Professional Pest Manager | Editorial Guidelines 2018

Professional Pest Manager magazine is the premier pest industry publication, one that readers trust to delivery high quality, accurate information. As the publication develops, our vision is for pest managers (and the wider industry) to use *Professional Pest Manager* magazine, in print and digital forms, as their go-to source for pest control information.

As part of our ongoing improvement to achieve this goal, we have reviewed our editorial guidelines to give contributors a clear understanding of the types of article we are looking to publish in the magazine, both in terms of style and content.

Having more clearly defined guidelines enables contributors to write better quality articles, and ultimately improves the experience for our readers. An interesting, well-written article is more likely to engage and inform our readers, with a higher chance that the message of the article is remembered (obviously a key objective for advertisers).

If you are not a professional writer, please consider using a PR or communications agency to assist you, as writing is a skill and creating original content takes time. The modest cost of engaging a professional will, in most cases, save money and time for the advertiser, and deliver a better end result.

For advertisers submitting editorial, it is important to understand that it is meant to be editorial and not advertorial. Advertisers are paying for the advertising space and are given the opportunity to submit editorial for free, as long as it complies with magazine guidelines.

As always, please feel free to discuss your content ideas before you put finger to keyboard. Not only does this often save time and improve output, but it can prevent double ups of similar content appearing in the same issue, something the magazine and contributors obviously want to avoid.

The following guidelines set out to give contributors a better understanding about the kind of content we want to publish in *Professional Pest Manager*. In short, it's content that is factual, educational, engaging and sometimes entertaining!

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(i) TARGET YOUR WRITING

Write for our readers

Our readers are involved in the pest control industry, typically as pest managers, product manufacturers and industry professionals such as researchers and consultants. Pest managers form our core audience, so articles should be written with pest technicians, business owners and admin staff in mind.

Target your contributions to one of our sections

News
- Company news, staff appointments, business awards, etc. relating to pest management.
- Maximum length: 500 words, plus 1-2 high res photos.

Termites
- Articles furthering the understanding of termites and their control e.g. Termite behaviour, latest research findings, regulatory/guideline changes and latest practical/technical control developments. Typically, articles in this section are educational and should NOT be product specific. Significant products launches may be an exception.
- Maximum length: 1000 words, plus 2-3 high res photos.

Business Management
- Small business management e.g. accounting, training, recruitment, promotion, insurance, marketing.
- Maximum length: 600 words, plus 1 high res photo.

Insights
- 3 x seasonal features in each issue, usually related to specific pests or practices.
- Articles should focus on the specific Insight, and should be a product piece, a case study, or an educational article. The higher quality content marketing articles with greater educational content will tend to get placed towards the front of each Insight section.
- Maximum length: 600 words, plus 1-2 high res photos.

Product and Services News

- Newsworthy updates about products or services.

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- Articles should be informative and credible. Although this section has a clear product/services focus, it does not mean articles can contain 'salesy' marketing 'fluff'.
- Maximum length: 500 words, plus 1-2 high res photos.

(ii) WRITING STYLE

To catch the attention of readers, the headline needs to grab their attention and the opening sentence needs to provide the hook to engage the reader to continue.

Before starting to write, consider your objective for the article and the key message you want the reader to remember. For product-related articles it's generally not necessary to include every feature and benefit about the product – not only will readers not remember it all, it makes it difficult to write further articles about your product without repeating content. The more successful articles generally focus on one benefit (or two) in detail.

Editorial vs advertorial

PPM publishes contributions written in an editorial, not advertorial, style.

- An editorial is an article that presents factual information with neutral commentary; an advertorial is an overtly sales-focused piece.
- In driving up the quality of the magazine, PPM is looking for advertisers to provide quality content marketing articles.

"Content marketing is the process of creating high-quality, valuable content to attract, inform, and engage an audience, while also promoting the brand itself."

The aim of the magazine is for as much of this content to be 'native advertising'.

"…material in a publication which resembles the publication's (non-commercial) editorial content but is submitted by an advertiser and intended to promote the advertiser's product."

Or another way of putting it:

"…content that involves the creation and sharing of pest control material that does not explicitly promote a brand but is intended to stimulate interest in its products or services."

- Editorial is written in third person, e.g. 'The Company has announced its new product' rather than 'We are pleased to announce our new product'.
- Articles that are intentionally written in first person must have an author's name at the top of the article, giving their name, job title, and company name. This makes it clear to readers that the opinions expressed in the article belong to that writer, not to PPM magazine.
- For articles without a named author, commentary linking quoted speech needs to be neutral and factual (not opinions) as the magazine needs to be seen as independent.
- Avoid using rhetorical questions or addressing the reader directly as 'you' as this is an advertorial technique e.g. 'Did you know?', 'What could be better?' or 'Isn't it time you tried it?'

