



Dream of Travel Writing

Creating a Magazine Pitch Planner That Fits Your Needs and Goals

Today we are wrapping up our four-part series on creating a sort of pitch approach of the magazine first variety. We've already done a series in six parts on the idea first variety. You'll notice that that was longer and it's not just because that's more complicated, which it is, but in that series, we did everything live where I walked through a trip I had gone on, picked magazines for it and write the pitches...wrote the pitches in front of you.

So, we're not doing an actual pitch writing part here in this webinar series. Instead, the way we're wrapping up with today's webinar is on creating a magazine pitch planner that fits your needs and goals. Now everyone's gonna have different needs and goals. The actual sort of physical, if you will, pitch planner that we're looking at today is something that you should create entirely in whatever format works for you. I'm gonna show you one done on slides but obviously, everyone is gonna do it their own way. I wouldn't keep it on slides myself. People have given it to me in the past as Word documents. I know people who use Excel or very, very convoluted things that are like Excel but way more complicated. I know people who just do it physically. All of these avenues are open to you.

I think if it was...if I had a pitch plan like this myself, I would probably do it mostly as a physical tracker. I have an app that they sadly don't make anymore that allows you to track your pitches and it's something that I've had to move over from computer to computer to be able to still use it because they don't make it anymore. So sadly, I can't recommend that to you guys because there's no way to get at it. But as we talk about pitch planning today, I want you to be really dialed into that, that this is about what fits your needs and goals, okay.

So, I'm gonna give you a framework. I'm gonna give you the things that you want to make sure to capture or track in your pitch planning and I'm gonna tell you why we track each of those four ones and how it's gonna help you. There might be some things that you find aren't as helpful to you personally and that's totally fine. But particularly what we're gonna go through today is we're gonna look at just a little recap for anybody who's joining us for this webinar who hasn't caught anything earlier in the series which is why we pitch idea first rather than magazine first and how to start building a list of magazines that you're gonna work on.

And I'm gonna talk about that in the vein of how these steps all work together. Because what I'm talking about today in terms of setting up a pitch plan, I can absolutely see people just going, "Oh, pitch planning. That's like the thing I most need to do." People come to me in coaching calls all the time. What I really need is a pitch plan for the upcoming year. But usually, especially if it's somebody that I haven't talked to you before, what they think that they're gonna do or what they set out to do or what they think that their goal is is either something that's completely not executable.

For instance, I know I mentioned this in the last seminar but this is the kinda thing with people who have their pitch plan on a thing that they wanna be writing, you know, an article every month for airline magazines starting, you know, two months from now and they currently have no relationships with any editors at any of those magazines, right. So that's



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what I mean when I say that the plan that you want is something that's not executable. And so, what often happens is when you sit down to go through the steps of creating a real pitch plan whether that's us talking about it on the phone, you going through it over the course of this series, going through our IdeaFest or Pitchapalooza online to really beef up your ideas and your pitch rating, whatever that is, typically, there's a lot of changes.

You'll find that as you try to write pitches for certain ideas either they can't be matched to magazines, there's just no homes for them or you're really having a hard time writing them because the research isn't there, it's too hard to get or it's something that you're too close to and so it's really hard to write about it objectively. Whatever that is, there's a lot of things that will come up and as you find yourself doing more pitches and sharpening your skills as a pitching machine. And by that, I mean somebody who pitches efficiently and with little waste and in the most optimized process for your personally.

As you find yourself becoming a pitching machine, it's really important to notice all of those things that happen. Because if you stay attached to what you thought it would be like whether that's all the magazines you thought you would write for, even if they never write back to your pitches, what destinations you thought you would write about, what types of articles you thought you would write, whatever. If you stay too attached to that and don't move in the direction of what's actually happening, what's working, what's going for you, then sadness can ensue and I don't want that for you guys, okay?

So, as we go through the webinar today, we're gonna talk about what makes this particular process that we're looking at work and not work. So, I'm gonna point out some ways that you can start to go astray. The problem of course is it's always easier for an external person to see that you've gone astray than it is for you yourself, right? And this is something that I spend so much time thinking about because even for people in our coaching program, I talk to them once a month mostly. There are some people who I have two calls with a month but it's mostly once a month. And it's only for 45 minutes and there's a lot that we cannot talk about one month that then comes up another month where a train has gone off the tracks, okay.

So, I want as much as possible, it's so much harder to see these things in yourself, but I wanna tell you where this process which is really just a meta of how ideal pitching should work, right? I wanna tell you how this process can go astray and give you as much information as possible through anecdotes primarily because it's easier to see things in other people than it is to just think about yourself doing a flaw. So, I'm gonna tell you these so that, as much as possible, you can recognize when you get into one of these mindsets that's not gonna help you succeed. Because the thing about this pitch plan, it's totally workable. It can actually get you wherever it is that you wanna go, right. Like I said, it's for your needs and wants, what you wanna get out of pitching. But that means we need to be really honest about what we need, what we want and what's realistic, okay.



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So, we're gonna walk through the four aspects of a pitching plan and then we are going to take some of the information we put together in the last webinar in the series and some things that I'll just make up on the spot for you and we're gonna put one together live.

So, as we get into today's webinar, I just wanna begin as I always do on this magazine first webinar series by orienting ourselves around this dichotomy, idea first, magazine first, right. Because you can't pitch magazines without ideas. So, when I say ideas versus magazines as if they're too competing entities, that's obviously not true. Ideas and magazines work together. But the thing about pitching idea first is that...and I talk about it like it's, like, a plague. I know I talk about idea first as if it's, like, a disease that people get and I'm so sorry that I say that.

