



Dream of Travel Writing

Article Nuts and Bolts: Putting Together a Celebrity Favorites Piece

This week, we are talking about putting together a celebrity favorites piece. We're gonna talk about what that really means. I've had somebody ask me this before, is this a name that we would use with editors? Like is this the thing that we would call, this type of piece, with an editor? And the answer is no. With an editor, you're gonna call the piece whatever she calls it, or he calls it in his or her magazine. The names that we talk about now are names that are to help you for educational purposes, they are not necessarily gonna be ones that everybody uses.

And part of that is because some people have gone to journalism schools, some people haven't gone to journalism school, some people have just learned from their staff. There's all sorts of different ways that people come into this. But most editors know what their magazine publishes. And so I see this happen a lot at conferences where an editor who doesn't also teach or something like that might get asked, "Well, how does it work?" And they'll say something and other people in the audience listening will be like, "No, that's not how it works." But that's how it works for one editor.

So this is always something worth keeping in mind, that every editor or every publication has a silo in terms of the terminology they use, the sections they have, and they run things in their way, and that way isn't necessarily gonna be the same everywhere. So that's really something worth keeping in mind, not just when you're pitching a piece in terms of terminology like I was just saying, but for all sorts of stuff. If you have...I've seen a few of these lately. If you have a weird email interaction with an editor, for instance, does that reflect on you? It might especially if you get three of them, but it also can just be a reflection on that person, that editor, or more largely about the culture at that organization at that publication.

So we're gonna talk about what celebrity favorite pieces mean, of course, and we're gonna look at what they look like. But first of all, we're gonna look at why on earth it is such a thing that magazines, especially in the travel space, but all over the place, have these pieces where they have a celebrity and they tell you a little bit about a celebrity. And then they tell you this celebrity's picks for whatever. Why do people care about this? We're gonna talk about that. And then we're gonna talk about who counts as a celebrity in these sections? What can you really feature here, what does that really mean?

And then I've pulled several different examples for you guys. I've got two that we're gonna look at from "Delta Sky," and the same section but a couple different iterations of it from "AFAR." And we'll look at, in detail, as many of those as we can depending on how time allows. But I've got several different ones for you from those two different magazines. And then we're gonna talk about how you pitch these pieces.



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So like I said, today, we're gonna talk about why on earth are magazines publishing so many of Gwyneth Paltrow's wellness picks, for instance, or, you know, Anthony Zimmer packing tips. Why do people care so much about so and so's recommendation, so and so celebrity, that may or may not be a super great expert on that talent? They're just a famous person or they might not even have spectacular taste as far as cuisine goes. Why are magazines featuring them?

There's a very simple thing that I'm sure that you've seen if you've ever gone to a newsstand, which is that it's almost rare for magazines to have covers that don't feature celebrities. We are here right now at the summer camp for coaching students, we've been going around all week on some different tours, both getting to know the Hudson Valley and practicing being out on Fan trips for those who are newer to travel writing. But also talking about all sorts of different things that come up in these situations we've been talking about. How you quote people from interview, how you follow up, how you put together a pitch based on your experience on the ground, at a site, and your interview with somebody and the quotes that you got.

But we've also been going to some really interesting places that you just might not think of writing, or think about, or think of going to, and seeing what kind of press they've gotten before we go there. A lot of places will have their press clippings up on the wall, that's not unusual, but what we found that has been really interesting is that places that I haven't even been to before, I haven't taken groups to, will have articles up the wazoo from huge news and publications.

So we've been looking at a lot of these covers and, you know "Popular Mechanics" had people on the cover, "Whiskey Advocate," people on the cover. You wouldn't think from the topics of these magazines that they would necessarily have to have people on the cover, but it is what sells. So what happens is let's say a magazine wants to have celebrities on the cover because it sells, because people will pick them up on the newsstand out of curiosity. And what do they do with those celebrities? Not every magazine has the type of audience where they're looking for, you know, of course, not celebrity gossip in a travel setting, but they might also not be looking for a feature that's really centered around anything having to do with a celebrity.

You will see these in the airline magazines, they do have celebrity profiles that are kind of how this person became big, what's going on in their life, you know, perhaps they're struggling with addiction or something like that. But that's not always going to be relevant, "AFAR," for instance, which we'll look at later, they focus on experiential travel, and, you



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know, they could have celebrity oriented features, where they're gonna talk about, you know, let's say...I'm trying to think of a relevant example here without thinking of Anthony Bourdain because he's just all over the news right now.

So let's just take Anthony Bourdain, let's say, Anthony Bourdain hiked Mount Everest, and he was talking about that from experiential travel perspective as a first-person story. That would be kind of a celebrity piece but it would really be just a piece written by Anthony Bourdain, right? Would "AFAR" have Oprah hiking to the top of Mount Everest? I don't know how that would really fit for them, even though it is going to be an adventure travel, experiential travel, which is more their thing.

So what often magazines will do to still kind of have that celebrity component is to do these celebrity favorites. And they just seem like the weirdest little pieces, because they take a celebrity, what you kind of would think of or perhaps associate with something like, you know, either a gossip-oriented magazine. Or, you know, just a profile about movies, say, or if it's, you know, a sports star or something like that, more about their career. So these things take a celebrity, so they take that brand name, but then they turn around very quickly into service information for the reader.

