



7 *PROVEN* STEPS

to landing guest posts
that actually get results

So, you want to guest post, eh?

Maybe you've never written one before... or maybe you have, but haven't seen any results.

Either way, these seven steps helped me land over a dozen guest post opportunities and increased my website traffic by over 40%, and can do the same for you. Guest posting has the potential to drive huge traffic to your site and show you as an authority in your field.

Without further ado, let's dive right in.

Step 1: Determine your target audience.

This is the most important step on here! If you don't know who your ideal audience is, you could get a ton of the *wrong* traffic and not make any sales or capture any leads. Some of you may have already experienced this firsthand.

You don't want that, do you?

Didn't think so.

First, do your research.

- Look at similar popular blogs in your niche to see who is commenting on and sharing their posts.
- If you have some traffic, look to see who is commenting on and sharing your own posts.
- Send your current traffic a survey, and even perform some one-on-one interviews if possible to find their needs and where they find content online.
- Look at your followers on Twitter, or your competitor's followers, and see who else they follow. Research those businesses.

These steps will do for now. Your research will get easier as you bring in more traffic.

Step 2: Find 3-4 ideal blogs to pitch

That's right – just three or four.

I'm going against the big guns telling you to write 50-100 or more guest posts. Not to say you can't do that eventually, but it's not practical to start.

What you want to look for are the **three to four blogs that will have the biggest impact on your bottom line.**

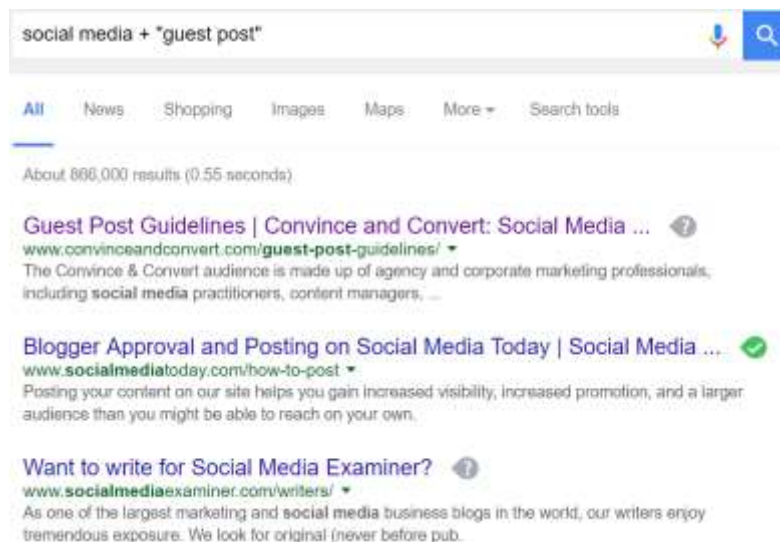
In order of importance, you should look for blogs that:

- Are related to your site
- Only post high quality content
- Have a real following of engaged readers (look for high shares and comments)
- Won't hide your link in an author bio way below the content
- Have a significant amount of engaged social media followers

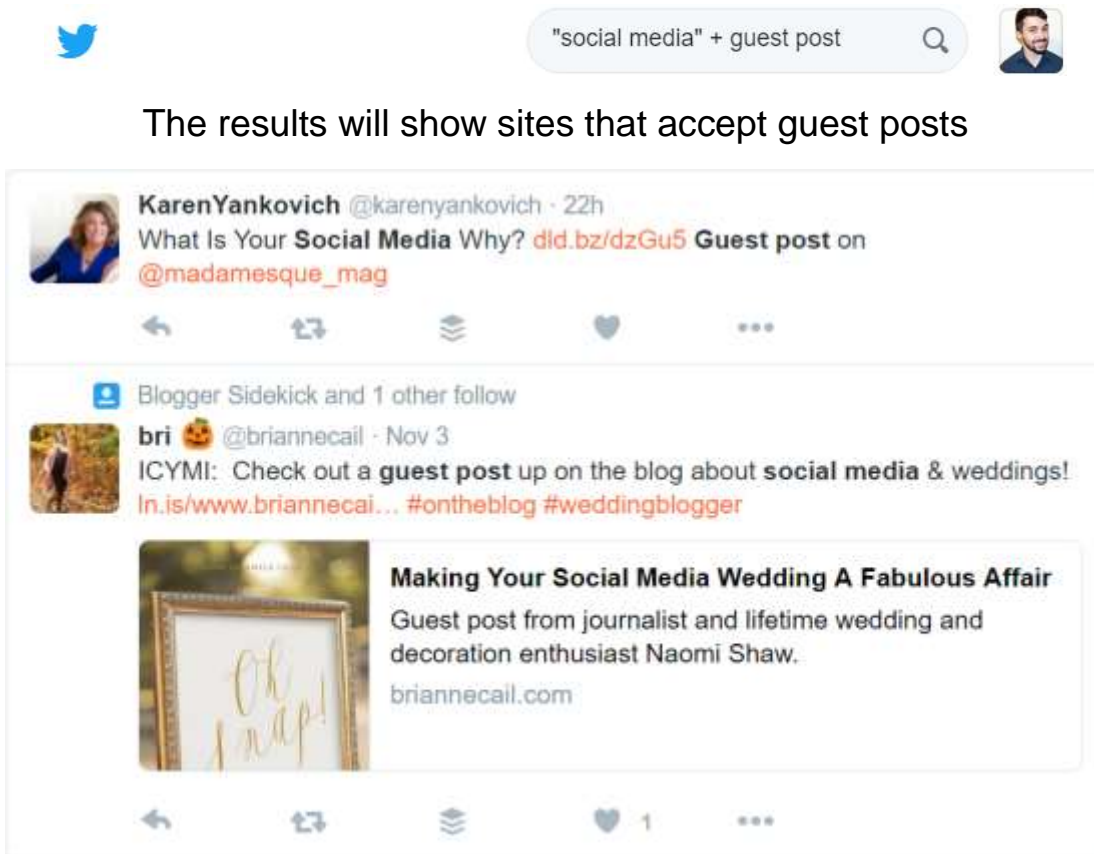
Ideally you should look to the high-quality blogs you're already reading. However, if you don't have any and need help finding them, some strategies to find these blogs include:

Use a Google Search String, like:

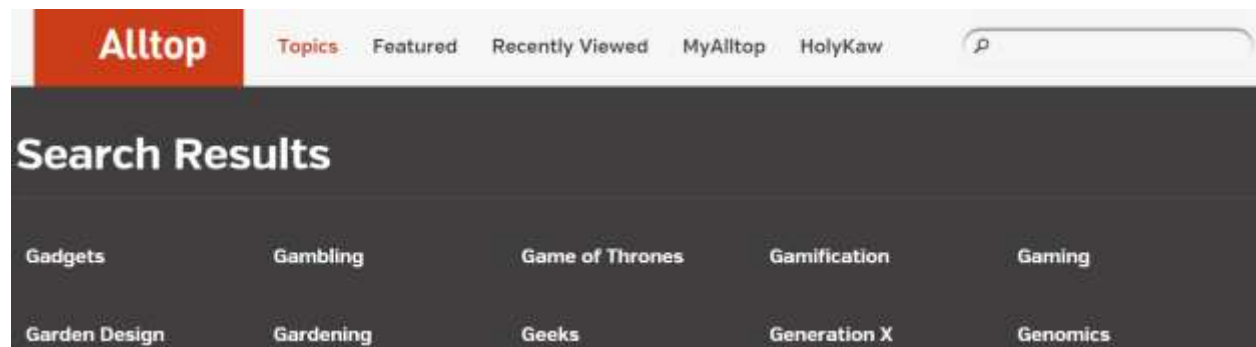
- “your keyword” + “guest post”
- “your keyword” + “guest article”
- “your keyword” + “write for us”



Go to Twitter and search “your keyword” + guest post:



Find the top blogs in your category with Alltop.com:



Step 3: Warm up your targets

You want people to feel like they've seen your face somewhere when you finally reach out to them. That recognition will increase your chances by a lot when you finally pitch the ideas.

Here's how to warm them up:

Follow and comment on their social media profiles



Bill Widmer @TheBillWidmer · 1m

@SME Examiner Great stuff, @Mike_Stelzner! It seems #FacebookLive is really going to be huge in 2017.



Post thoughtful comments on their blog (and share their posts)

November 4, 2016 at 11:41 AM

Bill Widmer

It amazes me how much awesome content you pump out, Neil. Hats off to you.

Facebook video seems to be a huge trend lately, and I'm sure that will continue in 2017. I love the bit about actually thinking through what your customer is doing when they go through the process of watching the video. A lot of the businesses I've helped never even thought of that, and made tweaks based on their idea of what would make it better without ever thinking of the UX.

Anyway, thanks Neil!

Cheers,

Bill

Email them to let them know how helpful a specific piece of content was (1-2 weeks before step 5 so it doesn't seem like you're just trying to get on their good side).

I sent this to Neil Patel:

Hey, Neil!

Just figured I'd give you a nice break from the crap coming in your inbox.

*I've been following you for a long time now, and I love your stuff. Bought your book *Hustle* last week, and I've been loving it! You (and the other authors) have a great way of turning ideas into entertaining stories.*

That's all I wanted to say. Happy Friday!

