

## Call Transcript from Jeff's interview with Charlie Page, owner of [directoryofezines.com](http://directoryofezines.com) on the subject of eZine Advertising

**Jeff Mulligan:** My name is Jeff Mulligan and I own CBmall in which most of you on this call found about it. With me today, I have Charlie Page. Charlie owns a website called [directoryofezines.com](http://directoryofezines.com) and Charlie is one of the internet's experts on eZine advertising. Charlie's been into marketing and sales for over 25 years, full time on the internet for, I guess, three years probably?

**Charlie Page:** Almost five now.

**Jeff:** Almost five? Ok, great. And Charlie has done a lot of copywriting, he's run hundreds and hundreds of eZine campaigns both for his own products and for others. So, I think we're really lucky tonight to have one of the real experts on eZine advertising. And I wanted to sponsor this call and welcome you folks on it to learn more about how to do eZine advertising.

One of the things that I've learned from answering a lot of emails and phone calls from folks who are CBmall owners is that most people don't understand eZine advertising. There are a lot of misconceptions out there; that it is expensive, that it is hard to do, that it is very risky. And so, I thought it would be a great thing to have Charlie on, who's one of the real experts, to describe to us how to run an eZine ad campaign; what's involved, what the costs are, what are some of the best practices and ways to do it. So with that said, Charlie, let me start the grilling.

Why don't we start with just a quick overview; exactly what is eZine advertising? By the way, people say "eZine" or "ezyne". I usually say eZine because it's sort of short for electronic magazine. So that's the way I say it. I know there are some different pronunciations out there.

Charlie, give us a sort of a 10,000-foot overview of eZine advertising, if you would.

**Charlie:** I pronounce it "eZine" as well because it comes from "electronic magazine" but either pronunciation is fine. eZine is an electronic newsletter. It's a topic-specific email that is sent to a list of people who asked for it. That list of people is called subscribers. They generally subscribe by visiting a particular website and say "Oh yeah, I wanna learn more about dog grooming or about parasailing or about making money on the internet, so I'm gonna ask for more information." And that information is provided in a form of an eZine.

eZines are published on different schedules: some are daily, there are some that are weekly, bi-weekly, monthly, and then, there are some that are occasional when the publisher has something to say.

Generally, an eZine is delivered by email, although a lot of eZines are being published on blogs now. And a blog is a natural compliment to an eZine; an email eZine.

And an eZine will usually contain an informative article that tells a reader how to do something. And then it will also contain advertising.

The beauty of eZines and the beauty of eZine advertising is it's the most targeted form of advertising on the internet; even more targeted than pay-per-click or Google AdWords. Because if someone is reading an eZine about golf, you can be reasonably assured that they going to be interested in golf products; they're going to buy golf balls, golf clubs, and lessons in videos and DVDs. So, the targeting is what makes eZine advertising very profitable and very easy to accomplish.

And that's a kind of an overview when you place your ad in an eZine. It's specific to a topic like working at home or making money on the internet or those type of things or whatever the topic is. Then the readers will pay more attention to that ad than if you just blast out an ad because they're already interested in the content of the eZine.

And they have asked for it. This is in no way, shape or form any kind of SPAM. And they have asked for the information. In many cases today, they've verified that they've opted-in. So, that's a kind of an overview.

**Jeff:** Thanks. Tell me, what kinds of ads are available when somebody wants to advertise in an eZine?

**Charlie:** Well, there are essentially three types of ads: The **solo ad**, which a lot of people had heard about, and then there is the **sponsor ad**, and then there's the **classified ad**.

The classified ad is the least expensive and the smallest ad of the three types of eZine ads. It's just like the classified ad that runs in your newspaper. If you need to sell that 1985 Dodge Dart that's been collecting dust in your driveway, you call your newspaper and put out a three-line classified in there: Dodge Dart, please come and drag it off my driveway and your phone number.

In a similar way, you place a 3 or 5-line classified ad in an eZine that's specific to the topic that you're interested in. These ads are generally very cheap and they usually run in a block; they'll have one classified ad on top of another. You'll see most eZines carry 5 to 7 classified ads.

Then there is the sponsor ad. Almost everybody had seen one of these, whether they knew to call it a sponsor ad or not. That's the ad that is at the very top of the eZine. So when the email is opened, the first thing they'll see is the sponsor ad.

Many publishers will put a little line above the ad that is saying "please support our sponsor" or "our eZine is sponsored by." And that's generally an ad that's about 10-15 lines long so you get more room. It sells for a bit more than the classified ad.

And then there is the solo ad; that's a kind of a "king" of eZine advertising. The solo ad goes out alone, hence the name: solo. It's an email that contains only your information and it goes out to everyone on the subscription list of that particular eZine. As you could imagine, it costs a little bit more because the ad stands alone. Only your information is displayed; the subject line is about you, the complete message is about you, and generally, they allow 500-700 words. So then you could put a lot of content into a solo ad.

