

How to Start and Run a Successful Magazine!

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Chapter 1 – Selecting the Right Niche

According to the article *Start Your Own Magazine*, 1,000 new magazines are published each year. Of this number, 90% will fail, usually right after the first issue has been distributed. The remaining percentage acquires more success, allowing the owner to return a steady profit.

So, what makes the 10% of successful magazines different from the 90% of unsuccessful ones? Well, sometimes it's an issue of budget and celebrity status. For example, the Magazine 'O' has received massive popularity. But, unlike most startup magazines, 'O' has the backup of a billionaire... Oprah Winfrey. She has the money and fame to get it marketed through every advertising venue available. Beginning magazine owners just won't have that type of pr power.

However, do not think that you have to be another Oprah Winfrey to publish a successful magazine. In fact, despite the difficulties associated with magazine publishing, there are still a few **average** people that are able to get their foot through the door. Yet, since they don't have money or fame to promote themselves, they must use a different approach... niche marketing.

What is niche marketing? Niche marketing occurs when you advertise to a more specialized audience... individuals who are not getting their needs or wants met by existing companies. As a result, you develop a high demand for your product... a demand that won't have too much competition in its supply, (since obviously you will be the main supplier).

To better understand the power of this concept, consider the example of Simone Gold, an emergency physician who launched the magazine *MedicaLife*. Instead of focusing on a general market, Gold decided she would go niche and advertise to people working in the healthcare industry. Her approach worked wonders as now *MedicaLife* is one of the top magazines in its market.

You can make niche marketing even more powerful if you find niches within niches. Sound confusing? Well, it isn't really. In fact, if you use Gold as an example, there are tons more niches within niches you could find. For instance, you could launch a magazine *just* for Emergency Technicians. You could make things even more niche by launching a magazine for *Female* Emergency Technicians. Ultimately, the list is endless.

Yet, keep in mind that this is just an example. Don't create a magazine for Emergency Technicians if you have no knowledge or interest in the subject. This is especially the case if you don't have the money to outsource your articles, (something you'll learn about later on). Remember, readers want pieces that are as informative as they are heartfelt. If your market feels you are not truly writing for them, they're not going to be interested in buying future subscriptions.

With that being said, how does a person decide what niche they should center their magazine around? And how can they be sure that their niche isn't already taken? Ironically, the answers to both questions can be found through a step commonly taken for online marketing: keyword research.

Now, if this seems strange to you, it might be because you're more inundated with doing things the hard way... spending hour after hour researching magazines that are already in circulation. Well, you don't need to worry about doing this right now, because what's more important is identifying your market. Once you have identified your market, you can then decide how you're going to work against your competition.

So, how does a person identify their market with keyword research? The best way is through a program known as a keyword analyzer. These work by scouring the Internet, looking for any keyword that relates to a person's original query. They can be obtained for free (through sites such as <https://adwords.google.com/select/KeywordToolExternal> or <http://inventory.overture.com/d/searchinventory/suggestion/>) or for purchase. Some of the best keyword analyzers you can buy include Micro Niche Finder, Word Tracker and Keyword Spy.

Either way, once you get access to a keyword analyzer, you need to pay attention to two things:

- The number of searches the keyword gets in a month
- The number of advertisers using that keyword in their promotion

Most keyword analyzers will use numbers to represent the number of searches a keyword gets in a month. For instance, if a keyword gets 1,000 hits each month, that's what the keyword analyzer will tell you. However, there are a few that may show you this information through a graph, which may omit actual numbers. The keyword analyzer associated with Adwords is an example. This is not as helpful, but it can still let you know if a particular keyword is getting activity.

Anyway, the general rule of thumb is the more searches the better, though you will still want to avoid generic topics. Consider the example of a person wanting to start a magazine for those in the modeling industry. Sure, they could try to go generic and use 'supermodel' or 'fashion models' as the topic for their magazine, but if they want to be ahead of the competition, they should probably go for something more niche such as 'black male models.'

Of course, high search numbers and niche-topics are only one part of the equation. You must also look at how many advertisers are promoting whatever keyword you are looking up. This will serve two purposes. First, you are getting

an idea of whether or not companies will be interested in advertising in your magazine. Secondly, it will give you an idea of how your online advertising will fare, (if you use online advertising). And generally, if there aren't as many advertisers, you can pretty much assume that you'll be able to dominate search engine listings, once your website is up.

But isn't this a double-edged sword? Don't you want to focus on a topic that is advertiser-friendly *as well as* reader-friendly? Well, it's natural that niche-based keywords won't receive as much attention as more generic ones. However, it can be hard to say whether your topic alone will be enough to attract advertisers... even if your keyword is popular. So, you will want to do other things to attract advertisers such as offering a lower price or showcasing your subscriber list, (things that will be discussed a little later).

Got all that? If you do, finding ideas for a profitable magazine should be a breeze. But, before you begin designing or typing anything, you need to do the following:

- Name Your Magazine
- Investigate whether or not your magazine's name is already in use
- Analyze your competition
- Determine whether or not your publication will be free or paid

Now, depending on how niche your keyword topic is, your magazine's name may already be taken care of. Sure, it may not be the most creative thing in the world, but it will clearly identify its purpose and market. It will also be easier for your audience to remember.

However, there is a risk to using a more general name... it might already be taken by a more established company. This is not to say that you can't encounter the same problem with a more creative name, it's just a lot harder. Either way, once you have decided on your magazine's title, you will need to investigate whether or not it has already been trademarked by another company or individual.

The easiest way to go about this process is to hire a person to search the records at the USPTO, (which is also known as the United States Patent and Trade Office). [Direct Legal](#) offers this service if you select their "Trademark or Service Mark Application & U.S. Trademark Office Filing" plan. This costs \$199, (plus an extra \$325 for the USPTO filing), but you can be assured that there won't be any conflicts with your business name.

Alternatively, you can search the USPTO records on your own by either visiting one of their offices in person or searching their online database. More information on either of these steps can be found on their website: