



The Girls Entertainment Network User Guide
Version 1.0



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WELCOME TO THE GIRLS ENTERTAINMENT NETWORK!

Whether you're a new addition to the GEN family or have been with us for years, there is something everyone can learn from on the following pages. Please read carefully as this guide is your biggest resource for being a successful contributor to The Girls Entertainment Network.

INTRODUCTION

If you are new to GEN you might be wondering what exactly the Girls Entertainment Network is. Well, we are glad you asked.

So, what is The Girls Entertainment Network?

"Forget sugar and spice – The Girls Entertainment Network is redefining what girls are made of. Spearheaded by a female staff, GEN fosters a dedicated and diverse group of ladies who are, first and foremost, fans. Readers who frequent the site can expect content written by individuals whose knowledge of the greater enthusiast culture is on par with their own.

"Although GEN's primary focus is to offer a platform to females, everyone – male and female alike – is encouraged to participate in the latest conversations pertaining to video Games, comics, anime, gadgets, and cosplay as well as join our growing community of friendship and support.

"GEN stands out among tech culture websites by breaking down gender stereotypes and showing the world that today's ladies are taking control of the controller and digging through your comic collection."

That's our "official" about us statement created specifically for marketing purposes. If you ask a GEN staffer what The Girls Entertainment Network is we promise it will be a bit more relaxed. Essentially, The Girls Entertainment Network is a blog written by a group of women and men who love geek culture, have a knack for the written or spoken word and enjoy making friends with like-minded individuals. GEN has been around for over five years now as the brainchild of our CEO/Founder Becky Young. The Girls Entertainment Network was originally established as "Watch us Game" back in 2005. It then evolved into the Girl Gaming Network, and made its final metamorphosis into what we know it as today in early 2008. While some of the girls on the team are relatively new, others have been around for over five years – meaning there is always a veteran to talk to if you need advice. Enough with the history...let's move onto the nitty gritty.

What can I expect from GEN?

To get the obvious out of the way immediately, contributing to GEN is not a paid gig. At this point in time no one – including the head honchos – gets paid for their work. GEN is a labor of love for some and a launching point for a career in the various geek-culture fields for others. That is not to say that your dedication will go completely unrewarded. Listed below are several incentives for sticking with GEN.



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Building your Portfolio: Perhaps the biggest reward for joining GEN is a chance to build your portfolio and network. Whether you use GEN as opportunity to hone your writing skills or to polish your camera presence, regular contributions help you grow in a professional capacity and make steps towards a potential career. A little bit of ambition, a bit of talent and a lot of hard work will eventually pay off.

Press Passes: Writing for GEN scores you press status at numerous enthusiast events across the nation. Press status not only negates any cost, but also allows you an opportunity to rub elbows with talent in your particular field through interviews, previews or demos and industry parties.

Perks: Other perks are relative to your particular area of coverage. At times several of the sections get free products to review. Once in a while GEN will score download codes for games or other swag. It is best not to join the GEN team *expecting* any of these perks, but from time to time they are available.

Friends: Without sounding all mushy, we can guarantee that joining GEN will introduce you to some amazing new people. Through online conversations or meeting up at events many of our girls have made lifelong friends. As a result we always have a couch to crash on virtually anywhere in the nation.

What does GEN expect from me?

Joining the GEN family is a commitment we ask our staff to take seriously. While we don't feel the required workload is overwhelming – the majority of our girls attending school or working fulltime do just fine – becoming a member of GEN will require daily attention. But don't worry...it's not as scary as it sounds.

The three key commitments expected of you are communication, contribution and commenting/social networking. But more on those later. For now we need to take a look at your specific staff role and understand the responsibilities coupled with it.

Staff Roles and Responsibilities

Please read through all of the staff roles and responsibilities carefully. It is important not only to know what is expected of you, but what role other individuals at GEN play. Understanding all of the staff responsibilities makes it much easier to discern the best person to contact in any given situation. This helps to cut down on mass emails and makes the site run more efficiently overall.

Founder/CEO

The founder/CEO is responsible for the large-scale branding and vision of GEN. If ever anyone has a question regarding the appropriateness of content, the behavior of users or anything policy-related, ask her first.

The founder/CEO also spearheads networking, arranges partnerships and contests and approves bringing on new staff. No new staff members should ever be added without



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consent. Additionally, the founder/CEO communicates with section heads to disseminate information as needed.

Event Director

The event director's primary function is to organize and prepare GEN staff for events and conventions. This is true across all areas of coverage – cosplay, comics and video games alike.

This happens twofold. First, the event director will help editors and writers organize press passes. Event organizers are more willing to hand out multiple press passes to an outlet if a single email is sent with all names and credentials attached. For this reason, never contact a large outlet without running it by the event director first. If it is a small or local gathering, this step may be bypassed with your own discretion.

Secondly, the event director will discuss coverage with attendees and help set up demos, interviews and other opportunities. If there is something in particular you are interested in seeing or attending at an event, please let the event director know. Although GEN does not reimburse travel expenses, the event director can help staff find reasonable lodging or airfare if the member is having a particularly difficult time finding their own.

Copy Editor

The copy editor, along with the editors of each section, are responsible for correcting grammatical and spelling errors within GEN articles. If your work is repeatedly flagged as needing editing, the copy editor may ask you to save your work as "pending review" and not publish it until it has been viewed. Conversely, you can ask for your work to be edited before publishing if you are concerned about your work. If you would like your work to be looked over, let the copy editor know so she can get to it in a timely manner.

With GEN growing month-to-month, it is very important that our writing reflects our passion and knowledge in our specific industries. More often than not writers, publishers and artists visit the site to view our coverage of their work. When such valuable eyeballs are making their way to the website errors cannot be front-and-center. Writers must not take offense if their work needs editing and should instead see it as an opportunity to improve and learn from their mistakes.