And that is the beauty of these celebrity favorites pieces, is that it allows you to check both of those boxes. To have that name that makes people say, "Oh," but also to give information that's highly usable for the reader. Now, like I said, we're gonna...I have several of these queued up for you. We're gonna look at some examples of these later, so you can see exactly how they fall out on the page. But this is a direct extension of what we talked about last week.

Which is that if you are interviewing somebody, you can interview them through different lenses, with different questions or just pulling different answers from those different questions, and chop a bunch of pieces up from it. So for instance, if you're already gonna be interviewing somebody, you can add a few questions about where they've traveled recently, or where they live, their favorite place to do this, that, and the other thing there, and then you magically have a celebrity favorites piece. And this also is gonna help you with one of the issues of pitching these pieces, which we're gonna come back to later when we talk about pitching these pieces at the end of the call.

Because there's a very distinct issue with how to pitch these pieces which is easily solved if you've already done the interview, and just tacked on a question or two about this at the end. So these pieces, in fact, can be very hard to pitch, but the flipside of that is that means that



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editors are always looking for pitches for them. So why are they hard to pitch? Because you have to have access to a celebrity who would work for this piece, who will answer your kind of random questions that are not about what movie they're currently working on, okay?

So what that means is that because these can be really difficult for magazines to fill in, is that they often have a sort of wide view of what celebrity might mean. Now, when I say wide view, this isn't gonna be what we talked about last week. And let me know in the chat box if you were with us for last week's webinar which was the interview nuts and bolts webinar.

So last week, we talked about how there are interview pieces that are more with a section of society that we could kind of call a man on the street. And what I mean by that is that this person could be your next-door neighbor, and you might not know that they're a titan of the industry that they're in. They're not somebody whose picture would be necessarily in a glossy magazine, outside of the profession. They're not somebody who necessarily even in the neighborhood, everybody would know what they do, but in their field, they're known.

So it's very, very, very easy to find these people. You can find them in science, you can find them by just picking up a book, somebody who's written a book, and is a luminary in their field, you can go through "TED Talks," you can ask people, you know, if they know somebody who's done something interesting like run ultra-marathons on every continent, things like that. These man on the street people are very easy to find.

So when I say that the editors, in order to make these celebrity favorites pieces happen, have a sort of wide view of what celebrity means. I actually don't mean that their wide view goes all the way into these man on the street celebrities. That's a bit uncommon because the idea with these celebrity favorites pieces is that the name of the celebrity should be big enough that it will entice people off of the name. So what that means is that these names should be relatively recognizable, or at least you can quickly be convinced that this person is gonna be like a Googly eyed celebrity for the audience of the magazine in question.

Now, that's the important part, what I just said, that they're going to make some google eyed or what not for the audience of the magazine in question. Because we'll look at "Delta Sky" which has a very general audience, and you'll see that there...there's gonna be two different pieces we're gonna look at, two different types of pieces. One is gonna be a name that you kinda need to know. And the other one a little not so much, and we'll see how they treat that differently in the introduction, and how that plays out differently with the pieces.



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But the idea is that it should be someone who is at least relevant to, important to, in a sector that touches the reader. When we look at “AFAR,” their celebrity favorites piece is all about chefs. Is “AFAR” only a food magazine? No, but it takes this idea of experiential travel quite far in terms of food travel. And so that is what they do and they feature celebrity favorites through the lens of a “Wandering Chef” in a city that they have visited. So we’re gonna look a little bit more about what counts as celebrity specifically in the context of “AFAR,” in the context of that “Wandering Chef” piece that I just told you.

Because it’s not always going to be quite as luminary as you might think, because again, these editors are publishing these sections month after month, after month, after month, and they’re gonna run out of, you know, the top restaurants in the world, chefs from the top restaurants in the world, what have you. They’re gonna run out of those kind of people, so they need to look at not just what they can get, but who’s got something that’s got an interesting time peg right now as well. We’ll see how that plays in with the “Delta Sky” pieces.

But let’s look for a second first at “AFAR.” So this is what they say about their section that I mentioned that’s called “Wandering Chef.” So it’s a front of book section, it’s not very long. I’ll verify the word count for you as well by looking in our database because, of course, some writer’s guidelines don’t provide such specific information for you. But the idea is that this is a column that as you can see here, I just pulled the description exactly out of their writer’s guidelines. So this is a column where they’ve given their self that width, they’ve given themselves a bit of wiggle room in case they can’t find somebody.

The very first thing that they say here is, “Chefs or other artisans that know the ins and outs of a particular destination.” Now, this is very interesting because the... first of all, like I said, they’ve got chefs and other artisans, but then they also say, “Who know the ins and outs of a particular destination and have a unique perspective on it.” Also, this is different than what “AFAR” originally had. They originally had a very specific rubric here, we talked a lot about rubrics last week, where they wanted a chef who had recently traveled to a specific city.

How do you reliably get a steady stream of interesting chefs who have just come back from somewhere interesting, who are willing to talk to somebody rather on your staff or a freelance writer? That’s tough. So you can see that they’ve both brought in who they’re gonna talk to as well as what they’re gonna talk to them about. So they say, “We have featured everything from famous composers who record in Iceland to sommeliers with an obsession for a certain region. Foremost, these are personalities who are highly informed in the area and have an unusual point of view on the area.”



