

InFlight Magazines

You literally can send your writing higher—say a cruising altitude of thirty-thousand feet—with in-flight magazines from the world’s airlines.

Every top carrier has a magazine to entertain and inform its passengers. These magazines often lead their contributors to mainstream writing awards, such as the Lowell Thomas Award for travel writing and the *Folio*: Editorial Excellence Awards. Respect for publications stuffed in next to the airsickness bag?

- ❖ **In Flight magazine the publication is not just a promotional tool for the airline.**
- ❖ **In Flight magazine is not investigative journalism, but we are experts on the needs and wants of the business traveler.**

If you’ve got an out-there idea, a unique voice, or a once-in-a-lifetime experience to relate, an in-flight magazine might be the home for it. In flight magazines often are regarded as some of the last general-interest magazines around. Many, but not all, of these publications include travel writing. Take a trip and write a story? Sounds easy, but it’s not. Randy Johnson, editor of United’s *Hemispheres*, explains that the magazine consistently hires a resident of an area—an insider—to write installments in the magazine’s prominent “Three Perfect Days” series. “We try to ‘let the world speak for itself,’ ” Johnson said. Unfortunately, in this market, a blanket query isn’t going to work because each of these magazines works to distinguish itself. The airlines are distinct as well. Their customers differ depending on flightschedules, ticket prices, and the locations of airport hubs, and they often serve a unique combination of cities. The magazines, ultimately, are a reflection of these corporations, and that’s a sensitivity for writers to keep in mind.

Ethnic Magazines

The ethnic magazine market is coming of age. “There’s a greater appreciation for ethnic cultures as something more than just a curiosity,” said managing editor Daniel Gibson of *Native Peoples Magazine*. “People are realizing there’s a lot of value and richness there.”

Vice President of Editorial Nigel Killikelly of *Upscale Magazine* points to is a growing number of African-American publications.

Publishers of ethnic magazines are dedicated niche marketers, but focusing on a specific race, culture, or nationality isn’t always enough. *Asian Pages*, whose readers encompass twenty different Asian groups, is one of many publications finding it necessary to micro-focus on divisions within its larger target audience. Also, *Vista Magazine*, with predominantly Hispanic readers, must keep in mind 2000 census figures showing a growing number of Hispanics who come from Central and South America. According to the census, Hispanics not from Cuba, Puerto Rico, or Mexico jumped from five million in 1990 to ten million in 2000. Editors across the board welcome submissions from writers outside their ethnic sphere, but you must be prepared to capture the voice, flavor, and spirit of the magazine’s audience.

“It’s important that writers be sensitive to Native issues,” said Gibson, “and have some familiarity with Indian culture and history.”

If you can take a broad, mainstream issue and show how it applies to a specific ethnic market, you’re on the right track.

Readers look for tightly targeted ethnic material that touches them on a human level, so emotional content in an article or story can help wring a sale out of an editor.

In the case of Weiberg, “If it draws a tear to my eye, it’s going to get my readers.”

Most ethnic magazines depend heavily on outside contributions. *Upscale Magazine*, more than 90 percent freelance-written, snaps up an estimated 315 freelance articles a year.

Some, such as *Native Peoples* and *German Life*, have extensive guidelines for would-be contributors.

Studying at least three of the latest issues is particularly important with ethnic publications because they evolve rapidly with the market.

Ethnic magazines are here to stay and primed for growth. Joshua Rolnick, managing editor at *Moment*, said, “There’s certainly a strong market for our type of publication.”