

FISHHEAD WRITERS' GUIDELINES

Thank you for your interest in contributing to Fishhead.

What is FishHead?

FishHead is the magazine for the lower North Island. We are a magazine for locals, by locals, about locals it's our greatest strength. We provide in-depth coverage of local-interest stories, and features on the people, places and issues across our region (from Wellington to Kapiti and including the Wairarapa). We offer a great read, stunning photography and high production values.

Who reads Fishhead?

Our target readership is as follows:

- 30+ years old.
- Middle to upper socioeconomic group.
- 60/40 female/male audience.
- Average yearly household income of \$100,000+.
- Educated to graduate level and well read.
- Occupation along the lines of middle to upper management.

FishHead is looking to be an entertaining and intelligent read. As such we hope to attract an educated, affluent and discerning readership – many of whom have reached the top of their profession.

Our readers are hugely proud of their region and enjoy reading about local people, places and issues. They take an interest in politics and the community, and are vocal about what they want from their councils and the Government.

FishHead readers are widely travelled and enjoy holidays abroad each year. They have many leisure interests and enjoy their life, community and region to the fullest.

What types of stories will FishHead publish?

Each issue of the magazine contains five or more features of 2,000 words. These will be topical, local-interest stories and given the most exposure through the publication's cover page and marketing initiatives.

The departments (Interviews, Columns, Food & Drink, Fashion and Health, Reviews, Regulars) contain several articles of 500-800 words. They cover topics such as history, travel, food, art, fashion, finance, politics and health, as well as interviews and human interest stories. Department stories can roam wider than the local-interest focus of features, but will preferably include a local angle.

What kinds of proposals is FishHead looking for?

Ideas for features and departments are generated both by FishHead staff and by freelance contributors. We will consider all contributions, unsolicited or otherwise, as long as they are in line with BOTH our target readership and publication profile.

How should an idea be proposed?

Just as we must sell readers our magazine, writers must sell us more than just notions and ideas. Please do not submit unfocused lists of multiple ideas. Restrict each submission to one or two well-developed proposals that have been targeted specifically at FishHead's readership and profile.

A carefully-considered proposal combines support for covering a particular story together with some angle or hook. A good proposal has a headline that suggests what the story is, a strong intro that builds on the headline, and paragraph that amplifies both the headline and intro and presents a clear case for publication.

Proposals should not be more than one page and should clearly identify the angle and approach of the piece. They should answer these questions about the publication of the story: why, why now, and why in FishHead? And they should be rendered in the individual style of the writer – a practice endorsed by FishHead.

What does FishHead look for in writing style?

There are no limitations on style, as long as the writing is lively and interesting.

Unless the writer is passionately interested in the story, the reader is sure to be bored. The first line and paragraph must be mind blowing. Feel free to knock the reader about the head. Every sentence matters. Each paragraph should snap, crackle and pop with excitement. Then tie the story up with a concise closing paragraph.

We like good storytelling – the compelling anecdote, the colourful character, the lively quote, the telling detail... And we like our readers to experience a story directly through the words and actions of people that the writer encounters, as well as through the writer's narrative. There is no substitute for first-hand reporting, so get out and speak to the people.

Prospective contributors doing preliminary research for a story must avoid giving the impression that they are representing FishHead. They may use the name of the magazine only if they have a definite assignment. When FishHead approves an assignment, the terms are clearly stated in a written contract.

What are the requirements for submitted articles?

Manuscripts must be typewritten in Microsoft Word format and emailed to editor@fishhead.co.nz. Hard copies of written material will be refused.

Submitted pieces should start with the following information:

20 November 2007 (date)

Joe Greatwriter (author's full name)

joegreatwriter@hotmail.com (email address)

Tel: 03 123 4567 (landline phone number)

Mob: 021 234 5678 (mobile phone number)

Service information (such as addresses, telephone numbers, directions and where to obtain more information) should be at the end of the article, not in the text. The writer is expected to include as much service information as possible.

Unsolicited contributors, please include your credentials and any relevant published clippings.

Terms and conditions

Copyright

WildTomato Media Ltd owns the copyright to all commissioned material intended for publication in FishHead.

The copyright of submitted material pre-written for the purpose of content syndication remains with the author. Notwithstanding, FishHead requests six months' exclusivity in New Zealand for submitted material.

Deadline

The deadline for receipt of manuscripts is the 1st of each month, unless stated otherwise. Manuscripts may be refused if received after this deadline.

Acceptance

FishHead reserves the right to refuse manuscripts if they are deemed unsatisfactory for publication or not submitted in the required format.

Modification of manuscripts

FishHead reserves the right to amend submitted manuscripts prior to publication while keeping in line with generally-accepted standards for style, and respecting the integrity of the author in terms of their meaning prior to modification.

Contract

On acceptance of a proposal, FishHead will issue a commission sheet to the author detailing all terms and conditions of the contract.

Payment

Final payment is per published word, which may vary from the original manuscript submitted. The rate is as detailed in the commission sheet. Payment will be made on the 20th of the month following the month of publication.

Should you have any questions regarding the above, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Regards

Ben Christie | Editor

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