

Magazine Article Submission -7 Tips to Reducing Rejection Slips

Submitting articles to trade journals or magazines is rewarding and can establish you as a published author. However, editors are very busy and have hundreds of manuscripts to pour over. To make sure you put the odds in your favor, follow these seven tips to help get your article accepted.

Request guidelines and be sure to follow them! For instance, if a magazine wants an article no more than 1000 words, don't submit a 2500 word article. Several magazines post their guidelines on their website and you can print them from there. If not, write to them requesting their guidelines and be sure to include an SASE (Self addressed stamped envelop) or you won't get a response.

Search for clues in guidelines. Read through the guidelines to find clues on how to break into a magazine. Often they are looking for "filler" material such as puzzles or short tips to fill in between feature articles. This can be a great way to get your foot in the door and your name recognized with the editor.

Learn to write a powerful query. Magazine editors often do not have the time or staff to read a full article and will ask that you send a query first. This is a brief letter that introduces the author and gives an overview of the article you would like to submit. Be sure your query is compelling and captures the editor's attention. Your story must have a unique angle or storyline that hasn't been done to death. There are several examples of a query letter online or in writing books such as the Writer's Digest or Writer's Market.

Read the editorial calendar. Many magazines have their editorial calendars posted on their website – take a minute to review it. They will give you insight as to the topics they want to cover in upcoming issues. If you have an article that will complement a magazine's theme for a particular month, be sure to send it in prior to deadlines.

Submit to the right markets. Read several issues of the magazine you are targeting before submitting. For instance, do not submit gardening tips to a sports oriented magazine. If you are a beginning writer and the magazine only accepts 10% of freelance submissions you might be wise to submit to a magazine that accepts 50% or more of their freelance submissions. Some magazines do not accept outside submissions (freelance) at all and work by assignment only. So be sure you know your market!

Submit to smaller magazines and trade journals. They can be more open to freelance submissions than the bigger names. You can jumpstart your portfolio if you look at the smaller to midsize journals. It can also be easier to develop business relationships with editors.

Track submissions – Keep dates of submissions and where your articles have been submitted on a spreadsheet. At the minimum list the title of your article, editorial contact name, date submitted, response time if applicable, and pay rate.

These seven tips for writers offer practical information to be successful in article submission. As with any craft, you must practice daily, even if it is just a paragraph in a journal to keep writing skills sharp.

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Can't seem to find the right words to promote your product? Denise McGill is a freelance copywriter specializing in catalog product description, copy makeovers, landing pages, promotional materials, and more. Visit her website at <http://mcgillcopywriting.com> for more information or subscribe to her free online newsletter.