

MODULE #2: FINDING GUEST BLOGGING OPPORTUNITIES

IN THIS MODULE:

This week, we'll look at where you can find (good) blogs that accept guest posters, how to approach the host blogger with a guest post pitch, and how to make sure you're following common guest posting conventions as well as meeting any specific guidelines from that blog.

Just a quick reminder: if you've not already introduced yourself in our Facebook group, please do let us know a bit about you here:

[facebook.com/groups/successfulguestblogging2018/permalink/115462416008030](https://www.facebook.com/groups/successfulguestblogging2018/permalink/115462416008030)

It's a private group, so only fellow course members will see your posts there.

When you're figuring out where to guest post, you might not be too sure where to start. Many bloggers begin by submitting guest posts to the blogs they already read – which is a great idea, because you're already familiar with the writing style of those blogs and with the topics they've covered a lot recently.

If you only read a handful of blogs, though, you may find that few (or none!) of them are actually open to guest posts. This means you'll often find that you need to look further afield for blogs that you could write for.

Finding Good Blogs to Write For

When you're looking for places to guest blog, you want blogs that will help you move towards your goals (we covered your reasons for guest blogging back in Module 1).

This means you need to think carefully about what would make a good opportunity *for you*.

Does the Blog Even Take Guest Posts?

Not all blogs take guest posts (however great your post is). So before you start coming up with ideas for a particular blog, do make sure that they actually use guest bloggers!

Some good clues are:

- Any mention of where to send your guest posts or how to send them in: try the contact page for this.
- Multiple different author names appearing on the blog – though these bloggers could potentially be paid staff members.
- The words “guest post” appearing on recent posts – though the blog may only be using guest posters they already have a relationship with.

Keep in mind that some blogs take guest posts for a while, only to stop doing so if they get overwhelmed or change direction. In the past, I’ve occasionally taken guest posts on Aliventures, for instance, but recently I’ve decided I want the blog to be very much focused on my own voice and content.

How to Evaluate a Guest Blogging Opportunity

When you’re looking at a potential blog to write for, think about:

- **How frequently do they publish posts?** If they only publish one a week, yours will get more attention from the audience than if they publish three a day.
- **How many readers does the blog have?** This may not be obvious or easy to find out, but you could look at the blog’s Twitter following to get some idea. A blog with 100 Twitter followers is unlikely to be so well-read as a blog with 10,000 Twitter followers.
- **Is the blog well regarded within its niche (topic area)?** For instance, do other bloggers retweet posts / link to it / mention the blog in their newsletters? If so, it could be a great place to post if you’re aiming to build your profile and brand.
- **Are the readers engaged with the blog?** Do they comment, tweet, interact on Facebook? A blog with 5,000 highly engaged readers could

send you more traffic than a blog with 50,000 readers who rarely comment or interact.

- **Are the posts on the blog generally well written and well edited?** If not, is it a blog you're comfortable being associated with?
- **How much support and attention do guest posters get?** Some blogs will introduce you at the start of the post and include a detailed bio at the end; others will only have a short bio at the end. You might also want to look at the comments on guest posts – are the blog's readers generally welcoming?

Handy Lists of Blogs to Guest Post For

As I've said, a great place to begin is with the blogs you already read and enjoy. Beyond that, though, there are lots of lists of blogs that you can use to find new places to guest post.

Here are some good ones to work through, in roughly the order in which I'd suggest trying them:

[List of Top Quality Blogs That Accept Guest Posts \(450+\)](#), Lilach Bullock, LilachBullock.com

This list is split into categories, with links near the top so you can jump straight to the sections that interest you most. The non-techy categories (like "family") are much better represented on this list than on many others.

[150 Sites to Guest Post in 2018](#), Norman Karim, Advanced Web Ranking

This is a handy list of sites, split into broad categories (e.g. "travel" and "health"). The main focus is on "digital marketing" and some other topics aren't well represented – e.g. "Family & Community" blogs only has one entry. Each site is listed with its "domain authority" (DA) score – the higher the score, the higher the site ranks in Google.

[54 Guest Posting Sites You Should Submit To For More Organic Traffic](#),
Tiffany Sun, Writing Co-Operative

While this is a shorter list than the others, it includes lots of detail about the various blogs. It'd be useful if it was organized into categories: the core topics of each site are given, but the sites themselves aren't listed in any particular order, so you may have to do a bit of digging to find ones relevant to you.

[List of 300+ Websites/Blogs That Accept Guest Posts & Contributions](#),
Dmytro Spikla, Solvid – *scroll down for the list*

This list is (a) focused on software/techy blogs and (b) in a rather tiny font, making it a little hard to read – but it includes useful information like the rough difficulty of landing a guest post on each particular site. (Large, popular, well-ranking sites tend to be harder to post on.) It also includes direct links to the contribute/contact page on each site.

How to Approach the Blog's Editor

Different blogs have different ways of requesting guest posts, but normally, the process will look roughly like this:

- You contact the blog's editor or owner with a "pitch" – the title and outline for the post you want to write.
- They get back to you and (hopefully!) ask you for a full draft.
- You write and send them the draft. They might request or make changes at this point. (More unusually, they might decide the post isn't quite right for them after all.)
- Your post will be published on the blog.

Some blogs are happy to accept full drafts initially, rather than going back and forth with a pitch. If they have guest post guidelines (and many blogs do), these will normally make it clear what they prefer.

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We'll be covering pitching your post next week (Module 3) and writing it the week after (Module 4), but hopefully this gives you an idea of how the process works and what to expect.

