

How To
GUEST BLOGGING
Successfully

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Helpful Tips and Secrets that Will
Let You Take Full Advantage of the
Powers of Guest Blogging

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Section One

What is Guest Blogging?

The simple answer to this question is quite easy. Guest Blogging is when you get approval from the owner of a blog to have your article published. Depending upon how much traffic this particular site gets your visitor volume can increase dramatically.

The hard part is actually getting your idea for a blog post accepted!

Now before you run off and start creating blog posts there are some key points to take into consideration here. I like to refer to this as blog etiquette!

You don't want to confuse guest blogging with leaving blog comments. These are two totally separate identities. Anyone can leave a blog comment on a post or article. With a guest post you are being given the limelight or if you like the chance to create your own solo ad!

Take advantage of this and your business has the potential to explode overnight!

The Benefits of Guest Blogging

The main benefits of having a guest post published are twofold. Yes, you will see an increase in traffic to your own site. But you will also be getting your name out into the community. This definitely helps with branding yourself and your business. This exposure can lead to you being introduced to other marketers and into business circles that can have positive effects on your overall business.

To start off, it is a great idea to sit down and figure out what your goals are from guest blogging. Do you just want to get links back to your site? Are you after recognition in your field or niche? Or maybe you are looking to network with other experienced marketers? All of these are great goals and knowing exactly what you hope to achieve will help you get started with guest blogging in the right direction.

How to Find Blogs to Post On

The biggest piece of advice we can give you here is to look for blogs that are in some way related to your niche. You want your article or blog post to be found on a site that contains relevant information. This way it will seem like a natural progression for the reader to follow any links back to your own blog.

If you are active in your niche, you probably already follow a number of blogs. Add these to your list of possible places to guest blog on. Don't forget to look for guest posts and follow the author's links back to their site. This could be yet another place for you to offer a guest post. Especially if the author targeted a relevant niche, you can keep going in this manner and in no time have a huge list of blogs ready for the attack.

Posting on unrelated sites will still increase the number of visitors you get to your site, but they will not be targeted visitors. What we mean by this is that they will not have enough interest to sign up to your mailing list to download a free report. They will definitely not be buyers looking for the solution that you have to offer either. These types of visitors will be more of the general freebie visitor just browsing. So why waste a good article on this type of traffic?

The best ways we know of finding related blogs would be to do a search in Google for your niche.

Just type in blogs + the name of your niche

Some of the internet searches you can do are by using the following search strings or some variation of these terms:

- Submit a guest post

- Guest post
- Guest post by
- Accepting guest posts
- Guest post guidelines
- Write a guest post
- Guest post articles

You get the idea! While this method is effective it can also be a little time consuming.

Here are two of our favorite ways which are a little quicker:

1. Use Google Reader and set up folders for related information in your niche. Then each day simply check for blogs who have just published new information. Visit the blog and see if it compliments your own site. If so, add it into your favorites or create a spreadsheet with this information. You can also find breaking news stories here, which would make the ideal content of guest posts.

2. The next way is to simply set up Google Alerts for blogs within your niche. You can have the content delivered to you as it happens or once a day. Again, all you do is check out each site and see if it contains relevant information. If so, add it to your main spreadsheet.

With these two steps once you have them set up you don't have to worry about hunting down sites. You will be notified of new blog posts each and every day. Plus, you will be able to keep on top of which blogs are gaining more exposure and can target these ones.

Your Next Steps

Logically once you have found a list of blogs you want to start contacting the blog owner. STOP! Don't do this step right now.

Before contacting the blog owner, you want to become familiar with the blog. We highly suggest that you get into the habit of reading this blog regularly and leaving suitable blog comments.

