

# BONUS: Authority & the Benefits of Guest Blogging

Two questions may be bothering you as you head through Module 1:

1. Is Aaron special?
2. Does this work if you're not a writer?

To the first: no. To the second: absolutely.

But don't take my word for it... instead, I asked 35 influencer-status leaders in a variety of industries three questions:

1. Has guest blogging helped you grow your business?
2. How has guest blogging helped grow your business?
3. What's the one thing you wish you knew when you started?



**20 of 35 are not writers nor content creators**



Using an incredibly scientific scale, here's how their answers to the first question about "has" guest blogging helped shook out...

- Hell yeah! 63%
- Yes 26%
- Sorta 11%
- Or, no 0%

**What follows—with the non-writers before the writers—are all 35 leaders answers to the "how" questions and the "one thing you wish you knew."**

# Non-Writers

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## Savannah Sanchez, Paid Media Manager at Common Thread Collective

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After guest blogging on Sumo, I was able to generate a significant increase in leads and traffic to [my website](#), social following, and CTC. It was a huge win all around — and it never hurts to have your boss see business come in from your offsite efforts.

From there, I've often referenced my guest blogging when submitting to speaking opportunities. Plus, it's been a great bonus to include the article on my personal website to add more validation of my expertise.

Last, my guest blog is also ranking highly for the "Facebook Metrics" keyword, which is an awesome spot to be in (especially heading into the [holiday's peak campaign season](#)).

Keep engaged with the comments! It's easy to forget to comment moderate when the blog doesn't live on your own website. However, there could be valuable potential clients that are asking questions in the comments of your guest blog.

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## Marco Marandiz, Partner at Marandiz & Co

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When I've contributed to established blogs, it's been really valuable in building reader trust with my brand and what I'm working on.

The inbound leads come to me a conferred trust from the platform where my writing is featured. It also has provided more social proof opportunities on my site and through social networks.

Guest blogging can oftentimes be on a timeline, so you have to create space in your days — often at a moment's notice — to write content that can be ready for the publisher's schedule.

This created a sense of anxiety early on for me, but you learn that it's okay to miss a post. The world keeps moving and more opportunities arise.

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## Paul Rogers, eCommerce Consultant at Vervant

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Over the years guest blogging has been really good for me and the company. There was a post I wrote for the Moz blog years ago that really helped to build awareness and also helped to generate at least one lead per month.

More recently I've done quite a lot of interview-style guest blog pieces and they've been really good for reaching a new audience and generally growing awareness of Vervant.

I've then done some bigger pieces for higher-profile blogs (such as Shopify), which have done the same but at a much higher level!



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## Daniel Snow, Founder of The Snow Agency

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Guest blogging has helped grow awareness of my agency and help bolster our authority in the space. By aligning our brand with reputable brands and providing key insights in my field it portrays myself and my agency, which I represent, as a thought leader.

When prospective clients see that we have been featured in so many different blogs, it helps ease any concerns on our ability to perform for their company.

Moreover, once your article has been published you can then distribute it amongst all your social profiles as well as distribute to any newsletters you may have to further improve your agencies credibility in the space.

Going above and beyond while guest blogging garners the most meaningful results. The desired result of being in a blog isn't only to be featured, but to also leverage the opportunity to showcase your exceptional wisdom in the space.

If you aren't prepared to give it your all in a guest blog, then you are doing yourself, your business, and the blog itself a disservice. If you don't have the time to write for a guest blog, simply say no versus putting out work that is not your best.

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## Kristen LaFrance, Head of Growth and Community at Churn Buster

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I have used guest blogging in many different roles, and each time it's proven to be a killer tactic on many levels. Guest posting is a great way to not only get authority in a particular space and build connections but also build high-quality backlinks to your site.

I've strategically worked to place in-depth articles on relevant blogs, which led to increased traffic to the site, increased email subscribers, social followers, backlinks, and in turn sales.