Community Manager

The community manager's primary function is to act as a liaison between GEN users and the GEN staff. All questions, comments and concerns of GEN users will be directed to the community manager who will then consult the appropriate staff member. Additionally, the community manager is responsible for posting contest details, as well as collecting the necessary information from winners so prizes can be distributed.

Furthermore, the community manager helps new staff get started on GEN by setting up their username/avatar and publishing their bio. When the community manager has time she will also aid the public relations/marketing head with GEN's social networking.



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Forum Manager

The forum manager is responsible for keeping the forums clean from spam, inappropriate threads and duplicate topics. This can be done through the use of moderators, which the forum manager has the sole right to approve. Moderators must contact the forum manager for approval before banning a user or deleting a non-explicit thread.

The forum manager is also the individual to contact when you need your permissions changed or when you have general concerns about anything occurring in the GEN forums.

Public Relations/Marketing

The public relations and marketing specialist is primarily responsible for promoting GEN on social networking websites. This means promoting news stories, original features, interviews and contests on sites such as MySpace, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and Digg. The PR/marketing specialist will additionally be responsible for updating GEN pages on the aforementioned sites. Updates include adding friends, posting bulletins and generally keeping the profiles active.

When the situation calls for it, such as with a complete website redesign or a particularly important contest, the PR/marketing specialist will need to create a press release to disseminate to appropriate outlets. For this reason, creating a master contact list for publishers, developers, artists and other talent is required. The public relations/marketing specialist is also responsible for getting in touch with potential sponsors, sending out marketing materials and general advertising concerns.

Graphic Designer

The graphic designer is expected to help editors, writers and hosts with graphics for recurring columns, site-wide events or one-time features. They must also be willing to work on promotional materials and advertisements for GEN. The graphic designer must be able to respond to requests within a few days time, permitting that the writer gives advance notice.

Tech Director

The tech director must have a broad understanding of website programming and be able to customize/update WordPress. The Tech director also must have the ability to troubleshoot and respond to errors in a timely manner. Any technology-related concerns are to be sent to the tech director.

Editor

Editors are understood to be the head of their sections and as such are the public voice of their genre. Editors are solely responsible for contacting publishers, developers and other industry professionals for their writing team. This allows each section to have a unified voice and keeps us from bogging down important contacts' inboxes. If a writer has worked repeatedly with a contact prior to joining GEN, an editor can grant them permission to maintain communication. However, editors must be cc'ed on all press-related emails.



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Some sections choose to send links of their coverage to companies when they go live. If your section decides to do so (which we recommend), this is the editor's responsibility. It reflects poorly on GEN if more than one person forwards our coverage, as it exposes a lack of communication on our end.

In addition to contacting industry professionals, editors must be able to maintain regular communication with those in their sections. Ideally an editor should be able to check their email at least once a day to distribute information, answer questions, and resolve conflicts. Editors also must be in contact with other section leads to disseminate information about website changes, upcoming contests and site-wide collaborations. A bi-weekly meeting may be required of editors to discuss GEN with other staff members.

In terms of content, under normal circumstances editors are expected to write 2-4 pieces per week. This number does not account for extenuating circumstances. If an editor finds herself or himself in such a situation the only action needed is to communicate the issue. Editors are also responsible for the content and quality of their writing team, and should remain watchful for spelling and grammar issues along with the copy editor. Editors also must discuss areas of improvement with their team if it ever becomes an issue, and should be able to give direct and honest advice to those in their section as maintaining a high level of quality in our coverage is a priority.

Writer

Writers make up the bulk of GEN's staff and are responsible for keeping fresh content on the main page. Writers must work closely with editors to plan coverage and should establish "writing beats" so that there is no overlap in coverage. Writers should cover news, previews and reviews, conduct interviews, create original features and post media as needed. If you are a designated review or news writer, disregard the above. All stories that you wish to have featured in the scroller must be approved by your editor.

Contacting industry professionals to access assets, set up interviews or talk coverage is strictly prohibited unless given permission by your editor. Your editor is the public face of the genre and will do that work for you for reasons mentioned above.

In terms of content, under normal circumstances writers are expected to write 3-4 pieces per week, which can vary in length from a few paragraphs to a few pages, context considered. This number does not account for extenuating circumstances. If a writer finds herself or himself in such a situation the only action needed is to communicate the issue.

Communication is key between writers and editors, and as such writers ideally should be able to check their email once a day. If you will be off the grid for an extended period of time, let your editor know in advance.

Video Editor

Similar to other editors, the video editor is solely responsible for contacting publishers, developers and other industry professionals for appointments and interviews. However, because hosts cover content from all categories on GEN, the video team editor must work closely with other section leads to ensure that video content complements written



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content instead of duplicating it. If a host has an idea for an interview they would like to set up, or need permission to film in a specific area, contact the video editor first.

The video editor must have experience with editing software such as Adobe Premier or iMovie and be willing to make custom intro/outro clips for event coverage. They must also be willing to teach the basics of video editing to the hosts in their section. Finally, the video editor must maintain a standard of quality and unity in all video content, meaning some form of template must be implemented.

Host

Hosts are unique in that they are very comfortable in front of the camera and possess the ability to think on their toes. Hosts are not tied to one specific area of expertise, and must be comfortable speaking or presenting a line of questioning on all of the subjects covered on GEN.

Hosts don't submit content as often as writers or editors, primarily because their work is tied to events such as San Diego Comic Con, the Consumer Electronics Show or the Electronic Entertainment Expo. For this reason a host should ideally be located in a central event hub such as Los Angeles or New York, or have the ability to fly/travel frequently.

As GEN evolves, hosts may take on more regular roles through weekly programming. Till then, hosts (and writers) are encouraged to use their own video equipment for reviews, previews or interviews. Hosts are not limited to video work, but like contributors, they must run written work by the appropriate section head before posting to avoid duplicate topics.

