

Monetize Your Knowledge - Module 6

**FREE
REPORTS**



Module 6 - Free Reports

Free reports are a great tool to boost your reputation, grow your list and increase your sales. The great thing about reports is that it's content you can use for *so many different purposes* and possible to **reuse and repurpose** reports *over and over again*.

This module will show you how to put together and distribute your reports for maximum business benefit. Whether you write your own reports, use a ghostwriter or purchase PLR, the opportunities with free reports are immense.

Review:

- If you're not familiar with free reports or want to review the advantages and potential drawbacks of distributing them (there aren't any, really), refer to [Lesson 2: Delivering Your Knowledge](#).
- If you need ideas on how to get your reports created for you, review [Lesson 3: Recruiting Others to Deliver Knowledge](#).

Know Your Purpose

It's important to keep in mind why you're distributing a free report as it will shape the type of content you will share. If you're selling a service or if you want to get someone to call for a free estimate as a result of reading your report, your approach will be different. It's not enough to throw out great information and hope it sticks, you've got to have a plan.

- [Making Your Free Report Profit Plan \(below\)](#)

Checklists

- [Free Report Promotion Checklist \(below\)](#)

Templates

- [Free Report Template \(see templates folder\)](#)
- [Opt-in Page Template \(see templates folder\)](#)

Making Your Free Report Profit Plan

Free reports are great tool for online businesses and you probably already know this. Free reports help you:

- Build traffic
- Establish credibility
- Offer a free product with high-perceived value
- Increase your sales

But in order to get the desired results, you need to have a profit plan for your reports. We're talking about creating reports that are designed to convert your market to prospects and customers. It's all well and good to publish some AWESOME content, but if that content doesn't compel your reader to take action on something...all that effort can be wasted.

Step 1: Have a Conversion Plan in Mind

Let's approach this a little differently than you normally might. Instead of trying to figure out what you want to create a free report about, let's think about the end result you want first.

Do you want:

1. An opt-in to a newsletter?
2. A customer for a particular product?
3. A client for a service?
4. WOW your reader with value?

In most cases, you'll be looking at the first 3 potential conversions. Generally, you'd only use the last one when you're trying to impress and provide value to an existing customer or subscriber. And in most cases, you'll simply be focusing on only on 1 of the first 3 conversions. Don't dilute your message...stay focused on your goal.

Step 2: Shape Your Report Topic around Your Conversion Plan

Now that you know what your conversion plan is, you can start making decisions about the topic of your report.

Tips for Choosing Topics:

- **To get an opt-in:** You can choose a general topic that would be of interest to your average subscriber. Make sure the topic is highly relevant and targets the type of person who would be interested in your newsletter content and offers.

Let's look at this practically. If you're in the health market and you have a newsletter that focuses on fitness, don't make a report about the Atkins diet. It's too focused and it's actually off topic. Instead, choose something fitness-related and what is likely to have wide appeal.

Ex. "Beat the Heat Summer Exercise Tips", "Staying Fit During the Cold & Rainy Months"...etc.

They're interesting topics that will cover a wide audience, but are also specific at the same time so that they will distinguish your report from other free fitness reports.

- **To sell a product:** If you want to sell a product, you have to be more strategic in choosing your topic. Let's look at this by way of a few examples because how you'll approach this will depend on what type of product you sell.

Information Products: If you sell a scrapbooking beginners guide, for example, avoid creating a free report that covers a bunch of scrapbooking techniques. Instead choose ONE aspect of scrapbooking that will interest the reader in getting a more comprehensive guide.

Or if you sell a potty training guide, avoid creating a report that covers the entire topic...even if it is in less detail. Instead, put together a report that help parents get their toddlers interested in potty training. It's the first step of the battle and once their child is interested, they will need more help and will buy your product!

In other words, give them a glimpse only into what they need to know in order to purchase your product. Or if your topic doesn't really lend itself to a "step 1" approach, just include one specific topic and leave the rest to the paid product.

Tools: If you sell the tools to do a certain task, it's more feasible for you to give away all the information up front. For example, if you sell a faux painting kit, you can publish and give away an illustrated guide that shows all the steps of a faux painting project...using the tools you happen to sell.

Or if you sell a piece of software that helps your readers find do-follow blogs, you can give away plenty of tips for commenting on blogs, plus illustrate exactly how your software works.

Services: If you're a service provider, this can get pretty tricky. Many service providers will release reports that show the reader how to do the tasks they actually do in their service.

For example, a developer who installs and customizes WordPress themes might create a guide that shows their reader how to install and customize WordPress.

Now really, there is NO HARM in sharing this information. After all, WordPress installation isn't a secret technique. Realistically, anyone can do it, so why not show people how?

But the problem with this approach is that you're not likely targeting the right person with such a report. Your target customer is NOT someone who wants to do it themselves. It's someone who wants you to do it for them!

