



Dream of Travel Writing

Writing for Travel Trade Magazines 101

Welcome! This week we're going to be talking about writing for travel trade magazines. And this is really meant to be a baseline 101 introductory salvo into the matter because a lot of you may not have written for magazines at all before or some of you have only written for consumer magazines or newspapers. I see some folks in here that I know that write for newspapers. And trade can seem a bit esoteric or different or "who really reads those things." So, I'm going to try to break down for you what trade magazines are, what they do, what their purpose is and then touch a little bit on how you fit into that equation. But we'll expand more on that in future weeks.

Today what I'm going to talk about in terms of the trajectory is I want to start by talking about why travel trade magazines might be that thing that you are missing. Especially if you prefer for your income to come from writing for magazines whether that's a prestige thing, or you have a journalism background rather than writing for websites. Trade magazines can offer something that I think a lot of people who are stuck in this feast or famine cycle or are waiting a long time to hear back from editors about pitches they're really in love with—something that they really need.

Then we're going to talk about what it's like to write for travel trade magazines. And this especially is where I invite you to ask me a lot of questions because I've been writing for them for quite a few years. Really a lot of articles—hundreds of articles every year. And so I'm very happy to be very transparent about that process and the type of articles I do and the press trips associated with travel trades and how they're different—all sorts of things.

Then we're going to talk about what travel trade magazines are and how first of all they might surprise you—and also how they can be a good way for you to perhaps expand into becoming an expert in other of the travel industry that you don't know too much about that you might be interested in.

Gabi breaks to take a couple of questions:

Somebody says that she has read travel trade magazines having been a travel agent and she wants to learn about writing for them

If you have a background or if you've previously worked in any of the areas that these travel trades touch on, you are the prime candidate to write for them. Because editors often get stuck in this rock in a hard place thing where they would really love to have great writers. And when I say great writers I don't necessarily mean that what you're writing is literary poetry so much as that you are reliable and knowledgeable and know how to do an interview



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and piece together an article. But they get stuck between wanting great writers and wanting people who understand their subject matter who are able to find sources. So you can get away often by providing one or the other of those two things. But if you're able to provide both you're really a shoe-in. And we're going to talk more next week when we talk about letters of introduction—about how to craft your opening introduction to the travel trade magazine editor whether you do have that experience or whether you don't. But if you do have it, that's a really great opening.

Somebody asked (what does it mean) when a publication says they only want service pieces?

Gabi's response: This is a great question that I wanted to answer because I think a lot of people who don't have journalism backgrounds might not know what that means. And I also want to preface by saying I did not go to journalism school. My degree is not only in literature it's in literature in a non-English language so I also didn't go to journalism school. I learned these terms through working and through reading blogs about freelance writing. So, service pieces means it is an article that has a "how to" angle. The article is typically written in second person as in "you can this...after you do this...first you do this." And the article is strongly focused around describing...explaining...providing the reasons for how to do something. So that's what service means.

Somebody has a question on when you're breaking down a magazine, how do you figure out the word count per article without counting each word?

Gabi's response: When I talk about how to pitch magazines I often say you should give a word count for the article that you're pitching. But that should really just be to demonstrate that you have knowledge of the section. And I'm going to get to this later but when you're pitching travel trade magazines you typically are not sending them a traditional pitch first of all and second of all, the word count is really going to be generally something that comes from the editor. I've heard some editors say that "don't tell me how long the piece is, I'm going to tell you how long the piece is." So that's not something I would really worry about.

Are travel trade magazines good for someone just starting out without many or any clips? Is it worth for me to pursue these from the beginning?

Gabi's response: This is a good question that tied into what Kerry asked which is if you do have some background in the field, this is the best, really a great way, not only to get clips but to get experience working and writing for a journalistic setting. And the reason for that is like I said that these editors are looking for both writing experience and industry experience



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and if you can provide one of those, that's often good enough if the editor has a need they need to fill. So, we're going to talk later about what types of industry experience you can use and next week we're going to talk even more specifically about how to spin experience you have. For instance, I didn't work in the travel industry previously. I worked in a university at the office of international studies but I did do a lot of event planning and I kind of had some travel knowledge. So I was able particularly to parlay my experience with setting up events into writing for magazines for meeting planners about places where they could hold events which ends up being a much more travel oriented thing, but I used by event planning background to get into that.

