

The Differences Between Popular, Scholarly and Trade Periodicals/Magazines

	Popular	Scholarly	Professional/Trade
Authors	Reporters, magazine staff, freelance writers	Scholars, researchers, experts in the field	Practitioners, educators, specialists
Audience	General public	Researchers, scholars, students	Professionals in the field, researchers
Purpose	Inform, entertain, special interests	Inform, report and share original research and experimentation with the rest of the scholarly world	Provide information and news to practitioners in a profession
Content	Personalities, news, general interest articles	Original research, research results, methodology, theory	New trends, techniques, organizational news
Language	Non-technical, simple, elementary language. Assumes an 8 th grade education.	Terminology and language of the discipline; reader is assumed to have similar background. Assumes a college education.	Technical terminology of the profession
Published by:	Commercial publishers	Scholarly societies, University presses	Associations, trade groups
Articles	Brief, providing broad overviews. A bibliography is usually not provided although references might be mentioned in the text	Lengthy, providing in-depth analysis. Bibliography and/or footnotes in standardized citation format	Length varies, many short interest/news items, bibliography may/may not be provided
Pictures and paper	Many photographs and pictures, glossy paper, many ads	Few or no photographs, includes charts and tables, regular white paper	Some photographs and pictures, some ads
Review process	No formal peer review process, reviewed by editors on staff	Reviewed by a board of experts in the field (refereed) or by the author's peers (peer reviewed)	Includes some peer-review articles, most are reviewed by editors (often professionals)
Examples	People Weekly, Sports Illustrated, New York Times, Washington Post, Ladies Home Journal	Sociological Review, Journal of Asian Studies, Journal of Philosophy	Industry Week, Plastics News, Pacific Fishing

Williams Library, Texas A&M University at Galveston, May 26, 2010

Adapted from several sources including University of Victoria Libraries, Penn Libraries and D'Amour Library
Creative Commons Attribution-Noncommercial – Share Alike 3.0 United States License