

5 Unlikely Places to Find Inspiration for Great Blog Articles ~ by Tammi Metzler

It hits you unexpectedly, like a blow to the gut.

You thought you were ready.

You silenced your phone, closed down your email, and opened a brand-new Word document or blog page.

As you stared at the strikingly white (and glaringly blank) screen, you suddenly realized...

You had no idea what to write *about* in that blog article you were so determined to check off your overflowing to-do list.

It happens to us all at one time or another.

Maybe you're new in business and are floundering to come up with something that will help you establish your expertise in a fun, unique way. Or maybe you're *not* new in business and feel like every topic under the sun has already been covered (and then some).

Rest assured, there are plenty of topics for you to write about, whether you're a newbie or veteran biz owner. (Bonus: these ideas will help you put your own voice into your articles, something that can never get old or overdone. Score!)

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Sometimes you just have to dig a little deeper to find the little gems that will not only endear you to your readers (and in the process create in them lifelong fans of not just your newsletter but your business as well) but will help you stand out from the crowd.

So, how do you come up with something fresh and new for your blog?

By using these 5 unlikely places to find inspiration for great blog articles:

Unlikely Inspiration Source #1: Your children/grandchildren/nieces/nephews/friend's neighbor's kids.

Kids say (and do) the darndest things, don't they?

Their innocence and unbridled joy at the simplest things can help bring a fresh perspective to life and business. If you have youngsters in your life, spend some time thinking about lessons you've learned from your experiences with them (or *could* learn from them) and how to tie that into an article.

For example, a few years back, when my daughter was 4, she went through this period of **NEEDING** to wear a particular pair of shoes. One day, we were running late for preschool and (gasp) one of the shoes was missing. Not normally one to pitch fits, she surprised me by completely melting down, as if not wearing *that* pair of shoes would be the end of the world. I kept looking, moving around her bedroom until finally I spotted it – tucked under her rocking chair, where she'd apparently tossed it the day before.

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As we headed happily out the door, I realized that the exasperating experience was a great article topic and ended up writing one of my most popular articles called, “[Change Your Perspective to Change Your Results](#).” It was all about how if we keep going about things the same way, we’ll keep getting the same disappointing results. Kind of like if I kept looking in the exact same spot and expecting my daughter’s missing shoe to magically appear. Not happening. But when I (literally) changed my perspective – by looking first under the rocking chair from the front and, not finding the shoe, then moving to the back of the rocking chair and looking again – I found the shoe, hidden from the front perspective by a bar running lengthwise beneath the rocking chair. Whew! Crisis averted.

In the article, I talked about how something similar happens in business. I said that if folks are feeling stuck with their marketing, whether they don’t know where to start or whether their marketing isn’t working for them, it’s time to change their perspective. By looking at things from their customer’s point of view, for instance. Or by changing their actual, physical location to get some fresh ideas.

Bottom line being that this potentially disastrous (and I do say that lightly, as there are certainly worse things than losing a pair of shoes) situation helped me to see a fresh ezine article that I might never have thought up without the help of a certain 4-year-old diva. :)

Unlikely Inspiration Source #2: Your hobbies.

Think about your hobbies, or really anything you like to do for fun. Are there any lessons that can be gleaned from them? For example, a while back my husband and I were enjoying a nice game of Guitar Hero (a video game where you have to follow along with the screen to play popular songs, in case you're not familiar :)) and I wasn’t doing very well.

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In fact, if it had been a real “gig” I would have certainly stunk up the joint! (Thank goodness I don’t have to rely on my musical talents to pay the bills, or we’d certainly starve. :)) At any rate, I realized that I was trying too hard to force myself into hitting the exact right button at the exact right time.

And I found that by trying too hard, I missed more notes than when I just relaxed and let my fingers “feel” the music.

I also realized that it's often the same in business. That the harder you try to force clients to buy your stuff, the more likely it is that they'll stay away. There's a sense of desperation that comes through, loud and clear, and sends up great big red flags warning folks to stay away.

Drawing from this inspiration, I wrote an article titled "What Guitar Hero Taught Me About Getting Clients" and received lots of great feedback and back-and-forth conversation with my community. Without trying hardly at all. *grin*

Unlikely Inspiration Source #3: Your mistakes.

