

The Urban Muse

Guide To Online Writing Markets

40+
Paying
Markets!

By Susan Johnston

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Introduction

Whenever a group of nonfiction writers gather, whether it's at a coffee shop, a networking event, or someone's home, the conversation inevitably wanders to the web. As in, who's writing online and who's clinging to magazines for dear life. Which websites pay well and which ones only offer a byline and the promise to make you rich and famous someday (ha!). Most writers know that the web abounds with opportunity, but many don't know where to find these markets.

Which is how this eBook got started.

I'm an avid seeker of online writing opportunities, and I noticed there wasn't a good directory devoted to that area. So, I decided to create one. For those of you who may be new to freelance writing altogether, I combined the directory with some samples of successful query emails and loads of tips on contacting editors, sleuthing out new markets, and more. Much of this freelance information applies to writing for magazines, too. But if you've already mastered the pitching process, then feel free to skip right to the markets on page 33.

So, fire up the laptop and get comfy! I hope you'll find this eBook useful (and at times, even entertaining). Here's to your writing success.

Susan Johnston
"The Urban Muse"

The Why and How of Writing for the Web

Why Write for Online Markets?

Great question! Online markets make sense for beginning writers, because they're an opportunity to build a writing portfolio relatively quickly. And if you're more experienced, online markets can complement your other work because the editorial process for websites is shorter, which generally means a quicker paycheck.

Most magazines and other print publications plan their editorial lineup months in advance, so you'd need to pitch a holiday-themed story in July or August at the latest. Then you'd have to wait six months before you could show off the published version of your story. Maybe you're dying to sell a seasonal story and it's already too late for a national magazine (or you've exhausted all your print options). Your idea could be perfect for an online audience!

In addition, many websites need fresh content on a daily or weekly basis, so there are a lot of online opportunities for freelancers. Web editors want their content to be timely, so they might actually assign a holiday story in November or December. Plus, it's fun to share your online articles via Facebook, Twitter, and email.

Is Web Writing Similar to Magazine Writing?

Yes and no. Many of the same principles, like using credible sources and citing relevant statistics, apply to both. But there are some key differences, too. Read on to find out how web articles differ from magazine articles.

Length

Since online publishers don't have to deal with printing costs, you might think that articles for the web would be longer than those in print. But usually they're shorter, because most people don't have the time or inclination to read a 5,000-word epic on their computer monitor. Sentences and paragraphs for the web must also be short so that readers can scan.

Turnaround time

Like I said, print publications can take a long time to put together (most glossy magazines plan at least six months in advance). Not so with online publications. If you're writing on a blog, you can publish things almost instantly. If you're writing for a website, you'll sometimes see your article published within a week or even sooner after you send it to your editor.

Voilà: instant writing clips!

Format

Even when you have a long article, it will almost always get broken into small bite-sized portions on multiple web pages. That way, readers with short attention spans won't get overwhelmed by a huge block of text (it's like those deceptively short lines at Disneyland). Many websites and magazines use subheadings to break up their articles. Lists, bullet points, or bolding key phrases are other favorite strategies. But don't underline text unless it's a link, as that could confuse readers.

Search Engine Optimization (SEO)

Web publishers need to get indexed by Google and other search engines so that people can find the site. Having well-written content that doesn't appear spammy, including keywords, and getting relevant links from other sites all factor into search engine rankings. There are tons of online tools available for researching key words, some of them free and others requiring a subscription. Free tools often have limitations, but they might work just fine for your purposes. For instance, WordTracker offers both a [free tool](#) and a [subscription-based service](#). Google AdWords has a [keyword tool](#) as well. Search engines, readers, and social bookmarking sites all seem partial to headlines in a list format. Think: "Top 5 Ways to Improve Your Blog" or "10 Ideas for Foolproof Father's Day Gifts."

How Much Do Websites Pay?

It varies. There are some websites that pay \$1/word like many national magazines. Then there are websites that pay pennies per word or not at all. I've included a broad range of markets in this eBook so that beginning writers and veterans alike will find something that interests them. Still, I'm a firm believer that you don't need to slave away for \$5 an article simply because you're new to the writing world. Ditto on places that offer a percentage of ad revenue or by the click. In the words of Nancy Reagan, "just say no."

However, I'd caution you not to focus solely on the per word rate, because what really matters is the time it takes to write those words. A \$1/word market that requires extensive, exhaustive research (followed by extensive, exhaustive editing by committee) might not be such a great market when you think about all the time and energy involved.

On the flip side, a lower paying market that allows you to explore topics that interest you without a lot of hassle can be golden! Many travel or food websites pay peanuts (get it? Peanuts?), but if they don't require a ton of reporting and you're passionate about the topic, then it may be worth your while. You could balance that out with higher-paying assignments on other topics.

What About Content Aggregators or Bidding Sites?

Some writers swear by sites like Suite101.com and Demand Studios. These sites don't require an intensive pitching process, which appeals to some. Personally, I'm not a fan, because they seem to emphasize quantity over quality. In order to make a decent living, you'd have to churn out dozens of articles every single day. And if you're going to work that hard, why not pour your energy into a higher-paying project?

Many of these sites have a very low barrier to entry, so virtually anyone can post an article on virtually anything, which doesn't make for Pulitzer-winning journalism (or at least clips that wow an editor). Typos, inaccuracies, and just plain bad writing can be commonplace. There are decent writers contributing to these sites, too, but those writers could earn more elsewhere.

I have similar feelings towards freelance bidding sites. No offense to those who have found clients on Guru.com, Elance.com, and the like. But they have a reputation for attracting tire-kicking clients and freelancers who are all too willing to under-price each other just to land a contract. Thousands of freelance writers have built successful careers by networking and prospecting on their own instead of using content aggregators and bidding sites. With patience and hard work, you can, too.

How Do I Land Assignments For Websites?

Like magazines and newspapers, many websites assign articles in response to query emails from freelance writers. (You'll notice I use "pitch" and "query" interchangeably throughout this eBook. I like to change things up!) In some cases, you can land a steady blogging or web writing gig by sending an email letter of introduction (or LOI). You'll find a sample LOI on page 29. But in general, it helps to send ideas that show you understand the website, its writing style, and its audience.

Queries should answer these questions:

1. Why should readers care about this story?
2. Why cover this now?
3. Why this website?
4. Why should *you* write it?

Why should readers care about this story? Your query should convince the editor that their readers will care about your article. Service articles (that is, articles that teach you how to do something) easily answer the "why should we care?" question. But telling a compelling story or putting a human face on a trend or issue is another way to hook readers.

Why cover this now? Creating a sense of urgency helps, too. Most websites, from lifestyle and entertainment to news or political sites, need content that's timely. Maybe your party planning article ties in with the Super Bowl. Or perhaps you're pitching a parenting article in response to new legislation regarding teen drivers. Or maybe your article relates to a TV show that's starting up again. If you're pitching something that's more

"evergreen" or could run at any time, then you can still tie in current events or trends. Then if you follow up later, you can always suggest a new time angle for your piece.

Why this website? If the topic of your pitch falls outside the scope of the website, then it doesn't matter how brilliant your query is. Most likely, you're not gonna get the assignment. That's why you need to familiarize yourself with the website and think about how your idea fits in. You can include phrases like, "I noticed your travel section covered X, so I wanted to suggest Y" or "please consider this idea for X section" to show you've done your homework.

Why should *you* write it? Lastly, your query should demonstrate why you are the perfect person to write this article. Here's where many writers fall down, because they don't want to boast or brag. Well, this is your chance. If you already know the person you're pitching as a profile subject, then that's a great start. If you're the mother of twins and you're hoping to write for a parenting magazine, that's worth mentioning. If you have experience with some obscure health issues (assuming it relates to your query), then that's another great point

Here are some other tips on writing a killer query email:

- **Do a quick search** to make sure that the site hasn't covered the topic recently. Many sites have a built in search function. You can also search within any domain using Google. Type in "article topic" site:domain.com (no space between site: and the domain). Google will pull up any pages on that site that include your article topic anywhere on the page. Try a few different variations of your topic's keywords to cover your bases.

