

THE ART OF

PUBLISHER OUTREACH



Outreach marketing is one of today's most diverse and flexible advertising options. The internet is so varied that every industry has its own niche communities and opportunities to stand out as the expert on a topic. Even publisher outreach offers enough flexibility that brands can tailor it to their specific goals and needs.

While publisher outreach is diverse and adaptable, it's not always easy. Many amateurs struggle to get their outreach campaigns off the ground and give up if they don't see immediate results. Often, their mistakes are so basic that they could have had success if they just changed a few things. This failure doesn't make them bad at marketing, but it does highlight the challenges many marketers face in their outreach promotions strategy.

We're here to help. Through in-depth analysis and industry research, you can launch and grow your influencer outreach campaign without the stress of ignored emails and frustrated publishers.

WHAT IS PUBLISHER OUTREACH?

Publisher outreach is also known as **outreach marketing**, **guest blogging**, **influencer marketing**, and **contributor marketing**.

While each of these terms describes a nuanced approach to working with publishers, they all have the same benefits. The goal of publisher outreach is to form strong relationships with blogs and websites that are different from your own so your brand or the publisher can share content related to your business.

Publisher outreach has roots in public relations. When this marketing tactic started to grow, brands would reach out to bloggers with news, upcoming events, or industry studies and ask them to share the content if they were interested. This evolved into marketers asking to publish news and content themselves on various blogs and websites — otherwise known

as guest posting or forming a contributor relationship. Today, influencer marketing and native advertising are popular and have taken outreach a step further. Now, marketers ask or pay bloggers to post about their brands and use their audience's trust and following to generate buzz or sales.

Some organizations use multiple types of outreach marketing in their platforms. They might send out news to certain blogs and ask them to share the content as they would in the PR days, then publish a post on their own for a site they have a strong guest blogging relationship with. Your brand doesn't have to pick one form of outreach marketing, but whichever you chose, you have to do it well.

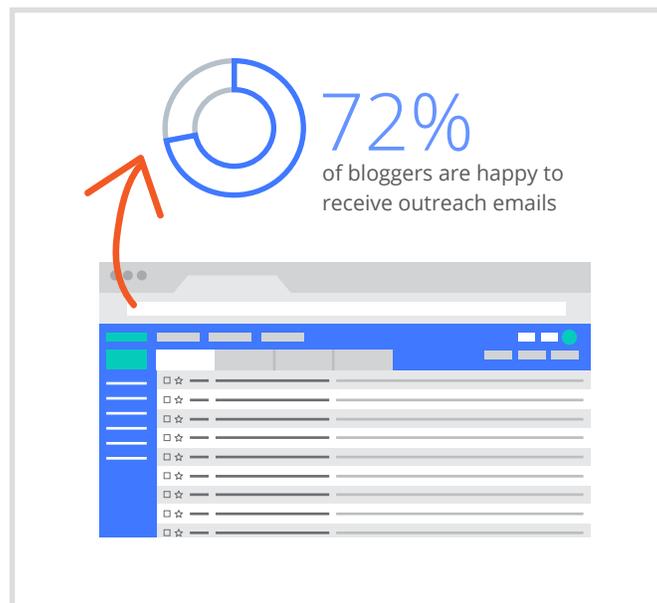
OUTREACH IS A MUTUALLY BENEFICIAL FORM OF ADVERTISING

Bloggers also benefit from brands and agencies contacting them for guest posts and other earned content. In some cases, blogger outreach leads to sponsored content deals, which helps the website make money outside of traditional (and rather ineffective) banner ads. Additionally, guest content reduces the burden on editorial teams that have to publish new posts and articles constantly to drive daily traffic.

The [team at eConsultancy](#) recently shared a study of more than 250 U.K. bloggers

to understand their viewpoints on publisher outreach. The first thing they discovered was that bloggers actively support brands and advertisers reaching out to them. Almost half of all bloggers said they don't mind being contacted by brands often, and 72 percent said they're happy receiving outreach emails from time to time. Conversely, only 7 percent of bloggers said they don't like outreach emails and ignore them.