Making mistakes *stinks*. If you're like most human beings, you hate making mistakes. And most of us hate *admitting* our mistakes even more. But here's the thing: mistakes make us human. Mistakes make us likeable. Believe it or not, mistakes can make shoot our sales through the roof.

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Because here's the thing: when we see someone we think is far more smart/experienced/popular/fill-in-your-own-adjective than we are accomplishing something great, we think, "well, gee, good for so-and-so, but he's much more smart/experienced/popular/fill-in-your-own-adjective than I am, so no wonder he got it done!" And they think there's no way **THEY** could ever reach the same goals. (Which can be a real sales killer when you're trying to sell products or services that help people achieve certain goals.)

But when we see that our "heros" are really just like us, out there making mistakes and just living life, then we start to think those goals are much more doable.

Take Oprah, for example. She struggled with her weight – very publicly, I might add – for years. But because she was so open and honest, we didn't fault her for it. Rather, we (at least, most of us) loved her all the more for her honesty. And continued to follow her advice and recommendations, even though she wasn't perfect. (Or maybe *because* she wasn't perfect.)

All of us can make our flubs work for us as well.

Especially if we learn from them, and can share a reasonable solution to help others avoid – or get past – those same mistakes that you can bet they're making too.

Case in point: I was talking to a fellow marketer recently who does a lot of things right in her business, and is doing very well for herself. She admitted to me that a recent product launch hadn't done very well. In fact, it had flopped, big time.

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And as frustrating (and embarrassing) as that can be for someone who is a so-called marketing expert, she set out to figure out what went wrong and planned to share her experience with her community, along with her suggestions on what NOT to do so folks could avoid her launch's fate. Now THAT is the mark of a true expert: someone who doesn't always get things right but who is willing to learn from the mistakes that we ALL make and share them willingly with those who want to learn and grow right alongside us.

Unlikely Inspiration Source #4: Your local coffee shop and/or walking trail.

Sometimes the simple act of changing your point of view, even by simply going to your backyard or the local coffee shop, can be enough to get you out of your writing slump.

Often, when my daughter was a baby, I would strap her into her stroller and take brisk walks around the neighborhood when I was facing the dreaded writer's block. The fresh air and pumping blood was often just the trick I needed to spark a rush of fresh ideas.

Just be sure to keep an open mind for article ideas (and a pen handy to jot them down), because you might be surprised at how many come flooding in. :)

Unlikely Inspiration Source #5: Your bathtub.

Or other places that make you feel relaxed. Doing things that soothe your body, mind, and/or soul, such as taking a bath, getting a massage, listening to music, etc., tends to encourage creativity. It goes back to my point mentioned above on Guitar Hero and

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trying too hard; sometimes all it takes to complete a difficult task (like coming up with an awesome article idea) is to actually step *away* from the task at hand and let your subconscious mind take over.

Trust me, your brain will still be hard at work coming up with a solution, even as you sip mojitos or relax in a tub full of bubbles.

So hand off the task of thinking up great topics to your subconscious and then forget about it.

And give yourself permission to take it easy for a bit. Before you know it, you'll have the perfect article in mind, just waiting to be written.

Regardless of whether you're sitting down to write your very first ezine article or your 100th, the ideas in this article can help you find inspiration in some of the most unlikely of places.

Want 25 MORE ways to find fresh article topics, along with 17 fill-in-the-blanks article templates, a fill-in-the-blanks template for writing a great article, 13 "types" of articles to keep your articles fresh, and a 21-point checklist of what to watch for before you publish your blog? Get instant access to our [60-Minute Article Template](#) to download all the goodies you need to write awesome articles that help connect you with readers.

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Tammi Metzler, founder of The Write Associate, is a self-professed "word geek." Her greatest joy is in playing with words all day to find just the right combination to get folks all fired up. In the daytime hours, this means writing online marketing copy that grabs the attention and interest of readers so that they "get" the awesomeness of the product/service in question and think "I gotta get me some of that!" After hours this often means finding just the right words to get the response she's looking for from her husband and/or 7-year-old daughter (grin). She offers tons of resources about creating compelling marketing copy that excites & engages your ideal clients on her blog at www.WriteAssociate.com.