



Dream of Travel Writing

How To Become Part of An Editor's Stable

This week, we're going to be talking about how to become part of an editor's stable. And if you read the email newsletter or the blog post about this week's call, the thing about being part of an editor's stable, and I'm going to talk more specifically about what that means, but it's really the key to having recurring income writing for magazines as a freelance writer.

When I say it's the key, what I mean is this is the answer to the problems that so many of you have with feeling like you write pitches and you don't hear back. Or like you write for a magazine once for this much money, and it takes you so long to get the pitch together and the article together, that the rate is horrible for you. Being a regular contributor for an editor is really the answer to a lot of those problems.

Specifically what I want to talk to you about today is what the stable is and why you want to be a part of it. Oops, sorry. I didn't do the second one. And then we're going to talk about the different things that you can do to make yourself indispensable to your editor. And then we're going to talk about times that you should not become part of a stable for a certain editor. So, the warning signs that this editor and this magazine is not a place for you.

We've also got the Travel Magazine Database. And I'm going to mention this a little bit later because the whole reason we started the Travel Magazine Database is because editor's biggest — any editor, no matter what they edit, the biggest complaint of every editor is that they get too many pitches from people who aren't familiar with their magazine or who don't understand their publication and are pitching something that could never appear there.

We really started the Travel Magazine Database to help people understand what magazines are looking for from writers. So, I don't have a journalism degree. I think I get a lot of sort of feedback from people when I'm telling them, "Oh, do this, do that," but they're like, "Oh, well, Gabi, that's easy for you. You've been doing this forever," and I haven't. I don't have a journalism degree. My degree is in Italian literature.

Literature is very different than journalism and a whole other language. So, you can learn this stuff. You can learn how to write journalistically. You can learn how to work with magazine editors. It's not rocket science. And the funny thing is they actually don't teach this stuff. They don't teach how to freelance and how to build these relationships in journalism school.

If you feel like you don't understand how to do all of these things, I have a lot of people in our Pitchapalooza class, for instance, who've done journalism classes and



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also don't understand how to do these things because they're just not taught primarily, which is why we teach this stuff. So, I've been on both sides. I've been a magazine editor, and I've been a frequent contributor for quite a few different magazines in different parts of the travel industry.

I'm going to talk to you from my own experience today, but I'm also going to sprinkle in a lot of direct quotes, and also anecdotes from other editors all around the country and around the world, honestly, about what they look for in their own words. So, before we get started, what do I mean by stable?

So, I got a couple different — some people haven't heard of it. A list of go-to writers. Catherine, great to see you. That's a great way of describing it. So, a lot of editors use this term. It's just kind of the industry term, and I'm not really sure how it came up.

It doesn't sound super attractive, if you think about it. But an editor's stable is the writers that they have worked with in the past that they know that they can turn to for, somebody else said this, the reliable list of go-to writers. Exactly. For reliable copy, and copy, if you're not familiar with that word, means text. So, a lot of people these days ask, "Oh, should I provide photos with my pieces?"

This is an ongoing discussion that's changing as magazine budgets shrink and more photos are available from online services like Getty. A lot of magazines get their images from Getty. So, if you thought about going into stock photography, that's a really good way to get your photos in magazines as well. But magazine editors really think of their writers as writers first.

And if you are able to provide images, that's a perk. And we'll talk about some other things that you can do like that to help with your editors later on. But one of the really important things for distinguishing yourself as part of the stable is that you are a reliable source of copy. So, what does that mean? It means not just that you are able to turn in a clean copy. That's another word that editors use a lot, which means that it's not just it's grammatically correct or it's free of errors.

It means that they have to do very little work on it. So, the structure of the article is good. The structure of the sentences are good. The level of detail, the amount of reporting. And I know that every so often, I say things like, "Oh, the amount of reporting," and people are like, "Well, I don't know how to do that." But what reporting really is, and what editors really just need in that way is they need facts.



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I was re-listening to some recordings of conference sessions that I've been to recently in which editors, either in a panel or individually, talked about what they want from writers. And one of the editors was saying, essentially, it wasn't don't make things up, but it was basically if you have written something down in the field, check it. Make sure that that is right. And Tim Leffel said very, honestly...

Listen to your guide, as in don't be on your phone posting pictures to Instagram, but also know that your guide might not be telling the truth. Not because they're trying to mislead you, but they just, in their training or somewhere, heard a story that's an anecdote or a fact that they didn't check. So, part of being in the stable is being reliable, is turning in a copy that is factually accurate, that is easy to read, and that requires few revisions.

Another part of that is editors knowing that you are there when you need them. And we're going to talk about some different ways that that works in a couple minutes. But first, for a second, because in order to understand how to become part of an editor's stable, how to work with them regularly, I need you all to pretend that you're editors to imagine what it is like to be an editor. And I just realized I didn't put this quote in.

But someone had asked in the Facebook group for a Pitchapalooza Program recently. "It looks like a magazine bases a lot of its issues on themes. Should I write the editor and ask for an editorial calendar?" And I pulled up a quote from the editor from Coastal Living, which is a pretty major U.S. publication. Regional, but one of the newsstand publications you'd find in most parts of the country.

And she said, "Do not ask me to do things for you. I am an E.R. doctor, and I have seven gunshot wounds, and you are asking me about a cold." Now, this sounds pretty harsh, right? And somebody who has a blogging background, but has not written for print who attended the session at TBEX left and told me, "Oh, my God. Everything she said made me think, 'I never want to pitch this woman.'" But the issue is that if you want to write for big magazines, this is what editor's lives are like.

She's an E.R. doctor with seven gunshot wounds. Don't ask her about a cold. And I so, so often in various Facebook groups or in emails that I get see writers who have these enormous — I don't want to say psychological because that sounds like I'm saying you need a psychiatrist, but enormous kind of emotional issues they have created around a piece or around an interaction with an editor. But an editor is really not thinking about it that hard.



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They need them from you, they need something from you, they say it. Sometimes the way they say it doesn't sound very nice, and you read into it, and so on, and so forth. But literally, every month, especially the big magazine editors, but also small magazine editors who today tend to have to edit more than one magazine. These editors have to achieve perfection over an enormous amount of content, over a book-length amount of content and photos.

And there are so many players, so many pieces involved in that process that they have to interact with. Well, at their office, they aren't just sitting there either reading their email and fielding pitches or editing your piece. They have to make decisions about issues that are months from now. The issue they're working on now, issues that have already gone to press perhaps, and now have had some issue come up in which there was a factual error, and now, they have to run around and change all the things of the copy.

They might have a photo that just doesn't work anymore that was supposed to be on the cover, and they're scrambling to find a cover photo because the issue needs to go out. They have so many fires that they are trying to put out, and you, as the freelance writer, especially as a freelance writer who doesn't have a full slate of work, have so much time to read into these emails that they write you. And I'm not just saying that you need to not do that.

