

## Writing for a Living

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Songwriter, press secretary, literary agent, book publicist, magazine editor, reporter, researcher, television writer, advertising copywriter, lexicographer--these are all examples of careers for those who love the written word. The Internet has opened up new possibilities such as content editor, web editor and social media coordinator. Technical writing and grant writing are other specialties. Here are some **employer types** along with suggested job titles for which they may hire.

**Local Publishers** hire editors, reviewers, proofreaders, etc. and make it possible for people to make a living as authors. Local publishing houses include Ten Speed Press in Berkeley (now part of Crown Publishing House [www.crownpublishing.com/imprint/ten-speed-press](http://www.crownpublishing.com/imprint/ten-speed-press) ) and [www.nolo.com](http://www.nolo.com) in Berkeley. Others can be found at [www.yellowpages.com](http://www.yellowpages.com) by choosing "Publisher" as Employer Type and then selecting various nearby cities.

**Printed publications** also hire media analysts. The position requires knowledge of syndicated research studies. Supporting advertising sales growth with data is the focus. Conducting research, analyzing & interpreting data (including computer analyses) and writing sales-oriented summaries of research are the job functions. Professional associations hire editors, communication managers and editorial assistants to create and proofread their print and online materials for members.

**Newspapers** hire newspaper copy editors, reporters and editors. Try local newspapers such as the Mercury News ([www.mercurynews.com](http://www.mercurynews.com) ) and San Francisco Chronicle ([sfgate.com](http://sfgate.com)).

**Small magazine publishers** have copy editor positions that require familiarity with AP & Chicago styles, Quark & research/fact checking. They also pay freelancers for articles submitted. A sampling of the many local magazines would include Mother Jones ([www.motherjones.com](http://www.motherjones.com) ), San Francisco Magazine ([www.modernluxury.com](http://www.modernluxury.com) ), Diablo Magazine ([www.diablolmag.com](http://www.diablolmag.com) ), and Sunset Magazine ([www.sunset.com](http://www.sunset.com) ). Website editor is a crucial job functions and possible job title.

**Book publishers** hire new media editorial assistants to aid in the creation of online, CD-ROM and other electronic products in addition to editorial assistants in the print division. Pearson Education ([www.pearson.com](http://www.pearson.com)) is an educational publisher with a strong presence in San Francisco. Openings there include editorial assistants, college sales representatives, marcom specialist, and production coordinator

**The government and public policy research organizations** hire analysts who do research and analysis to develop policy proposals. An example of a government body is the State of California Office of Rate Payer Advocates ([www.cpuc.ca.gov](http://www.cpuc.ca.gov)). They hire Public Utility Regulatory Analysts. An example of a private company is Mason Tillman Associates Ltd. ([www.masonstillman.com](http://www.masonstillman.com)) in Oakland. Nonprofits such as the Public Health Institute ([www.phi.org](http://www.phi.org) ) hire Research Associates.

**Businesses** may hire content associates to help create product presentation on their website. They also hire communications/web associates, a job combining writing, public relations, consumer products marketing, desktop publishing and web design skills. Jobs in Public relations and Public affairs require background in technical aspects of print and audio/visual production as well as excellent writing & public speaking skills. **Companies** that do extensive internal training hire

instructional designers to create and test their training programs. This frequently involves Internet applications. Companies that have call centers may hire customer support content developers to write or rewrite the templates used by their customer service representatives for email and help desk customer support. Law firms and legal departments hire legal researchers and paralegals.

**Educational Institutions** hire instructional application administrators who develop multimedia and other training materials and support online training efforts. They may also work closely with library staff on catalogue functionality.

**Companies with learning products** such as Leapfrog ([www.leapfrog.com](http://www.leapfrog.com)) hire content specialists and editors to help develop their products.

**Nonprofits** hire for positions such as program analyst or grant writer. Check [www.opportunityknocks.org](http://www.opportunityknocks.org), [www.idealists.org](http://www.idealists.org) and [www.bridgespan.org](http://www.bridgespan.org)

**Advertising agencies** need media research assistants in their media planning group. This is a high data position developing customized flowcharts using advanced Excel & Access to tell a story about topics such as consumer demographics or lifestyle or TV ratings.

**Marketing communication services companies** need employees with skills in business writing, proofreading and researching using the telephone as well as online databases for marketing assistant positions. Such positions involve media research, order trafficking and sales support.

**Online publishers** are a new breed of employer service. Blurb [www.blurb.com](http://www.blurb.com) headquartered in San Francisco has software that allows people to create polished personalized books at very low cost. [Upwork.com](http://Upwork.com) is an **online staffing platform** for online writing and translation contingent work

**Software companies** and **manufacturers of technical products** hire technical writers who possess computer and media knowledge in addition to skill in using the English language as a communication and teaching tool. Go to [www.technicalwritingzone.com](http://www.technicalwritingzone.com) for useful information about the field and links to open positions listed by state.

**Self-employed writers** take on projects such as writing the stories of senior citizens, ghost-writing, researching for authors, penning their own stories and articles for submission to magazines, and writing their own books. Writers Market [www.writersmarket.com](http://www.writersmarket.com) is a freelance writer's resource for places to submit writing for possible publication. Their resources are accessed with a small subscription fee. [www.freelancewriting.com](http://www.freelancewriting.com) has links to writing jobs. Blogging can sometimes create an income stream. Resume writer is another self employment niche.

### **Useful Websites and Resources:**

[www.bayareastar.org](http://www.bayareastar.org) Society for television, advertising and radio posts open jobs & internships.

[www.craigslist.org](http://www.craigslist.org) lists numerous positions under "writing/editing" and also under "marketing/pr"

[www.journalismjobs.com](http://www.journalismjobs.com) is a job board for media professionals

[www.cnpa.com](http://www.cnpa.com) is the website for the California Newspaper Publishers Association

[www.pubpronetwork.org](http://www.pubpronetwork.org) is the website for the Publishing Professionals Network

[www.baipa.org](http://www.baipa.org) Bay Area Independent Publishers Association puts on an annual institute

[www.mediabistro.com](http://www.mediabistro.com) – Job board for writing, editor, and marketing jobs.

[www.careerbuilder.com](http://www.careerbuilder.com) – Put "writer" in search box to match to opportunities in Legal, Information Technology, Design, Media-Journalism, Marketing, Sales & Management.