

AAA Journey Puget Sound Insights from Editor Nicole Meoli

1. How do you characterize your readership?

With a circulation of around 570,000, it's a bit daunting to completely characterize our audience. However, it's safe to say that the majority of our readers fall in the 40-55 age range (though we have begun to target a younger segment of our readers), middle to upper middle class, college educated, like to travel locally, nationally and internationally.

2. Who writes for your publication? Where do you get your stories?

We have mostly freelancers writing for us. However, I do some of the writing and so does our associate editor on staff.

3. If you were to give one or two bits of advice to a freelancer hoping to break into your publication, what would you say?

Follow up any email or mail correspondence with a phone call. Send relevant clips.

4. What is a mistake you typically see new writers (or writers in general) make?
Typos in their pitches. Or pitches that have nothing to do with the content of the magazine.

5. Speaking specifically of travel articles, what kinds do you look for? Can you tell me a little bit about your own needs? How would you characterize your publication's travel coverage?

I look for articles with a twist on the norm (in travel), something not written about five million times in the past year by other travel pubs. I like first-person articles, where the author describes his own experience--keeping in mind who he's writing for of course.

Our travel coverage is usually just that, however, we don't ignore popular destinations or trends. Within a typical issue, we have three to four features, one focusing on local (Northwest) travel, another on a national or international destination and usually one focused on an automotive topic.

6. What, in your view, separates an OK travel article from one that's truly inspired?

You can tell immediately when a writer is passionate about the places they've traveled. If the story flows well from start to finish, that's usually a good sign.

7. Do you have any pet peeves when it comes to travel writing?

Bad writing. Writing too much over the maximum word count--because then I am forced to cut.

8. Think about the writer you most like to work with... what makes him or her so special?

Easy to work with, doesn't take things too personally (i.e. When I'd like him to cut something or help me with an edit), minimal editing needed, quick responses to my questions.

Writer's Guidelines:

Thank you for your interest in Journey. The bimonthly magazine for members of AAA Washington reaches 550,000 readers in Washington and northern Idaho. Our goal is to present readers with lively and informative stories on lifestyle, travel and automotive topics that encourage them to discover and explore the Northwest and beyond.

Articles range from 500 to 1,800 words. We assign stories based on writers' proposals, and rarely accept completed manuscripts. We look for writers who combine sound research and reporting skills with a strong voice and excellent storytelling ability. We adhere to AP style. A solid knowledge of the Pacific Northwest is also required.

We create our editorial calendar in the spring for the following calendar year. We encourage you to read several issues of Journey to familiarize yourself with our publication before you submit article ideas.

Journey pays up to \$1 per word upon acceptance for first North American rights. Some stories run alternatively in our Western and Puget Sound editions and may also be published on the Web site. We run all articles with high-quality photographs and illustrations. If you are a published photographer, let us know but please do not submit any photos unless requested.

To be considered for an assignment, mail a query along with three samples of published work to:

- Nicole Meoli - Editor
Journey magazine
1745 114th Ave. S.E.
Bellevue, WA 98004
- Email to NicoleMeoli@aaawin.com

We usually respond to mailed queries within three months provided you include an SASE, however, we cannot assume responsibility for the loss or return of unsolicited manuscripts or photographs.

We look forward to reading your proposal.