**Jeff:** Give us a ballpark idea if you can on how much these different ads can cost.

**Charlie:** Sure. I'll start with the solo ad because some say it's the most effective and because it's one most people seemed to be interested in. So more generally, it's the most expensive of any other type.

Before I got on the call, I did some looking around the directory of eZines because I wanted to get some very specific examples. I found three eZines I want to tell you about: One goes out to 73,000 people and the solo ad in that eZine is fifty dollars.

**Jeff:** 73,000 people?

**Charlie:** 73,000, right.

**Jeff:** What market is that?

**Charlie:** This is home business.

**Jeff:** Ok. All right.

**Charlie:** The second one is internet marketing. It has 157,000 subscribers and the solo ad is forty dollars. The third one is healthcare; it's health and fitness. It goes out to 93,000 subscribers and the solo ad is \$46. Now to be perfectly fair, I'm giving you some modest examples. There are some publishers who say "The solo ads in my eZine worth a lot of money so I'm gonna charge" and they don't know how many of them. But there are a lot of publishers who understand that they make money by selling advertising and they price their ads reasonably. With that said, I've seen solo ads range from twenty bucks on the low end up to 3,000 – 4,000 dollars on the high end. It all has to do with how tight is the market. Left-handed golfers living in South Carolina is a very specific market and the publisher would probably charge you more than something where it's a business opportunity or pet care type eZine that goes out globally. So, they can have a wide range of price but they are reasonably priced.

The sponsor ad would generally sell for half of what the solo ad would sell for. That's a general rule of thumb. And the classified ad would generally sell for half of what the sponsor ad sells for. Again, a general rule of thumb is each publisher set their own prices; there's not a tightly defined standard in the eZine business. But those are generally true across the board: half price of solo for sponsor ad, half price of sponsor ad for classified.

**Jeff:** I can remember from my ad agency days that a magazine that can go to 73,000 people you could pay 5,000 – 10,000 dollars for an ad to reach them.

**Charlie:** Oh easily. There is no question about it. The way to buy eZine advertising is to look at what your cost is per thousand. You want the lowest cost per thousand that you can get. My rule is, and I've done a lot of eZine advertising over the years, I won't pay more than four dollars per thousand for any type of ad. Even if the publishers would endorse me and say "Hey, Charlie's the greatest guy in the world." I'm not going to pay more than four bucks per thousand because there's just too much out there that you can buy for less than that. So that's a premium price for me.

Now these examples I gave you are more in the 35 – 65 cent range of cost per thousand. I liked to look at it on a cost per thousand basis. It doesn't take long to divide the price of an ad by the number of thousands of subscribers and that helps me compare apples to apples.

**Jeff:** So, in the example of 73,000 subscribers for fifty dollars, you would actually divide 50 by 73?

**Charlie:** That's right. You'll come out with 68 cents. That means it's costing you 68 cents to reach a thousand people with your message.

**Jeff:** That's a great piece of information because that helps people right off the bat; knowing that they're getting a fair shake in looking for advertising.

**Charlie:** That's right. And bear in mind, that's for a solo ad. That's not for classified. So it's possible certainly and pretty easy if it's good quality; if the readership is real. It is not inflated numbers. And you're not spamming anybody and you're reaching a targeted audience. And you know as well as I, targeting is the name of the game.

I would rather have a hundred people who are interested in my products see my ad than 10,000 people who could care less if I draw my next breath. Yeah, that's the name of the game: targeting.

**Jeff:** Yeah, that brings up an interesting point because I get emails and questions from people who say "hey, I just found a safe list where I can send emails out to a million people every day." Or they'll see these advertising offers, so-called guaranteed hits, where I'm guaranteed that a hundred thousand people will visit my website for \$29.

**Charlie:** Right. I've done that too; to test it and find out. The truth is the people who make money on safe list are the people who own the safe list. Because every time you register for a safe list, they get to send you their email. And you can't refuse to take it if you're going to stay registered.

We bought not long ago 200,000 guaranteed hits from a very respectable company. We've paid good money for them. Yet, we've got no sales.

**Jeff:** None?

**Charlie:** Zero. And the thing is I've owned [directoryofezines.com](http://directoryofezines.com) for awhile and I'm a copywriter so I kind of know how to write a copy. And we have around 6-8% of the people who visit the site make their first purchase on their first visit. We know this statistically that 200,000 people came, yet we have no sale.

The hits were on our logs, there is no question. They were hits but we made no money on it. I've done the same thing with safe lists, free classifieds, blasters and things like that. If your time is worth anything, it just doesn't pay to do that. Now if you're giving away something totally free and maybe placing a free classified or doing something like Trafficswarm can work. It can work if it's not under a very tight, specific criterion. Even then, it's not profitable.

