)

So, they're good with math and put 2 and 2 together and came up with the not-so-brilliant idea of writing articles created solely for SEO purposes...

...and they continue to perpetuate the misinformation to as many places online where SEO myths are propagated.

And so, the SEO article creation industry was spawned...

...like a demon from hell.

Let's step back for a moment and look at the difference between "SEO articles" and information provided on a site that is there without regard to SEO.

When your goal is to create SEO "optimized" articles (or, press releases, for that matter), you'll almost always make the wrong decision on what to write, or how to write it. Why? Because, most likely, you'll be operating under the false notion that search engines rather than humans are your target audience.

Did you just catch what I said? Hmmm???

Anything you write in your articles, news releases, ad copy, sales pages, or posts to a blog, should have a reason for being there...

...but, that reason is not SEO.

The reason should be for human eyeballs... not search engine spiders.

**Whatever you add to your site should enhance it in the eyes of your target audience: humans.**

If an article about the history of your product is what your target audience is looking for—that is, it helps those people who might purchase the product make their decision--then by all means, write the article!

**But don't fool yourself...**

Your gut instincts will let you know if you really do believe it will be helpful, or if you are just looking for an easy way out! If you don't believe your own BS, then nobody else will either.

Your goal is to get inside your potential buyers' head and figure out what want. What might keep them from buying your product? Maybe they're not sure if your product will fit their needs. Maybe they don't understand why the latest version of your product is worth so much more than the previous versions.

So, write an article pointing out the differences, and why the manufacturer decided to rev it up, and how the extra money it costs will be well worth paying because it will likely last twice as long, or work twice as fast.

**Now, THAT is useful information for your target audience.**

It's also an article that others interested in your product might link to. The search engines could care less.

It also sets you up as an expert on those types of products (whatever your product is). It could be the latest “widget” or the latest improvement to the World's Best Mouse Trap. You don't need to think about SEO when you write such an article, because that's not why you're writing it.

The article itself will likely show up for long-tail searches relating to your product when people are seeking out the differences between the two versions. And if it naturally gathers links, that link “juice” will spread to the rest of your site—and beyond—providing your sales pages with a better chance at ranking for your money terms—i.e., pages that bring in people who are ready to purchase **now**.

So ditch this notion of writing articles “for SEO” and “just say no.” Treat it like a bad drug. Optimize your site to “do business,” and provide as much additional information as you can that will set you apart from your competition. Get into your readers' head and give them what they want and need to make an informed decision about your product or service: information.

Otherwise, keep operating on the false premise of attracting search engine spiders and maybe—just maybe—in another ten years you just might “get it.”

***[Ed. Note: Ernest O'Dell is publisher and CEO of the Guerrilla Internet Marketing Institute, the Guerrilla Real Estate Marketing Institute, and Director of DMS Group Publishing, a holding company for [QuestarTeleCommunications.com](http://QuestarTeleCommunications.com), and [QuestarPC.com](http://QuestarPC.com). He has won international recognition in 182 countries and is published in over 20 different languages. His publications cover marketing in small, medium and large businesses, telecommunications, real estate, insurance, risk management, public utilities and government related industries.]***

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