Let's get going, I'll answer some more questions as we go along. There's a couple of questions I didn't answer yet but it's because they're going to come up in my talk anyway.

In terms of my background in this, I had mentioned briefly earlier, but especially for those who are just joining us, I have been writing for travel trade magazines for several years and I didn't go into it with a journalism background. I actually went into it with a background as a marketing writer and some sort of esoterically connected experience. But what really allowed me to continue to successfully write for those magazines was simply learning on the job.

If you're interested in having an editor who sort of mentors you through learning to write for magazines, this can be a really great way to do it. And it was funny because I started out (when I first left my job) I thought I was going to be a blogger and for a while I was a bit apologist about specializing in web writing and feeling bad that I wasn't a print writer. And then a funny thing happened a few years ago, I was at a blogging conference and someone asked me what I did and I realized that pretty much all of my quite respectable income was in fact coming from writing for print magazines and largely trades.

Somebody had a question about what travel trade magazines paid and I want to jump on that first because obviously this is the elephant in the room. (And if you read the blog post or the e-mail reminder about the webinar—and if you didn't get it and you are used to getting them, it's because I'm trying to now only to send that Wednesday e-mail to the folks who haven't already registered for the webinar, but if you'd still like to see that content it's on the blog every Wednesday.) So in terms of the pay, one of the things I really love about travel trade magazines is the regularity of the pay. And not just because you can get very frequent assignments but because they tend to pay you on acceptance and on the 1st and the 15th of the month. So you might file a story and get a check just two weeks after that which is really grand. But, of course, it matters how much that check is for. But the thing is that, it doesn't just matter the sheer amount the check is for, what really matters is your hourly rate. It matters how long it has taken you to put together that article. I'm going to talk a little bit



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about sort of the black and white pay rates of these magazines, but I also want to look at the time involved.

A very small travel trade magazine—say something that has even as few as 6,000 subscribers every month—is going to be paying something like 25 cents a word. And a large trade magazine, the kind of things that go to everyone in the industry or ones that are very specialized and able to command a high rate from the advertisers, these are going to be paying up to \$1.00 a word. So this is a very wide spectrum and obviously different magazines fall into different parts of the spectrum but what's important to remember here as I've got on the slide is the hourly rate. Because that's what really matters. Because here's the thing that is one of the factors that can really make travel trade magazines worth your time is that these editors tend to edit more than one magazine. Let's say typically between maybe 3 or 4 and sometimes they'll have their hands in different pots of up to 12 magazines on the travel trade side.

The thing that can make travel trade magazines really worth your time—and we're going to get to how you write these articles and what types of articles they're interested in in a second—but I also want to mention that these editors typically are editing multiple publications so what that means is that your hourly rate is increased by the fact that you have this relationship with the editor and you don't need to be double checking style guides, you don't need to be wondering what you need to be writing. You have that relationship with the editor and that helps you to feel confident that you can just ask him a question if you're not sure if something needs to be done a certain way and it helps you to get more and more assignments with less and less marketing work—which can really bring your hourly rate down.

Secondly, in terms of hourly rate, one of the things that can make these trade magazine (articles) very easy to write is that they are, gasp, interview based. But I think interviews are a topic that people—especially people who are coming (like I was) not from a journalism background or from a background in blogging particularly—don't feel confident doing interviews, don't know how to set up interviews, think they need to be doing it only via e-mail, are afraid to pick up the phone, and are not sure where to source them.

The thing about working with these travel trade magazines is first of all, you will learn how to do it because they're always going to want sources, but second of all, the editors often connect you with the sources.

I've had trade magazines that I wrote for for years and they essentially have a source list that they pass around. They also have guidelines but they say here's a bunch of people who recently got this designation that would be good sources, or here is an excel sheet with the e-



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mail addresses of everybody that we have ever interviewed so if you are working on a story in the future and you need a source, check out this list and we have their direct contact information. That's sort of the more general way, but I have a friend who has written a lot in the sustainable space and she also does quite a bit of architecture and she typically has her editors just give her the names and contact information of the sources directly.

