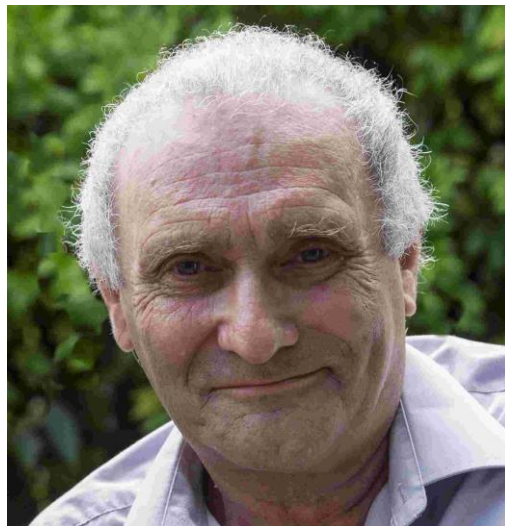


Portfolio – Digital Marketing

John Coutts



www.WriteSystem.com

My name is John Coutts. I write for a living, and I have been doing so professionally for over 22 years. My first language is English, and I have a passion for proper grammar, spelling and punctuation, as well as for producing creative and imaginative writing.

Over the years I have co-authored three books with the manager of a museum; for 12 years I wrote a weekly column for a newspaper, and also worked as a reporter; I have had various poems and short stories published in

magazines; and I have written thousands of web content pieces and articles, for hundreds of satisfied clients, in dozens of countries, on every continent (except Antarctica), all over the world.

Examples of my writing ability can be found in this ebook, and also on my website at: www.WriteSystem.com.

You can contact me:

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I should point out here that I am not Spanish. My first language is most definitely English. I live in Spain because it is a beautiful country and I enjoy the way of life here.

My services and rates are available on request as they may vary, depending on what you require:

- <http://www.writesystem.com/contact-form/>

Please contact me to discuss any writing requirements you may have. I am normally available during working hours in my time zone, which is Central European Time (CET) (+1 hour GMT), Monday through Friday.

The following pages contain several samples of my writing in the digital marketing niche:

Email Marketing Strategies - the Good, the Bad, and the Better

Adopting an email marketing strategy is a wise plan if you intend to grow an email list to market to.

It is often said that the money is in the list, and that is true to a large degree, but a more accurate statement might be that the money is in the targeted list.

When an email marketing strategy grows a list of people who are proven buyers, for example, that list will always be more profitable than a similar list of people who have merely shown an interest.

There are many acceptable ways to capture emails from potential customers. Often it can be little more than a simple subscribe form placed prominently on a web page.

The subscription could be for a weekly or monthly newsletter, or it could be for a one-off 'gift' of a relevant PDF report, an informative video, or a useful piece of software, for example.

In all cases, the person opts into the subscription willingly and exchanges his or her email for whatever is offered in return, knowing that they will continue to receive email messages.

Some of the messages will usually be informational with no selling involved, but some others will be promotional emails trying to sell something. This is sometimes known as permission marketing.

"... double opt in ..."

It is also common for the person opting into a subscription to be asked to 'double opt in'. They opt in initially by typing their email and possibly their name into a form on a web page, then they are asked to click a link in an email that is immediately sent to them.

In this way, the person effectively agrees twice to receive the emails. This can be a very effective safeguard against any case where a wrongful charge of spam is made.

"... an unacceptable form of email marketing ..."

Spam is an unacceptable form of email marketing. Emails are sent, usually in bulk, to hundreds or thousands of people who did not give their permission to receive them.

With spam, it is also usual that the recipient has no way to unsubscribe, and there is usually no contact information included either. There may also be an enticing, but deceptive subject line designed to get the email opened.

One of the main hallmarks of spam is that it is usually a blatant advertising message that screams "buy this product". The conversion rates of spam are generally very low, but by sending out hundreds of thousands of emails regularly, it can, sadly, be a very profitable strategy.

The emails used in spam marketing are often scraped from websites using special software. There is rarely any attempt to form a relationship with the recipients and most people find spam messages annoying, irritating and intrusive.

Email marketing through spam is, unsurprisingly, illegal in most countries, and there are often severe penalties for those caught. As email marketing strategies go, spam is not recommended for the serious marketer.