Key points to look for are:

- Know the level of the target visitor: are they beginners, intermediates or advanced learners?
- Who is the audience of this blog? Are they other business owners, product buyers or people looking for information products and ready to buy?
- Check out the content, style: Are any of the blog posts in list form? Are posts written as tutorials and how to guides? Are the posts specific or more general?
- Check out another guest blog post and see if they have gotten lots of feedback on the site. If so, this is a good indication that the readers are responsive.
- Take a look at what type of marketers is making these guest posts. Are they all well-known marketers or experts in their niche?
- By leaving comments regularly, you are getting your name in front of the blog owner. This will actually help when you contact them by email or instant message, your name will be familiar and they are more likely to reply back to you quickly. Plus, if you leave helpful and useful information this person can see that you are someone who knows what you are talking about. You are setting yourself up as an authority in your niche!

- Leave comments for a few weeks at least before attempting to contact the blog owner directly. Once you feel really comfortable with the type of information that they publish you can ask about writing a guest post for them.

When you have found potential blogs, then create a folder in your favorites and get into the habit of reading new posts as they are published.

We suggest looking to see how often they publish, if they sell products in their posts or do they just offer tons of useful information? Make a note if they use a lot of images and graphics, again, you want to keep your post in-line with the look and feel of this blog. This will help you later on when it comes time to create your own post.

How to Properly Contact the Blog Owner

After you have studied and analyzed the blog's content you will be more confident in knowing what type or article you want to create. If you know right out of the gate that your article suits the reader of the blog in question, your acceptance rate will be higher.

Just have a general outline of the type of post or article you want to write including the approximate length of it. Your next step will be contacting the blog owner. This can be done via their contact form on their website. Or by using Skype or their email address if it is published.

When connecting for the first time you want to make sure that you start off by introducing yourself and what you do. If you have had articles published on other sites don't forget to mention this. Plus, if you have a degree in a related area this will help 'prove' your credibility to the blog owner. Any type of expertise and experience that will help set you up as an authority figure will benefit you.

In your email after your introduction outline the idea you have for your article and say why you think their readers will enjoy it. If they regularly post on this subject, then mention it. This also shows to them that you actually read and take part in ongoing discussions on their blog.

To improve your acceptance rate, we suggest that you offer your article to this blog exclusively. We really advise you to state that you will not republish this article anywhere else, this helps as blog owners don't want to publish the same post as everyone else. For the blog owner, knowing that you have taken the time to write an article just for them puts you in a more favorable light. Many blog owners will not accept a guest post unless they retain sole rights to the work. You will

still get the credit and an author by-line, but they technically own the article.

Don't assume that you can link to other sites within your article. Always ask the publisher if they allow links and if so how many. Normally you will find that the majority of webmasters are happy with you leaving one link in your author bio back to your website.

When it comes to affiliate links, again ask to see if they allow this. As you are both in the same or similar niche they might be promoting the same product and would rather not have you use your affiliate link.

The main goal of guest blogging is to drive visitors back to your site and to get them to opt in to your mailing list. This is much better than trying to incorporate affiliate links to make sales. A well written guest blog post can bring you targeted traffic for years to come!

Send your message and wait a few days to see if they respond. If you are aiming to publish in an active blog then someone should get back to you within a couple of days. If you don't hear back after a few days it doesn't hurt to send another email. If you still receive no response then move on to another webmaster.

If you have a phone number or their Skype info it can't hurt to call or send them an instant message either. Just be sure that you are not hounding them though! They could just be extremely busy and haven't had time to get back to you. Remember that some of the highly visited blogs probably receive a ton of requests and they may be booked for months ahead of time.

This is why we suggest not actually writing the blog or article until you get the okay from the webmaster. You don't want to spend hours or days writing posts for a certain blog only to never hear from them. It is much better to work the other way. Create an outline and send your

proposal in with a time frame of when you can have the article finished by. Then, once you are approved, you have plenty of time to write your content.

There would be nothing worse than to promise a particular article to someone and then give it away to another blog. A few weeks or months may pass and then your request for a guest blog is approved and you have given away the content!

Your Offer

Always offer content that is relevant to the blog owner's readers in some form or other. Study the type of content that is published and create something along the same lines. Look at the average word length and look to see if they include photos and images so you can keep your style in line with theirs.

It doesn't hurt to send them links to your own site as well, so they can see what type of content you offer to your readers. This can be extremely helpful if you are new to guest blogging and haven't yet published a guest post. The blog owner can at least check out the quality of your writing.