Cheers,

Bill

Step 4: Research their current posts

Go to the blogs you plan on pitching. Check out their current posts.

What works well for them? What posts have gotten a lot of shares or comments? Make a note of them.

What's their writing style? Can you match it?

The most important part of your research is this:

If they have guest post guidelines, read them!

They likely spent a long time putting together those guidelines. The easiest way to get a big fat "no" is by not following the game plan they laid out for you.

Step 5: Pitch some amazing topics

Based on your research, come up with some ideas so good and so relevant to their readers they can't help but say yes.

Make sure you pitch some spectacular headlines. Headlines can make the difference to your article's success or failure. Use [CoSchedule's headline optimizer](#) to help you out.

Here's a template you can use when reaching out to them via email:

SUBJECT: Guest Post for (Their Site)

Hey (Their Name),

I just want to start by saying that I'm a huge fan of (Their Site). I'm reaching out to you to offer up a unique and value-packed guest post for you.

I did some research on topics that have performed well for (Their Site). Here are some ideas I had:

-Headline #1

-Headline #2

-Headline #3

You can check out some guest posts that I've already published at (Authority Site) and (Authority Site). [If you don't have any guest posts yet, link to posts on your blog. If you don't have any, write some!]

Let me know if you're interested.

Cheers!

(Your Name)

Be sure to actually do the research and find topics that have performed well!

Give them 3-5 days to respond. If they don't get back to you by that time, write a follow-up email. I use something like this:

Hey (Their Name),

Hope you're having a great day!

I just wanted to follow up on my last email because I know how busy you are and how easily emails can get lost.

Please let me know if you'd be interested in a well-researched, in-depth guest post. I'd like to get the outline to you once you choose a topic.

Cheers!

(Your Name)

Step 6: Write the best content of your life

You've done the work, and got your pitch accepted.

Awesome!

Now the real work begins – writing the article.

When I say write the best content of your life, I mean write something so good that it attracts more comments & shares than other posts they've had.

Of course, writing is only one part of the puzzle to get content shared, but crap content doesn't get shares regardless of the other tips and tricks used.

It also won't do you any favors. So, bottom line, write as good of an article as you possibly can.

How?

- [Outline your article](#) before you start writing.
- [Format your article](#) for readability.
- Define a clear, step-by-step system and final takeaway from your post.
- Longer is better – I like a minimum of 1,500 words, and will even write up to a 6,000-word beast on occasion to stand out. Of course, don't stuff it with crap. Make sure it's all relevant and high-quality info.
- Include tons of media like screenshots, charts, and anything else you can get your hands on. Images add tons of value when done right.
- Edit your post, then edit some more. Please don't let them find any spelling or grammar errors anywhere. Please.

- Sprinkle in plenty of internal links to their best posts. Trust me, they will appreciate this.
- Finally, [add a few tweaks](#) to put the finishing touches on it.

Step 7: Take action after it's published

- **Send a thank-you email.** You worked hard to get your foot in the door! If you build that relationship, you may be able to help each other further in the future.
- **Respond to comments on the post.** Doing so can net you more traffic and authority, and make the owner of the blog's life easier. Also, reaching out to commenters can potentially net you more guest posts!
- **Promote it on your social media profiles.** This should be a no-brainer.
- **Reach out to anyone you mentioned in the article to get more shares.** For example, if you quoted any experts or fellow bloggers, be sure to drop them a note and a pre-populated tweet so they can easily share. This step only takes an extra 10-30 minutes and can make a huge difference.

Bonus Tips:

Here are a couple extra points to help you get the most out of your work:

- **Send your post in HTML format.** I usually create it in my own WordPress site, then copy-paste the HTML text into a notepad to send over. For images, upload them to your WordPress or Flickr.
- **Ensure a good file name.** Rather than naming it "guestpost.txt", call it "posttitle.txt" – small, I know, but again you want to make it as easy as possible.
- **For extra pizzazz, add a [content upgrade](#).** Send over a PDF or video they can give their audience to improve their content. Very few people do this, so you'll definitely stand out to them.

- **Write an enticing bio.** Don't just state your name and company. This is the perfect place to add a call-to-action, like a free cheat sheet (like this one) or a free template or eBook. Create your own content upgrade to give your guest post readers.

And there you have it – seven proven steps to landing guest posts that actually bring you more traffic and engagement!

If you're starting from absolute scratch, this whole process can be done in just 4-6 weeks. In less than two months, if you play your cards right, you can see a huge influx of traffic to your business or blog website.

Quick Wrap-up



This is meant to be down and dirty guide and reference point. For some it's new material, for others a review.

If anything sounds confusing or doesn't make sense...don't worry!

I'll be in touch very soon to answer any questions you may have and clear things up. Cheers! -Bill