Contributor

Contributors are unable to write for GEN regularly due to time or technology restraints. However, their work is valuable and appreciated when they are able to pitch in. Because contributors do not report to an editor of their own, we ask that they contact the appropriate section lead or the community manager when they wish to compose a specific story. Regular communication occurs between each section (video games, comics, cosplay etc.) and this will eliminate the chance of duplicate coverage. Contributors are still asked to remain active on GEN in the form of commenting and sharing posts through social networking tools.

Guest Writer

A guest writer is brought onto GEN for a specific feature idea that they propose. The writer comes to the GEN community not expecting to be promoted to contributor. Becoming a contributor is an option if they desire pending repeated submissions and approval of the appropriate section head. GEN writers, editors and contributors are welcome to nominate individuals for a guest writer piece.

When posting, the guest piece must be approved and posted by the appropriate section editor. For example, if they penned a piece on the top video-game enemies, the editor for that section would be responsible for the content. If the piece is opinionated or controversial in nature, the editor must decide if it is appropriate for the tone and voice



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of GEN and use the disclaimer below if necessary. Controversial pieces are not frowned on as they provoke conversation and have the capacity to get outside users involved. Additionally, the editor should use the "guest" avatar for the post.

GEN Disclaimer: The views and opinions expressed on this page are strictly those of the author and not necessarily those of the Girls Entertainment Network or its staff.

Communication

Now that your specific responsibilities are understood, we will move onto site-wide tasks. Communication is of hugely important to GEN. A lack of communication not only pokes holes in our coverage but also can make it extremely difficult to plan site-wide content or prepare for events. Again, we understand that extenuating circumstances occur. If such a situation occurs which will drastically cut down your ability to stay in contact or contribute, please communicate this fact.

Additionally, GEN has been structured so that communication is streamlined. For the majority of your questions or concerns you should need only contact your editor or the individuals in your section. This should help cut down on mass emails. Please do not email the entire GEN staff list unless the information pertains to everyone.

Email

Speaking of email, as a member of the GEN family you will be receiving emails frequently. Ideally you should be able to access your email account once a day. Although it is not required, a Gmail account is highly recommended as it stacks conversations and keeps your inbox from being flooded. Come event season you may be receiving 20-30 messages a day. You will be assigned a GEN email address upon joining GEN that will be listed on the website and your business card. We suggest you use a forwarding system so you are able to send or receive email from that address. We also recommend that you create several contact lists specific to GEN for quick communication. Examples could be: All, Editors, Comics, Video Games etc.

Forums

Please create a forum account immediately upon joining GEN. If possible, use the same name assigned to you on the main site to avoid confusion among forum-goers. From there contact the forum manager to have the appropriate permissions added to your account.

These permissions are needed to access a special "VIP Only" area at the very bottom of the forums. From there, clicking the "GENadmins" forum will give you access to a wealth of information. Everything in this guide is also available there. The forums also host the most up-to-date contact list and discussions on upcoming events. Each section additionally has their own hub in which they can discuss or archive current project information in case email chains become too difficult to search through.

Google Calendar



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All members of GEN will be invited to the Girls Entertainment Network Google Calendar upon joining the team. This will allow everyone to update a single, uniform location with upcoming events and travel plans so that the Event Director can research press requirements and potential coverage opportunities. Please add events (or confirmation of your attendance) to the calendar as soon as possible so there is plenty of time to secure the required credentials.

Other

Some GEN users prefer to communicate via instant messengers, Facebook groups or even Twitter. Talk to your section lead to see if your group has a special means of communication.

Contribution

The staff roles and responsibilities section above should have already explained the amount and type of content expected of you. With that taken care of, here you will find some general guidelines to keep in mind when penning a piece for GEN.

Tone and Voice

GEN is unique because of the array of personalities it hosts. This is something we look to promote. However, we do ask all GEN staff to keep one rule in mind when composing their work.

Positivity breeds Positivity: This is our mantra here at GEN. We prefer to foster a positive community at The Girls Entertainment Network. This means we try not to dwell on the negative like many other Internet websites. We do our best to weigh both pros and cons, offer constructive criticism, maintain civilized debates and to be generally supportive of both our community and staff. Positivity breeds Positivity does not mean that we ask our staff to mask their true feelings in news, previews or reviews. Remember, ultimately we write to inform our community, and as such we want them to receive our honest opinions. All we ask is that all writers provide reasons for their arguments and avoid making personal attacks or unsound claims.

Vulgarity and Adult Content

Because GEN covers subjects enjoyed by both teens and adults, mature content is part of the territory. However, we prefer that GEN remain safe for younger viewers to visit. If you are posting an article featuring media or content with an abundance of gore, violence, vulgarity or sexual content, please post the below disclaimer as your article lead.

Warning: This post contains content suitable for mature readers/viewers only.

Please do not post any images that might be considered offensive on the front page. Save any questionable images for after the jump and pair them with the aforementioned disclaimer. GEN policy does not allow for anything explicit to be posted on the website. Also remember to warn the reader if you are linking to anything that might be considered NSFW (not safe for work) within your post.



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When it comes to your own writing, use discretion with vulgarity. Generally speaking you can get away with anything passable in a PG-13 movie. However, any degrading language, racial slurs and so on will be removed immediately by your section lead.

Commenting/Social Networking

Commenting and Social Networking is the final of the big three commitments expected of you here at GEN. GEN is a small but growing community. As such we need all the support we can get, both internally and externally. Internally we expect staff to actively comment on each other's stories so to facilitate community conversation. If you see a story with little to no activity on it, it reflects poorly on our website and to potential sponsors. Please rectify the situation as soon as possible by contributing your own thoughts. Additionally, digging, tweeting, and blogging about GEN and your work is an expected. The more users we get to GEN the more potential perks we can pass along to our staff.

Our constant goal at GEN is to augment the regular user base with new members and one of the fastest ways to achieve this is through social networking/content sharing tools. GEN has profiles on all the major networking websites such as MySpace, Facebook, Twitter and YouTube. The maintenance of these profiles is the duty of the PR/marketing specialist and community manager. However, it is expected that GEN editors, writers, hosts and contributors all use these tools to promote original work on GEN. At a minimum, a Digg account is required of GEN members. Access to other sites such as Twitter and MySpace/Facebook is encouraged. Remember to balance the usage of social networking tools so not to spam users or friends, as it might alienate them and have the adverse effect of what was desired.