I'm saying that as you are interacting with editors, you need to put yourself in their shoes and think about how much stuff they have on their plate, and what you can do to make their lives easier. This is the number one, number one, number one thing that I want you to take away from this topic of how to become part of an editor's stable. Is that the best possible thing that you can do for any editor is to make their life easier. Now, people who are afraid of pitching tend to think that their pitch is an inconvenience to the editor somehow.

They think the editor won't have time to read it, or what if they just don't like it, or why would they read my pitch, I'm a nobody. If you have some other things, chime in. I'll mention them anonymously. But there's a lot of different ways that writers think that they are bugging editors by pitching them. But the fact of the matter is why do editors bother to read pitches from writers they've never heard of, right? Why would they take that time, if they have all this stuff to do?

Why would they ever bother to do that, if it wasn't important for them? It is important for them because editor's lifeblood is ideas. They need those ideas from you, from new people, from new places, because they have been covering this same thing forever. They might have something they would love to do a story on, and just



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they've never found a writer who knows the area, or lives in the area, or has access, or whatever it is.

And you are finally the person that they have been waiting for all this time. Or perhaps they just have a hole that came up. One of their regular writers got in an accident and can't do a piece for them, and they have this hole, and they need to fill it with something. But that something isn't just anything. That something needs to be geographically balanced with everything else that's in that issue and in that section.

And that something needs to be something they haven't run recently, and that they don't have on the slate to run the next month. And so, even though it needs to be kind of anything, it needs to fill a lot of specific checkboxes. And so, what you're sending them might be the answer to exactly what they need that day. And so, this is really important to keep in mind with an editor.

Is that the best way to become part of their stable, to become on their good side, to become somebody whose pitches they accept, or even just read in the first place, is to show them that you understand what they need. Okay? And we're going to talk more about specifically how to do that in a couple minutes. But sometimes people complain that it's hard to break in to magazines because the editors are only working with people in the stable or people that they already know.

I hear this a lot. And, in fact, I just kind of — I didn't end up going to this session, but I just died of laughter because during an editor's panel at a conference in the Pacific Northwest, the editor of Seattle Magazine, in response to a question about how to pitch her, said, "Well, I've basically made it impossible to pitch me. I've said on our website, 'Don't send me pitches.' I have a bunch of writers that I work with, so I don't get too many new pitches anymore, thank God."

And she was teaching that session on how to pitch an editor. So, my point in saying that is that editors can sound like they are negative about pitches, but that's because they don't want pitches that suck, quite honestly. They don't have a lot of time, and they need to spend that time on the fastest route to getting their magazine published. So, a lot of editors choose to primarily or as much as possible work with writers they already know because it feeds what we talked about in the last slide.

It keeps them on all of their other tasks. They're not triaging new writers. They're not making sure that the copy is correct or in line with their style. It just saves them time. But does that mean that you can't get in? No, it doesn't. And here's why. Because every regular contributor to a magazine is one of us, is a writer, who has things that



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they're interested in, other tasks on their plate, other things going on in their lives, other ambitions.

Maybe they want to write a book, or they want to write a guide book, or they want to move somewhere else. And so, they don't stay forever. It's really rare for a writer to have been writing for the same magazine for like 30 years. And especially not to be doing multiple pieces a month for the same magazine for 30 years because people's interests change. People's availability changes. All sorts of things change.

In the vast world of magazines out there, and the couple to dozen or 20 plus sections in each of those magazines that are available to freelancers, there are always sections, always magazines where there are turnover, where there are regular contributors who are on the way out, or need to leave, or should be pushed out. And I'm going to tell you a couple stories about those in a little bit. I just had a couple of things over here.

Oh, someone was saying, "Speaking of editors, did you enjoy it when you were?" That's a great question, Michelle, actually, and I'll answer that because I think it's really pertinent to what we're talking about here. So, when I was an editor, I was an editor of a wine magazine, and my publisher, so my boss had the opinion that — no, he didn't have a journalism background, and most publishers don't. Most publishers understand very little about publishing and much more about sales.

This is very common, and this is often why editors will give you crazy directives that contradict what they told you in the first place. So, my publisher was of the opinion that people who didn't know wine, who didn't work in wine, didn't get it, and shouldn't be writing for us. And so, we didn't have very many people who were proper writers writing for us. We had a lot of one-industry people.

What that meant was that every single issue, I was effectively writing/rewriting every single piece in the entire magazine in addition to making decisions on layout, and photoshoots, and going to events, tasting wine, and helping the tasting director write up his wine notes so that he didn't say acidity 35 times in 50 different wine notes. So, this is a good example of the type of things that editors are dealing with that you have no knowledge about.

You think that you are writing the best piece that you can and worry what the editor thinks about it. But the editor doesn't even think about that. If your piece comes in, and it's usable, and they can fix it up on their own, then that's just like a check off their list. And it sounds harsh, and that's why some people were like, "Oh, my God.



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I'm never going to pitch that mean, mean Coastal Living editor." But this is the reality of the situation for editors.

And the sooner you come to terms with that, the much better off you're going to be both on your own psychologically in these interactions, as well as being successful in these dealings. So, I just pulled this out of the database. This was a piece, a database article, that just went up this week or very recently. So, I remembered when I was editing this, and I edit again now. So, if you have questions about what it's like now to edit, I can also chime in on that.

But I remember looking at this piece and just being blown away by the number of frequent contributors that this magazine has. And so, I just wanted to show you because this is really common that the front-of-book sections, which we think of as columns, like somebody has a column in a magazine or in a newspaper. Those are things that are really easy to assign to one person every month because they tend to be very specific.

They tend to have a certain structure. They tend to have a certain focus, and the editor knows that they have to be there every month. So, for an editor to have to find a new person every single month to write those sections is God awfully annoying. And so, it's a really big relief for them to know that that is going to be taken care of.

This is a really extreme example. I think there's like 22 odd sections in here, but of things being written by frequent contributors. But I've worked with a lot of magazines, and in the trade magazines, this is super common where the front-of-book sections are predominantly written by the same people every month, even if it's not officially a column that's out in their name.

I'm going to talk later about how having a specialty, which is really the case here, is one of the best ways to break into the stable. But I just — I'm going to minimize my thing so I can see. But I just want to point out to you here how specific these are. So, this is — so, Gourmet Traveller is a big magazine in Australia, and this is their wine publication, which is separate. And I don't have it in front of me, but I believe it comes out every other month.

In this — in their front-of-book, and again, if you're not familiar, front-of-book means the section of the magazine before the feature start that tends to be composed of smaller or page-long, or sometimes even two or four page-long pieces that tend to fall into predetermined categories. So, in the front-of-book of this magazine, you'll



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see. And this is also something common. It's a wine magazine, but they've got a craft beer section and a spirit section. Okay?