But idea first is just gonna be the most time-consuming and difficult way that you can go about your pitching and I'll tell you why. When you pitch idea first, what it means is that you are walking down the street, at home or in a destination, whatever it is and you think of a story that you want to write. And then because you really wanna write the story and you wanna write it for pay or at least for publication, you wanna get out in the world, then you start looking for places to publish that story. Or sometimes there's a step before that where you take the idea that you wanna write into a story and you write down a lot of notes or sometimes you even write the whole story, God forbid. And then you try to find a home for it.

Now the problem with this approach, as I'm sure all of you guys have tried it at some time, is that it's really difficult to find homes like that. And so, you can end up with a lot of homeless ideas. Some people have entire homeless trips. I know somebody who's on a trip right now she's quite worried about because it's a very out of the way destination and she wanted to pitch it before she went and it's just really hard to know what she can pitch that somebody will certainly buy from there because it's a place that not a lot of people can get to, not a lot of people would go to.

So, when you have an idea without a magazine attached to it, like I said, you can end up with a lot of these homeless stories. But even worse, you as the writer, as the freelancer, can spend inordinate amounts of time trying to find a home for those ideas.

And so, because that can be really soul-sapping and just generally disillusioning, I recommend working a different way which is the magazine first, right. So, when I say magazine first, what I mean is that you take a magazine as we do with our travel database. You look at each individual section of that magazine. Is it written by freelancer writers? Is it written by staff? If it is open to freelance writers, how many words is it? What have they covered in that section in the past? Have they already covered the destination that you're looking at pitching? Have they already covered an idea really similar to what you're looking at pitching?

Or are they perfectly ripe for some idea that you have floating around in your head somewhere? Maybe a trip that you went on last year, maybe a place that you lived, maybe a



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trip that you have coming up, whatever that is. Now when you start by looking at the magazine and not just the magazine but exactly the criteria of what they're looking for, what's the word count? What does it need to include? What places have they covered recently so they're off-limits? What's kind of the vein or the flavor of the types of places that you're covering? When you look at it through that lens and limit yourself to proposing to your own self in your article producing head, ideas that are a natural fit for that section you have cut up so much of the work completely out of the process, okay.

So, this is the thing about magazine first pitching is that we all know, particularly as writers, that in a vacuum we can sit there and we can just create, and we can create, and we can create, and we can create, so many things. But if they don't go out into the world, if somebody doesn't accept them or acknowledge them or whatnot, then it doesn't feel so great what we're doing.

So, magazine first pitching bypasses a lot of that. And another thing that I always like to mention in these webinars is if you pitch the exact same magazine every month with regularity, they get used to seeing you in their inbox. And I know many editors of very major publications that people would love to get published in. And when I say people, I mean really, like, all people. I don't know people who don't wanna be published in these magazines. Say that they have assigned stories to writers that they see in their inbox regularly, that the writers didn't pitch them, that are just ideas that they had in-house but because they see these writers' emails so often and they like their writing, they just assign them a story. So, it's one of the great things that can happen with magazine first pitching if you do it right.

So, the thing that I mentioned earlier is that this is the fourth, the last webinar in the series and the other two...well, the other...there were three before this. The first one, we talked about this gap between idea first and magazine first pitching and why it exists and what the benefits of each are. But in the second one we talked about how to select the magazines that would go into your pitching plan, okay. So really what we're talking about today, this creating your pitching plan, it began in that second webinar in the series, okay. Now if you don't walk through that correctly, if you don't do what we talked about, safety match reach, which is to split up the list of magazines you're gonna pitch in terms of how likely it is for you to actually get published in them, then this pitch plan is not gonna be effective.

Now I wanna just dwell on the safety match reach thing. We talked about it a lot in the second webinar in the series, but I just was on the phone with someone the other day, I wanted to share this, who watched that webinar where we focus on this entirely and told me she was gonna redo her entire thoughts about where she was pitching because every magazine that she was trying to pitch was either a reach or a delusional reach, okay. And it's not that she...she was getting, like, nice noes from some of these editors, but the whole thing is we're not looking for nice noes for our whole lives, right. If you were to say what pitch acceptance rate you would like, and I don't mean you would love to have like in a pie in the sky, 100% way, but, like, that would make you feel like you were doing your job well, you'd probably say something like 50%, right? Maybe 30% but, like, 50% is what we like, right.



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So that's why we have the safety match reach setup so that you can actually realistically and regularly and reliably achieve a 50% acceptance rate, okay. So go back to webinar two if you have not caught it because if you didn't do that setup right, then everything we're gonna talk about today of actually setting up the pitch plan is not gonna work.

Now in the last webinar that we did in this series, we looked a lot at the specific magazines that we had chosen and how to go through and start to generate just piles and piles of article ideas for those magazines, okay. And one of the things is that I totally didn't intend for this to happen but it did that often when people have a magazine on their list and they sit down and try to generate ideas for it, there's one that feels harder and maybe it's something you wrote for before. Maybe it's something that feels like it should be in your wheelhouse but when you sit down to come up with the ideas, they just aren't coming.

Either it was a particular format of the articles, you're just kind of not into them today, whatever that is. But if you feel that happening, it's a sign. Now it's a sign, obviously, that that magazine might not be a fit for you but some people push past that anyway because they say, "Well, it's easy. You know, like, they're just city guides or I know a lot about this topic." So on and so forth.