- **Research the publication and read previous articles.** Know what types of topics they cover and where your idea might fit in. Without being a brown noser, see if you can work in a line about “I’d love to contribute this idea to ___ section” or “I enjoyed the recent essay on bouncing back after a lay-off.” That way you’ve tipped off your editor that you know the website and can write in their format.
- **Write an interesting intro.** “I’d like to write an article about X” probably won’t excite your editor. Craft your lede as if you were writing the actual article and want to grab your reader’s attention. Then explain why the topic is relevant those readers now. Once you get the assignment, you can recycle your intro or write something new based on your interviews and research.
- **Always, *always* proofread before you hit send.** Some editors will overlook the occasional typo if it’s a well-written, well thought out query, but major mistakes could send the message that you’re a sloppy writer (especially if you make the classic blunder of misspelling the editor’s name!). Don’t rely on spell check. I like to save a query in my email drafts, then go back to it later with a fresh pair of eyes before I hit send. Two more things to watch out for: overusing exclamation marks, which can be a sign of an inexperienced writer, and using two spaces after a period instead of one. One space is now the standard.
- **Use an eye-catching subject line,** but leave out words that scream SPAM! For instance, “free” is a tip-off to a lot of spam filters and “I love you” was the subject line for a notorious email virus. I use this formula: Query: Name of Proposed Article. For example, "Query: Top 10 Blogging Tips."

How Should I Include Writing Samples?

Forget scanning PDFs or sending sketchy attachments! The beauty of writing for online markets is that all your clips are easily accessible online. Use links to your writing samples instead of sending them as attachments unless the guidelines specifically request attachments. Sometimes attachments get caught in spam filters, and many editors are leery of opening attachments and getting a virus from a writer they don't know.

There are several ways to keep track of your writing clips. I use Delicious.com to organize all the links to my clips rather than having an exhaustive list on my website. That way I can tag my clips and easily find articles I've written on various topics. Then if I'm querying a relationship website, I pick three or four of my favorite clips and list them in bullet format, like this:

- Title of Fabulous Relationship Article #1
- Title of Fabulous Relationship Article #2
- Title of Fabulous Relationship Article #3

What If I Don't *Have* Any Published Clips?

Not to worry! Everybody starts somewhere. Some people use their blog as a writing sample. On one hand, it shows your unedited voice and a commitment to writing regularly. On the other hand, it might worry some editors if they're unsure about your ability to take feedback or follow their style guide, since solo bloggers don't deal with editors. It's your call.

Under no circumstances should you apologize or try to explain a lack of clips your query letter ("sorry I don't have any clips" or "I'm new to writing,

so this will be my first assignment"). Instead, focus on selling yourself by writing a kick-ass query and playing up your other assets. Maybe you're ideally suited to writing this article because you practiced divorce law or spent a year in Bolivia. Pretty soon, you'll have a few writing clips and this won't be an issue.

Sometimes if you don't have any published clips, it can make sense to write your first article on spec (short for "on speculation"). That's how I broke in to magazines for the first time, because I didn't know that you *could* get an assignment without writing the whole article first. It's a highly individual decision, and I'd recommend that you get an editor interested first before sending them the entire article (attachments from strangers tend to scare people). Read more about this topic on page 14.

Where Do I Find Ideas?

In a word: everywhere! The writers I know draw from personal experience, pop culture, conversations with friends or relatives, and oodles of other places. If your well of inspiration is running dry, then check out this list of [50 ways to find article ideas](#). And don't forget that you can repurpose ideas for other markets, too. Say you interviewed an entrepreneur for a hyper local-website. You might be able to pitch related topics to his alumni magazine and trade publications. That's how many freelancers earn a living.

How do I Keep Track of Ideas and Queries?

There are as many different ways to keep of ideas as there are writers. Personally, I find that a good old-fashioned spreadsheet gets the job done.

Here's the format I use for tracking my queries in Excel:

Date	Publication	Idea	Contact	Status	Notes
2/1/2010	WalletPop.com	Emailed intro & clips	Emailed Beth Gladstone		
2/2/2010	Nerve.com	Commuter marriages	Emailed submissions@nerve.com	Said he'd get back to me around 3/15	If no, try YourTango or TheFrisky

Help! I Can't Find The Writer's Guidelines! How Do I Know Who To Query?

Most writing books and blogs tell you to address your pitch to a specific person, rather than opening generically with "Dear Editor." That's good advice, but sometimes it's hard to find an editor's name, much less their email address.

Many websites, even those with good content, omit the editor's name or contact info to shield them from spam. But often there's a way around that. Here are some strategies for sleuthing out an editor's info:

- **Search the site (and beyond).** First stop on a publication's website should be any pages labeled "About Us," "Contributor Guidelines," "Write for Us," "Freelance Guidelines," "Contact Us," or "Our Team." Often one of these pages will lead you to an editor's name and potentially their email address. If not, check out the site map to see if that information might be buried. Also try searching through the website's internal search feature and on Google (sometimes their own search function is buggy, so definitely try Googling with "xxx.com" AND editor). MediaBistro's [Revolving Door](#) is another

place to check. And if the website has a parent company, you should check the main website, too.

- **Try LinkedIn.** Next try an advanced search on LinkedIn. Here you can search for people based on their job title (editor, content manager, etc) and company name (be sure you're searching for people who are *currently* in that job), but ***don't*** ask them to join your network at this stage. Once you have a name, you can usually figure out the email address based on [common email formulas](#), but some editors will find it a little too forward if you ask to connect with them before you've worked together (then again, some won't).
- **Pick up the phone.** If you can find a phone number somewhere on the website, you could try calling the main number and ask who handles freelance queries. Then confirm the spelling of their name and ask how they prefer to receive queries. Most of the time you'll talk to a receptionist or editorial assistant, but you should be ready with a few ideas in case the right person actually answers the phone.
- **Ask around.** If the first three steps have failed, then you can always call on your network of freelancers for help. Ideally, you might know someone who already writes for the publication and ask them who to contact (they may even let you use their name, but always ask first). Alternatively, you could post on a writer's forum or put out some feelers on Twitter. Be sure to thank anyone who gives you suggestions and make it clear that you'll gladly reciprocate if they ever need help. Reciprocity is the name of the game.
- **When all else fails, use the online contact form.** With contact forms, it often feels like your message is going into a giant black hole in cyberspace. But sometimes you actually get a response. It's

possible that your message will get forwarded to the right person and land you an assignment, too. Try it.

What Is "Writing on Spec" and Should I Do It?

Writing on spec or on speculation means you write the article before you secure a contract. This is often the norm for essays and travel pieces. But I recommend getting a contract before doing a reported piece, because it's a lot of work to do without a guaranteed pay-off. It's almost like building a house and hoping someone likes it versus building a house to a buyer's specifications. Only with writing you're concerned about word count, structure, style and number of sources.

Sometimes an editor might ask a new-to-them writer to submit their first piece on spec, because they want assurance that the piece will turn out the way they want before they agree to buy it. If you're a new writer and you think you can really nail the assignment, then it might be worth doing so you can get your foot in the door and score an awesome clip.

If you're not a newbie, then it's a tougher call. I'd consider how much work is involved, how badly I want this article published, and how likely it is that I'll be able to sell it elsewhere if the original market passes. Confession: sometimes when the writer's guidelines say they only review articles on spec, I send a query anyway to gauge interest. If they write back and ask to see the article, I know I'm in a better position than if I'd sent the article blindly.

Along these same lines are editors or clients who instruct the writer to send along very specific samples tailored to their publication. Sometimes this is

a thinly veiled attempt to get free content from a bunch of unsuspecting writers before the contact person goes mysteriously MIA. Again, it's a dicey situation, so proceed with caution. One way I've found around this is to look through my portfolio and choose the pieces that most closely resemble what this editor wants to show that I am indeed capable of writing in their style or format but I'm not writing anything new without a contract.

