Dear Sam

A syndicated feature from Ladybug Design

Helping newspapers help readers since 2004 **www.DearSamOnline.com**

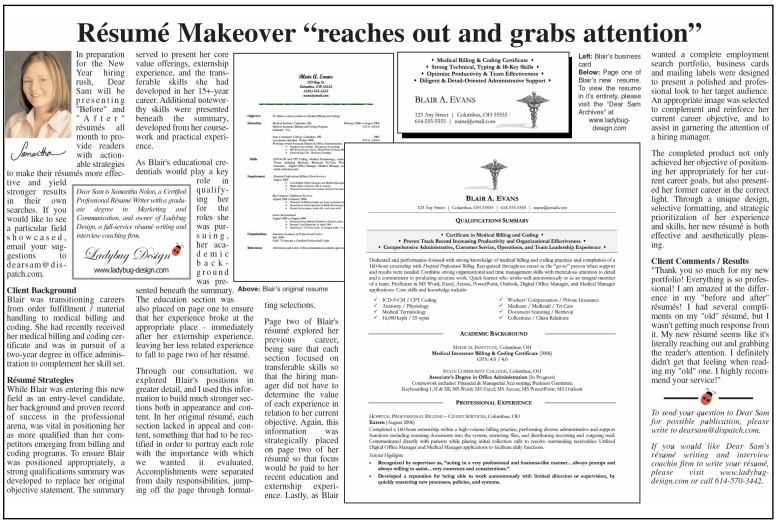
Dear Sam Generates Significant Reader Interest for Employment Classified Sections at Ohio's Newspapers

Samantha Nolan, Owner and Managing Editor of Ladybug Design, has been writing the "Dear Sam" column for nearly two years and has grown the column into a readership-generation tool for it's founding newspaper, The Columbus Dispatch.

Since it's inception in 2004, Dear Sam has captivated readers with honest, informative and constructive advice on resume-writing and job-hunting. Dear Sam answers the most burning questions readers have regarding their job searches. By responding to readers' questions, Dear Sam provides newspaper partners with more relevant job-hunting information than most "canned content" that other services offer.

The Columbus Dispatch has been very pleased with Dear Sam's advice and value that she has brought to their publications and events and advertisers have responded as well. "They don't want to pay the front page premium unless they know they're going to be on the "Dear Sam page" said a Dispatch Recruitment Account Executive.

Readers have also responded:



Résumé Makeover "reaches out and grabs attention"

In preparation for the New Year hiring rush, Dear Sam will be presenting "Before" and "After" résumés all month to provide readers with action-able strategies to make their résumés more effective and yield stronger results in their own searches. If you would like to see a particular field showcased, email your suggestions to dearsam@dispatch.com.

Dear Sam is Samantha Nolan, a Certified Professional Résumé Writer with a graduate degree in Marketing and Communication, and owner of Ladybug Design, a full-service résumé writing and interview coaching firm.

Ladybug Design
www.ladybug-design.com

Client Background
Blair was transitioning careers from order fulfillment / material handling to medical billing and coding. She had recently received her medical billing and coding certificate and was in pursuit of a two-year degree in office administration to complement her skill set.

Résumé Strategies
While Blair was entering this new field as an entry-level candidate, her background and proven record of success in the professional arena, was vital in positioning her as more qualified than her competitors emerging from billing and coding programs. To ensure Blair was positioned appropriately, a strong qualifications summary was developed to replace her original objective statement. The summary served to present her core value offerings, externship experience, and the transferable skills she had developed in her 15+-year career. Additional noteworthy skills were presented beneath the summary, developed from her coursework and practical experience.

As Blair's educational credentials would play a key role in qualifying her for the roles she was pursuing, her academic background was presented beneath the summary. The education section was also placed on page one to ensure that her experience broke at the appropriate place - immediately after her externship experience, leaving her less related experience to fall to page two of her résumé.

Through our consultation, we explored Blair's positions in greater detail, and I used this information to build much stronger sections both in appearance and content. In her original résumé, each section lacked in appeal and content, something that had to be rectified in order to portray each role with the importance with which we wanted it evaluated. Accomplishments were separated from daily responsibilities, jumping off the page through formatting selections.