How much time is saved depends a bit on the editor and also the article, but having your sources handed to you—believe me, I can tell you, I track my time religiously—can be a huge time savings. But the thing is it's actually often not that hard to find people especially if you are interviewing people from tourism boards or people who represent venues. And the thing is that at first I used to do my interviews very long. Maybe I would have people on the phone for 25 or 30 minutes and I needed to interview a lot of people and I wasn't sure what questions to ask (and again, I'm going to talk more about this in an upcoming week) and I would let them tell me everything because I was worried about missing something and I was worried about directing the conversation and missing what was a great quote.

Now I have some techniques for this that we'll talk about later. I try to do it in about 7 minutes—and you can get everything you need from a person. You do need to be a bit direct in sort of keeping them on topic and shaping the questions and what not, but what that means is that say you are writing a feature which is interview based so it might be a trend piece – and a trend piece can be any length—but in this case we're going to say it's a feature. So say you're writing a trend piece and you need to include three sources—travel trade magazine editors often have stipulations about how many sources you need to use. Say you get all of those interviews done in 15 minutes each—that's 45 minutes. Now, you might think ok, but I still have to write the piece. But here's the fantastic thing about this sort of trade magazine article is that your piece is written for you in your interview notes and all you have to do is go back to your notes, clean up the sentences, put them in order and you magically have a feature. Then you just go through and smooth out some of the words.

If this is something like watching me take interview notes and turn them into a story—if that's something people want to see, I can do a live demo of that in a webinar as well. But what I've found to be really shocking is that at first you might think “I don't know anything about this topic” It's going to take me a really long time to research it, but people teach you in the interview. You ask them questions that are very basic and you ask them to explain it like they would explain it to a visitor or to a travel agent or something like that. And then you get them to explain it in exactly the right kind of words that you need to use in your story. And all you have to do is clean them up and type them up. And then mix up quotes that are in quotes and quotes that you've paraphrased and a couple transitions and you magically have a 2400 word feature. It's really great and it takes much less time than writing a destination feature where I have to come up with what are the transformative moments or what's the



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trajectory like where did I start, where did I end and what do I want to include along the way. These types of features take much less time.

You can extrapolate from what I've said about the features how much less time it also takes you to write the shorter types of articles that you would be doing for trade magazines. That's pretty much everything I have to say about pay rate. But in terms of giving you an idea—and I've told you a couple of little snippets here—but to put together a) how long it would take me to write a feature like this 2400 word one that I was just mentioning which is very interview based. Let's say I was working on this feature, it's based on travel trends, I'm going to go online and I'm going to spend—I think the maximum I've ever spent sourcing people for an article would be an hour—but let's say I spent half an hour looking for people who had maybe talked to other magazines, or had written articles themselves or are somehow thought leaders in this area and sent them a message and then I've got my interview scheduled. So that's an hour of looking for interviews. Then I spend 15 minutes each doing my interviews. Then it typically takes me just cleaning them up and sorting them out and I use a color coding system so each interview source gets their own color then I put subject headings in my draft of my article, so let's say it's going to be trends in food service at conferences and we're going to talk about individual desserts being one like cake pops and mini tarts—things like that. So one thing is going to be individualizing, one thing is going to be eco-friendly and one thing is going to be local. So I'm going to put bold headings for each of those three things I just mentioned.

Then as I go through my quotes, I just cut and paste, cut and paste, everything from the interview that went into each of those categories, then I go through and clean up each of those quotes and add transitions. And that will take me again maybe about half an hour to do the cutting and pasting then maybe 45 minutes to 1 ½ hours to do the cleanup. So all total I spent less than 4 hours on this article. Not because I'm fast but because I'm not doing unnecessary work. What that means is that even if that article only pays \$400, which is going to be a really low per word rate for 2400 words, I'm still running a \$100 hourly rate. And this guys, is why it is so important to track your time if you don't do it already. Because first of all that keeps you from spending too much time on certain tasks. But secondly, it helps you to know – well, this article is paying this much so I need to make sure I get it done in a certain amount of time in order to fit my hourly rate.

Gabi breaks to take a question:

Do you have to transcribe the interviews? It seems like that would add on a lot of time.



