

Writer's Guidelines for *PPB* (*Promotional Products Business*)
The Award-Winning, Monthly Magazine of
Promotional Products Association International

GENERAL INFORMATION

Editorial Objective: *PPB* empowers promotional professionals by providing indispensable industry information and education, and expanding their resources for products and services.

Frequency of Publication: Monthly

Audience: *PPB* is produced for distributors and suppliers in the promotions industry and mailed as a membership benefit to all members of PPAI. The majority of members are small-business owners and salespeople located in North America with annual revenue under \$2.5 million.

MANUSCRIPT SPECIFICATIONS

Each story submission should include the following:

- a. Digital color photos (300 dpi jpg file) that are relevant to the article.
- b. The author's name, address, e-mail address and phone number, and the article's title or working title.
- c. A brief author biography listing current position and brief background. We do not currently publish authors' photos.

Length: Columns are generally about 900-1,400 words; features generally run 1,500 to 2,500 words. Sidebars and boxed information that adds visual interest to a story are highly encouraged.

Writing Style: *Promotional Products Business* closely follows *The Chicago Manual of Style*. Exceptions: Spell out numbers zero through nine; use numerals for 10 and up. Omit the third comma in a series of three. Credit sources directly in the article, don't use footnotes. Bibliographies are not appropriate. Skip a space for all new paragraphs. Subheads should be typed flush left with the margin, using upper and lower case letters. Skip only one space after periods.

EDITORIAL PROCEDURES

Article Submission and Acceptance Process: We suggest that before submitting an article to *PPB* that you submit a story query consisting of a summary paragraph of the proposed article, along with a story outline and a cover note addressed to the editor.

After receiving the story query, an editor will call or write you to discuss your idea, how it will be organized, what sources you will use and what sidebars (short, accompanying articles) might be appropriate. Although acceptance will be confirmed with the author as soon as possible, the editor cannot guarantee when the article will be published.

Generally, the editorial content is planned at least three months in advance of the publication date.

If Your Article is Selected for Publication:

- a. The editor has the right to edit the article for style, clarity and length and to make final selection on headlines, subheads and graphic treatment. Manuscript submission implies author agreement with this policy.
- b. *PPB* does not pay for articles unless the writer is a freelance journalist working on assignment from *PPB*.
- b. All published material is copyright by *PPB*.

Basis for Judging Manuscripts: Upon receipt, manuscripts are read and judged for suitability based on the following points:

- a. Information - Does the article deliver the promised facts? Are those facts supported?
- b. Analysis - Are facts examined and brought together into a cohesive body of work?
- c. Balance - If there are several sides to an issue, are they all presented? Is opinion presented as such?
- d. Originality - Is the topic presented with a fresh, new perspective?
- e. Audience appeal - Does the article capture and retain reader interest? Is it logical and convincing? Does it address the proper audience?
- f. Relevance - Is the article current? Does it present the reader with useful information? Does it address a topic worth discussing?
- g. Truth - Are facts and data accurate? Note: While the *PPB* staff attempts to check the facts, the responsibility for accuracy rests with the author.
- h. Product or service endorsements - Does the piece primarily promote or endorse a specific product or service? Articles that are “disguised” news releases will be rejected. Products or services may be identified, but should only be mentioned sparingly within the confines of a much broader context.

TIPS FOR GETTING YOUR ARTICLE PUBLISHED IN *PPB*:

Your article will have a better chance of being accepted if it:

- is based on a sound idea that is relevant to the sales, marketing or promotion of promotional products, or trends or issues within the promotional products industry, advertising community or small-business community.
- does not promote a product, service or company.
- does not diminish another industry company or product.
- projects a style or tone that is suitable to the sophistication of the membership.
- is well organized with subheads making significant shifts in topics.
- uses examples within the industry. If quotations from others are used, they should be from credible sources within the industry or related to the industry.
- includes interesting statistics and facts to support the story's point.
- is accompanied by interesting sidebars or photos.

WHAT TO WRITE ABOUT

Read through *PPB* archives (available at <http://pubs.ppa.org>) to see what kinds of articles have been published in the past and then consider your own experience. What kinds of promotions have worked really well and why? What trends are at work in the industry or business world in general that affect the industry? Do you have a fresh approach to an old problem? Do you have a cost-effective solution? Think about the kinds of information you need in your job. Is there an aspect of the industry that you think needs examination and thoughtful perspective? Are there ethical issues to be addressed? As you start thinking about it, you are likely to come up with a number of ideas. From these you can cull the most important ones and then decide on a topic that would make an interesting magazine article.

If you have an idea, but don't know if it's really appropriate for a magazine article, try to capture the essence of the idea in a paragraph or two and then develop a detailed outline. List the specific points you will make in the article and how it will be organized. If the prospective article interests you and you think it will interest others, then submit it to *PPB* for consideration.

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