But what we're talking about today is where the rubber hits the road which is actually getting those pitches out the door regularly and on a schedule, okay. And nothing sinks sitting to your...sticking to your schedule more than dread. It's not even missing one day, okay. Missing one day can make you sink your schedule, sure. But it's the dread of having to work on something that you're just not excited about because then that dread will fill the room. It will suck up all the air and it'll take away from the things that you are excited about working on and it will sink your whole plan, okay.

So, as you are going through the other webinars within this series, as you're going through those exercises, as you're figuring out what magazines you wanna pitch, what articles you're gonna pitch, some of the ideas you're gonna pitch them, watch out for meh, okay. Book agents, for anybody out there listening to this webinar who has tried to pitch a book or heard about people who've pitched books, it's a very famous thing that people get a lot of noes to their books. And this is a very sort of humbling process.

People often say JK Rowling famously got 37, 49, some interesting odd number, 57 maybe rejections to "Harry Potter" before it got published. And the reason for that is that book agents, like, senior book agents who are training younger book agents teach them that working with a book, it's gonna be at least a five or six-year process just between getting the editor match, getting the writer match the editor, getting the book completely written, getting the cover selected, getting through the publicity tour, perhaps there's gonna be, you know, another version, so on and so forth. But if it's a great book, it's gonna go on forever and you're gonna have to sit there and you're gonna process the royalties for that book every year and there's always gonna be fresh mentions and there's always gonna be publicity. And so, it can be a lifelong relationship, not just for the writer but for the agent, okay.



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And agents have this maxim. They say, "If it's not a hell yes, it's a hell no." Now I know you might feel like you wished in a way that magazine editors would say that to you because they seem to sit on your story ideas forever, but it's not the role of the editor to do that. Even in the book world it's not the role of the editor to do that. A little bit but they can always get out of those contracts and other houses can pick up books down the line. It's really the agents that say this and the writers that should but don't always, okay. So, you need to tell yourself when you're looking at which magazines to pitch ideas and things like that this thing. If it's not a hell yes, then it's a hell no. It will make your life so much easier and you'll get to avoid the dread that will sink your pitching plans, okay.

So, when we talk about pitching plans, I'm saying it kind of in the plural. It kinda has four parts, they can be different documents. They can be all in one document. It's really up to you, okay. But these are the parts, portions, subsets, whatever you're gonna call them that over the years I have seen are really important for the success of following a pitch plan regularly which, of course, indubitably as long as you've created the right reach match safety setup will lead to you having regular relationships with magazines, right. So, we can say that this is the underlying linchpin of having success with magazines, okay, is to have all four of these parts. I say this because you can do it without one of these, but if you want to for sure be on the right track, it can really help to have all of them. So let me tell you about each of them and some of them I'll talk about in more detail because we're gonna actually physically make them together from scratch.

So, the first part of the pitch plan is tracking where you're at with each magazine. So let me give this a little more detail. So, in this part, you'll see when we get to it...I have another page. We're gonna make it from scratch. We are gonna look at where we're at with each magazine in terms of where at a glance our ideas are at in terms of a state of progression. So, what that means...let me just pop over to another screen for a second and we will look at the article ideas that we generated in the last webinar. So, we took a list of magazines and I'll pull up the list of magazines in a second.

So, we took a list of magazines that I had created for the purposes of this webinar series and we went through and we pulled some different article ideas that I had for those magazines, okay. So, this one is "Ambrosia." You can see up here, it is an independent magazine. It comes out twice a year. It's very feature-focused. So, we had...I had three different ideas for this roundup section that really focused on this idea about a concept and its connection to the given location through food, okay.

So, I had these three different ideas. Now one is Seattle, one is Berlin, one is here in New York. I'm here in New York right now. We eat in this neighborhood quite often because my husband's Indian and it's where all the good Indian food is. There...Berlin, I was there a couple of months ago. I go to pretty much every single year at least once. Seattle, I go to maybe at least two to four times every year and I was just in some of these places the other day but I don't know this as well.



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So, as I'm going through my pitch plan and I'm writing where I'm at with each article idea, I would list these different article ideas and make a little note, okay. So, the note might be something like, "Needs more research. Pitch outlined. Pitch written. Pitch sent. Response from pitch received. Positive no or pitch me something more blah, okay." So those might be some different statuses that we can include but what's gonna happen is that...I'll go back to the slides now. What's gonna happen is that each magazine that you are targeting...here we go. On your part one, you're where you're at with each magazine. We're gonna track the status of each of those pitches in one visible visual place, okay.

Now here's the reason why we do that. People keep their pitches, their pitch information, their pitch plans, their thoughts in so many different places, okay. I literally was starting to clean out some furniture here because we're getting some different things for the holidays and I found a bunch of notebooks from years when I was doing a lot of travel around Italy or doing a lot of press trips, doing a lot of interviews and they are just so full of notes.

If I wanted to write about one of those places, I can tell you it would be so painful for me to find the notes from that trip. I have other trips though that I've taken the notes over email and I could try to go through my email and figure out, you know, like, "Okay, here's the day of the trip" and then find the notes but I'd still have to read through the whole tour to maybe find something that I'm interested in. And that's not even taking into account various lists of pitches that I have here, there and everywhere, okay.

So, what that means is that when you sit down on a given day to pitch, knowing what pitch you should start with is usually 90% of the battle to actually getting a pitch out the door that day. So, we keep this list of where are we at with each magazine to know at a glance which pitches are further along and which pitches maybe need some research. Now that doesn't mean we should automatically pick, you know, the ripest fruit. There's days where you're like, "Okay, I'm ready to write some pitches." And you really wanna go from ground zero.