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Gabi's response: This is a really great question. I'm going to talk a little bit about what's expected from different types of magazines in a minute, but some places do require (and for a lot of consumer major magazines this is also a requirement) you to record your interviews. And I just want to say this up front, guys: anytime you are recording a person whether you are at a talk at a workshop or you are having a chat with somebody, anytime you are recording a person in the USA, you are legally required to let them know you are recording before you start. I see a lot of people turn it on and then say later "Oh, I'm recording, I hope that's ok." It's not from a legal perspective and you don't want to get into an issue with that with your editor. So if you are going to be recording your interviews, make sure that you are letting people know in advance.

In terms of transcribing, I have not worked with a magazine where I am required to provide transcriptions of the interviews, but what I do have is some magazines that I work with require me to keep the recording of the interview on file for six months or possibly forever. And this is something I recommend you do. I don't record all of my interviews. I have had instances where people might say "Oh, you know, this wasn't the quote, blah blah blah, but to be honest—and I heard a really great talk about this the other day—people typically prefer for you to clean up their quotes and not use what they say verbatim and they typically only have an issue when you have changed a fact. So as long as you are making sure that as you are cleaning up and paraphrasing, that you stay completely within the facts then you are in the clear. And if you're not sure—and I see this happen a lot with trade magazines—you can always send not the full article but the quotes you are attributing to a person, to that person for review before you file your article. Just make sure you give yourself enough buffer room for that to happen. And in trade magazines because you are often quoting people who work for companies who are going to be quoted in that article as working for companies or tourism boards or what have you, they may ask you if they can review the quote. Always check first with your editor about what the policy for your specific publication is because they differ. Some people might say no, not ever. Some people might be used to this and say you can send them the full article. And some might say you may send them your quotes. My general rule is to only send quotes, but always check with your editor.

But in terms of transcribing for yourself, this is a different question. I take notes while I am on the call. Some folks might find this hard but if you're doing your interview the right way, you shouldn't really be talking and you shouldn't have to ask that many questions. Usually 5 questions for a 10 minute interview is too many—you just need to get them to start talking. So as long as you can take notes while somebody is talking, you should be able to get what you need while you're on the call. However, I do recommend, if you are not a super-fast typer, recording the call while you are on it so that you can fill in your notes when you are done. But again, do let them know.



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Why are travel trade magazines a much more stable income stream than consumer magazines?

Just to step back a little bit for a second. If you don't know, there are 3 legs to the stool in publishing. There are consumer magazines which are the ones that you find on the newsstand. There are custom magazines which are made by a company specifically for its customers: inflight magazines that you're going to see on airlines, the AAA magazine you get if you have AAA, or the car magazine, or Geico that you get—things like that. Trade magazines, like custom magazines, you can't buy on the newsstand, but for a different reason. Trade magazines are able to reach a very small circulation but have healthy ad rates, healthy revenue from their advertisers by having what's called a qualified circulation. This means that they have insured their advertisers that the only people looking at the publication are people who are in a position to spend money...typically large amounts of money...on whatever the advertiser may be selling. What this means is that it's going to be people who work in a certain industry and make spending decisions related to that job.

As a result, like I said, even if a publication only has 6,000 subscribers, they're able to pay you 25 cents a word. Typically, on the consumer side, a publication would need to be having at least in the 6 figures of subscribers to be able to pay you that much. So in terms of how you have a more stable income though, it's because for these editors having somebody who knows their readers and knows what their readers want and also is a bit of a familiar face is really useful. Because they often have small subscriber bases but subscriber bases who need to get important information for their jobs and for their purchasing decisions from these magazines. So editors want to be working with the same people over and over again because that is less information transmission about their audience, their publication, their industry that they need to be doing.

What happens with travel trade magazines is that by in large, you aren't pitching them ideas—they pitch you ideas.

Mind blown, right? I know you may have heard about some people who get articles assigned from their editor for certain consumer magazines—Afar does this quite a bit as well as many other ones—but with trade magazines, they adhere very closely to what is on their editorial calendar. When I say very closely, unless they don't get enough ad revenue to back up a certain story, they will definitely do everything that's on their calendar, which is not the case with consumer magazines. What that means is that travel trade editors on the one hand can plan in advance because they're going to stick to their calendar. But on the other hand are not able to accept pitches for things that aren't on their calendar.



