

# How to Pitch Articles to B2B Trade Publications

*By Steve Slaunwhite*



A few years ago, I published an article in a B2B trade publication, and then forgot about it when I moved on to other projects.

Then out of nowhere, I got a client who called me and said he had come across that article and read it. He assumed I must be an expert on the topic, and he wanted to talk to me about a project.

Isn't that wonderful?

Article marketing, which is using articles to promote and market yourself, can work very well. It's hard to break through the clutter of articles online, but it's a strategy that can work well in generating really good, high-quality leads and inquiries for your copywriting or writing business.

Now, the best place to publish an article is the hardest place to get into, and that is with high-profile publications in your industry. These are publications that have an editor who manages it.

They could be online publications, which are quite common these days. Or they could be traditional print publications.

They usually have a very targeted readership. These readers take the articles and features in those publications very seriously. And they also take the authors of those articles very seriously and assume they're experts at what they're writing about.

So, if you can get into one of these publications with one of your articles, it can really work out well for you.

I'll give you an example ...

Let's say you're targeting the insurance industry and you get an article on content writing or copywriting into a high-profile publication called "Insurance Marketing Magazine."

Marketers, marketing directors, and marketing VPs in the insurance industry would likely be subscribers to that magazine. They may be avid readers of that magazine and they'll see your article in there and take notice.

So it's a real marquee place to put an article and you tend to get some really good, high-quality leads.

When I'm talking about breaking into publications and getting your article published to help promote your business, I'm not talking about simple online things like guest writing an article for someone's blog or publishing an article on LinkedIn. Comparatively, those are pretty simple things to accomplish.

It's much more difficult to break into traditional, real editor-managed publications that your target audience reads, especially industry trade publications.

So I'm going to give you some strategies on how to pitch an idea to the editor of a publication.

Before you pitch your article, there are four things to do ...

## #1. Study the Publication

You want to read through the past issues of that publication for a number of reasons.

First, you want to get a sense of the style and approach they use in writing. Do they have a very technical style or are they very businesslike? Are they more cool and edgy, with a modern, millennial style of writing?

You also want to get a sense of the types of articles they publish, especially if they have categories or features. For example, they might have a marketing feature each month.

When you pitch your article, you want to be able to say, "Hey, this article could be a great addition to the marketing department of your publication." Or, "This article would be great for your upcoming issue on marketing communications."

When you're familiar with the publication, you can make specific suggestions for an article. It also lets the editor know you're familiar with his or her publication. You know how it's put together and where your article might fit.

You also want to get a sense of the length of the articles as well. There's no sense pitching a 1,500-word article if the publication mainly publishes shorter articles of only 800 to 1,000 words.

Scan and read some past issues of the publication. You can usually find that online. If it's an online publication, it's all there. But even if it's a print publication, sometimes you can find some past issues on their website.

## #2. Search for Articles on Your Topic

If you're thinking of pitching an article, let's say, on writing emails for email campaigns and they recently published an article on the topic, you're not going to be well-received if you pitch that idea.

The editor is going to send you an email saying, "Sorry, but we did an article on that same topic two or three issues ago." You're going to come across as someone who's not familiar with the publication.

That's the worst thing that can happen when you're trying to pitch an editor.

You want to make sure the topic you're going to pitch has not been published recently. It's okay if it was published two years ago, but not in the last two or three months.

## #3. Have Two Good Ideas

Not just one, but two. When you pitch an article idea, you do want to pitch only one idea at a time, but you want to have a second really good article idea in your back pocket, and I'm going to tell you why in a moment.

## #4. Find the Right Contact Person

Which editor handles submission of ideas for articles? Sometimes you can find this in the masthead or in the staff section of a print publication. Or you might find it on their website.

If there's some way you can get introduced to the right editor, that goes a long way to getting your email through.

Maybe you have a connection on LinkedIn. Maybe you both know someone who can introduce you.

Now, sometimes they'll have a generic email address where you can send inquiries about writing for them. It's not going to a specific person, but to a general delivery box. Try to avoid that if possible.

Ideally, it's better if you try to find the name of the actual editor you need to contact and find a way to contact that person directly.

# How Do You Pitch an Article?

Here's a four-step strategy I use that works really well ...

## Step #1. Present Your Idea Clearly

This is the first thing you mention in the first two or three sentences of your email. You want to come right out at the beginning and say, "I've got this terrific article idea I'd like to write for your publication."

Editors don't want just an idea. They want to know that you've fleshed out this idea so it's concrete.

