

## ▶ Becoming a HomoCulture contributor

- Contributors for HomoCulture agree to commit to a minimum of 10 stories. The first 10 stories are agreed to, upfront on a content calendar, based on one story per week, for 10 consecutive weeks. The topics are mutually agreed upon upfront. During this time, contributors submit their weekly stories using the article submission template. Over the 10 week period, contributors are guided on ways to optimize their stories for social media, link juice, SEO, and the HomoCulture tone-of-voice. It's a great learning opportunity for anyone who is looking to improve his or her skills in writing, social media, or to develop a greater share of voice as a subject matter expert.
- All stories must be 100% unique and original for HomoCulture. While the rules are pretty easy going, the more writing style rule that is strictly enforced is the use of first person; it's now allowed. This means, instead of writing a sentence with "I think that gay men are awesome because...", the statement should be "Gay men are awesome because...". It's that easy! An editor will review and edit posts before they are published, to ensure the story is in line with the tone and message of the site. Contributors are encouraged to write informative, educational, and edgy content, that pushes the boundaries and forces people to think, sometimes out of their comfort zone, or help people understand things they didn't previously know.
- After the first 10 stories are published, contributors may continue on as regular columnists. Regular contributors are recognized on the contributor page with their biographies and photo. Regular contributors also have stories published under their own name and may receive credentials to log in and post their own stories. Regular contributors may continue on with the calendar content format, or branch out and write more frequently, across multiple subject areas, covering a wider range of topics.
- All contributors, new and ongoing are strongly encouraged to share their content across their social platforms, tagging the relevant HomoCulture social properties.
- Keywords: Scan your article and pick out important words that stand out. These are keywords. An easy way to pick out keywords is to think of what words people would Google to find your story. These keywords should be both listed as keywords and written into your article.

- **Meta Description:** This is the executive summary that pulls together your entire article into one sentence. It needs to be catchy, descriptive, and entice the reader to want to read the full article.
- **Focus Keyword:** This is one or two, and occasionally three words, that describe your entire story. This word(s) must be written exactly as is in the headline, body copy, meta description, and keyword. Sometimes this means that you need to go back and re-write your headline or change body copy to make your focus keyword fit.
- Whenever possible, articles should use HomoCulture images. If a suitable image is not available, then the contributor should provide a suitable image that can be used, with permission and/or with photo credit. Images cannot be randomly taken off the Internet and used without permission. Provided photos must be a minimum of 640 pixels wide or high.
- Articles must be submitted a minimum of 24 hours in advance of publishing date, unless otherwise indicated by the editor. In rare occasions, there may be times when articles need to be submitted up to one week in advance of publishing.
- Once your article is pushed live, please share it across your social networks. Remember to tag @TheHomoCulture / #HomoCulture on twitter, and HomoCulture on Facebook.
- Contributors are encouraged to share not only their content, but other contributors content as well.
- It's everyone responsibility to encourage their social networks to give a "Like" on Facebook, follow on Twitter, and subscribe to the newsletter.