




*Dream of
Travel Writing*

How to Set Up an Individual Sponsored Trip from Scratch

by Gabi Logan, founder of Dream of Travel Writing

A hand holding a vintage brass compass against a blurred landscape background. The compass is the central focus, showing its intricate details and a green jewel in the center. The background is a soft-focus view of a valley or hills under a bright sky. The text "Today, we're going to talk about..." is overlaid on the image in a clean, black, sans-serif font.

Today, we're going to
talk about...

A wooden desk with a laptop, a bowl of white pebbles, a succulent, and a smartphone.

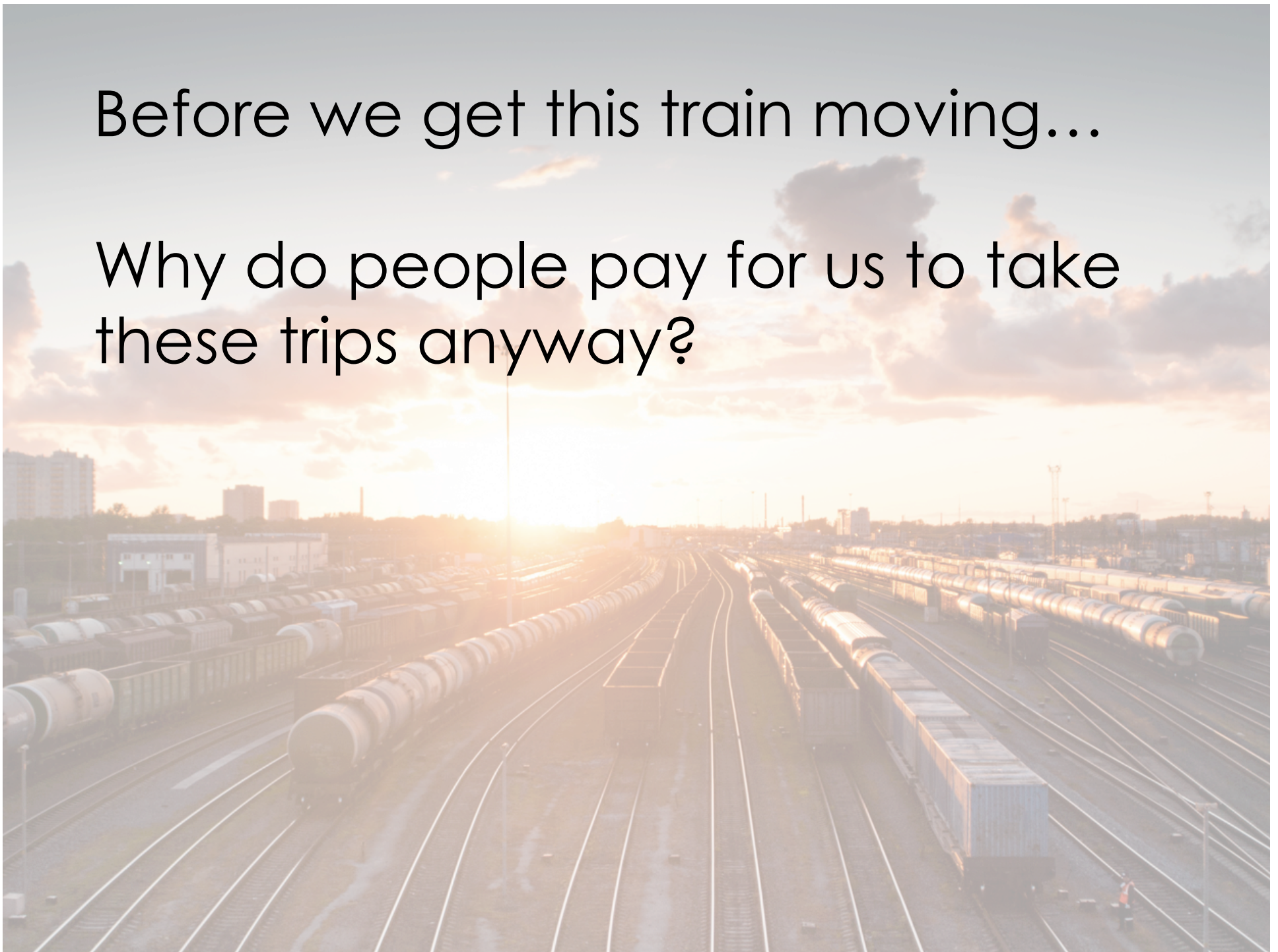
1. The real reason people let you go on these trips in the first place

