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# How and Why to Write a Bylined Article

By *Nicolle Martin*

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I know what you are going to say, “I don’t want to spend my time writing an article that doesn’t promote my company.” However, this is a great opportunity to showcase your expertise and knowledge *and* get your company out there in a very nonpromotional way.

First of all, your marketing materials are where you promote your company and your offerings. Your company website, brochures, trade show collateral and even your blog can be promotional (although I wouldn’t recommend this for every post). Bylined articles are different. They give you the opportunity to showcase you and your company as experts in your field. When writing a byline, remember that the people reading it are potential clients – you want them to reach out to you because of your expertise.

Here is the process you should follow when writing a bylined article:

## Choose a Topic

When you write a bylined article, you should find a topic that is relevant to what you offer as a company, but also something you can write about without talking about your products or services. For example, if you are the CEO of an e-discovery service provider, you can write about the top things to consider when hiring an e-discovery provider (tips articles are usually a great way to go – they are easy to write and offer good practical advice). You can also look at a hot topic or case taking place in the industry and provide insight into the issues it raises. Whatever topic you choose, you just need to make sure you know enough to write 1,200 or so words on it. Once you choose your topic, write a short abstract outlining what the article will be about.

## Choose a Publication

Now that you know what topic you want to write about, you need to consider a couple things when looking at which publication to send it to. First, make sure the publication accepts bylined articles. Second, make sure the audience of that publication will find the topic that you are presenting something its readers/subscribers will find interesting.

## Write the Article

Once the article has been accepted by a publication, you should now have a deadline and a word count. Make sure you write the article with the ultimate goal in mind: You want to showcase yourself as a thought leader in the field. You want to be a resource for the readers of your piece so when they need help with a similar topic, they will know to go to you and your company. Make sure you stay on topic based on the original pitch and don’t promote or name your company anywhere but the byline.

Before you submit the article, make sure you get a couple other sets of eyes to read and review it. Reviewers should be people you trust to give you their honest feedback. Once you have the content finalized, make sure you have it proofed for any grammatical errors.

In closing, bylined articles are a great way to get your name out in the industry as a thought leader and expert in your field. While they can be a lot of work to complete, I have seen thought leadership pieces pay off for clients time and time again. Although it’s hard to measure the exact ROI from this activity, it is clear that they do have an impact when done correctly and can lead to bringing work in the door, speaking invites and other article opportunities. Remember, you do not need to rely only on the distribution from the publication: Once the article is live, you can link to it from your website and



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through social media accounts, and you can get reprints of the article (some publishers offer this for free) for use as marketing materials.

#### ***About the Author***

Nicolle Martin helps her clients strategically plan and execute marketing and public relations activities that will help them achieve their goals and make them happy in their jobs.

Prior to joining Edge, Nicolle worked at Kroll Ontrack, where she most recently served as the director of marketing services and managed a team responsible for executing all marketing and public relations activity for both of the company's product lines. In the way-back machine, Nicolle received her Bachelor of Arts degree in English from the University of Minnesota – Duluth.

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