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You say “Oh I saw this was on their calendar, so maybe I should just pitch it to them.” But the thing is that they typically have already discussed in their own editorial meetings in some way what that article is going to be about because it’s an important eco-system. Trade magazines work differently than consumer magazines—their relationship with advertisers is different. So what will often happen is that somebody on the sales team will say “Hey, I got this big ad for this issue, can we do some content not necessarily around that advertiser but maybe around camping because it’s a campground.” So what that means is that if you just see that it’s the outdoor summer vacation piece, you might pitch them something that is so far left field away from that whereas internally, they already know that they need to be doing camping. So what happens with most travel trade publications is that if you pitch them something they won’t even look at it. The only way that they can work with you is to assign you the ideas that they’ve already generated in house.

Gabi breaks for a question:

Someone asked how can you find out about their editorial calendars.

Gabi’s response: Go to the magazine’s website and you look at its editorial calendar. Every travel trade magazine will have it, they’re prominently displayed. You click on advertising or editorial calendar or you can just Google the name of the magazine and editorial calendar.

The thing is, you don’t need it until you’ve already started talking to the editor in most cases. Because then they will tell you what issue they’re working on and they will say, “Hey, I might be able to work with you on a story for our September issue about North Carolina beaches. Do you have some ideas for that?” And then you can go about pitching them ideas. But the thing is that they are typically telling you what article they want you to be focusing on.

Then the core area of that is that they’re not only telling you—once you get to know them and once you’ve proven to them that you can write for their audience and that you’re a pleasure to work with—they’re not only pitching you their current calendar (their next issue), they can be pitching you several issues ahead. They could be pitching for other magazines that they have control of. The reason this is really fantastic for your income, is that once you get in with that editor, they are not only going to come to you with pitches rather than you pitching them—which saves a ton of marketing time—they’re going to ask if you can write for their other magazines, they’re going to ask if you can write things that are far in advance and maybe go on a press trip related to it. It takes a huge chunk of time out of your work on the one hand but also allows you to have much more reliable assignments because you know



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that editor is going to come to you with some regularity every single month, or multiple times a month once you get to know them.

Where the magic really happens: The work builds your skills + connections.

What is it like to work for travel trade magazines? And when I say work, I don't mean in house, I mean write for.

I just talked a little bit about how the process of being given an article worked. I talked earlier about sourcing and how often your editors will be coming to you with sources and not the other way around. And I talked a little bit about this concept where sometimes the editor says, "Hey, we have a spot on our calendar for this, what do you have for me?"

Someone asked earlier, how do we come up with these ideas, or are we just pitching a travel trend? How do you know what to pitch an editor? If an editor has asked you for pitches, what is your first step to figure out what to pitch them?

Read the magazine. I can't believe how often this is overlooked and there was a hilarious interchange on Twitter about this the other day, but everything that you need to know to figure out what type of pitches the editor is looking for is right there in their magazine. And the thing about trade magazines is that they're almost always online and you can just download them and the full articles are online as well. So if an editor asks you for pitches around a certain topic, then you go and look at what they've done on similar topics in the past and you pitch them something just like that but on your topic.

For instance, I had mentioned as an example article, something that was a feature about trends for meeting planners and food service at big galas and banquets. I had mentioned a couple of different trends I had featured. How did I go about figuring out what I was going to pitch my editor for that? First, I checked on their publication and I looked at what they had written before. Then I checked their competing publications and I looked at what they had written about. Then I put the search terms in Google and looked to see if anything else came up. I found a couple of things on blogs and then I said "what about this interests me?" Then I went back to my editor and said, "Hey, why don't we do it about this?"

The thing that I find—especially for those who are saying, well, I'm just starting out, I haven't written for magazines in the past, is this really the right thing for me?—these editors really need good writers. Sometimes I see them looking for writers on some of these please



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pitch me sites, but not even that often because, like I said, they need to know that people know a little bit about their industry or at least they're willing to learn. So these editors kind of sit there and hope that magic happens basically, that something arrives in their in box. Or maybe they'll try to poach a writer from another publication (I heard about his happening recently) or they'll just give their existing writers more and more and more work. But if you come to them, then they will give you sources. They will tell you where to look for sources. If you say, here's an idea I have for this article, but how would you like me to lay it out, how would you like it to be organized? They will tell you.