**Jeff:** If you value your time at all, then you got to do targeted advertising.

**Charlie:** Yes.

**Jeff:** That's great. That's real understandable. That's a good lesson for all of us that we should always think about the target. Who's seeing the ad? What kinds of things they'll be interested in. That's the thing I love about eZine advertising you know what they're interested in. It's what the writers are writing about.

**Charlie:** That's right. You know before you spend your money that these people already have an interest. They've expressed an interest because they've taken action. They have said "Ok, send me an email then if I wanna quit, I'll click a link." They've asked for it. They've asked for the information. So when I send to them, they're going to pay attention.

**Jeff:** Let me ask you this. The three different kinds of ads: the solo ad, the sponsor ad, the classified. Which works the best?

**Charlie:** Well, here's my answer. They all work the best when they work in combination. And this is one of the little secrets of eZine advertising that I never hear anybody talking about. Now I wrote about it in a little report called "How to do eZine Advertising." But I never heard anybody talked about this. I had a lot of clients do it because I did it for them. But here is the rhythm I use when I advertise; I'll send one solo ad then after that I'm placing a top sponsor ad in next 2 or 3 issues. And then I'm placing a classified ad in the next 5 to 7 issues. And then I'm going to start that rhythm again with another solo ad for a different offer.

Because what happens is this; repetition is the mother of learning. Very few of us learn anything the first time we hear it or take action on anything the first time we think about it. That's why a wildly successful website has a 5% conversion rate. Most people would kill for just 5% conversion where 5% of their first time visitors make a purchase on the first minute. The reason is it takes time for people to warm-up to us, to trust us, to understand the message. They need it to percolate into their minds a little bit. So, I want to be in that eZine every time they read it, as long as my ads are profitable. Of course, I'm always using an ad tracker and I'm always looking at the tracker and saying "Ok, did I make money?"

So, the answer is all three. I think the answer you might have been looking for was solo ad. And sure, solo ad is more effective than any other type of ad because your offer stands alone.

**Jeff:** Interesting. It's interesting about the rhythm too.

**Charlie:** It really works. It really does. It's just common sense if you think about it. People very rarely buy the first thing they'll see or buy the first time they think about buying something. You got to remind them to come back to your site. The purchasing on your site is what makes the sale but your ad is what drives these people to your site so that you can make the sale.

**Jeff:** Let's say I run a solo ad to an eZine that is in my market place. And let's say they have, just to make the numbers easy, just a hundred thousand subscribers. Is there an average and what kind of response that I could expect from sending a solo ad to a hundred thousand subscribers?

**Charlie:** Yes and no. I don't want to sound that I'm sitting on a fence but if it's a poorly written ad then there's no telling what to expect. If it's a well written ad, it's not unreasonable to expect between 5 and 10 percent of the people who see the ad to click on it. Now that's a real number. A lot of people would say "Oh, yeah 35% of the people who saw my ad click on it and look at all the hits I've got." I think some of this people are just truth-challenged; they're just not telling the truth.

I've seen a lot of solo ads run over the years and what I've seen is that when people get between 5 and 10 percent response on a regular basis for their ad, they're very happy people.

**Jeff:** To be clear, that's 5 to 10 percent who are clicking on the ad, that's not 5 to 10 percent buying something.

**Charlie:** No. That's the average 5 to 10 percent of the readership. So if you go to a hundred thousand people and you've got a well-fashioned solo ad, it's not usual to get 5,000 clicks. Now what your website does as far as converting visitors into sales is a whole different matter; that the ad can't control. This is something in the eZine advertising world we see that is a kind of fallacy. Somebody will say, "You know I spent \$75 and my ad went out to 50,000 people and I made a sale." Then I'll ask him how many people clicked over. "Well, we got 400 clicks." The website made one sale out of 400 people. It's not that the ad did not do its job; it can only drive the traffic.

**Jeff:** Let's say we got the average website which converts half a percent, maybe good ones convert a percent, and maybe really good ones in a targeted niche may go higher. Even at half a percent, what you're telling me is at 5,000 clicks I could potentially make 25 sales.

**Charlie:** That's correct.

**Jeff:** And even if in my product, I get ten dollars profit from each. I get 250 dollars in profit. Now, in the eZine like you told me before, I could run an ad to 250,000 people for forty dollars.

**Charlie:** That's right.

**Jeff:** Wow! That's pretty profitable.

**Charlie:** It is very profitable. Especially, when you combine consistent advertising practices with good copywriting targeted to a very targeted mailing list which an eZine

provides. You got the formula for succeeding online. This is how people do it. I often said the basis of all success online is eZine advertising.

People would say, "Oh, you know it's just because you own the directoryofezines.com, you just want to sell memberships." But if you think about it for a minute, you got people out there who have big mailing lists. And the reason why they built those mailing lists because mailing to those lists is profitable.