Content Breakdown

Not all content warrants the same amount of promotion as others. Below is a laundry list of how to best take advantage of social networking tools.

News: Digg news immediately if it's posted in a timely manner, or if a mundane news story is supplemented with a unique viewpoint, interview or further clarification. If the news is being posted a day late, or all the major websites have already had their run with it, digging is not required.

Previews: If the preview, hands-on or otherwise, is posted at its scheduled embargo date immediately rally up GEN staff to digg the piece. At that point it is a race for eyeballs. Do not digg unless the preview is posted in a timely manner. When developers or publishers visit our website, it looks better that the piece has not been dug than it having only two diggs. This signals an inactive community on GEN. However, do post a link to the article on the remaining social networking sites through bulletins, status updates, tweets and so on.

Reviews: Do not digg unless the game review is posted in a timely manner. Retro-reviews and reviews for games that were released months prior have already received their attention on Digg. When developers or publishers visit our website,



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it looks better that the piece has not been dug than it having only two diggs. This signals an inactive community on GEN. However, do post a link to the article on the remaining social networking sites through bulletins, status updates, tweets and so on.

Original Features: Original features include interviews, opinion pieces and other editorial work. This is the content most likely to score us new users on GEN. When an original feature is posted on GEN, rally all GEN staff to give the piece a boost on Digg. Remember to additionally post about the article on all the remaining social networking websites through bulletins, status updates, tweets and so on.

Video/galleries: Always digg video and image galleries, as most people on the internet like quick, visual chunks of content and they are more likely to be received well. When you are posting a video or gallery, immediately rally the GEN staff to give the piece a boost on Digg. Remember to post about the article on all remaining social networking websites through bulletins, status updates, tweets and so on.

Social Networking/Content Sharing tools

Sharing GEN content through social networking or content sharing tools is easy because of shortcuts at the bottom of any particular post. Currently GEN supports Twitter, Facebook, MySpace, Google, Technorati, StumbleUpon, Reddit and Digg. Please take a moment to familiarize yourself with how each social networking tool works so you can best take advantage of them.

Link Sharing/Social Bookmarking

Digg

www.digg.com

"Digg is a social news website made for people to discover and share content from anywhere on the internet, by submitting links and stories, and voting and commenting on submitted links and stories. Voting stories up and down is the site's cornerstone function, respectively called digging and burying. Many stories get submitted every day, but only the most Dugg stories appear on the front page. Digg's popularity has prompted the creation of other social networking sites with story submission and voting systems."

Digg is the most important networking tool for GEN. As a general rule, do not digg your own work as it tends to annoy the Digg community. If you are the first to read or comment on a story that was just posted (and meets the above criteria) please digg it immediately. Users and staff are more likely to digg a post if they don't have to go through the work of submitting the story. When you do submit a story, be sure to use a gripping headline and an appropriate image.

Reddit

www.reddit.com

"Reddit is a social news website on which users can post links to content on the web. Other users may then vote the posted links down or up, causing them to appear more or less prominently on the Reddit home page. The site has



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discussion areas in which users may discuss the posted links and vote for or against others' comments. When there are enough votes against a given comment, it will not be displayed by default, although a reader can display it through a link or preference. Users who submit articles which other users like and subsequently 'vote up' receive 'karma' points as a reward for submitting interesting articles. Reddit also includes topical sections called 'subreddits', which focus on specific topics, such as politics, programming, 'not safe for work', and science. There are hundreds of subreddits."

Essentially Reddit is a Digg clone, right down to the slightly snarky community. You aren't required to both digg and share a post through Reddit, however if you have preference towards this platform it is still a worthwhile tool to use. Again, its best you don't Reddit your own posts as the community tends to come down on any users they suspect of spamming the system.

FARK

www.fark.com

"Fark.com is a community website that allows users to comment on a daily batch of news articles and other items from various websites. It is one of the top 100 English language websites, receiving over 2,500 submissions a day and over 5 million unique visitors per month. It is frequently used as a humorous source on CNN, Fox News, The Daily Show, The Colbert Report, and many radio stations. It is generally seen as a destination for strange news stories and snarky commentary. Links are submitted by Fark members (called 'farkers'), which administrators can approve for posting on either the main page or one of the subsidiary tab pages.. All links, approved or not, have associated threads where users can comment on the link. Fark moderators regulate the discussion threads to delete forbidden content. Greenlit links can generate upwards of 300,000 page views in one month for the recipient, such an enormous amount of traffic that smaller websites are often 'farked,' meaning that their servers have crashed."

Fark.com is a crapshoot in terms of its usability to GEN, but if a link were to be Greenlit it is the equivalent of getting a story on Digg's front page. Content on Fark.com tends to be humorous, quirky, sarcastic or bizarre, so if you feel a particular post fits the bill make sure to submit it via Fark.

News for Gamers

www.N4G.com

"N4G (News for Gamers) is an international video game internet discussion forum. It relies on user submitted content, where registered contributors submit news about gaming and the industry from all across the internet, borrowing articles from established gaming news websites. N4G also keeps track of video game reviews from other sites, and combines them to present an average rating for each game. The site features news collectively gathered from various websites. Each submission must have a verifiable and legitimate source, such as a well-known gaming website. The popularity of each submission is measured in 'degrees.' Submissions with higher degree values, or 'heat,' rise to the top of the page. Submissions include news, images, videos, tips, and rumors. The site also



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offers prizes to winners of Contributor Contests; eligible users are those who submit the most news in a month. Registration is free, and a new user may post or contribute stories without prior assessment."

Similar to all of the above, this is a good tool to use when you have a video-game related feature that has something unique or original to offer. Any user can submit a story, which is sorted into approved, pending and tips. If a story is submitted the goal is to get it approved and moved to the front page of N4G.com.

