

WRITING FOR FAME AND PROFIT

Questions, facts and misunderstandings



- “Expert columnist” for PoliceOne.com

A FEW MYTHS...



**GRAMMAR DOESN'T
MATTER**





**NO ONE CHECKS
CREDENTIALS**



HOW TO DESTROY YOUR CREDIBILITY

- Diploma mill college degrees
 - Faked experience
 - False “expertise”
 - Contrived associations
-

**“DEADLINES ARE
FLEXIBLE.”**



**“I WRITE.
PICTURES ARE
SOMEONE ELSE’S
PROBLEM.”**



GRAPHICS ISSUES

RESOLUTION

- Print: 300 dots per inch (dpi) minimum
 - Web: 96 dpi
 - File size is an indicator
 - Send max resolution photos when possible
 - Services like Dropbox and SkyDrive may help
-

ASPECT RATIO

A white-outlined rectangle representing a landscape aspect ratio, which is wider than it is tall.

Landscape

A white-outlined rectangle representing a portrait aspect ratio, which is taller than it is wide.

Portrait

CROPPING

- Shape can be more important than content
 - Leave the editor lots of room
-

CREDITS AND CAPTIONS

- Provide photographer information with every image
 - Even if you took it
 - Write a caption for every photo
 - Key credits and captions to file names
 - When in doubt, get a model release
-

PHOTO RIGHTS

- Images aren't public domain just because they're on the internet





Shepard Fairey

PHOTO RIGHTS

- Responsibility for vetting is yours
- Be certain of permissions with vendor photos
- Be cautious if an agency is identifiable

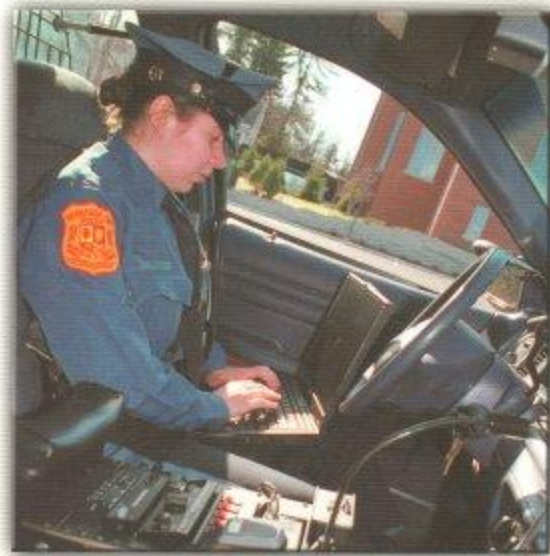
STOCK PHOTOS

- Not usually suited for police pubs
- [iStockPhoto.com](https://www.istockphoto.com)
- Consider creating your own

**“I’D RATHER BE
IN PRINT.”**



Online Resource Guide for Law Enforcement



Tim Dees

**WHAT DO I
WRITE ABOUT?**



TOPICS

- Read the magazine or website
 - Find something they don't have
 - Or something you could do better
-

“POETRY”



UNDERSTANDING PUBLISHING

- Editors pay attention to content
 - Publishers pay attention to ads
 - That's where the money comes from
 - Editorial vs. Advertising
-

WRITING OUT OF YOUR HEAD

BREAKING IN

- Be prepared to work for free
 - ILEETA publications
 - Department newsletters
 - State police magazines
 - Association magazines
 - Blogging
-

BREAKING IN

- Presenting at conferences
 - Submitting tips
 - Solicit feedback
 - Don't stop trying
 - Tom Clancy shopped *The Hunt for Red October* to over 24 publishers
-

FIND YOUR VOICE



**“I CAN MAKE A
LOT OF MONEY”**



- Per article or per word
 - On acceptance
 - On publication
 - Net 30
 - Net 90
 - Maybe never
-

FORMATTING

- Find out what the publication wants
 - “Writers Guidelines”
 - Footnotes and endnotes
 - Bold, underline and italics
 - Titles, subtitles and subheads
 - Don’t open with a subhead
 - Article summaries
-

BOOK REVIEWS


- Few publications print them
 - Fewer people read them
 - Consider mentioning them in a larger article
-

PRODUCT REVIEWS

- Takes a while to get established
 - You won't get to keep the good stuff
 - Attendance at trade shows
 - IACP
 - SHOT
 - Pick your topics carefully
-

PRODUCT REVIEWS

If you can't say
something nice...



COPYRIGHTS

- Usually belong to the publication
 - Exclusive for a year, shared thereafter
 - Most will allow you to republish
 - Anthologies and books
-

TAX BENEFITS: SO MANY THINGS BECOME DEDUCTIBLE

- Internet access
 - Computers
 - Software
 - Telephone
 - Office supplies
 - Postage
 - Home office deduction
 - Travel
 - Conferences
 - Trade shows
 - Interviews
-

SELF-PROMOTION

- If you don't, no one will
- Discussion forums
- Writing contests
 - “Award-winning author”

SELF-PROMOTION

- “Writer” business cards
- Website domain
 - Link it to your blog

BIO NOTES AND HEAD SHOTS

- Make up several canned bio notes
 - 25 words
 - 75 words
 - 150 words
 - 200 words
 - Have head shots available and pre-formatted
 - Take some time and do them right
-

CONTACT INFORMATION

- Consider a post office box
 - Establish a separate email account
 - Get a Google Voice number
 - Watch your comments on social media
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PUBLIC SAFETY WRITERS ASSOCIATION

- www.policewriter.com
- Mostly novelists and memoir writers
- Excellent, inexpensive conference in Las Vegas
- Networking
- Manuscript review



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