Use your network and don't be afraid to think big! Everyone is creating content and trying to provide the best for their readership (if they're not, you don't want to guest post there).

Just because you're not on Forbes "Top 10 List" of writers doesn't mean your voice, knowledge, and perspective aren't worthy. Leverage the people you know to start finding new places to publish. Always lead with kindness and remember that you are helping them, not the other way around.

The best way to land guest posting spots is to treat editors like humans, genuinely offer help, and provide content that's worth it to their readership.

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## William Harris, Marketing Strategist and Media Buyer at Elumynt

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The biggest value I get from guest blogging has been the relationships I've built from it. When you can write an outstanding article for someone else, and it gets them a lot of traffic — you make them look like a hero to their boss or founder.

When you make people look like heroes, they want to find ways to make you look like a hero. And the cycle continues and spills over to everyone else in your combined circles. It's truly a win-win situation all around.

Go above and beyond.

People know that the content I write for them will be great. They know that I will intentionally try to fit their blog while bringing my own personality. They know that I will be careful to run through Grammarly, and often, will hire a professional proofreader.

They know that I will promote it as many places as I can — that I'm partnering with them on this piece. Not just trying to "get a backlink."

Mon- Writers

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## Andy Crestodina, Co-Founder & CMO of Orbit Media

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At first, I just wanted to be part of these sites that I'd admired for years. During the process, I realized that I was learning to be a better writer by working with amazing pro-level editors.

Yes, it's had SEO benefits, which are lovely. But the biggest upside has been a surprise: friendships.

I've met and worked with people I've admired for years, kept in touch and done my best to drive value back to them. It's been an honor to appear on these blogs and a career highlight for sure.

More research earlier. Work harder to figure out what works best on the host blog and then work harder to nail it on the first try.

I was a bit lazy at first and had to get my ass kicked to figure out how to do it right.

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## Goldie Chan, Founder of Warm Robots

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I'm not a full-time writer but I contribute to various outlets. These pieces have helped gather new clients for my social media strategy agency, Warm Robots and helped to increase brand awareness for my own brand.

When you are guest blogging be very clear what your goals are — do you want to show expertise in a certain area?

Be sure to mention those keywords associated with that vertical.





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## Georgiana Laudi, SaaS Marketing & Growth Advisor at [Elevate](#)

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Honestly, guest blogging isn't a part of my current strategy (as an advisor). The reason for that is quite simple; I'm a painfully slow writer. When I do write full-length posts, I will publish them on my own Medium account (or that of [Forget The Funnel's](#)).

That said, I do make appearances on others' blogs from time to time, but this is a result of being asked for thoughts or quotes on a given topic that the author is already writing about.

Being there along with thought leaders, combined with the mentions across social media helps, but I can't say with any amount of confidence that they've directly led to "new business" — not like I've seen resulting from podcast interviews, for instance.

Guest posting is on my radar to experiment in 2020. My intention will be to generate interest in other "deeper dive" content I've created on the same topic.

When I was in-house, representing a SaaS brand, guest posting was a part of my marketing strategy for the company. In this case, I only ever saw significant results when the blog's audience was hyper-relevant for us.

Again, driving to deeper dive content on the topic worked best for us to generate leads (vs directing readers to landing pages to generate signups).

Treat a guest post opportunity as you would a marketing campaign. Have a documented and well-thought-out strategy; know-how success will be measured; think about the supporting assets you'll need to create beyond the post itself (other content, downloadables, landing pages, email responders, visuals), timing, your promo plan, etc.

Don't skip steps. Be realistic and manage your expectations. Provide value above everything else.



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## Matt Schlicht, CEO of Octane AI

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There are two ways to go about guest blogging. One way is to write only about your own company and the other way is to write something valuable that relates to your company.



At Octane AI, we have always strived to write guest blog posts that follow this section option. By providing value, no matter if the reader is interested in your business or not, you create a piece of content that is beneficial to the reader, builds trusts, and is shareable.