Delicious

www.delicious.com

"Delicious uses a non-hierarchical classification system in which users can tag each of their bookmarks with freely chosen index terms (generating a kind of folksonomy). A combined view of everyone's bookmarks with a given tag is available; for instance, the URL "http://delicious.com/tag/wiki" displays all of the most recent links tagged 'wiki'. Its collective nature makes it possible to view bookmarks added by similar-minded users."

Currently GEN doesn't have a shortcut to bookmark a link on Delicious, but the process doesn't take much effort on its own. Simply create a Delicious account (which is recommended anyway because it allows you to access your bookmarks and favorites from any computer) and click "save new bookmark." From here all you do is enter in the URL, title and a brief description. Lastly you must tag the link with relevant terms, which is the most important part. This allows other users to find and bookmark the page as well.

Social Networking

MySpace

www.myspace.com

"Myspace is a social networking website with an interactive, user-submitted network of friends, personal profiles, blogs, groups, photos, music, and videos for teenagers and adults internationally. Its headquarters are in Beverly Hills, California, USA, where it shares an office building with its immediate owner, Fox Interactive Media; which is owned by News Corporation, which has its headquarters in New York City. In June 2006, MySpace was the most popular social networking site in the United States."

MySpace has many applications that can help you share GEN content. First, you can blog about a particular story, event or contest currently on GEN. Only subscribers can view these blogs unless they find it while exploring your profile. Secondly, you can post bulletins that will stream on your friends' navigation hub. Bulletins can be used to post the same content as blogs, but can additionally be used every few weeks as you add new friends to remind them to join the website. Last, you can join groups on MySpace, which would put you in contact with like-minded individuals who might be interested in GEN content. If you want to post to Myspace quickly, you can post a blog, bulletin or something directly to your



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“about me” section by clicking the MySpace icon at the bottom of any GEN post. This allows you to add a 340 character description before submitting.

Facebook

www.facebook.com

“Facebook is a free-access social networking website that is operated and privately owned by Facebook, Inc. Users can join networks organized by city, workplace, school, and region to connect and interact with other people. People can also add friends and send them messages, and update their personal profiles to notify friends about themselves.”

Similar to Myspace, you can use Facebook as a tool to disseminate information about GEN via many avenues. First, you can use your status update to post links to your most recent work. You can also tag people in notes that you think they might find interesting. This is particularly useful for contests or breaking news. Lastly, Facebook also allows users to join groups and start threads to discuss a shared interest. This is another place you can use to share links about previews, reviews, news, contests and so on. Clicking the Facebook icon at the bottom of any GEN post will automatically link to the article on your profile page, where other users can comment on it or check it out as they desire.

Twitter

www.twitter.com

“Twitter is a free social networking and micro-blogging service that enables its users to send and read other users' updates known as tweets. Tweets are text-based posts of up to 140 characters in length which are displayed on the user's profile page and delivered to other users who have subscribed to them (known as followers). Senders can restrict delivery to those in their circle of friends or, by default, allow anybody to access them. Users can send and receive tweets via the Twitter website, Short Message Service (SMS) or applications such as Tweetie, Twitterrific, Twitterfon, TweetDeck and feedalizr. The service is free to use over the Internet, but using SMS may incur phone service provider fees.”

Twitter is also a valuable tool to GEN. The GEN Twitter feed automatically posts updates from the website by relaying our most recent headlines. However, if you have a Twitter account, it is much appreciated if you also share links to your work or other particularly interesting work on GEN. Make sure the tweet captures the essence of the piece by using the lead. Good leads (the opening sentence or two) should fit within the 140 character limit of Twitter. Because Twitter utilizes a character cap, don't post the full URL. Use a TinyURL service like the one at <http://www.tiny.cc>. You can also use the TwitThis button at the bottom of any post to quickly share a piece of work on Twitter.

StumbleUpon

www.stumbleupon.com

“StumbleUpon is an internet community that allows its users to discover and rate web pages, photos, and videos. It is a personalized recommendation engine which uses peer and social-networking principles. Web pages are presented



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when the user clicks the 'Stumble!' button on the browser's toolbar. StumbleUpon chooses which Web page to display based on the user's ratings of previous pages, ratings by his/her friends, and by the ratings of users with similar interests. Users can rate or choose not to rate any Web page with a thumbs up or thumbs down, and clicking the Stumble button resembles 'channel-surfing' the Web. StumbleUpon also allows their users to indicate their interests from a list of nearly 500 topics to produce relevant content for the user. There is also one-click blogging built in as well."

You must have a StumbleUpon account to use this tool. To share something via StumbleUpon all you need to do is click the SU icon at the bottom of any GEN post. This will prompt you to pick a tag for the page so that other users can find it quickly. When submitting a story you are able to use multiple tags, so take advantage of that feature. An interesting page that is appropriately labeled can gain popularity and momentum quickly.

Other

YouTube

www.youtube.com

"YouTube is a video sharing website where users can upload, view and share video clips. The company is based in San Bruno, California, and uses Adobe Flash Video technology to display a wide variety of user-generated video content, including movie clips, TV clips, and music videos, as well as amateur content such as video blogging and short original videos. Most of the content on YouTube has been uploaded by individuals, although media corporations including CBS and the BBC and other organizations offer some of their material via the site. Unregistered users can watch the videos, while registered users are permitted to upload an unlimited number of videos."

It is recommended that all GEN staff members who create video content have a YouTube account. After posting a video on GEN, be sure to upload the video to your YouTube channel and link back to the original article in the content. All original video content posted on GEN will additionally be uploaded to the GEN YouTube channel by the PR/Marketing specialist. If you don't intend on creating original video content for GEN you can still rate videos posted to the GEN channel to improve their overall rating.

Forums: If you are active in several different forums, a great way to encourage new users to join GEN is to use a banner in the signature of your posts. This is especially true if the forums you frequent explore geek culture.

