

Re-selling your work  
By Roberta G. Wax

Re-selling your articles is a great way to get the most out of your work. However, the internet has changed the game for re-marketing articles, and many publications don't want to play second fiddle.

Here are some tips, tricks and things to know (in no particular order) about re-selling your work:

- First, and most important, know what rights you own. When negotiating a writing contract, try to sell only the rights that let you retain your work.
- Do an internet search for your work. If a particular article comes up a LOT, that article will probably be hard to re-sell, even if it is revised.
- Use your research to create original copy.
- Go with the *idea*, not the story. For example, if you write about how to pick a pre-school, find local experts. Get local quotes. It may be more work, but you already have the bones of the story.
- Think ahead. Over-research. Look for other angles. Before you even start interviewing a top chef for American Foodie Magazine, think of all the angles: business (how she opened her restaurant), alumni magazine (profile, where are they now, etc.), kitchen appliance trade group (what he looks for in a stove), health (how she stays healthy with those crazy hours), etc.
- Understand that not every article is a good re-sale.
- Check writer's guidelines to see if a market is open to reprints. Unless a publication specifically says it uses reprints, you will need to update – or completely re-write -- your piece.
- Re-slant your original to fit the parameters of the new publication.
- Get new quotes. Don't be lazy.
- When pitching stories, look immediately for viable secondary markets, such as trade publications or alumni magazines.
- Look for a local angle and figure out how to adapt the story to a different market. Ask yourself: what makes this appealing to local readers?
- Some publications ask that you include a line saying something like “this piece first appeared in ....”

- Consider the new audience. Would they have already seen your piece? If so, it's not a good candidate for a re-sell.
- Smaller markets are more likely to be open to re-treads. Check overseas markets.
- Look at non-competing markets, such as regional publications. Find markets that don't draw the same audience.
- View your story in a fresh light. Don't just copy paragraphs from your original article. That's just lazy.
- If the editor of your original piece has made significant changes, don't use those changes.
- Should you inform the editor that this article has run elsewhere? That depends. Are they in non-competitive markets? Has the new story been substantially re-written? Do you have new information? Was the original widely distributed? When in doubt, it's always best to be straight with an editor.
- Pull information from related articles for a "best of" piece. For instance, if you've done several articles about artisan breweries, create a Top 10 List of Best Neighborhood Pubs. Think creatively: create a quiz, write a sidebar, make a list.
- Find a small nugget of information in a story and expand it into something new. Does one source have a unique view on a subject? Expand on that.
- Adapt your article for different age groups (teens, new moms, seniors, recent college grads, etc.) or different occupations (small business owners, human resource managers, sales people, teachers, etc.)
- Keep a list of viable reprint markets.
- Had a good story last year? What about a follow-up this year?