So a better approach might be to show the power of Wordpress. How certain plug-ins work, how easy it is to post, manage comments, etc. You want to sell them on using the tool that you install and customize. Make sense?

Take some time think about what you can offer to your prospects that will get them to take the call-to-action you're looking for.

Step 3: Include Promotions...Don't Be Shy

Once you've got your topic settled and you've put together the content required, you need to make sure you've designed your report to compel your reader to take your call-to-action. This means you can't rely on a random link here or there to do the job for you.

You've got to put it right out there!

Where to Include Promotions:

- **Beginning of the Report:** Include an introduction that says why've you created the report, how you can help further and perhaps a special offer for report readers only. Make sure the promotion is highly visible – use a bold headline and perhaps a graphic to draw the eye in.

It might be an eye-catching graphic (see example on the next page), a product image or even a picture of someone using the product, achieving the benefits of the product, etc. Here's an example from a freebie I've released on another project:

isn't worth much, unless people **CLICK** on your byline. This guide includes some handy templates to help you start getting more clicks on your bylines.

Before You Get Started...



This swipe file is a sneak peek from the [Contentrix Better Content Marketing Course](#) that takes you through 20 weeks of intensive learning and application – helping you get more **RESULTS** from your content marketing.

If you find this resource to be helpful, be sure to drop by and [get your first lesson for \\$1](#)

Before We Get to the Templates, 5 Important Tips for Bylines

- **Don't make it all about you, it's not a biography:** Yes, sometimes it's called a "bio box", but always put yourself in the mind of the reader. They don't really want to know about you, your credentials and your life. They want to know **how you can help them** instead.
- **Craft unique bylines to match your specific topic:** While it might be more work, crafting a byline that is tailored specific to the article's content will more likely produce better results. It's well worth the effort to make an on-target offer.

- **In Context, Where Appropriate:** You don't need to stop and mention your product or offer in every paragraph or anything like that, but do mention it where it is appropriate. Remind them of your special offer or where your product is especially helpful for the particular point you are writing about.
- **At the End of Your Report:** End your free report with a conclusion and approach it in a similar way to the introduction. Include a bold headline and perhaps a graphic to grab attention.

The key to making this work is: 1) you offer a lot of value in the free information; and 2) your call-to-action is really clear, relevant and compelling.

Next Steps

Now that you know how to create your conversion plan, shape your content around that and even create promotions, be sure to grab the other important components of this lesson including the free report template, opt-in template and more.

Free Report Promotion Checklist

Free reports are a great way to grow and expand your business. The great thing about them is that there is so much you can do with free reports and this checklist gives you plenty of ideas to maximize your marketing.

1. **Free gift with opt-in:** Offer the report as a gift for opting into your mailing list. A high-value report can grow a list quickly.
2. **Tell your mailing list:** The people most responsive to your great content are the people who have already shown they're interested in it.
3. **Offer it as a bonus to someone else's customers:** Offer your report to another product seller to give away as a bonus.
4. **Offer it as a bonus to your own customers:** Pump up the value of your information product with an additional report.
5. **Announce it on your blog:** Again, your readers will love it and it makes good link bait and encourages word-of-mouth.
6. **Check your stats:** Go through your older, relevant and high traffic pages and add a promo/link to your report.
7. **Visual promotion:** Add a promotional graphic for the report to your site.
8. **Swap newsletter ads:** Contact other targeted and large mailing list owners and offer to promote their free report in return for promoting you theirs.
9. **Buy newsletter ads:** If there is no swap available or you don't want to swap, buy an ad.
10. **Affiliates:** Let your affiliates brand the report with their affiliate link. Plus, be sure to share a lot of these promo tips with them too.
11. **Find New Affiliates:** Contact busy blog owners or big list owners whose audience are a perfect match for your report. Ask them if they'd like rights to give away the report and tell them they can include their affiliate link for [insert amount] commissions.
12. **Get social:** Tweet it...tell your Facebook friends. You know the drill.

13. **Signatures:** Include the report in your signature line in your emails and in networking groups.
14. **Bylines:** Create highly-targeted articles and distribute them with a link to the report in your byline.
15. **Unique Guest Posts:** Go a step further than simple article distribution, create unique blog posts and offer them to busy blog owners for publications. Make sure the content is very targeted to their readers and it's stellar content.
16. **Advertising:** Buy pay-per-click and graphical ads. Be sure to split test and track your results to ensure you're staying profitable.
17. **Free Ebook Sites:** Upload your report to free ebook sites – Try Books.Google.com, iTunes, GetFreeEbooks.com, e-Library.net.
18. **Get in print:** Contact brick-and-mortar businesses in your area and see if they'd like to give your content away in printed format.

As you can see, the reports that you create can be promoted and reused, over and over again. You've taken the time to create an awesome report...get it out there!



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