Now it might not be called an eZine but it has the same principle. It's sending an email to make your case to a group of people who has expressed a particular interest.

**Jeff:** Let's make an analogy from print for a moment. There are so many magazines out there; you walk into Barnes & Noble or one of those places and there are racks and racks. You can see magazines for antiques gun collectors, doll collectors, power boats, and all kinds of things. The fact is, especially on a niche publication such as that, people read the ads as much as the material because they want to find out information about the products they're interested in.

**Charlie:** That's right. They do. They're interested in that topic and they want to learn more. And for them, the ad is just part of the content. I know just a very few people who would say, "I'll never look at the ad, just the article." Or a solo ad comes in and they just automatically trash it. I guess there are some people who are like that. Over the years I've dealt with a lot of people who read eZines and have done survey after survey about the behavior of these people. How do they read eZines? Do they scan it first? Should it be a short eZine with a link so that they could put the entire content on the eZine itself? And what I found is people read them; people read them from top to bottom.

**Jeff:** Are there certain types of ads that would work better for certain types of offers?

**Charlie:** There are certain types of ad writing that worked well for certain types of offers, but I wouldn't say that a solo, a sponsor or classified would work better for a certain type of offer.

I can't imagine a product that I haven't sold. I've sold fuel additives, dog shampoo, business opportunities, cars, and things like that for clients over the years. I'm not really seeing a pattern. Certainly solo ads are more effective and then the sponsor ads and the classified ads. But as we spoke about a few minutes ago when they're used in tandem with each other, when they're used in combination with each other, you'll get more synergy; you get a much more powerful effect because you're always in front of the person's eye. You're building credibility as time goes by. I don't know a particular type of product that a specific ad works for.

**Jeff:** I'm going to make this a challenge for you. I have a budget of fifty dollars and I'm just starting out. And I want to keep my expenses real low, a lot of folks find themselves in that circumstance. Would you say that I'm better off running a \$50 solo ad? Or 2 \$25 sponsor ads? Or 4 classified ads?

**Charlie:** A very good question. I would go for the two sponsor ads for these reasons. Certainly, solos are more effective and studies already proved that. But if you're going to take one shot and that's it, what if you run that ad and some national tragedy happens, what if a tsunami comes through, what if you run into July 4 weekend or something like

that. Where for one reason or another, not everyone is seeing it then you have only one chance. I'm a big believer in measuring results and making decisions based upon those results. So if you have two top sponsors ad, you can run the first time and see what happens. And then based upon that, you can either run the same ad or you can strengthen the ad or change the ad somehow and then run your second ad.

So if it was my fifty dollars, hey I've been there, I would say I'd split it up.

**Jeff:** Interesting.

**Charlie:** I'd run it in the same eZine even though you don't have to. I wouldn't run two top sponsor ads in two different eZines because I believe in the power of repetition. I've just seen over the years too many times where it takes people three, four, five repetitions to warm-up to an idea. Certainly a one shot is probably the biggest mistake I see in eZine advertising. People would say, "Well, I bought a solo ad for \$75 and didn't make any sales so I guess using eZine advertising isn't for me, doesn't work for my product." That type of thing.

It's just too soon to tell. I mean the first time I got behind the steering wheel of my car I almost wipe out a very nice oak tree but now I'm a pretty good driver. It just takes time.

**Jeff:** Interesting. That's great. That's great information. Can you give us some hints for writing an ad? Although, I'm sure there are literally books and college courses on writing ads so we can't pretend to do that but maybe in a few highlights just to get people thinking in the right directions.

**Charlie:** Sure, I'll be glad to. If you're going to write a solo ad then I suggest you keep it under 500 words. Although some publishers would let you go as long as you want to. I think there's a point where people won't read email; a long, long, long email. If you are going to write articles, you should keep it under 500 words because I think 1,500-word articles don't get read quite as much. I also use bulleted lists.

The formula I follow is at the first paragraph or the first two paragraphs I outline the problem. And then I'll reveal the solution during the next paragraphs and make a bulleted list of why the solution may apply to them.

After that, the next paragraphs would be a call for action. With it, there's another bulleted list summarizing the benefits. And the last one would be another call for action. When I say call for action, it means click here, call this phone number, send an email, which by the way when it comes to ad writing, I always recommend to people to include an email address and a website in their ad if they can. It is because some people are more comfortable with sending an email.

It is also because people who want to get more information don't reply to automatic email since they know it's only an auto-responder. And they won't visit the website because they think that they're being tracked.

It's a funny phenomenon but I've seen it to be true in almost every case when you add an email address to a website, you'll get better response. You'll even get better response when you add a phone number to the website.

So that's how I write a solo ad. You should at least call for action three times when they can click a link or make this phone call.