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So like I said, I have a couple of those open, we'll see how it plays out, but I wanted to continue on that course of what is celebrity? What counts as celebrity? So let's look at some people that they featured. So it's a little bit small here on the slide, but I just goggled "AFAR Wandering Chef," so you can absolutely do the same if you're interested. But here you can see the names of the people that they featured recently, and what they have featured them about. So we've got some names here and there are some that I clicked on for you to open, Michael Solomonov and René Redzepi. These are two pretty big names in food these days. Also, Chris Cosentino, I've heard of, but less so much is James Lowe.

Now, on each of these, even just the preview that we've got here in Google itself, they're telling you right away who each of these chefs are, and why you care. So the first one here, they say Michael Lomonaco, the chef of Porter House New York and Center Bar. They say Michael Solomonov is the chef behind Philadelphia's modern Israeli restaurant, Zahav. They've got René Redzepi who kinda needs no introduction but they say the chef behind the world's best restaurant at least according to this list. Chris Cosentino, they say the offal-obsessed chef of San Francisco's Incanto Restaurant. For Chef James Lowe he's of the London-based food collective the Young Turks.

So they're telling you who all these people are, and like I said, most of you will probably only if you've heard of any of these especially if you're not in food have heard of René Redzepi, or at least Noma, the restaurant that he's attached to. But you might not have heard of Michael Solomonov, or you might not have heard of Chris Cosentino. Now, if we go further down the list on Google, then we get more people that I'm not familiar with, and we've got here someone who is the chef behind Hong Kong's hip Yakitori Gastropub Yardbird.

So this is something also their primarily American base readership would probably have no way of knowing this guy. It does say he was previously in New York, though. They've got somebody who is chef and owner of New York City's Little Owl. We've got someone who's a chef of San Francisco's SPQR, a lovely place if you ever have the opportunity to go. We've got a chef who's built a mini-empire of 15 restaurants in 5 cities including Mercat in Chicago, and a chef, Chris Shepherd, of Houston's Underbelly who was named one of "Food & Wine Magazine's Best New Chefs in America" this year.

So like I said, celebrity here, they're giving themselves a lot of latitude about how celebrity you really need to be, and also they've widened it. Like they said they've featured composers and different things like that. So when it comes to these celebrity favorites, it's important to know that it's not just about getting for them the chef from the top restaurant in the world.



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It's not about getting for them a chef from the "Food Network." It's not about getting a movie star, it's not about getting a politician. It's about getting somebody that has a unique hook for that section.

So in the case of "AFAR's Wandering Chef," it's gonna be someone who is a chef or artisan, who has a connection to a city that might not be where that person lives, right? If we look back at these for a second, what cities do we have here? We've got New York, we've got this one, I'm not quite sure where he's from. But we've got Oahu, Ecuador, Puerto Rico, Rome, Israel, Tokyo, Montreal, Mexico City. So they're looking to cover a city that they haven't covered before also. So you're looking to find someone who can speak to a city that they haven't covered in that section before more so than you're looking for somebody famous.

Whereas if we're looking at the section in Delta, that we're gonna look at later, they are looking for somebody who is relatively household name famous, but has something going on in the news. They need to know why they should feature this person now. Might be the person has a movie coming out. We've looked at this section in a previous webinar and they had featured Jose Andres for the section, who is a chef based in D.C. but he had been very heavily involved to the tune of millions and millions of dollars in the relief effort in Puerto Rico following the hurricane.

But then you'll see that in the same magazine, their concept of what counts as celebrity, and then whether that time peg is really important is gonna be different for the second celebrity favorites piece that we look at. So there's just no hard and fast rule here about what counts as celebrity, and that will also translate into the celebrity's bio at the top of the piece. And I'll show you how that works out.

So what typically happens in terms of the structure here is that you will primarily be writing the bio or the top of the piece or the intro if you wanna call it that. And the recommendations themselves might come verbatim from the person. This is particularly in the case of the celebrity, really famous celebrity-driven piece in "Delta Sky" that we're gonna look at. But what that means is that these pieces are an absolute snap to write up.

It takes you very, very little time because you're not even as you were with the interview pieces that we looked at last week, going through a whole interview, trying to figure out what's a nice arc for the interview. What's a nice way to kind of move through the person's background, why they care about what they care about, why they're doing what they're doing now, what they're gonna do next. You don't have to hunt those, you don't have to worry about trimming down into beautiful blocks of text that sound like the person said this



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paragraph perfectly off the top of their head after you remove all the ums and incomplete sentences and all of those things.

You're just gonna pull a couple sentences of why they love this restaurant, or this shop, or this park, okay? So that makes it really easy to write these up, but also like I said, it's important here with a lead which like I said is gonna be most of what you write to be really tuned in to what the specific magazine is looking for there. Because they're not gonna be a basic celebrity bio, they're gonna be a lot more like what we looked at last year where the timeliness of this person, the timeliness of why we care about this person's recommendations right now. Whether they're involved in something new, like a hot new movie, they've reached a certain level of success in their career such as winning an award.

Whatever that is, is gonna be heavily filtered into how they tie in with the topic that's touched on in the rest of the bullet points. So that little bit of intro, which might be 100 words, maybe 150, has a very tall ask, it's really got a lot that it needs to get done up there. Needs to give a sense of who the person is, or very clearly showing how they tie into the time peg, and also showing how they tie into the destination of the greater topic that's explored in the roundup bullet points below.

So I feel like these pieces are heavily visual because they tend to have a lot of graphical layout kind of elements. So I want to move over to those now, and I've got two from "Delta Sky" where I'm gonna show you how they look like on the page, and then we'll look at two from "AFAR" online. And I'll give you the links for those on "AFAR" as well so that you can follow along with those or have them to look at later.