Many times, magazines will be about one thing, but they'll have sections in the front-of-book or in the back of the book, which is what comes after the feature, which also has many predetermined sections which are often short and shorter than the features. In those two sections, they might have recurrent section that happen every month that are about something that's not — that's like gently related to the magazine, right.

In a lot of airline magazines, there's a front-of-book or back-of-book section that is a science section. There's a business section. There's potentially a politics section. Okay? So, these kinds of sections are the things that editors aren't necessarily getting pitches about, right. So, this wine magazine might not be getting tons of craft beer pitches. They might not be getting like this Asian perspective.

I don't even know exactly what that means, but it's probably not something that they're getting a consistent amount of pitches every month. Right? So, when you identify something like this that is probably hard for an editor to fill, that's a great spot, it's a great candidate for you to become a frequent contributor to help though. So, we've talked about how working with frequent contributors save tons of time for editors. What it really does for writers as well.

There's two main advantages as they're broken down into a couple different sections for you as being part of the stable. And I just want to say I didn't even mention here the money. Okay? Because these things both flow into money. So, I never use this phrase, but it's so true time is money, right. But I like to think of it more like everything is trade-off between time and money. So, for instance, I have a non-profit background.

In non-profits, so much stuff is done by volunteers. I have worked with non-profits where everybody is a volunteer, where they have absolutely no paid staff, but they have a budget in the six figures, and they put up like seven or eight theatre productions every year. In non-profit, it's all about using time instead of money. Okay? And so, when we look at freelance writing careers, and I talk about this a lot when we do our freelance travel writing master classes, you start by figuring out what is your hourly rate.

But when you look at your freelance writing career, the single most important thing you have control over is how you spend your time. And most people who aren't



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earning what they would like to be earning are spending a very small amount of their time on revenue-producing activities. They're spending time on their own blog, on social media, on researching magazines, maybe on writing pitches, but very little time on actually writing pieces of writing for which they're getting paid.

Or the flip side is sometimes people are spending a lot of time, too much time, on pieces of work that they're being paid for, but their income is still too low. And that means the hourly rate is too low. So, when they talk here about how the biggest advantages of being part of the stable are saving marketing time and writing time, this is because having to spend less time on these two activities means you have more time to make money.

And when you're part of the stable, you might be pitching an editor ideas. Sometimes they'll be pitching your ideas, but either way, you have that in already. You don't need to send a hundred pitches to get a couple editors to get back to you, or a few editors, or 20 editors. And then have five, or one, or however many of those eventually turn into a piece, which eventually pays you.

You can have five editors that you work with every month, or pretty much every month, and you know that when you send each of them a list of pitches, something on that list is going to get assigned. So, just think about it. It's one, two, three, four, five pitch emails that will get you some number of thousand dollars versus a bunch of pitches or a bunch of time on social media that might get you \$0, or \$20, or \$200.

In terms of saving you pitching time, I think the biggest blackholes in terms of time sucks for people in doing their pitching is the following. Or people skip them all together. But learning the magazine style. So, this is when you start reading the magazine, and you're just reading, and you're reading it, and you tell yourself that you're figuring out what the magazine covers, but you're really just reading it to get a feel for it.

Now, checking what the magazine has covered in the past, this is something that people ask me how far they should check. But you should always do this with your pitches to see if what you're proposing has already been covered. But the thing is that you also need to check. Not just how they covered Puerto Vallarta in this section on cruise ports. You also need to check how they've covered Puerto Vallarta somewhere else in the magazine recently. Have they covered this region?

Have they covered somewhere nearby? Have they covered Mexico too much recently? And so, as you're doing that triage process of has this idea been done too



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recently in these different forms, you're spending a lot of time not reading the magazine for style where you're actually reading articles. But you're spending a lot of time sort of doing a cursory skim over recent issues of the magazine, over past table of contents, over the website, and things like that.

That's a big-time investment. And how much better is it for you to do that, get an assignment, and then the next month you've done it recently enough that you can remember if Vienna river cruises, or Danube River cruises rather, were also covered recently because you just spent a bunch of time looking at these things. Now, understanding the magazine sections, this is something that not enough people spend time doing.

And I really recommend that you start doing a little bit every day, if you're not already doing this. So, if you have the Travel Magazine Database, it's very easy because from the Travel Magazine Database, we take the magazine, and we break down every single section. And the ones that are open to freelancers, we talk about exactly the word count, if it's in first-person or second-person, or third-person, what's been covered in the past, the structure of the articles.

But even if you don't have that, you can spend a little bit of time every day going around on Zinio or Magzter, which are two-way street magazines online, or your bookstore and the pile of magazines you already have, and looking at the structure of the magazines. So, not the content, but the structure of how it's put together and why. How many front-of-book sections does it have? Are they part business, part science with only a little bit of travel? Are they primarily longer sections?

Are they primarily written by frequent contributors? Are the features balanced geographically? Are the features balanced in terms of style; that some are interview and some are narrative? By understanding how the magazine is put together, you understand not only where the section that you are trying to pitch at this moment fits into that. But also, what types of ideas you can offer the editor if that pitch doesn't work, or if that pitch gets accepted, and then they assign you another idea.

Somebody asked what were the names of the magazine sites that I mentioned. And I'm going to send this to all of you. It's Zinio and Magzter I believe are the two main ones we use for the database when we need to find magazines. But I believe most of those two are paid, but Magzter might be free. So, let's talk about writing time now. How many of you get an assignment for a new-to-you publication, and spend an amount of time writing that article that you're kind of embarrassed by?



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Like, you know it's just too long, or that your hourly rate is in the tank, or that you are just spending too much time perfecting it. I was just talking with somebody that I coached the other day about — she says she spends a lot of time just staring at the computer and not doing anything. And I said, "No, no, I doubt that. What are you trying to do when you're staring at the computer?"

And she says she's trying to figure out how to start, or she's trying to figure out what's the right way to say something, or she's trying to choose the right word. How many of you find that this happens to you, primarily with places that you're writing about new versus places that you write for regularly? Great, thanks. So, yeah. So, I think the thing is a lot of us, at this moment, if you don't already have magazines that you're part of a stable of, most of what you're writing for tends to be new-to-you publications.

And then you don't necessarily pitch them again, right? Let me know over here in the chat box. Do you — yeah, yeah. Stephanie had a great answer. When you write for somebody regularly, it's automatic, but new assignments give you pause for multiple reasons. I love that answer. So, I'd also like to know. Do you find when you are writing for a publication for the first time if you do get a number of doubts about it, especially if you run into some things in the email exchange of the editor after you turn it in, or something like that?

How often are you pitching a new idea to somebody after you file that first article? We're going to talk more about this in the next couple slides, but I'd live for you guys, as many of you as can, to chime in about that in the chat box. How often do you pitch again after you file the story for a place? Okay. So, in terms of saving writing time. So, I want to break out the couple different ways that writing for a place regularly helps with that.