Tips: Many of the popular blogs such as Kotaku, Joystiq and Destructoid accept tips about unique stories. This is particularly true about nerd-craft items. These blogs are willing to link to original content, meaning if you have a particularly interesting interview, photo or video feel free to let your editor know in order for them to submit a tip. It is mutually beneficial if they pick up the story.



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Example of sites that accept tip submissions:

Kotaku: tips@kotaku.com

Joystiq: joystiq.com/contact/tips/

Destructoid: tips@destructoid.com

Engadget: engadget.com/contact/tips/

Gizmodo: tips@gizmodo.com

Getting started

Now that you understand your role and expectations upon joining GEN, its time to move onto the nitty-gritty. Here is how you get started.

Your Public Face

There are several avenues on GEN that you will have the ability to personalize.

Username: Many of the writers here on GEN use an alias for their penname. You are not required to do so, but if you choose to pick one up please make it known to the community manager immediately upon joining. Otherwise your full name will be used as default. Please keep the username relatively short and avoid mature/inappropriate content.

Avatar: Immediately after joining GEN, pick out an avatar to represent you on the website. Headshots are preferred, but if you are uncomfortable having your image on the main page, anything else will do – aside from mature content. The avatar must be 203x203 pixels. Email the image to the community manager when your avatar is ready.

About Us Page: You will need to design your own GEN bio page. Please do not attempt to do so until you are familiar with WordPress and the process of posting on GEN. Creating a bio page is essentially the same as a post, except you choose to author a new page instead of post from the dashboard. Do not publish your page once complete. Instead, set it to "pending review" and contact the community manager so that she can set put it live. Feel free to link to other websites, post photos and generally share about yourself on your bio page – personalities are the biggest asset here at GEN and our users are genuinely interested in knowing more about us. However, do your best to keep the profile looking professional and clean. Contact your editor if you need help with customization.

GEN WordPress Walkthrough: How to Post

Here you will find a detailed walkthrough of how to post, along with descriptions of all the different things you can do in the WordPress editor.



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General Navigation

- After you log into the website and you're taken to the Dashboard, click on "Write." You should now be under the subtab "Post" (aka "Write Post"). You have now reached the WordPress editor.

The screenshot shows the WordPress Dashboard for 'The Girls Entertainment Network'. At the top, there's a navigation bar with links for 'Write', 'Manage', 'Design', 'Comments', 'Gallery', 'Polls', and 'Gazette Edition Options'. Below this, there's a 'Dashboard' section with a 'Count per Day' and 'Dashboard Management' link. A notification bar indicates 'WordPress 2.7.1 is available! Please update now.' The main content area is titled 'Dashboard' and features a 'Right Now' section with a 'Write a New Page' and 'Write a New Post' button. Below this, there's a notification from Akismet stating 'Akismet has protected your site from 4,573 spam comments already, and there are 2 comments in your spam queue right now.' The dashboard is divided into two columns: 'Recent Comments' and 'Incoming Links'. The 'Recent Comments' section shows a list of comments, including one from 'Sideshow's stuff is beautiful. I'm just so bitter that people keep calling it Star Wars: A New Hope now. It's ...' and others from 'Amber Love', 'jinxie', 'SaberRusty', 'kannaya', and 'kannaya'. The 'Incoming Links' section shows a list of links from other blogs, including 'The Top Cow Blog', 'Top Cow Productions' Amazon Blog', 'What Is Techno Again?', 'Hawty McBloggy Invites You to Play', and 'Book Recommendations, Blog and Podcast: Books on the Nightstand'.

Learning the Basics

- Most things are self-explanatory, like the "Title" field. Under the "Title" bar there will be a box with two tabs: "Visual" and "HTML." Visual is the easiest to use, so stick with that most of the time. There are some advantages to the HTML version, however, which we'll explore in a minute.
- Beside "Visual"/"HTML" are the following Buttons: Add an Image, Add Video, Add Audio, Add Media, and Add Interactive Video.
- Right above the Visual box you'll see a toolbar with your Basic Functions: Bold, Italic, Strikethrough, Unordered List (allows you to use bullets/create a list), Ordered List (creates a list by numbers), Blockquote, Align Left/Center/Right, Insert/Edit Link and Unlink, Insert More tag, Toggle Spellchecker, Toggle Fullscreen Mode, Show/Hide Kitchen Sink (formerly and more easily known as "Show/Hide



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Advanced Toolbar”), Insert Poll (don’t worry about this one), Paragraph, Underline, Align Full, Select Text Color, Paste as Plain Text, Paste from Word, Remove Formatting, Insert/Edit Embedded Media, Insert Custom Character, Outdent (not available unless you have clicked the next button ...) and Indent, Undo and Redo, and Help.

The screenshot shows the WordPress 'Write Post' interface. At the top, there's a navigation bar with 'Write', 'Manage', 'Design', 'Comments', 'Gallery', 'Polls', and 'Gazette Edition Options'. Below that, a yellow banner says 'WordPress 2.7.1 is available! Please update now.' The main content area is titled 'Write Post' and contains a 'Title' field, a 'Post' content area with a rich text editor toolbar, and a 'Path' field. The toolbar includes buttons for Bold, Italic, ABC, List, Link, Undo, Redo, and 'Add media'. The 'Add media' button is highlighted with a red arrow. To the right, the 'Publish Status' is set to 'Unpublished', and there are 'Save' and 'Publish' buttons. Below that, there are 'Related' links: 'Manage All Comments', 'Manage All Posts', and 'Manage All Categories'.

