

The Free Traffic Loophole

I'm just going to come right out and say it: guest blogging isn't a smart way to build a blog.

I hate to break it to all the bloggers out there, but they're doing it the hard way. ALL the leading authorities online take advantage of the "Oprah Factor."

Think about it. Oprah didn't get famous for her writing style, her extensive knowledge of fine wines, or her acting. And even though she's on the cover of literally EVERY ISSUE of her magazine...



...do you think she's the one writing all those articles? *Of course not!*

Oprah isn't famous for her content...she's famous for aggregating content from celebrities, experts, and world leaders that her market will find interesting.

We call it the "free traffic loophole formula"...

$$\text{OPC} + \text{R} = \text{T}$$

To put it in plain English...

Other People's Content + Reach = Traffic

When I say “Reach”, I’m simply referring to the number of social media followers a particular writer has. The more Twitter followers, Facebook fans, etc, the bigger the “Reach.”

When we discovered this “formula” we decided to test it to the extreme.

We began hiring writers with a strong social media following and paying them between \$10 and \$100 per article.

At first we didn’t realize what was causing it, but there was no doubt that every time we published an expert’s article our traffic would spike. We paid them for the content, but then **they sent us loads of free traffic in the form of tweets and Facebook shares...**



...some were even kind enough to email their subscriber lists!

These articles were generating 1000's of visits for \$0.03 and \$0.04 a click which is much less expensive than other forms of paid traffic.

Now that you understand the basic concept of the “Free Traffic Loophole,” let’s cover the step-by-steps of how you do it.

From Blogger To Editor In 7 Steps

First, finding guest contributors for your blog will be much easier than you think. Most experts are ambitious and motivated to build their personal brand through guest blogging.

STEP ONE: Research

The first step toward building a solid list of guest contributors is research.

It's simple to do. Just Google your site's most relevant keywords (the ones you'd absolutely love to rank for) and look at the blogs and other content sites that already rank for those phrases.

Then, pick out a few competing sites that are currently sitting where you'd like to be and make a list of their writers.

Some of these writers will be working under exclusive contracts, but the vast majority of them are freelancers who are ready, willing and able to write for anyone who'll pay them.

Once you've identified 20 or so writers, track down and record their contact information through social sites like Twitter, LinkedIn or Facebook. Many of these writers will also have personal blogs that contain contact information.

Don't contact the writers yet, we'll do that in a later step.

STEP TWO: Determine Reach

Once you have a list of 20 potential contributors, it's time to vet the candidates.

The main criteria you are judging are:

1. Can they write coherent sentences?
2. Do they appear to have a good overall knowledge and understanding of your topic?
3. Do they have enough clout on social media to boost your site?

Ironically enough, there's an app for #3... it's called Klout.com. Klout is the quick and dirty way to size up potential writers and determine the size of their audience. It aggregates your popularity across a bunch of social platforms and gives you a Klout score.

Once you know that a particular writer has at least some "Reach" (we like to see a score of 55 or higher), it's time to reach out and touch someone...

STEP THREE: Making Contact

It's time to contact the prospects that have made it through your vetting process.

Email is going to be your most common form of outreach, but we have also had good luck contacting guest contributors through Twitter, LinkedIn, Facebook, and even Google+.

Feel free to use the following email template,

Hi _____

I read your article on [BLOG] and was very impressed.

I'm the Managing Editor at _____.com, and I'd love to hire you as a guest contributor on the site. We focus on [TOPIC] and [TOPIC] and I think your writing would be a great fit for our audience.

If you're interested, let me know and we can schedule a quick phone conversation to go over the details.

Once you have made contact and started the relationship, the next step is to agree on price and deliverables...

STEP FOUR: DO THE DEAL

Here's where you'll agree on a fee and make an agreement with your contributor about deliverables, bios, backlinks, promotions and posting frequency.

When it comes to paying for content, you'll want research what others in your niche are paying. You can do this by browsing the job boards on sites like ProBlogger (jobs.problogger.net) or your local Craigslist writing section.

Remember, it doesn't have to cost you a fortune.

For example, right now LifeHack.org is paying just \$5 per article and they're getting over 1.5 MILLION unique visitors a month so they must be doing something right.

Once you have agreed on deliverables and fees, the next step is to go into editor mode and make sure the content you're posting is of the highest quality possible...

STEP FIVE: Be Critical...Be Very Critical

As your contributors send in their content, you'll need to check it with a critical "editor's eye."

So, what are you looking for?

Here are a few guidelines,

- **Links in the body** – Some guest contributors will fill their article with links to their website. Keep these links to a minimum (2 or less) and only include links that will improve the reader's experience.
- **Links in the author bio** – Your guest contributor will want an author's bio (byline) with links to their website and social channels. Allow up to 2 links in the bio.
- **Grammar/Spelling** – If you're paying for articles you will want to receive content that takes very little time to edit. If a writer is having major grammar and spelling issues, consider moving on.

STEP SIX: Leverage Their Reach

Most of your writers will spread the article to their social network as soon as it's published, but in case they forget this is the time to send them a nice little email encouraging them to spread the word.

Ok, so now you have content and you have traffic. The last step is to expand the relationship...

STEP SEVEN: Go Back for More

Once you've had time to gather feedback about a guest contributor's content -- i.e. that it's informative, thoughtful, edited, it got views/comments, and they shared it with their network, it's time to take this relationship to the next level.

Write your guest blogger a thank you email letting them know how much your readers enjoyed their guest content. For example, you might say, "Your post was our highest traffic post this week," or "Your post sparked a lot of discussions and got 23 comments."

Then, ask them if they'd like to become a regular (quarterly, monthly, or even weekly) contributor. After all, the more content they contribute, the more traffic you get.