

Flying Solo Contributor Guidelines

Updated June 2007

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Overview

About

Flying Solo is an online community which has been created for the fastest growing segment of business: the solo business owner. As well as speaking *to* the soloist community, Flying Solo aims to speak *for* the community. We provide an impressive array of free resources and advice to aspiring and actual soloists.

Audience

A survey of Flying Solo [newsletter](#) subscribers has revealed a fundamentally happy group of individuals who enjoy their work and cherish their freedom.

The majority (66%) work in a consultative role, selling their expertise for a fee. Most are active networkers, take professional development seriously and welcome access to experts.

76% work from a home office and are aged between 26-50 (52% of those falling into the 36-50 age range). Women outweigh men by 54% to 46%.

The survey showed our audience enjoy being challenged, are always on the lookout for new ideas to grow their business and readily embrace strategies to work smarter.

Application process FAQs

When can I apply?

Applications from potential contributors are invited throughout the year and are considered on a quarterly basis.

You can expect prompt acknowledgement of your application and once we have reviewed applications, we will get in touch to let you know how you got on.

When is the next review?

Early August 2007

What does the application consist of?

We ask potential contributors to send an article which complies with the following guidelines, along with outlines for two more story ideas. If we accept your submission, we will ask you to write up the remaining articles over an agreed period of time.

Can I write about anything I like?

Probably not. We know what our readers want and where gaps exist. Please read on for more information.

Topics of interest

New articles are posted on Flying Solo every Monday, Wednesday and Friday. All articles have a solo-focus/angle and fit into one of the following categories:

- **Starting Out:** articles directed to new or aspiring soloists.
- **Marketing:** advice on marketing, advertising, PR, sales strategies and techniques.
- **Networking:** advice on techniques, tips and making the most of networking opportunities.
- **Working Smarter:** tips and strategies covering the likes of: policies, procedures, time management, prioritising and innovative ways of working.
- **Solo Psyche:** how to do it 'your way', achieving balance, opinion pieces, commentary on the soloist's identity.
- **Technology:** articles on the basics of managing your computer, software reviews and expert Internet marketing advice.
- **Stay Balanced:** taking an holistic approach to soloism, this category espouses the benefits of looking after yourself by adequately balancing your work commitments with your personal needs.

However, to even better express what we're after from new contributors we have come up with the following, more specific subject areas. Those that are already well covered are greyed out, whereas those where new articles are invited are shown in black:

attracting new business	media
branding	motivation
business exchange	networking
business growth	office organisation
business management skills	marketing
business performance	online marketing
business planning	outsourcing
business practices	pitch strategies
business psychology	PR
business values	presentation skills
career choice	pricing strategies
communication skills	problem solving skills
communication skills	professional development
confidence	sales strategies
copyright	social responsibility
customer relationship management	start up
customer service	stress management
decision making	surveys
email management	sustainability
email newsletter	tax advice
exit strategies	time management
financial management	websites

funding and grants	work and family
goal setting	work life balance
health	work styles
innovation	working alone
IT	working from home

What if what I want to write about is greyed out?

This suggests the area is well covered. However, this does change over time so you can [request a reminder](#) from us to check the list again after the next quarterly review. However, before you get in touch we encourage you to read through the remainder of the guidelines.

What if my area of expertise isn't on the list at all?

If you have an area of expertise you consider is solo relevant, but it is not covered by our current content or highlighted on the list, please contact [us](#). However, we encourage you to read through the remainder of the guidelines beforehand.

Why is the procedure is so thorough?

Because of the number of contributor applications we attract and the number of articles (300+) already on our site, we are able to be very specific about what we're after. Our discriminating approach also ensures successful applicants enjoy the benefits of a long-term relationship with Flying Solo. For example:

- The more articles you have published, the more times your [profile](#) is viewed by visitors.
- If you supply articles on an ongoing basis, you can expect stronger client leads and enjoy an enhanced expert presence.
- If you become a regular contributor, we will arrange to get your profile page optimised by our search engine specialist. You can expect a higher Google ranking as a result.

From *Flying Solo's* perspective;

- The application process enables us to more effectively gauge the extent to which you can help our audience of solo business owners.
- We can publish articles on a wider range of topics and avoid covering repetitive themes.
- Our demanding process encourages contributors who are committed to supplying on-going, quality content which in turn ensures loyalty from our growing readership.