How Long Do I Wait to Hear from an Editor?

Ah, yes, the dreaded waiting game. It can be just as nerve-racking as that period after a really good date where you like the person but aren't sure if they like you back. (But hey, whether you're looking for writing markets or potential mates, there are plenty of fish in the sea). Sometimes you'll get a response to a query within minutes, and other times it can take weeks, months, or in some cases, years. It's all part of the process.

Editors aren't thrilled with the idea of simultaneous submissions (when writers submit a query to multiple publications), but most also understand that freelancers need to support themselves and can't wait forever. So if you have a really juicy or timely idea, don't let an editor hold your idea hostage. If you don't hear anything in a few weeks, follow up. And if you don't hear after that, move on to Plan B.

It's like applying to college. Most high schoolers don't think "Harvard or nothing!" They'll apply to their dream school *and* a few safeties. So you might pitch your brilliant idea to Salon.com, but also have a few back-up options waiting in the wings. Sometimes you'll hear from your dream market as you shop around your idea elsewhere, which is great. Sometimes you might never hear and you'll be glad you didn't wait around forever.

Writers often worry, "what happens if three editors at three awesome websites all want my article?" That's a pretty unusual (and enviable) problem to have. Occasionally simultaneous submissions can backfire, but often it's a smart idea. Space out your queries so if the first editor emails you two months later, you can say, "sorry, but I didn't hear from you, so I moved on to XXX.com. I'd still love to write for your website, so I'm including another idea below and will await your response."

Editors generally understand that the early bird gets the worm and they may be more inclined to jump on your idea next time you offer them first dibs.

How and When Should I Follow Up?

In general, you can send a follow-up email a few weeks later. If your idea is time-sensitive, you might follow up sooner. Be sure to include the contents of your original query to make it easy on the editor. And if there's any new research or tidbits you'd like to add, now's the time to mention that.

Here's a sample of how I might follow up on a query:

Hi Sally,

I wondered if you've had a chance to review the query I sent last month? It's included below. I just discovered a new study on [insert topic] that makes this topic even more timely: [link to study]. I'd love to write this piece for XX.com, and I look forward to hearing from you soon. Thanks for your consideration.

--Susan

I think it's totally reasonable to send a second follow-up email a few weeks later. You can set an artificial deadline to create a greater sense of urgency,

but remember that editors get back to you on *their* schedule, so it may or may not work. But at least this way, you can send your idea elsewhere with a 100% clear conscience. Read on for an example.

Hi Joel,

Just wondering if you've had a chance to consider the query I sent a few months ago? I'd love to contribute to your website, but if I don't hear from you by [date], I plan to shop this idea elsewhere. Thanks for your consideration, and I hope to hear from you soon.

--Susan

I Got a "Yes!" What Happens Now?

Congrats! Bust out your happy dance, pop the champagne, and otherwise revel in your success for a few glorious minutes. Once you've celebrated, it's time to work out the details. If you have an über-organized editor, he or she will probably outline everything you need to know in your assignment letter.

If not, here are some of the questions you should ask:

- When is the deadline?
- What is the pay? Will I be paid on acceptance, on publication, or some other timeline? (Pay on acceptance is almost always the preferred timeline, but alas, it's becoming more and more rare.)
- What are the contract terms? If you're unsure work for hire or first rights means, then check out this [explanation of rights](#) on the ASJA website.
- Do you know when this is scheduled to run?

- Is there a house style guide I should follow? Or should I defer to Associated Press Stylebook or the Chicago Manual of Style instead?
- What is the word count? Do you have a certain number of sources in mind for an article of this length?
- What is your fact-checking process? (In other words, do you need to record phone interviews? Save emails from sources? Include a source list along with the article?)

It's generally advisable to get a contract so both parties are protected, but in the absence of a contract, you should at least get all of this info spelled out in an email.

I also like to discuss the types of sources I'll use with an editor before I schedule any interviews. That way I'll know if she expects me to find someone in a certain age range or with certain professional credentials. Finding sources is often the most time-intensive part of the process, so it's best to get started as soon as the ink has dried on your contract.

How do you handle contracts for online markets?

I have a flatbed scanner, so instead of faxing or mailing contracts, I sign, scan, and email them back to the editor. Sometimes websites want an original copy, too, so I'll mail those back, but most websites are content with a high-quality scan. Some writers take this a step further and apply a [digital signature](#) to reduce the need for printing, signing, and scanning.

Wait! What If I'm Not Happy With the Terms?

Remember, all of this is negotiable, so if you think the deadline is a little tight or the pay is a little low or the contract is a little too rights-grabby, you can ask to have it adjusted. I know it's tough to talk money when you're dying for an assignment, so you'll find a quick sample email on the next page.

Hi David,

I'm delighted that you want to assign this piece! Still, \$XX seems a bit low for the word count and the amount of research required. Is there any flexibility in your budget? Please let me know, as I would love to contribute to your website. Thanks!

Best,

Susan

Of course, if it's your first assignment or you're dealing with a dream market, you may want to just go with the flow and negotiate on your next piece so you have more leverage. You'll find a sample email for that situation on the following page.

Hi Sara,

I'm so glad you liked my last piece! I love contributing to your website, and I'm excited to get started on this next assignment. Since this is my fifth profile for you and readers have posted great comments on my work so far, I wondered if we could discuss a pay increase? I hope to continue contributing, but these pieces are fairly research-intensive, so let me know if you have any flexibility in your budget. Thanks!

--Susan

What If I Get Rejected?

It happens to the best of us, so take heart. Go for a walk, have a piece of dark chocolate, crank up the angry chick music, or follow whatever other rituals you use when you're bummed. *Don't* fire back a rebuttal, no matter how heartless and just plain wrong you think the editor is! I once convinced an editor to reconsider a rejection after I'd tweaked the idea, but I took a few cleansing breaths first so I wouldn't lash out in the heat of the moment.

Depending on the nature of the rejection, there are a few tactics you could try. If the editor rejects your idea but offers some suggestions or encourages you to send others, then *send others*. Do not pass "Go." Do not collect \$200. Send more ideas ASAP while you're still on his radar. If the editor didn't like your idea but seems receptive to future queries, you might thank her for getting back to you and ask if there are any sections of the website where she needs pitches. The goal here is to keep the conversation going and see if you can gain any insights.

And, of course, now that you have closure, be sure to tweak your pitch and send it to your plan B market if you haven't already done so. Remember, each rejection brings you closer to an acceptance. You may never know why the editor didn't bite, but my blog includes a [list of things to consider](#).

How Do I Protect Myself Against Scams?

Given the proliferation of "get rich quick" schemers and "work at home" scams, and other unsavory characters, no guide to freelancing would be complete without a word of caution. So here goes ...

- **Do your homework.** Google the company name along with phrases like "scammer" or "bankruptcy." Check out sites like [Predators & Editors](#) or [WritersWeekly's Whispers and Warnings](#). Email writers you trust and ask if they've had any experience with the publication. Put out some feelings on forums like [FreelanceSuccess.com](#) or email lists like [UPOD](#). One or two bad reports could indicate personality conflicts. But if you keep hearing horror stories, then don't expect your experiences to be much different.
- **Always, always get a phone number and physical address.** I don't care if you think you'll never need to call or snail mail. If she stops responding to emails and you haven't gotten paid yet, you'll be glad you have a phone number so you can call accounts payable. Or (if all else fails) send a registered letter reminding the pub to pay up. If someone refuses to give you their contact information, then that's a *bad* sign.

Most importantly, remember that if something seems too good to be true, it probably is. Follow your gut and hightail it outta there!

