

Party Plan



MAGAZINE

Article Submission: General and Formatting Guidelines FOR PARTY PLAN REPRESENTATIVES



Every submission guideline must be adhered to unless you receive different instructions. We will decline any submission that violates these guidelines. At our sole discretion, serious violations (such as plagiarism) may result in being banned from further submission to our magazine. ♦

What To Do

SUBMIT ORIGINAL CONTENT

We love content that you create especially for *Party Plan Magazine*. You can also submit content you have published elsewhere, as long as the byline matches your name and you own the copyright. However, republished content is not eligible. In all cases, submissions must be content you originally created.

BE YOURSELF: AUTHENTIC & UNIQUE

It should be clear that the writing is YOURS, and that no one else in the world could have created it. Submit content on topics about which you are passionate and knowledgeable about. Please speak in first-person voice when appropriate, and make clear in the content how your personal experiences backup your statements and topic. Offer unique insight that sets you apart from other writing on the web or in print.

BE RELEVANT & INFORMATIVE

If you were a reader looking for information on this topic, what would you need to be informed and thrilled with the resource you chose? Make sure that each piece of content is written to thoroughly inform and/or delight the intended audience.

BE CONCISE

Attention spans are short. The article length will be specified when you have been accepted as a contributor. There are many online word count tools to help you. And if you write using Word, it has an automatic word/character counter. Put your article together by starting with a few key points and expanding upon them, using only as many words as are necessary to convey essential information.



Keep formatting to a minimum, our Creative Director will take care of that. If you have too much to say, break your article into specific chunks that can stand alone as useful articles.

PROOFREAD

Please use correct grammar, structure, spelling, and punctuation; make sure your article is copy ready before submitting for publication. Read **Formatting Text** for more information.



Party Plan Magazine, its editors and employees, reserve the right to edit for content, grammar, punctuation and length without recourse from the submitter. The submitter will be emailed a copy of the edited version for approval before publication.

What To Do (cont.)

WRITE STRONG HEADLINES

A strong headline summarizes your content concisely, and begins with the critically important information that a reader will use to choose your article from among the list of articles on the index page. Let them know why they should view your story, and do it in the first 65 characters. Avoid clever headlines that hint at a topic without explaining it – humor can be a great asset, but put it in the body of the article.

ALWAYS CITE YOUR SOURCES

Information you use in your article that is neither common knowledge nor clearly established as something you've personally experienced must be taken from a credible, cited source. In the text, immediately indicate the source of any specific facts and quotes in a format that allows any reader to easily find each source. Acceptable authorities include government agencies, scientific studies, established online or print publications, and articles by credentialed professionals. Do not use Wikipedia articles or other forms of user-generated content as authoritative sources.

REPRESENT YOURSELF ACCURATELY

Describe yourself to third parties (e.g., interviewees, sources, and fans) as "a freelance writer submitting content for possible publication in *Party Plan Magazine*." If sources have questions about our magazine, please feel free to contact us for help answering them.

CC US IF YOU'RE ASKED FOR PRIVILEGED ACCESS

If you'll be using your publishing history as a *Party Plan Magazine* contributor to request any kind of press credential or event access, you must CC your request to info@partyplanmagazine.com on all correspondence with publicists or other credentialing authorities. No need to do this if you're only using your own name, but if you'll be mentioning *Party Plan Magazine* in your credentialing conversations, we need to be in the loop.

FOLLOW EDITORIAL GUIDELINES

Editors' specific instructions can override any of the above. If you receive a direct instruction from an editor that seems to conflict with the General Submission Guidelines, the editor's instructions take priority. Email us if you need clarification.

PROVIDE FULL DISCLOSURE

When you submit a review or commentary, you must disclose any special relationship or material connection to your subject. (For example, if the business you're discussing is owned by your brother-in-law, disclose it. If you received free tickets to a movie you're reviewing, disclose it. When in doubt, disclose.) Make the disclosure in the body of your content. *In all cases, disclosure is not only our guideline, it's the law.*

What are my responsibilities for publishing a review of a product, service, or event under the new Guidelines?

