

# Look How Much Money I Made from Writing!

Shôn Ellerton, January 7, 2020

There's a growing number of articles from writers who love to boast how much they are making from writing and then proffer their advice on how to do it.



## Let me say this!

I write because I like writing.

I do not write for money.

I do not have my content curated on platforms designed to make money for writers.

My articles are *never* behind a paywalled site.

Here's a message to those who boast about how much they make.

And yes, this is a bit of a rant.

## A message to those who write for money

Good authors are like movie stars, only a few will make decent money out of it. Most of us have day-to-day jobs, some of which, aspire to become influential and well-known writers. Most of us will never achieve that. If you have achieved that status and you have a great following of readers, I am really, seriously happy for you. Honest. There's a lot of hard work in it.

For those of you who boast about how you're getting six-figure annual payouts or \$25,000 a month from writing, for fuck's sake, please stop it. Go away. I'm

not interested. If you *do* make lots of money, have a lot of eager followers and engage with your readers, but maintain some degree of humbleness on your reading stats and figures, good for you. Modesty is king.

Here's another thing which pisses me off. If you're not going to answer questions from other readers about your success and instead, choose to ignore them, shame on you. Is it because you're too busy writing your next article? Maybe we're not important enough.

Frankly, I don't know why *anyone* would boast how much they make under any circumstance. You don't walk up to your colleague or a friend and say, 'Hey, you can make six-figures like me just by doing ....' Blah...blah...blah... It's bloody condescending. It's like being spruiked by real estate evangelists and stock market gurus that you can earn an easy million by doing something as simple as this.

## Stop giving advice like this... seriously, we know

### 1. Be original

Whoop-dee-do. Do not all writers strive to come up with something original? Actually, I take that back. This piece of advice is bullshit and irrelevant. If you are one of many viral bloggers who post the same type of shit every day, is that being original?

I'm not suggesting you *have* to be original, but don't proffer your advice on that being original is one of the keys to becoming a successful writer.

### 2. Answer readers' questions in the comments section

I love this one! Did I not mention this very thing above?

So many of you viral bloggers out there tend to become self-sufficiently important enough not to have the courtesy to do a reach-around (whoops! I was thinking of [Full Metal Jacket](#)), *courtesy* to answer readers' questions in the comments section.

You don't have to answer to the trolls.

You don't have to answer to those who make a nice comment, although it would be nice if you acknowledged it. What? Have you become so self-

important that you don't want to use one of your precious 'likes'? And if it's a Medium article, please use the full 50 claps. Come on!

You don't really have to answer to anything, but, hey, if someone is genuinely asking for advice, don't just ignore it.

Please don't offer this advice if you never do the same thing yourselves!

### **3. Engage with your readers**

I assume that what you mean is not to be boring.

Don't give me this, 'oh, you know, well you have to think about being in the mindframe of your reader and try to fit in his or her world, align yourself with their thoughts, create that writer/reader fusion in which the Universe is well-positioned to expand into the great canvass of life and....' (*I better drink a cold glass of water*)

### **4. Don't review your work / Review your work**

Confused? Yes, that's right. Some of you suggest we should never look back and review our work, although some of you suggest otherwise.

So, which is it then?

Trust me, if *I* don't review my work, the article will, undoubtedly become riddled with mistakes and the content will, invariably, need some realignment. I'm sure there'll be several grammatical mistakes in the final product should a pedant read this, but I'm not terribly bothered about it. Some of you who profess we should just write without reviewing are blessed in making very few mistakes on the first pass but don't assume everyone else is like that.

As for those of you who claim that reviewing is very important, fine, great! I do a little myself, but not overly so. After all, I'm not writing a journal or a book.

### **5. Curate your work (i.e. put behind a paywall) to get better readers**

*Curate*, in this context, means having your writings looked over by a reviewer and publisher and then having your article stuffed behind a paywall so the ordinary 'Joe' without a subscription can't access your article.

I don't have a problem if you choose to curate and have your articles behind a paywall. This is sometimes the only option of getting paid for your work if

that's your goal. If writing is what you do as a professional living and you need a wage. That's fine. Professional writers don't disclose how much they're making.

However, don't say to me that you're going to get a better class of readers if your work is behind a paywall. That's horseshit! To suggest that a reader can offer higher quality engagement, whether it be through commenting or through online discussions, simply because of having a subscription in place is an asinine comment if there ever was one.

## **6. Keep your articles short and concise**

Well, that's kind of the way Twitter works. Why do I have to keep my articles short and pithy? Why assume that all your readers have the attention span of a gnat?

Look, I've read many successful articles that require a good twenty minutes to read. If they're not boring (or should I say 'engaging'), it's very likely I'm going to read to the end of it.