Samples of Successful Query Emails

Background on Query #1

I sent this blind query to the generic email address listed on the website ... and it worked! So have faith, gentle reader, even if you can't find an email address for the exact right person. I interviewed the entrepreneur mentioned in this pitch for another article, so that's where I got the quote. Waste not, want not.

Query Example #1, WomenEntrepreneur.com

Subject: Query: Turning Setbacks into Creative Successes

Dear Eve,

Given the current economic climate, many would-be entrepreneurs are likely putting their business plans on the back burner and waiting for better times. Unfortunately, that time may never come. It's rare that every aspect of your business falls into place as you'd planned, but sometimes those unexpected bumps in the road can lead to an even better idea.

That's exactly what happened to Emma March when the bank rejected her application for a small business loan. Initially, she was furious, but when she thought about it, she realized that she could start the clothing boutique she envisioned without a storefront.

"I could wait for some money to fall out of the sky or I could just come up with a mobile concept," March says. That was the inspiration behind Gracie J., March's mobile boutique. March works out of her house and sells

clothing and accessories at private parties and events, but she hopes to expand into a storefront one day.

Using case studies from Emma March and other female entrepreneurs, this article will show how these women have turned setbacks into creative successes. It could focus on keeping costs down by launching a mobile business, or it could include a broader range of women-owned businesses that have bounced back from disappointment with creative ideas.

My writing has appeared in print and online publications including *Bankrate.com*, *The Boston Globe*, *Dance Retailer News*, *Hispanic Executive Quarterly*, *MyBusiness Magazine*, *Pizza Today*, *Self magazine*, and *Yahoo! HotJobs*. I'm including a list of writing samples below.

Thanks for your consideration. I hope to hear from you soon.

Best,

Susan

Read the finished article on WomenEntrepreneur.com.

Background on Query #2

I had written an essay about losing my father and how it impacted my relationship. Though editors said it was well-written, they also felt it was too depressing and perhaps not relatable enough for readers. Determined to write about this topic, I re-envisioned the article as a service piece.

Successful Query Email #2, YourTango.com

Subject: Query: Helping Your Date Cope After a Death

Hi Genevieve,

When my father passed away last year, it was hard on me, of course, but also on my boyfriend. The call came just a few weeks shy of our one-year anniversary and suddenly he found himself sitting next to me in the front row of the church and meeting all my extended family for the first time. Plus, we'd already scheduled a vacation around the same time, so he was stuck with a crying, grieving girlfriend (me) for nine days.

Still, he handled it with sensitivity and maturity, and the experience has even made us closer.

That's why I'd like to write an article for YourTango with tips on helping a boyfriend or girlfriend after a loss. My first-hand experience has shown that significant others need to understand that grief doesn't follow deadlines (and often comes in waves), plus nobody wants to hear that their mother/father/sibling/pet rabbit is "in a better place." Better to offer a shoulder or a kind ear instead.

Since there's no substitute for professional help in this case, I'll also interview experts like [name redacted], a licensed counselor who helps couples and individuals with loss and other issues. I could also include the experiences of other daters.

My writing has appeared in *AOL's Lemondrop*, *The Boston Globe*, *The Christian Science Monitor*, *DailyCandy*, *SELF magazine*, and *WomenEntrepreneur.com*, among other places. I'd love to add YourTango.com to that list.

I'm including several recent clips below. Please let me know if you're interested. Thanks!

Susan

Read the finished article on YourTango.com.

Background on Query #3

I'd worked with this editor before, so this query was fairly short and friendly. I also omitted my list of credentials and writing clips, since he'd seen them before. If you're contacting an editor after being out touch for awhile, you might say "here are a few of my newer clips I wanted to pass along" or just keep it short.

Query Example #3, Yahoo! HotJobs

Subject: Query: Dress for Success This Summer

Hi Tom,

Thanks for the follow on Twitter! I searched the archives and didn't find anything about how workers should dress for the summer. As temperatures rise, it also increases the risk that employees will inadvertently wear something inappropriate to work (say, flip-flops or a skirt that's a little too short). I plan to interview career experts about the types of wardrobe faux pas they see during the summer months and gather tips on how employees can avoid them. I'll also include tips on the types of outfits men and women can wear to stay cool without looking unprofessional. Let me know if you're interested. Thanks, and have a great weekend!

Best,

Susan

Read the finished article on [Yahoo! HotJobs](#).

Background on Query #4

I'd been pitching this website for years before I finally broke in. Since the editor and I had already exchanged multiple emails and she'd invited me to send along more ideas, I didn't restate my writing credits or include clips in this email. In this case, the combination of dating and social media did the trick.

Sample Query #4, HappenMag.com

Subject: Query: To Blog or Not to Blog?

Hi Jennifer,

It's one thing to Google a first date and find a few embarrassing photos and an article or two from the campus newspaper. It's quite another to find an entire blog. In fact, on date #3 with my current boyfriend, he asked nervously after discovering that I have a blog, "so, are you going to blog about me?"

Aside from the occasional vague reference to my boyfriend and his eagerness to help me pick out new computer gear, I haven't. Other bloggers, like my pal Karin, who writes the [Single in the City](#) blog, use code names like Audacious Man and friend A or B. Some bloggers go incognito, blogging anonymously to protect their own privacy.

Career blogger Penelope Trunk (who also appeared on the front page of the NYT for blogging about her divorce) recently posted her own [guidelines for blogging](#) about boyfriends, coworkers, or others close to you without killing the relationship. Now that she's back on the dating market, she's been using code names for her dates, too. She also lets them preview the

posts beforehand. I happen to know Penelope, so I know that she would be willing to offer her insights as a blogging expert.

With millions of new blogs being created every year, I'm sure this is a dilemma that many of your readers face. Please let me know!

Best,
Susan

Read the finished article on HappenMag.com.

Background on Sample Letter of Intro

I might send an email of introduction to break the ice if I'm not sure a website uses freelance or if it's a niche publication. I've sent tons of emails using variations on this format, emphasizing different aspects of my experience.

Sample Letter of Introduction

Subject: Writing for XXX.com

Hi XXX,

I recently discovered your website, and I love that it provides such a wealth of information and insights on women and careers. I wondered if you work with freelance writers?

As a full time freelancer who specializes in articles for and about women, I would love to contribute to your website. My writing appears in *AOL's Lemondrop*, *The Boston Globe*, *The Christian Science Monitor*, *DailyCandy.com*, *SELF magazine*, and *WomenEntrepreneur.com*, among many others. You'll find that I'm the type of writer that editors can rely on to generate fresh ideas and consistently deliver on time.

I'm including several recent clips below. I'd love to discuss your editorial needs and send you some ideas, so I look forward to hearing from you soon. Thanks for your consideration!

Best,

Susan

Glossary of Writing and Web Terms

A few web terms to know ...

Above the fold: this is an old newspaper term, but it also applies to the web, meaning the content that is visible without scrolling down.

Domain name: this is the name of a website. For instance, in the email address info@somewebsite.com, “some website” is the domain name and that’s what you’d type into a web browser to find the website.

HTML: computer language used so that your web browser displays the page properly. A few basic tags to learn:

Bold: Bold

italic: <i>italic</i>

Link: anchor copy

Kill fee: this is a standard writer’s contract term. If your article gets “killed” and the publisher or editors decides not to publish it for whatever reason, you will get a percentage of the fee agreed upon for the work that you’ve already done. Usually, you also retain the right to sell your article elsewhere.

LOI: letter of introduction or a letter of interest. Generally an established writer would use this to introduce herself to the editor of a niche publication. You would not use a LOI for a major consumer publication, because they usually expect you to pitch the ideas until they've worked with you.

Masthead: list of editors' names for a certain publication. You'll usually find this in the front part of a magazine, and many websites have them, too.

Pay on acceptance: this is the ideal scenario for the writer, because it means you get paid soon after you turn in your article and your editor accepts it, even if your article isn't published for months (or years) into the future. "Acceptance" is interpreted liberally by some editors, but it's generally a better deal than pay on publication.