You wanna go from scratch, from some fresh things or you're in a day where you just kinda feel like reading...not a day. Please don't spend the whole day just reading magazines. But you're in, you know, a morning where you feel like you're having a slow time getting into it so you wanna read some magazines and figure out which ideas do and don't fit so you look for the ones where you haven't really checked to see if it's a fit for the magazine or not, okay.

But this part one where you're at with each magazine will show you where each idea is at in a single place that you can easily reference so no matter what kind of mood you're in, no matter what you need, if you need to get a pitch out the door right away, whatever. You can always select the right one. Now you might have imagined in order for this to be usable, we need to not put too much information there because if it gets too crowded, if your status becomes more than two, four, seven words, it becomes a jumble and it's really hard to read and we'll see that when we get over to it.

Now the next thing I've got in here is kind of a later and very useful addition to how we did this. And by this, I mean this whole pitch plan that we use frequently on our coaching



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program. So, it's similar to where you're at with each magazine but instead, it's where you're at with each article idea. And I don't mean it like the status that we just talked about. So let me elaborate on that.

Now, when we went through picking the magazines that we were gonna pitch, I encouraged you to pick some that line up with each other. So, you might have a couple that are about a similar geographic destination. You might have several where you could pitch food stories because you're a big foodie, whatever that is. So, what I mean when I say where you're at with each article idea, this is not about status, this is about where it's sent and where you might send it, okay.

So, this is the corollary. This is kind of like the Janice Klein other side of where you're at with each magazine. Because what I've seen happen is that people may have an article idea...I was just in a coaching call about this earlier today actually. So, someone has a coaching idea about...or sorry. An article idea about a person to be profiled who is doing something adventure, like explorer-y that's never been done before and is just about to wrap up. And this writer's sort of top magazine that he wanted to place it in is not clear if they're gonna take the story. They keep telling him, "Oh, we've covered this a lot. I don't know if we wanna cover this again. Check back with me when he's done with the trip. We'll see, we'll see."

And so, because this is a really big story in the way where this is something that he has access to these people doing this amazing thing that would interest anybody, we really wanna make sure that we get a good placement for it. So even though that story right now has been pitched to a certain magazine that he has a relationship with and that he pitches regularly, we would also have a separate tracking system for that idea where we would put all the other places that it could maybe go afterwards. Now sometimes those places it can go afterwards are gonna be part of the pitch plan in terms of the magazines that we've already worked on but not always and that's okay, all right.

And I said that's okay for a couple of different reasons. So first of all, when you did all this magazine searching and I had you cut down your list of magazines, I'm sure there were some that you were still interested in that didn't make the cut because you felt like you couldn't come up with an article idea for them every single day of the week. This is where they come back. So, this is how it all comes full circle, that as you were then working on ideas in the line for the magazines that are on your regular pitching list, other magazines can start to creep in but only as reused pitches, okay. Only as recycled pitches.

We don't wanna start to be having to familiarize ourselves with too many magazines all the time. We think of them as a market for, "Well, it doesn't take that much work for me to just slightly tweak this pitch that's already written for this magazine and that magazine so I can just do that quickly, like, in one sitting, okay." And that's the kinda thing where these other magazines can come into play. So, this is where part two, where you're at with each article idea, comes up.



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Now part three is your calendar. Now this is a pretty simplistic thing theoretically, how to use the calendar and I'm...but sometimes just the rotation of it and the math can be a little mind boggling for people. If you have not watched our webinar on following up, we have a whole webinar called the art of the follow-up and in that, I give specific scripts for how to do follow-ups as well as talk more in detail about this timing but I'm just gonna touch on that a little bit when we look at the calendar today.

Now the fourth part of this pitch plan is so simple. I'm not gonna show it to you today but it is...even though it's so simple, it's just so helpful and it's kinda deceptive because it's simple, it seems easy to skip doing it but it has so many different benefits. I'm gonna tell you why and I really, really, truly hope that you do it. And let me see if I can have an example. I know I said I didn't have one for you but I might have one just kind of laying around that's open. So let me see if I can find one for you in the background.

So, the idea of this fourth part here, which is really just your log of what has been done. Very simply, you would put at the bottom or in a new document, whatever you want, you would say, "You know, December 19th, you know, read August to December issues of X magazine." Again, please don't spend too much time reading magazines, I'm just giving it as an example. So, you know, "Read August to December issues of "National Geographic." Came up with 12 ideas for "Adventure Journal." Wrote new pitch for "Men's Journal" after the polite no to my last one." And maybe you would even say, like, what that pitch was on, okay.

Now the reason that we write this down is because when we have that available, it becomes, on the one hand, if you've heard of this idea of kind of, like, the gratitude journal or something like that, it's kind of the flipside. Like gratitude is making you feel good about external things in a way that's supposed to make you feel humble. This is more like an accomplishment journal, okay. So, it's something that you can look at at any time and feel like, "Wow, I've done all of this stuff, okay."

Now it seems a little braggy. You can call it a Brafile if you want. That's fine. But the really lovely thing about this is that it builds. Every single day you can look at it and feel good about those things that you did that day. But what's even better about it is when you see it in aggregate, okay, and when you see all the work you've done, all of the things that you've put together. But that's really honestly, like, the secondary benefit of this. I find it's something that can be useful for people who kind of have a tendency to not always be the most confident in themselves in that way but the real main use of this, to be honest, is to find things, okay.

So again, like I said, for some people, just that tracking, the accomplishment log, so to say, might be the number one thing, but I really find that the most useful thing that happens with this is that it helps you to be like, "Oh, my gosh. I know I sent this pitch. I think I sent this pitch to this editor. I'm not seeing it in my log. Did I forget to put it in my log? Did I work on it? I don't know. It's not in my email. I swear I wrote it. What happened?" Okay?



