

SOHO Business Report Writer's Guidelines

Regional Reports

Each issue of *SOHO Business Report* has several 'Regional Reports' featuring entrepreneurs from different regions of Canada

Purpose:

- Help entrepreneurs succeed by learning through the experiences of others
- Demonstrate the challenging reality of surviving in business

Basics:

- 900-1,000 word articles
- minimum two photos of the entrepreneur, their product and/or workplace
 - high resolution (min 300 dpi) .jpg photo files

What a Regional Report is NOT:

- Flattery and promotion for the entrepreneur or a specific organization
 - This does not help our readers
- A list of successes/achievements
 - These are only important if they help our readers understand how to succeed

Who qualifies for a profile?

Since *SOHO Business Report* focuses on Small Office Home Office enterprises, almost every point raised in the profile should work towards starting, running and expanding a SOHO venture. **Before pursuing a particular profile**, be sure **it is a serious business that makes a regular income**. Generally, that means the company should be in full operation for at least a year, and that the owners earn not less than 50 per cent of their *personal* income from the enterprise.

SOHO Business Report talks to a national audience of 125,000 even though your focus is regional. That means reducing to **an absolute minimum** local and regional names of associated people, publications, shows, etc., because these mean little to most readers. If particularly significant to the article, you may prefer to identify things generically, for example, "a major regional craft show" or "the director of ..?.."

Questions a profile should answer

Each profile should cover the basic who, what, when, where and why. Here are some ideas on what your regional report should include:

- Why was the business started?
- How long did it take from planning to launching the business?
- What research was performed before the business launch?
- What strategies does it use to identify and fill its customer's needs?
- What competitive advantages has the business developed?
- What are the worst challenges/surprises/failures that have been overcome?

- Which successes were the hardest to achieve and why?
- How has the business strategy evolved?

Length and photos

Regional reports must end with the brief summary sections on “Lessons Learned” and “Tips for Success.”

Color photos or illustrations should normally accompany any article. We prefer action shots which highlight some aspect of your story. The photos should reflect the business the subject is in , a building contractor looking over blueprints, working at a jobsite, or sitting casually on a truck tailgate is far more interesting than a photo of someone sitting at a computer or talking on the telephone.

Your photos should be accompanied with any explanations, names, dates and titles that an average reader might need to understand the relevance of the photo (when in doubt, give more information) If someone else took the photos and a photo credit is required, include that information.

Please avoid sending in slides or actual photos. These images should be submitted with the story in the form of .jpg format images with a resolution of no less than 300 dpi.

Ending a regional report

Lessons Learned

At the end of your profile, write a brief section * about 100 words * that lists the major lessons your interviewees learned from building their business. Make it short and pithy. Bullets could work. This last section should also include advice or tips the interviewee would like to pass on to readers. This ending is included in your 1,000 word count.

Contact information

Follow the “Lessons Learned” with the e-mail and/or website address of your interviewees (telephone number if not available) for readers to connect with the subjects of the story. This section is not included in your 1,000 word count.

Your Bio

Then include your writer’s bio up to 75 words. This is your chance to promote yourself and your organization so keep it current. If you have contributed to *SOHO Business Report* before and have submitted a photo, we should have it on file. If you’re new, include a good, clear colour photo. This section is not included in your 1,000 word count.

Interviewee address

Complete your story with the street address of interviewees so we can send them a copy of the magazine containing their story. This section is not included in your 1,000 word count and is NOT printed in the magazine.

Style guide for SOHO Business Report

- . Style is CP, including “our” words, like “honour” and “harbour.”
- . Spell “centre,” with -re, not +er.
- . Numbers: one to nine in words; 10 and over in numerals.
- . Acronyms: no periods, except for geographical places, such as NATO and P.E.I.
- . Caps: use sparingly, mainly for proper names of people and places. For titles, capitalize only if the title precedes the name: John Doe, minister of finance or the minister said, but Finance Minister John Doe.
- . No apostrophes in numbers or plurals of acronyms: the 1990s (not 1990's) and MPs (not MP's, unless it is meant to be possessive).
- . The first time you identify an individual, use the first and last name (no Mr., Ms. etc); thereafter, by last name only.
- . One space only between a period and a new sentence.

Questions?

Contact our Production Manager, production@SOHOBusinessReport.com