Pay on publication: unfortunately, this is the payment situation at many publications because of the way they manage cash flow. So, if your article gets bumped a few weeks (or months) into the future, you have to wait for your check. Publications that pay on acceptance (see above) are preferable.

Query: this is your chance to get an editor excited about your article idea and (hopefully) land an assignment.

SASE: Self-addressed stamped envelope. This dates back to the times when writers snail mailed their editors and included an envelope so the editor could respond. Writers almost never use snail mail these days, but it's still a good term to know.

Simultaneous submission: sending the same idea to multiple publications. Many editors discourage this, but it's sometimes in the writer's best interest to do this. After all, you can't wait forever for an editor to acknowledge your brilliant idea. Occasionally simultaneous submissions can give you a figurative pie in the face, so play this carefully. Read more on page 15.

Social bookmarking: allows users to search, store, and organize favorite links and access them from any computer. Examples include Delicious.com, Digg.com, and StumbleUpon.com. If your article or website makes the homepage of one of these sites, it can significantly increase traffic (sites sometimes crash thanks to the "Digg Effect").

UGC: user-generated content (if it's a news website, this is sometimes called citizen journalism). Examples include TripAdvisor.com and Yelp.com.

Wiki: a collection of webpages that allow users to collaboratively update the information. For instance, Wikipedia.org.

Writing on spec: you send a completed essay or article and the editor decides if he wants to publish it and pay you for it. Read more on page 14.

Directory of Online Markets

Before We Dive Into Markets...

Things change very, very quickly on the web, so I'm not copying and pasting complete writer's guidelines below. Instead, I've included a short description and a link to guidelines, the masthead, or a contact page. That way, when the page gets updated, you'll have access to the most up-to-date information. Where appropriate, I'm including an email *formula* rather than a specific email address for that same reason. In a few cases, information is only available on a third-party site, so I'm including that link in addition to the main site.

Editors needs evolve, so it's possible that they might not be assigning at this time or they might pay more or less than the rates specified online. In cases where the pay is unspecified, I've included those sites because of their reputation and with the understanding that they fall within a range that's comparable to the other sites listed. The most complete information is under the alphabetical listing. Some of the listings in the topical or pay sections have been abbreviated due to space.

I plan to update this directory as often as needed, so please [email me](#) if you spot an incorrect link. And if you'd like to receive updates via email, please [sign up through MailChimp](#). And now, without further ado, here's what you've all been waiting for ...

Alphabetical Listing

[AListApart.com](#)

Topics: web coding design, development, and project management, CSS, and more.

Pay: \$100/post

[Writer's guidelines](#)

[AskMen.com](#)

Topics: money, sex, cars, sports, and other topics of interest to men.

Pay: \$50/article

[Writer's guidelines](#)

[Babble.com](#)

Topics: Pregnancy, parenting, and lifestyle with a touch of sassy humor

Pay: unspecified, can range up to a few hundred dollars for an essay or reported piece

[Submissions page](#)

[Masthead page](#) (email formula is firstname@babble.com)

[AccountingWEB.com](#)

Topics: accounting, taxation, finance, and small business for CPAs and their clients.

Pay: \$.10/word (up to 2,000 words)

[Writer's guidelines](#)

[ArtofBlog.com](#)

Topics: Wordpress plugins, themes, and hacks.

Pay: \$40-150/article depending on the topic

[Guest posting guidelines](#)

[Bankrate.com](#)

Topics: personal finance, credit cards, taxes, retirement, mortgages, and investments.

Pay: \$.50/word (up to 850 words)

[Masthead page](#) (email formula is firstinitiallastname@bankrate.com)

Alphabetical listing cont.

[Bizmore.com](#)

Topics: small business, workforce trends, money, management, social media, and more.

Pay: unspecified

Contact page (last I saw Editor-in-Chief was Jeffrey Davis)

[BNET.com](#)

Topics: productivity, management, careers, and work life.

Pay: generally at least \$1/word

About page (includes masthead)

(email formula is
firstname.lastname@cbs.com)

[Citysearch.com](#)

Topics: restaurants, bars, stores, spas, entertainment, and other places in cities across the United States.

Pay: varies, starts at \$30/write up

Masthead page (look up your city editor as this list may be out-dated, email formula is

firstname.lastname@citysearch.com)

[BobVila.com](#)

Topics: home improvements and renovations.

Pay: \$1/word, less for slide shows

Contact page

(scroll down for editorial contacts, the Building & Remodeling Editor handles freelance pitches)

[BustedHalo.com](#)

Topics: pop culture, art, music, books, politics, etc. from a faith perspective (Catholic focus).

Pay: \$75/article

Freelance info

Masthead page

[Culinate.com](#)

Topics: sustainable and seasonal cooking, food trends, and recipes.

Pay: unspecified

Writer's guidelines (last I saw, Kim Carlson was Editorial Director)

Alphabetical listing cont.

[DailyCandy.com](#)

Topics: new restaurants, products, stores, spas, salons, and other goodies in several cities across the US and UK.

Pay: starts at \$50/piece (<200 words)

[Staff list](#) (they're scaled back in some areas, but look for your city editor and plug in this email formula:

firstinitiallastname@dailycandy.com)

[EdgePublications.com](#)

Topics: news, entertainment, lifestyle, and business with a GLBT focus.

Pay: unspecified

[Employment page](#)

[ErrantParent.com](#)

Topics: parenting-oriented humor, open to essays, poetry, parodies, fake news clips, and top nine clips.

Pay: \$25-50/piece

[Submission guidelines](#)

[DropZone.com](#)

Topics: skydiving gear, training, and safety.

Pay: \$50-\$100/article

[Submission guidelines](#)

[Entrepreneur.com](#)

Topics: marketing, sales, technology, and more with a small-business slant.

Pay: magazine pays \$1/word, website pays slightly less

[Writer's guidelines](#)

[Video interview with](#)

[Editor-in-Chief Amy Cosper](#)

[FreelanceSwitch.com](#)

Topics: tips for freelance professionals on finding gigs, working with clients, marketing, maintaining balance, and more.

Pay: \$60/post

[Contributor page](#)

Alphabetical listing cont.

FundsforWriters.com

Topics: tips on breaking into writing markets, applying for grants, winning contests, and more.

Pay: \$45 for unpublished articles, \$15 for reprints (*it's rare that a web-based market accepts reprints, so this is a plus!*)

[Submissions page](#)

GigaOM Network

Topics: GigaOM owns sites on nontraditional workers, Apple products, green technology, online video, and more.

Pay: can go up to \$100/post

[Contact page](#)

LabMice.net

Topics: resources on Windows, career tips, and more for IT professionals.

Pay: \$.25/word

[Submission guidelines](#)

GoGalavanting.com

Topics: travel essays and tips, blog posts, women-owned businesses, and more.

Pay: \$15/blog post, \$50/feature

[Submissions page](#)

HowStuffWorks.com

Topics: research-heavy articles on animals, computers, communication, health, history, geography, science, and more.

Pay: flat rate of a few hundred dollars

[Writing for HowStuffWorks.com](#)

Miller-McCune.com

Topics: breaking news about social problems, policy analysis, and research that may provide ways of dealing with social problems.

Pay: unspecified, but word on the street is that it starts at \$0.75/word.

[Writing for Miller-McCune.com](#)

Alphabetical listing cont.

[Nerve.com](#)

Topics: smart takes on celebrities, sex, dating, movies, and pop culture.

Pay: varies, can go to up to a few hundred dollars for longer pieces

[Contact info](#)

[ProBlogDesign.com](#)

Topics: advice and tutorials on WordPress, web design theory, PHP, JavaScript, SEO, PhotoShop, and more.

Pay: \$100-125/post

[Writer page](#)

[SitePoint.com](#)

Topics: web design and layout, coding in HTML & XHTML, CSS, Javascript, and more.