As long as you form a respectful and mutually beneficial relationship with the bloggers you work with, there's no reason for your brand to encounter challenges contacting bloggers and setting up contributor opportunities.



WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF PUBLISHER OUTREACH?

Many brands struggle to publish content on their own websites and social media channels, much less the blogs of others, leaving them to wonder why they should invest in publisher outreach when they have easier forms of marketing to choose from.

While publisher outreach requires work, it offers benefits other forms of advertising can't. Publisher outreach is trustworthy, scalable, and beneficial in the long run. Today's investment in guest-post marketing could help your brand for months to come.

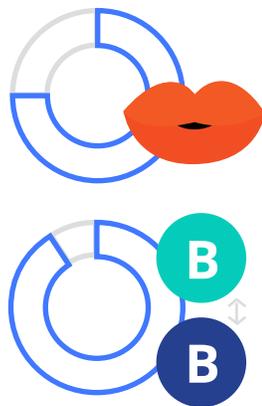
THE CONTENT IS TRUSTWORTHY

Consumers turn to their favorite blogs and news websites for accurate and insightful information. When consumers feel like they can't trust an outlet, they won't return, which means it's in a publisher's best interest to make sure the content on their site is high-quality and exactly what visitors want.

The trusting relationship between publishers and their audiences essentially makes outreach marketing a form of word-of-mouth advertising. The shared content is an endorsement from the publisher that the brand has something relevant and important to say. Audiences will listen and pay attention.

Word-of-mouth marketing continues to be one of the top drivers of purchasing decisions and most trusted forms of advertising. Almost [75 percent of shoppers](#) say word-of-mouth recommendations are an important part of their purchasing decisions, a number that shoots up to 91 percent for B2B buying decisions.

If your brand has relevant information to share, then outreach marketing can help you spread your message to audiences that trust your brand and are eager to hear what you have to say.



BRANDS CAN REACH NEW AUDIENCES

Speaking of connecting with audiences, another significant benefit of outreach marketing is the ability to reach new audiences outside of your existing social media and marketing channels. A website that only has 5,000 social media followers and an email list of 2,000 can publish content on blogs that receive thousands of hits each day. If the publisher shares the content and tags the brand on Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn, the company has a chance of reaching tens of thousands more people than before.

This publishing example isn't relevant to only one website. If the brand has publisher relationships with multiple sites, its reach extends to millions of potential readers and customers.

Most marketers tailor their publisher outreach to highly relevant blogs or websites where the audiences are likely to convert. This targeting makes outreach a highly effective tactic for reaching new audiences and building your online presence through word-of-mouth promotion.

THERE ARE NEW LINKS POINTING TO YOUR WEBSITE

So far, publisher outreach's benefits have focused on the content, traffic, and sales aspects of this marketing channel. However, a strong outreach strategy can grow your SEO significantly and have long-term organic search benefits.

Contributing to highly relevant or high-quality websites in your industry allows you to link your website to others on the web. When these websites link to you, they serve as an endorsement to Google's site crawlers. By gaining links from industry leaders, your brand can stand tall as one of the best companies or thought leaders in what you do.

All of these links also create a stronger web pointing back to your site. Within a few months, you could rank higher for certain keywords or see an increase in your organic search traffic because of your outreach efforts.

The many benefits of outreach mean brands need to approach their marketing strategies carefully. Not only should you have brand awareness and traffic-driving goals in mind but you should also have a plan to boost your SEO through strategic link building.

PITCHBOX AND THE ART OF PUBLISHER OUTREACH

While the awareness of publisher marketing and its benefits are higher than ever, many brands still struggle to get their outreach strategy off the ground. Their whole team will operate blogger management out of Google Docs, and they will struggle to track the results and analytics of the posts they acquire. Some brands continue to struggle with getting publishers' attention and often give up when their pitch emails are ignored.

The team at [Pitchbox](#) saw clients struggle with outreach firsthand. They kept talking to customers who were floundering in their outreach efforts and wanted to create a streamlined system for managing outreach content. These customer concerns led them to create an online influencer outreach and content marketing platform to make blogger management easier.

