

July 2011

Dear Friend,

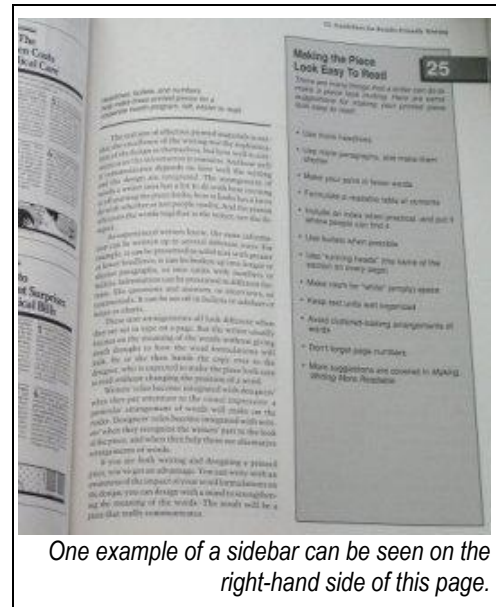
As someone who almost majored in art instead of journalism in college, I'm surprised I almost forgot to cover the topic of images (aka photos and graphics) in this series on content marketing!

We've all heard the phrase: "A picture's worth a thousand words." It's true. But it has to be the right picture. That is, there needs to be a connection between the message your words are conveying and what the photo represents.

One ezine I subscribe to ([Copyblogger](#)) is great with this. Five days a week, a new issue appears in my inbox. Even though I don't always have the time to read each of these, I sometimes take the time to open an issue just to see what the photo is. And occasionally, I end up getting drawn into the "story" of the message. I'm sure that's why they include those photos in the first place!

One photo I'm including this month (see below) illustrates what I described in the June issue, where I discussed sidebars. Seeing this picture, along with the information I provided that month, probably would have made the subject a little easier to understand.

Of course, there are times when including an image won't work, like when you're submitting your article to an online site such as [EzineArticles.com](#). However, articles on that site usually link back to websites that *DO* have photos.



One example of a sidebar can be seen on the right-hand side of this page.

In this issue, I'll be discussing why you should try to include some type of image with all of your content marketing - even if it's just a "pull-quote" floating inside a shaded box somewhere in your text.

Attract More Readers with Images

by Chris Wilson

Are you a visual learner? Even if your primary learning style is auditory or tactile-kinesthetic, seeing an image - whether a painting, a cartoon, or a photograph - will help you process information much quicker. And remember it better too!

One article I found online claims all types of articles - both online and print - need to be accompanied by pictures because they grab readers' attention. (You'll find a link to the article under "Resources.")



The first mechanical book was created in the mid-13th century by an English Benedictine monk named Matthew Paris. This illustration is not an accurate representation - just a strange example of what might happen if you combined gears with books!

If you *can't* grab their attention, it doesn't matter how well you've written the article. Many people will simply glance at the text and move on to something more interesting.

This works online as well as offline (in print). The first time I used an image in a blog I write, I noticed the traffic to my blog shot up dramatically.

On the left is an example of why, if it's a drawing I need, I enlist my husband.

This ends up saving me a lot of money, since vector images (line drawings vs. pixel-based pictures like photos) are *VERY* expensive on iStockphoto (my main source of images).

I had to illustrate a page about the history of pop-up books, so I asked my husband if he could draw a picture of a mechanical book.

As you can see, he's very good at thinking outside the box!!

Which Image . . . and When?

The next time you're working on a new marketing piece, try to relax and step back a bit. The most logical images aren't always best, but sometimes they are - it just depends on your audience and the type of reactions you're hoping to stir up in them. Here are some suggestions:

- If you're writing a **how-to article**, you could show step-by-step diagrams.
- If you're writing a **case study** about how your product helped a customer in their business, you could show one or more photos of the customer using your product.
- If you're **blogging** about a new direction your company is taking, you could include a photograph you found on iStockphoto of, say, a sign posted at a fork in a road, with an arrow pointing down one of the paths.

The possibilities are endless. The only thing limiting you is your imagination.

For ideas on how to brainstorm for ideas, see the [August issue](#) of this newsletter. The November issue on "[Unusual Combinations](#)" may also be helpful, since graphics and photos sometimes work best when they're a little "outside the box."

Hire a Professional, or Do It Yourself?

Depending on the scope of your project, you may decide that taking your own photos (or hiring your friend to do so) isn't going to work. Here's a link to an article that can help you decide on the right freelance graphic designer for your needs: "[5 Tips on Choosing a Freelance Graphic Designer.](#)"

The same tips that apply to finding good freelance graphic designers work for freelance photographers, too.

RESOURCES


"The Importance of Pictures for Press Releases, Case Studies and Business Articles"

This online article at EasiMarketing.com (by Ian Lockyer) explains why including photos in business communications matters so much.

iStockphoto.com My favorite source of photos for my website. (Second favorite: my own camera.)

Paint.NET GREAT tool for manipulating photos and includes almost as many features as Adobe Photoshop. It also happens to be *FREE*, available as a download.

To your success,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Chris". The signature is written in black ink on a white background.

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