

# *Careers for Copy Editors*

## *Panelists:*

- Eric Hamilton, *Farm and Dairy* (Salem, Ohio)  
Clare Noonan, *The Modesto (Calif.) Bee*  
Missy Prebula, *The New York Times*  
Christine Steele, The Capital Group Cos. (Los Angeles)

## **Career options for copyediting or proofreading if you choose not to pursue newspaper copyediting**

- Book publishing (there might be small, local publishers in your area)
- Trade magazines & their accompanying trade shows (may include copyediting buyers guides, tradeshow directories, ads, Web site announcements and articles)
- Freelance copyediting or proofreading — This requires work on your part to find opportunities. A few ideas: look for mistakes on company Web sites and e-mail to offer your services, read friends' resumes, go to local networking events
- Company communications and marketing departments (brochures, new hire benefit package materials, internal publications such as co. newsletters)
- Advertising agencies (copyediting posters, ads, brochures)
- Internet/Web site copyediting

## **Other journalism/editorial organizations you could join to network and learn of other career opportunities**

- **American Society of Business Publication Editors (ASBPE)** *asbpe.org* — Professional association for full-time and freelance editors and writers employed in the business, trade, and specialty press.
- **Society of Professional Journalists (SPJ)** *spj.org* — Works to inspire and educate the next generation of journalists and protects First Amendment guarantees of freedom of speech and press.
- **Online News Association (ONA)** *journalists.org* — Includes news writers, producers, designers, editors, photographers and others who produce news for the Internet or other digital delivery systems, as well as academic members and others interested in the development of online journalism.
- **Society for Editors and Proofreaders (SfEP)** *sfep.org.uk* — Based in the UK, SfEP encourages high standards of editing and proofreading and upholds the professional status of editors and proofreaders.
- **Editorial Freelancers Association (EFA)** *the-efa.org* — Professional organization of self-employed workers in the publishing and communications industries.
- **Society for the Preservation of English Language and Literature (SPELL)** *spellorg.com* — An organization of people who love the English language and are determined to resist its abuse and misuse in the news media and elsewhere.

## **Approximate salary ranges**

- \$20–\$80 per hour as a freelancer (depending on experience and what you are comfortable with charging)
- \$36–\$55K+ — Internet editor
- \$37K — Book publishing copy editor
- \$30–\$35K+ — Trade magazine copy editor
- \$40K — Trade magazine copy chief
- \$48K+ — Company communications/marketing departments (large corporations)

# Careers for Copy Editors

## Job search

mediabistro.com  
journalismjobs.com  
freelanceworkexchange.com  
asbpe.org ("Job Connection" in left menu bar)  
councilscienceeditors.org/jobbank  
editorandpublisher.com/eandp/classifieds/index.jsp  
careerjournal.com  
careerbuilder.com  
allfreelance.com  
spj.org/careers\_search.asp

- *Look in the paper for these titles*  
copy editor, associate editor, assistant editor, editor, proofreader, freelancer, technical editor, reporter
- *Look under these additional classifieds headings*  
publications, advertising, marketing, broadcast, communications, Internet, Web, writing, journalism, newsletter, administrative, human resources  
(sometimes these last two list proofreading/editing opportunities)

## Suggestions for starting or maintaining a freelance business

- Create your own Web site. It can be as simple as two to three pages offering your bio and the copyediting or proofreading services you offer.
  - Search online for "copyediting" and "proofreading" and you'll get a return that includes some freelancer sites. Read them for guidance in developing your own and for knowing what your hourly rate should be.
  - To start your own site, domain name registration and e-mail services can be as low as \$7.95 a year (gate.com).
- Inexpensive and good-quality business cards are available at vistaprint.com. First order is free for a box of 250 cards. Future orders are minimum \$19.99 a box.
- If you are not comfortable with giving out your personal phone number to a new client, you can get a phone/fax/e-mail package in one through onebox.com. The pricing starts at \$12.95 a month and includes use of a toll-free number for your calls and faxes.
- Consider having some writing pens (or whatever you'd like: magnets, pencils, keyrings) made with your name and contact info (either a phone number or a URL) and hand them out in addition to business cards. And, after you finish a job, send a thank you note and include the freebie. If the client can't find your card, they'll most likely have your other item handy.
- Look for newspaper articles about embarrassing typos in company literature or in a community publication/brochure. This could be a silent calling for a copy editor and maybe help is needed. Call the company and mention you saw the article and offer your services. Ask if they have any openings.
- Local Chamber of Commerce meetings involve members of the community having lunch or dinner and talking about their business and/or services. Business cards are exchanged and this is an excellent opportunity for you to talk about your service and how you can help others in the community.

## Have some fun on the side

- **The Apostrophe Protection Society** — This is not a society to join, but be aware — apostrophe abuse is even greater than you might have thought! Check out the photos on this site of some apostrophe abuse and get a good laugh! [apostrophe.fsnet.co.uk](http://apostrophe.fsnet.co.uk)
- **National Punctuation Day® is September 24, 2006** [nationalpunctuationday.com](http://nationalpunctuationday.com)  
This site also has photos of punctuation abuse.

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