And keep chiming in on the side if you pitch again after you've written a piece for a place for the first time. So, one of the big ways that you save time is these little things we were talking about of being not sure, right, being not sure what the style is, being not sure what the structure is, being not sure what the editor wants. So, when you are writing for a place for the second time, or the third time, or the fifth time, you have a certain level of confidence that you've done it right because the editor gave you another assignment, right.

But you also know because you can look at the piece that you published with them previously and see what changes the editor made. So, you actually not just have this kind of anecdotal approval, but you can actually see what they let in, and what they



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changed, and what they didn't let in. And so, you can know very factually what works for them and what doesn't. And you also know the submission style.

There's often magazines that have very stringent and specific requirements in terms of how you should be sending information about your sources or fact-checking information. I wrote for a magazine one time, horrible experience. So, don't ask me which magazine it was. But I wrote for a magazine one time where it was really difficult to get the contriving of the writer's guidelines, and then I finally got them the day the piece was due, and because it was due that day, I had already drafted it.

And they had like a two-and-a-half-page, like two-column list of words that you can't use. And it was a food magazine, and so, it was kind of like words that they thought were overused by food writers. But it was crazy because I had to go back and rewrite the whole piece because they were so strict about the word choice. So, knowing the style of the submission from the get-go, and being able to write your piece in that way, because these busy editors aren't always sending us their submission guidelines right up front.

Usually, we just file a piece, and then they say, "Oh, we need all this fact-checking information. You need to go back and annotate every other line with the link to where we can find this information." So, knowing that in advance helps you write your piece much faster. But one of the most important things is having a rapport with the editor, so that if you aren't sure along the way, you feel confident that you can just — oops, sorry — that you can just write them and ask.

Sorry, I was trying to check the chat box. Okay, there we go. So, now that we've talked about what the stable is and why you want to be part of it, I want to look at how you become part of it. Now, I have a couple notes here. First of all, this is in all caps, and that's not a mistake. And on the bottom, I say, "These are in order of importance." And you'll notice the one in all caps is Show You Understand the Magazine.

These five things in this slide, these are the basics. These are not the basics just in terms of content, but these are the basics in terms of getting your foot in the door in the first place. So, these are the ways that you get the editor to assign you a pitch. Oh, God. Sorry, guys. That the way that you get an editor to assign you a pitch in the beginning. And I'm just going to go back up to Stephanie's question.

Earlier, she asked: How do you query an editor when you don't have enough for the type of guidelines they're looking for? Surely, a compelling query can catch their eye.



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And this is the answer. So, the way to get an editor's attention, first and foremost, is to have a good idea. But you'll notice have a good idea is actually the third one on here, and that's because part of the goodness of the idea, the quality of the idea, is how well it fits the magazine.

And when I say part, I really mean that's one of the major, major parts because if you see that a magazine has a specific section that they haven't covered the specific place in the past, and that that specific place is similar to, but different in a fresh way than these other places, that is solid. And so, I say, and you may have heard me say, and a lot of editor's say. A place is not an idea, but if it is a recurring section in a magazine like a sort of city guide or something like that, then the city is the idea.

It's sort of this weird catch-22, but what makes it an idea is that you are pitching the city for a specific column in the magazine. So, you're pitching the city as a guide to what is new in Reykjavik, or what is new in Berlin, or what is new in Houston. So, you're not just pitching Houston. You're pitching a city guide that is 800 words that's a roundup with seven sections for Wow Magazine's City Guide. That's what you're pitching.

Showing that you understand the magazine happens through the quality of your ideas. And one of the editor panels that I went to recently that I was re-listening to, the editor from Coastal Living, she said she wants to see the word pitch and your topic in the subject line. And this is the way that I always teach people to write subject lines. As a lowercase-word pitch, so lower case word pitch; and then the title of your article, and then the name of the section that it's for.

This is a signaling mechanism to editors. It helps them understand right off the bat that you understand the magazine because you are pitching to a specific section, and that's very attractive to them because I would say at least 95% of the pitches that most editors get don't pitch a specific section of the magazine. So, you're immediately catapulting to the top of their what is this list by having that in your subject line.

Now, showing that you are not crazy. This is number two on the basics here. Okay? Because when I say 95% of people aren't pitching to a specific section of the magazine, I then want to say that probably 60%, yeah, I think that's about right, of the pitches that most editors get, and I'm talking about globally, all editors, different levels of publications, from the pays \$20 to the pays \$2,000. At least 60% of the pitches that these editors get, they could never ever use, and they just don't even understand why the person has sent this.



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It's somebody sending a mountain story to the editor of Coastal Living. It's somebody sending a beach island story to the editor of Mountain Living. It's somebody sending a story on Botswana to — let's see, I was going to say U.S.A. Today, but a story of Botswana to the Denver Post, which only covers regional things in the Rocky Mountains. And that's the low level of the off-base stuff they get.

They get things from people who are saying, "I'm writing my memoir, and here's an excerpt of it. That's a perfect fit for your magazine. Your readers will love it. Please publish it." And then there's the people that are really like batshit crazy. My favorite thing is an editor said one time that they had somebody who pitched them something and then called them every day for like two or three years and like every Thursday at 4 o'clock or something to check in on the pitch.

Showing that you're not crazy. Again, it's after understanding the magazine because this is something that's a little harder to show. But showing that you're not crazy is also one of the most important things that you can do in your pitch. And part of the way to show that is these other sections. So, now, when I say show you have good ideas, I talk about how part of the good idea factor is related to how much you've understood the magazine.

But you'll also need to understand what is an idea. And this is a huge thing that people struggle with that it's fundamental if you want to write regularly for a magazine. So, how do you understand what's a good idea? Can I even tell this to you in one sentence? Because we have whole weekend workshops around that. The Pitchapalooza spends a lot of time on this.

It's one of the biggest things that I spend time teaching, and we do query critiques and coaching. So, the simplest way to know if you have a good idea is to tell it to somebody else in person, live, and see if they want to hear more. That's the simplest, simplest way. In terms of coming up with a good idea, that's a whole other story, and we have a lot of webinars on that, and I can talk more about that some other time.

But it's really fundamental for the editor, before you're writing, ahead of your writing, to know that you have good ideas. The editor of 5280, which is the Denver City Magazine, was saying, "If you have a good idea, I can help you with the writing, but if you're just a good writer, but you don't have anything to write, I can't help you there." So, having a good idea goes a long way, but it has to also fit the magazine.



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I've had some really nice rejection notes from really big newsstand magazine editors before where they said, "I love this idea. I don't think we can use it right now, but let me know where it ends up. I would love to read it." So, that's the kind of thing where even if you didn't get this part right somehow, you have a good idea. You can still ingratiate yourself with the editor. So, these are all ways you can ingratiate yourself with the editor, but if you want to become part of the stable, you really need to have the whole package.

