



I'm Not a Shotcrete Expert—

But Here's How You Can Write Like One for *Shotcrete Magazine*

By Cara Baker, Managing Editor



Let me start with a confession: I'm not in the shotcrete industry — at least not directly. I don't spray concrete, design structures, or calculate compressive strengths for a living. I'm a writer and editor, someone who spends my days making sure other people's ideas come through clearly and professionally

on the page. And guess what? You — yes, the engineers, contractors, and shotcreters out there — have some really great stories worth sharing in *Shotcrete* magazine. You just need to know how to tell them!

If you've got a cool project or technical insight you want the industry to know about, you don't need to be a professional writer. You just need to follow some clear steps to turn your expertise into a polished article.

STEP 1: START WITH WORD (AND A WORD COUNT)

First things first: Write your article in Microsoft Word. *Shotcrete* magazine prefers this format, and it keeps things simple for the editorial team. If you're writing a deep-dive feature article, aim for 1500 to 2000 words. If you're doing a project report — say, about that tricky tunnel rehab or innovative pool application — 800 to 1000 words is the sweet spot.

Don't worry about being flashy. Focus on explaining what you did, why it mattered, and how you overcame challenges. Think about what *you* would want to read in a trade magazine.

STEP 2: ILLUSTRATE YOUR STORY

Now comes the fun part — pictures, drawings, charts, and tables! You should include at least four visuals. They don't need to be fancy, just relevant and clear; maybe a site photo, a detail drawing, a material application chart — whatever helps tell the story better.

There are two helpful ways you can include these visuals in your submission:

1. **This is a must:** Email hi-resolution visuals (1MB+) as individual JPG, PNG, or PDF files. This helps us ensure your story has the best possible presentation with clear imagery and sizeable graphics. **HOT TIP:** *Reach out to me at cara.baker@shotcrete.org for alternatives if your attachments are too large to email all at once.*
2. **Useful, but not required:** Embed the visuals in the Word document itself as well, exactly where you want them to appear (use a caption and label like "Fig. 1"). While this helps to ensure your visuals get placed exactly where you want them, imagery placed within a Word document loses resolution and is much less likely to be of printable quality.

Got a Story Idea?

Let us know your topic or title!

We can work with you to figure out:

- How to put together your story
- Which issue it will fit best in
- What due dates to keep in mind

cara.baker@shotcrete.org | 248.973.7832



Reference list entry

American Shotcrete Association - American Shotcrete Association. (2025, April 1). American Shotcrete Association. <https://shotcrete.org/>

STEP 3: CAPTION AND CROSS-REFERENCE LIKE A PRO

Each image needs a caption — short and sweet, ideally 12 to 15 words or less. Think of it like a headline for the photo. And within the body of your article, make sure you point the reader to the illustration: Phrases like “As shown in Fig. 2...” are perfect. This kind of cross-referencing keeps things organized and professional.

STEP 4: NAIL THE TECHNICAL DETAILS

Technical accuracy is a big deal. Measurements should always appear first in U.S. customary units — like inches, feet, or pounds — followed immediately by the metric equivalent in parentheses. For example: 4 ft (1.219 m). Same goes for temperature — write it like this: 70°F (21°C).

If you refer to a code, standard, or research paper, list it in your properly formatted references section at the end of the article. If you're unsure how to cite references, there are multiple free citation generators online to make it easier, such as scribbr.com, where I created the reference above for Shotcrete.org using just the web url.

STEP 5: DON'T SKIP THE FINAL TOUCHES

Almost there! The final two things you'll need are:

- A short author biography (about 100 words). Just tell readers who you are as a professional in the industry.
- A headshot-style author photo — clear, professional, and at least 300 dpi in JPG or PNG format.

This helps humanize your article: People want to know there's a real person behind the words, not just a shotcrete nozzle or a clipboard.

So, there you have it — from someone who may not know a wet-mix from a dry-mix, but does know how to craft a clean, compelling article. If you're in the shotcrete world and have something to share, don't let the writing part hold you back. Follow these steps, be clear, be accurate, and be proud of what you've built, both in the field and on the page.

YOU KNOW SHOTCRETE

Now it's time to share it. Ready to tell your story?

