

Writing for Magazines: Twelve New Things Writers Must Do Today to Make Money

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“It used to be that everything you needed to know to write a magazine article was the topic,” says the author. “Writers who believe this is still true will be left out of the money.” In her book, the forty-year publishing veteran explains the secrets behind her success and teaches writers how to be more successful.

This book is a complete marketing course for freelancers at any stage in their careers. Novices will learn an effective approach to selling their work, while more experienced writers will find information to improve their existing skills. Weaver gives readers some basic sales theory, based on her thirty years in marketing and high-tech product sales. Building on that, she teaches how to focus a query specifically to the needs of the publication for which it is targeted. Using these methods, Weaver increased acceptances on her own queries to forty percent.

Several chapters are devoted to teaching freelance writers what they probably haven’t learned anywhere else—how to analyze a magazine and derive all the information needed to write a successful query letter. Weaver points out how inadequate even the best-written writer’s guidelines are for this purpose. She shows how to glean every bit of information, and provides a form at the end of the book for recording it.

Of greatest value are the tips and strategies for understanding a publication the way a marketing team understands its customers. Weaver explains that the success of a magazine depends on its ability to attract readers, and thus deliver an audience to advertisers. Understanding this audience gives freelancers the tools they need to craft an effective query letter. By knowing what readers want, the writer can offer magazine editors precisely what they are looking for. The book offers many ideas for researching publications beyond the usual guidelines and sample copies.

Every writer who reads this volume is sure to walk away with a new point of view and a marketing approach that will increase acceptance rates. The book is certain to provide techniques that can immediately and effectively be put into practice by any freelancer who is determined to succeed in today’s publishing climate.

DAWN WILLIAMS (January / February 2002)

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