Now, showing you're a professional seems like it would go part in part with showing you're not crazy, but showing you're a professional goes further. So, showing you're a professional means using these signaling mechanisms like the subject line that I talked about. And somebody asked me what it is again.

And if you check out on our website, on the blog there's a post about writing pitches in 15 minutes, and we have a whole sort of fill in the blank thing about how to put together your pitch in that blog post. I can't get it for you right now because I'd have to X that over the slide screen. But if you look up 15-minute pitch on the Dream of Travel Writing Blog, then you'll find it, and that has the headline formula.

And it's also — if you have The Six-Figure Travel Writing Roadmap book, it's in there as well. The headline formula. So, part of showing you're a professional is using these signaling mechanisms to show that you understand how journalism and how magazine publishing works. So, one of the signaling mechanisms is to put the word pitch in your subject line, and to put the topic.

Another signaling mechanism is to keep it short and to the point. One of the biggest mistakes that I see from people who — it often happens with people who are used to writing their own blogs or writing for other online outlets where space is not so much of a premium. But they write very, very long pitches that have a lot of information both about the article and about the writer. And print editors are used to everything being very short.

Their emails are short because they don't have time for long emails. Their word counts in their magazines are short because they don't — because it costs more to print longer articles. Everything is really short for them. So, part of being a professional is showing that you can get to your point quickly, and that you know what your point is. And this flows into the next one. So, do people want to see your clips?



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This depends. It depends on the editor, and it depends exactly what they're looking for. Resoundingly, never ever, ever just put your portfolio and your pitch. I've started seeing this going around, and I think there must be some travel writing courses that are teaching this, but never just say, "If you want to know more about me, here's the link to my portfolio."

Don't do it. And especially don't say, "And if you want to know more about me, you can read some of my writing on my blog." Don't do it because — I can't see it right now. Sadly, my notes are on another slide. But the editor from Coastal Living said, "If you do that, you've missed an opportunity because I won't go there. I just don't do it. I'm not being mean, but I just don't have the time."

Editors are not going to go to your portfolio and dig around. If they want to see your clips, then you will send them specific articles. And I really liked the way that the Coastal Living editor outlined it. She said — so, this is if people ask you for clips. Don't put this in your query letter. Okay? "If people ask you for clips, you want to include a narrative clip, a clip that shows a sense of place, and a service clip." Okay?

I'm going to send this out to all of you. So, these are the three types of clips you should send if someone asks you. Now, the second part of this though is that you should also — if you are sending clips, you should also send clips that are related to the type of article you are pitching. This is very important. Don't just send them your best clips if they show a style of writing that is not what the magazine needs or what this particular article needs because that doesn't matter to the editors.

It doesn't help them decide if they should assign this particular piece of writing to you. Okay. So, let's get into after the pitch. Once you've started working with the editor. How then do you help show that you should become part of the stable? Now, I just want to preface this by saying that it does not take long to become part of the stable. Sorry, I'm chronically dehydrated since I got to Iceland. Just give me one second.

I asked an editor point blank the other day in a workshop: How long does it take for people to become part of your stable? How many assignments, how many months, whatever? And I'd love for you guys to guess how many months he said. Just chime in in the chat box. So, this particular editor was doing a session on essentially how to work well with editors, how to work with them on an ongoing basis, how to become part of the stable, more or less.



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He talked about pitching, but he also talked about the ongoing relationship, and he talked about his own frequent contributors, and frequent contributors for other publications, and he also manages more than one publication and has been an editor of a different publication in the past. Oh, hi, Lenora. So, a couple of you got it. So, two to three months was what he said.

I see a lot of five, six months. One person said one month. It can happen, but it's usually two or three. Two or three articles or two or three months. Okay? So, that is not that long, guys. Somebody asked me the other day: How long does it take you to set up a recurring income as a travel writer? And if you're doing something on contract like content marketing or getting writing gigs online where they're going to assign you a certain amount of stuff every month, it can be much faster.

You can put in your — you can set up your whole income in a week, if you bust your butt marketing. With magazines though, you can definitely spend a month pitching a bunch of different places, and then get some assignments, do those assignments, figure out which editors you don't want to keep working with. And we're going to talk about that at the end of the webinar as well, which ones you don't want to keep in your own stable.

And then after two or three months, have a brand-new set of editors that you are working with regularly that you like, and they like you, and you have your work. You have your work planned out for the next year. So, this isn't something that takes forever to set up. If that's too long for you, and you need an income more quickly, I recommend going the content marketing route, but this is not the type of thing where you have to wait two or three years.

Sorry, Donna, ask me that question again at the end of the call. Okay? Because it's not quite relevant to what we're talking about right now. So, let's talk about a couple different ways to become part of the stable. So, again, I've put these kind of in order. The order isn't quite as clear as earlier where one is infinitely more important than the next one. So, you can do a combination of all of these different ways of being part of the stable. But some will get you there faster.

Having a specialty the editor desperately needs is one of the things that's going to get you there faster. So, I'm going to tell you three different stories about this, and they're all slightly different situations. So, the editor of Northwest Travel and Life, which like Sunset or Coastal Living, is a major regional publication, but primarily in the Northwest. So, you won't see it on newsstands if you live anywhere else, but it's kind of the major regional travel publication there.



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He was looking for somebody who could cover basically architecture, but something a bit specific. So, it was like someone who is very familiar with the architectural history of the Northwest. So, not just architecture, but of his area and of specific types of buildings. So, this is not going to be something that every writer who pitches him has the reporting where I'll potentially do this. He wanted somebody who already had a familiarity.

He had spent a while kind of waiting for pitches to come in or grooming one of his writers. That wasn't working. He went on a website where you can put out a call for writers. He got a lot of people back. He had tried to work with some of them. It didn't work out. He even went so far as, I think, to post on Craigslist or something that he was looking for a writer who could work in the specialty.

He still couldn't find anybody. So, part of the story is how all these people didn't work out. Why did these people not work out? We'll get to that in one of the next couple slides. But what he ultimately had to do was he had to cruise the table of contents of other magazines and find somebody by poaching them from another magazine that was what he was looking for, and write to that person and ask if they would be interested in writing for his magazine.

If you have an area of specialization — I mentioned this when we were talking earlier about the Gourmet Traveller WINE Magazine. If you have an area of specialization that is hard for the editor to get enough articles in that area, you are golden. The editor might have spent ages looking for this person, and you just have no idea. And you can often use that area of specialization not just for editors who are desperate because they don't have a writer, but for editors who are desperate because they have a writer who is not working out.

And I think I have a specific quote from this editor in a couple slides. So, I'll just tell you the short version of this. But the editor who lead the panel on how to work with editors and how to build relationships with editors, one of the magazines that he edits is about boating. And it's about boating in a specific geographic area. And so, some of the sections are more travel-oriented, and some of the sections of the magazines are more technical. And so, he really needed people with that background.