On December 1, 2009, the new "Guides Concerning the Use of Endorsements and Testimonials in Advertising" issued by the Federal Trade Commission took effect. These FTC guidelines specifically address online content but may also affect contributors to our magazine who review any companies, products or services, including but not limited to consumer products, movies, restaurants, and hotels. The most important change to these guidelines is the mandatory disclosure of any relationship the contributor may have to the company, manufacturer, producer, or marketing firm promoting the product or service. **For example:**

- ◆ If you received a product or service for free – such as movie tickets or a subscription to an online music service – and you write a review of that product or service, you must disclose that fact within your review.
- ◆ If you are an employee of the marketing firm promoting the product or company that makes it, you must disclose that.
- ◆ If you have any financial relationship or arrangement with the marketing firm, manufacturer, or other entity related to the product or service in the review, you must disclose it.

PLEASE NOTE

*You personally (and not Party Plan Magazine) are responsible for making this disclosure. Please include your disclosure at the time of article submission. For more information on these FTC guidelines, visit the **FTC website**.*

What Not To Do

DON'T REHASH

You must provide a fresh and unique angle on every story. Do not reword or rehash information from other sources and call it your own. This rule applies even when you cite your sources. If you're not creating a unique and original piece of content, please don't submit to us. Sources should inform your content, and not be interspersed between snippets of your own content to form the majority of your content.

DON'T GENERALIZE

Content that covers an overly broad topic tends to be dull and unsatisfying. Your topics should be highly specific (ex: "Frugal Summer Bohemian Fashion Tips" over "Fashion Tips").

DO NOT COMMENT ON OR REVIEW OUR PUBLICATION

Don't go on about about *Party Plan Magazine* or other contributors. We love hearing what you think of *Party Plan Magazine*, but please refrain from using this publishing platform to review or comment on *Party Plan Magazine* or any *Party Plan Magazine* or Party Plan Companies site or services. Contact us with feedback, including complaints, suggestions, and compliments.

DON'T FAKE IT

Don't choose a topic merely because it's trending. Don't write about something unless you are uniquely qualified to address the topic. Your unique knowledge, experience, and passion should be evident in every piece of content you create. If you don't have something valuable, compelling, and personal to add, avoid the subject.

DON'T OVER-PROMOTE

We welcome your enthusiasm for the things you do and love, but if your article reads more like an advertisement or press release than thoughtful insight, it's not for us. And although our magazine is a great way to find an audience for your expertise and build your personal brand, we don't publish content that is primarily intended to sell something. Never accept payment from a third party to publish in *Party Plan Magazine*.

DON'T GO 'THERE'

Here are examples of content we won't publish or include a link to: Anything pornographic, threatening, obscene, defamatory, or abusive; hate speech; anything that encourages illegal or discriminatory conduct; anything containing potentially offensive generalizations about a group of people; anything that promotes gambling; anything that infringes on the rights of a third party; anything that constitutes or encourages bullying.

This list is not exhaustive. We recognize that many of these descriptors are necessarily subjective, but in order to offer great content that's safe for all our readers, we will apply these standards at our sole discretion, as necessary.

Formatting Text

- ◆ Use double-spacing between paragraphs.
- ◆ Use line breaks only at the end of paragraphs.
- ◆ All text should be left-justified.
- ◆ Limit use of bold and italicized words to section headers or highlighting of key points. Links should be spelled out as this is a print magazine.
- ◆ Avoid excessive capitalization. In general, only proper nouns, the first letter of each sentence, and acronyms should be capitalized. TEXT WRITTEN IN ALL CAPS LIKE THIS is considered shouting – use your inside voice.
- ◆ All images received with an article must be relevant to the content, and abide by all of the image guidelines. Submitted images are not necessarily reviewed by staff before publication as to use authority. It is solely your responsibility to ensure you have all necessary rights to publish any image in *Party Plan Magazine* pursuant to our guidelines. Blurry or irrelevant images (including author portraits) or images from unapproved sources may be rejected without notification. Please include written documentation that you have authority to use any image submitted to us.