With the sponsor ad, it's all about the headline, the bulleted list, and the call for action. You want to talk about benefit, benefit, and benefit. It doesn't matter what it does, it matters what it does for me.

When it comes to describing products, we need to tell people what the product does for them because that's all they care about. Why not tell them?

When it comes to classifieds, it's all about the headline. I put my headlines in all uppercase. I also put one or two asterisks in front of the first word so that it stands out from the others.

**Jeff:** Ah. a good hint

**Charlie:** When it comes to writing classified ads, sentence fragments are ok. You don't have to write whole sentences. Some people would say, "Click here for more information and get the details today." That's just too many words. Click now. You don't even have to say, "Click here now."

In a classified ad, it's all about brevity so you want to have your headline scream out the main benefit and in the end you want to support that benefit with one or two short sentences. And then, call for action.

One little trick about classified ads which is interesting and I've seen this work almost every time is to offer two URLs that goes to the same place but they're different URLs like [directoryofezines.com](http://directoryofezines.com) or [directoryofezines.com/jeff](http://directoryofezines.com/jeff) because now you make a choice between which link do they click, not between do they click or not.

**Jeff:** Interesting

**Charlie:** And that works well.

**Jeff:** You know you brought up a good point and we're halfway through the call so let me just mention it. People are interested in this kind of information; I know you have a great newsletter that has a lot of these tips in it. And we're trying to setup a page where you can get this newsletter and take a look at it if you're interested in eZine advertising. Then this is definitely a resource that can help you. You can sign-up for this newsletter and it doesn't cost you anything. It's at [directoryofezines.com/jeff](http://directoryofezines.com/jeff) and that's a special page. It's only available for folks hearing this call.

Go to that page and at the very least, sign up for the newsletter because you'll get more information in detail. It's because we don't have time to cover everything.

Let me ask you another question. Everyone's talking about spam filters: Will my email or ad get through? What's your experience on that?

**Charlie:** Spam filters are a real challenge. It would be foolishness to say that it would be no problem. But as a matter of fact, there are many technologies that will help you

overcome that problem. I use a service called “e-filtrate.” The service is fast and easy to use, I checked that.

**Jeff:** Let me clarify for people who are interested in that. The URL is <http://www.efiltrate.com>. All of my CBmail newsletters and emails that go out run through “e-filtrate.” What it does is it runs emails through filters and helps you find any words that you should change. It gives scores on the likelihood that your email might get filtered. It’s a good thing. Anyone who sends out a lot of emails might want to subscribe to something like that.

**Charlie:** In addition to that, there are a number of things that you can do to make that your message gets through. Almost any reputable email broadcasting service today has a way to check your message against the spam assassin database, the largest one of its kind. So this spam filter checkers are very effective.

Still, my best advice is to write better. I don’t mean to write like a professor at Harvard but don’t use hype, don’t use three exclamation points. Don’t claim that they are going to make \$50,000 in the three minutes.

If you make the sent information compelling yet not bordering on hype, your message will get through. eZine publishers had trouble with this for a little while because they weren’t telling their advertisers to tone down their language a little bit.

I personally don’t like using the little things like: if you’re putting money in the message, you write “m\*ney” instead of an “o.” Those type things only makes it hard to read and I think it’s unnecessary.

**Jeff:** You know I was guilty of doing that. And now, I’m removing that whenever I find it in my newsletters. I get feedback that say that spam filters are scanning for “fr\*ee” now. It doesn’t take a genius to figure out a bunch of those and put them in you filter too.

**Charlie:** That’s the thing. Why waste your time on that when you can make your case and stay away from the obvious stuff. Like you don’t write full lines all in caps; that’s considered shouting. You may use a service that checks your email messages and sends a report that tells you how it’s going to fare.

After I talked to several publishers over some time now, it seems that there is no problem with deliverability now compared to back in 2004. Today, deliverability is much better. We also learned about white listing. Publishers take extra care now to remind their subscribers to add their names to the address book.

Obviously, AOL is still the big problem. However publishers are finding ways to work with it. I would say spam filters are a challenge but if you stay with professional publishers, you could learn to overcome that challenge.

**Jeff:** The lesson here is: don’t try to outsmart spam filters with gimmicks instead try to write a smart ad.

**Charlie:** Right. Write the best ad you could possibly can. I believe that’s not hard to do. I even wrote a book about this. Although, you don’t have to read books about it, the way to great ads is to read great ads. When you receive an email ad that appeals to you, you

make copy of it and study how it was written. Don't try to copy it word for word. What kind of words they are using? Where are their punctuations placed? How long is it? How do you feel about the message?

When you get a collection of what writers call swipe file of ads, you read some of those ads, you'll see how a great ad is written then you'll be able to write your own great ad.

**Jeff:** Is eZine advertising getting saturated now unlike before? Is it still working now?

**Charlie:** No, I don't think it's true. But I think what is true is that it is no longer possible to send out a mindless ad, deliver it to as many people as you possibly can, and get clicks from it.

