WRITER'S GUIDELINES

One of the most prestigious contributions a professional can make to the industry is to contribute to its literature.

"The Cutting Edge" and Its Readers

The Cutting Edge is a technical journal and trade magazine written and edited specifically for diecutters, diemakers and industry suppliers who are faced with the need to stay ahead of technologies in an industry that is changing at break-neck speed.

Twelve times a year, *The Cutting Edge* gives its 1,500+ readers timely coverage of diecutting converting industry issues and trends relevant to commercial and inplant diecutters and diemakers, along with detailed, how-to technical articles on a variety of aspects of the diecutting and diemaking process. Plus, *The Cutting Edge* keeps its readers up-to-date on Association news and activities.

Our readers are members of the International Association of Diecutting and Diemaking (IADD) who convert soft to semi-rigid materials into diecut parts. CEOs, owners and managers form the primary audience, while front-line production employees, supervisors and other staff also benefit from its contents.

Nearly 70% of our readers have over 15 years' experience in the industry. Approximately 15% have been in the business from 11 to 15 years, and 15% have been in the business for one to 10 years.

Industries served by member firms include corrugated boxes, folding cartons, packaging, gaskets, rubber products, plastic and vinyl products, electronic circuitry, toys and games, labels, greeting cards, envelopes and other paper products.

Before You Write

Ideally, we want articles from those who have been in the trenches and who can write articles that relate directly to the industry —technical solutions, industry roundups, market trends, new products, improved technologies, ongoing research and development, new manufacturing techniques (especially those that cut costs, improve or streamline operations, offer new insight, improve financial or administrative operations or improve speed)—or sales and management techniques that can be successfully applied by our members.

Instructional "how to" articles are preferred. They should be nonpromotional in nature. Most company and product names are edited out of articles except in situations, at the editor's discretion, in which the use of a proprietary name is unavoidable for clarity. The editors look for objective, educational, technical articles to help diecutters, diemakers and others in the converting industry learn about techniques, tooling, machinery and management concepts.

Articles should be impartial and should not describe the benefits of certain products available from particular companies. They should not be biased toward the author's or against a competitor's products or technologies. The IADD may refuse any article that does not conform to this guideline.

From time to time, case studies may be published with the goal of being instructional tools rather than promotional pieces for any company or product. They are primarily written by the magazine's editors who always strive for impartiality; company and product names are used when necessary for clarity. Case studies submitted by outside authors will be considered only if they have educational merit. Additional guidelines may apply for case studies, applications and product highlights articles.

Full length published articles are about 750-2,000 words in length; half page articles, about 400-600 words; quarter page articles, about 250-400 words.

Personal experience is probably your best source of article ideas. As a practitioner in the industry, you have encountered problems, developed solutions and corrected mistakes that your colleagues can learn from. Has your company found a technique that works better than anything you've used before? Do you have a fresh approach to an old problem or a cost-effective solution to a new one?

Show readers, through examples, the relevance of your insights to their circumstances; that is, how to apply your insights to their own situations. Readers are eager and grateful for tools that help them solve problems and achieve new levels of understanding about their challenges.

In writing from your experiences, ask these kinds of questions:

- How can other companies adapt what you've done?

- What kinds of pitfalls might they run into?

- What costs are involved?

- Try to anticipate a reader's questions and answer them.

The most common reasons why articles are not accepted for publication in *The Cutting Edge* are:

- They deal with topics that are irrelevant to diecutting or diemaking;

- They are poorly organized;

- They lack insight; they describe an idea whose narrow scope and depth do not warrant feature article treatment;

- They offer too few examples from the industry; or

- They are self-promotional or market a product or service available from only select vendors.

The Cutting Edge has alternative outlets for topics that are not well suited for in-depth feature article treatment. Member-written contributions also constitute two of our columns:

- "TechTalk" addresses solutions to technical problems in a Q & A format.

- "Die-alog" targets industry-related issues and provides point/counterpoint views.

In addition, *The Cutting Edge* welcomes thoughtful responses to the magazine's content for possible inclusion.

Approval and Publication

All submitted articles will be acknowledged and reviewed by the Editor within four weeks and, if accepted, assigned a publication date. You'll be notified as soon as it's assigned.

We will make every effort to preserve your article as you submitted it for publication. After all, your style is your own. However, we reserve the right to edit your article to make it as substantive, impartial, clear and lively as possible. Once your article has been accepted, you will be asked to sign a copyright release form that gives *The Cutting Edge* copyright to the article. IADD cannot guarantee that an article will be published or a photo or cover shot used, and we reserve the right to refuse any article or artwork.

What's In It For You?

What will you reap for your time and effort? Personal satisfaction from helping to promote the diecutting and diemaking industry and advance the knowledge of its practitioners. Respect from your colleagues and recognition of your technical expertise. Networking opportunities. Visibility for you and your company.

Direct all inquiries and completed articles to: CuttingEdge@iadd.org. Call 1-815-455-7519 with questions. We can also be reached at:

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Making it Fit to Print ... an Author's Checklist

- Pick a working title three to six words long, with an active verb. Aim to be clever. Make it brief and catchy.

- Write a lead sentence or paragraph that will draw the audience into the article. Keep it relevant to the topic and get to the point quickly.

- End the article with a one-or two-sentence "bio" listing your name, title, company and its location.

- Avoid cliches and excessive jargon. Favor the active voice. Keep the "twenty dollar" words to a bare minimum. Do not promote a product, service or company.

- Our readers are educated, successful industry executives, so don't preach or lecture. When establishing your tone, pretend you're talking to a colleague face-to-face.

- This publication is international in scope. All technical articles should include metric conversions as well as the English system of units.

- When possible, submit **high resolution** illustrations, schematics, cutaways, graphs, diagrams, charts or tables to support your text. Be sure to number them and refer to them by number in the body of the article (e.g., See Diagram 3).

- Do not use footnotes. Instead, credit sources directly within the body of the article.

- Be comprehensive without being excessive in detail. Include sidebars for pertinent facts or data that does not fit within the main body of the article. These should be no longer than two double-spaced pages.

- Use subheads to signal shifts in topics and bullets to make the article easier to read.

- Make your concluding remarks as memorable as your lead sentence and just as relevant to the article.

- Edit your article thoroughly. Eliminate unnecessary words. Make sure paragraphs flow smoothly and logically. Double-check for accuracy—we count on you to give us correct information.

- Email the document and any supporting charts, photographs or artwork to CuttingEdge@iadd.org (all formats are accepted; word processing formats (such as Word) and image file formats (such as JPG) are preferred to PDFs).