This is a great way for a new business to be introduced to us. Make sure your blog post provides value for the reader regardless of if they are going to work with you or not.

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## Nathan Resnick, CEO of Sourcify

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Without a doubt! Guest blogging has helped Sourcify connect with new partners, new customers, and new audiences. It enabled us to gain widespread recognition in an industry we didn't exist in two years ago.

Our strategy revolves around providing value and unique angles. What's going to set our article apart and make our guest blog worth it. We've opened our blog up to guest bloggers now and to be honest, it's scary to see how promotional some of these people try to be.

Provide value first and then maybe make mention of the company. Don't ever be promotional.



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## Andrew Faris, VP of 4x400 and FC Goods Baseball Wallets

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Guest blogging has helped me generate general awareness, brand equity, and from there, crucial relationships that have, in turn, produced leads and ultimately new business.

That's sort of the hidden upside of guest blogging, I think: while in some cases I'm sure it generates really direct lead gen and revenue in some cases, but what I have found is that guest blogging was a launch point for new relationships and a growth in people's perception of my expertise.

That generates more opportunities for partnerships and mutual contribution, which creates growing awareness and positive perception of our ad agency, which creates leads in the long run, which creates revenue.

The stuff that really generated cascading value for our organization took me hours upon hours to research, write, edit, re-edit, re-edit again, and then promote. I worked hard on every part of it, from data compilation to writing good quality work to outreach to editors to rounds of edits, and so on.

It's like anything that way: if you really want to make an impact with guest blogging, be ready to put the time into it to make it good. If you don't, my guess is that it will fade into the depths of the Internet content abyss.

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## Josh Fechter, CEO and Co-Founder of Squibler

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I currently manage growth efforts at FutureFuel and Squibler where we do a combined thirty to fifty guest posts a month. These posts help us rank our site content better through quality backlinks.

The trick is to ensure these guest posts are designed to rank for the same keywords as your onsite content that you backlink to. This way, Google assumes that your onsite content has authority in this niche since the guest post ranking for the same keywords lists your onsite article as the go-to resource.

I wish I knew more about SEO before I started. I have wasted a lot of time guest blogging with little understanding of how it can play into ranking my site's content. At first, I did it only to build my personal brand. I didn't know the compounding effect from the traffic that comes with higher Google rankings is just as valuable.

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## Wilson Hung, Co-Founder of GetARPU and Head of Growth at Kettle & Fire

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I usually start by testing out concepts via tweetstorms to gauge engagement. If the signals look good, I just screenshot and link to the tweet to pretty much get a guaranteed accepted guest post.

From there, the main points are already done so it's repurposing into a blog format, and tactfully tying in our company naturally as a solution to the greater problem or theme of the article.

Start with tweets that take less than 30 minutes to publish instead of three hours on a full form blog post



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## Ross Simmonds, CEO of Foundation Marketing

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Guest blogging was the fastest way for me early on in my career to build relationships with some of the best in the industry, build an audience, establish authority, and drive more traffic to my site.

One of the biggest wins for me early on was playing the game of level up. I would reach out to smaller blogs early on and try to land a guest blog post. Once I landed a few of the blogs that a handful of industry folks would recognize and respect I used that experience and work sample to level up to bigger and more trustworthy blogs.

As I began writing for bigger publications, more opportunities unlocked and with every opportunity came the chance to connect with a new audience. It's one of the most effective ways to reach an already engaged and targeted audience.

It's also a great way to drive additional eyeballs to existing content that you have developed. For example, one of the key drivers of our agency's early success on Slideshare was the act of embedding our decks into guest posts. This resulted in generating more than 1M views on Slideshare and generating thousands of emails.

The one thing that I would advise would-be guest bloggers is the importance of engaging in the comments that happen on your guest posts. It's fine to let the person who owns the blog to answer questions asked in the comments but that 1-1 connection can be powerful and is not something to overlook as a real opportunity.