So let's start...I'm gonna switch the screen over. Let's start by looking at these two from "Delta sky." Here we've got...as I mentioned, we've got two very different types of celebrity favorite pieces, and I'll make this as big for you as I can. So we've got two different types of celebrity favorite pieces. Now, this one which runs in "Delta Sky" every month, it's called "My Bag," and this is what the person being featured has in their bag when they travel.

Now, this...sorry about that. I'm trying to blow it up for you. This one might, just from the name... I recognize this Matt McCue character or Matt McCue. This might be written in-house, so I would definitely check the database before you go out and pitch this piece because you're gonna feel like, "Wow, that looks easy. I could pitch it out to anybody." So definitely check the database to make sure this isn't written in-house. I'm pulling it up to show you as an example of an article and not necessarily as an example of something you can pitch.



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So hopefully, this is big enough. I wanna make it so that we can see...I think you can hopefully see the text, but I wanna make sure you can also see the layout on the page. So here we've got a bit over 100 words, the person being featured here, her name is Chriselle Lim. She's an entrepreneur and a digital influencer. If we were to think about entrepreneur, digital influencer, what does that mean? It probably, to us, means somebody who has a blog based business, okay?

So not necessarily gonna be a hugely difficult person for us to track down in our circles. Now, what she does now is much larger, let's see what they say about her in the introduction. "When people used to ask Chriselle Lim what she wanted to be when she grew up, she would say a boss." "I didn't know what that meant but I wanted to build a business," says Lim, 33. Today, she runs "The Chriselle Factor," a 10-person L.A.-based fashion and beauty hub for women in their mid-20s. And recently launched her Chriselle x J.O.A. clothing collection with Nordstrom. Lim's YouTube video tutorials are also a hit, 65.1 million views and counting. Thanks to their educational focus. Quote, "The purpose isn't just to get inspired but to teach viewers tips they can apply to their lives," says Lim."

So in this little piece here, we're tying into what the section about, right? The section is about what's in her bag, as opposed to tips in a specific place which I had mentioned we're gonna look at in the other one. And you'll see down here on the bottom, we'll read this in a second, they've got her quotes here. There's very little here, here just says, "Olive oil from Milan," but this is a very formulaic type of interview like I said last week, you know, you often get the questions from the magazine's format rather than coming up with them yourself.

But this is a very formulaic type of interview which instead of being presented as an interview, with her whole block of text, has very heavily edited down slim sentences that are all based on recommendations. So let's look back up here though at how this interview plays out. So we've got a little bit of a lead here which goes into a quote, so we could kind of almost say that from this 33 back, that that's our lead here, all right? So it sets up for us how she...we don't necessarily know yet that she's pretty young. I mean, we know from her age that she's 33 before.

But in that first sentence, we just know this is something that she always wanted to do. She didn't know what she was going to do but this is something she's always wanted. And then we hear more about exactly what she does now, and we hear this in a lot of detail about what her company does and her clothing connection with Nordstrom. And here, what's the time peg? The time peg is that she recently launched something that you can now get at Nordstrom nationwide.



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So that's the peg here. The peg is that here is a person who's clearly been doing something interesting for a bit, she's got 65.1 million views and counting on her YouTube channel. Now, it seems like that's probably a total number of views from all her videos, but it's not super clear to me what that number is. But we can definitely say that she was clearly doing something great for a while, but the specific time peg is that she's recently launched her clothing collection with Nordstrom. And so that is gonna be how she ties in to the topic of this roundup section which is that she's showing what's in her suitcase. She's somebody who has a sense of fashion, okay?

Now, if this instead were her talking about L.A., they would probably instead talk about how long ago she had moved to L.A., kind of, you know, that she built her business there, something like that, okay? So in this intro, though, this is really important. In these pieces, they very rarely basically never will explain or kind of elaborate on the things that are mentioned below. The intro is very much a separate element that's almost a mini piece itself about this person. You could call it a mini bio, maybe a mini-profile, but it's typically highly divorced from the person or from the products or places being featured below.

I just saw we had a question. It's a little hard for me to see questions when I'm reading the thing, but we've got, how would a freelance writer source photos then especially of the celebrity? So to put together a piece like this, you will have to interview the person. As you can see, there's quotes here. On the bottom, is all quotes. So you would ask them for a photo, or you would take a photo when you were interviewing them. And if this is an interview that you would do by phone because it's a short piece, even if it pays a dollar a word, it's still only \$300.

If you're doing this interview by phone, then you would get a piece from their publicist, or from that person, or from their business, or something like that. So then let's look at how this gets put together. So there's nine recommendations here, and they've also got like a special digital feature where they've also put together a playlist of her favorite songs. But let's look at the "text of the roundup" here.

Now, unlike most roundups, and unlike the next one we're gonna see, the text is not attached right underneath the photo, it's down here. So I can't quite show all of it on one page. So the first question is her preferred travel outfit, she says, "If it's a five-hour flight to New York, I'll resort to stretchy jeans from Mother. I also like to wear Puma sneakers and a trench coat from Acne Studios."



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So you can see that they show the jeans and they show the Pumas, and they have them separately and they say one plus nine. But the question here was, what's your preferred travel outfit? Now, you can see she said, "If it's a five-hour flight to New York," so she may have then said something else, but if it's a longer flight or but if it's a shorter flight. So she may have said something else here and the person writing this piece decided how much of that to include probably in concert with the people that were sourcing the photos.