And he had somebody who had been working with the magazine for a very long time, longer than he had even been there, and this person just started essentially to flake. And he had to say to the guy one day, "You're just — your heart is just not in this anymore, right?" And he was like, "Yeah, I just am not really interested in doing this anymore."



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And then he had to find somebody quite suddenly, but it turned out that one of his other writers had said, "Oh, by the way, I also have this background. In case you need something for that section. I know so and so is writing it right now." And so, he was able to turn to this other writer that he had worked with that he didn't use for this specialty in the past, but who had it, and immediately give that writer that column.

I've had a similar situation where I was writing for a couple magazines that were under one editor, and he also had a magazine that was about meetings, about sort of people who plan conferences and things like that. And I had been writing for some other magazines about conferences for some time, and had developed quite a Rolodex, so to say, of contacts, and I knew the industry very well.

And my editor at this other publication had kind of asked me if I'd be interested in, writing for the meeting magazines, but I had a non-compete, so I couldn't do it. And then somebody who wrote several columns for him was going on maternity leave. And so, he basically said, "Look, I can give you two columns for the next this much time." And I said, "Okay. Well, like I guess I can do that. How long is it going to be?"

And I got that all figured out. And then what happened was that I had so impressed them slash done better, had more knowledge of the industry in the time I had taken over those columns, that when she came back from maternity leave, they rearranged to give her some other stuff so that I could keep those columns. So, if you just know something very, very well, and again, it can be architecture, it can be technical boating aspects, it can be having the right contacts, you can warm your way in into these things, even if there is already a regular contributor there.

So, this is what I was saying. Even though editors prefer to work with people they already know, you can still get in there, guys. You still can. So, don't be crazy part two. Now, I just told you about this boating guy, right, who basically had stopped turning in his work, or he had started turning it in later, later, later. So, this is one type of crazy, but this isn't the crazy that I want to talk to you about. Don't be crazy after you get the assignment as to supposed to in your pitch letter means don't start telling the editor your whole life story.

Don't start telling the editor, "Oh, I'm so sorry, I didn't respond to your email within one hour. My dog is really sick, and then I got a call from the hospital because my grandmother just had surgery-" It is not only not the editor's business, it is unprofessional, and the editor who is strapped for time will be like, "Why is this person sending me these emails that I need to read to see if there's actually something important at the end because I have an assignment going on right now? I would rather work with somebody else who isn't sending me emails like this. Okay?"



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I have one person who writes for the database who I think might even be on here right now. There she is. Hi, Vanessa. Who is fantastic. We met in London the other day, and she's going on I believe it is a long like five-week trip or something to Costa Rica to go scuba diving because she's a certified scuba instructor as well. And she's just going to leave all her work. She's just going to figure out when to do it. I do the same thing.

I'm in Iceland right now for a conference, but I'm doing this call. And I have another writer who will tell me, "Oh, I'm going to be in such and such place between this and this day. I'm going to be in such and such place between this and this day. I'm leaving on this day to go blah, blah, blah." And I'm like, "I don't care. You have your work, and you have assignments, get them done and tell me when you're going to give them to me. I don't need to be remembering your travel schedule. I need to know when I'm getting these articles from you and know that they will actually come in on at that time."

Crazy seems like a bit of a strong word here, but oversharing might be another word. But essentially, don't be unprofessional is really what it comes back to. Keep the personal out of your interactions with your editors, unless they have very gently opened that door to becoming slightly more friendly. Now, part of this being professional thing is remembering that you are on the same team, and that you have the same goals.

And when you start talking too much about what your personal challenges are, or other deadlines you have, or anything like that, you're talking about your own goals, and not the shared goals that you have with the editor. And so, these times when an editor emails you an edit, or asks you if you can change something, or any other request like that, that you take as an affront; an affront to the quality of your work, to some agreement that you believe that you had, what have you.

You have lost sight of the mutual goal, which is to put out a clean, interesting article for the editor's publication and focus on your own personal goal. And this always leads to bad things. Okay? It's the same way as you if you have a significant other or a spouse, or if you ever have had a significant another in your life, and you're having a spat about something.

These spats tend to escalate once people defensively retreat into only caring about their own interests. So, when you retreat into caring only about your own interests, what keeps the editor from doing the same thing? What keeps the editor from just saying in the middle of the assignment, "You are too much of a pain to work with. I would rather get somebody reliable in my stable who is just going to say, 'Yeah,' and



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turn this around in two days to do this than continue dealing with you, even though you have a good idea and we agreed that you would do this assignment”?

Don't put the editor on their back feet, so to say. Don't make the editor defensive by being that way yourself in your emails, or in your tone, or anything like that. So, related to that — I'm going to switch to the next side and come back. Related to that is say yes. Okay? Now, I'm going to talk about the caveats about those particular types of saying yes. But I popped in some quotes here from an editor panel that I wanted to share with you.

“Nothing should ever be a problem for you that we ask you to do.” Again I'll talk about caveats about this later, but this is from the editor's mouth. “The editor is always right, even when they're not. Don't tell them you're too busy, you have another assignment, or don't have time for them.” Now, I am super the champion of writer's rights. So, like I said, I will talk about the times that you should put your foot down about this in the back or later in the call, but this is how the world is for editors. Okay?

This is really important to know that if you want to be part of the stable, this is how you need to appear to them. You can go complain to your significant other, or your spouse, or your friends about how crazy this editor is, and so on, and so forth, but in your actual correspondence, if you want to have a relationship with them, this is how you need to appear. I had an editor who, again, like I said, you don't tell them when you're going on vacation.

I was actually going to be not on email for a while. And so, I told an editor that I'd literally email like every other day. “Look, I'm gone this time. I'm not going to take assignments. I'm gone.” And he had a whole feature fall through in one of his publications, and he wrote me, and he was like, “Look, I know you're on vacation. Do you have anything, even something you've already written for another magazine that I could just rewrite?”

Literally, this is how desperate he was. He was like, “Do you have anything? Like anything at all?” And I felt bad, and I didn't just want to give him something horrible. So, I went and hid out somewhere, and I wrote him a piece in a couple days, a whole feature based on something I had already done, but I had to rewrite it. So, that's the kind of thing that will make an editor love you forever.

And I'm not saying that you should interrupt your five-year anniversary to write a feature for an editor, unless it's a really, really lucrative and valuable relationship for



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you. And then it might make sense. But there's smaller versions of that, right. There's like, "Can you — do you have photos for this? I know we didn't ask you for photos, but it turns out we couldn't find the ones we needed, or we couldn't get a photographer," something like that. "Do you have them?" Okay?

These are the kind of things that coming through for an editor, like I said earlier, making the editor's life easier, is the single biggest thing that you can do because there's a human psychological tendency that if you help someone, they want to help you. And just getting your work done, just doing the assignment, to an editor doesn't insight that. That's not helping them. That's doing what you have been paid to do. But going above and beyond does.

