

How To Pitch: *Angeleno*

With room in its FOB section, this luxury pub prizes pitches aimed at L.A.'s most discerning denizens

By Kate Parham – February 10, 2011



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The information in this article is current and accurate

Circulation: Rate base is 75,000, with an estimated readership of 545,000.

Frequency: Monthly

Special issues: "Best of the City," January; "Health and Beauty," February; "Spring Fashion," and "Home Design," March; "Men's Issue," April; "Spring/Summer Travel Special," May; "The Annual Nightlife Issue," June; "The Annual Restaurant Issue/Collector's Edition," July; "Real Estate Issue," August; "Fall Fashion," September; "Fall/Winter Travel Special," October; "The Fantasy/Jewelry Issue," November; "Culture & Power," December. (Calendar is subject to change.)

Background: *Angeleno* is an 11-year-old luxury lifestyle magazine, the second book launched by publisher Modern Luxury. Other titles in the Modern Luxury family include *CS*, *Atlantan*, *DC*, *Miami*, *Houston*, *Dallas*, *Hawai'i*, *San Francisco*, *Front Desk*, *Riviera OC*, *Riviera San Diego*, plus a number of interiors and brides publications. In September 2010, Modern Luxury was purchased by Cumulus Media, a large radio station operator based out of Atlanta. As of yet, there have been no large-scale changes to the editorial content. As a controlled distribution magazine, *Angeleno* is mailed to target homes every month, in addition to luxury hotels, events and digital readers. The magazine is also sold on the newsstand.

"*Angeleno*'s focus hasn't changed since its inception," says acting editor-in-chief Lisa Sweetingham.

"Although, in terms of editorial direction, it's steadily grown more journalistically ambitious over time, with occasional longer-form investigative pieces, oral histories, and the like."

Because *Angeleno* targets a luxury market consumer, the magazine tends to skew older and wealthier in terms of readership. Sweetingham characterizes readers as affluent Los Angeles residents who are interested in what the city has to offer in their hours away from the office. "Essentially, we cover the most interesting people, places and things in the city, but with a highly curated perspective."

"Our focus is on the intersection of what's upscale and luxurious with what's young, hip and cool," says Sweetingham. "It's such a disparate city and Angelenos can tend to stay so much in their own neighborhoods, that we work hard to create excitement about what's going on in L.A. and lure them to be more and more adventurous and embrace the city."

What to pitch: Like many magazines, the front-of-book section is most pitchable. The "Now!" section, which features shorter items (typically 100-300 words) covers everything new and trendy, while the "Radar" section features mostly one to three-page stories (typically 400-1,800 words). Think articles that would work for a Los Angeles version of *Vanity Fair* or *W*. The "Look Who's Talking" section, a back-page profile on the "It" guy or girl you should know about, is also open to freelancers and typically ties into the month's theme.

"Often, the problem is that writers don't think to the next level," says Sweetingham. "We want to know

why this idea, right now? Is there a bigger trend to report here?" She says *Angeleno* also gets pitches for ideas that are really stale, something covered in last year's beauty issue or something that was covered in the *L.A. Times* magazine last week. Do your research and become familiar with the magazine, and don't just pitch a story about a new clothing boutique opening in Brentwood. Sweetingham wants to know: What makes it special? Who is the owner and what's her back story? What designers' lines will the store carry? Are the clothes elegant and at the taste level of *Angeleno* readers?

While stories don't have to have an obvious luxury hook, the luxury angle must exist in some form. A profile about a manicurist to the stars is not for *Angeleno*, but a profile about an L.A.-based musician who straddles the world of fine art, just completed a performance piece at the Museum of Contemporary Art AND has an album dropping in three months is exactly what the magazine is looking for. To land the assignment, convince editors you have the access to make the story something *Angeleno* readers can't find elsewhere.

"We're always happy to get pitches, but for the most part we generate ideas in-house and they get assigned to freelancers who already know our style and tone because they've written for us before," says Sweetingham. "The biggest challenge for a freelancer is getting the tone right. *Angeleno* readers are savvy and have access to the best things, places and people the city offers. We have to go deeper to reveal the 'insider-ly' info on the people, things and places they didn't know about -- and should."

What not to pitch: "Every section is open, but it's extremely unlikely, for instance, that we would assign a celebrity profile or 'Star' page, which are planned months in advance in coordination with film release dates, based on a pitch," says Sweetingham. "We typically coordinate these in-house."

Online opportunities: "At the moment, we're not taking pitches for freelance online content. That might change in the future," says online executive producer Jade Chang.

Percentage freelance-written content: *Angeleno* has a very good relationship with freelancers. About 50 percent or more of the magazine is freelance written, although it really depends on the issue, says Sweetingham.

Percentage of freelance submissions accepted: About 10 percent

Etiquette: Email is best and including clips is appreciated. "Sample images to accompany the story are very helpful -- not photos that you have to take -- just screen grabs of the subject or idea so that we can get a sense of how we might illustrate the story. If we are interested we will be in touch," says Sweetingham.

Lead-time: About two to three months

Pay rate: Varies, but other freelancers report around \$1/word

Payment schedule: 30 days

Kill fee: 50 percent

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Direct all pitches to:

Fashion and beauty: Erin Magner, EMAGNER at MODERNLUXURY dot COM

News, culture, nightlife, music and general pitches: Gary Baum, GBAUM at MODERNLUXURY dot COM

Entertainment and general pitches: Lisa Sweetingham, LSWEETINGHAM at MODERNLUXURY dot COM

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