So the question here isn't just gonna be like as we had in the chat box, it's not just gonna be, how do you source photos of the individual, but how do you source photos of these items? So these items either would have been photographed because this is Delta and it's a big magazine. They either would have gotten the items and photographed them in-house of the magazine, or they would have gotten press photos from all these different places. And I would wager, for instance, that this one in the middle is probably gonna be just a press photo from that resort, and several of these may be as well.

So let's continue on. So they've got, what's your most recent souvenir? And it says, "Olive oil from Milan." Now, I'm trying to see if I can tell. I'm not sure if this olive oil would really necessarily have even been the olive oil that she got, okay? So the next one is, what is your preferred in-flight entertainment? As I imagine how they would have asked it to her. But here, just as briefly, in-flight entertainment. She says, "On a recent trip to Europe, I watched the whole season of "Big Little Lies." The last movie was "Hidden Figures.""

And so here they've got a little picture that's meant to look like an in-flight screen where they show a little screenshot of "Hidden Figures." Where would they get that photo from? They for sure would have to get that from the press distributor for that movie, okay? And the question is also, is it your job as a freelance writer to source these images for "Delta Sky?" Absolutely not. It's only your job to write the piece. And I would say that most places, as in most magazines in which you would be writing a celebrity favorites type piece, are gonna be places where someone else is gonna find the photo for you.

I actually really, really recommend against as much as you can sticking to for too much of your career the kind of magazines where they expect you to source the photos and that's part of your rate. That should be a separate thing even if you're shooting the photos. It should be a separate thing that you should be paid for. You should get \$1,000 for your dollar per word 1,000 piece, and another \$1,000 for your photos. So if you're not in that position yet, it's something that you want to be working towards.



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So then what's the next question? What is her beloved spot in L.A.? "Bestia, it's very meat-heavy," she says, "Gracias Madre for vegan Mexican food. And the Griffith Observatory for hiking and best views of L.A." So they've showed that just with a photo here which I imagine is from this Bestia place as well. Bucket list trip? Amanyara in Turks and Caicos. That's not in quotations, so clearly she was talking about it and they couldn't cut that quote to be quite sure enough. But they pulled it out from her, "It's supposedly the nicest resort on earth."

Not necessarily a super, super punchy quote, but that's the thing about the celebrity favorites pieces, is that there's very, very little text. It's not verbose, it's as tight as we can make it. Now, as I said before, this intro covers all sorts of her in about 120 words, and down here, it's about the same. So these are typically very short pieces because they need space for these photos like you'll see as we go on to the next one here in Delta as well.

Next question is best new fashion trend. So here we've got a full quote from her and it's quite long because fashion's important for her, right? "The return of feminine dressing and I think that my new collection really reflects that. There's one dress called the Cocoon Sleeve dress that reminds me of a piece Audrey Hepburn would have worn but modernized." And this is like I said definitely gonna be the longest quote in the piece. You can see nothing else. All of these black subject heads, there's no other place where we go so along between black subject heads.

Now, you'll see because of this layout, it's okay to do that. In the next one we're gonna look at where the layout's little more balanced, it would look weird if one was a lot longer than the other. Which then really forces your hand and what kind of quotes you're gonna use. You're not just picking what you think best represents all these things. You also need to think about what the layout is gonna look like after you hand the piece in. And they need to all be similar because otherwise, the editor is just gonna edit down your things and you're not gonna like how it's been edited.

Last two questions here in her in-flight reading. "Right now," she said, "I'm reading "The Happiest Toddler on the Block." For magazines I like "Vogue." Favorite suitcase, I always use a black TUMI rolling carry-on." So let's skip ahead here and look at the next celebrity favorites piece here in Delta. As you can see, by the way, this is the May 2018 issue of "Delta Sky" and you can get that on...you can download it directly from the Delta Sky website if you're interested in checking out these pieces or Delta later. So you can just google Delta full issues and you'll find it that way.



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So let's look here. This section is called My favorite Street, and this is Joe...I know he pronounces his name in a way that's slightly weird. He's an Italian speaker I'm pretty sure he says, Manganiello, instead of Manganiello. I'm not exactly sure what he says. So we've got an actor here and his favorite street that he's speaking on...as you can see a picture up here of the street is Sunset Boulevard in Los Angeles. Now, this intro is even shorter. We're looking here maybe barely 100 words.

And then how does the layout work out? We've got some things that he recommends, down here, we've got some photos. And then they've got a little sidebar type thing where they give you the address, and the website, for each of the places that we talk about. And it's a little unusual because they talk about them, and they've got the photo up here. And like I said, you have to be really cognizant as a writer of how this piece is gonna look, and this piece always looks very similar that all of the words of each of the thing that you're gonna feature need to fit into here, into these tiny, tiny spaces. But thankfully, that's not gonna include the address or the web address.

So let's look at how they introduce him. Now, he's an actor and they're gonna talk about a project that he's working on now. They're also gonna kinda tell you who he is in case you don't know. And then they're also going to tie him in to Los Angeles. That's what they have to accomplish here, and particularly Sunset Boulevard.

So it begins, "Seeing yourself on a Hollywood billboard is a true L.A. moment. For actor Joe Manganiello, it happened unexpectedly. One day during lunch at Soho House, he looked over at a nearby building and saw a giant mural going up for the TV show "True Blood." "That was the first poster I was included on," he recalls. Most recently audiences saw..." Wow, it won't let me go without saying his name over and over again.