(iii) ARTICLE TYPES

There are 8 main article styles that contributors could consider as a starting point for their content.

News – industry updates, reporting on an event, key personnel appointments, etc. generally with one or two quotes from different sources.

Advisory – helpful advice for pest managers e.g. tips on best practice, how to use a particular piece of equipment, advice for running a successful business, etc.

Product/service – showcasing the benefits of a product or service by first explaining the problem, and then detailing how the product/service solves the issue.

Case study – an article detailing how a particular product or service was used by a pest manager to solve a real life, on-the-job pest problem. Includes testimonial content from the pest manager and their customer, if possible. A case study illustrates the benefits of a product or service by showing the reader, rather than telling them.

Compliance – explaining updates or changes to Australian Standards, Building Codes or general compliance, and how it applies to pest managers.

Launch – of a new product, service or app. Explains what it is, how it works, and how it is to be used.

Technical – an authored educational piece sharing research data and insights e.g. Dr Cameron Webb writing about mosquito behaviour.

Opinion piece – written by a key figure within a company, in first or third person, with the author's name at the top of the article. The article may or may not include quotes from a third person.

Basic article structure

Try to follow the 'rule of three' when it comes to structuring your article:

1. Introduce the main point of the article in the opening 1-2 paragraphs. Hook the reader in, making them curious to read the rest of the article.
2. In the main body of the article, make clear, concise statements, using testimonials, quoted speech, or outside examples to add weight to the point.
3. Summarise the key message in the closing paragraph.

(iv) RULES ABOUT CONTENT

Quotes and testimonials

- Including quotes from pest managers or other clients is an effective way of promoting your product/service, as readers like to hear about how a product/service is effective in a real-life context.
- Give the person's full name, the name of the company they represent, and their location (town/state).
- Providing a photo of the pest manager, ideally an action shot is a good option (and generally very appreciated by the pest manager).
- Write the quote in the person's own words – do not rewrite it, as readers can spot a 'polished' quote. Similarly, readers can detect quotes that are overly technical, using supplier jargon. Inauthentic quotes jeopardise the credibility of the testimonial.
- Quotes from senior figures within a company can be included if they give additional, insightful information about a product/subject.
- All quoted speech is subject to the **Product and performance claims** rules outlined below. No superlatives or outlandish product claims will be accepted just because they form part of quoted speech.
- If quoting a happy customer/client, avoid ending the quote with a cliché such as 'Product X is the only choice for me' or 'I will truly only use Product X ever again' as this overly advertorial and it should be obvious from the rest of the testimonial that they are a loyal supporter of the product.

Product and performance claims

- Do not use 'best in world' type claims, even in quotes. Exaggerated quotes will detract from your message and will be deleted.
- Generic superlatives – describing a product as the 'best', 'fastest-acting', or 'most effective' – need to be qualified. Why is it the best? What is meant by 'most effective'? Being clear improves the quality of your message.
- Comparative claims e.g. 'Product X is better than product Y', are strongly discouraged. Generally promoting a product's benefits in isolation (without giving a competitor airtime) delivers a stronger, more enduring marketing message. Any comparative claims will need supporting data.

Any claim relating to the efficacy performance of a product <u>must be backed up with research data</u>. It is not sufficient to refer to 'internal testing'.

- Any claim about a product's efficacy performance (speed, duration, completeness of control) that is not on the product label needs to be supported with appropriate evidence. Reference to peer-reviewed journals or presentation of data is required. Citing third party reports is also acceptable, but data would need to be presented in the article.
- Citing 'internal company testing' will not suffice unless data from the study is given in data tables/charts or discussed within the text.

Performance claim evidence can be presented in three ways:

- Describe the study and include a summary of its findings in the body of the article.
- Include a data table/chart and refer to it in the article e.g. 'see Figure 1'.
- Cite the research in the article giving the name of the researcher and year of the study e.g. '(Doggett, 2013)' and give the full details of the research as a footnote to the article e.g.:

  Further reading: Doggett, S. L. (2013). 'A Code of Practice for the Control of Bed Bug Infestations in Australia', 4th ed. Westmead Hospital, Sydney, Australia: Department of Medical Entomology and The Australian Environmental Pest Managers' Association.