The more details you can give in your offer, the better your chances are of having your guest post accepted. Once you get the go ahead be certain that you meet your deadlines and deliver your content on schedule.

When writing a blog post you don't want to rush it. Concentrate on writing a quality post that you would be proud to put on your own blog. After you have written your post, let it sit overnight and then go back and ask yourself if this is the best post you could have written on that particular topic? Also view your article or post with your target audience in mind and make sure that it is relevant.

It is important to look after your post once it is approved and published. This includes responding to comments made by the readers of the blog. Do your share of promoting your post on the various social networks. If your post contains images, then pin those over on Pinterest.

If possible, try to connect with the people that have left comments and build a relationship with them. It is also a great idea to write up a post on your own blog. This post could expand on the discussion that you began in your guest post. Don't forget to link to your original post, this way you are sending some traffic to the blog owner who will appreciate this.

By taking the time to make a little extra effort you will experience better results from your guest post. By responding to comments you are showing the blog owner and the readers that you care about your content. This helps to build up your reputation in your niche.

Type of Blogs to Target

When it comes to guest blogging most people assume that they should aim for the best blogs out there. To a point this is true, but if you are totally new to guest blogging it may be a better idea to start with smaller publications. Even writing guest articles for e-zines are a fantastic way to increase your exposure.

Some top blogs will require that you have been published elsewhere before they even consider you. So targeting small publications can be helpful in creating some valuable publishing credentials.

Much less well known blogs may still receive tons of readers each day. This would be because the information being provided is relevant and these types of readers would be beneficial to you. It is much better to have 50 readers totally interested in what you have to say, rather than 500 who found your post by accident! The chances for those 50 readers to become regular readers are extremely high.

Note: Don't ever discard a blog as being too small or unknown for your content. The blog owner may be just starting out as well. As their site increases in popularity your post can very well receive more exposure, which leads back to traffic to your site.

Section Two

Let's switch shoes here and look at guest blogging from the view point of the webmaster or blog owner.

Benefits of Having Guest Bloggers

One of the biggest benefits of accepting guest bloggers on your blog is that you have pre-written content. This really helps when you are busy plus having guest posts is a nice way to add some varied content for your readers.

Some guest bloggers will have the ability to write great content for you. You may even want to set them up as regular contributors if things work out for you both.

When you find a few wonderful guest bloggers be sure to offer them a regular post on your blog. This is a great way to cover those times when you are busy or want to take a little time off. You can easily fill open slots with quality content and keep your readers entertained while you are out enjoying time with your family.

How to find Guest Bloggers

If your blog gets a lot of traffic you will most likely find that you get plenty of requests for accepting guest bloggers. If not, one idea is to set up an invitation page on your blog.

Here you can outline all the details that you expect when accepting a guest post.

This would include things like:

- Word length expected
- If you want exclusivity or not
- How many links you allow in your posts
- Any sought after topics

Plus any other relevant information which might include the best way to contact you or how far out you are scheduling guest bloggers.

What You Should Offer Guest Bloggers

Guest blogging is a two way street so you need to offer something in return for someone writing a blog post for you. The majority of bloggers will be happy to have you include a link back to their website from the blog post. This is most often done from within the author bio or resource box.

If you want to have exclusivity then this is something you need to discuss with the blogger ahead of time. It is often nice to be the only blog offering this particular article. It will keep your readers engaged with fresh and interesting content and help you increase additional visitors to your site.

After the guest post has been published keep in contact with your blogger, especially if the post receives lots of favorable comments and attention. This way you can invite them to write a follow up post addressing some of the common concerns and questions. Plus, you might want to seriously consider giving them a regular spot on your blog. You get quality content and the guest blogger gets recognition.

Setting Up Guidelines for Guest Bloggers

Let's get into setting up your guidelines for guest bloggers in more detail. This really is an important step and when set up correctly will save you a lot of headaches and frustrations.

Cover the basics of how you want your guest post delivered including the delivery method and format. Do you want your post in a text or word document, or would you prefer it to be web ready and submitted as an html page or not?