2. When you shouldn't try to set up an individual sponsored trip

3. The planning process (overview) + in practice

Before we get this train moving...

Why do people pay for us to take these trips anyway?



A person is shown from the chest up, holding a globe of the Earth. The person is wearing a light-colored, patterned shirt. The background is a large, light-colored world map. The text is overlaid on the left side of the image.

We must always
remember:

What is in it for them?



Coverage is **not**
always enough.

(these days)

Don't Try to Set Up an Individual Sponsored Trip When

- You're trying to travel in high-season
- You're looking for free things for more than just yourself
- You're just planning to do one story for one small or online outlet (a.k.a. the Seattle situation)
- **Start with day trips if you're not sure. Then build case studies!**
- There are exceptions to these rules, especially if you've been in the game for a while, but follow if you're new



**Shrinking budgets.
Open-minded editors.**

(Except the Times, of course)

The attack order:

When to go

How to get there

Where to sleep

What to do

Where to eat

The Set Up Process

- Approaching CVBs
- Using hot press releases
- Using CVB “what’s” new lists
- Open “ask” sites (Media Kitty, HARO)
- Tours are the easy part
- Flights and meals are not
- Free attractions work very differently in the U.S. and abroad

Blah Blah Networking Blah Blah

- Hop on the phone. PRs aren't editors.
- Going to lunch (PR firm lists)
- Stopping in to say "hi"
- Interview for a round-up to get the invite for next time
- Where is the real money? (hotels)

August 31: Charlottesville

Sept 1: Asheville

Sept 2: Nashville

Sept 3: Nashville to Eureka Springs (8 hours)

Sept 4: Eureka Springs then depart for Oxford, MS to overnight?

Sept 5: Atlanta (pick up Sat)

Sept 6: Athens, Macon, arrive south coast

Sept 7: Georgia islands (or Charles/Myrtle Beach? a few options here)

Sept 8: Georgia Islands and Charleston, SC

Sept 9: NC south coast and islands, maybe sleep Greenville or outer banks?

Sept 10: more NC Coast? quick stop in Alexandria????

Sept 11: Up east MD shore, through Phila, then home

Charlottesville:

I want to check out the Blue Ridge Mountains for sure: www.goshenandoah.com/
Wine tasting: http://charlottesvillewelcomebook.com/Vineyard_Tours_and_Tastings/
There are some train adventures in the mountains we are heading through.

Asheville:

Biltmore Estate
Maybe the Botanical Gardens: www.ashevillebotanicalgardens.org/
Basilica of Saint Lawrence | Asheville, NC: saintlawrencebasilica.org/
National Forests in North Carolina - Pisgah National Forest
River Arts District
Supper Club: <http://lex18avl.com/>
More on food: http://www.romanticasheville.com/foodie_favorites.htm
Salt therapy: <http://www.ashevillesaltcave.com/>

Nashville:

Great Smoky Mountains
Aerial tram and Oktoberfest: <http://obergatlinburg.com/>

Not sure what James has planned but I would love to get a bourbon with my friend Al.

