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Editorial Philosophy: Texas Getaways

Texas Getaways is a magazine geared toward connecting with an audience that have an interest in the outdoors. Demographically, the target audience does not narrow to a specific age group because the magazine features places in Texas that are desirable for the whole family. The magazine primarily appeals to those that value fitness, exercise, and overall good health, as much of the content provides information on how those benefits relate to the outdoors.

The title infers that the magazine will provide information and details regarding places in Texas that are considered “getaways” or vacation spots that appeal to those that enjoy natural and interactive activities. Texas Getaways advocates exercise and promotes good health by providing readers with informative articles on food and how to become more active and involved by participating in outdoor related activities. The features and department pages contain content with an emphasis on traveling to places for camping, hiking, rock climbing, and other outdoor activities. All featured locations are in Texas.

Texas Getaways seeks out unique geographic locations to inform readers where the best places are to participate in their favorite outdoor activities. Swimming, fishing, hiking, and camping in Texas make up much of the content in the magazine and are described in a way that conveys excitement and adventure to the reader. The magazine advocates the benefits of participating in outdoor adventures and provides a road map to places that are unique to Texas.

Continuing department pages include Fun for the Family and the Monthly Outdoorsman, and provide consistent, reliable and interesting information for the reader every month.

The Fun for the Family department page focuses on a particular destination in Texas that has become a popular destination or an undiscovered oasis that needs to be shared. Featured parks have ranged from Big Bend to Barton Springs. The page provides general information about the park, such as directions and park hours, as well as unique, natural characteristics that appeal to readers and compel

them to visit. Many of the destinations featured are ideal for camping and family outings or vacations. The feature length articles are typically short and concise, with a focus on what makes the park special, such as a swimming hole or extensive hike and bike trails. The Natural Parks department page revisits a previously featured park to provide updates and details, especially if the park has undergone significant changes.

The Monthly Outdoorsman features a person that is actively involved in outdoor activities. April's issue featured Katie Brown, a notable rock climber. The Monthly Outdoorsman is typically divided into two articles; one that details the accomplishments and biographic information on a featured individual and a short interview. The biographic information includes: name and age, how long the featured person has been involved with their outdoor activity/sport, their accomplishments/awards, and where they're from. The short interview asks questions that are constructed with the reader's interest in mind, and are administered under certain criteria. Taken into consideration are questions like:

- Why is this person relative to the magazine?
- How will this interview provide information on the benefits of the outdoors?
- What is unique about this person and their achievements?
- Are the answers provided sufficient and relevant to the page and magazine as a whole?

The interview article is eight questions long with more text space for the interviewee's answers. The page is designed with a large image of the featured person that illustrates why they're being featured; such as Katie Brown scaling the underside of a cliff. Department pages are distributed as run of the book throughout the magazine.

The second department page, Fun for the Family, features Schlitterbahn waterpark in New Braunfels, Texas. The waterpark was chosen as a popular destination for the whole family because it accommodates small children as well as adults. Schlitterbahn offers kiddie pools as well as wild and

crazy water slides that appeal to those with a more adventurous side. The layout is designed with a large image of a little girl and her family tubing down a water slide, with the word Schlitterbahn sliding down beneath them. The article takes up about a quarter of the page but still provides enough information for those who have never visited.

In terms of design, the magazine features large images of natural Texas landscapes and images that illustrate the appeal of visiting specific locations in Texas. The front cover of the April issue illustrates an image of the river at Garner State Park. The image conveys the natural wonder of the location and instills in the reader a yearning for the outdoor lifestyle. There are 126 pages, with 14 department pages and 112 feature pages.

The editorial formula ties together the elements of the benefits of an outdoor lifestyle and which places to visit in Texas. We provide the material needed to fulfill a sense of adventure and escape from the confines of a routine life. Specific subjects such as places for the whole family and natural state parks are emphasized. Texas Getaways also provides information on restaurants and eateries in Texas that can be categorized as organic and healthy. For example, in the Plan a Texas Roadtrip feature, The Czech Stop is featured as a destination that meets the standard valued by readers and the magazine. Texas Getaways also provides information on the best camping destinations, and places to hike, fish, and swim. To avoid repetition and maintain a unique image, the magazine ensures the content is based on evolving criteria. Writers must develop content based on these questions:

- What about this location will appeal to readers that value an outdoor lifestyle?
- Does the content match the magazine's overall tone and voice of adventure and escape from the mundane?
- Are readers given enough important information regarding visitation to a "Texas Getaway"? (Dangerous wildlife, specific park hours and curfew/seasonal calendar visitation, ongoing events at a park that contribute to traffic/congestion).

- Does the feature require a full-length article?
- Is the content organized in a way that enables readability? (Body copy size, headlines, number of columns, image placement).
- Is the content interesting and concise enough to persuade the reader to check out the rest of the magazine?

The layout and design of Texas Getaways is constructed with an emphasis on images of natural landscapes. The articles are relatively short but encompassing all the information a reader needs to learn about the most prominent characteristics of the featured destination. The layouts implement color repetition and contrast of words against the background for readability. The color choices are typically neutral and match the chosen image and font colors to provide visual continuity. The placement of content within the layout contributes to the balance and flow of elements on the page. The typefaces and fonts are large for the nameplate, headlines, subheads and pull-quotes and capture the reader's eye so as to pull them into the story. For example, the first feature of the April issue focuses on Garner State Park. The related pages will cover the variety of activities provided by the park, such as hiking trails and river activities. The Garner State Park feature also includes information on camping and lodging, as well as the best places to hike, dubbing one portion of the feature "Hiking Heaven." Another example would be a feature covering the best Austin destinations during the summer. Barton Springs and Zilker Park would be given particular emphasis because of the family friendly opportunities they provide. The Austin feature also includes a section on where to stay, eat, and how to get around in downtown Austin. A whole spread is reserved for how to navigate the downtown nightlife in Austin. Another example feature is called Plan A Texas Road Trip, and focuses on the best places to road trip to, stay, and eat in Texas. All the features relate to the magazine's purpose and editorial formula so as to cater to an audience interested in learning more or furthering an outdoor lifestyle.

The magazine layouts are organized in a way that capture's the readers eye and prompts them to read the articles. The background images are chosen to feature large, aesthetically pleasing natural landscapes. For the Garner State Park feature, an image of the hiking trails is the main focus because that's what the content emphasizes, mainly because the trails are one of the best characteristics of the park. For the Austin Destinations feature, images of Barton Springs, downtown, and the Zilker Park Kite Festival are chosen to highlight Austin's best and most popular places to go for someone interested in visiting. From a tourist's perspective, or for someone who has never visited Texas before, the magazine serves as a helpful tour guide.

Texas Getaways formulates its editorial philosophy around researching locations that would appeal to its target audience. The magazine is very selective in choosing which locations in Texas to feature and always keeps the reader in mind. Texas Getaways attempts to include content that appeals to a narrowed audience of outdoor activists or people that have never stepped foot in a natural park before. The magazine advocates travel, adventure and a healthy outdoor lifestyle and creates its own identity by offering content and illustrative images on a variety of topics related to Texas destinations. In an effort to keep readers interested and invested in the magazine, Texas Getaways strives to feature content that is as informative and concise as possible, with large images of Texas locations to prompt readers to learn more about the eye popping image. The magazine not only advertises and garners attention for certain places, but also provides content on how to enjoy the desired location. Texas Getaways is the perfect companion for a road trip, or guide for vacation destinations. The features and departments pages were all selected based on thorough research and criteria that maintain the magazine's voice and purpose that advocates an outdoor lifestyle.