People click on topics that interest them whether it is a Google ad word, an eZine advertising, a billboard on a freeway, or a sticky note on a college dorm. People respond to information that interests them. So if you learn to speak in terms of their benefits, then you're going to do very well.

I don't think it's saturated at all because there is evidence that more and more eZines are being published. Some people say there are hundred thousands or even a million.

**Jeff:** How many are in your directory?

**Charlie:** We have 1,075 eZines and we have very strict standards to be in the directory. Most of the time, we turn down eZines that does not meet our standards. We buy advertising in these eZines; we talk to the publishers on the phone. They have to sell ads, publish articles or join joint ventures to be in the directory. We don't allow pornography. We received more applications than we accept.

To list an eZine is free, but we still reserved the right to maintain quality because that's what we do: We sell memberships. I'm going to be pretty dogged to ensure good quality. In fact, right now I have 150 publishers who haven't answered my emails, and I'm going to take them out if they don't reply soon. It is because I insist that members should have access to good information. I think there are 15,000 – 20,000 real eZines out there. When I say real eZine I mean that they publish regularly, have been publishing for awhile or they provide good quality content, not just an ad.

There is probably 300,000 eZines around the world; there is certainly plenty to choose from. I believe the market is not saturated by any means.

There are some people who say they heard you can make money on writing an eZine so they put up a webpage. They would then ask people to subscribe to their new, wonderful eZine and all they send out is ad after ad after ad. They can call themselves what they like, but that's not an eZine.

**Jeff:** If somebody wants to put up a real eZine, they might need to know that. How would somebody know that it's a good, professional eZine?

**Charlie:** It's a great question and here's another one to go with it. I'll answer them both.

**Jeff:** Thank you.

**Charlie:** How do you know that if they really have the number of subscribers that they claim?

The answer to both is to do some due diligence. You have to go to their website. You have to know how long they have been publishing. The best thing to do is to subscribe to their eZine and read a couple of issues. Now in two or three issues, anybody with a common sense can say that this eZine is for real or not.

Now, if it passes the smell test to you, then it will probably pass also to other people. Then you're going to be fine. But what people usually do which is unfortunate because this is how people lose their money or how they get ripped off is place ads without doing some research. They hurriedly place ads on some eZines only because it seems cheap.

The right thing to do is to find out about the publisher. That's why we exist, by the way. What we do is we compile 45 details of information about eZines for example: Start of publication, number of subscribers, do they sell ads, what size ads, price, discounts, do they accept articles, do they accept joint ventures, etc.

**Jeff:** Hold on, let's back up for second. Explain about discount for members.

**Charlie:** Yeah, but I'm not trying to make this a pitch for the directory.

**Jeff:** Yeah, but I think people like discounts.

**Charlie:** One thing we ask our publishers to do since only members can access the directory is to give discounts to the members. Right now maybe around 650 – 700 publishers out of a thousand offer a discount. The discount may range from 10 - 80 percent, the average maybe around 40 percent. Now if anybody wants to be a member or is already a member, we tell them about it. They usually look for it once they've known. Because you know, a dollar is a dollar.

What I'm saying is people need to do some due diligence in either by looking at the website or subscribing to it to find out more about it.

**Jeff:** That makes sense. Now, let me take the next step. How do I know that my ad went out?

**Charlie:** There's a fast and easy way. And that is you subscribe to the eZine before you place your ad. And most likely the publisher will give you a run date. They will communicate with you, it's not like you're just going to pay and let you wait and wonder. Professional publishers will send you an email stating that they received your ad and/or your payment and your ad is going to run on "x" date. But they won't do, but I wish they did, is send you a copy of that eZine. Like in the print world, there's something called the tear sheet and when you buy a half page ad in a newspaper, they'll send you the actual page where the ad ran. eZine publishers just don't do it. I begged them, but they declined. They said they're busy and I understand. But if you subscribe to the eZine, you will easily see if the ad actually ran.

**Jeff:** That's too simple... Give us some insider tips where people won't find it anywhere.

**Charlie:** The first thing is don't expect instant results on your first ad. eZine advertising is effective and each ad is effective and profitable. If the ad breaks even the first time, that's a reason to run another ad. Repetition is the mother of learning.

The second thing is, we've covered this so I'll just be brief, is to use a rhythm. Place a solo, if it works then place a sponsor and then place a classified.

Another thing is if you find an eZine that works for you, go find similar eZines. It may sound like just common sense but it really, really works. If you find an eZine that works for you like dog grooming, go find other eZines that is similar to that and place an ad there too.