"... cold email marketing ..."

An email marketing strategy that is often overlooked is cold email marketing. While these emails are sent out to people who have not asked for them, and can, therefore, be technically classed as 'unsolicited email', this strategy, when done properly, differs from spam in a number of important ways.

Unlike spam, the object of a cold email sent out is not to make an immediate sale, but rather to start a relationship with the receiver.

In a good cold email strategy, the emails are all personalized, and rather than sending out thousands at a time, as with spam, it is more usual to send out fewer than 100 at a time, perhaps even only 10 or so.

It is also usual to incorporate a follow-up sequence to reinforce and strengthen the relationship, and because the emails are extremely focused and personalized, as well as short and straight to the point, a cold email marketing strategy can be extremely successful, and ultimately very profitable.

Cold emailing also differs from spam through having a clear means for recipients to opt out of receiving further emails.

There will also be full contact details included in any serious cold emailing effort. In short, where spam is all about being shadowy and deceitful, cold emailing is all about being honest and transparent.

The Can-Spam act of 2003 recognizes the difference, clearly distinguishing between 'spam email messages' and 'relationship email messages'.

"... a positive relationship established ..."

With a cold emailing strategy, the recipients are very carefully researched and chosen. The subject line of the initial email will usually be personalized, perhaps including the recipient's name or the name of the recipient's company.

The body of the email will usually start off by establishing some connection between the recipient and the sender, and the message will be all about the recipient, emphasizing benefits, but not trying to sell anything.

This will encourage the recipient to continue reading the email. The message will often end with a question, which gives the recipient a good reason to reply.

At that point, a positive relationship has been established. The person receiving the email doesn't feel they have had their time wasted, or that the sender is trying to pull the wool over their eyes. They will likely recognize the email for what it is; a legitimate attempt to establish a mutually beneficial relationship that is worth pursuing.

The most important thing to remember about email marketing strategies is that they should all be about the person receiving the email, and not about you or your company.

The recipient should want to receive the email and want to continue receiving further emails too. An open and fully transparent attitude should always be adopted, honoring unsubscribe requests immediately, and always listening to what the people on the list have to say.

It is in this way that an email list carefully and thoughtfully grown through cold emailing techniques can become an extremely successful and profitable tool.

It is in this way too that any company can employ the little used and little-understood benefits of cold emailing to their advantage to grow their business from strength to strength.

[1,013 words]

Themed Content - a Better Way of Digital Marketing

You are no doubt familiar with the concept of ordinary content in the form of an article. The information in the article is usually based around the main keyword or keyword phrase, and the article is commonly around 400 to 500 words in length.

The main keyword is used in the title, once in the first paragraph, and again three or four times throughout the article in order to tell the search engines what the article is about.

This works well. It provides useful information if the article is well written, and it can provide a valuable backlink to a website through a linked piece of text in the body of the article, or in a resource box at the end of the article.

The reader receives a benefit (the information), the writer receives a benefit (the writer is paid) and the person who is responsible for having the article written also receives a benefit (the backlink to the website). Everyone wins.

Article marketing has taken this form since its inception. Why, therefore, should you consider changing to themed content? And what is themed content anyway?

What Is Themed Content?

While an ordinary article can be found in the search engines for its main keyword, and may even rank well, it is still just one keyword. You can enhance that situation by including two or three secondary keywords, but the article will still typically only rank in the search engines for a mere handful of keywords.

Themed content can typically rank for a dozen or more keywords. An article that is properly themed will contain all the words and phrases that Google has already indicated as being important to the particular topic of the article.

These words and phrases will be synonyms of the main keyword, alternative meanings, closely related terms, and so on. They are the kind of words and phrases that we would expect to find in any written material on a specific subject.

For example, suppose the topic of the article is *"Fix Credit Problems."* You will find that the top 10 results in Google will all contain a majority of the following words somewhere in the text of the page: *bills, borrow, card, check, clear, companies, consumer, credit, debt, denied, erasing, financial, fix, good, help, history, information, interest, issues, late, loans, mortgage, pay, payment, personal, problems, rating, repair, repayment, report, score, services, trouble.*

This is no coincidence either. Google expects these words to be found in an article that deals with fixing credit problems, and the articles that include these words are rewarded by being ranked highly in the Google index.

