

Writing For Greeting Card Companies

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Writing For Greeting Card Companies

This has been on the minds of almost every amateur poet and jokester at some time or another. Most people seem to think there is a fairly high demand for greeting card verses and good jokes for gag cards. This is not true. Many firms hire their own writers since they cannot effectively handle all the thousands of suggestions they get from amateur writers trying to make a few extra dollars. Remember when you enter this not-so-lucrative field that you will be competing against highly skilled freelance writers and creative writers with a great deal of experience in dealing with editors and publishers. Your chances of landing a lot of sales are very slim indeed, but there are a few people every year who do make a dent in the market and find their time and effort well rewarded.

A member of our staff decided to investigate the market for his own sake and discovered some interesting things which we thought we'd pass along to you. He wrote to most of the greeting card firms in the 1985 Writer's Market, the definitive guide to who buys all kinds of writing, who are accepting freelance submissions.

Here is what he found out: Of the fifteen or so he wrote to, most of whom requested self-addressed, stamped envelopes for replies, only seven responded and only five are accepting submissions.

Hallmark, the giant in the field is not accepting unsolicited ideas.

Fran-Mar Greeting Cards of New Rochelle, NY is interested mainly in novelty stationery ideas and invitations and thank-you notes, and purchases a limited number each every year.

Bo-Tree is not accepting any submissions at this time.

Carolyn Bean Publishing Ltd., of San Francisco is looking for artword and for words and makes no bones about the fact that they expect the highest quality of work for their wide variety of greeting cards.

Oatmeal Studios of Rochester VT accepts humor only, and a copy of their writer's guidelines (the letter starts: "Dear Funny Person:") is a necessity for their writer. They pay well, too - \$50 for each idea they buy.

Amberley Greeting Card Company of Cincinnati is interested in a wide variety of ideas, and it would be wise to consult them first about the current needs. They pay \$40 for each usable idea.

Contenova Gifts Inc., of Seattle, Vancouver and Toronto look for funny card ideas which can be easily translated to a card by an artist. Write to the Vancouver office for current wants.

Portal Publications is seeking artwork only at this time.

Those firms have proven to us to be responsive to the writer and will probably be your best bets for sale. If you'd like to give this hobby a try, read the section of greeting card markets in *Writer's Market* to get better ideas of exactly what is involved in submitting professional-looking ideas. And sad to say, the days when the flowery verse writer could sell to greeting card companies appear to be almost gone.