Also, don't shy away from small eZines. Some people may choose only to place ads on eZines that could send ads to a quarter million people. Well, there're just not enough eZines out there that cater to a quarter million people but there are many small eZines that cater to 15,000 people. They don't realize that small eZine publishers often times have a better relationship with the reader than big ones. I, myself have a good relationship with 18,000 readers of my current eZine. They respond well to the ads I placed and also, the surveys. There is less response when the population of eZine readers becomes bigger.

I'd say don't shy away from small eZines. I think they're wonderful. Sometimes, I would rather have 5 ads placed in different eZines with 15,000 people each than one big one with 200,000 subscribers.

One other thing is to make your ad impressive. Too many people describe their product, but don't tell what's in it. Generally, people want to save time and money or earn money. In the internet, these three things are the primary motivators.

If you could show somebody to do things faster and save time for other things like golf or spend more time with the family, then you've done something for them.

If you've shown somebody how to make money and become more independent, then you've done something for them.

Also, if you show somebody how to save money which is the same thing as making money just like a left shoe, right shoe, then you've done something good for them.

So, those are a few of the insider tips I could give.

**Jeff:** Folks, I'm going to open the call up for questions in a couple of minutes. If you thought of a question, get it ready so that when we open up, you can jump right in. In the meantime, I believe Charlie made an excellent point about small eZines for a couple of reasons. One is they cost less, that's important. It's also in many cases; small eZines are built more organically. What I mean by that is that they're built one at a time by somebody going to a subscribe form and signing up as opposed to buying a bunch of names or that type of thing in which you'll find from huge eZines, especially if they're relatively new. A lot of names come from them and they're not going to be as responsive.

**Charlie:** Another advantage of small eZines, it's where you could test your ad copy because when you look at the response on a percentage base and not on a sheer number basis. For example, 15,000 subscribers could mean 15 clicks that's a certain percentage of response. If your ad is good, you should get a better percentage response on a bigger eZine.

So, you may want to test your ad copy on smaller eZines before bringing it to bigger ones. After revising your ad copy and if you get the percentage that you desire then you can move on to the bigger eZines. I do that every time I advertise.

**Jeff:** That reminds me of an old TV infomercial a few years ago where Don McCrae talked about these thousand tiny classified ads. Each one makes some money but when you add them all up, it would mean big sums; same idea.

**Charlie:** It's a similar idea.

**Jeff:** Let's open the line for questions and see what our folks can come up with.

**Caller:** I got one real quick.

**Jeff:** Sure

**Caller:** You gave the rhythm for solo, sponsor and classified ad. I got the solo and the classified, but I didn't get the sponsor's.

**Charlie:** I think I said was two, that's generally how much would I run. I would run two or three.

**Caller:** Two solos then a couple of sponsors and then 3 – 5 classifieds?

**Charlie:** Yes, that's right.

**Caller:** Thank you.

**Jeff:** Any other questions, folks? Feel free to chime in; you got one of the world's experts here. So this is a great time for it.

**Caller:** Yeah, there are two things I'm interested in eZines. One is the actual products because I'm in eBay. The other is I'm developing a website for Hawaii. I'm interested in advertising for condominium services and that kind of thing. Will those pretty well fit themselves to eZine advertising?

**Charlie:** Hard goods will definitely do. With hard goods, you have to be very specific about the target. You want to pick eZines that are in that target. If you're selling shampoo, you go to eZines that might be interested in selling that. There are very little differences in selling hard goods versus digital goods as far as the effectiveness of eZines are concerned. The job of the eZine ad is to bring the reader to the website while the job of the website is to make the sale. So, you don't want to sell the product itself on the ad but rather develop curiosity.

So, as far as the Hawaii site is concerned, certainly. There are travel and recreation eZines. There are also time management eZines and many people will subscribe in order to learn how to manage their time better so they can take a vacation. There are many eZines related to your concerns and you can assume that you can be successful there.

**Caller:** When you've decided what target market you're after and you've narrowed down your list of eZines, what is the best way to approach the publisher? What do you say to them so they would accept your ad? If it's a good eZine, they most likely get dozens of requests everyday.

**Charlie:** You have to remember when you approach an eZine, you're the customer. You're paying the money. So, they are there to serve you and they will. These publishers sell their advertising space is what they do for a living. So, it should be no different from going to the market and picking out something you want to buy and go to the cash register and checking out. A good publisher will have advertising rates on their site and will have a very clear payment plan for you on their site. The thing to remember is that you're not trying to talk them into taking your ad but you're buying something from them. To give you a bit further information, it's always helpful that you read the eZine before you contact the publisher and tell them what you like about it.

**Caller:** Thank you

**Charlie:** Sure

**Jeff:** One question that often comes up. What about competition? If everybody's promoting out there, how can my ad stand out? That's truer for pay-per-click advertising than it is for eZine advertising. Like you said there are thousands and thousands of eZines out there, even in a single niche, there still could be so many. It's inevitable that people may have the same product and would probably be fighting over spots in an eZine.