One of my travel trade editors told me that after an intern they have wrote one of her pieces for the publication, he would sit down with her after it had been published and go over all the changes that he made and talk to her about why he had changed those things and what she could do differently next time. I was kinda like “wow” and he said it comes with the job. Often the editors of these magazines are incredibly generous with their knowledge about how to report as in how to collect the information for the article, how to write the article, how to pitch, and how to come up with ideas. They are really great mentors to have when you are just starting.

Here's the other thing, besides just building your skills in working with these mentors, a really cool thing happens when you write for travel trade magazines. As you are writing about the industry and doing really quite a lot of interviews you get to know a lot of people in the industry—especially tourism boards and hotels and places like that. And what inevitably happens is that you will interview them for this piece and you'll have a good chat and then people will start asking you to come and see them sometime. And then you get invited on press trips. And then perhaps you get invited to write for that destination's tourism board website. Or by virtue of being on that press trip, you meet other editors that you can pitch. Working for trade magazines builds your connections in the industry. And this to me, besides having the editors come to you with assignments or having check come 15 days after you've filed your story, this is one of the coolest most valuable parts of writing for trade magazines is that you get to know all the people in the industry.

In the last two years, I've gone to the North American TBEX which I hadn't gone to recently. TBEX is a travel blogging conference, however, a lot of the sponsors are destinations, they're tourism boards, they're destination management organizations. And I just thought it was the funniest thing when I got to TBEX this year in terms of the sponsor tables. I knew personally, I had met, I had interviewed, I had worked with in some capacity almost every destination that was there. And somebody joked that I just know everybody. And I said, “Well, in the southeast (because this conference was in Alabama) I do, because I've been covering that for years and I know every tourism board.” I know somebody there if I don't know the person who's at the event. I know someone who's given me photos to use with a story in the past or



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something like that. So you can use writing for trade magazines to worm your way into an area of the industry that you want to know more about. If you want to do travel content marketing for hotels, write for trade magazines for hoteliers and learn more about hotels work and what their pain points are and what they need help with and then go pitch sources (after your stories come out) to help them with their content marketing.

What kind of travel trade magazines are out there?

I've mentioned them a bit briefly and some of you have chimed in to say you read them in your past lives as a travel agent or something like that, but I want to open your eyes to some of the very random different things that you can be learning about when you're working for travel trade magazines. They basically fall into six main categories and the sixth one I would say isn't necessarily always classified as a travel trade but might be more up the alley of many of you:

1. Tour operators
2. Travel agents
3. General industry
4. Hotel professionals
5. Meeting planners
6. Hospitality industry

The first two seem a bit similar, tour operators and travel agents, but in terms of the trade magazines they're actually quite a bit different. So magazines for tour operators tend to focus on a couple of different things. Sometimes they might be talking about hotels, but that's not usually their point. You're not going to see so much about hotel reviews here. Magazines for tour operators tend to be talking about interesting activities in a place or giving an overview of a destination in terms of why you should go there, where you should stay, what you should eat, what you should do while you're there. These magazines can be great places to write larger destination pieces but also to get to interview a lot of different types of tourism businesses.

Whereas magazines for travel agents tend to have a couple things and some of them can help you really break in. One of the things that magazines for travel agents tend to have that can help you sort of shimmy in if you don't have this background is that they tend to have some content on running your business or marketing or things of that nature. That can be a good way to break into a lot of these trade magazines is by focusing on the marketing content in the beginning if that is your background. But the magazines for travel agents tend to have more reviews of things that are very fresh and new—particularly hotels. And these are often needing to be done based on an actual stay which can be great because the magazines



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sometimes will just send you there. I had a magazine I'd never written for before—I wrote them and asked if they were looking for writers and they said “we usually only use writers to review properties for us. So would you be willing to go on a trip on short notice?” Well, of course I would. Now, not so much, but for those of you who would be willing to go on a trip on short notice, these can be great. And also for the travel agents, they're also looking at things on how to run their business, they're looking at hotel reviews and also activity reviews, also venue reviews but also a lot of trend pieces here. What is new in travel? And these are a lot of the kind of things that you can do from wherever you are based on interviews.