It does insight the tendency in them. So, related to this though, this is the flip side of going above and beyond that often people miss. I'm curious. How many of you guys, before you file a story or a piece, check, double check that your assignment letter and that your pitch letter actually corresponded with what you ended up writing, what you ended up filing?

You go back and you double check that every single thing you said in your pitch that you were going to include you've actually included. Great. I'm so glad to see at least one of you doing that. Oh, good. Good, good, good. Because this is a really easy thing to forget. You might have said in your pitch, "I'm going to mention this, this, and this," and then as you were researching, you found this other thing that was interesting, or the real story was really this.

So on and so forth. Or you just really liked this story from a particular angle, and that angle just didn't include this thing. And then you go to turn it in, and the editor is like, "Well, where is blah, blah, blah?" So, write what you were assigned, in part, is did you write what you told the editor you were going to write. But another part of this is are you and the editor both understanding what you said you were going to write the same way. Okay?

This is actually the much tougher part, and the part where a lot of us run into problems. So, I've seen a lot of people in different Facebook groups that I'm in say — I just saw a sob story about this today actually. That say things like, "I wrote this piece. I sent it to the editor. They weren't very happy with it, and they wrote me back with all these questions and all these changes. And I did those, and then I sent it to them, and now, they've sent me back even more."



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I know exactly why this happens, and in fact, when I do rewrites of things that are massive rewrites, I always need to go back two or even three times. And that's why I have a rule with the database that when I'm doing trial assignments, which are paid, but when I'm doing trial assignments with writers, if that first version that comes to me, if I see it and I know that I will have to do another round of edits after that, they're out because it's this rabbit hole of edits.

And so, editors don't do this with you because they're not interviewing you for long-term assignments in the same way. They just get the assignment from you, and then they decide not to assign you something again. But editors can see when they get something from you if it's one round of edits away from what they wanted, or if it's multiple round of edits away from what they wanted.

But you don't know that because the whole reason it's that many round of edits away from what they wanted is because you didn't understand what they wanted. And this is a really, really tough thing to start to get in line with. And so, I highly recommend if you and your past history of writing have had this happen to you where editors come back with what seems to you like an unreasonable number of changes, take a couple minutes later today, or tomorrow, or next week, to look at your pitch letter.

And to look at what they asked you to change, and see what the relationship between those things was because I really bet you that the editor thought they were getting something else from you from your pitch than what you ended up giving them. And what you gave them was in line with your idea of the piece, which may have been formulated before you even picked up this magazine, before you even saw this section of this magazine.

And it may have been your idea of the story, and you just didn't mold it to that magazine enough, and you just wrote it the way you originally imagined. So, a really clear thing on this, like I included this quote here. "Don't send a 3,500-word story, especially past deadline, when I've commissioned 2,000 words." This is a big editor pet peeve to write over word count. I've also heard people say you should always write 10% over word count so they can cut whatever they want and have it then be in the word count.

I've also seen people ask do I get paid based on the word count I've turned in. No, you are always paid based on the word count that was assigned. But this is a really big one. Okay? So, sometimes you realize that the story does just need to be longer. Then you need to bring that up to your editor, and especially if the editor has asked you for a bunch of new stuff. I see this happen a lot.



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If the editor has asked you for a bunch of changes, then you need to say, "I can't incorporate this new information and stay at the same word count. Do you want to make the word count longer, or would you like to take something out?" And this gets to my next — hopefully, my next point. I will come back to that. Trust and communication. Literally, everything in the editor-freelancer relationship, whether you are writing for a magazine, or a website, or just doing content marketing, comes back to these two things.

All professional relationships come back to these two things. The first step is to build trust, and the second part is to maintain it with communication. I have found unilaterally that everything freelance relationship that goes bad happens because this is broken, and once the line initially become tenuous, once it becomes frayed, it's not fixed with communication, and it snaps.

And you could never put does threads back together. So, all of these different little things that I'm talking to you about are all related to this. Okay? They're all related to building trust, or maintaining trust, and the types of communications that flow into that. So, we're over time. So, I just want to redo this quote, which is related to what we were talking about before about showing that you have ideas and showing that you can step up.

This is the editor quote that I was telling you about earlier with the guy that flaked on him after 30 years. So, he said, "I definitely have a stable, but I have few people that are difficult to work with and kind of annoying, but the stuff they do is specialized, so I put up with it. Some regular people send in great stuff all the time, and then they send me stuff I'm not super stoked about, but it's like the free one you give away to keep the relationship going."

What he means here is I'm not going to dump somebody just because they sent in one story I didn't like. But he said with the boat guy it became — there was a word missing here. I couldn't figure out what it was. It became that he was like the Monday after deadline. Then it was a week before the issue went to press. Then it was the Monday of the week that the issue was going to press. Then it was the day before the issue was going to press.

And then he missed a deadline. And that was when he put his foot down. Now, this is really generous that he let this go on for like six weeks. And a lot of times, people come to me freaking out because they missed a deadline by like a day or two, but it's really important to see here that when you have the trust, you can do that, and it's ok. But to go back to what we were talking about here, if the trust is already frayed, you can't get away with that.



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You need to keep the trust strong with communication. And in this case, the communication was that the guy had been writing for the magazine for 30 years. So, there was a history there. Okay? So, let's talk about times when you are thinking that this just sounds so too easy, and you think that you've done all these things right, and it's just not happening.

Like I said about going back and checking your pitch against the thing that the editors came back to you about, if you are having trouble with all of these different things that I've mentioned will help you to build a relationship. It probably means that you have conceived them differently than the editor. And that's why there's a gap. Because it really is just that simple. I hear editors say all of these pieces of advice time and time again, and if everyone was doing them, they wouldn't have to keep saying them.

But the thing is that the people aren't, like I said earlier in response to Donna's question about can you really still pitch those editors if they're so attached to their stables. People in stables stop doing all of these things that we talked about. I told you about the boating guy, right. Or you're just better than the person in the stable, and the editor realizes that, and they replace the person.

It's all about building the trust and maintaining it with communication. And as people who were already in the stable break those various things, you have a way in. Or like the gentleman who needed the architecture person, there might be a hole in the stable that the editor is really trying to fill. And as long as you can check these boxes, as long as you can be reliable and say, "Yes," and step in when needed, you can be there.

I told her I was going to talk about sometimes when you do not want to be part of the stable. And when I talk about the timeline of building up your own stable of editors, I've talked about how you send a bunch of pitches, you do the first round of assignments, and then you figure out who you want to keep working with. Okay? Because you don't want to make your own stable with any editor that will have you.