"Audiences saw Manganiello in the film "Rampage" in which he plays a former Navy SEAL who's head of security for a pharmaceutical company, at which a genetic-editing experiment goes awry. Think supersized animals. Manganiello was lucky to be able to draw on a little insider's knowledge for the role having previously trained with the SEALS and kept in touch. "These are guys I have on my speed dial," he says."

So super light here on the tie, and again, to the things that are mentioned below. They really touch just a little bit on his kind of L.A. moment or his L.A. connection. And he, for instance, is married to Sofia Vergara. You know, people say only half-jokingly that women are typically mentioned as the wife of so and so, but men are never mentioned as the husband of so and so. And so you'll see that's not mentioned here, but also it's very short and there's not



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really a lot of place to talk much about him besides his L.A. connection and his current movie.

Now, you'll see that they do go into quite a bit of detail about the movie, they've got like a good block of, you know, three, four lines here talking about what it is. And quite long wordy ones as well. A pharmaceutical company, genetic-editing experiment. So why do they do this? Because this is part of how magazines or writers are able to get these celebrities to do these celebrities' favorite pieces, is because a celebrity has a movie going out. And this will allow something talking about the movie to appear in a big magazine in the way that that content marketing...because that's really what it is.

This piece in a way is content marketing for a film. The way that that content marketing happens is by having the celebrity talk about something that's interesting to the magazine. So speaking of excellent content marketing, I don't know if you guys have been following this, but "Jurassic World"...the new "Jurassic World" movie which I think isn't even out yet, I think it comes out on Friday. I have been seeing it all over the news for weeks. They have done an amazing job not just with marketing for the film, but with the content marketing for the film.

They took over a TV show called "American Ninja" and had a Jurassic World night and they set it up outside in New York or L.A. or whatever it was filmed. And people could play with the dinosaurs and jump around on the things. They also have a hotel room and I guess it would be Universal Studios, Disney, I'm not sure who made the film. They've got a hotel room that is, in fact, Jurassic World theme that's been being written up the hospitality magazines like in Condé Nast and things like that.

So this is one of the reasons why you shouldn't feel so nervous about these pieces, because if somebody has something that they need to promote, it's part of their job. So that's part of their job to talk to you and to give these recommendations, and to do these things. So we looked at how this piece is put together, and like I said, it's largely about what he has going on that's new with just a bit about his kind of L.A. connection here. Is when he felt like he made it in L.A. and how this street is important to him.

So now, let's look at his recommendations, and like I mentioned, these recommendations may have very, very, very little to do with what was discussed in the intro, but be just kind of things that are interesting to this person in this town. So he talks about Chateau Marmont and these again, you'll see almost every single one, there's a little bit here that's not his quote,



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and this one isn't his quote. But there's a lot here that's just directly words from him from the interview. So they say there's a lot of history at this hotel.

“From Jim Morrison to John Belushi and everyone who came after them, I'll hold meetings there or have breakfast in the garden. Subliminal Projects. This is Shepard Fairey's art gallery. He's been a friend for years and I love going to his art shows. They have great musical guests at some of the openings.” Now, does this seem like there may have been some other sentences in here or that he may have said, “We've been a friend for years, and blah, blah, blah, blah, blah. And like I always love going to his art shows because they have great musical guests in some of the openings?”

So these, like I said, highly edited quotes here. Now, Soho House, this, he did mention up here. “Soho House West Hollywood. This private members' club has an incredible view of L.A. and it's good for a business lunch or brunch with the family on the weekends.” The last one here, “Golden Apple Comics. Beloved for almost 40 years. You can hear the change here.” Now, we've got journalistic language instead of his quotes. “Beloved for almost 40 years. This store is a collector's dream with walls of comic books, graphic novels, action figures, posters, trading cards, and more to choose from.”

I think it's quite interesting personally that they don't have the quote from him talking about why he loves this place, but that's just my opinion. So let's switch over. These, like I said, are super, super brief. Let's see how this plays out in a different context which is going to be “AFAR Magazine.” And we're going to look at their “Wandering Chef” section that we've been talking about for a little bit earlier in the call.

But as I mentioned, these are going to be pieces that aren't laid out, these are pieces online. So this isn't showing you that same kind of visual that I really wanted to make sure that we looked at, when we looked at the ones that were in the “Delta Sky” print issue. So I've got for you here, this is Michael Solomonov like I mentioned before. He is an Israeli chef and, well, I don't know about you guys, but I got completely distracted by Austria's new James Bond museum, I'm going to open that for later.

So he is an Israeli chef. He kind of brought modern Israeli cuisine that's been a big thing in America, he really kind of brought it to be what it is. And so here, this is his take on...I'm not sure that it's specifically Tel Aviv. It seems like it's going to be all of Israel. So we can see here that we've got this introduction and the introduction here was really short because here, they really wanna dig more into these recommendations. We've got 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10,



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11. This is a lot of recommendation, guys, because here, they're really, really focusing highly on the service.

So here's what we've got here. "The chef behind Philadelphia's modern Israeli restaurant, Zahav, was born near Tel Aviv and frequently returns to Israel for culinary inspiration. Recent trips helped shape the menus for his forthcoming Philadelphia restaurants: hummus spot Dizengoff and Abe Fisher, which will serve cuisine of the Jewish diaspora. Here, Michael shares highlights from his travels."

