

How to Find Guest Blogging Opportunities

You've already learned how to write a blog post, promote it, and enrich it with keywords. (If not, check out *How to Write a Blog Post*, *How to Promote Your Blog Post*, and *How to Implement Keywords in Your Blog Post* if not.) We'll conclude our series on blogging with two other important skills to have in your online marketing repertoire—finding guest blogging opportunities, and securing those placements.

You may think your own blog is plenty to worry about. After all, you could always write more often for your own blog. But guest blogging comes with added benefits: it's *great for* expanding your audience, promoting your thought leadership, and building your own website's authority.

You already know that your own high-quality blog content earns you visibility and boosts your domain authority with search engines. Getting your content placed elsewhere can amplify both of these benefits (as long as that content includes a link back to your own site, of course).

So if you love your content, set it free. Remember that it tells your story—who you are, what you're known for, and how you rock your clients' worlds. Get it out there.

Step 1: Get Googling

You may already have a few outlets in mind. If you don't—and many new bloggers won't—the first place to turn is Google.

Search for terms similar to the topics you've been writing on. Add "guest blog" to your keyword to see if that helps. Often this will lead you to full lists of top industry blogs.

You can also find great ideas on social media. See what your peers are sharing on Twitter and LinkedIn. Also be sure to check relevant LinkedIn groups.

Your goal is to find the outlets your target audience reads. You'll need to vet these outlets yourself to confirm they're relevant, reputable, and active on social media. If their credibility checks out and you see a definite fit with your audience, put them on your list. Which leads us to...

Step 2: Create a targeted list of outlets

Start a list of prospective outlets. You'll find that many don't have specific invitations for guest blog posts. Don't write them off just yet. Look around and see if they have newsletters, online publications, forums, or other possible places to contribute your content. But the best approach is to ask. You'll be surprised how receptive many blogs can be to outside educational content.

As you get into your guest blogging groove and start getting pieces published, you may find your list dwindling. At some point you'll feel like there are no more "good" blogs to reach out to. And you may become discouraged by the weak responses to your posts. Don't let any of this slow you down. If your initial list is running dry consider what other niches or influencers might find your content useful.

For example, let's say you typically write about marketing. Instead of focusing on marketing blogs exclusively, tweak your approach. You might, for example, target C-level blogs that cover marketing topics as part of a broader lineup. You may find some of these online publications to be hospitable homes for your content.

Step 3: Check out your competition

Your competitors can also lead you to fresh outlets. Consider your peers in the industry whose prospective clients mirror yours the closest. Where are they guest blogging? Typically, folks aren't shy about promoting their content when it's published elsewhere. There should be a nice trail of breadcrumbs that lead you to new opportunities.

If you know the names of your competitors' leadership, you can even Google "John Doe ABC company" for some quick intelligence. You can also set up Google Alerts to let you know when they publish anything new.

Step 4: Form blogging partnerships

Once you've executed a few successful guest blogs, start thinking strategically. Did you find an especially good fit for your content? Did you work with anyone who you'd like to deepen a connection with? Did you get great traffic from a certain post back to your website in particular? A particular outlet may stand out as one with which you'd like to build a partnership.

Here are a few ideas to include in your ask:

- Thank them again for the opportunity. Offer to write another guest post.
- Take it a step further and ask if they'll consider you as a recurring guest author.
- Return the favor by offering them a guest post opportunity on your own blog.

- Follow your potential partners on social media and promote their content to build future goodwill.

The quality of your content will be the single most important factor in an outlet's decision. The stronger your content and the more traffic it drove *to them*, the better your chances of forging a successful partnership.

Even if your partnership pitches fall short, you'll still walk away with new connections. Evaluate your new contacts for other opportunities—maybe they would make a great presenter for a future webinar? Stay in touch and reach out if you see potential.

Step 5: Focus on trending topics

Here's a way to get an edge when you're competing for guest blog spots. You can help your post stand out to editors by writing on the hottest, most newsworthy topics. Editors know this is where the traffic will come from, and they'll be especially motivated to consider your post.

For example, let's say you're in the network security industry and there's a big data breach in the news. Jump on it. You could write a piece educating companies on the best strategies for preventing similar breaches, including insights directly from the breaking story.

These opportunities may be a little more work. You'll have to stay on top of a news story and quickly turn around a pitch and a post. (This strategy will lose its value as the story fades.) But if a really exciting idea comes to you, make the investment.

Good luck as you start your journey into guest blogging! You have absolutely nothing to lose. Be sure to read the next chapter in our series — *How to Contact and Secure Guest Blog and Article Placements* — in which we walk you through the pitch process.

We encourage your feedback! If you have suggestions to improve this document email us at feedback@hingeuniversity.com. Thank you!