writing for ;login:

Writing is not easy for most of us. Having your writing rejected, for any reason, is no fun at all. The way to get your articles published in *;login:,* with the least effort on your part and on the part of the staff of ;login:, is to submit a proposal first.

PROPOSALS

In the world of publishing, writing a proposal is nothing new. If you plan on writing a book, you need to write one chapter, a proposed table of contents, and the proposal itself and send the package to a book publisher. Writing the entire book first is asking for rejection, unless you are a well-known, popular writer.

;login: proposals are not like paper submission abstracts. We are not asking you to write a draft of the article as the proposal, but instead to describe the article you wish to write. There are some elements that you will want to include in any proposal:

- What's the topic of the article?
- What type of article is it (case study, tutorial, editorial, mini-paper, etc.)?
- Who is the intended audience (syadmins, programmers, security wonks, network admins, etc.)?
- Why does this article need to be read?
- What, if any, non-text elements (illustrations, code, diagrams, etc.) will be included?
- What is the approximate length of the article?

Start out by answering each of those six questions. In answering the question about length, bear in mind that a page in *;login:* is about 600 words. It is unusual for us to publish a one-page article or one over eight pages in length, but it can happen, and it will, if your article deserves it. We suggest, however, that you try to keep your article between two and five pages, as this matches the attention span of many people.

The answer to the question about why the article needs to be read is the place to wax enthusiastic. We do not want marketing, but your most eloquent explanation of why this article is important to the readership of *;login:*, which is also the membership of USENIX.

UNACCEPTABLE ARTICLES

;login: will not publish certain articles. These include but are not limited to:

- Previously published articles. A piece that has appeared on your own Web server but not been posted to USENET or slashdot is not considered to have been published.
- Marketing pieces of any type. We don't accept articles about products. "Marketing" does not include being enthusiastic about a new tool or software that you can download for free, and you are encouraged to write case studies of hard-ware or software that you helped install and configure, as long as you are not affiliated with or paid by the company you are writing about.
- Personal attacks

FORMAT

The initial reading of your article will be done by people using UNIX systems. Later phases involve Macs, but please send us text/plain formatted documents for the proposal. Send proposals to login@usenix.org.

DEADLINES

For our publishing deadlines, including the time you can expect to be asked to read proofs of your article, see the online schedule at http://www.usenix .org/publications/login/sched .html.

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FOCUS ISSUES

In the past, there has been only one focus issue per year, the December Security edition. In the future, each issue may have one or more suggested focuses, tied either to events that will happen soon after *;login:* has been delivered or events that are summarized in that edition.