Now, the general industry publications, these can be a little harder to put your finger on but I'm sure you're familiar with them. So do any of you know Skift? It's a website but they also have a print version. So Skift is the travel trade online publication that most of you would be most familiar with but the thing that I think we kind of forget is that it's a travel trade publication. It's really meant for people in the industry. It's talking about how Trump will affect airline prices, it's talking about how the London Bridge attack will affect travel not just to London but all of Europe and things like that. So the general industry publications tend to tackle quite a lot of topics but not so much destination specific reviews, specific things though they can. If there's a big hotel offering they tend to cover that, but they tend to be a bit more not just general in terms of the industry but general in the types of things they cover within the industry. So they'll be covering trends that will cover a lot of different parts of the industry. These are going to be the kind of thing where if you like to write profiles or trend pieces, this would be a great place to go.

As I mentioned, hotel professionals, if this is a part of the industry that you're interested in learning more about because you want to be doing content marketing for them, this is a great way to parlay into that. But the magazines for hotel professionals are going to also focus more on the business side of things which can be a great entrée if you have a background in a different type of business in terms of a way to break into travel trade magazines. And then parlay those travel trade magazine clips over into other types of travel trade magazines that you might be more interested in topically in writing for.

Now the magazines for meeting planners, there are a lot. There are so so so many magazines for meeting planners, it's just unbelievable. Obviously all magazines that are within the same industry need to differentiate themselves from their competitors somehow but what I will say about the magazines for meeting planners is that they all have a different flavor. Some are more focused on destination oriented content as in giving ideas of venues where you could have an event or ideas of corporate social responsibility outings like voluntourism things that you can do as a company, or interesting bus tours that you get on with your whole group and you ride around the city and there's beer and talking and tastings—those kinds of things.



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Some are more focused on the experiential side. Some are more focused on the service advice content for the meeting planners themselves. Some are going to be more about larger trends within the industry. And that's going to be the case across all of these magazines. You're going to see a differentiation in each of these verticals that I'm telling you about between what different magazines cover. And this is something that you can use to help yourself figure out which magazine to focus on.

As I mentioned this category, hospitality industry, is not necessarily trade strictly but this is for restaurateurs, bartenders, and different things like that.

Gabi displays the list of magazines from her book, The Six-Figure Travel Writing Road Map.

I want to show you the crazy explosion of all of the different types of magazines that there are in these areas. This one I always use as an example when I talk about magazines that focus on very narrow things—Hospitality Technology. There's a whole magazine about info tech that they use in hotels. There's Hotel Design, there's Hotel Business, there's Hotel F&B—F&B is a term that's used very commonly in travel trade and F&B means food and beverage. For meeting planners, I don't think I have quite all of them on here, I have most of them. There's one publishing company that has a magazine for each and every state that has a decent amount of meetings going on. So, like I said, I don't think we have all of them on here but there's the Michigan Meetings, and the New Jersey Meeting, and the Northwest Meetings. And then there's going to be ones that are just for associations, just for religious conferences or just for physicians' conferences.

There's all of these different magazines that focus on very different things, but they all need the same type of work. We spoke in the beginning of the call in quite a bit of detail about how to go about writing for these magazines. We talked about the pitching part, about setting up the interview about how to do the interviews and how to put them together into an article, but we also looked a little bit about what are the different types of articles. The thing that is really important to remember is that even though you don't know anything about hospitality technology right now, that doesn't preclude you from writing any of these things about it. The whole point of being a journalist or writing as a journalist rather than a writer is that you're asking questions. And the writing that you are doing is not based on your own knowledge. It's based on a conglomeration of knowledge of other people that you have gathered in search of that article.

What kind of articles do you write for them?



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1. News briefs
2. Features
3. Profiles
4. Round-ups
5. Reviews

In these magazines, the news briefs or the short little newsy bits at the beginning of the magazine tend to be written in house by the editors and the reason for that is that they usually know—not just better than you do—but before you do everything that’s new in their industry and they know their audience best so they know which of those things they should be including for their audience. So they tend to just write up those short news briefs themselves. So you don’t need to worry about keeping track of every single thing that’s going on. If there is a news brief that’s required, they’re typically going to assign it to you and they’re probably going to give you the sources and the information you need to write that up.

We talked before about features. And the features that you’d be doing for travel trade magazines by in large (I’m trying to think if there are any exceptions) but they tend to never be these first person narrative features about a place. It might be that you’re writing for a travel agent or a tour operator magazine and you’re writing about your own experience there, but by in large they tend to be reported features where you are collecting information about a place and weaving in quotations from people who are sources—who are knowledgeable experts on that area or on that attraction. So more reported features than narrative features in here for sure.