If you prefer your articles to have sub headings and short paragraphs put this information in your guidelines. The same applies if you want authors to make use of the appropriate H1 and H2 tags.

Delivery method can include sending via email or uploading to your site via your contact page. It is possible to use Wordpress plugin forms that allow the user to upload files to send you. If you go this route then we suggest using a form that incorporates a capture form. This should help cut down on any spam related content being uploaded to your site.

State what your quality standards are. This can include the length of the post, type of language preferred and the originality of the article. We strongly suggest not being overly strict, so that you don't hamper any author's creative juices.

If you have any preferred topics or subjects post them on your guidelines. Linking to similar blog posts is also a good idea.

Be clear on your linking policies. This includes whether you want the author to link to another article on your blog. Also be very clear if the author can link to their own content within the article or only via the

author's box. If you do not allow affiliate links state this clearly up front. This way you will prevent any misunderstandings.

If you want the ability to edit the post be clear about this on your guideline page. Let the author know that you reserve the right to correct grammar and punctuation and edit the post as you feel fit.

The same applies to keyword usage if you have strict terms of this state them to the author. If you allow keywords to be hyperlinked inform your prospective guest blogger of this and state clearly how many hyperlinks their article may or may not have.

Decide if you would like the guest blogger to submit their own images or if you prefer to select your own. Just remember that if the author sends in images, then they will need to send you the related credits pertaining to the image. You don't want to get into trouble for not attributing credit where it is due.

Clearly state your republishing policy. If you expect to retain sole publishing rights then have this written out clearly. The policy most commonly used is that the guest post will belong to the blog owner. The author gets credit for the article, but cannot republish anywhere else.

For the author's by-line state how many links they are allowed the normal practice is just one link in this section.

Once you have your policy written out, set it up on your blog in an easy to find location. Many people name their guidelines with names such as:

- Write for Us
- Guest Bloggers Wanted

- Guidelines for Guest Bloggers
- Submit a Guest Post

Taking the time to come up with your own guidelines will help cut down on the amount of inappropriate content that you receive. Plus, when anyone emails you with questions you can just send them to your link. You may also want to post your link on your contact page as well.

Receiving tons of great guest posts can also be a wonderful source of inspiration for you. By reading some of these posts you will find that your creativity juices get sparked up. It will be easy for you to think of additional blog posts that you can add which relate to these guest posts. Before you realize it you will have content prepared for weeks if not months in advance!

Best Practices for Guest Bloggers

In this section we want to recap what we define as the best practices for guest bloggers. You can easily reference this as your cheat sheet if you like.

1. Always take the time to research the blog owner's name so you can personalize your email.
2. If you can't find the owner's name reference the blog name in your email. Don't use the http:// reference as this can sometimes trigger spam filters.
3. Read the blogs guest post guidelines before submitting your article. Ensure that it meets the required word count, topic and adheres to any formatting guidelines.
4. Make your blog post easy to read. Use bullet points, lists and bold words when necessary. Keep your paragraphs short and provide lots of whitespace which is easy on the eyes. Don't forget to include images or graphics if required, again refer to the guidelines for assistance.
5. Reference other guest blog posts you have done if applicable. This increases your authority in your niche and helps you jump the queue for being accepted.
6. Have a clear call to action in your bio or resource box. Let the reader know they can get more information or download a free guide by clicking on your link.
7. Be prepared to reply to comments pertaining to your post.
8. Use the comments and questions from your blog post as material to create new posts.
9. Try to develop a relationship with the host and see if you can write on a regular basis for them.

