



Dream of Travel Writing

Live Idea-to-Pitch Walkthrough #4: Ruthlessly Auditing Idea Fit

This week we are going to do module four of our six-part "Idea-to-Pitch Walkthrough" series. So in the past, we have gone from just some basic notes on a trip or rather, you know, in-depth notes from tours, but the basic itinerary and turn that into some potential pitches. We've gone through the travel magazine database and we looked at a number of different magazines, both airline and otherwise, and pulled out some magazines that might be a fit for these ideas. And then in the last webinar, we started to look at the actual physical magazines to see which ones, when we look at them, really didn't match the idea that we had in terms of tone. Or perhaps the magazine was connected to an airline which did not, in fact, fly to the destination that we were doing. That was one of the things that came up because we started, in particular, looking at the airline magazines because we had a lot of ideas for those.

But one of the things that we ran into last time, just to refresh everyone's memory, is that the place that we are profiling particularly with these ideas is in the Czech Republic. And it's kind of an out of the way place. And so what happened was that some of these places were not serviced... Well, some of these airlines didn't even service Prague, which was kind of surprising. And some of the airlines didn't service the smaller airports in the Czech Republic and they wouldn't take pieces for the sections that we were looking at, which is kind of the thing you have to look at. Some airlines sections will only cover the specific cities that an airline flies directly to on its own planes that it owns or rents. Aer Lingus is particularly one in this case. And other magazines, particularly Delta, this comes up a lot. They have a section called "Breakaway," which is specifically for destinations that are, say, like two or three hours away from the airport. So there's other magazine sections and airline magazines where we have a lot of latitude in terms of where the physical location of that place is.

But, first, the overview of what we're gonna talk about today are, like I said, I'm gonna tell you what the series is and how to follow up at home. And then I'm gonna pull up our list of ideas so we can all refresh ourselves about what the ideas we're working on. They kind of fall into some main categories that basically, even though there were a lot of different things that I did on these fam trips, I can show you the earlier pages if people are curious.

As we notched down from some like 40 odd ideas, there were only really magazine sections, at least that we were seeing, and we only live for one hour, you know, in the database, but there were only really magazine sections that we were seeing for a handful of those ideas. And some of the ones that jumped out were actually a little bit surprising because they weren't necessarily large aspects of the trip. So then we're gonna talk about what fit checks we've done before I went into this a little bit and what's left to do. And I'm gonna introduce a new kind of tool for checking fit that we're gonna look at as we get into the pitch as well because it's a way for you to know that your pitch is both relevant and interesting that you should apply at multiple stages of the process, both when you first have the idea as well as in the pitch. And then we're gonna attack our matches and refine them.



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The next two webinars in this series involve us actually writing the bones of the pitch and then filling it in with specific details, which is something that I've been doing a whole lot of because we just had the financial writing boot camp last week or the week before last, and we were writing 15 minute or less-pitches right and left while we were there. So you will see how exactly we go about doing this like really fast pitch formation that we do. But before we get there, we need to make kind of a priority list of the pitches that we're gonna work on on our pitch. So if we have one overarching goal today as we refine the matches further and kind of ruthlessly check to make sure that they are workable, it's gonna be that I'm trying to create a list of which ideas are actually worth my time to pitch. So something that I was thinking about before this webinar today, I'm gonna tell you after I kind of refresh from the beginning about what we're doing because it's really central to that.

As I was saying, it's really interesting now that we're getting to the end of the series or, rather, we've just passed the hump now, we're in four of six, right, to start to see things come to fruition. And circling back to what I said at the beginning, the whole reason that I set out to do this idea-to-pitch series is because I don't see enough of you going through this process in, to go back to the title of today's webinar which is "Ruthlessly Auditing for Fit," quite as ruthlessly as you perhaps should or need to in order to have viable careers, particularly if magazine writing is where you wanna focus your time.

I've had several chats with people about the idea of freelance and what that means, historically. So if you're not familiar with it, freelance literally means somebody who, back in medieval times, was a knight who was not pledged in fidelity to any particular lord or king. So his lance was kind of free to be attached hither or thither. So, this idea of a freelancer was really literally, from the inception, somebody who's a mercenary, somebody whose lance is for hire, somebody who has no allegiance. However, I find so often these days that there's a lot of allegiance going on. You feel allegiance to an editor that you haven't even pitched that you don't wanna bother her. You feel allegiance to an editor that you've sent one email to who hasn't responded that you don't wanna bother them by following up to make sure they've seen your pitch. You feel allegiance to an editor who has responded to you in one way or another. It's just amazing how much thinking of others is happening here in a way where we need to remind ourselves that this is business.