Pay: \$100 retainer plus bonuses

[Writing for SitePoint.com](#)

[SFO*Media](#)

Topics: owns two daily travel sites: HotelChatter.com and Jaunted.com

Pay: unspecified

[Write for us](#) (scroll

[PoliticsUnlocked.com](#)

Topics: current events, national politics, analysis of happenings in Congress, the White House, the Supreme Court, and more.

Pay: \$20/article

[Freelance writer info](#)

[Salon.com](#)

Topics: news, culture, reviews, and essays with an edgy, irreverent voice.

Pay: unspecified

[Submission page](#)

[Complete staff list](#) (with emails!)

[Slate.com](#)

Topics: news, politics, and culture with a witty editorial voice.

Pay: unspecified, can go up to a few hundred dollars for reported pieces

[Slate submissions page](#)

[Smashing Magazine](#)

Topics: web design/development, including CSS, Flash, and more.

Pay: unspecified

[Become a Smashing Magazine Author](#)

Alphabetical listing cont.

[The Smart Set](#)

Topics: culture, ideas, global and national affairs, philosophy, food, travel, essays, and more.

Pay: unspecified

[Writer's guidelines](#) (scroll down)

[TheFrisky.com](#)

Topics: dating, relationships, and sex with a sassy and irreverent twist.

Pay: unspecified

[Contribute To The Frisky](#)

[TheStreet.com](#)

Topics: banking, stocks, business, finance, and more.

Pay: unspecified

[Masthead page](#) (click the name to contact an editor or use this formula: firstname.lastname@thestreet.com)

[Tutorial9.net](#)

Topics: tutorials on PhotoShop, photography, SEO, and blogging.

Pay: \$50-300/post or tutorial

[Get paid to write](#)

[TheBigMoney.com](#)

Topics: business, money, economics, technology, stocks, personal finance, book reviews, and more.

Pay: around \$.50/word

[Contact page](#))

[TheNetsetter.com](#)

Topics: entrepreneurship, start-ups, blogging, online marketing, and more.

Pay: starts at \$50/post

[Contributor Page](#)

[TutsPlus.com](#)

Topics: graphic design, motion graphics, Flash, web development, audio production, and more.

Pay: around \$150/post

[Write a tutorial](#)

[Weblogs, Inc.](#)

Topics: AOL blogs cover pets, lifestyle, travel, technology, and more. These editors generally want regular bloggers, rather than one-time contributors, so choose the blog(s) that interests you and send the editor an introduction email

Alphabetical listing cont.

[WorkAwesome.com](#)

Topics: workplace issues, office life, productivity, management, careers, setting goals, and more.

Pay: starts at \$50/post

[Contributor page](#)

[WorldStart.com](#)

Topics: Windows, internet, email, and computer tips in a clear, easy-to-understand tone.

Pay: \$35-65/article

[Writer's guidelines](#)

[WritersWeekly.com](#)

Topics: how to make money as a freelance writer, tips on unusual approaches or niches, and more.

Pay: \$60/article (*accepts reprints – big plus!*)

[Writer's guidelines](#)

with clips.

Pay: varies

[Masthead](#) (email formula is firstname.lastname@corp.aol.com)

[WorldHum.com](#)

Topics: travel stories, videos, and slideshows.

Pay: varies

[Submissions page](#)

[WOW! Women on Writing](#)

Topics: interviews with women writers, tips on writing, marketing, entering contests, and more.

Pay: \$50-150/article

[Contact page](#) (scroll down)

[YourTango.com](#)

Topics: relationship and dating advice, essays, and more with a smart, sassy voice.

Pay: varies, but can go up to a few hundred dollars for longer pieces

[Submission page](#) (scroll down)

Listing by Pay Rates

Money talks, so here's that same list arranged by pay rate, omitting websites whose pay rates are not specified. I've roughly grouped these listings into three groups: Bagel and Coffee Money, Soup and Salad Fund, Steak Dinner.

Bagel and Coffee Money

You'll earn a little cash writing for these markets, but they're at the lower end of the spectrum.

[Citysearch.com](#)

Topics: restaurants, bars, stores, spas, entertainment, and other places in cities across the United States.

Pay: varies, starts at \$30/write up

[Masthead page](#) (look up your city editor, as this list may be out-dated, email formula is
firstname.lastname@citysearch.com)

[ErrantParent.com](#)

Topics: parenting-oriented humor, open to essays, poetry, parodies, fake news clips, and top nine clips.

Pay: \$25-50/piece

[Submission guidelines](#)

[DailyCandy.com](#)

Topics: new restaurants, products, stores, spas, salons, and other goodies in several cities across the US and UK.

Pay: starts at \$50/piece (<200 words)

[Staff list](#) (they're scaled back in some areas, but look for your city editor and plug in this email formula:

firstinitiallastname@dailycandy.com)

[FundsforWriters.com](#)

Topics: tips on breaking into writing markets, applying for grants, winning contests, and more.

Pay: \$45 for unpublished articles, \$15 for reprints

[Submissions page](#)

Bagel and Coffee Money cont.

[GoGalavanting.com](#)

Topics: travel essays and tips, blog posts, women-owned businesses, and more.

Pay: \$15/blog post, \$50/feature

[Submissions page](#)

[Weblogs, Inc.](#)

Topics: AOL blogs cover pets, lifestyle, travel, technology, and more. These editors generally want regular bloggers, rather than one-time contributors.

Pay: varies

[Masthead](#) (email formula is
firstname.lastname@corp.aol.com)

[WorldStart.com](#)

Topics: Windows, internet, email, and computer tips in a clear, easy-to-understand tone.

Pay: \$35-65/article

[Writer's guidelines](#)

[PoliticsUnlocked.com](#)

Topics: current events, national politics, analysis of happenings in Congress, the White House, the Supreme Court, and more.

Pay: \$20/article

[Freelance writer info](#)

[WorldHum.com](#)

Topics: travel stories, videos, and slideshows.

Pay: varies

[Submissions page](#)

Soup and Salad Fund

These writing markets fall somewhere in the middle.

[AccountingWEB.com](#)

Topics: accounting, taxation, finance, and small business for CPAs and their clients.

Pay: \$.10/word (up to 2,000 words)

[Writer's guidelines](#)

[ArtofBlog.com](#)

Topics: Wordpress plugins, themes, and hacks.

Pay: \$40-150/article depending on the topic

[Guest posting guidelines](#)

[DropZone.com](#)

Topics: skydiving gear, training, and safety.

Pay: \$50-\$100/article

[Submission guidelines](#)

[AskMen.com](#)

Topics: money, sex, cars, sports, and other topics of interest to men.

Pay: \$50/article

[Writer's guidelines](#)

[BustedHalo.com](#)

Topics: pop culture, art, music, books, politics, etc. from a faith perspective (Catholic focus).

Pay: \$75/article

[Freelance info](#)

[Masthead page](#)

[FreelanceSwitch.com](#)

Topics: tips for freelance professionals on finding gigs, working with clients, marketing, maintaining balance, and more.

Pay: \$60/post

[Contributor page](#)

Soup and Salad Fund cont.

[GigaOM Network](#)

Topics: GigaOM owns sites on nontraditional workers, Apple products, online video, and more.

Pay: can go up to \$100/post

[Contact page](#)

[Nerve.com](#)

Topics: smart takes on celebrities, sex, dating, movies, and pop culture.

Pay: varies, can go to up to a few hundred dollars for longer pieces

[Contact info](#)

[Tutorial9.net](#)

Topics: tutorials on PhotoShop, photography, SEO, and blogging.

Pay: \$50-300/post or tutorial

[Get paid to write](#)

[WOW! Women on Writing](#)

Topics: interviews with women writers, tips on writing, marketing, entering contests, and more.

Pay: \$50-150/article

[Contact page](#) (scroll down)

[LabMice.net](#)

Topics: resources on Windows, career tips, and more for IT professionals.

