

# Insider's Guide to Freelancing

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# Finding Your Story

What do you really want to write?

# What is your story about?

- Why do you care?
- Why do you want to write this story in the first place?
- What touches you emotionally?
- Who is your audience? How are these readers affected by what you have found?
- What is new here?

# Find Your Focus

- Write a headline.
- Tell your story in one sentence.
- Tell someone about your story.
- Did something surprise you?
- Where is the emotional center?
- Organize your information

# “Aboutness”

What is your work *really* about?

What is its theme?

What question or questions are you asking?

# The Telling Detail

Specific

Concrete

Appeal to the senses

Find your *SO WHAT*.

# And...Don't Forget the Basics

- Who, What, When, Where, Why, and How?
- How much? So what? What next? Why not?  
Who benefits? Who gets hurt?



“The first rule of writing is not to omit the thing you meant to say.”

# What are you going to write?

Personal Essay?

Q & A?

F.O.B. Department Piece?

Seasonal Article?

Online?

# **Set mood and tone**

Your story can be intimate or distant, tragic or hilarious, hard-hitting or celebratory. One of these choices will be right for your story.

# Use Story Elements

- Decide which is the strongest element in your story: plot, character, setting, conflict, theme. You should focus on the strongest element.
- Consider starting at the climax, or at least at a critical moment that establishes the “so what.”
- Remember to entice the editor, who is your first reader.

# How to Sell Your Story

The Art of the Pitch

# Do Your Homework

Demographics

Submission Requirements

Editorial Calendars

# Audience

*Who* do you want to reach?

*Why* should this audience care?

*How* can you make it matter to them?



How does the publication describe itself?



# Know Your Target

- Study the publication
- Get writer's guidelines if they are available.
- Study the masthead to identify the appropriate editor. Remember: Editors change jobs frequently.
- You may send the same subject query to more than one publication as long as they do not compete and you have taken the time to make sure the subject is appropriate for both publications.

#### SUBMISSIONS

We regret that, due to volume, we cannot consider unsolicited nonfiction other than submissions to The Talk of the Town, and we will not be able to respond to queries or return manuscripts if sent.

We welcome submissions to other departments, although volume precludes personal response. They should be sent by e-mail to the appropriate department:

FICTION: FICTION@NEWYORKER.COM

THE TALK OF THE TOWN: TALKOFTHETOWN@NEWYORKER.COM

SHOUTS & MURMURS: SHOUTS@NEWYORKER.COM

POETRY: POETRY@NEWYORKER.COM

NEWSBREAKS: NEWSBREAKS@NEWYORKER.COM

Except for poetry and newsbreaks, we do not accept submissions that are received as attachments. Please send your work as part of the body of an e-mail.

Alternatively, submissions may be sent by regular mail to the appropriate department at The New Yorker, 4 Times Square, New York, NY 10036. The New Yorker does not accept unsolicited submissions by fax. Although we do read all submissions, we cannot respond to them individually or return them.

No more than one story or six poems should be submitted at one time. Poetry submissions should include the poet's name in the subject line of the e-mail and as the title of the attached document. Except for Shouts & Murmurs and The Talk of the Town, we prefer to receive no more than two submissions per writer per year. We do not consider simultaneous submissions or material that has been previously published.

The New Yorker is not responsible for the return or loss of, or for damage to, unsolicited manuscripts, unsolicited art work, or any other unsolicited materials. Those submitting manuscripts, art work, or any other materials should not send originals unless specifically requested to do so by The New Yorker in writing.

### \$\$\$ HARPER'S MAGAZINE

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**Nonfiction** "For writers working with agents or who will query first only, our requirements are: public affairs, literary, international and local reporting, and humor." Publishes 1 major report/issue. Length: 4,000-6,000 words. Publishes 1 major essay/issue. Length: 4,000-6,000 words. "These should be construed as topical essays on all manner of subjects (politics, the arts, crime, business, etc.) to which the author can bring the force of passionate and informed statement." Humor. No interviews; no profiles. **Buys 2 mss/year.** Query. Length: 4,000-6,000 words.

**Reprints** Accepted for Readings section. Send typed ms with rights for sale noted and information about when and where the article previously appeared.

**Photos** Occasionally purchased with ms; others by assignment. Stacey Clarkson, art director. State availability with submission. Pays \$50-500.

**Fiction** Lewis H. Lapham, editor. Will consider unsolicited fiction. Humorous. **Buys 12 mss/year.** Query. Length: 3,000-5,000 words. **Generally pays 50¢-\$1/word.**

**Tips** "Some readers expect their magazines to clothe them with opinions in the way that Bloomingdale's dresses them for the opera. The readers of Harper's Magazine belong to a different crowd. They strike me as the kind of people who would rather think in their own voices and come to their own conclusions."



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Following

10 tips for pitching Fast Company Senior  
Writer @lindatischler <http://bit.ly/1F4GL3>



FAVORITES

10



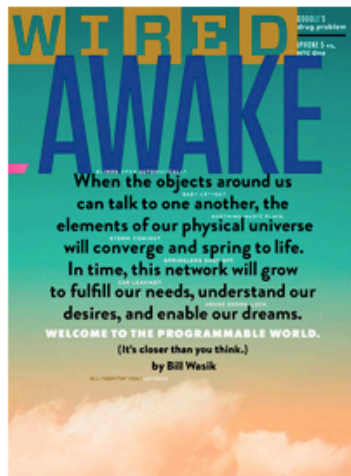
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## HOW TO PITCH: *WIRED*

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### Pitch news and analysis to this tech mag's front-of-book

By Blake Gernstetter - May 20, 2013



**Circulation:** 800,000  
**Frequency:** Monthly  
**Special Issues:** None

**Background:** *Wired* is a general interest magazine, but "we see the world through a particular lens," said senior editor Sarah Fallon. "Think of it as a continuum: Science leads to technologies. Technologies spawn businesses and whole industries. Businesses flourish and end up influencing and changing culture." Fallon bills the magazine as "a guidebook to the modern world that uses engaging narrative, insightful analysis, smart infographics and bold design to give readers insight into the people and the machines that inhabit it."