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## Nichole Elizabeth DeMere, B2B SaaS Consultant

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Guest posting has been instrumental in helping me build a personal brand. As a B2B SaaS consultant, getting published on well-known SaaS blogs — such as HubSpot, Segment, Drift, Appcues, Canva, Moz, InVision — not only helped me build “thought leadership,” but also enabled me to use their logos for social proof, and led to paid work for other SaaS startups and companies.

Once I had social proof, I was then able to pitch to more authoritative industry sites to get my work featured there as well, such as Social Media Today and Content Marketing Institute.

And just about every time I’m talking to a potential client who filled out a lead-gen. form, they mention having read my articles somewhere, so I know that guest posting is also generating ROI.

Just go for it. Even if you don’t think they’ll consider your work because they don’t know who you are yet, pitch it anyway as long as it’s relevant and they don’t already have that exact blog on their site.

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## Kurt Elster, Host of The Unofficial Shopify Podcast

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As a consultant, the ROI on guest blogging has been tremendous. By putting getting myself in front of other people's audiences, I have grown my authority, my audience, and ultimately gained great clients for the consulting business.

Some of my most impactful guest posts have come from sharing our journey. For example, I'm really proud of my podcast, I'm a podcast evangelist, so I jumped at the chance to share the business side of my podcast — revenue numbers and all — on [Starter Story](#).

Sharing that story has connected us with new opportunities that has kept our content pipeline full. Even if you don't love writing, you should still be able to speak to your own life and inspire others in the process.

I'm on the receiving end of a lot of bad cold outreach efforts, and that just makes the great ones stand out all the more.

The key differentiator are those that have an obvious investment in the relationship and aren't just one-sided, copy-and-pasted templates. Taking a shotgun approach to every publisher's email you can find won't work.

Go for quality over quantity by trying to develop real relationships with those people you have a genuine interest in. That enthusiasm will come through and can go a long way toward receiving a positive reply. It's the spiritual opposite of what most people do: spamming as many contact forms as they can scrape.

Elaborate on why each topic will be valuable to that publisher's audience. For me, I want to hear what my audience will learn and how that will help them as entrepreneurs.

I love to hear unconventional opinions or hot takes on topics that provoke new perspectives. Maybe you have new data or a really atypical case study you can share.



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## Johnathan Dane, Founder of KlientBoost & Kite

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This was major for us in the early days of KlientBoost. We would guest blog only on sites that had higher domain authority than us and had complimentary services.

Then, we'd make sure that we would write content that was against the normal way of thinking.

For example, this post I wrote back in 2014 for Unbounce: [You're Doing AdWords Wrong \(Here's How to Make It Right\)](#). Unbounce is a landing page tool and people reading their blog probably want their traffic to perform better too. (Box one, checked.) We wrote something around how people are using Google AdWords in the wrong way. (Box two, checked.)

Over 300+ comments plus tons of traffic lead us to achieve very early traction. Do more of going against conventional thinking, as long as you have the data to back it up.

Non-Writers



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## Nadya Khoja, Chief Growth Officer at Venngage Infographics

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For our team, we focus a lot on SEO as it is one of our biggest growth drivers. Not only does guest posting help build credibility in the marketing space and design space, but it has opened up tons of opportunity for building better relationships with new partners (like getting more guest post opportunities), as well as helping me build up my personal brand and securing better speaking opportunities.

We've also invited a lot of influencers to guest post for the Venngage blog which helps our audience gain valuable insights from people who have first-hand experience with a specific area.

Don't try to just blog for the sake of blogging. Really focus on providing useful value to the person reading what you're putting out. I also often think to myself, "If I'm bored writing this, someone is going to be bored reading this."

Reading about [management skills](#), for instance, can be a tedious subject. So I try to add humor and relatable anecdotes to keep my audience engaged. It also keeps your bounce rates low.

Non-Writers

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## Tracey Wallace, Founder of Doris Sleep and Head of Marketing at Eterneva

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Guest blogging has helped forge new relationships, partnerships, and build trust and value for the two new companies that I run in their respective industries.

