



THE SMART GUIDE TO WORKING WITH

Bloggers

A COMPILATION OF EXPERT ADVICE

MOTIVATES

YOUR BRAND

INFLUENCERS

+



**Group
High**

Best Practices on Maximizing Blogger Outreach ROI

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Why Should You Care About What These People Say About Reaching Out to Bloggers?

In this ebook you will find an awesome collaboration of advice from top thought leaders in the public relations and marketing world. These are no beginner level tips so be prepared to learn, take notes and implement new strategies that have been proven to work in the world of blogger outreach.

Bloggers account for some of the most trusted resources consumers check with when making purchase decisions and strong blogger relations are a strong asset to marketers. However, a strategy needs to be thought out and implemented for identifying, reaching out to and keeping up strong relationships with bloggers.

Enjoy learning from the following experts and gathering a bunch of takeaways to advance your digital marketing and PR strategy when it comes to working with bloggers as influencers.



Follow him [@adamsherk](#)

Adam Sherkh

Adam Sherkh is VP SEO and Social Media for **Define Media Group**, formerly part of The New York Times Company. Adam works as a consultant and trainer helping news and content sites to develop and execute successful enterprise SEO, audience development and content promotion programs.

Figure Out What *Motivates* Each Blogger & *Give it to Them*

What's the best way to work with bloggers? I'm desperately trying not to use the phrase "win win." (Ok maybe not desperately, but is that really the best I can do?) Cliché aside, successful blogger relations really is built on developing win win scenarios. There's got to be something in it for them or it's not going to work.

What that "something" is can take many different forms. I'm not talking about compensation, although some certainly try that (don't). Review copies, samples and perks are helpful, but that's not always applicable or sustainable.

What I'm talking about are things that are less tangible: access to information or resources they couldn't otherwise get; genuine interaction with a brand they respect; a chance to participate and make a meaningful contribution; publicity opportunities for themselves.

Providing a compelling story idea is an incentive too, as bloggers have a continual need to produce new content. But you have to be honest about just how compelling your idea really is. And without exclusivity – which creates a scalability issue – there's only so many bloggers who'll consider it a new and original story.

As a marketing blogger myself, I get contacted nearly every day. I'd say 90% are generic pitches that are blasted out far and wide, with no effort to connect and no incentive for me to respond. You might occasionally get lucky taking a shotgun approach, but for the most part it's a colossal waste of time.

So in the end it comes down to finding the right people, figuring out what motivates them and aligning it with what you have to offer. This holds true for slow and steady relationship building as well as the occasional big splash.



*Best Practices on Maximizing
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Follow him [@Treg_Lewis](#)

Treg Lewis

Treg is an Account Executive at Bliss Integrated Communications, a B2B and B2C marketing communication agency based in New York City. Working across the financial and professional services practice groups at Bliss, Treg is engaged in media intensive accounts, specializing in the development of both traditional media and blogger relationships on behalf of clients.

Bloggers, Their Tendencies & How to Insert Your Brand or Client into the Mix

Blogger relations is different from traditional media relationships in that it's never really finished. Successful PR professionals are those that maintain constant immersion in the blogger's community, touching them when and how it makes the most sense.

While we would certainly advocate the establishment of strong and lasting relationships with members of traditional media, the blogging community is much more personal for a number of reasons. Below, we list several of these reasons and identify the relationship building opportunities they create:

Scope: In many cases, bloggers will publish several posts a week and garner five to 50 thousand unique views per month on their site. For comparison, the New York Times routinely writes well over 500 stories per day and circulates the paper to over one million people each Sunday alone. PR professionals should treat the smaller audience on blogs as an opportunity to have a voice in the crowd. When appropriate, unique and thoughtful commentary on blog and Facebook posts will show the bloggers that you (and by extension, your client) are fully engaged in their community.

Ownership: Remember that Bloggers are small business owners. This means that they're quite autonomous and rarely have a strict line between their personal and professional lives. From this perspective, bloggers are their own editors, they set their own deadlines, they choose their own content and the traditional news cycle rarely applies. Learn the details of how a target blogger operates and use your findings to manage overall expectations with clients.

Culture: Each blogging community has a distinct culture that should be apparent after the initial stages of research. These differences should dictate the way we engage and interact within the community. For example, an equity trading blog may prefer to engage with readers on Twitter as they discuss live market movements and stock picks, while a parenting blog may prefer Pinterest as a platform to share creative ideas for childproofing a house. Based on this insight, PR professionals can better counsel clients on the social platforms that will be most effective in reaching their target audience.

The best blog outreach campaigns will not only identify these blog attributes, but effectively leverage them to ultimately help the client. In doing so, PR professionals become a valuable asset to both blog and client as shepherds of information and relationships within the community.