Based in San Francisco, *Wired* -- which was acquired by Condé Nast in 1998 -- has a laid-back but focused West Coast feel and a sensibility that welcomes everyone from the worldly generalist to the Vine junkie. There's plenty of room for freelancers, too, so long as you're pitching fresh meat. "We want to cover stories that you wouldn't find in any other magazine," Fallon explained. "If you're going to pitch something mainstream, make sure you have a unique angle."

# Look Professional

- No spelling or grammar errors.
- Address the appropriate editor. The salutation should be formal.
- The publication name and address should be correct.
- Use a simple font.
- If mailed, the paper and the letterhead should be clean and professional. Standard 8 1/2 x 11 inch paper should be used.
- Include a Self Addressed Stamped Envelope (SASE) if mailed or required.

# Be Interesting

- Introduce a fresh idea, topic, and angle.
- Your idea should be presented in the first paragraph.
- Your lead-in should excite the editor.

# Be Succinct

- Keep your pitch to a single page. Less for email.
- Lay out exactly what you intend to include.
- Identify which section of the publication you believe your article fits within.
- If you propose pitching to a department, the article's scope should be appropriate.



# Be Persuasive

- Include links to writing samples that are appropriate to the publication, article topic, and writing style you believe the publication is looking for.
- Present any credentials or awards you have that show you are qualified to write, especially about this subject.
- Identify other similar publications that have published your work.
- Identify any sources you have that you feel would help persuade the editor.
- Close with a phrase such as: “I look forward to hearing from you. Please let me know if I can provide you with any additional information.”

# Know What *Not* to Say

- Do not mention who has rejected the piece before.
- Do not include other people's statements about your article.
- Do not tell the editor how long and hard you have been working on the piece.
- Do not tell them that article still needs work.
- Do not request advice, comments, criticism, or analysis.
- Do not talk about how thrilling it would be to get published.
- Do not include inappropriate or off-subject information about yourself.

# More...

- Do not discuss the rights you wish to sell or discuss price or payment.
- Do not include attachments.
- Do not wear out your welcome by writing too much or failing to get to the point.
- Do not query without studying the publication enough to know whether your idea is appropriate.
- Do not waste your time querying an unreceptive editor over and over again.
- Do not present ideas for several different articles in the same letter
- Do not use obscenities or inappropriate content.

It is the true writer who can “pierce this rotten diction and fasten words again to visible things.”

—*Emerson*

# When should you sell on spec?

When you're breaking in

Literary journals and publications

Certain types of articles, like essays

# How To Run a Business

The pragmatics of freelancing

# Think Like a Business

- Mission/Vision Statement
- Business Plan
- Annual Budget + Time Tracking + Invoicing
- Tax Plan and legal deductions. (Consider a CPA)
- Insurance

# Business Development

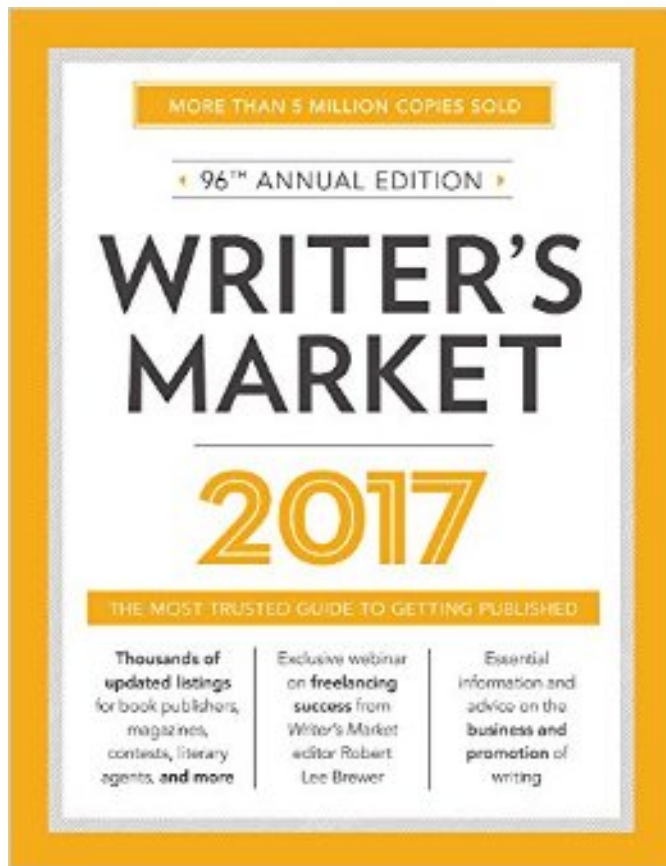
- Web presence
- Social media and “platforms”
- Networking and professional organizations
- Continuing education
- Writing for “exposure?”



# Know Your Rights

- Read freelance agreements and contracts
- Copyright versus work made for hire
- Remember “first rights” rule before posting online
- Maryland Lawyers for the Arts

# A Few Resources



- Longform Podcast
- Mediabistro
- *Writers Market*
- Poynter Institute
- Networking Events
- Social Media

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