Pay: \$.25/word

[Submission guidelines](#)

[TheNetsetter.com](#)

Topics: entrepreneurship, start-ups, blogging, online marketing, and more.

Pay: starts at \$50/post

[Contributor Page](#)

[WorkAwesome.com](#)

Topics: workplace issues, office life, productivity, management, careers, setting goals, and more.

Pay: starts at \$50/post

[Contributor page](#)

[WritersWeekly.com](#)

Topics: how to make money as a freelance writer, tips on unusual approaches or niches, and more.

Pay: \$60/article

[Writer's guidelines](#)

Soup and Salad Fund cont.

[YourTango.com](#)

Topics: relationship and dating advice, essays, and more.

Pay: varies, but can go up to a few hundred dollars for longer pieces

[Submission page](#) (scroll down)

Steak Dinner

In general, expect to make \$100 a pop (or more) from these markets.

[AListApart.com](#)

Topics: web coding design, development, and project management, CSS, and more.

Pay: \$100/post

[Writer's guidelines](#)

[Bankrate.com](#)

Topics: personal finance, credit cards, taxes, retirement, mortgages, and investments.

Pay: \$.50/word (up to 850 words)

[Masthead page](#) (email formula is firstinitiallastname@bankrate.com)

[BobVila.com](#)

Topics: home improvements and renovations.

Pay: \$1/word, less for slide shows

[Contact page](#)

(scroll down for editorial contacts, the Building & Remodeling Editor handles freelance pitches)

[BNET.com](#)

Topics: productivity, management, careers, and work life.

Pay: generally at least \$1/word

[About page \(includes masthead\)](#)

(email formula is firstname.lastname@cbs.com)

Steak Dinner cont.

[Entrepreneur.com](#)

Topics: marketing, sales, technology, and more with a small-business slant.

Pay: magazine pays \$1/word, website pays slightly less

[Writer's guidelines](#)

[Miller-McCune.com](#)

Topics: breaking news about social problems, policy analysis, and research that may provide ways of dealing with social problems.

Pay: unspecified, but word on the street is that it starts at \$0.75/word.

[Writing for Miller-McCune.com](#)

[SitePoint.com](#)

Topics: web design and layout, coding in HTML & XHTML, CSS, Javascript, and more.

Pay: \$100 retainer plus bonuses

[Writing for SitePoint.com](#)

[HappenMag.com](#)

Topics: The online magazine for Match.com covers seasonal date ideas, etiquette and advice for the newly single, divorced, or same-sex daters, and more.

Pay: around \$.50/word

[Masthead page](#) (email formula is firstname.lastname@match.com)

[ProBlogDesign.com](#)

Topics: advice and tutorials on WordPress, web design theory, PHP, JavaScript, SEO, PhotoShop, and more.

Pay: \$100-125/post

[Writer page](#)

[TheBigMoney.com](#)

Topics: business, money, economics, technology, stocks, personal finance, book reviews, and more.

Pay: around \$.50/word

[Contact page](#)

Steak Dinner cont.

[TutsPlus.com](#)

Topics: graphic design, motion graphics, Flash, web development, audio production, and more.

Pay: around \$150/post

[Write a tutorial](#)

Topical Listings

If you have a particular interest or niche, this list should help you locate websites that fit your interests.

Computers, Technology & Web Design

[AListApart.com](#)

Topics: web coding design, development, and project management, CSS, and more.

Pay: \$100/post

[Writer's guidelines](#)

[Bizmore.com](#)

Topics: small business, workforce trends, money, management, social media, and more.

Pay: unspecified

[Contact page](#) (last I saw Editor-in-Chief was Jeffrey Davis)

[GigaOM Network](#)

Topics: GigaOM owns sites on nontraditional workers, Apple products, green technology, online video, and more.

Pay: can go up to \$100/post

[Contact page](#)

[ArtofBlog.com](#)

Topics: Wordpress plugins, themes, and hacks.

Pay: \$40-150/article depending on the topic

[Guest posting guidelines](#)

[Entrepreneur.com](#)

Topics: marketing, sales, technology, and more with a small-business slant.

Pay: magazine pays \$1/word, website pays slightly less

[Writer's guidelines](#)

[LabMice.net](#)

Topics: resources on Windows, career tips, and more for IT professionals.

Pay: \$.25/word

[Submission guidelines](#)

Computers, Technology & Web Design cont.

[ProBlogDesign.com](#)

Topics: advice and tutorials on WordPress, web design theory, PHP, JavaScript, PhotoShop, and more.

Pay: \$100-125/post

[Writer page](#)

[Smashing Magazine](#)

Topics: web design/development, including CSS, Flash, and more.

Pay: unspecified

[Become a Smashing Magazine](#)

[Author](#)

[TutsPlus.com](#)

Topics: graphic design, motion graphics, Flash, web development, audio production, and more.

Pay: around \$150/post

[Write a tutorial](#)

[Weblogs, Inc.](#)

Topics: AOL blogs cover lifestyle, travel, technology, and more.

Pay: varies

[Masthead](#) (email formula is
firstname.lastname@corp.aol.com)

[SitePoint.com](#)

Topics: web design and layout, coding in HTML & XHTML, CSS, Javascript, and more.

Pay: \$100 retainer plus bonuses

[Writing for SitePoint.com](#)

[TheNetsetter.com](#)

Topics: entrepreneurship, start-ups, blogging, online marketing, and more.

Pay: starts at \$50/post

[Contributor Page](#)

[Tutorial9.net](#)

Topics: tutorials on PhotoShop, photography, SEO, and blogging.

Pay: \$50-300/post or tutorial

[Get paid to write](#)

[WorldStart.com](#)

Topics: Windows, internet, email, and computer tips in a clear tone.

Pay: \$35-65/article

[Writer's guidelines](#)

Culture, Food & Lifestyle

[Babble.com](#)

Topics: Pregnancy, parenting, and lifestyle with a touch of sassy humor

Pay: unspecified, can range up to a few hundred dollars for an essay or reported piece

[Submissions page](#)

[Masthead page](#) (email formula is firstname@babble.com)

[Citysearch.com](#)

Topics: restaurants, bars, stores, spas, entertainment, and other places in cities across the United States.

Pay: varies, starts at \$30/write up

[Masthead page](#) (look up your city editor, as this list may be out-dated, email formula is
firstname.lastname@citysearch.com)

[BustedHalo.com](#)

Topics: pop culture, art, music, books, politics, etc. from a faith perspective (Catholic focus).

Pay: \$75/article

[Freelance info](#)

[Masthead page](#)

[Culinate.com](#)

Topics: sustainable and seasonal cooking, food trends, and recipes.

Pay: unspecified

[Writer's guidelines](#) (last I saw, Kim Carlson was Editorial Director)

Culture, Food & Lifestyle cont.

[DailyCandy.com](#)

Topics: new restaurants, products, stores, spas, salons, and other goodies in several cities across the US and UK.

Pay: starts at \$50/piece (<200 words)

[Staff list](#) (they're scaled back in some areas, but look for your city editor and plug in this email formula: firstinitiallastname@dailycandy.com)

[GoGalavanting.com](#)

Topics: travel essays and tips, blog posts, women-owned businesses, and more.

Pay: \$15/blog post, \$50/feature

[Submissions page](#)

[Slate.com](#)

Topics: news, politics, and culture with a witty editorial voice.

Pay: unspecified, can go up to a few hundred dollars for reported pieces

[Slate submissions page](#)

[EdgePublications.com](#)

Topics: news, entertainment, lifestyle, and business with a GLBT focus.

Pay: unspecified

[Employment page](#)

[Salon.com](#)

Topics: news, culture, reviews, and essays with an edgy, irreverent voice.

Pay: unspecified

[Submission page](#)

[Complete staff list](#) (with emails!)

[SFO*Media](#)

Topics: owns two daily travel sites: HotelChatter.com and Jaunted.com

Pay: unspecified

[Write for us](#) (scroll down)

Culture, Food & Lifestyle cont.

