



When a European journalist based in Amman Jordan calls a writer in Central Florida for a comment on church bombings in Mosul, only to end up on a conference call with an Assyrian activist in Beirut - you know things have changed. The world is just not the same.

That happened to me recently. I've written about the plight of the Assyrians in Iraq. The Assyrians are Christians, and are the original inhabitants of Mesopotamia. I got interested in their situation prior the Iraq War, and started writing about them right before the U.S. invasion.

The Assyrian cause is one that doesn't get a whole lot of consideration by Western, particularly U.S., writers. Therefore, having a portfolio of writing on a topic that is interesting, controversial, and somewhat neglected by other writers has gotten me quite a bit of attention.

Now, before I get too fully into this blog, let me caution you not to mistake my goal of writing about the Assyrians. I started writing about the Assyrians for the same reason I left the Christian Coalition in 1996, even before I became Orthodox. I care about what happens to Christians outside the United States, but many Christians in the U.S. don't share my concern. Unfortunately, what happens to Christian communities in places like Iraq or the Sudan or East Timor is a topic American Christian activists usually ignore.

But, that being said, my experience with writing about the Assyrians helps illustrate the point that is the topic of this blog. While getting famous usually requires a really good press agent, getting well-known within a specific sphere isn't nearly so difficult in the age of the Internet. In fact, achieving a serious slice of *mindshare* in a given field, particularly if that field is your business or ministry, is well within your grasp.

Here are some simple tips to getting the notoriety that you need to promote yourself effectively online.

First, concentrate on an area of your specialty that isn't already bloated with articles on the Internet. If I'd written articles about Christian persecution in China, or just Christian suffering in

general, then no one would have noticed. Instead, I chose to write about a topical area of the world that is little understood, and about a group of Christians that most people had never heard of.

The combination of limited knowledge but newsworthy topicality assured me (and them!) a lot of attention in short order.

I've carried this through to my own personal business as well. There are lots of Christian writers, and even Orthodox Christian writers, who blog about the end of Western Civilization, the wisdom of the fathers, or other spiritual/philosophical topics. Putting out articles on the same themes would put me in the Google search results somewhere on page 33 or beyond. Not even my own mother would bother to keep looking for my articles.

But I'm an Orthodox Christian writer that typically writes about technology for an Orthodox Christian audience. That space isn't exactly crowded. It's a niche space, but it's one that happens to be wide open. Hence, it's a way for me to score really well in the ultimate quest on the Internet - *to get noticed*.

You can do the same thing. If you analyze the various aspects of what your business/ministry actually does, then I'm positive you will find closely related topics which are practically ignored on the Internet. By staking out a claim to those topics, you can find yourself getting noticed, and getting linked-to. A combination of good in-bound links and popularity of your articles can help lift you well above your competition.

The second thing to keep in mind is that if only your friends and family read your stuff, then you are probably not going to get very far. Sure, you can go out to Blogspot and get a blog going and try like Heck to promote it. But that isn't going to get you a whole lot of traffic, nor is it likely that Google is going to pay much attention. But, if you get published on a site with decent traffic, then sit back and watch the magic happen.

My Assyrian articles ran on lewrockwell.com and on orthodoxytoday.org . From there, they got reprinted on literally dozens of other sites as diverse as Christianity Today, the Vatican's official news site, Worldnetdaily.com, and even some left-wing sites. Had I published them on a low-traffic site, then they would have languished in obscurity and gone nowhere.

So, try to publish on sites that get good traffic, the higher the better. Those articles have the greatest chance of getting linked-to and reprinted, as well as being *dugg*. This doesn't mean that you shouldn't maintain your own site, or even maintain your own blog. It just means that you need exposure from more established sites to feed traffic back to your own Web presence, especially at the beginning.

My third and final suggestion is to answer your email and your comments. If you write something noteworthy enough for people to take the time to contact you about it, then answer their emails. Even if they are hateful and disagreeable. Even if they get you steamed. They cared enough to write to you, so you should care enough to write them back. Some of my Assyrian articles generated 200 or more emails. A recent two-article set I did about Ron Paul (one on Lew Rockwell and one on [Orthodox Biz](#)) generated almost 100 emails.

I responded to every one of them, and thanked every single writer for caring enough about what I wrote to contact me. I also responded to all comments that were posted on sites carrying the articles that I knew about.

If you want people to take you seriously as a source of information about a specific topic, then you need to return the favor and take them seriously as well.

One final thought I'll leave you with. You don't have to be a brilliant writer to make this work. Your pieces need to be clear, concise, and readable. They also need to be short. Online readers are notoriously flighty. It's my opinion that almost any decently educated person can write reasonably good online articles and build up a great portfolio establishing them as an expert in their market/ministry space.

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