

SUBMISSION GUIDELINES FOR AUTHORS

When you submit an article draft to the Building Performance Association (BPA), you assign BPA the First Serial Rights to publish your submitted materials and to reproduce that work in any and all media at any time in the future.

While we cannot offer authors payment per word, we offer the following compensation:

- Write 1 article/year and receive newsletter and social promotions on BPA channels.
- Write 6 articles/year and receive a FREE Professional-level BPA membership (\$150 value).
- Write 12 articles/year and receive a FREE National Conference registration (approx. \$1100 value)

You may republish the link to your article on a website with proper attribution to the applicable BPA media outlet(s) where your submitted materials first appeared (i.e., BPA Journal).

You may only submit your original work for consideration. You must have ownership and/or copyrights to any manuscripts, photos, figures, tables, videos, or audio materials you submit to us, and be able to legally Grant Rights to us for publication and distribution of that content in print and digital forms by providing us a signed copy of our Author Agreement along with your submission. If you are including or quoting references to other technical works or data from other authors to support your submitted materials, you must have permission from the author of that information, when applicable, and provide appropriate citations and/or links in your piece.

AUDIENCE

Our media outlets address a well-defined niche: members of BPA who work in high performance building design, construction, and retrofit. This includes home performance contractors, general contractors, HVAC contractors, energy auditors, program managers, weatherization crewmembers, energy officials, and manufacturers of energy-efficient products.

SUBMITTING TEXT AND IMAGE(S)

Please submit the text of your article in a Word document as an e-mail attachment.

We ask that authors provide high-quality, high-resolution images (photos, figures, charts, graphs, etc.) with their draft submissions. Any company names or trademarks appearing in photos will be removed. Please don't embed graphics into your text file. Send them as separate JPG or PNG files. Send tables in Word or Excel files. In most cases, you should be able to send us image files as email attachments. You can also transfer them directly by a file-sharing service such as Dropbox or Google Drive.

TYPES OF SUBMISSIONS FOR OUR PUBLICATION

Blogs – shorter pieces that provide readers with answers to specific questions or concerns; industry and policy news and updates

- Length: 300–800 words
- Artwork: 1–2 images

Trends – medium-length articles that cover hot industry topics; may explain a single advance or research result

- Length: 600–1,200 words
- Artwork: 2–4 pieces, including images, graphics, and figures

Features – in-depth articles that explain technical concepts or discuss topical concepts close-up

- Length: 1,200–2,000 words
- Artwork: 4–6 pieces, including images, graphics, and figures

TIPS FOR TURNING A PRESENTATION INTO AN ARTICLE

If you've already submitted a presentation for a BPA conference, you may wish to turn that into an article for our publication. Presentations conducted at events can be developed into great content. You've already got the information, so sharing it with the larger Journal audience can be exciting and worthwhile. Following are a few tips.

DETERMINE THE LENGTH

Do you want to turn your entire presentation into an in-depth feature, or would you like to take one aspect of the presentation (i.e., case study results, a key takeaway, etc.) and write up a shorter trend piece? Answering this question should be the first step. Keep in mind that an hour-long presentation will turn into approximately 10–15 pages of double-spaced, typed material, which is much too long for an article appearing online.

Determining which points are important to the Journal readership will help decide how long of an article you'd like to write. It may also help to write a one-sentence purpose statement for your article, which can help you focus on exactly what you want to say. If you find that you have several important points, the presentation might be broken into two different articles.

USE AN OUTLINE

Chances are that you've already created an outline to form your presentation... great! Use that same outline to start writing your article. Oftentimes, slide headings or sections of a presentation can also be used to tell a story and break up your content in a meaningful way.

TRANSCRIPTS CAN BE HELPFUL

If you've given your presentation already and it's been recorded, it may be helpful to listen to it to help take your article from bullet points to paragraphs. You may also want to get a transcript of the recording, which can serve as your first draft. This will provide you with an introduction, a body, and a summary of the topic.

WRITING GUIDELINES

Authors should come to us with well-developed ideas for articles. We will help to convert these ideas—your expertise—into the consistent, readable, and relevant voice that our readers have come to expect.

STYLE

The style of the BPA Journal generally conforms to the *Chicago Manual of Style* or the *Associated Press Stylebook*. If you're familiar with these guidelines, please follow them as you write your article.

KEEP IT CONVERSATIONAL, DIRECT, AND ACTIVE

The tone of our content is conversational. We strive to publish articles that are welcoming, informational, and approachable for both new and seasoned members of the home performance community. A few keynotes:

- **Avoid using excessive industry jargon or acronyms** in your writing, even though you may be writing to industry readers. When you do use an industry-specific term or acronym, please define it at the first occurrence.
- **Write in an active voice.** Especially in housing, nothing happens by itself! Tell your readers about the people who are engaged with the actions you describe. Be sure that the subject of each sentence is directly involved with the verb.
- **Use short, simple sentences.** If you're having trouble composing a long, complicated sentence that makes sense, break it into two.

PRACTICE STORYTELLING

Good authors have information to share. Great authors know how to make it relevant and interesting to their readers. Oftentimes the difference is in having a narrative, or story, through which to share the information.

When you're ready to write an article, consider both the information you want to share and the people who have

been involved in creating, collecting, or interpreting that information. Include their stories in your narrative, describe their motivations, and tell our readers how their lives could be affected by the information you present.

RESOURCES

One of the best pieces of guidance we've seen for good simple writing is the [Federal Plain Language Guidelines](#). Don't be put off by the stuffy-sounding title—it offers strong and relevant tips for anyone who cares about clear communication.

We're here to work with you to ensure that your content resonates with our audiences. Don't hesitate to reach out to our editors to assist with your project!

Have questions? Contact Macie Melendez, Editor in Chief of the BPA Journal at mmelendez@building-performance.org.