Buttons



- *Add an Image:* Clicking this will bring you two options: “From Computer” and “From URL.” Let’s start with “From URL,” since it can be done from the first menu.
 - *From URL:* Some of these are self-explanatory, so we will only focus on a few. “Source” is where you place the image URL. “Image Caption” gives you the option of putting in a sentence or two to describe the image, and this will appear under the image. “Link URL” should typically be different than the Source; clicking on the image will take the reader to this URL, whether a website or a bigger version of the image.
 - *From Computer:* Click the blue link, “Browser Uploader,” to locate the image file from your computer and then upload it.
- Once you have uploaded an image from either a URL or your Computer, your image will be stored in the “Gallery” (tab). From there you edit a number of



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things. But first, once your image is uploaded, it will appear along with its info fields and the options "Insert into Post" or "Save All Changes." Make sure the Title is something simple and fitting (your reader will be able to hover the mouse on the image and see the Title). Choose your Alignment (images are typically, but not always, centered) and Size (typically Full Size, but not always).

- Now you can either "Insert into Post," which inserts the image where your cursor was before you clicked the "Add an Image" button, or simply "Save All Changes," which does not insert the image. If you need to delete an image from the Gallery, click "Delete" and then "Continue."
- *Add Video*: This allows you to insert a video box. For more information on how this works, contact your editor. Some websites have video URLs, which can be inserted by viewing the "HTML" editor. This works well in the majority of instances.

Basic Functions



- *Blockquote*: This is essential if you are quoting something 1) from a source and 2) the quote is more than three lines of text.
- *Align Left/Center/Right*: These are now usually nonessential, since image alignment can be done by clicking on an image and choosing to edit it. From there, you can align the image effectively.
- *Insert/Edit Link and Unlink*: Turn a phrase into a hyperlink. For example, highlight the phrase "this" and click the Insert/Edit Link button. The "Link URL" is the source you want your reader to be taken to when he/she clicks the phrase (eg., website or image on a separate page). Unlinking changes the hyperlink back into regular text.
- *Insert More tag*: VERY IMPORTANT! This is used in every post. Take a look at the main GEN page/home page. Under each article header there is a snippet of text, and then you click to read the rest of the entry. "Insert More" allows you to do divide your post, making your first sentence or two a lead into the post. Put the "Insert More" tag after your lead.
- *Toggle Spellchecker*: Use this during the editing process. Typically the most efficient way to use this function is to hit the Spellchecker as a final step—aka once you have thoroughly edited and think everything is good to go. The Spellchecker will wavy underline any misspelled words, allowing you to easily detect any legitimate errors.
- *Show/Hide Kitchen Sink*: This reveals/hides the buttons on the bottom part of the toolbar under "Post."



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- *Paste as Plain Text:* Formatting (aka that mess of HTML and other code) can really put a kink in your article if you're not careful. Troublesome HTML can ruin your day! When you copy a body of text from an outside source, oftentimes there is underlying formatting—whether you can visibly predict its presence or not. Basically what Plain Text means is simply text: no specific font, color, size, URLs, or anything. Just words. If all you want is to copy and paste words from an outside source (website, etc.), use this to be on the safe side!
- *Paste from Word:* Paste from Word serves the exact opposite purpose of “Paste as Plain Text”—this is used when you want to preserve formatting (aka font, text color and size, URLs, and all that junk) the way it is already!
- *Undo and Redo:* These buttons are essential! Accidentally deleted your whole article? Don't freak out! Just click “Undo”! “Redo” is obviously the opposite. Think of these as your rewind and fast-forward buttons.

Tags and Categories

- *Tags:* Under the “Post” section is “Tags.” These aid readers and facilitate searches, but they should be short, sweet, and the most relevant keywords of your article.

Dashboard

The Girls Entertainment Network [Visit Site](#)

[Write](#) [Manage](#) [Design](#) [Comments](#) [Gallery](#) [Polls](#) [Gazette Edition Options](#)

[Post](#) [Page](#) [Link](#) [Email](#)

WordPress 2.7.1 is available! [Please update now.](#)

Write Post

Title

Post Add media: **Visual** **HTML**

Path:

Tags

Add new tag

Separate tags with commas

Categories

+ Add New Category

All Categories Anime/Manga Comics Events Interviews Press Reviews

Most Used

Publish Status

Unpublished

Keep this post private

Publish immediately [Edit](#)

Word count: 0

Related

- Manage All Comments
- Manage All Posts
- Manage All Categories
- Manage All Tags
- View Drafts

Shortcuts

Drag-and-drop the following link to your bookmarks bar or right click it and add it to your favorites for a posting shortcut. [Press This](#)

Revisions

Minor Edit

Revision are Enabled [Revision Details](#)



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- **Fixing Tags:** On the dashboard go to "Manage" --> "Tags," and input the tag in question into "Search Tags." So, for instance, if you wanted "Batman" but it was coming up "batman," search "Batman" and it'll give you a list of related tags. Click on the name of the tag you want, and you'll be able to edit it from there. All instances of that tag should be fixed automatically.
- **Categories:** What GEN section does your article fall under? Video Games, Comics, Cosplay? You should click one main category per post; you may click any number of subcategories under that parent category, depending on its relevance.
- If your article makes a good feature (or you have received approval to make it a feature story), make sure the "Feature" category is clicked, too. Feature images are, as I'm sure you've noticed, a different size than regular article headers.

Gazette Edition Custom Settings

- Each article should have a header image that will show up on the main page with your article. Headers are width: 280 x height:150. Upload your header image, give it a Title, copy the Link URL, and hit "Save All Changes." Then paste the URL into this field, and you're done!

The screenshot shows two sections of the dashboard. The top section is titled "Categories" and contains a list of categories with checkboxes: Anime/Manga, Comics, Events, Interviews, Press, and Reviews. Below this is a "Gazette Edition Custom Settings" section, which has a red arrow pointing to it. This section contains a text input field labeled "Image URL:" and a note below it: "Upload your image with 'Add Media' above post window, copy the url and paste it here."

Post Avatar

- Who are you? Select your avatar/picture from the list.

WP to Twitter

- Wordpress will automatically tweet your article to the GEN twitter account using a standard format, but you may choose to tweak this. If so, a good way is to copy and paste your article lead into this field. Good leads (aka opening sentence or two) should fit within the 140 character limit of Twitter.