[The Smart Set](#)

Topics: culture, ideas, global and national affairs, philosophy, food, travel, essays, and more.

Pay: unspecified

[Writer's guidelines](#) (scroll down)

[Weblogs, Inc.](#)

Topics: AOL blogs cover lifestyle, travel, technology, and more. These editors generally want regular bloggers, rather than one-time contributors, so choose the blog(s) that interests you and send the editor an introduction email with clips.

Pay: varies

[Masthead](#) (email formula is
firstname.lastname@corp.aol.com)

Dating & Relationships

AskMen.com

Topics: money, sex, cars, sports, and other topics of interest to men.

Pay: \$50/article

[Writer's guidelines](#)

Nerve.com

Topics: smart takes on celebrities, sex, dating, movies, and pop culture.

Pay: varies, can go to up to a few hundred dollars for longer pieces

[Contact info](#)

YourTango.com

Topics: relationship and dating advice, essays, and more with a smart, sassy voice.

Pay: varies, but can go up to a few hundred dollars for longer pieces

[Submission page](#) (scroll down)

HappenMag.com

Topics: The online magazine for Match.com covers seasonal date ideas, etiquette and advice for the newly single, divorced, or same-sex daters, and more.

Pay: around \$.50/word

[Masthead page](#) (email formula is firstname.lastname@match.com)

TheFrisky.com

Topics: dating, relationships, and sex with a sassy and irreverent twist.

Pay: unspecified

[Contribute To The Frisky](#)

Entrepreneurship, Business & Personal Finance

[AccountingWEB.com](#)

Topics: accounting, taxation, finance, and small business for CPAs and their clients.

Pay: \$.10/word (up to 2,000 words)

[Writer's guidelines](#)

[Bizmore.com](#)

Topics: small business, workforce trends, money, management, social media, and more.

Pay: unspecified

[Contact page](#) (last I saw Editor-in-Chief was Jeffrey Davis)

[Entrepreneur.com](#)

Topics: marketing, sales, technology, and more with a small-business slant.

Pay: magazine pays \$1/word, website pays slightly less

[Writer's guidelines](#)

[Video interview with](#)

[Editor-in-Chief Amy Cosper](#)

[Bankrate.com](#)

Topics: personal finance, credit cards, taxes, retirement, mortgages, and investments.

Pay: \$.50/word (up to 850 words)

[Masthead page](#) (email formula is firstinitiallastname@bankrate.com)

[BNET.com](#)

Topics: productivity, management, careers, and work life.

Pay: generally at least \$1/word

[About page \(includes masthead\)](#)

(email formula is firstname.lastname@cbs.com)

[TheBigMoney.com](#)

Topics: business, money, economics, technology, stocks, personal finance, book reviews, and more.

Pay: around \$.50/word

[Contact page](#)

Entrepreneurship, Business & Personal Finance cont.

[TheNetsetter.com](#)

Topics: entrepreneurship, start-ups, blogging, online marketing, and more.

Pay: starts at \$50/post

[Contributor Page](#)

[TheStreet.com](#)

Topics: banking, stocks, business, finance, and more.

Pay: unspecified

[Masthead page](#) (click the name to contact an editor or use this formula: `firstname.lastname@thestreet.com`)

[WorkAwesome.com](#)

Topics: workplace issues, office life, productivity, management, careers, setting goals, and more.

Pay: starts at \$50/post

[Contributor page](#)

Freelancing & Writing

[FreelanceSwitch.com](#)

Topics: tips for freelance professionals on finding gigs, working with clients, marketing, maintaining balance, and more.

Pay: \$60/post

[Contributor page](#)

[GigaOM Network](#)

Topics: GigaOM owns sites on nontraditional workers, Apple products, green technology, online video, and more.

Pay: can go up to \$100/post

[Contact page](#)

[WritersWeekly.com](#)

Topics: how to make money as a freelance writing, tips on unusual approaches or niches, and more.

Pay: \$60/article (*accepts reprints – big plus!*)

[Writer's guidelines](#)

[FundsforWriters.com](#)

Topics: tips on breaking into writing markets, applying for grants, winning contests, and more.

Pay: \$45 for unpublished articles, \$15 for reprints (*it's rare that a web-based market accepts reprints, so this is a plus!*)

[Submissions page](#)

[WOW! Women on Writing](#)

Topics: interviews with women writers, tips on writing, marketing, entering contests, and more.

Pay: \$50-150/article

[Contact page](#) (scroll down)

Bonus! Other Places to Find Online Markets

This directory is barely the tip of the proverbial iceberg, so with a little digging, you can uncover loads of other online markets. Here are some starting points. Many of these websites also have interesting content on writing, marketing, and so on. Some of them focus on full time writing positions, but you'll find freelance opportunities, too.

[AbsoluteWrite.com](#)

Great for writers who are just starting out. Includes an email newsletter with writing markets and forums where you can swap tips with other writers.

[Craigslist.org](#)

A healthy dose of skepticism is key when you're not sure who you're dealing with, but you can find legit writing gigs on Craigslist. Look under gigs and don't limit yourself to your local edition, since you'll be working remotely.

[Ed2010.com/jobs/whisperjobs](#)

Also lists fact checking, proofreading, and editing gigs, some of them full time or geographically specific. But when they list freelance writing opportunities, they're usually good ones.

[Groups.Yahoo.com/group/UPOD](#)

Technically, this is not a job board. It's a Yahoo group for writers moderated by LA freelancer David Hochman, and you'll find that members frequently post job leads and other helpful information. UPOD stands for Hochman's mantra: "Under Promise, Over Deliver." Words to live by.

[FreelanceSuccess.com](#)

Freelance Success (FLX to those in the know) publishes a weekly

newsletter covering a decent paying freelance market in depth (usually the markets pay at least \$.50/word). Plus, you can read the archives and get referrals from other members using the forums. Membership is \$99/year, so I would suggest this for serious writers who are full time or considering full-time freelancing.

[FreelanceWritingGigs.com](#)

Get your daily dose of writing and blogging tips, gigs, and more. This blog aggregates new job listings every weekday morning and has a huge freelance following, so be sure to read the articles and comments.

[MediaBistro.com/joblistings](#)

Tends to be mainly full time media jobs, but you can set an alert so you'll automatically get an email when new jobs get posted that meet your search parameters. Also has great content about pitching specific publications and general media topics. Membership costs \$59/year, but many writers find it useful, as it comes with magazine subscriptions and other benefits, too.

Other Writers' Websites (no link)

When I read an article I really like, I Google the author to see what else they've written. I'll often discover new interesting markets by perusing their website or looking at their other clips. Try to find contact information on your own before contacting another writer, but I've found that many other writers are willing to share information if you ask nicely.

[WritersMarket.com](#)

I like to do my own market research (that way I learn about the publication in the process), but many writers swear by this website, because the listings are comprehensive and you can search by all kinds of different criteria. Plus, the web version is more up-to-date than the print one.

WritersWeekly.com

Here you'll find lots of great articles on writing for print and web. Check the "Whispers and Warnings" section for the dirt on delinquent publishers and the "Paying Markets and Freelance Section" for, well, you get the idea... Updates are published on Wednesdays.

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About the Author



Photo by Rachel Hadiashar, MergeWeddings.com

Susan Johnston is a Boston-based freelance writer whose articles have appeared on AOL's *Lemondrop*, *DailyCandy.com*, *MediaBistro.com*, *WritersWeekly.com*, *WomenEntrepreneur.com*, *Yahoo! HotJobs*, and many other websites. Her writing also appears in numerous print publications including *Boston Globe Magazine*, *The Christian Science Monitor*, and *Self magazine*. She created [The Urban Muse](http://TheUrbanMuse.com), an award-winning blog about the freelance life, and teaches freelance writing at Boston Center for Adult Education. For more info, visit her website at www.susan-johnston.com.