Beyond that, guest blogging is incredibly helpful with SEO (increasing domain ranking specifically), and it gives me additional content to fill out social feeds, making it clear that I'm not speaking only to a bubble, but working with others in the field to educate and build value.

I come from the media world (was once a freelance writer) and know how to pitch great stories. But I often have more success with publications than I do with business owners. A lot of businesses don't understand the value of guest blogging, or of partnering in that way. And, what I wish I would have known at the start was to let those folks go.

If they don't get it, it won't bring value. The best guest blogging opportunities are with those brands that understand the value, that will promote your piece as much as you do, and that will hopefully write for you, or invite you back to write again. It's relationship-building beyond just SEO, and I now only work with brands that see it that way.

# Writers

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## Ayesha Ambreen, Digital Media Strategist and Blogger

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Guest blogging has helped us in more than one way. When we started guest blogging our aim was to build authority but we ended up getting more traffic, more backlinks, and more conversation on our social media channels.

Also, guest blogging has helped us gain more visibility in the community, a win-win for business! It takes time and patience to build a funnel (relationships) but it is worth it.

Also, guest blogging is not meant to sell, it is meant to help you grow, build authority, help the community, and become an influencer. So, focus on relevant websites and write educational and helpful content instead of sales pitches.

Writers

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## Adrienne Barnes, B2B SaaS Content Marketer at ANB SaaS Consulting

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My goal is to have a guest post published once a quarter. Guest posting has been a great way to build my portfolio and my authority.

I've had numerous clients find me because they read something I wrote for another publication. When that happens, there's no trying to convince them in the value of my writing. They come to me knowing the value, and in turn are the best clients.

Honestly, one of the best pieces of advice I ever heard on guest blogging was Aaron's. He said, "Never let your words go to waste."

I took that very seriously. Just because you're told no by one publisher doesn't mean the piece is crap; it usually means it doesn't fit into their editorial calendar at the moment.

So, it's important to be resilient, and keep pitching your piece.

Writers

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## Chintan Zalani, Writer and Content Marketing Consultant

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For a few months last year, I guest blogged in the self-improvement niche for my personal website. I only earned a handful of email subscribers and minimal referral traffic.

The short-term results didn't seem to make sense, so I discontinued guest blogging.

Earlier this year, I picked up guest blogging again. This time it was for a client in the content and ecommerce space. I simultaneously started a brand new site myself in the content marketing niche. The domain authority of both the sites has shot up to over 30, and organic traffic has also started warming up (both crossing 1,000 visitors per month).

I have found all of my current clients as a result of guest blogging.

In all of your guest posts, try to get a couple of quotes from subject matter experts. This way you also develop relationships with really cool people.

Writers

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## Jordie Black, Content Marketer at Copy and Check

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I started my career as a freelancer and guest blogging was the catalyst that allows me to work with bigger and better (paying) clients. It also gave me invaluable insight into different editing styles and content team setups.

Now, at an agency level, it's opened the door to hundreds of new contacts within various different industries. As part of all our client's growth strategy we use our existing connections with blog owners to publish content to widen our client's reach.

Guest blogging is a great way to provide clients with a healthy initial boost in traffic if they're starting from point zero and a brilliant way to expedite their growth if they've already had some experience in content marketing.

Not only are we able to secure them backlinks on high authority sites and establish them as thought leaders, but we're also able to use the guest blogging experiences to work on bigger co-marketing efforts (joint ebooks and reports) that perform extremely well.

It's not just about the backlink, though. In many cases, getting your name on a well-established site is lucrative enough as it is, without the added benefit a backlink.

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## Rachel Andrea Go, Content and Partnerships Marketing Manager at Deliverr

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We do regular guest blog exchanges with many of our integration partners (for example, listing tools like GeekSeller and SellerActive) and will do an occasional blog exchange with great eCommerce resources and thought leaders (for example, payment portals or marketplace plugins).