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And when you look on this "what I did every day" thing, you will find the particular day when you wrote this pitch and then you can very easily and simply go and search your computer in a way that even if it's not coming up searching with the article name...like, let's say you just forgot to save the pitch and it's just like an untitled file floating around somewhere, okay. If that happens, you can still find it by date created doing it this way. And that's what I really love because when we work on pitches or article ideas, sometimes we take notes, sometimes we do them in our email, sometimes we just do them in a, you know, in a file in OneNote or Evernote or whatever you use and sometimes we use little scraps that we wrote on the subway or whatever. They can get lost, all right.

But if you do this very diligently every day, you will never ever have a little scrap of work that you did get lost again. And what's really wonderful about that is that I know so many people spend a lot of time redoing work unnecessarily. But the worst thing to me is when you don't redo the work. When it was done and you just think it's lost and there's just really no way, not gonna be able to find this and you give up. That to me is really sad because this is work that is already done that you don't need to rethink it, you don't need to re-research it. It's just written, it's just ready waiting for you to send and it's out there. And this will help us find it. So, it's up to you, like I said, which of these benefits is bigger for you. I think that the accomplishment log is really nice. I kept one of those about every single thing that I did every day for years and years and I've been looking for it but I don't...I can't find it since I haven't done it in a while.

But I'll just show you...I'll just put it in the chat box. Actually, then it won't show up in the recording so I'll just switch over. This is just a really simple one that I just did one day. It's not a full thing. But this is just sort of like an example of kind of, like, the level of detail that you would do. Obviously, it's not about pitching. It's about some sort of other general stuff.

But what you might do if you were doing it about pitching is that you could say, for instance, you know...I gave you kind of, like, a verbal example but let me do it a little more specifically about pitching. I'll use somebody...I'll kind of, like, obscure the details but I'll use somebody that I know. So, you could say, you know, "Followed up with Midwest Living, Midwest Traveler, and Sunset Magazine, you know, on the pitches that I sent them earlier this month. Lined up leads for my Delta Sky pitch and my International Living pitch that need to go out later this week and refined article ideas for the four pitches that I need to send next week." So that might be something that you would list in your list, okay.

And again, dating them, putting the specific date, like, you know, December 19th, or whatever that is, is a really important part of your log of what's been done. So again, we're not gonna go through one of those today but I'm gonna show you these other things now. So, as we get into this example, I just wanna remind you that making your personal magazine file as full as it can be is gonna be one of the easiest ways to smooth this process of filling in your pitch file. So, I mean, when we worked on the one the other day that I did I told you, you know, we've gotten to a certain place with some of these. Obviously, I haven't gone through all the magazines but this one here, this first one we did, I came up with one, two,



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three, four, five, six, seven, eight...eight, okay. So, I said, like, 8, 10, even 12 article ideas for each section is a great place to start.

So, if you aren't at that yet with your personal magazine files, I really recommend you get there before moving over into creating this list that we're gonna do because otherwise you're gonna get stuck and the problem with that is that then you're gonna feel like you should create some more ideas. But it's a different brain space, okay. Organizing things and brainstorming. It's like blue sky versus what do I have in front of me and how do I complete this puzzle, okay. Those are two really different brain spaces and it's gonna be very painful. I don't say difficult. I say painful because I actually mean it's gonna be tiring, exhausting and not fruitful to go back and forth between doing both of them at once, okay. So, if you haven't completed the list for each of your magazines, I recommend doing that first.

Pro tip someone reminded me of after the other webinar is that if you set up your...and I will show you in the file. If you set up your file so that all of your article ideas are a different color than your magazine information...like this. I use purple because that's the color that the person who does this uses. It is very helpful. So, you'll see I have all this demographic and stuff information that I've gathered here and then I have different magazine sections and then when I have article ideas, if you color-code them, that means that when you are working on your pitch planner...that color is atrocious. One second. I'm sorry. I'm gonna find a better purple.

If you flip back over to this when you're working on filling in your pitch planner because it's something you're gonna do once. You're gonna have to do it periodically, right. Then you can very quickly just skim past the magazine information, keep your mind from accidentally brainstorming, and just find the article ideas, okay. And like I said, this is very important because you don't wanna burn yourself out trying to do your pitch plan by mixing brainstorming into that process, okay.

So, you can see now I've put all of these in purple and as we get into making this simple, I am going to go back to the file that we...the file that's the actual PowerPoint here so that I can type into PowerPoint and then you guys can have that as slides that we will upload after the webinar. So let me flip back over to that PowerPoint for you.

So, if you have joined us in one of the earlier webinars, you'll remember that I put this list together for us. So, this is a list of magazines that I put together for myself as an exercise in the second part of the series that we did. So, what I'm gonna do is I'm gonna take these magazines and we're going to start to slot them in to part one, right, which is the following the magazine list.

So, what it's gonna look like here with each of these magazines is that we would have, you know, idea one, idea number two. Now it's really important also when you do this not to obsess too much about putting the idea that you think is, like, number one in your heart or number one in terms of readiness or whatever as one, two, three, four, five here, okay. The best way that I like to think about slotting them in here are maybe the ones that seem the



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easiest, that have the best chance of getting written up and quickly but honestly, I wouldn't fuff too much around with this number one through five format here.

So, we obviously didn't come up with article ideas for all of these magazines the other day. So, what I'm gonna do is I'm gonna just do a couple here so that you can kind of see how it would be. And then I have a couple things open so that we can look at that as well. I opened them earlier for us for the other webinar so we can just flip back to that. If we want to, if we wanna fill more things but I wanna make sure that we get through all of the different parts of the series as well.