So what do we see here? We've got one sentence that it's a bit about who he is but it's more about his connection to the place. We'll hear about how his connection to the place informs his food because as we saw, this is the big criteria for "AFAR's" piece, is that they don't just want a celebrity and then to talk about something. They want to have a celebrity who's a trusted advisor about this place.

So let's see what he says, let's see how they have it set up, and let's see what is the difference here between quotes and not quotes? Which you'll see just skimming along is that the vast majority of these, again, even though these are much longer, the vast majority here is gonna be quotes. So again, even though it's a long piece, very little writing for you. So here's a cooking class that he talks about.

"Erez Komarovsky is the first contemporary baker to introduce artisanal bread to Israel. He is known for his chain of eponymous bakeries and gives cooking workshops at his home in Mizpe Matat in the Galilee mountains. Classes combine Israeli and Lebanese recipes, since his home is near the Lebanese border. Erez bakes insanely good breads in a tabun or clay oven with ingredients from his organic gardens and olive groves. When I visited, he made a twist on a falafel sandwich stuffed with lamb."

Now, holy cow, guys, does this, when I was reading it, did that sound like a quote to you? I don't think. It sounded like something that was written by journalists. Why? Because they are, like I said, highly, highly, highly editing these interviews into what will make sense as elements of a roundup. So that one right there just sounded to me like it was written by a journalist, maybe with a bit less facts, but it's pretty journalistic. Okay? Let's look at the next one.

"Acre is a magical place. The historic port city was a strategic site during the Crusades. Uri Buri is a famous no-frills seafood restaurant where I ate raw crabs and sardines. The chef-



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owner, Uri Jeremias, also owns the 12-room Efendi Hotel. The hotel combines two old homes that were restored over the course of eight years with the help of Italian artisans. Order tapas in the hotel's Byzantine-era wine cellar."

Again here, it absolutely sounds like it was written by a writer rather than being pulled from him directly. The next one sounds more like he said it, and I have eaten at Uri Buri myself actually. So okay. The next one is Brown TLV Urban Hotel, "This is a really cute boutique hotel with a sick roof deck that has great views of the city skyline. There are just 30 rooms and the price is quite affordable. There isn't a restaurant but guests can choose from one of three nearby cafes for breakfast."

This is so much more spoken that it almost sounds to me like the person handed in this piece and then said, "We need more hotels," and they pulled this out of their notes, if you ask me. The next one is the Bouza Market. "There is always a line out the door at Hummus Said, at the Old City Market in the northern city of Acre. The doors close when the hummus runs out." Now, then they switch out for a second. "At Tarshiha Market, try the passion fruit sorbet at Bouza. This ice cream shop in Tarshiha sources ingredients from local farmers."

We go on, Mamilla Hotel. "The Mamilla is the nicest hotel I've ever stayed in." Very first person, very clearly from him. "The design is modern and beautiful and you can't beat the location. You're steps from the Old City and the Jaffa Gate and within walking distance of a lot of high-end shops."

I'll read you one more and then I'll switch over so we can take a look at a couple other ones. So this one is a long one, and this one has more recommendations, but again, you can really see here that the recommendations and in particular the order of how these little minis are put together really sounds a lot like those guidebook writing sections that we talked about a couple weeks back.

"This restaurant is 15 minutes outside of Jerusalem in the Judean Hills and is run by chef Tomer Nir, who worked at the Fat Duck in the U.K. He is cooking really impressive food and goes foraging for ingredients like wild sumac. The restaurant serves brunch, lunch, and dinner. Expect to find dishes like leg of lamb roasted in a paprika marinade, or frika risotto with artichoke, gnocchi chips, black carrots, and oranges. No one is doing food like this in Jerusalem."



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Okay? Let's look at a couple other ones here, so that's the James Bond museum that I will look at to share with you in a later time. Here we've got "René Redzepi Takes Tokyo." Let's see what they do with the introduction here, this is a little bit longer.

"In January, René Redzepi, the chef behind the world's best restaurant, at least according to this list, will shutter Noma and export his staff to Tokyo for a three-week-long pop-up in the Mandarin Oriental. Tickets for the dinner series are long gone, but we caught up with the foraging chef to get the full scoop as he scoured Japan for local veggies, handcrafted tableware, and the most unusual shellfish. We're still on the fence about whether we want to meet this one." They say it with a link. And I imagine that in the written piece, they would also have photos on the side of some of these things. So this one is actually done in a different tack. Sorry, I didn't notice this before. But this one is actually an interview piece. Let me see if the next one is done more in their normal format.

Here we go. This one is more normal. So this one is "Chris Shepard in Puerto Rico." "When Chris Shepherd of Houston's Underbelly restaurant was named one of "Food & Wine Magazine's" Best New Chefs in America this year, he didn't realize that he would bond so strongly with his fellow award winners. Recently, the 2013 best new chefs had a reunion in Puerto Rico, hosted by Jose Enrique, chef of the eponymous San Juan restaurant. 'Jose Enrique had an idea that we should all get together and host a party that showcased the best of our talents and the best of Puerto Rico,' says Shepherd. 'It was also an excuse to hang out in Puerto Rico for four days and it was a hell of a good time.'"

So here we've got who is this guy? And they say it in a way where the who is this guy leads into what they're gonna tell you about. So they tell you that his restaurant and he were named one of the best chefs of "Food & Wine Magazine," but then they go really quickly into how he got to Puerto Rico and why Puerto Rico. And then they go on.