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Save, Preview, Publish Status, and Publish

- *Saving:* As you compose and edit your article, you'll want to hit "Save" often so you won't lose chunks of progress! Believe me, this is essential! Remember that twenty-page paper you wrote back in college for your hardest class senior year? And remember how you forgot to save after an hour of writing, and when you got up to go to the bathroom you tripped and pulled out your power chord? Yeah, exactly. Saving frequently is key!
- *Publish Status:* There are three statuses here. When you are composing/editing, your status will be set as "Unpublished"; when your post is published it will be listed as "Published," of course. "Pending Review" is the mid-way point. Speak to your section head about whether you need green-light approval from her (or him) about hitting that "Publish" button.

The screenshot shows the WordPress dashboard for 'The Girls Entertainment Network'. At the top, there's a navigation bar with links for 'Write', 'Manage', 'Design', 'Comments', 'Gallery', 'Polls', and 'Gazette Edition Options'. Below this is a 'Write Post' section. The main content area has a 'Title' field, a rich text editor with 'Visual' and 'HTML' tabs, and a 'Publish Status' dropdown menu set to 'Unpublished'. A red arrow points to the 'Publish Status' dropdown. Below the editor is a 'Tags' section with an 'Add new tag' input and an 'Add' button. On the right side, there are 'Save' and 'Publish' buttons, a 'Word count: 0' indicator, and a 'Related' section with links to 'Manage All Comments', 'Manage All Posts', 'Manage All Categories', 'Manage All Tags', and 'View Drafts'. At the bottom right, there's a 'Shortcuts' section with instructions on how to add links to the bookmarks bar or favorites.

- *Publish:* The final step. If all systems are go, publish your work and it will show up on the main page.



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Image Formatting Guidelines

To ensure that all GEN posts have a uniform look and feel, there are strict guidelines to follow when creating images or art.

Gazette Image: 280x150 pixels

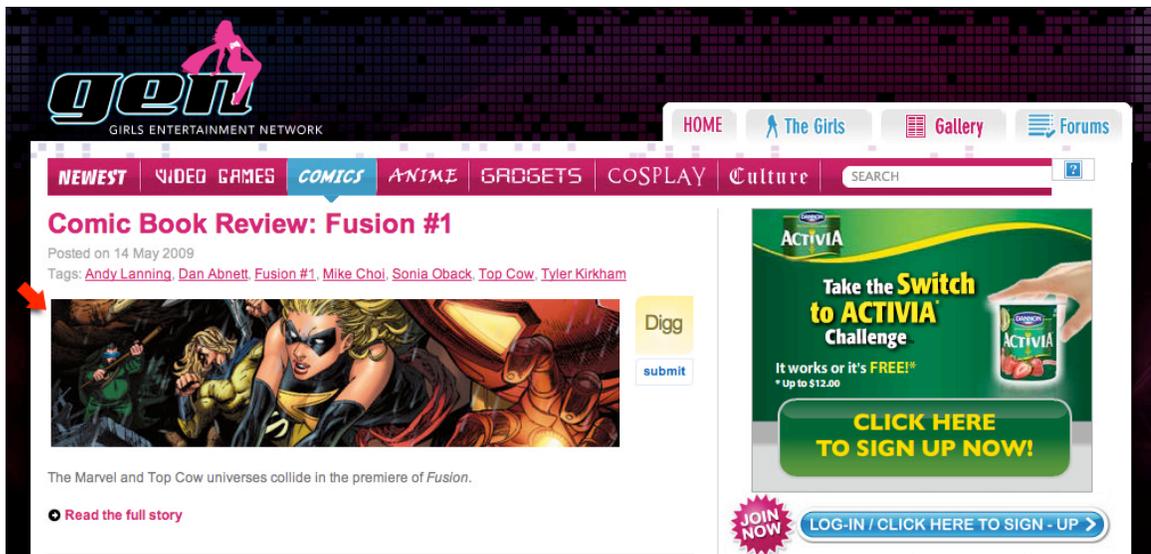
The Gazette image is not to include text unless part of the original art. All text necessary to understanding the content of your post should be found in the title or lead sentence. This keeps the front page of GEN looking cleaner and unified. Exceptions include reoccurring features in which custom art has been made.

Feature Image: 595x270 pixels

The above is also true for a feature image. No text should be used unless part of the original art. As the scroller moves between features, your lead text will overlay the image uploaded, covering a third of exposed area. Keep this in mind when choosing art and try to avoid images that are bottom-heavy in significance.

Banner: 500x130 pixels

All posts must include a banner image before the "insert more" tag. Similar to the gazette image, banners should not include text unless absolutely necessary. The goal is to use engaging artwork that speaks for itself in order to keep each section's index page orderly. Banners need not be aligned as they are already the maximum width the site allows.



In-story Images: 500x___ pixels

The website allows for images up to 500 pixels in width. You may choose to use the full 500 pixels or any increment below. In-story images are where you can get the most creative - feel free to spice them up with text, photoshopping and more.

Inserting a Gallery: If you have attended an event or are putting together an image-heavy post that will require 15+ images, inserting a gallery is necessary.



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Inserting a gallery requires accessing the GEN FTP, which can only be done by section leads. Give your section head advance notice as to when you plan on posting your piece, and transfer the files to them for uploading.

Font Selection: We realize that some site-wide events or reoccurring features may call for text to be used in either the gazette or banner image. If the title and lead sentence are not enough to convey the topic, please use your best judgment when it comes to the font selection. Generally speaking we encourage the use of simple serif or sans-serif fonts over distracting display fonts. Recommended fonts include Times New Roman, Century Gothic, Gill Sans, Futura, Helvetica and more.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Remember, if you have any questions your editor and fellow writers are here to help you.

If you are looking for the most recent contact list, one has been sent out to all members of the staff separate from this guide to facilitate frequent updating. A copy of the contact list is also available in the GENadmins section of the forums. Both this guide and the contact list are clearly marked to indicate what version they are. Each update will result in a new sequential number – for example, version 1.0, 1.1 or 1.2.