It does amaze me how extremely short Twitter-sized articles with virtually nothing to say, certainly nothing original, can generate a huge amount of comments and readers. This, unfortunately, is a sad fact of social media these days.

You know? Come to think of it. Perhaps you're right on this one!

## **7. Don't be too provocative**

Really? So, if the recent speech given out by [Ricky Gervais](#) at the Golden Globes 2020 wasn't provocative, would it have had the same viewing numbers? Would UK TV presenter, [Piers Morgan](#), be as popular (or unpopular depending on who you are) as he is if he didn't provoke just about anything on two legs?

The reality is that many of us like to read about provocation and controversy. I'm not suggesting that it's healthy, but it can certainly boost writers' revenues, or if one is unfortunate, lose loyal readers.

Preaching that writing articles that are too provocative have no bearing on how successful your fanbase and revenue-making will be. I, personally, don't give a rat's ass if someone likes my articles or not. If I attempt to cross any boundaries

I shouldn't cross or single out any individual, I make every effort to arm myself with the facts.

## **8. Write something positive and comforting**

Ahhh! How sweet! Yep, it works for many I guess, but ..., hold on, let's watch that murder crime drama on Netflix! That's hardly positive or comforting. Certainly, popular though.

Yeah, ok. Some of you appease to those in dire straits; in need of some comfort much like that all-too funny scene in the British 1990s TV series, [\*I'm Alan Partridge\*](#), when Alan Partridge loses his BBC contract, sits depressed in the car and his God-fearing secretary says to him that if he needs someone to talk to, at which Alan interrupts and accuses her of always trying to get people to join her Baptist church when they're 'on the down'.

To be nice to you, I think it's great that you can offer comfort to your readers, but to *boast* about how much you're making because you're posting stuff like this seems somewhat meaningless. It's kind of like boasting about giving to charity. But wait, maybe that's not a bad idea. Writing for charity!

## **Some of the advice you give isn't half bad....**

Maybe I better cool off a bit, huh?

Some of the advice you give on how to master the art of becoming a high revenue-earning writer isn't half bad, although, it's probably quite obvious to many of us.

### **1. Write frequently**

Absolutely agree. Some of you write daily and that is an activity which is worthy of benefit; not only to you as a writer, but to your readers who can enjoy more of what you write.

### **2. Choose a great headline**

That's a tough one, and if you're good at headlines, you're almost worth your weight in gold in the media industry. I struggle with headlines, puns or being able to remember a joke I once heard. Without a decent headline, your article is useless. Absolutely.

### **3. Have a picture in the title**

For many, this is truly hard. I dabble with mine using images on Powerpoint slides and to then export them to images. It's not easy to get them right, particularly with respect to the correct aspect ratio and how they're going to fit in the title.

Some of you suggest using royalty-free images from websites like [Unsplash](#), which offer high-quality images you can use for free. I think that's a great idea and it's very easy. One of you offered advise in choosing the ones towards the end giving a better chance of being not being used by someone else.

Being a keen photographer, I check out my collection beforehand, but not all of us are photographers and it's unlikely that you're going to have an arsenal of pictures for every occasion you need one.

### **4. Keep an eye out for spelling and grammatical mistakes**

It looks very amaturish wen you're article is fool of spelling and gramatical mistake's. (*I'm having fun here!*)

## **To cap it all off**

Writers write for different reasons.

For me, writing is about alleviating stress and getting things off your shoulders. I like to share my experiences and opinions. Some are well-received, some not so well-received, and many, not received at all. My reader base is not large, and I have no ambitions on having one.

Many of us wonder why write at all if you don't profit out of it or have the aim of establishing a large base of readers. The same question is now asked to those who write in their daily diaries, an activity I do by hand at home. What's the point if no one is going to read it? Some use social media as a, sort of, surrogate diary, and many out there want as many of us as possible to read about their daily lives. Each to their own, I guess.

You may have noticed, by now, that I have 'toned down' the atmosphere in this article towards the end. That is the intention.

Am I salty for not having a huge reader base? No.

Am I surprised that many articles which, undeniably, have far greater substance than those written by popular authors never get read? No.

Do I get upset when no one reads my articles? No.

Do I get pleasure from writing new material? You bet!

It's also nice to see aspiring authors create their own pieces of work. I also like to read from those writers who courageously step out of the accepted narrative and provoke us a little. To challenge us, if you will.

There's nothing wrong with writing challenging and opinionated articles. I've mentioned this very thing before in a related article I wrote some time back. If I want to read near-perfect objective material, there are plenty of journals to read out there.

Now let's get on with some more writing, for the *love of it!*