First, guest blogging has helped us get the word out when we have a new feature release (particularly through our integration partners). If there's something vital we want to share, tapping into that guest post network really helps multiply reach.

Second, guest blogging has helped us get valuable information into our own blog by exchanging posts and topics. Instead of trying to learn something, we're not the experts at, we'll host a guest post instead and add value for our readers that way.

Third, guest blogging has helped us build relationships with other companies. It's so fun to see them on the news and in social media, recognize their name, and be able to say, "Hey! They wrote for our blog," and, "Hey! We're published on their blog."

As for my one piece of advice to new guest bloggers: Don't annoy the editors! I'm talking five or more email follow-ups, barely any personalization, and misspelling someone's name.



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## Brittany Berger, Founder of [WorkBrighter.co](https://www.workbrighter.co)

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Guest blogging for the write publications has been one of the most successful tactics of my career. When I was building my personal brand as a marketer, taking my best ideas to already-established audiences helped me make a name for myself and start my portfolio, which eventually led to my dream job at Mention.

While there, guest blogging for the blogs our target customers loved was part of so many different areas of our marketing. Guest blogging was often a first or intro step to bigger and more in-depth collaborations with another brand, like webinars and email courses. We also used it to drive targeted links and traffic to important campaigns, position our brand and product, and so much more.

I use these same tactics in my own business and personal brand to this day. I seriously couldn't love guest blogging more — I call it my [introvert PR strategy](#) (literally, on the record).

Don't worry about saving your best ideas for your own website or platform. If anything, that's the opposite of what you should be doing. Especially when your brand or business is new, your ideas will get seen by more people in a strategically placed guest post than on your own blog.

Either take your best ideas to the biggest platform you can find for them, or use guest blogging as a way to remix the best content from your own and extend their reach in a new audience.

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## Mike Blankenship, Founder of Get Your Gusto Back

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As I'm working to drive traffic to Get Your Gusto Back and build my email list, I've tried everything — Quuu Promote, Facebook Ads, cold emailing, blog commenting, and reaching out to influencers.

None of those strategies have been as effective at generating high-quality traffic that actually converts as guest blogging has. Usually, when I publish a new guest post, I don't just receive traffic, but I see a spike in opt-ins and conversions as well.

I wish I would have known how powerful it is. It doesn't just drive traffic and conversions, it also gets your name on other authoritative websites and builds rapport. I used to only guest blog every once in a while, but doing it once per week has been a big game-changer for my business.

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## Graeme Keeton, Lead Copywriter at Revolut

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Editors I met through guest blogging 5+ years ago still send me referrals today. During my freelancing days, having guest blogger credentials opened doors which would've been near-impossible to open any other way.

Then there are the backlinks, which continue to pay dividends years later. Finally, having big-name publications as part of my guest blogging portfolio has enabled me to raise my prices considerably.

Know your worth. If you're willing to put in the work for a topic you know well, then be confident (but realistic) about your rate. You are, after all, aiming to make money for the client or platform. It's a business relationship.



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## Lianna Patch, Founder of Punchline Conversion Copywriting

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For a while there, most of my business was guest-blogging! I worked with retainer clients in the ecommerce, software, and mobile marketing spaces. Along with writing regular bylined articles, I ghostwrote a massive monthly piece for one client.

It was a great way to stay up to date on what was going on with ecommerce, while being able to point prospective clients to my most recent articles and casually, authoritatively say, “Oh yeah, I wrote about that issue you’re having.”

And I’d be remiss if I didn’t mention that I still get leads from the guest posts I wrote for CopyHackers!

Promote your dang posts. I still hate this lesson and don’t promote and share as much as I should. The sad truth is that a mediocre post shared among a solid network will garner more success than a truly fabulous post that gets zero promotion.

TL;DR — If a post gets published in the forest, and nobody’s around to read it, it doesn’t make a freakin sound.

