

Guest Blog to Build a Bigger Base

Some people panicked when Google spam expert Matt Cutts announced on his blog that there was a decay and fall of guest blogging. So all of a sudden, everyone decided to steer clear of guest blogging – and they didn't even read the fine print.

So let's cover guest blogging, because there's a big difference between valuable guest blogging and guest blogging for SEO (Search Engine Optimization) purposes, which is what he said is now viewed as spammy.

Your goal isn't just to spam blogs for backlinks. *That* is a problem. Guest blogging should be done as *one* part of a multi-part list building effort – and in moderation.

You want to be particular about where you guest blog, and how often. But the way you'll be learning it here will prevent you from churning out low-quality guest posts anyway, so you'll be safe.

Matt even posted some spammy guest blogging requests he'd recently gotten – and these are what you do not want to be doing. This is when you send out random, impersonal requests to stick content on someone else's blog for the sole purpose of getting a backlink from their site.

You're not going to be asking for "do follow" links like the spammers do. That's because they want link juice, and your goal is to connect with the audience and get them to click through to your squeeze page.

Matt even says you can accept guest blogs from those you know and trust. And that is where you should be positioning your guest blog posts – with bloggers you know and respect *after* you've allowed them to get to know you and respect you as well!

He even states specifically in the [guest blogging article](#), that the good reasons to *continue* guest blogging are for "exposure, branding, increased reach, community, etc." Yes! That's what you're looking to do, and the Google expert himself has okay'd it for you.

So now that that's laid to rest, let's look at how to properly approach guest blogging in a way that you can use it to help you build a loyal following and increased subscriber base.

What Is Guest Blogging?

Guest blogging is a great concept when done right. Basically, you're developing a blog post – just as you would for your own blog – and allowing someone else to post it on his or her blog.

This is unique, original content that you created. It's not something you use elsewhere. The blogger posts the blog on his or her site and then either gives you an introduction as the guest blogger, or simply allows you to create a "bio box" just as they do in magazines – with your name, a blurb about yourself and a link back to your site.

Find Blogs You Want to Guest Blog For

Before you get started with a guest blog post, you have to find a blog that you want to write for. This is not a one day event where you log online, do a quick keyword search, find a blog and pump out content for it.

You want to choose the *right* blog and the *right* audience. In order for you to craft the best guest blog post and get it accepted, it will take a little time for you to observe and find the right content to create.

You want to find a blog with an active audience – one that has active posts that are current, not from 3 months or three years ago. Check the dates of the blog. If, per chance the blogger hasn't allowed dates on their blog, then sign up and observe and see if they post frequently.

Is the audience active in the comments section? You don't want to be talking to a blog that doesn't have a thriving audience. Check to see what the comments are, not just the numbers.

Some poor bloggers don't know the difference between spam comments and real ones, so look at the comments and see who is commenting, what they're saying (could be great ideas for a guest blog post or opt in offer here), and how many are in discussions.

You want to choose a blog with the same target audience as the opt in freebie you're driving them to. You might need to swap out your opt in freebie if you find a blog willing to let you guest blog, but your offer is slightly off-target.

Fill a gap for someone on a topic that you know more about than they do! It should always be something relevant for their blog, but as long as it all ties in, see if you can fill a gap for them.

For example, let's say you're in the Internet Marketing niche and you go to a great blog that's thriving and current. But the blog owner has nothing on SMS Marketing (text marketing).

You would be doing them a favor by helping them have a whole rounded blog with another relevant IM topic. Make sure you check with them first if this is your approach, though.

You don't want them to balk and say, "I don't want to cover SMS Marketing." See if they would appreciate your filling the gap and if not, look for a topic they *do* need.

Approaching Bloggers with an Offer

Ideally, you will have formed a relationship with this other blogger before you start asking if you can guest blog for them. They need to know you're not just some spammy backlink builder.

So spend some time on the blog as a participant, get to know the blogger and interact with him or her, and then later approach them with an offer if the time is right.

You can approach it content-wise in one of two ways. One way is to ask them if you can guest blog for them and if they have any topics they need help with, as mentioned previously.