Profiles are a place where you might end up doing some first person work. Particularly if you are in a situation where you’re doing profiles of new hotels that have opened, that’s a big one. So profiles can also be a more third person back business profile where you’re talking about the business owner and why he’s opened that hotel or that restaurant or that museum or started that tour company.

Round-ups are going to be a very great bit of work if you are not comfortable writing long. What a round-up is essentially a collection of shorter articles around a certain theme that are all put together. Travel trade magazines some of them tend to lean more toward a feature which is all in one and some travel trade magazines tend to lean more towards features that are round-ups. So what that means is that your assignment might be for 1500 or 1700 words, you’re essentially writing an introduction and then five small 220 or 300 word articles within that umbrella each about its own place based on its own interview. The thing about roundups that’s really nice that if you want to be writing longer pieces but you’re not feeling up to it, you’re not feeling confident about stringing together such a long piece of writing in the



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journalistic setting, roundups can be a great way to build your relationship with that editor and still be assigned the longer word counts.

Reviews are an interesting case in these trade magazines. Like I said, there are some types of trade magazines that are still doing them but reviews in many cases on the industry side have moved online. Any situation which you could be doing reviews for travel trades would have to be a place that was just opening. Or a situation where either you happen to be there and happen to pitch it at the right time, or more likely where you know the editor and they have been invited on a press trip and they sent you on the press trip.

Pitching travel trade magazine

We're going to spend all of next week talking about how to put together something called a letter of introduction, which is different than but similar to a cover letter like you might do when applying for jobs. But it has some particular and specific pieces that go into it. But the thing about pitching travel trade magazines is, like I said earlier, you're never quite sure when you write the editor if they are going to already have their editorial calendar done to minutia that they know exactly which places they want featured and they have the interviews already lined up for an article, or if they're going to tell you a topic from their editorial calendar and ask you to pitch.

So what I recommend—and there are a few exceptions to this and we'll talk about this next week—is that anytime you find a travel trade magazine that you are interested in, your first point of contact with that editor is going to be a letter of introduction that closes expressing your availability to send them specific pitches at their request. The thing about travel trade magazines is that they want to know your writing ability and they want to know you're experience or knowledge of their industry. And they're equal. So if you have enough experience in their industry or related to their industry, they might not care all that much about your writing ability. This is a very weird area here. Whereas usually with consumer and xxx magazines, your pitch is everything. Your pitch is your writing sample. Your pitch is you showing the editor how well you understand their publication. How well you know how to come up with ideas, how well you know how to string words together both in terms of your email as well as when you're writing articles. When you are trying to get in with a travel trade editor it's very different and it's much more akin to interviewing for a job where you need to be proving your background and everything before you ever get to the point of doing work for them.

Next week we're going to talk all about when you should write a letter of introduction and when you shouldn't and how to put together a letter of introduction. And how to put it



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together based on whether you have experience in that industry or not and how to slant what you do have into something that can work for that industry.

I highly recommend in the meantime, if you have a background in something whether it's specifically like a travel agent or something else that is related—and I have a friend who's probably going to be listening to this on the replay who does some sort of concierge travel bookings.

This is great. I had ghost blogged, I had written as the person not as myself for several years as a concierge itinerary consultant would best describe what they do. People come to them and say “I want to go to Italy, I want to do things like this, can you help me out?” I had ghostwritten for someone like this for several years. So even though I didn't have any specific background in group tours—I literally think I'd never been on a group tour in my life when I started writing for tour operator focused magazines. I was able to say very sideways that I understand that customer. We'll talk about how to make those sort of sideways little shimmies in your letter and how to make them make sense. But if you had a situation like that whether it's a clear or a sideways shimmy, send me an email with your situation. I'd really love to use real situations rather than make up situations off the top of my head. I'd really love to use people's backgrounds next week to workshop writing the letters of introduction for different magazines.

Gabi notes a comment made by a participant:

I'm a hybrid tour and travel business expert.

If you are an expert in any sort of travel topic—like when I was at TBEX there was somebody who has positioned himself as an expert in stretching your budget when you travel—if you through your blog have positioned yourself as an expert in something, you can totally work with that with the travel trade magazines.

Thanks so much for joining me guys.