I don't say that in a, you know, Mafioso way where they dig the knife into somebody or something like that. I mean it in the way that if you aren't hitting your bottom line, if you're not covering your expenses, then you're not doing this as a business. You're doing this as a hobby or I don't even know, for tax purposes, what a hobby is, has even changed in the U.S. recently. So maybe it's not even a hobby. Maybe it's like crocheting for you or something. Okay. So if you aren't thinking about this in a way of how do I make my numbers make sense, how do I make my expenses get covered, how do I meet my financial goals, just like you would with any other type of job, you might wanna think about how to reset your viewpoint in what's standing in the way of you doing that and if those things are more



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important than your actual goals in terms of the type of lifestyle that you want from the business that you've set up for yourself. One of the numbers that is very important to watch is how long it takes you to pitch. People think a lot about how many pitches they're sending out.

And it was very interesting. I just had a coaching call with somebody who I hadn't talked to in a little bit. In the beginning of our call, she very promptly reported to me all of the work that she had recently filed. She was very proud of this. And it's interesting because I often talk to people who tell me about how much work they've done in more of "hours in" kind of input way. But the thing is that the number of hours that you put in in this profession, unfortunately, don't matter at all. In fact, they are the opposite of a badge of honor. You should be putting in fewer hours and doing more traveling and enjoying your life. But most importantly, you need to be getting your pitches and your articles out as quickly as possible so that you have the best hourly rate.

So, the impetus of this entire webinar series is to show you not just how, okay, not just how to get your pitches out quickly or why, but really this idea of where your priorities should lie. And you're gonna see this come up today because I've spent all of this time, okay. You know, we looked through the itinerary. I didn't even spend that much time on my notes the first go-around, okay? Then we spent some time in the database. Then I've spent a little bit of time, like an hour or probably less because we do talk about some other things on our webinar, looking through the actual physical magazines. But I know we looked through like five or six, if not more different magazines in the last webinar. So I am not taking one magazine title and sitting there for two or three hours and reading back issues of that magazine, okay, because you can't. Because it doesn't make sense for your time. Once you get the assignment, you can spend some more time doing that. But even now, up until writing the pitch, I have been very sparse in how much time I'm dedicating to any one pitch and any one article idea because that's the way that the game works, so to say, and that's why we're doing this series. So, we're gonna move into, as I said in this webinar, checking the fit more closely and starting to create that priority pitch list.

So, for this week in particular, like I said, it's about taking the ideas that we already have, some of which we have already actually gone through several stages of fit checking and taking them to the next level so that we are starting to assemble as well the material that we need to write the pitch. So first, I wanna check in with where we are with our ideas. And then we're gonna talk more about exactly what fit checking we're gonna be doing this week so that we can take those ideas further along in the process and put together basically our hit list in order of what seems like the hottest ideas for next week, or sorry, for the next webinar in this series, which I think is, in fact, next week.

So up here at the top, the very first thing that we did last time. So last time, like I said, one of the very first things that we did was we took a look at the airline magazines that we were interested in. I've got all the magazine sections in here. But we looked at the airline



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magazines that we were interested in and we looked at which cities that I went to on this trip are actually okay for the airline magazine, as in which one do they fly there.

Now, like WOW Air, which was one we were looking at, doesn't even fly to the Czech Republic at all. So we can only pitch them a story where it would be okay that the story doesn't cover one of their airports, okay? And then I also went and I checked for some other airlines maybe that we didn't think about that fly into some of these smaller airports, some of these we didn't look at the magazines for before, okay? So then what we did was we looked at some of our ideas. Now some of these ideas that we're focusing on, just as a refresher, there's a couple ideas that are feature ideas.

So what I'm gonna start doing now is I'm gonna start switching these and putting them by which ideas they are. And this is actually how we had it on our first one, but then we switched to looking at them by magazine so that we could quickly go through the magazines and see which ideas actually worked. So I'm gonna resave this so that we know that this is gonna be from our new call so that we've got every stage of our process documented so we don't lose anything. I often find, especially those of you who work in Google Docs, for instance, aren't necessarily saving extra versions of things. And this can be really useful because it might be that you've written a version of something that you really like in an early pitch. And after you edit it, you've lost that, you've gotten rid of it. And then comes a time to kind of put together the final version and you realize that you don't actually have this really great maybe lead or something like that that you had in the first draft because you thought you didn't like it. And now after seven versions, it's actually your favorite thing. So always save your things as versions, guys. Okay?