The other way is to have readymade content available for them. If this is the approach you take, then go ahead and prepare the blog post and when you email them asking if they'd like to use it, send the post as an attachment for their review.

Let them know that if you don't hear back by a set date, you'll assume they're passing and you'll go ahead and use the content elsewhere (said politely, of course).

Of course you can also do an exchange request. This works well sometimes if the other blogger has enjoyed your blog as well. The two of you can cross promote to each others' audiences by writing a guest blog post for each other.

You want to know what the terms are of the guest blog opportunity. For example, will the link be live or un-clickable? It doesn't need to be a "follow" link, but it does need to be clickable so the reader doesn't have to copy and paste it into their browser.

As a side note, when the blog post goes live, check to make sure the link is actually clickable and has no typo errors in it. There have been a few cases where the blogger underlined the link, colored it blue and bold, but it was only formatted that way and not an actual hyperlink.

What will happen once the blog post goes live? Will the blogger email out about it, and put it on their social networking accounts? Most will want to do this anyway, but you want to make sure you have the details spelled out.

And the bio box is very important, too. Where will it be located? Some bloggers put it before the content, as a way of introducing you. Others put it at the bottom. You might request an introduction by the blogger and a bio box at the bottom.

Crafting the Perfect Guest Blog Post

What kind of blog post will make blog owners want to host your content so that you can build your own list? The first thing you want to do is make sure it's uniform for the site.

That means creating a blog post with a similar length, style and tone as the original blogger to some degree. You don't want to provide a 250-word blog post if the blogger usually has 1,500-word posts.

Likewise, you don't want to submit a blog post laden with four-letter words and crass humor if the blogger is more professional and vice versa – if the blog is less professional, and your content is too stiff, that won't go over well with their audience.

You do want your content to be entertaining, informative and cutting edge. Your blog post as a guest has to be some of the best you've ever written. It should be something you *wish* you could put on your own blog because it's just *that* good.

In addition to creating the blog post itself, you'll want to create an author's bio box that helps drive traffic from their blog to your squeeze page. In this case, you might even point them back to one of your blog posts if it has an opt in form in the sidebar and below the blog post.

You could write a part 2 on your blog and publish the part 1 on their blog. Or, you could just link them directly to the squeeze page freebie so that they could download something and get on your list immediately.

Notice specific blog layouts for your blog host. For example, do they use long paragraphs or very short ones? Do they use lots of subtitles? You want the posts to look like they fit in nicely with what's already there.

Writing and delivering it this way will also make the blog owner instantly feel more at ease with your content and more likely to say yes to whatever you've produced.

Post Guest Blog Promotion Strategy

Once you submit the guest blog post and the blog owner has accepted the offer, you're not finished with this list building effort. You have more work to do! Just as you want the blog host to promote your content, you need to do the same.

Even though you already have some people on your list, you still want to drive your list to the blog post. The more activity it gets and the more social shares it gets, the more your list will grow.

Once the post is live, go to it and use the social sharing buttons to share it on all of the main sites, including:

- Twitter
- Google Plus
- Facebook
- Pinterest (if applicable, which is a good reason to include a picture in the post)

Some other sites might work well too, like Tumblr. It all depends on the niche and target audience.

On these social networking sites, you want to share the link with some of your own commentary posted along with it. You might say something like, "Appreciate the opportunity to teach John Doe's blog readers about SMS Messaging!"

Blog on your blog to complement the other blog post. Even if it's not a part 1 and part 2 post, you can put a new post on your blog for a topic that complements the other one, and drive traffic to the other blog.

You'll already have them on your blog, but let's say they haven't opted in and you want them to go straight to your squeeze page. Send them to the other blog and make that link go straight to your freebie opt in offer.

Guest blogging is just one of many ways you can help build your list. You want a well-rounded approach, not one where you put all your eggs in one basket. Use it effectively and you'll see results.

That means spending plenty of time researching the best blogs, forming relationships with those bloggers, and crafting content so amazing that you wow their audience enough to click off their blog and come sign up with *you!*