While we want contributors who can send us articles *regularly*, this does not mean we expect to hear from them *frequently*. The exact level of commitment is discussed with each individual upon acceptance.

Article style guide

Word count

We prefer for articles to be between 350 to 650 words per piece. Occasionally, longer articles are published by pre-arrangement with the Editor.

Style

While the brevity of the articles suits a to-the-point style, we also want to maintain an affable, upbeat tone. Furthermore, it's important that contributors share a similar outlook and philosophy to the team at Flying Solo.

House format

All spelling is Australian-English.

Write numbers one to nine as words and numbers 10 and above as numerals.

The word **email** should be lower case and contain no hyphen.

Where possible, avoid mentioning specific companies or organisations in your article.

Most soloists do not run a company, rather they run a **business**.

If you want to emphasise a phrase or word, please use italics rather than underlining. This is because readers assume underlined text is hyperlinked.

What we look for

All successful applicants have the following in common:

- Their experience is interesting or relevant to solo business owners.
- Their articles present sufficient 'stand alone' information to the reader.
- They are able to supply articles that meet the above criteria on an ongoing basis.

It is useful, then, for you to consider your ability on these fronts. If you doubt any of them, it's highly likely we'll feel the same!

This may seem strict, but we know raising the bar is necessary to maintain our high quality of content and avoid wasting time - yours and ours. Read on for more tips on how to get our attention.

What we avoid

Articles that are not "solo" specific

We will reject articles which discuss staff management issues or any other topics which are irrelevant to our audience.

Articles that are too advertorial in style

For example, a copywriter would have little chance of getting *Why you need a copywriter* or *What a copywriter can do for your business* published. However, their piece on *The essentials of good writing* is more likely to get our attention. Rather than blatantly plug the copywriter's offering, it employs the 'attraction' marketing principle, i.e. their expertise is evident, but not obtrusive.

Articles that are too similar to existing topics

This is discussed in detail on the [previous page](#).

Articles that require too much editing

Our expectation is for articles submitted to be as close to Flying Solo 'ready' as possible. Any submissions requiring significant editing will not be considered. This could include overly long articles, or previously published/written items which require excessive modifications. Previously published/written items are fine, provided that, prior to submission, the author has made the necessary edits in accordance with these guidelines.

Interaction with readers

Each article has a 'comments' facility attached to it and we definitely favour pieces that generate discussion. The site's most popular contributors succeed in prompting conversation with the reader, so keep this in mind when writing your article.

Submission process

What we require

We ask potential contributors to supply an article which complies with these guidelines, along with outlines for two more story ideas. If we accept your submission, we will ask you to write up the remaining articles over an agreed period of time.

Editing

We reserve the right to reject any contribution that does not meet the site's editorial standards, as determined by us.

Generally we steer clear of articles that require a lot of reworking. With articles requiring minor edits we reserve the right to make the necessary changes and in most cases, due to time efficiency, will do so without consultation. Our editing is not to impose a voice, rather it is to fix up typos, sharpen phrases (including headlines) or delete/amend unnecessary or excessive text.

Copyright

You retain full copyright for published work - what you do with it outside of Flying Solo is your choice entirely. If one of your articles is to appear elsewhere at your instigation, a link to Flying Solo is encouraged, but not required. Suggested wording for such a link is:

This article first appeared in the online magazine for solo business owners, www.flyingsolo.com.au

If you'd prefer to, you can link to www.flyingsolo.org instead.

Contributors' Agreement

Once your article has been accepted for publication, we will send you two documents:

1. Contributors' Agreement, detailing the terms of publication and
2. Contributor Profile form, which captures the details which end up on our website.

Once you have confirmed your acceptance of the terms of the Contributors' Agreement, and you have returned (and we are happy with) your profile, we will advise you of a likely publication window for your article.

Become a contributor form

When your article and ideas are ready, please get in touch with us via [this form](#). Please note we will *only* consider one article and two ideas at this point. Subsequent submissions of the form will be ignored.

Those whose expertise is not called for at this time can contact us [here](#).

We look forward to hearing from you!

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