So we got rid of this portion of "Wizz." We said that one wasn't gonna work. Now this one here looks like this is not a feature. This is a profile. And this is on something that someone pitched to me actually in the speed dating at this conference, okay. So this is gonna be a profile of northern hikes, and we'll see if there's some other places that we have to pitch that. Okay, so that's in "Wizz." Now, something else that we saw a lot of was this profile of honest Prague people. Okay. You're gonna see, as I pull these in here, that there's quite a few of those that seem like they would work. Now, for "Wizz," we also had like three or four different features that seemed like they might work there. "Wizz" is an Eastern European airline magazine that we were looking at. Okay. So we have the honest Prague people profile, those are ones that we have a lot for. The other feature ideas that we're kicking around are beer culture in Prague. Now, this is a really proto idea, okay? This is really early, okay? And this is something that, one of the things we'll do in this webinar and particularly the next seminar, is that we'll develop that further into a proper idea.

We also talked about modernizing the spa culture in the Czech Republic. And perhaps this culture of the underground tunnels, which, again, all of these right now are very vague. They're very proto because we're gonna make them specific once we start writing up the



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pitch and once we start getting into this idea of what...not necessarily just once we start writing the pitch, but once we start getting into the idea of what is the tone and what is the voice for the particular magazine we're writing a pitch for. And Lindsay noted that you can recover previous versions in Google Docs. But I was talking about it less from that you can't recover it but it's kind of like recovering different things in Google Docs is like me going into WordPress and trying to figure out who made a mistake in the "Travel Magazine" database and when this happened and having to look through 27 versions. So I prefer to say like, you know, if I'm working with somebody on their pitch, I'll save it as "Gabby edits February 20th" or "pitch version 2," or "pitch with new lead" or something like that. So as I wanna go back and pull something from a different version, it's a lot easier and faster for me to do that.

I think one of the reasons that people don't save different things in Google Docs is that they know they can go back through prior versions using version history, but I think that nobody ever really wants to or, you know, you'll sit there and go down the rabbit hole of self-doubt of all of these different versions of your past pitch and maybe the one you have now really isn't the best. So good point there, Lindsey. So, like I said, we've got honest Prague. We've got these three main feature ideas that we're looking at. Now, we had several things that looked like they could work for EasyJet, particularly for their front of book thing. We had this homeless tour idea that they had in Prague, in Ostrava. And I'm not sure if there's other places where that's happening, but that could be an interesting front of book pitch, okay? Some other things that we had in EasyJet were this area guide, but that depends on where EasyJet flies. And it looks like EasyJet only really works for Prague. So because I don't really have a ton of stuff about Prague, that probably wouldn't be the best. So I'm just gonna cross over, and I'm not gonna get rid of it just in case something occurs to me later as I'm going back through my notes.

Now, we did, however, have one place that I went to in Prague that seemed like a really cool sort of cafe idea that could work for this short thing in EasyJet. Now, this might be something that, as we start writing the pitch, I see that this is something that I can repurpose for some other places. So you'll see, particularly when we get into the webinars, when we're doing writing the pitch and polishing it, I'm also going to be lining up some different sort of backup, if you will, places that I can send that pitch to. This one, we decided... Oh, I'm not sure where we were with that one so I'm just gonna make it a question mark. And then again, we have these honest Prague people who we're just gonna be pitching all day every day it seems. Now, I always tell everybody that if you wanna pitch a profile of a particular person, of an individual, or particularly a Q&A, then you need to be getting their permission first. So for the purposes of this webinar, I have not reached out to these people, I wanna say this. But it's something that you really need to be doing whenever you guys are pitching these things, okay?

Now for EasyJet features, I had several different feature ideas. And some of them incorporate the same feature ideas that we had earlier for "Wizz" and some of these are different, but I'm



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just gonna put them together for now. Now, you'll notice I don't have a spreadsheet here. I'm not sitting here kind of, you know, like tabulating and color coding and doing all these things, not because I think that this looks good. This is like crazy and disastrous and seven different fonts and everything. But because it's important to not get drowned in the ceremony of what you're doing. If you have a process that works really well, then that's great. If you are finding that you are becoming a slave to your process and that your process is taking more time than actually doing the work, then that's something that we need to look at.

So I'm just moving again these ideas back up here so that they're with their counterparts because, like I said, at the end of today's webinar, we're going to be kind of grading these for which are the best. So for instance, I'm putting together these features where the features go. Let's just do a search for feature. It takes forever. So I'm putting together these features. Here we go. I'm putting in all these features. So for instance, I'm gonna find the feature. There's a couple different ones that I wrote here, but it's only this modernizing spa culture one that's coming up on a lot of these lists. So when I go back, I'm gonna say, "Okay. It looks like the modernizing spa culture could work for three magazines." So that's probably gonna be the feature pitch that I wanna prioritize out of all of those feature pitch.