Of course, the number of backlinks, the level of on-page SEO and other factors will all have an important bearing on where any article gets ranked, but if the article has all the essential theme words in place, and it is well written, then it is perfectly placed to rank very well.

The Authority Set

Google goes one step further. It has a set of "authority" results for any given keyword or keyword phrase. If an article has a majority of the necessary essential theme words that Google recognizes, then the article will be included in the authority set. If not, it gets dumped in the supplemental pages.

Try this... Do a search on Google for the phrase, *"fix credit problems"* without the quotation marks. You should see around 43,700,000 results mentioned just under the search bar (at the time of writing). That's a lot! But are there really that many search results?

OK, let's see, shall we?

If you adjust the search setting so that Google returns 100 results at a time instead of the usual 10, you can do this much faster. When you get to page 8 you should find this at the bottom of the page:

"In order to show you the most relevant results, we have omitted some entries very similar to the 792 already displayed."

In other words, Google only shows us 792 results for the phrase, *"fix credit problems,"* because those are the only results that Google actually values. This is Google's authority set of results for this keyword phrase.

Your article only has to beat these 792 top results to get ranked at number one for this particular keyword. Forget about a competition level of 43,700,000! All you have to do is concentrate on the really important 792 authority set (in this example).

Does that sound easier? Of course it does!

This is why themed content is different from ordinary content. When an article contains the theme words that Google has already shown to be important, then it will be included in the authority set. And each authority set is anywhere from around 400 results to 1,000 results. Google may state that the results for a keyword are in the millions, but now we know the reality is quite different.

When an article contains the essential theme words for a particular keyword or keyword phrase, it will be ranked in Google's authority set. The better themed the article is, the higher it will rank. When you add good backlinks to the article, it will rank very high in the Google results. This is why properly themed content is superior to ordinary content.

But there's more...

Properly themed content has such a rich mix of relevant words and phrases that it gets ranked for dozens - even hundreds - of different words and phrases, all of them highly important to the basic topic, or theme, of the article.

The ordinary article, by comparison, will rank for just one keyword, or a handful at best.

Latent Semantic Indexing

In 2003 Google purchased a technology pioneered by a company called Applied Semantics. It has become known to us today as a technology called Latent Semantic Indexing, or LSI. The technology achieves semantic text processing, which is a bit like how the human brain works.

The press release that Google distributed following its acquisition of the technology in 2003 reads in part:

"Applied Semantics' products are based on its patented CIRCA technology, which understands, organizes, and extracts knowledge from websites and information repositories in a way that mimics human thought and enables more effective information retrieval."

In other words, LSI, or theming, works like the human brain. It makes associations in a similar way. It's really a case of a robotic system copying the human brain so that humans can be served a result that they feel more comfortable with because it mimics the way they think.

Themed content gives people something they are more comfortable with, and it gives the search engines exactly what they want too. There are only winners all round with no losers.

An analysis of the top pages in Google for a given keyword will show that the results at the top use more theme words than the results found towards the end of the authority set.

If you take the trouble to analyze the results that are not found in the authority set, the ones that Google says it has omitted, you will find that they are poorly themed, if indeed they are themed at all.

This is what makes the difference between themed content and ordinary content, and it can work to make a considerable difference in your article writing efforts too. Forget about keyword density, secondary keywords and where to place them all for the best effect. Think theming instead.

The Panda update by Google that started in early 2011, has surely shown anyone who knows anything about web content that Google only wants the highest quality content in its index.

There is no higher quality web content than properly themed content, in Google's opinion.

Test any authority set for any keyword yourself, and you will see that the very best themed content is right up there at the top. The number and quality of backlinks, SEO, Page Rank, and other factors may skew the results to some degree, but not nearly as much as you might think.

[1,316 words]

Top 5 Outsourcing Benefits for the Article Marketer

Article marketers often write their own articles and don't always consider the outsourcing benefits of having professionals write for them.

This can be a mistake in many ways, often based on the false concept of cost savings and a belief that the only way to maintain a proper level of quality is to do it all yourself.

For very small businesses that use article marketing, farming out work may not always be feasible, but for larger businesses there can be enormous benefits.