You want to have the title of the article and an overview. If you're going to give five tips, you want to tell them, "Here are the five tips." If it's based on an interview, you want to tell them who you interviewed. If your article is based on the latest research, let the editor know what the research is and the Big Idea of your article.

You want to give them enough detail so they know you've really thought about this, and this isn't just some idea that's flown through your brain.

You want to give the editor the impression that you've worked up a Big Idea and you can turn it into a great article.

## Step #2. Explain Why the Readers Need This Information

You've got to explain why their readers would be interested in your article. Usually that comes in the second paragraph of your pitch.

Now, why do you need to do this?

Editors want readers to read the publication. And if you can, position your idea in a way that says, "Hey, your readers are going to flock to this article. It may even attract new readers."

That gets the editor's attention because that's what they're all about. They want to create a publication that's of high interest so the articles get read. They want the articles talked about amongst the target audience. Explain how your article is going to do that.

## Step #3. Explain Why You're the Best Person to Write This Article

Then, in a short third paragraph, you want to explain why you're the best person to write it. Who are you? What are your credentials? Why are you the expert at this? How much writing experience do you have? How many articles have you published? Where have you published?

You want to give them a quick profile of who you are. I recommend you keep it crisp and pithy. You've got to briefly touch on your credentials and why you are the best person to write it.

## Step #4. End with a Call-to-Action

Just like you would when you're writing a sales letter or email, you ask them for the next step.

The next step could be simply, "If you're interested in this article, I'd be happy to do it. I can get it to you within two weeks."

Or you might want to arrange a quick phone call with the editor to confirm details.

That's three paragraphs and maybe one sentence at the end. It needs to be short, no more than a page in a Word doc, single-spaced.

It's a lot of information. You've got to write it in a very short, crisp email. Not easy, but hey, you're a copywriter. You face this challenge all the time, so you know how to do it.

So if you follow that formula for pitching an article to a traditional editor-managed publication, then you have a pretty good chance of at least being heard. It's an approach that editors appreciate.

## What Types of Responses Can You Expect?

One response might be, "Hey, yeah, let's do this. Here are our terms." If they pay writers, then they might also say, "Here's our price and go ahead and do it."

They might get back to you and say, "We have no interest right now. Thank you very much for your submission."

Or they might come back with something a little more friendly and they might say, "This is a good idea, but we're really not prepared to go with an article like this right now. Maybe in the fall."

If you get any positive response from the editor, one thing you might want to do is follow up quickly with a second idea. That's why I said to come up with two good ideas for an article. Not just one, but two fully fleshed out ideas for an article with a topic and a title.

When you have two ideas, you can respond to the editor right away saying, "Well, I'm sorry that article idea isn't going to work out for your publication. Here's another idea I have that you might want to consider." And then you do the same thing. It gives you a chance to give them a second pitch.

That does a couple of things. Number one, it lets the editor know that you're very interested in writing for his or her publication.

But number two, and more importantly, it lets the editor know that you're someone who comes up with great ideas for topics for their publication. And not just whimsical ideas off the top of your head, but well-thought out, detailed, specific ideas with the article headline and lots of specifics on how this article is going to be written.

That's the kind of writer editors like to work with — someone who can come to the table with great, well-fleshed out ideas for articles.

So those are my tips for breaking into high profile editor-managed publications, either print publications or online publications.

Give this technique a try. Because like I said, getting an article placed in a top publication your target market is going to read can pay off in many different ways.

This article, [How to Pitch Articles to B2B Trade Publications](#) was originally published by [B2B Writing Success](#).

Published: May 17, 2018

#### Related Content:

- [Copywriting Makeovers: Tips and Tricks](#)
- [Should You Hire a Virtual Assistant for Your Copywriting Business?](#)
- [When Should You Charge for B2B Copywriting Revisions?](#)
- [Writing Radio Commercials for Fun and Money \(Part 1\)](#)
- More by [Steve Slaunwhite](#)
- More from [B2B Writing Success](#)

## 1 Response to " How to Pitch Articles to B2B Trade Publications "

After the last two days of studying the B2B business, I'm convinced that I need to focus on learning fast how to do good B2B E-mail Copy. This alongside learning about Sales Letters seem to be the way to go before I think of doing the case studies and White Papers I initially talked about. I will get around to those later, but I seem to have reason to revise my priorities.

*Themba* – over a year ago

---

Copyright © American Writers & Artists Institute([www.awai.com](http://www.awai.com))

American Writers & Artists Institute

220 George Bush Blvd, Suite D

Delray Beach, FL 33444