Okay. This is a road trip type piece. So this is a very popular thing which people talk about whenever we do workshops, but I don't actually see so many people pitching. So this is "b.inspired" which is Brussels Airways. And they have a really great road trip section. And then after that, we've got, again, our honest Prague folks. Now, I had some kind of weird feature idea here about this idea of a collection driven curio cabinet and how people who travel a lot kind of focus on something that they always collect everywhere they go. And I don't super love that. So I'm not gonna move that back up into the ones that we're looking at for now. I'm gonna put it in Italics like I did for these other places.

So then I had another one for Brussels Airways that I was thinking about, which is a neighborhood one. So then we're gonna double check. Brussels only flies to Prague. So again, it seems like this is not gonna work. So, those are the magazines that we had looked at already. So like I said, we did have originally a lot of different magazines picked up and besides that, a lot of different magazine ideas. So I'll just pull those up so that you guys can see those as well. And then we'll circle back to talk about fit. And I'm just gonna put these side by side on the screen and then zoom out to my whole screen and have you guys look at those. All right. So, hopefully, you should be seeing these now.

All right. So this is our initial ideas list. So this I went through and added up kind of both the original day trips that I went on for the conference, the meetings that I had during speed dating, and then some different ideas that came up during the tour that I was on. And then we had gone through a bunch of different magazines. You can see the magazine names are over here. They're small. We had gone through a bunch of different magazines. And I put the



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different sections of the magazines that I thought might fit. And then I also put the ideas that I had, especially if there was more than one, that might work for that section.

So last time, like I said, we went through a certain number of magazines. And we actually physically looked at those magazines. We looked at "Wizz," which is an Eastern European carrier. We look to "N by Norwegian." We looked at Brussels. We looked at EasyJet which is out of the UK. And I think that might be all the ones that we got to. But you'll see that in here, there's quite a few other ones that I have. I have "WOW." I have "Voyeur," which is Virgin Australia. I have "Celebrated Living," which is gonna be one of the, I think it's the upper-class magazine for American Airlines. I have "High Life," which is British Airways. Again, Voyeur. I have WestJet, which is a Canadian airline. I have Wings, which is a German airlines, Swissair, "Cara," which is the magazine for Aer Lingus which is an Irish airline. So there's several magazines that we didn't even get here. And still, these are only the magazines that we saw when we did a quick look through the database in less than an hour.

So it's important to remember that all that being said, I still turned up here 10 article pitches that I was ready to move forward even though I was not looking at every single magazine, even though I was not kind of going back towards the dawn of time, even though I was not reading every single magazine and like four back issues of it.

So, as you saw in our last call, we didn't get through a monumental amount of stuff. Like I said, we only got through four magazines. We only got through adding in about 10 ideas, but that's okay because how many pitches are you really gonna write? Like I said, one of the things that we were noticing was that there were certain ideas like the profile of those honest Prague people that just seemed to have more resonance. There were certain feature ideas that seemed like they would match more people. So that helps us to see which pitch is gonna make sense for me to write because if we're spending this webinar series of six webinars, it'll be six hours. If we're spending six webinars, or six hours rather, and we've done a survey of all of the ideas we could possibly pitch, you know, a skim of which magazines they could go in and still we get out with somewhere like three to five pitches at the end, that's great for six hours' work, to think about all of that that went in there. And then that is our jumping off point.

Then we can always go back to other ideas that we didn't pitch. We can always go back to other magazines we didn't check. But more importantly, we can take the pitches that are now finished and we can circulate those out to more places that have more of a chance of those landing and turning into ideas, especially bigger, longer ideas. So, last time we checked, particularly the airlines where they serviced, and we looked at four of those magazines, now, I particularly noted at the end the call last time that we wanted to check on Blue Wings because we had quite a few different ideas for Blue Wings. But also, I wanted us to dive more deeply into this nine-step fit check process.



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And then like I said, the real goal today, to me, is for us to take those ideas that we already have and put them in into an order of what is the highest priority, what is the best fit, what seems to have the best chance of success, because those are the pitches that we're gonna write next time. And this is part of the ruthless audit is that we all have lots of ideas. I'm working on the essay for the newsletter for this week and it's all about drowning in ideas and how we have... I have pages and pages and pages of wall-sized Post-Its that people fill with ideas that each of those ideas could spin off into 200 different things every time we do the boot camp. But the ideas don't matter. Ideas are cheap. Ideas are air until we get them out into the marketplace for pitches.

So what I'm gonna do is I'm gonna go into these magazines, like I said, and have us start there in terms of what we're gonna cover.

