

How to Choose the Right Publication

So You Want to Be a Journalist · By Simon Townsend · 2 min read

Choosing a publication to write for

Every journalist has to decide which publications to target.

"What should be my target publication?"

Only YOU have the answer.

Ask yourself these questions:

- Which publications would you LIKE your articles to appear in?
- Which publications do you read and admire?
- Ever read a publication and thought "I want to be published in this one!"

There is no point writing for a publication you hold in contempt.

Yet to my professional eye, the student's article was perfect for the publication I had suggested.

I soon realised a student has to WANT to be in a certain publication, and has read many issues and studied it, and written specifically for it.

Students often mistakenly feel that a good article fits anywhere. It simply doesn't. I must rely on you reading publications so that you can get a feel for the kind of publication you'd like to sell an article to.

If you like a certain publication, then you'll have a feel for the kind of subjects they are interested in, and the style of writing they prefer.

I know it can be hard sometimes to figure out which publication you should be writing for. Even experienced freelancers sometimes need to stop and take stock. Who DO I write for? It happened to me a few times in the years I freelanced a great deal.

I suggest that you:

1. Go to your state or local library and check out their current publications. At a library you have time to peruse the publications and get a feeling for what's on the market. State libraries have most publications, local libraries have few.
1. The other quick and easy way is to look at the publications for sale at your newsagent. Take a notebook and write down the titles. Buy, say, two publications that grab your attention. It's not good enough to react: "I'd like to read this publication." You have to feel: "I'd love to write for this

publication." Now, don't tell anyone I told you this, but if you're friends with a newsagent he or she might give you copies of old magazines they throw away.

Incidentally, many cafes now carry a lot of magazines for customers to browse while having a coffee (not to mention hairdressers, doctors, dentists, optometrists, etc). This is an excellent additional method of concentrated browsing. Also, what publications can you borrow from friends?

1. And as a third option, you might want to buy a directory titled "The Australian Writer's Marketplace", available possibly at your library for free or from a bookshop like Abbey's (02) 9264 3111 for \$60. But remember this is only a LIST which should lead you to READING any publications you're interested in.
1. Your fourth option costs nothing and you can do it from your computer. You go the websites of all the best publications in the WORLD, and you can read some or all of their best articles for nothing. More proof, if it was necessary, that journalists and other writers simply cannot live without the internet.
1. Your newsagent should be a Very Important Person in your life. Why? If you want to know the answer ask me for "Mags-new ones" by email. Only via email.

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