Writers

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## Kaleigh Moore, Freelance Writer

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Writing guest posts helped me earn bylines that not only helped establish me as a subject matter expert and authority within my niche but they also sometimes lead to job opportunities, which happened when clients would reach out to hire me after seeing a post I wrote on a high-traffic site.

It was an easy way for me to get my name, face, and knowledge in front of a strategic audience and to start building personal brand recognition. Plus, having posts on sites like CopyHackers, ConversionXL, and business publications — like Fast Company, Forbes, and Inc. Magazine — were instant ethos-builders with potential clients.

Having my name associated with those brands helped me greenlight more projects and differentiated me as an expert rather than a mere writer for hire.

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## Kristina Lopienski, Head of Content at ShipBob

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Getting placements on sites that our customers and prospects view as relevant and credible has helped us drive new traffic, generate leads, increase our domain authority through links from new sites.

Even better — and to my surprise — it's positioned me as a leader in the industry of shipping, fulfillment, and logistics. Beyond that, I still get requests for input or interviews from articles I wrote 5+ years ago for an industry I no longer work in.

Don't say yes to everything. Prioritize the publishers that will move the needle. For those big opportunities that rarely come along, jump on them, fast. A last-minute request may seem impractical, but drop what you're doing if it's worth it.



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## Lucas Miller, Founder of Echelon Copy LLC

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For me, guest blogging has been a great way to share my “entrepreneurial journey” with people. As far as my business growth is concerned, however, I think the biggest benefit is that it’s made me easily “searchable” for prospective clients.

If they want to know more about me or learn about what it is that I do, yes, they can visit my site. But, more importantly, they see that my thoughts, opinions, and advice are all over the internet. This makes their decision to hire me that much easier.

When I first started guest blogging, I agonized way too much over each and every word I wrote. That said, by no means do I advise that you skimp on research, writing or the editing process. I was almost paranoid about how every word I wrote would be perceived by readers.

Now, though I still dedicate a solid amount of time to everything I publish, I write more freely, allowing myself to better enjoy the process. Writing is fun. Don’t forget that.

Writers

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## Val Geisler, Founder of Fix My Churn

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I had blogged both on my own site and for the company I was working for when I was in-house, both on their blog and on other blogs on behalf of the company. So I had a few by-lines and recognized the power of a well-placed article.

When I started my consulting business, I had a lot to say and a tiny amount of traffic to my site. So I leveraged the relationships I had developed and asked people (who I knew would accept a guest post) if I could write one of my endless ideas for them.

Using some advice from friends like Ryan Robinson on how to make the most of a guest post, I was able to 1) build on my email list 2) drive traffic to my site and 3) create leads for my business through a handful of guest posts.

Do your research! First research if the site even accepts guest posts. Do they have a page with requirements? Do you see other guest posts on their site with a recent publish date?

Then research the site owner. Get to know them on social media, subscribe to their email list, interact with them in small ways and build a relationship.

Finally, before you pitch in any way, research what kinds of posts might be valuable to their readers. What angle hasn't been covered? How can you build on what they've already written?

All of this research seems like a lot but it's what it takes to have a successful post, not to mention a long-time supporter of your work.



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## Josh Steimle, Author of *The 7 Systems of Influence* and Founder of the International Digital Agency MWI

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I've written 300+ articles for more than two dozen top-tier publications like Forbes, Entrepreneur, and Mashable. But — when it comes to building a personal brand — guest blogging for smaller, niche sites has been a necessary ingredient to give me “street cred.”

That enhanced credibility has led to more revenue for my companies, speaking gigs, and a book deal. For example, when I went to launch my masterclass on how to become a contributor guest blogging on [ProBlogger](#) allowed me to get in front of my ideal audience where they were hanging out and in a more credible way than if the same post had been in Time or Inc.

Don't use impersonal templates for your pitches with a cluttered list of ideas! Any website worth guest blogging on gets hundreds if not thousands of pitches per month, and they can spot a template pitch a mile away.