Now, "Lufthansa Magazine" is gonna be a little tricky for us to check because I'm not sure if they have a full issue online. It doesn't look like it. They seem to have some random articles. So let's just look quickly through. I'm gonna switch the screen. We're going to look at "Lufthansa Magazine" and "Blue Wings" and then if we have time, maybe one more. I've also got Swiss open in terms of some other magazines that we might fit, some of these ideas, into. So parts of "Lufthansa Magazine" that are open are an interview with a celebrity, four features but between travel and aviation. They're usually 1,500 words long. And travel feature example would be "Giver of Life," which shows the story of a writer's trip to Bangkok to celebrate the Loi Krathong festival with an emphasis on the modernization of Bangkok's river including quotes from locals. Okay. Another example includes "Optimistic Outpost" in which the writer visits Athens with an emphasis on the upcoming contemporary art exhibit "documenta 14," including quotes from artists involved in the discussion of the changing art scene.

So, I really feel like here, they wanna have a strong time peg at the festival here and this art exhibit. But they also really wanna focus on how something is changing. So I feel like this can be a good fit. Of course, we'll have to have a glance of the magazine if we can, but I feel like this could be a good fit. And I'm gonna go add it to our sheet for today that this can be a good fit for that spa thing that I was talking about, which again, is about kind of the modernization of the Czech kind of ancient spa culture, particularly focusing on this Santa Catarina, which is sort of collaborating with an Indian spa in Kerala to open a brand new building which has a whole Ayurvedic component. So I think that could be an interesting one here. But, otherwise, there's not too much Lufthansa that's open to freelancers so we will leave it at that.

So I'm gonna see over here in Lufthansa if we can get one of their features open. Now, again, I'm not super sure which is a feature here just because they don't annoyingly have their whole magazine online. So we're sort of just grasping at straws here. Yeah. See, this is short so I'm not sure. So, sometimes this happens, guys. Sometimes you simply can't get an actual copy of



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the magazine. Now I really harped last time on how important this is to actually look at a copy of the magazine. And part of that is because I've seen some magazine editors get really ticked recently at people for pitching...it's not like somebody pitched just without looking at the magazine. But it's that...see, this actually looks kind of feature-y so this could maybe work. But it's not just that somebody pitched without looking at the magazine but it's like very clear that somebody pitched with a certain amount of information but that they just didn't do that last step of checking out the magazine.

So, whenever you can, even if it's just like we're doing that I've just gone on the website and I found something that looks like it could be a feature even though I'm not sure, it's really important to do this because editors notice. Editors notice if you pitch them an idea that's way off. And it happens for two reasons. Either you've pitched them an idea that you really love, that you think is in line with what they're talking about and you're not communicating it well, or you haven't done your homework. And neither of those things bode well for your relationship with an editor. So, this thing that looks like a travel feature, maybe this clicking on travel would let us know, but this thing which looks like a travel feature is about the East Coast Greenway in the U.S., which, honestly, I didn't even know about. And I'm just gonna dump this in our notes so that we have it as a potential example for later of what a feature looks like here. Now, we're trying to see if this whole idea of the Santa Catarina spa is gonna be a fit. So, they're talking about the trend. They're talking about the trend. They're talking about the history of the swamp. Again, it all seems kind of very reported. There's some quotes, but it all seems kind of big picture and trend-oriented. They're profiling a particular bike shop. Of course, they've got pictures.

I feel like I have quite a few sources for this, both from the trip that I took and also from the speed dating. And I had a massage at the place and I toured the new spa there as well. So I feel like I have a good amount here, and I would wanna check if this person who did the photos, if that was somebody who shot it just for this article, because it looks like it, because they're all the same person. So the one thing I would need to do is figure out how I was gonna get the photos. Now, I do have something but I don't know if I would have enough for what they would want. Or it might be that they could just send one of their own photographers to do that. And in fact, let's even just look up this person and see. Yeah. She seems to be... Oh, she's a photographer based in New York, right, because they shot this here. So she has a website that does not seem to work. But so she's a New York-based photographer. So it seems like they send out separate photographers. So that wouldn't be a problem that I don't have those pictures. So that's great. So I'm going to hold on to that Lufthansa piece.

So now let's take a look. I'm gonna switch over to one of the Blue Wings magazine. And actually, it might be faster for me to share my whole screen so that we can see side by side both the magazine and my notes. So I'm gonna go ahead and do that. So here we've got Swiss. Let's look at a Blue Wings. And this is our idea fit thing that we're gonna talk about



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later, and let me pull up our ideas. All right. So, I'm gonna pull up the second page just so we can know what we're gonna move over. Okay, great. So in Blue Wings, we are specifically looking for...we're looking for this up-close. And that is to cover this idea of the beer spot, this beer cultures in Prague. We're looking for...oops, that's up-close again. We're looking for inside track, and that's again for this modernizing spas idea. I'm not sure why everything is showing up twice here. This is very strange. Okay. And then we've got two other ones here that are different, how Instagramers are changing natural destinations. That's what I was talking about, about the northern hikes idea from earlier. Okay. And for sidesteps, it's a roundup of different things to do in a destination. That could also be the beer spas. Okay. It seems like that's all the ones that we've got here.