And not just because it sucks, or they pay low, or whatever, but because it's infections. The bad feelings that you feel about an editor who's mistreating you will seep into your other relationships. They'll draw away your desire to work, or your desire to pitch, or your interest, and it'll have a negative impact on everything else. So, if you have one assignment, or even if it's your eighth assignment, or fifteenth assignment with an editor.



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If you have an assignment that really puts you off, that really makes you feel like that trust is broken, and that the communication is not fixing it and is not keeping it up, then that means that that editor does not have a place in your stable. So, I'm just going to go through this quickly cause I know we're over time. So, one of the ways is they have a crazy contract. Condé Nast is famous for having a contract where they buy all book and movie rights to your ideas, and you aren't allowed to work with any competitive magazines for the next year.

That's crazy. Don't do it, in my opinion. If you really want the clip, you can do it, but in my opinion, a crazy contract does not make a long-term relationship. Similarly, and this is me. You can choose to go the other way. But publications that pay on publication. So, that means they don't pay you until the issue with your article on it comes out, and you have no control over when that is because it might come out in a different issue than they've mentioned in your contract or in your assignment letter.

You basically have no idea when you're getting paid. I don't deal with that. I don't think you should either. There's plenty of publications that pay on acceptance, and the ones that pay on publication know it sucks for writers. I have heard this from the editors. They know that they are doing a disservice to their writers. So, don't put up with it. Only write for places that pay on acceptance, especially for people on your stable.

If you want to write periodically for people who pay on publication, fine. But in terms of your stable, you want to know what day that check is coming, especially if you're waiting for it every month. Now, if you have filed a story, and we talked about how busy editors are, they aren't necessarily going to write you the next day and say, "Oh, this is great," or the next day and say, "Oh, here. I have a couple questions." It might be two weeks, it might be two months, it might be four months, and you have no idea.

But if you feel like it's been a long time, and the date of publication that you discussed is coming up, and you haven't heard from them, and you write them, and they don't write you back. They just say, "Oh, I'm sorry. I've been busy. I'll get back to you when I can," that's a red flag. That means that that editor does not belong in your stable because they just don't care about their writers. Okay? And the reason I say that you've written them and you followed up, this is important because sometimes things happen.

Sometimes there's fires that need to be put out. Okay? Or sometimes it's just not on their schedule to be editing that piece right now. So, if in your initial story with an editor you find yourself in one of these situations, don't add them to your stable.



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Likewise, if with your first assignment you find it really painstaking to be paid by the publication, and I don't just mean like in terms of the timeline. I mean the time when they're supposed to pay comes up, and you write the editor, and you write the editor, and you write the editor.

And on the third writing they get back to you and say, "Oh, I don't know. Accounting has it. You'll have to ask them." That's not something you want to be dealing with every month. So, that's not somebody you want to continue to be writing for. So, it goes too far outside of the scope. So, what the scope means, if you don't know, the turn scope. Scope is kind of the breath, the outline, the parameters of the agreement. So, if you have agreed that you will write a piece that is 1,500-words, and you write it.

And then the editor says, "Oh, can you also do a sidebar on this? Oh, can you also do a sidebar? Oh, can you also do photos?" And they just assume that you're doing all of that for the original rate, that is outside of the scope. If you haven't discussed photos in your initial discussions when the editor said the price range, and then they come back and ask you for photos, then you say, "What is the fee for these?"

And if they say, "Oh, there's no fee. All of the writers have to provide photos with their pieces, then you essentially say, "Screw you," and you provide the photos for that time, and then you don't write for them again. If they say, "Oh, this is not..." then you say, "Okay, great. Thanks." And you decide if you want to work within that rate. Okay? But don't let them just presume that they can ask you — no, sorry, that they can expect you to do something else they didn't ask you about before without asking you if it's okay.

If the editor says, "Oh, our photos fell through. Do you have photos we could use this time?" That's different. That's doing the editor a favor, and that can help you later on. Now, if they change what they want after you turn it in not because you didn't understand the assignment, but because of something like a crazy publisher or an editor above them that they can't control, that's not something that you want to deal with every month.

Those are the times that you don't want to work with the editor. But why if I didn't mentioned something on that list, and you just feel like you have no idea what's going on with an editor, with the assignment with your general interactions with the magazine? Like you just — when you're confronted with that publication or those emails, you just kind of feel a little lost, and scared, and out of your depth.



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That also means that you shouldn't add them to your stable. People should only be in your stable who are easy for you to work with and make you happy. You enjoy the interactions that you have with the editor and the pieces that you're doing. Not just because it's nice or it's fun, but because that breeds longevity, that breeds happiness with what you're doing, which brings better work. Okay?

Those are really the criteria for you to decide if somebody should be in your stable as opposed to for the editor to decide if they should put you in their writer's stable.

If you've got any questions, you can hit me up at questions@dreamoftravelwriting.com. And I'm so pleased to have seen all of you guys this week. It's really nice to be back seeing you live, and interacting with you, and having questions.

On the topic of questions, I know there were a couple that came up that I missed during the session. So, feel free to drop those back in the chat box, and I'll get to them now. Thanks so much, you guys. So, Donna asked: When you're writing a pitch, should you say I would like to propose a, name piece for a magazine, or should you say article?

I think the question is should you say piece or article, and that's totally interchangeable, but in terms of — I think this is the line that I use at the close of the magazine because I would never start a pitch saying, "I would like to propose." I would always start a pitch with the lead of the article itself. So, something interesting; an interesting fact, or an anecdote, or a scene. The second paragraph, I do say, "I'd like to propose a thing."

This might be the second paragraph. So, I typically would say the name of the section. So, let's say like a piece for the — I'm trying to think of — for connections that's like the intro of the front-of-book in Hemispheres. I would say like, "I'd like to propose a 500-word piece on the food scene in Adelaide, Australia for connections." I wouldn't say the name of the magazine in that middle paragraph there. I hope that answered your question.

Carrie. Do you have a structure layout sample I could look at and use as a guideline? Structure of what, Carrie? Is this for the pitch? For a travel destination article. No, I don't, but I — in Pitchapalooza right now we've got some people doing some really nice article breakdowns. If you want a structure layout sample, I would say go to like AFAR. Their features are usually pretty clear in terms of layout.



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I would say go to AFAR and take a couple of their features, and break them up into quote, background, history destination info, something like that, and do a couple of those, and you'll see the structure emerge because it tends to be pretty standard for features. If you want to know something more like a magazine section, those it depends entirely on the magazine and the section itself.

That's why I don't just say, "Hey, everybody. Here's how to write a travel destination article," because it's different for every magazine, and you should really hone yourself to the structure of that particular magazine uses. But for general destination features, AFAR is very kind of literary.

A lot of people that write for them teach writing on a literary level like for NYU and things like that. So, that's a good one to look at to learn feature structure, I would say. Okay. I think I got all the questions, or if so the people who have asked them, and they had left and not reposted them. So, thanks so much, you guys. I'll catch you all later.