The worst offender I see starts with: “I see you post about [topic]. I really liked your post [post title]. I would like to contribute a guest post on this topic at no cost to you, just include a link to our website.”

Instead of doing what everyone else is doing, playing the guest blog lottery and hoping you win by sending out a lot of emails, send fewer emails but increase the quality.

First, verify that they accept guest blog posts (as of this writing I don't, so it's useless for people to pitch me and if they spent a few minutes looking at my blog they would know this). Second, if they do accept guest posts, write a paragraph or two that don't merely prove that you know what they've already published but shows you know where they're going and what they want to publish in the future.

Think of a blog owner as a collector of rare animals and find what's missing from their collection.

If someone came to me and said, “I see you're focusing a lot these days on your 7 Systems, but that you haven't published a lot about System #3, and I have some ideas for guest posts that could give you more content focused on that,” then that would be pretty compelling.

It would prove to me they've gone further than a temple and they really know the content on my site. Who knows, perhaps someone could even convince me to start accepting guest posts with a pitch like that.



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## Tommy Walker, Global Editor-in-Chief at The QuickBooks Resource Center

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When I started my independent consultancy, I was flat broke, living in a boarding house with nothing but a bed and a broken laptop. I took my first gigs through getafreelancer.com to make enough money to pay my rent and eat. I even went so far as to attend webinars that were giving away Amazon gift cards to people who answered a quiz question just so I could get food.

Eventually, I saved up enough money to purchase a guest blogging program, and it absolutely changed my life.

My first guest post was on Problogger and — using the strategies I learned from the program — I ended up writing for larger and larger sites. And getting paid work. The apex of it all was when I learned I had the #1 and #4 most trafficked articles on ConversionXL, at which point I negotiated a position as editor of the site.

From there I was recruited into Shopify where I set up the publishing operation for the Plus division. I moved from Shopify to QuickBooks and established and refined its publishing operation, which has now expanded to 16 different markets.

It must be said that each of the operations I've set up have been built almost exclusively with freelancers, and it's because of my own experience as a serial guest blogger that I have been able to develop a culture where everyone feels like they're part of a team and contributing to something greater, rather than just getting paid a few hundred dollars per article.

Without guest blogging, I wouldn't have the career I have now and am forever grateful to have had the training and guidance I had from someone who truly knew their stuff.

I came into guest blogging equipped with a lot of knowledge and training, so I can't speak too much to what I wished I knew. However, as an editor with very little bandwidth, there are four things I wish guest bloggers knew when they pitched me.

## 1. Do your research.

I can't even tell you how many times I've gotten pitched the same article over and over and over again. 9/10 we've already published it. If you pitch something we've already covered, you're disqualified right away.



## 2. Write an abstract.

We're busy. As editors, a lot of our job is acting as a conduit between the company's needs and the reader's wants. The larger the organization you're in, the busier the editor becomes.

If I look at your email to review your pitch, I need to know very clearly what you're pitching, the angle you want to take with it, why it would benefit my readers, and what extra special thing you would bring to the table.

The abstract is also your opportunity to give me a sense of your writing style. I don't have time to go to your website and read your work. Let me know, through your pitch and abstract, why you should be published with me.

## 3. Give more than you expect to get.

Many pitches are incredibly, transparently self-serving, even when they're wearing their best disguise. Editors see through this within the first few lines, and often the first few words. I care deeply about my readers, authors, and the integrity of the brand I represent. If you want to write for me, I expect you care about them just as much as I do.

## 4. Bring your A-Game.

This ties back to the research. If you're going to write for me, I expect you're able to write at the same level (or greater) as the people who we're paying. The things I see most often are too many unnecessary words, poor structure, and the "blogger voice."

I need you to stretch your skills and push yourself. You have to bring something to the table that will be worth the time it takes to put in a full edit. Don't send me first drafts. I can tell when you don't edit your work.

Chisel that article out of stone and make it airtight. I read a lot for a living, so give me something that I'll enjoy reading.

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