So we're looking for up-close inside track sidesteps in an investigation. So let's see what we've got. All right. So up close is gonna be on page 14. Investigation is much later, on some page 68. And then I'm still looking for inside track and sidesteps. We'll see if those come up as we scroll through. They might be one of these ones that are written with the destination instead. Okay. So let's go to that page 20 whatever it was for up close.

It's right over here. Inside track, there we go. "Going coastal. With a combination of nostalgic elements and modern twist, this great seaside English town is still going strong." Ironically, they don't seem to tell us what it is, but I imagine that is Brighton. Okay. So for this one, we are considering inside track. We're considering these modernizing spas. Okay. And it's different places in the same country or region. But this one seems to be a bit different. It seems to be more things that are going on in the coast there. So I don't know if that fits so well with this current idea. Let's go back up for a second and see where we need to go for these other ones. Up close is on. Oh, we skipped up close. Okay. Up close is on 14. Let me see if we can just go to that and then I'll go to 68 for investigations.

Okay, up close. This is the one that covers one aspect of a city in detail in about 300 words. Now, this one is talking about serenity in the city. This is saying about gardens somewhere in China. It's quite short. It just has a couple of pictures. It has some very general recorded information. So I think at least just from the structure, the one that I was looking at would work there. And now let's look at these investigations and then we'll look at the other two issues quickly. All right. Now, for investigation, we had thought about this idea of how Instagramers are changing travel, natural destinations. After revolutionizing bike sharing and mobile payments, China now aims for global dominance on the electric vehicle market. So it starts with a lead, that sort of a profile of a particular example of this trend. It's got some quotes but talking about some specific companies. I feel like this works. So I'm gonna hold on to this one. And I think we also feel like the beer spas could potentially work, but we need to check on this inside track. So let's check on one more issue.

Okay. So we've got up closes on 17. Now, somehow we found inside track. It must have been this 19. And I'm not quite sure how to find sidestep. So maybe we'll just try and scroll and see



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if we can come up to it. So I'm gonna skip ahead to 17 and then investigations on 70. Let's just start there actually. Brain food ... can handicrafts boost wellness, increase creativity and brain activity? So this one's much more general, which I feel like kind of goes to the one that we're thinking about more so than the China one. So I'm actually gonna just jot this down that we're pitching something in this frame. And this one I really like. And I think this can be a cool thought piece to write as well. So I'm definitely gonna upgrade this. I'm gonna keep this as one that we're gonna do. So let's go back and look at those other two ideas for Blue Wings.

Okay. Up close, off the beaten path. This is talking about Delhi's Sufi capital. So it's sort of a type of mysticism, if I'm not mistaken. Now, within Islam, again, this is quite general. I feel like this would totally work for the beer spas and with the little that I have, I could still know enough to write it. So I'm gonna hold on to that one for beer spas. And let me just look again at this inside track if we can find it. It seems like they are not being super helpful in how they title these things here. Inside track, "Nanjing on tap. China's former capital is home to some of the earliest craft beer in the country. And these are some of the hoppiest venues around." So this one is a little more that it's gone out and it's gone more general. And it's just profiling individual places, which is more like what we were looking about at the spa here. But it's specifically in a city.

It looks like in the past, they have covered one that's like five national parks. So I'd still feel like that one could work. But I'm just gonna check one more just to be safe. And I'm still trying to find this sidesteps, which is a roundup of different things to do in a destination. I don't wanna take too much time on this. So let me just pop over here to the last of the three Blue Wings that I pulled up and just see if I can get us one more example. It's probably gonna be 29. Let me try 29 of that inside track for us to look at. Agenda. I think it's before Explore. Let's see. Escape. It's a beautiful magazine, by the way. This is the "Finnair" magazine. Oh, but they did just have a field trip to Prague. So this is the August. This is really important to remember. Field trip to Prague in August of 2018. Now, this was something that I wanted to cover today is this idea of how obsessed do we need to be of whether the magazine has covered a specific destination already or not. We don't need to be super obsessed, guys, because here's the thing. Up close, here we go. This is the one we're looking at? Up close we already said was fine. Okay. I think we're gonna just say this is sort of fine. I'm gonna get rid of the side steps because I had trouble finding it so we'll keep these three.