Implied claims

If, in the opinion of the editor, the wording of the article *implies* a performance benefit without specifically stating the claim, it will still be treated as a performance claim. It will either need to be supported with evidence (as above) or the wording will need to be changed. A common example is when it is implied that a product can achieve total population/colony control (based on unspecified levels of insecticide transfer), without actually stating that the product 'achieves colony control'.

To imply that a product can achieve an effect that is not stated on the product label or supported with evidence could be viewed as misleading to readers. With the magazine aiming to provide a trusted source of information, it is important for readers to know that statements made are factual. It is of course allowed to discuss potential hypotheses, but these should be stated as such.

Safety and environmental claims

As a general guide, *Professional Pest Manager* magazine follows the Croplife Code of Conduct regarding claims in advertising, when considering editorial content.

Ensure that any claims made about a company product do not discredit another registered product on the grounds of safety, hazard or risk.

Any statement making a natural, organic, safe, harmless, non-toxic, non-poisonous, non-injurious or environmentally friendly claim needs to be suitably qualified.

As a general rule, such claims need to be somewhat unique to the product concerned and relevant to the message in the article (as all products are deemed to be 'safe' when used in accordance with the label). There is a growing trend for many of the articles submitted to have generic 'eco-friendly' claims. With such claims appearing in numerous articles, it generally does not add to the message and leads to needless repetition in the magazine. Such content may be edited out.

Photographs

Photographs are a key element in editorial (after all it's a magazine!). With a picture 'saying a thousand words', a well chosen image not only attracts readers to your article but can leave a lasting impression.

- All photographs/images should be emailed to the editor as attachments, please do not embed the photos in the article Word document.
- Photos should be high resolution jpegs, minimum size 1000x1000px, ideally 300 dpi, and at least 1MB.
- Please supply captions to go with the photos.

(v) EDITOR'S DECISION IS FINAL

These guidelines are designed to help contributors and avoid confusion, but cannot cover every eventuality. It is important to remember that advertisers pay for advertising and have the opportunity to submit an article for free, as long as it meets the magazine guidelines. In all cases, the editor's decision is final.

(vi) FORMATTING AND STYLE

Product names and trademarked phrases

- Write trademarked phrases with an initial capital letter e.g. 'Genuine transfer effect'. Trademark symbols should be left in the submitted article (so we know it's a trademark), but these will be edited out in the final version.
- The first instance of a product name should use the product's full name, as on the product label e.g. 'Advion Cockroach Gel'.
- The second instance of a product name can use a shortened version e.g. simply 'Advion'.

Titles and bylines

- Article titles should be short, six words or less, and as engaging as possible.
- Title should not include the name of supplier or a product name. (There may be the occasional exception, e.g. a product launch.)
- For author bylines (at the top of an article) the name is in bold, with job title and company name in italics e.g. '**Dr Cameron Webb**, *University of Sydney*'.

Bold and italics

- Within an article, only use italics for genus/species, which is always italicised e.g. '*Mastotermes darwiniensis*'.
- Only use bold for the first instance of someone's name in the text e.g. 'In his latest article, Dr **Cameron Webb** explains the behaviour....'. (Note that 'Dr' is not in bold.)
- Bold and italics should not be used at any other time.

Subheadings

- Subheadings can be used in longer articles as appropriate.

Bullet-pointed lists

- Bullet-pointed lists are used sparingly in the magazine, as it is not part of the preferred style. In many cases a bullet-pointed list can be written as a paragraph. When a bullet-pointed list does make sense, generally there will only be one list per article.

Capital letters

- Capital letters are not used, even for job titles.

Call to action/further details

- No contact info, websites or call to action permitted at the end of an article e.g. 'Call Dave Smith on 07 XXX for further information'. From the article it will be obvious which company they need to contact.
- Such information can be included in any advertising.
- Further information is only permitted if there is a very specific reason.

References

Articles that are written using a single research paper as the source should only reference that single paper, at the bottom of the article, as a footnote in this style:

Further reading: Doggett, S. L. (2013). 'A Code of Practice for the Control of Bed Bug Infestations in Australia', 4th ed. Westmead Hospital, Sydney, Australia: Department of Medical Entomology and The Australian Environmental Pest Managers Association.

If any other works are referenced in the article, they should appear in the body of the text in this style:

'…and research into insecticide exposure (Lilly *et al.*, 2016)…'

Note: no footnote is needed for these references in the text, we assume that all references will appear in the main paper, which *is* footnoted at the end of the article.