So, as we're looking at filling these things in, we...or I mentioned the other day that "Ambassador" was something that I didn't have in the database but the interesting thing about "Ambassador" is that it and this other magazine and even this food magazine to a lesser extent, again, really trade a lot of the article ideas around, okay. So, this gets back to what we'll see later...and oops, let me not go too far. What we'll see later in the idea tracker here, okay.

So here we have ideas and then magazine number one, magazine number two, magazine number three, etc. and so on, okay. So often when I'm chatting with folks and they have a story that's really hot, we will automatically go through and find the backup places for it. What I wanna encourage as we're doing this, filling this in right now is that this is where you start. You start by coming up with the different ideas for the different magazines that you wanna work on and just picking for your tracker here from the paper the ones that seem the biggest chance of success, okay. So don't keep too many ideas in this tracker. I'm not gonna put every single one of the eight different places that I thought of for 48 hours into this tracker, okay. I'm only gonna pick the ones that I'm most excited about, all right.

So, for ideas, this is kind of, like, the second stage because I talked about this is what you do with pitches that are already written when you're recycling them. So once an idea has not only made it onto this tracker but I've also written as a pitch, I've also sent it and I've also gotten either a polite no or just a defined by not defined...sorry, declined by nonresponse as in I followed up with the editor twice and told them, "It seems like you're not interested in that story anymore. Here's a new idea." And they didn't say anything about it.

Then I will move the idea for the pitch I have already written here. So, this should be only for pitches that are already written, okay. And then as I'm out in the world finding other magazines that might...you know, I might be interested, I just see them in the database or I remember them, whatever. Then I will start to fill them in here. And periodically, we're gonna get to the calendar bit in a little while. Periodically, you'll have a time where you have everything...sorry. It's so hard to do this in the PowerPoint. You'll have a time where you have everything ready for all of these magazines that you're working on, okay. And you'll see what I mean by everything ready in a minute. And then it means it's time to maybe put a little more room into recycling your article ideas. And I'll show you what I mean by that when we get to the calendar but let's start here.



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So, as I mentioned for "Ambassador," this is a magazine that's very similar to the "Italia" magazine that we spent a lot of time with. So, I'm just gonna steal some ideas from there. So, I'm gonna steal this idea about purchasing entire villages in Italy for high-end accommodation because if they haven't done that yet, this is something that would definitely be a good story idea for this place. Let me just change the font size.

So, this purchasing entire villages thing. So, I have a lot of PR contacts for this but no pitch yet, okay. So, something else would be this idea about the Piedmont area that I just went to and the Amaros from every different city for "Afternoon." Now, of course, this isn't like us. It's just gonna make everything big. Okay, fine. So just took this trip. No pitch yet. I think for this magazine...oh, here's one more. Chestnut festivals. The fall trip, I think the must-do fall trip. Whatever. And I would do that as maybe, like, a first-person with sidebars random optional. Okay. And that is something that I just took this trip. No pitch yet, okay.

So, you can see I'm just picking ones here that I quite like. Now but when we go back to Italia, I had...I'll just switch over for a second so you can see I had this huge list for their city guide section of eight odd different places. Now, I say I wanna tell you this because it's really important when you have a list like this, they often end up being for city guides that you don't just pitch the exact same magazine section back-to-back to back-to-back to back to the same editor, okay.

You wanna mix it up for a couple of different reasons, okay. One is that there might be something that the editor doesn't like about how you're pitching that section or that it's just an issue. Like, maybe the section is just full for the foreseeable future, or maybe they're changing the section, or maybe they're getting rid of the section, okay.

So, if you pitch two or three pitches on that in a row to an editor that doesn't feel like they know you well enough that they wanna give you that piece of information, then they might start to feel guilty responding to your emails because they feel like they're kind of lying to you by not telling you this information and kind of start to avoid your emails. I know it's so much psychology but we have to think about these things in our pitches.

So, what I'm gonna do is I'm gonna pick the ones here from this 48-hour section that I really like the most. So, I'm gonna pick this Barolo [SP] thing just there. No pitch yet. I'm gonna pick...see, I like this one, Tim's idea. My friend was just there but I don't personally know it so well. Bologna is also a great city but I don't personally know it so well. I'll pick Parma.

And so, I was just in Turin but the problem is that Turin and this other place that I have here first are very near each other. So, what I'm gonna do is I'm gonna pitch...think that I'll pitch that Turin one much later. And then I'm gonna look at some other sections that I might wanna pitch for this place. So, I'm just gonna take these features...let's see. There's features and there's also culture to describe visiting a cultural destination with their spouse, friends, or family members and they tend to be something like going to a palace or something like that. So, I'm trying to think on my trip if I went to any of those and I can't think of any right off



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the top of my head. So, what I'm gonna do instead is I'm gonna take some of these feature ideas.

And then I'm gonna pop these in here. Now notice on this one that I just put in because the text isn't small yet, I haven't made a mention on these other city guide ones about checking to see if they cover a city of that size or if they cover those cities regularly. That's kind of a given. But for this Piedmont Amaro feature, I wanna check if that's too small but I'm gonna give myself a note. If so, Amaros by region guide, okay. Because I know a lot about this particular type of drink, this Amaro and I could do that as something by region, okay. So, I'm not gonna go too much for them both because we're kind of out of ideas that we've come up with. I have one more magazine I have ideas for I can drop those in. But I think we've also gotten the gist of this, okay.