So in terms of how crazy we need to go with making sure that the destination has not been covered recently in the magazine, here's my thoughts on that. We don't really need to worry too much unless it has specifically been covered in that magazine in the same section, okay? So for instance, if you are pitching to Brussels Airways and you are pitching this road trip piece, okay, let's have a look at that. Let me pull back up a web browser for you guys. In Brussels magazine specifically, and all I'm gonna do is this. Go to Google. And I'm gonna run two searches. I'm gonna write "b.inspired" which is the name of the magazine and I'm gonna



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write České. That's the name of the town. So, apparently, that's also the name of an album, among other things. The magazine doesn't even come up first. So let's try "b.inspired" magazine. Okay, there we go, by Ink. Okay. So still, you're gonna see that there's not things coming up here. Okay. Now, we could go and we could search specifically within Ink magazine website. But we have to remember, most of these airline magazines that we can get our hands on are only published online digitally, as in like in flip-through versions, which aren't searchable.

The editors know this. They know that there's only so much that you can do in order to check if the magazine has been covered or not, or the destination has been covered or not in the magazine. They get that. They also know that there's no way that you could know if they've scheduled it to run two weeks from now. But what you can do, okay... So that's the case of an airline magazine, is if you're searching for consumer magazine where they're gonna be covering...they're gonna be writing, sorry. They're gonna be putting a lot of their writing on the Internet as well that appears in the magazine, what you can do is this. You go on Google, and you put the URL and then the colon and then you put the destination. Now, I wouldn't expect anything to come up here. And sure, enough, it doesn't. You see, like Rick Steves has one. But like if I put Paris here, even though without putting magazine, I'm sure some stuff is gonna come up. See in Paris. In Paris, see it goes Outside. Outside. And then it starts to go into other things. But, you know, if I put mountain biking or something that Outside magazine will definitely cover, all of the results that we're gonna see are all gonna be in Outside magazine. Well, actually, they switched it off pretty fast. That's interesting.

So typically, when you run this search like this, you should be getting only results directly from the magazine. So I'm not quite sure why this is working. But you can use Google rather than using the magazine's own website to run this search a lot more quickly and to do as much searching as you reasonably need to be doing for the sake of the editor's mindset to show that you've done your searching. Because they don't expect any writer to be reading every single issue of their magazine to know what they've covered in every single issue. That's their job. That's not your job. They're only going to get irritated if you've pitched them, for instance, this road trip and the very last road trip that they covered is something on the same destination or a similar destination that you're pitching. I want to switch over now. Like I said, I wanna put together our list of the priority pitches for next month.

But first, I wanna switch over to this pitch checklist. So like I said, this is something that I'm introducing today but that we're really gonna be using in subsequent webinars as we write the pitches even more. Now, do I have a topic rather than an article idea? Is it encyclopedic or is there a story to tell to the point at the end? You'll notice, right now I have topics. And that's okay because I have topics because I need to meld them to all of these details about what the magazine is specifically looking for. And this is what you're gonna see me do in the next webinar, is I'm gonna essentially take the script of what the story arc that Norwegian likes and the big idea and I'm gonna mold it around this idea of, you know, is Instagram the actual



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secret to enjoying national parks, okay, or whatever it is that we're gonna pitch them. Or, you know, in the case of one of these things, there's so many that we came up with that are profiles honest Prague. One is a roundup of quotes from locals. One is a profile of someone. You know, one is a profile of a local in the area, but specifically covering their career, life in their city, and other interesting humorous experiences, whereas this one is a profile where the person shares six tips, okay?

So I'm gonna take my proto idea or my topic or my wider idea, and I'm gonna mold that into what each of these articles are looking for in the next webinar. Now, something that I talked to several people about today is there's this idea of having an attention-grabbing hook that makes people want to know more even if they're not already interested in this topic. Again, this is something that comes up in the pitch. And this is why we run this kind of now to remind ourselves of what we need to do as we set out to write the pitch. But it's only when we're sending out the pitch that we need to be super clear and checking these things about this idea because the thing is that, like I said, no matter how much work you do ahead of time to get to be familiar with the topic or the person or the thing or the place you wanna profile, you only select the things that fit the specific market that you're gonna be pitching. And that's what we're gonna do in the next webinar, okay?

And the third step is the "tell a friend" test. So we'll do this next as we're writing the pitches. I'll write a couple of potential leads and you guys can all tell me which one you think is more interesting. Then we're gonna do this part. Have I checked to make sure this idea is 100% valid? No business is closing or going out for renovation. I was there in August. That was a while ago, right? This could be the case. So anything like this hotel that I'm basing my pitch on, anything like that, I'm gonna be checking here, okay? Is this topic too topically or regionally specific for the size of the magazine? Should it be a basket of kittens? This is something that we've already done. This is one where we went through the articles and we checked to see whether these ideas would fit. That's what we've done in the last two webinars. Is there something timely about this topic? If not, dig it up. This is something that I know a little bit about from being there but we're gonna do more of it when we get there. Does this idea exactly fit one section of the magazine? That's something that we did already in the last few webinars.

