

## **Las Vegas Quill Keepers Lesson 1: Researching and Finding YOUR Perfect Place to Submit**

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We want to be published, but we can't get our work seen unless we've been published. It's the old catch 22 of this industry, and yet, there are new writers' works seen all the time. Magazines need fresh new voices, and publishers want writers who have audiences all ready. It's true that agents and publishing houses would prefer to work with "name" authors. You should choose your submissions specifically in support of the books you are working on, if you wish to have a book published. So how do you do that?

First, decide who your demographics are, and work from there. We'll use the example of Jane Doe, who is working on a mystery novel, with a lead character, a woman in her forties. Her target audience is single women who are interested in quilting, since the novel revolves around the clues in quilts. So, Jane now makes a listing of all the magazines that are targeting similar demographics. She looks for craft websites, and reads what magazines are recommended.

Where does Jane go to find this information? What specific information should she look for, and where?

Start with the characters themselves. She has a lead who is a woman who does crafts. The sub-stories involve a teenaged daughter, and a doting husband who enjoys fishing. She wants teenage girls to read this book, and she would like men who enjoy fishing to read it as well. Jane now decides what types of articles she could write based on the demographics of her characters.

Jane can write about crafting quilts. She can write about the things a mother and a teenaged daughter can do to improve their relationship. She is very capable at fishing, and can write about husbands and wives on the lakes of Maine. All of these things are mentioned in her book, and this will help present her as an expert in things that will sell this book to publishers.

Keeping these three specific topics in mind, Jane now crafts query letters that she can send to target editors. She explains in one sentence who she is, and the intent of her article in another. In a third, she states why she is an expert in the field, and in a fourth, who the audience is. In the next paragraph, the topic is discussed in direct relation to the periodical she wants to approach. She further discusses the content of the article in less than five sentences. She closes her query with a comment that she is submitting the same article to other periodicals. She also lets the editor know if the articles have appeared in other places. She thanks the editor for her time, and closes the query as professionally as possible, with her full title, address, and email information.

How did she come up with the periodicals in the first place? Jane went to her local library, and directly to the periodicals section. It is here she can verify which editors are currently listed in the mastheads of magazines that present the topics of crafting, teen-age life, and fishing. She also has kept up with her daily subscription to the Publishers' Lunch. Jane invested a small fee, and added the Writer's Market to her weekly web visits. It's here she can learn about new periodicals, and changes in editorial staff of these, as well as in publishing houses. Doing these things gave her a list of twenty-three publications which she feels will present her words well.

Jane took one more step which writers tend to overlook. She contacted her local visitors bureau and chambers of commerce, and learned about meetings and conventions that were scheduled. She found out that there are seven fish and game societies in the region, and that fifteen quilting organizations have made her hometown their central location. Taking a chance, she called the contacts listed, and asked if she could appear as a public speaker at events. As she completed her time as panelist, and keynote speaker, she collected the letters from the organizations. Comments such as "One of the funniest women fishing today.." were added to her press kit. Organizational commentaries do much to add to a writer's credibility and credentials. Out of the twenty-three queries written, Jane was asked to write three articles. The articles published, now become a great introduction to the agents and book publishers she wants to approach about her novel. She can now write, "...as I discussed Field and Stream's June issue's article, 'Mommy and Daddy Go Fishin' '". This gives her some clout.

I've put together some links for you to use when researching which places to look into when seeking to gain some status as an author. Remember, if you are a fiction writer, you will need to have a book DONE before publishers or agents will even look at your work. This gives you the ability to seek out publishing opportunities to appeal to the demographic of your book prior to publishing. For non-fiction writers, you're already working on topic specific materials, and you should be clearly targeting periodicals prior to and during the manuscript writing process.

Writer's Digest Marketplace, (pay service) [WritersMarket.com](http://WritersMarket.com)

Publishers Marketplace <http://www.publishersmarketplace.com/>

Become a freelance writer

<http://wwfw.c.topica.com/maadNamabiXSIciButfeafpMBT/>

The Writer's Life

<http://www.thewriterslife.com/>

LitLine

<http://www.litline.org/links/index.html>

BookPitch.com –

Your 24/7 Literary Convention - Pitch & Find Proposals. Get Connected.

<http://bookpitch.com/>

Post & Find Jobs.

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