St Louis:

The arch!
Butterfly House: <http://www.missouribotanicalgarden.org/visit/family-of-attractions/butterfly-house.aspx>
Jewel Box - City of St. Louis: <https://www.stlouis-mo.gov/government/.../Jewel-Box.cfm>
Eads Bridge
Forest Park Forever: www.forestparkforever.org/
Soulard: www.soulard.org/

Eureka Springs:

Ozarks
Art trail: <http://www.arkansasarttrail.com/>
Underground (?): <https://www.reserveeureka.com/buy-tickets/?af=1&attractionid=1001>

Oxford:

The Square: <http://visitoxfordms.com/about-oxford/the-square/>
Lyceum-The Circle Historic District
Holly Springs National Forest
Sardis Lake: Lyceum-The Circle Historic District

Atlanta:

Centennial Park at night

<http://www.exploregeorgia.org/listing/54216-atlanta-food-walks>

The Buckhead neighborhood is my fave area in ATL.

Stone Mountain looks interesting

Warm Springs looks super cute: <http://www.exploregeorgia.org/city/warm-springs>

Helen looks adorable! <http://www.exploregeorgia.org/city/helen>

Blairsville

The autumn views from the top of Brastown Bald, the highest natural point in Georgia,

HWY 246 in North Georgia Mountains

The beautiful fall leaves provide a stunning view on a drive through the North Georgia mountains.

Okefenokee

The Okefenokee Swamp is the largest, intact, un-fragmented, freshwater and black water wilderness swamp in North America.

Brunswick

The Sidney Lanier Bridge, Georgia's tallest cable-stayed suspension bridge, provides easy access to the Golden Isles from Interstate 95.

Georgia coast:

St Simon or Jekyll? There's the private island too :)

<http://www.exploregeorgia.org/article/a-guide-to-georgias-coast>

Savannah:

historic district

Charleston:

Slick website: <http://www.charlestoncvb.com/>

Walking tour: <http://www.charlestoncvb.com/plan-your-trip/tours-attractions~204/walking-tours~1160/charleston-strolls~5601.html>

Greenville looks nice because it's in the mountains but I think we might want to do Outer Banks instead?

Outer Banks:

<http://www.outerbanks.org/>

Movie setting: <http://www.outerbanks.org/outerbanks-nights-in-rodanthe/>

Towns: <http://www.outerbanks.org/outerbanks-towns-villages/>

Kill Devil Hills has the Wright Brothers National Memorial

I want to take pictures of these piers: <http://www.outerbanks.org/outerbanks-nags-head/> I'm sure they are all along the spit

Hatteras Village is home to several great restaurants, but you won't find much in the way of famous fast food restaurants, everything here is locally owned and operated.

This would be fun! <http://www.outerbanks.org/outerbanks-kiteboarding-and-windsurfing/>

Alexandria:

Arts scene, Torpedo Factory Art Center: <http://www.visitalexandriava.com/things-to-do/arts-and-culture/torpedo-factory-arts-center/>

Old Town

Waterfront

Colonial tour by lantern: <http://www.visitalexandriava.com/listings/alexandria-colonial-tours/2785/>



Once you're in...

Folks always want to
show you more...

The background of the slide features a faded, atmospheric photograph of ancient stone statues, likely Mayan or Aztec, situated in a lush, overgrown environment. The statues are partially obscured by mist and dense vegetation, creating a sense of mystery and historical depth. The overall color palette is muted, with greys, greens, and earthy tones.

Combatting the assignment letter chicken-and-egg problem

Please don't say these things when trying to set up individual fams:

- Anything that sounds like you are writing from the 1800s
- That you are one of the most prolific/influential/respected/loved by CVBs/anything in the country (unless you really are)
- That you promise publication
- That you are asking for things ***in exchange***
- You have a relationship with an editor you do not
- You write for a publication you have not historically written for

A hand holding a pen writing on a notepad with a checklist. The notepad has a grid pattern and a checklist with items like 'Drive to work' and 'Moz'. The background is a blurred image of a hand writing on a notepad.

The Pitch Portfolio Trick

(we'll do a whole webinar on this soon)

Thanks so much
for joining us today!

It was a pleasure chatting
travel writing with you 😊

Whenever you need to double check an idea fit, your assumptions about editors, or your self doubt on whether your idea is good, email questions@dreamoftravelwriting.com.