Have I explained how in my pitch? That's something that we're gonna do in more detail in the next one. Am I shoehorning the idea into the section? That's something that I've been trying to do as we go along. And for ones that we're shoehorning, you're gonna see that I'm not gonna prioritize them right now as we prioritize which pitches to write, okay? So now that I've shown you that and so I've laid the groundwork for what we're gonna do next time, I'm gonna go back to the full-screen view for a second and I want us to prioritize which pitches we are going to be doing next time. All right. Let me pull these up. Sorry, for a second it's gonna look crazy. Okay. Let's start with this and I'm gonna make a new priority pitch list. Okay. So we have just a billion things on these honest Prague people, right? So that's



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definitely one, but somehow I don't feel like it's like my exact number one. So I'm gonna write...I'm gonna make this bigger for you guys. Honest Prague profiles, I see at least three here.

Now, something that I don't actually know, we have one here the features that are around like the evolution of the spa culture. But I don't actually have any on here that are specifically profiling that hotel. Those are some of the ones that we had pulled up originally but we haven't looked through any of these. So that's another one that I'm gonna put sort of towards the bottom of the list, just like a straight Santa Catarina hotel profile. If we have time, that's something that we can circle back and write. So one of the ones that I think seem really easy. I also think that some of these ones from Blue Wings seemed really easy, like this idea of the beer spas in Prague. There's also this, as a shorter one of this modernizing spa topic.

So I'm gonna say that these Blue Wings beer spas, another one that's easy and probably, personally to me, slightly more interesting to write than this honest Prague profile. Okay, so this is for up close and it's beer spas in Prague. What else do we have on here that I'm particularly interested in? So there's this place in Prague that I mentioned that we saw that was relatively interesting. And that's gonna be for EasyJet. So this is also like a single place profile. And this is also probably something that we can repitch to some other places. I'm just gonna make a note. For some of these, it seems like they should be repitch-able but I don't yet know where but then I imagine that we will repitch these other places. Okay.

Now this one that came up a lot was this idea of modernizing spa culture in the Czech Republic. So that's a feature pitch. So it's sort of a bigger undertaking, but I'm sort of a bit more interested in it than some of these other things. We've got this feature pitch, modernizing spas.

That can go in a short section of Blue Wings. It can go in Wizz as a feature, Norwegian as a feature. And then we also have it on EasyJet. Yeah, we also have it on EasyJet as a feature. I'll keep this in here so that we can also see how we would change this for the different sections. Oh, we also had that for Lufthansa as feature, right. I wanna figure out where it went. Shoot, I hope I didn't delete it. That investigation one definitely interested me at least. But I noticed I'm getting a lot of ones going from Blue Wings so I'm gonna put that one a little lower. So this was the one about how Instagramers are changing natural destinations. And that's related to this other pitch, the idea that I had. So that's something that I can also spin out for and by Norwegian's big idea, and also for Wizz, the innovator. Actually, maybe...I don't know. Maybe I'll move that one up. We'll see.

So, let's go back up to the top here. Okay. So we've got these feature ones we went through. Those seem to be the main feature ones. We can also take this beer spas and expand it into a feature later, of course, as well. So we've got the three for honest Prague are gonna be for Wizz, Voices, EasyJet, Citizens Advice, and be.inspired Insider. All right. Now, I'm quite interested in this road trip to České Budějovice because that was a big part of our tour. So I'm



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gonna put that up here. Now, what's gonna happen next time, it's gonna be really interesting. Okay. So that's basically what we've got for ideas. So that's great. There were a couple other that I put down here that maybe we could think about, and I think there might be some smaller ones that are hidden in here and also some other feature ideas. So, this is one that we would have to pull the sections and double check and also put other feature ideas.

So this has now given us one, two, three...oops, real three, sorry, three, four, five, six general ideas that we're gonna work on, which I think is totally doable. And then maybe a seventh and then I think there were a couple other feature ideas. But even though this is six general ideas, we've already got 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11 different magazine sections in here, okay? And that's not counting other repitch options that I might roll out here. We've got 6 to 8 ideas, 11 minimum sections. Okay.

What we're gonna do next time is that I'm gonna take each of these and I'm gonna write down kind of the basic formula for what we do for pitches. And then I'm just gonna start filling these things in. And as I fill them in, you're gonna see that for some of them, I'm just gonna write the actual text. Like it might be the about me paragraph or something like that or it might be the middle paragraph because the article is highly structured, I'm basically just copying what we talked about in the database. But for some of them, particularly for the leads, I might just write some notes like, "Could this be this? Could this be that? Here's some things from my notes." And that's really what we're gonna do in the polishing phase, is to fill in those specific details.

All right, guys. Have a great rest of your week. Bye-bye.