So, the main things are that we want to look at changing up how many sections we include in here so you're not pitching the same magazine section back-to-back, okay. Also, we're not pitching the same geographic area back-to-back. So, see, look...I see here that I have this right next to this one. So, then that means that I would go in and I would wanna move this one forward or maybe move Parma forward instead of Bra. Something like that, okay. So, I would do something like that to switch these up, okay.

Now up here, these are all gonna be features so it kinda doesn't matter what order they're gonna be in but something else to know is if you find that you have pitched a section and then the editor gets back to you and says, "Oh, we're not accepting pitches for that section," it behooves you to take that moment not necessarily to send them a new pitch right away if you don't have one ready but to go back here and check which of those article ideas that you have in here are for that section and replace them with something else from your personal magazine list.

Now I mentioned that this idea list is something that we're not gonna do a lot with right now because it's something that you usually do as you are working with ideas that have already been written up into entire pitches. But I just wanna note on here that there's a couple that I have going on here like this purchasing entire villages, okay. That I'm just gonna put this down here because I already have it on a couple of different ones, right.

So, I have it out...that's not one that I have on here but I'll just use that one for now because I know I wanna pitch that to "Italia" also, right. So, I'm gonna put "Ambassador." That was my first choice here, right. And then I'm gonna put "Italia." And then I'm gonna think just because I just know off the top of my head. Like, this might be something that would work for "American Way." This might be something that would work for some of the airline magazines but Italy is kind of lagging in that mag department so I'm not quite sure about that for another airline magazine. I know Conde Nast has already covered this, but this might be a good fit for another luxury magazine. So, I would have a look at...

Now it can be really useful even when you're doing the pitch. Obviously, we don't all know tons of magazines but just this note that I've put here, look for other luxury magazines. And



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then look for architecture magazines, okay. It can be really useful just to do this when you are working on the pitch because then when you come back, you've just...it feels like you just saved yourself the tiniest amount of work but it's so much easier to have a to-do list for yourself and to come and look here and be like, "Oh, yeah. I can look up architecture magazines. I think that's, like, you know, a directive. I can go and do that. That makes sense, okay.

So, it seems like it's so inconsequential, you know, to write down that list of everything you did that day or while you're writing the pitch, write down what other types, broadly categories of magazines this might work for. But having the ability when you're working on your pitches, when you're not sure what to do when you start your day, when you have five minutes, whatever, to look here and have a list...oh, there it is. To have a list of checking is this Piedmont Amaro article too small. That's a small task that I can do in, like, two minutes or five minutes of going around and checking their magazine, right. I need to update my research on what is current in Parma or make sure the places that I would wanna write in this pitch are still open. Cool. That's, like, maybe a 5, 10-minute task that I can go do, right.

The Donati Family. I need to check and make sure they still own both of the places that I would cover. Obviously, the history going back to the 1500s hasn't changed but I would wanna make sure that they still own both of those places and nothing about them has changed. Maybe there is something that has changed that makes it a time peg and that might move it up into my pitch plan, okay.

So that's how these two parts work. But then where it gets interesting is the calendar, guys, okay.

So, for this calendar, here's how the calendar works. This is really, like, how it all comes together, guys. You can see that I've got these 10 magazines over here, okay. Now please do yourself a favor of putting either ones that are really safety or ones that you know well and feel confident about early on, okay. So, when I think about what magazines might I pitch in the beginning of January, I'm gonna put this "Ambassador" one because I know it well.

And I'm gonna put "Italia" also because I have a lot of article ideas for them. And I'm gonna put "Ambrosia" because I also had a lot of ideas for them already. Now obviously, like I said, you shouldn't do this until you've already gone through and had all of your article ideas written out for all of your magazines but you get the hint. So, then I would have "Ambassador" and I would go back up to my earlier sheet and I would say, "Okay, which pitch do I think I'm gonna look at right now?" Actually, maybe I'll just try this. We'll go with this Piedmont Amaro one for now, okay.

So, then I'm gonna slot that in here and that is the pitch that I plan to work on for the first week of January for "Ambassador," okay.

So, imagine that we've got all these filled in. So, this is gonna be, like, a 48 hours piece on Turin. This is gonna be the Berlin Thai food or Vietnamese food. And then just fast-forward



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and imagine that I have filled in all of these other magazines on my list and that I have article ideas for all of them. Do you remember when I talked about how our follow-up plan works? I mentioned a little bit in this webinar. I've mentioned it in much more detail in the past but the basic idea with how our follow-up plan works is that you write the pitch, you send the pitch. And then you follow up in two weeks, okay.

So, I'm actually gonna do this. This is how I would do it if it was me is that I would put the pitches I need to send in a different way and then what's gonna happen is all of those pitches...geez. All those pitches that get sent in week one are gonna get followed up in week three. Now you'll see because I have 10, I'm gonna have 3 pitches that I'm sending some weeks and 2 pitches that I'm sending other weeks. Now I would kind of put this to your schedule, right.

So, you might decide that you wanna have two pitches go out the first week. I'll just move this. So, you might decide that the first week of the month is always tough for you. The last week of the month is always tough for you. So, you're gonna leave yourself some wiggle room on those, okay. So, then what happens is that I need to...FU I used as an abbreviation for follow-up, guys, so don't be scandalous. So, I need to follow up with "Ambassador" on that day and I need to follow up with "Italia" on that day, okay.

And then the corollary of that is that here I'm gonna follow up with "Wiz." Here I'm gonna follow up with "Taproot." Here I'm gonna follow up with Standard. And then what happens is that I need a new pitch for "Ambassador" here, okay. So, you'll see that this starts to get filled in. But then also here I've got a follow-up on "International Living." And "Food and Wine." Okay.