Not all article marketers are particularly skilled in writing articles. They may think they are, but may not realize that by giving up some control and outsourcing at least some of their article writing work, they can enjoy the outsourcing benefits of fewer hours worked and articles that perform better.

If you are a small article marketer, you can easily tap into high-quality services that can help your business to grow. Hiring service providers in this strategic way should be considered a wise investment, and not an unnecessary expense.

You may have to spend some time finding the right professional writer for you. It may have to be a balance between what you can afford and how good the writer is, but always try to lean towards quality, if possible.

Here then are 5 of the top outsourcing benefits for the article marketer.

Hiring a Professional Writer Can Make You a Lot More Money

This is perhaps the biggest of the many outsourcing benefits to be gained. Most article marketers become so through a need to make money online and saving money by writing the articles themselves can make a lot of sense.

Writing articles is something most of us can do, and it is an inexpensive and very effective way of marketing a business.

It isn't free, however, for while you pay no money if you write articles yourself, you do spend your valuable time, and that certainly adds up.

The number hours you will work are likely to be many and arduous, and while the level of quality may be acceptable, most do-it-yourself writers don't consider the outsourcing advantages of hiring a professional writer whose expertise could catapult their marketing efforts beyond their imagination.

Yes, there is a monetary cost involved in hiring a professional writer, but the high-quality work of a well-chosen good writer will more than pay for itself in the long term.

A well-written article can drive traffic to an offer or website with considerably more efficiency than a mediocre one. And a poorly written article will most likely fail to convince even a single prospect to take action.

You Gain Instant Access to a Wealth of Writing Talent From All Over the World

The article outsourcing benefits do not confine you to just one professional writer from one country. You can take your pick from thousands of writers from anywhere around the planet.

Outsourcing to countries on a global scale is no more difficult than outsourcing locally. There is a belief in some quarters, for example, that only an American writer can write successfully for the American market. This is simply untrue.

One of the great outsourcing advantages is the simple fact that a good professional writer can write in any voice or style that is required. Even writers who are not native speaker of the language they are writing in can often deliver amazingly good results.

Hiring an SEO Writer Who Fully Understands LSI Can Mean Higher Ranked Articles in the Search Engines

Most professional article writers now understand that theming an article through latent semantic indexing (LSI) techniques produces a product that can usually easily outrank 'ordinary' articles, everything else being equal.

A lot is said and written about LSI, but most people don't really understand what it is. In a nutshell, it's a method of using a majority of the terms, words, and phrases, that would naturally occur in a well-written article on any given topic.

The search engines seek out the potential relationship between words to improve their understanding of the information presented.

LSI is actually the technology and not the writing technique, but you don't have to understand all the technicalities to make a positive difference to your marketing efforts.

Hiring a Professional Writer Will Give You Back the Time to Focus on Other Aspects of Your Business

While article marketing may be your core business, when you realize the outsourcing benefits of a professional writer you will suddenly have more time.

This can be especially welcomed as the number of hours worked by many article marketers is often considerable. You can spend this time to write even more articles, or you can use it to focus on other aspects of your business.

You could even take advantage of the situation and take a short (or long) period of time off work. Hiring a professional writer has many hidden benefits that are not always obvious at first glance.

Hiring a Professional Writer Means Having Constant Access to an Expert

This is possibly the most important of the many outsourcing benefits to be gained. An article writer who has many years of experience will not make silly spelling or grammar mistakes.

They will be fully capable of doing extensive research to gain accurate information you can depend on, and they will understand how to write engaging content that is also properly structured and optimized for the search engines.

When you hire a professional writer you will also have access to specialized services and skills. In short, their articles will not disappear under another Google Panda, or whatever names are applied to any future algorithm updates that may be imposed on us.

These are just some of the outsourcing benefits you will enjoy when you hire a professional article writer. You should never think of the costs involved as yet another way of losing money that you could of used for other things.

I should also point out that the spelling and grammar mistakes in the last paragraph were deliberate, and if you did not spot them, then you definitely need the outsourcing benefits that a good writer can bring to your business!

[1,023 words]

Contact me for your writing requirements at:

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- by the "old-fashioned" method of writing a letter to me at:

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Extremadura
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I look forward to hearing from you!

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'John Coutts', with a large, stylized flourish extending to the right.

John Coutts.