Page two of Blair's résumé explored her previous career, being sure that each section focused on transferable skills so that the hiring manager did not have to determine the value of each experience in relation to her current objective. Again, this information was strategically placed on page two of her résumé so that focus would be paid to her recent education and externship experience. Lastly, as Blair wanted a complete employment search portfolio, business cards and mailing labels were designed to present a polished and professional look to her target audience. An appropriate image was selected to complement and reinforce her current career objective, and to assist in garnering the attention of a hiring manager.

Left: Blair's business card
Below: Page one of Blair's new resume. To view the resume in it's entirety, please visit the "Dear Sam Archives" at www.ladybug-design.com

The completed product not only achieved her objective of positioning her appropriately for her current career goals, but also presented her former career in the correct light. Through a unique design, selective formatting, and strategic prioritization of her experience and skills, her new résumé is both effective and aesthetically pleasing.

Client Comments / Results
"Thank you so much for my new portfolio! Everything is so professional! I am amazed at the difference in my "before and after" résumés! I had several compliments on my "old" résumé, but I wasn't getting much response from it. My new résumé seems like it's literally reaching out and grabbing the reader's attention. I definitely didn't get that feeling when reading my "old" one. I highly recommend your service!"

To send your question to Dear Sam for possible publication, please write to dearsam@dispatch.com.

If you would like Dear Sam's résumé writing and interview coachin firm to write your résumé, please visit www.ladybug-design.com or call 614-570-3442.

Above: Blair's original resume

Readers look to Dear Sam's advice on a weekly basis. She has quickly become the local career expert and has generated tremendous reader interest and loyalty!

Dear Sam, Hello. I read your column every Sunday. I learn a lot from just reading. However, I have a question that has stumped me and feel you are the one to answer…

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Dear Sam, I have read your column in the JOBS section for some time now and the most recent one that really caught my eye was the article published in the Sunday April 9th edition. It had a lot of very good tidbits to help out the seeker in the job marketplace. I am a professional in the Worthington area and I have recently been helping my mother search for a new job…

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Dear Sam, We have spoken once on the phone, with me passing my compliments on to you. I want to reinforce the fact that you are one of the best career advice givers I've ever encountered. There are four people who rank highly on my list of excellent advice givers who, in my opinion, really know the real world; Samantha Nolan is one of them. Again, Thanks for your good work. - professor from Ohio University

Perhaps what most differentiates Dear Sam from the rest is that Dear Sam is local! Samantha takes the time and care to respond to local issues, giving your readers a personal connection to your newspaper. Your Dear Sam column will frequently include letters from readers in your market. This cannot be said for "canned" editorial.

Flexibility is also a major advantage! If you have a special section or themed page planned, Ladybug Design will create a column or resume makeover written specifically for your theme.

Last, but not least, are personal appearances. Samantha is available to conduct seminars at your job fairs or other newspaper events in order to further the personal connection with and concern for your readers.

Dear Sam Now Offered at Newspapers Nationwide

Dear Sam has grown and now appears in several Ohio print and online publications. Whether you are interested in growing readership in your Sunday Employment section or providing added value to a free distribution product, Dear Sam will be the perfect complement to your initiatives.

Dear Sam has plenty to offer including:

- Weekly resume-advice column written by Certified Professional Resume Writer, Samantha Nolan.
- Monthly "resume makeovers" showcasing actual case studies and testimonials from job seekers.
- Informative seminars presented at job fairs and other relevant events.
- Complimentary job search packages for use as contest give-aways.
- Themed-content available for special sections and theme pages.
- Online archive hosted and maintained by the Ladybug Design staff. You simply add the link to your site and Dear Sam's staff does the rest!
- Much more! Samantha is very flexible and open to your requests. Our committment to you is to make Dear Sam a powerful tool for extending your reach with that sometimes elusive market of job seekers.

"There are no out-of-pocket expenses for our editorial content," says Jennifer Valentine of Ladybug Design. "We simply ask that our partners commit to a consistent publication schedule in order to effectively increase readership and generate public interaction with the column. "

To take advantage of all that Dear Sam has to offer, please contact Jennifer Valentine with Ladybug Design at 614-570-3442 or via email at jennifer@ladybug-design.com