Do You Need to Know the Editor to Guest Blog for Them?

While it's true that some guest bloggers will write for editors they already know (e.g. through commenting on their posts, exchanging emails, maybe even interviewing the editor on their own blog) ... **many guest bloggers send in a pitch with little or no prior contact with the editor.**

You definitely don't *need* an existing relationship to land a guest post, though it can certainly help you to get your pitch read in the first place. If the editor or owner of the blog already knows you, they'll hopefully already have the sense that you can write and that you're a nice person!

There are plenty of good reasons to establish relationships with larger blogs in your niche – but don't feel that you have to do loads of blog commenting or retweeting before you send in your pitch.

For me personally, guest posting has often been a great way to *start* a relationship with busy big-name bloggers. Having your post published on their blog gives you a much stronger connection to them than exchanging a couple of tweets – and they'll be more likely to remember your name!

By all means do comment on blog posts and be active on social media, if you enjoy that – but don't feel that you *have* to do it in order to be a guest blogger.

Finding the Guest Post Guidelines

Many blogs, particularly larger blogs, will have “guest post guidelines” or “submission guidelines” for posts (the latter is more commonly used if posts are paid for).

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You can normally find a link to the guest post guidelines in one of these places:

- On the Contact page
- In the sidebar
- In the footer (right at the bottom of the site)
- On the About page

If none of those seem to offer guest post guidelines, go to Google and type this in:

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guest post guidelines site:aliventures.com
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(Change the name of the site to be whichever blog you're looking at.)

If you still can't find any, then the blog probably doesn't have any specific guidelines – and that's fine. We'll cover exactly what to include in your email pitch next week.

Common Guest Posting Conventions

The guidelines may or may not spell out some of these, but unless they say otherwise, these are some common assumptions that you can make about guest posting:

Your guest post should be exclusive to the host blog. That means it shouldn't have been published on your own blog or anywhere else on the web. If you want to publish it somewhere else at a later date, you'll need to check with the host blog.

Your guest post should be your own original work. I'm sure this goes without saying, but no blog wants to publish plagiarized content! That means if you quote from someone else's post, or use it extensively for inspiration, you should acknowledge and link to the source.

You won't be paid for your post. Unless there's a mention of payment, you can safely assume you won't get any.

You'll be expected to answer comments on your post. You don't need to answer every comment, but if someone asks a direct question, you should normally reply.

You'll probably be expected to promote your post on social media. Some blogs care about this more than others! But it's normally good for you, as well as them, for you to share your post with your Facebook or Twitter followers.

Your post might be changed by the blog editor (and you won't necessarily get to see those changes before it's published). This varies a great deal from blog to blog, but on every blog, the editor's say is final – even if that means you withdraw your post because you don't like the way they've proposed changing it.

You'll get to link to whatever you want in your guest post bio (so long as it's not offensive or 18-rated). It's normally fine to be quite self-promotional here: e.g. you could link to your own book, a page about your freelancing services, and so on. Some blogs will let you have several links in your bio, some will limit you to one or two.

You can include links to your blog within the body of your post (as well as in the bio), *if* these links are relevant. You may find that the host blog wants to change or remove these links – e.g. they might want to link to one of their own posts on a particular topic instead of to yours. They'll expect to be able to run your post regardless of whether your links stay in or not.

While different blogs may have different stances on some of these, if there isn't anything explicitly stated in the guest post guidelines, these assumptions probably hold true.

Your Module #2 Assignment

ASSIGNMENT

Your assignment this week is in two parts, and shouldn't take too long.

#1: Write a list of at least five blogs you could potentially guest post for. (If you're feeling keen, go for ten!) Highlight your top three to target first.

#2: Check each of these blogs to see whether they have guest post guidelines, and record the links to those.

Once you've completed the assignment, or got as far as you're going to get, come and "check in" on Facebook to get your reward stamp for Week 2. If you're willing to, share your list of blogs with us.

[facebook.com/groups/successfulguestblogging2018/learning_content/?filter=1922314541397029](https://www.facebook.com/groups/successfulguestblogging2018/learning_content/?filter=1922314541397029)

If you prefer not to use Facebook, you can email me (ali@aliventures.com) with "Module #2 check in" or similar in the subject line.

Module #2: Further Reading

All of the further reading is optional, but if you want to find out more about something we've covered, it's highly recommended! If you find other useful resources, you're very welcome to share them in our Facebook group.

[15 Smart Ways to Find Guest Posting Opportunities](#), Anthony Mangia, Moz

This post focuses on people who are guest blogging primarily to get backlinks (to improve their site's ranking in search engines) – but whatever your reasons for guest blogging, there are some great tips here on finding blogs to write for.

[Guest Blogging: The Definitive Guide \(2018\)](#), Brian Dean, Backlinko

This massive post is worth a read, but for this module, focus on “Step #1: Find Guest Post Targets”. (I don't entirely agree with Brian's advice in Step #2 to establish a prior relationship, and I find the email template in Step #3 rather pushy in its language. We'll cover pitching next week.)

What's Coming Up Next Week:

Well done on reaching the end of this week's module. Remember, if you have questions at any point, please do ask in our Facebook group. If it's something you'd prefer to discuss privately, you can send me a message via the Facebook group or you can email me at ali@aliventures.com.

Here's what to expect in Module 3 next week:

MODULE 3:

Next week, from Monday 26th November, we'll take a look at how to come up with ideas (suited to the blog you're targeting) and how to pitch your guest post.

In this module, we'll have sample emails that you can customize and use when you're emailing blog editors, plus examples of what to do and what *not* to do.