**Charlie:** As a consumer, it is important to be an informed consumer. So, if you're going to place an ad in an eZine, you ask the publisher not to run it if there will be competing ads. However, it is extremely rare that you find competing ads. Honestly, I personally never saw a competing ad with a sponsor ad, but yes in the classified ads since there are 5 – 7 ads per issue.

The secret here is to develop your own core set of eZines that you know works. Once you've done that, find other products to offer through those eZines and continue offering that main product through the eZines. Be consistent. In the case of CBmall, it's perfect because you've got so many products that you can advertise; in the retail and business opportunities section.

I can't imagine ever running out of things to say and ways to write ads that would cause any level of exclusivity or where you'll have competition.

**Caller:** This is Bob of Idaho. I'll be asking about the format of eZine advertising. I see some in plain text and some in html. Does that make a difference in terms of popularity or how well accepted it is?

**Charlie:** There are two schools of thought about this. One is html eZines look more of a webpage and therefore there are more ads that can be placed. And if you're going to advertise in an html eZine, you would surely want your ad to be eye-catching. You may want to use animated GIFs, something that moves or changes color.

However, plain text eZines are better read. I personally like plain text because I get a lot of email everyday from friends, from family, from customers, from vendors. And they're almost all in plain text. I find plain text to be friendlier while html types look like they're trying to sell you something.

I haven't heard much from publishers that said they made more money from html eZines. You have to be more careful with spam filters when it comes to html email. If you plan to advertise in an html eZine, you must ensure that they also send it in plain text because it might trip spam filters. Also, because there might be some subscribers that don't have programs that read html emails.

**Caller:** How often should these eZines be published on the average? I know you mentioned it awhile ago. Is there a rule of thumb on how often these eZines go out to make it a good advertising vehicle?

**Charlie:** I find the ones that go out weekly are the best. I feel that the ones that go out every other week are acceptable, while in monthly eZines, readers tend to forget the reason why they subscribe to the eZine. So, if I would place an ad in a monthly eZine, I make sure my ad would be more striking; I have to really get their attention.

**Caller:** Your directory tells when it was published?

**Charlie:** Yes, it does. It tells you when it was published, on what day it was published. If you have an eZine that gets published weekly and on Wednesdays, it will say that.

**Jeff:** Any other questions?

**Caller:** Typically, how long will you wait before your ad runs?

**Charlie:** Based on my experience, I'd say between a week and ten days or two weeks. Many sponsor ads go unsold because a lot of people don't understand the value of them. Smaller eZines sell ad space closer to the publication date. They don't have a long lead time policy. Yet, there is one publisher in the directory that publishes 14 – 16 eZines and for their weekly you have to wait 5 weeks. In smaller eZines, if you get it in the day before, they'll put it in.

**Jeff:** That's another good reason to test with smaller eZines, you get a faster turnaround.

**Charlie:** Yeah, faster turnaround, lower cost. I think the readers pay more attention to what the publisher says. Jeff, it's a nail on the head. Smaller eZines are grown from the ground up; one subscriber at a time coming to the website.

The ones who have a couple of hundred thousand, if they haven't been in business for four years, you can be pretty sure that they bought their list from a co-registration

service. Knowing how long the eZine has been in business, which is one of the things we do list, is pretty important.

**Caller:** Can you give the URL of the special offer again?

**Jeff:** Sure sure. That URL is [directoryofezines.com/jeff](http://directoryofezines.com/jeff). The forward slash is there because Charlie is nice enough to give us a special offer; if anybody's interested.

Not every product is for everybody but if you're serious enough about eZine advertising. I can tell you honestly after this call; I would be paying a lot more attention to eZine advertising for some of my other products because, look at those numbers we talked about earlier on the call. You can run an ad for fifty dollars and if the site converts well and if you run a decent ad, you can multiply your money significantly. So, I think it's great and I'm going to wade through Google to try to find a good eZine.

I couldn't be happier that Charlie shared some great stuff. And I'm sure anybody on this call is psyched now and will give some serious thought and research. And more than that take some action and start doing something. I think you can read all you want, you can buy all the e-books and courses and go to seminars and everything else.

The bottom line for success is actually acting on it, actually doing something. I think we all learned here tonight that it isn't all that hard to run an eZine ad. Especially, if you can start out small and if you can start out with a reasonable budget that you're comfortable with and do the kinds of things that Charlie talked about. Whichever size of ad and research the types of eZines that fit your niche and give it a try.

If you're making profit, take some of the profit and take your spouse out for dinner and say, "See honey, this internet thing worked" and then take the other half and reinvest it.

Again, thank you all very much for coming on the call. And Charlie, a special thanks to you. We really do appreciate it.

**Charlie:** Thanks, Jeff. I enjoyed it a lot.

**Jeff:** Good night, everybody.