Shonali Burke

Shonali, ABC, is president & CEO of **Shonali Burke Consulting, Inc.** where she uses her signature blend of measurable “social PR” to help you join your online flock for better business results. She is also Adjunct Faculty at **Johns Hopkins’ M.A. in Communication program**, founder and curator of the #measurePR hashtag and Twitter chat, and owner of the popular blog/community, **Waxing UnLyrical**.

Help Bloggers Achieve *Real Results* for Your Brand

A few years ago my team had the privilege of working with **Oxfam America** on its International Women’s Day campaign. The goal was to use blogger relations to generate visibility around the campaign and OA’s focus on empowering women around the world, with the ultimate goal of building the organization’s advocacy brigade.

There were two specific actions we needed to publicize through our outreach: the sending of eCards via OA’s site, and the downloading of a personalized IWD “award.” These actions were incorporated into every aspect of our outreach, so the bloggers knew exactly what we were asking them to talk about.

So we started by doing what any good media relations pro would do: a ton of research to find the right kinds of bloggers. We researched their content in preparation to pitch them.

We personalized each and every pitch and sent them out one at a time. When those pitches met receptive ears, offered links to a digital media kit we pulled together with FAQs, study findings and, of course, photos and video. And we kept an eye on the bloggers who responded, and then thanked them when their posts ran.

We also created a sample blog post that they could pull from if they were pressed for time, which incorporated keywords and keyword phrases (in a very readable fashion, of course!). It was surprising how many bloggers used this as a resource when it was offered politely to them.

Our outreach generated all the right kinds of “impressions,” and OA was very pleased. What was even more gratifying, though, was the success of the eCards which resulted in almost a 300% increase in new advocacy members which was the ultimate goal of the campaign. Further, when we looked at traffic sources to the site, there was a clear correlation between search traffic and the publishing of blog posts... and we didn’t call this out, OA’s SEO specialist did!

These kinds of results are very gratifying, not just for an agency or consultant but, ultimately, for the organization because they’re “real” results.



Follow him [@theprcoach](#)

Jeff Domansky

Jeff develops social media strategies and puts them into action using content marketing including thought leadership, blogging, business storytelling, traditional PR, curation, websites and social media programs. He believes social media channels and shiny new technology should only be used if they're integrated and deliver results. As you'd expect, Jeff is a very social guy. You can reach him easily on Twitter, [LinkedIn](#), [Scoop.it](#) or [The PR Coach blog](#).

Influencer Relations & Best Practices

How do you analyze influencers?

"Usually we think about the four P's of marketing (product, place, price and promotion). Marketers should think about influencer relations having four P's that are critical to success:

- **Profile:** Listen before you engage. Who's their audience? What's their reach? How knowledgeable are they about the topic?
- **Passion:** How engaging is their topic and their writing? Are their followers active?
- **Pertinent:** How relevant are their channel and topic to your organization?
- **Professionalism:** Like choosing a celebrity endorser, you need to choose your influencers well. Can you have a businesslike relationship even if they are passionate amateurs?"

Definition of influencer relations

"Influencer relations is a new art and science. The science is choosing the right influencer and audiences and measuring how your program will meet your organization's goals. The art is creating a relationship by providing the influencer and followers with value or a program that results in active and positive engagement."

What do influencers want from you?

"The best things you can provide influencers are: relevance, value, support for their "mission" and unique and creative ways to help them engage their followers. It's not about you and your organization first."

What's the future of influencer relations?

"The new frontier is moving from traditional media and blogger relations to engaging influencers in many social media channels. Watch out for new influencers and opportunities in channels like Pinterest, Instagram, SnapChat, Scoop.it and others on the horizon. Some very talented influencer relationship managers will be needed in the near future."



Follow her [@macala](#)

Macala Wright

Macala Wright is a strategic and analytical B2B marketer with strong expertise in leveraging digital media to drive demand generation, inbound marketing and lead management. She loves Twitter and [LinkedIn](#)!

Standardization of Blogger Outreach (InStyle Magazine Case Study)

I recently worked with Instyle Magazine and TrioFit Technology to launch the Instyle Essentials product line, a partnership that allowed women to shop by their bra size instead of their dress size. Influencer outreach was an extremely important component of our overall marketing strategy both online (ecommerce) and offline (mobile fit tours).

The mandate required that influencers not only fall inline with the product line's target consumer group, but also help build brand awareness as well as drive sales simultaneously. The specificity of the audience made GroupHigh the ideal platform for us to manage the blogger outreach portion in order to properly segment to three classifications: 1) brand awareness, 2) product sales and 3) regional engagement for live events.