"It was Shepherd's first trip to Puerto Rico. 'I went in with a very non-judgmental attitude and was completely impressed by these people who just live for food. It felt like going to a Hispanic country but without the hassle of going through customs or dealing with an exchange rate.' Shepherd was grateful to have Enrique as his local guide. 'I feel like I was getting sent to tourist spots in Old San Juan that wouldn't offend or scare people. The instinct is to send you to either places that are so vanilla. But Jose took me to the places he and his family eat. We definitely got off the beaten path. I walked away from Puerto Rico wanting to go back.'" Here, he shares his most memorable meals."



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So this is a lot longer of an intro, and as you'll see, there's a lot more information here not just of how he connects to the place but also a bit of service information, okay? And then each of these sections about where he ate, also a bit longer, but the whole piece ends up being a similar length. We've just got longer sections. So I'll read you and break down one more and then we'll go over and talk about pitching.

“So, of course, Jose Enrique planned for us in Puerto Rico, the one place I looked forward to the most was eating at his restaurant, Jose Enrique. I'd met him twice before, once in New York for the Food & Wine Best New Chefs photo shoot and then again at the Food & Wine Classic in Aspen, so I knew he was a talented chef. But I wasn't fully prepared for this dinner. Jose's food showed us his Puerto Rico, and his talent is staggering. Jose's blood sausage was one of my favorite dishes. He prepared it three ways: seared, stuffed inside a spring roll, and with Galician clams. But the standout dish of the night was the yellowtail snapper. The freshness and the way Jose butchered it made me want to cry. He butterfly cuts the snapper and cuts from the belly and takes the rib and spine out of the fish, then folds it over so that the back fin is still on. Then he dusts the fish in cornmeal and fries it, the technique was just great. This was his signature dish and it was awesome. We ate here on the first night and I wish I had gone back at the end of the trip to eat again for perspective. He explained all of the dishes to us and I understood the concept and knew they were delicious, but then to go on the streets, food stalls and return to Jose's, I think you'd better appreciate what inspires his cooking.”

So here, again, you can see that this is all sourced, this whole big long thing I just read you is all one quote theoretically from this guy. But you'll see here that you feel the voice a lot more in that other one, because in order to get 11 different places featured in there, they have to really, really edit down what they're including from the person at each place. Here, he's able to give us some context on visiting Puerto Rico, and how you should understand the piece. He also gives you some service here where he's saying, “He wished he had eaten back there at the end, and he recommends that we go out and eat the street food and then eat at Jose Enrique later for perspective.”

All right. So let's flip back over to the slides, and if you have any questions, we're kind of getting into the wrap-up, so let me know in the chat box. But let me flip over now to the slides and we will talk about how you pitch the use pieces.

All right. So we've looked, the past couple weeks, at several different types of pieces that are all based on people, relatively famous people. People's cooperation in your story. If you can't get the person to cooperate with the story, you can't get the piece. In some cases, you can



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maybe write a profile if it's short without talking to the person. You definitely can't write an interview piece without talking to the person. But you most 100% certainly cannot write a celebrity recommendations piece out of the air, you cannot write it without talking to the person.

So that makes it not only hard to pitch the piece because you've gotta get the permission first which is weird, because you don't know if the editor is gonna approve it. But it also makes it hard to know what you're pitching. So when you pitch, you've gotta really focus on that beginning part of the piece, what's your time peg, and what's the person's connection to the topic at hand? Okay?

And as I mentioned early on in the call, these pitches are best as a tack on from something else. So you've gotta another piece, another reason you're interviewing this person, and then you just ask them a few other questions at the end and say, "You know, I'm gonna see if I can get this also in blah, blah, blah place as a celebrity recommendation feature. Would you mind telling me, you know, four of your picks on your favorite street in the city where you live?" Something like that, okay?

Now, as I've shown here, the words that appear particularly in the more roundup section tend to be words that were said directly by the source. This is not stuff that you're writing. And that's one of the things that makes it hard because you can't even tell them...you could say I'll feature a restaurant, a hotel, a cafe, and a piece of nightlife, and then you can ask the source for each of those. But you really don't know what they're gonna be, right? So you can kind of notch it down in terms of what you ask the source.

But the thing is also that sometimes because these things are so easy to put together and you're gonna use the words verbatim anyway, you can get in a position where you're doing these interviews over email rather than live. And that can end up being nicer than you think in a way, because rather than interviewing somebody who is very kind of like on the leash in terms of what they say to the press or media transition like that, you can have them already vet through whoever it is that has to vet what they say, you can have that done before you get the quotes. So that once you have quotes, you're able to just use them as you wish rather than having somebody say, "Well, we need to see those quotes, we need see what's gonna appear before it goes out."

Now, this is something we need to see it before it goes out, that you should never be showing any source the whole piece even if it's just about them. But you can always...there's never a problem. I've never heard anyone ever have any issues with this. Give them the quotes of



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what you're gonna say that they said for approval. And in this case, if it's not demanded, I would definitely recommend that you do it.

Now, I mentioned this in the last couple weeks and this bears repeating, which is that if you are pitching to an editor, someone that's a real kind of well-known celebrity, and this is an editor that's new to you, that you have not worked with before, you want to make sure that you explicitly say this person, this person's team, whatever, has agreed to participate in the piece if it's assigned. Do not assume that because you're pitching the person, the editor will know that you have gotten permission from the source to do the piece, you need to come right out and say it.

So thank you guys so much for joining me, and have a great weekend.