

POPULAR vs. TRADE vs. SCHOLARLY PERIODICALS – What’s the difference??

Characteristics of Journal	Popular (Magazines)	Trade (Professional)	Scholarly (Peer-reviewed)
Article length	Tend to have short articles (1-5 pages)	Tend to have short articles (1-5 pages); can be longer when writing about current issues and trends of interest to people in the field.	Five to Fifty pages which contain results of original research in a specific subject area (eg. Medicine, Ecology, Psychology, etc.).
Audience	Intended for a broad audience; meant to inform or to entertain. Can cover a variety of topics (Newsweek, Time) or a single topic (Sport Illustrated).	Intended for a specific audience, usually managers or administrators in business, finance, or industry (eg. Advertising Age or Computerweek).	Intended for an academic or scholarly audience and use specialized or technical vocabulary.
Reliability	Contain articles that do not contain a bibliography or cited reference page. The reader cannot check the author’s information by tracking down original sources.	Contain articles written by journalists and specialists in the field. Many articles are written by experienced, seasoned professionals who are up on recent trends in a given field.	Contain articles with footnotes or cited reference pages. Produced under editorial supervision of a professional association (ie. Journal of the American Medical Association)
Who writes the articles	Articles written by journalists, rather than researchers or specialists in the field.	Articles are written by specialists or journalists.	Publish articles written by scholars, specialists, or researchers in the field
Advertising/Photos	Articles are usually accompanied by photographs and include extensive commercial advertising	Some advertising; though usually limited to products related to a specific field.	Contains little or no advertising or photographs
Frequency of publication	Issued Frequently (weekly, bi-monthly, etc.)	Issued weekly or monthly to keep up with product or technology changes in the field.	Issued less frequently (ie. Two to twelve times a year)