No matter what bucket they fell into, our team created the standardized mandate for each of them. This included:

- The opportunity at hand.
- All the relevant product information.
- What we could offer them, (e.g. exclusive content, brand or magazine exposure).
- What we expected in return (including social media surrounding their participation.)
- Payment or revenue share (affiliate) opportunities, if any.

The influencers could either accept or decline the offer. There were no variations as the product and it's budget didn't allocate for them. Please note, that some pitches may require a tiered approach, where you can escalate the incentive in order to secure their participation.

Standardization Works, But There Are Exceptions To Every Rule

The InStyle Essentials blogger outreach is a great example of standardization, but there's always exceptions to marketing rules. The one exception I make, no matter the client, is if the blogger we're attempting to work with comes up with an idea on how to work with us that goes above and beyond the standard mandate and I can tell they're enthusiastic about working with the client.

In that case, I take the idea to the client, pitch it to them and then let them decide if they want to do it. If so, then we will allocate a slightly higher budget, revenue share and/or distributions of product to them and their readers. This is most effective in instances where bloggers have communities rather than audiences.





Neal Schaffer

Neal is a **Forbes Top 50 Social Media Power Influencer** two years in a row and creator of the **AdAge Top 100 Global Marketing Blog** Windmill Networking (recently rebranded as **Maximize Social Business**). Neal is a **global social media speaker** and author, best known for his definitive book on social media strategy and creation, implementation, and optimization "**Maximize Your Social: A One Stop Guide to Building a Social Media Strategy for Marketing and Business Success**"

Reaching out to Bloggers: *Develop a Strong Relationship*

The most important part of your blogger outreach program is deciding how you want to reach out to people. Now, I really recommend you think a LOT about this as this is where many make mistakes. For instance, I've had a package come to me in the mail out of the blue from a company that was doing some blogger outreach campaign. They sent me some freebies and said, "Hey, there's a \$100 certificate for you to use." And guess what; I never ended up using what the company set me. I didn't have a relationship with the company, and therefore, what they offered me was really irrelevant to my life. They have assumed it was relevant but it wasn't. What a waste, right?

Obviously, when you are looking for bloggers, you need to make sure that they are relevant or genuinely have an interest in what you're trying to promote. But the other thing is: you should always be building a relationship beforehand. The longer the relationship you build the better success your blogger outreach campaign will have.

How do you build a relationship with bloggers? It's actually very easy. Have you ever comment on their blog posts. Have you ever shared their blog posts in social media? Have you sent them any social signals on any social media platform? I highly recommend you do this. If you don't do it today, start doing it tomorrow!

Trying to find out what makes that particular blogger tick is a challenge in psychology and sociology. But that being said, there are things you can do to try to understand what that blogger would like from a relationship with you and what would be the incentive to help that blogger promote your brand.

Look back at past blog posts that blogger might have promoted. If you're building a relationship, you should see in the past month or two has that blogger promoted any other products, or services, companies or brand and how have they promoted them.

If you establish your relationship in a way that says, "Hey, we noticed you work with Brand A. We're a big fan of yours. We're creating a campaign that we think you might want to take part in."

You do it over time and you build up a relationship. So, when you contact them, they know that you know who they are and you already have a relationship. I think it will make your blogger outreach program all that much more effective.



Chris Abraham

Chris is a leading expert in digital: online reputation management (ORM), Internet privacy, social media marketing, and digital PR with a focus on blogger outreach, blogger engagement, and Internet crisis response, with the digital PR and social media marketing agency **Gerris digital**.

Conversion is a Numbers Game: *The Value of Long Tail Outreach*

While I call the alternative to top down, A list blogger outreach “Long Tail Blogger Outreach,” “BZ List Blogger Outreach,” the “Bottom Up Approach,” and “Doing the Full Cluetrain,” I really need a better title for this sort of blogger outreach (how about just “Blogger Outreach?”).

Instead of 1-25 powerful gatekeepers barring you from accessing their hundreds of thousands of potential eyeballs, you instead discover, collect, and message thousands of weak gatekeepers who are only barring you from accessing hundreds of their friends, families, and sometimes thousands of followers and readers. There’s this thing called Internet Rule 34 I like to quote, “If it exists, there is porn of it.” Same was with blogs: if it exists, there’re blogs, bloggers, and passionate readers — no matter what the topic may well be. Be assured of it.

And, when you do find them, there are probably hundreds or thousands of them and their associated hundreds or thousands of followers, readers, friends. And, since they are, generally speaking, a lot further down the totem pole, a lot less used to corporate or brand attention, and probably have been playing the lottery known as blogging in the slim but motivating hope that someday someone would notice their blog and validate them through appreciation, engagement, and attention.