I'm just gonna ignore all the bolding because it's going crazy but I...if it was me, I would follow up SEN or I would bold SEN and follow up as I've done in these first couple that actually look correct, okay. So, the idea here is that I'm then gonna have to send a new pitch to Wiz while also following up on "Delta Sky." Now if you know this, then this is what we...then this is where the calendar can get both complicated and, like, a delightful task manager, guys, right, which is that I know if on this day meaning this week, okay, I'm sending the Piedmont Amaros pitch. It means that it has to have been written in the previous week which means I have to also write "Wiz" pitch. I have to write "Taproot" pitch. Okay.

And likewise, I need to also decide on the "International Living" pitch for two weeks from now, okay. So, this means that basically each week using this calendar you'll get an automated list as long as you keep it up. You can do it just once a month, whenever, once a week. I know a lot of people who do weekly meetings with themselves and that's a really effective time to do this, okay. So, you're gonna not only sit and fill this in. What do I need to get done? And you're gonna do that by saying, "Okay. Well, this week I owe pitches to these places or this coming week or whatever. I owe pitches to these places. Let me see where am I at with those pitches."



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And these statuses are gonna change, right. It might be "written, needs polish." It might be "wrote lead." I'm gonna blow these up a little bit so that they're a little easier to see. It might be "wrote lead." It might be "wrote middle graph, no idea for lead." It might be "have research, need to organize into pitch." It might be "ready to go, just sitting on it to make sure I love it," okay. These are all different things that it can be, all right.

So, I showed you how this sheet here can have different statuses. This next sheet, there was part or whatever you wanna call it, is mostly just gonna be list of magazines but you can also say sent, you know, rejected, sent, needs follow up, need to doublecheck section and change pitch accordingly. So, these are the kind of statues that you can put here. And so, then when you have this meeting with yourself whether it's once a week or once a month or every day or whatever, you look back at these two and you can see what's going on. Now I mentioned that there can be times when this becomes a priority because you've got all of your other work done, okay. And let me just go back. Let me get out of this somehow.

So, there might be weeks where you've actually, as you see in your lovely tracker which might be at the bottom of this, however you do it, you might actually see that you've gotten ahead. So even though there's week where it says you have to send this, you have to write this, you have to follow up on that, you're actually ahead on your pitches because you just sat down one day and you wrote three pitches for "International Living" and those are all set for the foreseeable future.

And then another day you sat down and you did the same thing with "Italia" and then you sat down and you did the same thing with "Delta Sky," whatever. So, your pitches are done. You've done a blitz sometimes. You've gotten ahead. That's when you get to go back to here and say, "Okay, great. I have some extra time on my hands when it comes to pitching. Where can I repurpose some of my articles?" And maybe you need to look at some of these things and fill in the magazines. Maybe you just need to send it out to a new magazine. Maybe you need to double-check if it fits and send out the pitch or...and change the pitch accordingly, okay.

So that's how these three parts work. And let me switch back over to the normal slides now. And obviously, the fourth one, like I showed you a very small example is where you just kind of track what you have already done, okay. So let me just get past the blank ones here. So, I hope you have seen in the examples that we put in how having this pitch plan in place can save you from just so many aspects of what really hurts people about pitches.

But I just wanna remind you that even though it's, like, on the one hand really nice because this is a system. It's a system that you can just follow. It is also a system that really works. It works for a lot of reasons but particularly about building relationships with editors which is, really, if you get down to it, the goal of a lot of people. There are some people who simply wanna have an article out. Whether it's in a certain publication, that's just a dream for them or not. But most people wanna have ongoing relationships with editors where they are able to have the reliability and confidence that they can write for that place every month or every



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quarter, whatever it is. They can send the editor shorter pitches. They don't have to feel so formal. They don't have to wonder where their money is coming from. All those kinda things, okay.

And magazine first pitching is really gonna help you with that so much but it's also gonna help you get comfortable with pitching because you're just following the plan, right. You just have to do what's on your list every day and you know that as long as you have gotten that safety match react ratio correct and you are really picking magazines that you feel excited about that it's going to work out. And I'm so excited to have put this into a webinar so that more of you can work on this because, obviously, like I said, we do this with people in our coaching program all the time.

So don't forget, though, that there are ways that people can go wrong with their pitching. Obviously, if you feel nervous about writing the physical pitches, I recommend our IdeaFest and Pitchapalooza programs for that because we really get into the writing aspect in those. I don't talk about that so much in our webinars. But in terms of the parts that aren't the writing, that's really where most people fail. I know so many people who are perfectly eloquent writers who write wonderful emails and then they send me pitches and they seem like they were written by a completely different person, usually, a person 40 years if not more younger than they are, okay.

So, where most people go wrong with their pitching, so much of it is psychological, okay. So having this pitch plan will help you with a lot of that. It'll help you to show up in editors' inboxes regularly, but it will help with this thing that is really the biggest thing I hear from a lot of people which is not knowing where to start when you sit down to pitch, okay. Once you have set up the pitch plan like we looked at in this webinar series and the calendar especially, you just have a list of tasks. They're just sitting there waiting for you. You just open up your list and you see what you're supposed to do that week and you do those things and the pitches gout and then you get responses. It's brilliant.

It's something really important to me to have this process for people to pitch where you really feel confident about what you're doing, that it's gonna get you somewhere, that you know what to do, and that you can trust that you have made the right choices previously when you were planning and the stuff that you're doing is gonna get you there. So, I'm so happy to have shared all this with you and I hope that you have a wonderful holiday season if I don't speak to you again before then and a great weekend because it's Thursday. Cheers, everybody.