10. Write for your readers and not just for the search engines.
11. Remember that guest blogging brings you an audience and not just visitors.
12. Direct the readers of your guest post to a free giveaway on your site. This way you can keep in contact with them and let them know when you have added new content.
13. Tweet about your guest post and post it on your Facebook page.
14. Research your target blog carefully.
15. See how many posts were written by other bloggers. This will give you a good indication of if the owner even accepts guest posts.
16. Edit your post very carefully before submitting it.
17. Include a short bio with a link to a relevant topic or giveaway on your site.
18. When looking for site look for those where the owner states that they are going away on vacation or travelling and target those as these owners have a more urgent need for the material immediately.
19. Check to see if affiliate links are allowed.
20. Check the guidelines or ask if any special file formats are required when submitting posts.
21. Approach your target blog with a series of articles for posts as this can increase your chances of acceptance.
22. Ensure that your guest posts offer valuable information and are not just a sales letter for one of your own products.
23. If you do include links in your article double check that they are active.

Best Practices for Host of Guest Bloggers

1. For guest posts that attract a lot of attention aim to get this author guest blogging at least once a month for you.
2. Guest posts are great for SEO purposes, but always think of them as a way to add content to your site.
3. Advertise on Facebook and Twitter who you have guest blogging for you each week.
4. Allow the blogger at least one link in their author bio back to their website.
5. Determine whether you will allow guest bloggers to use affiliate links within their posts or not.
6. Setting up Guest Blogging Guidelines will cut down on the amount of emails and questions you receive.
7. Don't forget to advertise for guest bloggers on social sites.
8. Use LinkedIn to find authors.
9. Thank the author for their contribution.
10. Make use of blogging communities to find people to guest post for you.

Conclusion

After reading this report you may feel a little overwhelmed by what is involved with guest blogging. While we have provided you with tons of advice once you have a system in place it will be easier for you to manage. This applies to both the guest blogger and the owner of the blog.

For the guest blogger setting up a spreadsheet with links of where you have applied to and if and when you receive a response is a huge help. You can easily track which of your efforts are paying off. Plus, you can add a note if a blog owner asks you to contact them in a few weeks or months. Don't forget to add a reminder to your calendar when this happens.

Don't forget about setting up Google Alerts and making use of your Google Reader. This will help you find new blogs to apply to and keeps you up to date with current news in your niche. You can then be the first person to write an article on a breaking news story!

For blog owners setting up submission guidelines will really save your sanity. Otherwise, you might just find yourself bombarded with hundreds of submissions which don't fit your criteria.

After stating your guidelines any ill-fitting submissions can just be trashed. Following instructions is important for any author as you don't want to end up editing content all day either.

Once you have streamlined your submission and acceptance process, you will have freed up your time for other areas of your business.

We hope that you have enjoyed this report and are looking forward to either writing guest posts or starting to accept them on your blog. Whichever road you take, you are sure to meet some wonderful people and see more traffic coming to your site.

Happy blogging!

Sue Anne

Resources:

<http://myblogguest.com/> - community of guest bloggers

<http://technorati.com/> - Technorati is a great way for both site owners and guest bloggers to find suitable blogs

- [About Sue Anne Dunlevie](#)

Remember that kid who won the bike for selling the most at the school fundraiser?

That was me. I've always had a gift for sales—even back in those days.

But when I attended college in the 70's, women didn't go into sales as a career.

So, I did what anyone longing to be in sales would do: I became a teacher, of course. (Hey, it was the 70's!) And while that was a lovely career, the minute one of my girlfriends landed a job in sales in the early 80's, I knew I could, too. And I applied for sales positions so fast your head would spin.

Since then, I've sold linens to hotels, copiers to small business owners and medical devices to hospitals and wholesalers. I was great at it, I won awards for it and it was everything I hoped it would be.

It became clear I had a certain talent that didn't always come naturally to others, and so, twelve years ago, I first began coaching women on how to get clients and sell their products and services—with integrity, with success, and *without* the pushy car salesman vibe.

Fast forward to the present day, and here I am having more fun than ever, helping women with online businesses get more customers & clients, and sell more products & services.

Because, at the end of the day, sales is truly the heart of everything—as much as we may not like to admit it. I've had the pleasure of working with so many sharp, talented women in their field who simply weren't doing as well as they could have been because they were missing the sales piece. And to me, that's a tragedy, because sales does not have to be this big, scary, looming concept.

It can be fun.

It can be easy.

It can be enjoyable.

It can certainly be profitable.

And it can change *everything*.