All bloggers want to be discovered, and when you take the bottom up approach, where you reach out to multiple thousands of bloggers, most of whom are too low caste to ever have been kissed by a single brand manager or social media team, many of whom haven’t yet been “ruined” by a blogger conference that brainwashed them into believing that their nascent blog is mature and profitable enough to not accept earned media pitches but only paid media and paid posting (it seems the be happening more and more). If you get deep enough into the vox populi — the voice of people, the many instead of the few, the real citizen journalists — then you can find the people who are really exploring their own passions, interests, hobbies, sports, and obsessions.

The way I do it is simple. I collect as many as possible, but only the blogs and bloggers who are germane to the outreach, to the campaign. And only those bloggers who want to be engaged. I assume that if a blogger wants to be contacted, he or she’ll have his or her name and email somewhere on the blog. So, I personally reach out via email pitch, and I often pitch upwards of four, five, six, seven, even eight thousand bloggers in one go.

While I generally earn between seventy and three hundred blog posts when I reach out with this method, I also earn hundreds of tweets, retweets, Facebook and Google+ posts, and also having had message upwards of eight thousand bloggers who will have personally been messaged by you, your brand, your client, your offer, product, service, news, and whatnot.



Gini Dietrich

Gini Dietrich is the founder and CEO of **Arment Dietrich**, a Chicago based integrated marketing communication firm. She also is the founder of the professional development site for PR and marketing pros, **Spin Sucks Pro**, and co-author of **Marketing In the Round**.

How to Prove Your Blogger Outreach Success

Blogger outreach, just like media relations, covers many communications goals: Brand awareness, credibility, networking, and a driver of traffic. But, you'll notice most of those things (except traffic driver) are difficult to measure.

We instinctively know if it's working, more people are talking about us, our sales team anecdotally tells us people know who they are when they make prospecting calls, and it feels good. But to put a hard revenue number against it? It's not easy.

That's why so many business leaders get frustrated so easily when it takes more time than they expect and they can't show a direct correlation between your efforts and an increase in sales. In the past, we'd look at things such as media impressions, increased reach and engagement, or advertising equivalencies. But those numbers don't really mean anything.

Instead, you want to focus on an increase in traffic that comes specifically from a blog post written by one of your influencers.

A great example of this is the Blue Key campaign run by Shonali Burke Consulting in 2011. The strategy was to bring on board U.S. based bloggers to help them prompt the purchase of 6,000 keys during a six week timeframe (the money went to help refugees during World Refugee Day).

Shonali and her team set up Google analytics to monitor not only an increase in traffic from each blogger, but also whether those visitors were buying keys.

At the end of the campaign, there was a 169 percent increase in web traffic and realtime confirmations of key purchases showed the traffic was converting to purchase.

Many times, organizations do a blogger outreach campaign, but are afraid to ask for what they need. In this case, Shonali and her team asked the bloggers to buy a key for themselves, write about what it meant to them through a blog post, and encourage their readers to buy a key.

She approached bloggers she and her team already had relationships with, and those she knew had influence in asking their readers to take an action. When you are specific like this, it's easy to show the return on investment.



Follow her [@cmroman](#)

Cristina Roman

Cristina Roman is a digital marketing consultant who works with individuals and small businesses in a variety of industries who may be new to the world of business or are just ready to kick things up a notch. Check out her [site](#)!

Blogger Outreach is *no One Night Stand*

As we all know, blogger outreach is not a “one and done” kinda thing it is (or should be) an ongoing relationship. Just as it takes more resources to find new customers than to keep current ones, it takes more time, energy, and money to bring new bloggers into your network than it does to continue working with those you have an established relationship with. Thinking of creative ways to engage the bloggers already in your network means less time spent vetting, pitching, convincing, following up, and tracking.

A caveat: don't continue working with the bloggers who are more work than they're worth. On your outreach spreadsheet or in your GroupHigh account, keep up to date notes about the results of each campaign.

Once you know which bloggers you'd like to continue working with the “unicorns” who produce original content about your brand, who drive insane amounts of traffic, and who are a joy to work with keep up with their lives and blogs by creating and monitoring Twitter lists and using Feedly. Use Boomerang to remind yourself to check in regularly.

When an opportunity arises, send your bloggers discount codes, let them vote on new styles or offerings, give them pre-launch access to products, and send personalized, hand written notes when something big happens in their life.

These small gestures keep you front of mind and ensure that your initial investment of resources pays off in the long run!



*Best Practices on Maximizing
Blogger Outreach ROI*



Group High

About GroupHigh

GroupHigh is an all encompassing blogger identification platform used by over 300 agencies and brands as part of their outreach marketing strategy.

To learn more about GroupHigh or chat with someone about improving your strategy, contact us [here](#).

If you are curious about implementing an outreach marketing strategy, check out some resources to get started here.



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