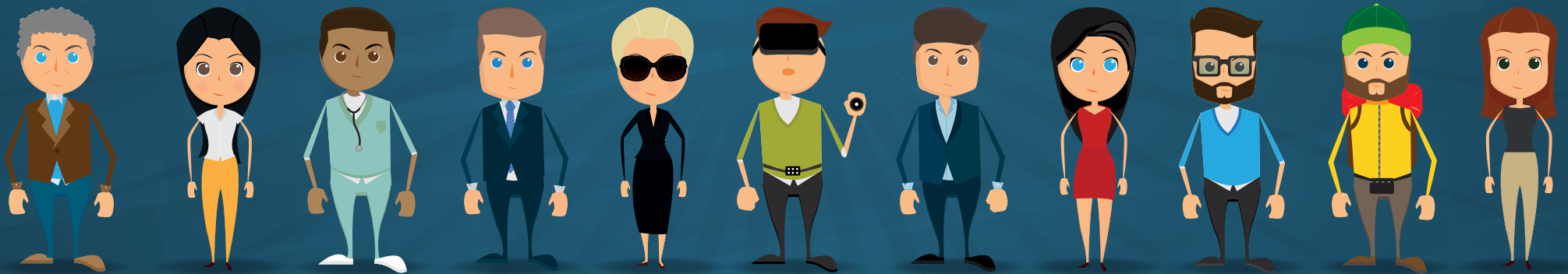


Guide to *Editor Personas*



Connecting with an editor can be a daunting task, but this kind of networking is vital to establishing long-term, productive PR relationships. In fact, **64% of publishers** think that taking the time to get to know them before pitching is one of the most important things media relations professionals can do.



Methodology

BuzzStream and Fractl have studied editors from 11 verticals to learn more about the personalities you will likely face in real-world pitching scenarios. In reviewing their recent articles, LinkedIn profiles, Google+ profiles, and publisher bios, we found that five variables reveal the most about publisher personas:



► Education



► Work history



► Target audience



► Scope of work



► Need for visual assets

Education

Understanding an editor's educational background can be helpful in determining the right pitch angle. Editors usually fall in one of two categories: those who have studied in the field they cover and those who have studied to be writers. There are key differences between an MBA who takes up writing and a writer who finds a niche in business. Trained writers can cover almost any topic but may struggle with highly complex issues such as nutritional science or chemical engineering. Contrastingly, a constitutional law professor turned contributor may only handle a narrow range of content.

***Your approach:** It's helpful to understand the background of the person you will pitch in order to determine exactly how complex your approach should be. Use LinkedIn and bio pages on the editor's publication or blog to learn more about his or her education history, and pitch accordingly.*



Work History

Much like educational background, work history can tell you quite a bit about an editor. Accomplished editors with a long history of successful, high-level work have established relationships with content sources and are highly sought after for their coverage. Such editors have crowded inboxes, and you may find them difficult to engage on the first pitch. Conversely, a less experienced editor may receive fewer pitches and be more receptive to new contacts. Some editors change jobs often, sometimes with tenures of six months or less at any specific publication. (This is particularly true in the entertainment vertical.) Those with comparatively stable, long-term work histories will have a more consistent beat, which may give you more insights in tuning your pitch.

Your approach: *LinkedIn and bio pages are the best references for work history. Learn whether the editor has been with his or her publisher for three weeks or three years, and you'll find more opportunities to engage them in a personally relevant way..*



Target Audience

Target audiences vary considerably among verticals, publications, and even editors. One thing that remains consistent, however, is that content is always tailored to meet the needs of the readers. In a recent survey, 83% of publishers told us that pageviews are crucial measurements for their success, and 54% said social shares are important. If you can pitch content that will earn lots of views and shares for the editor's publication, you'll win more placements both now and in the future.

***Your approach:** Most sites make it easy to review the body of work by a particular content writer; find an article by that person and click on the author's name to see all recent work. Take time to read what that writer has produced. Tone, vernacular, and statistical content all provide insight into the intended audience.*



Scope of Work

Some writers are generalists, able to cover almost any topic. Others are highly specialized and typically provide deep analysis in their areas of expertise. If you pitch content outside of the normal scope of an editor's work, you may be passed over. Persistent pitches outside of the editor's comfort zone can get you blacklisted. That being said, a well-crafted pitch can garner attention and placements even if the content is not within the editor's immediate coverage area.

"IT'S ALWAYS GOOD TO KNOW WHY THE NEWS IS IMPORTANT - IF IT'S NOT MY MAIN AREA OF COVERAGE, I COULD OVERLOOK GROUNDBREAKING NEWS AND JUST NOT KNOW IT. AT THE SAME TIME, IT'S GOOD NOT TO OVERSELL IT WITH WORDS LIKE 'GROUNDBREAKING' WHEN IT'S REALLY NOT."

Mashable

Your approach: Take time to familiarize yourself with an editor's body of work prior to crafting your pitch. Understanding whether his or her approach is broad or specific will tell you how familiar the person may be with your subject. Either appeal to the editor's authority or let him or her know that you have new and relevant data.



Need for Visual Assets

Every publication has different needs when it comes to the assets that resonate with its audience. Infographics are in demand in the health vertical, but high-quality photos are a necessity for food publications. 65% of publishers are eager for you to include some kind of visualization with your pitch; the most successful pitches will offer assets that will earn the highest engagement and social traction for the vertical.

***Your approach:** Use our **personas outline** for broad suggestions by vertical, then look more closely at the content on your target contact's site. Offer assets that match those in the most popular posts. This step is even easier when you use [BuzzSumo.com](https://buzzsumo.com) in your analysis.*



More Pitching Resources

Understanding the persona of your target contact before you pitch is the first step in outstanding media relations. Make the most of these insights by learning more about the best practices that will ensure you establish productive, long-term relationships with top-tier publishers; how to earn the most attention in a publisher's inbox; and the content and assets that 500+ publishers told us they really want:

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- **Media Relations Guide to Etiquette**
 - **21 Tips for Pitching Publishers**
 - **Secure High-Authority Press**