With the tools and interface created by Pitchbox, marketers can discover bloggers and influencers that are relevant to their medium and eager to accept contributed content on their websites. Content managers can easily track the outreach process for multiple blogs and websites, helping them keep track of their multiple influencer efforts. They can also make data-driven decisions about which bloggers to continue working with through clear analytics. The whole interface makes outreach easier and streamlines the process in one location.

A GREAT SYSTEM STILL REQUIRES STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT

While Pitchbox's system helps brand managers keep track of their outreach marketing, much still needs to be done on

the brand manager side to build influencer relationships. As customers starting using and testing the system, they began approaching the Pitchbox team with questions about outreach tips.

- What are some of their best practices for getting a response?
- Why do bloggers ignore me?
- How can I get publishers to open my emails?

An influencer management platform needs effective marketers who understand the nuances of email outreach to be successful. While their platform is incredibly clean and easy to use, some marketers still flounder when it comes to getting noticed.

In an effort to support their customers, the team at Pitchbox started combing through its data to find answers. After searching through more than 20 million emails and analyzing patterns and publisher results, the Pitchbox team is ready to share their data. By understanding how publishers respond to blogger emails, marketers can tailor their outreach in a way that increases responses, which can lead to more published guest posts and long-term contributor relationships. This is the art of publisher outreach.



FIVE DATA-PROVEN WAYS TO IMPROVE YOUR PUBLISHER OUTREACH

After collecting email data and analyzing outreach trends, CopyPress and the team at Pitchbox came together to find ways to improve the email outreach process. We wanted to turn this information into actionable insights for any marketer

struggling to grow his or her guest blogging and influencer marketing strategies.

By conducting an audit of your current outreach process, you can find weaknesses in your email content, subject lines, send times, and follow-up plans. Each of these elements plays a critical role in reaching publishers and convincing them to respond to and work with you.

Using our data, here are five best practices for improving your outreach results and getting responses from publishers.

HOW LONG SHOULD YOUR SUBJECT BE?

Crafting an email subject seems simple enough. After all, how much damage could you do in a few words? However, your brand can't underestimate the importance of the email subject line. This text is the difference between an email open and a deletion unseen. It doesn't matter how great your brand is or how carefully crafted your email body is if your recipient deletes the email before opening.

[MailChimp shared insights](#) for email open, click-through, and unsubscribe rates by industry. While the numbers vary depending on where you work, most industries have an average open rate of around 20 percent. If there's only a one-in-five chance that your email will be opened, then you should do everything in your power to make sure your subject line convinces readers to click on your message.

Pitchbox found the sweet spot for subject lines hovers around 36 to 38 characters. Follow-up emails sent on the second or third attempt trend closer to the 38 character limit for successful response rates.

Messages at this length typically provide enough information to share a complete thought without cutting off the message when viewed on a small screen such as a smartphone. Brands that send messages exceeding 36 to 40 characters should keep the most important information and keywords at the front of the subject line to grab the reader's attention immediately.

HOW LONG SHOULD YOUR EMAIL TEMPLATE BE?

Along with analyzing subject lines, the team at Pitchbox wanted to see how email body length varied by response rate.

Should you keep your message short and to the point? The results, when reviewed as first, second, and third attempts, were actually quite surprising. For a successful response on the first try, your email body should hover around 1,560 characters. This number increases to 1,830 characters on your second email and 2,300 for your third.

This data proves that quick check-in emails aren't effective. If your follow-up message simply has two sentences, such as, "Just checking in to see if had a chance to read this," then you're unlikely to get a response. Instead, successful marketers will use these additional emails to cover information they might have missed the first time or highlight additional benefits to the recipient. This could move publishers from ambivalent to your messaging to interested in what you have to offer. While you might want to start with a concise message the first time to get their attention and gauge their interest, you shouldn't avoid giving further details as long as they stay within these guidelines.

WHAT DAY OF THE WEEK SHOULD YOU SEND YOUR EMAIL?

The day you send your email has a significant impact on the likelihood of a response and the average amount of time you will have to wait before a publisher gets back to you. By planning



your email send dates and times, you can increase the chances of starting a relationship on the first try instead of sending multiple follow-up attempts.

By far, the best days to send emails are Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday. Thursday has the highest response rate at 22 percent, with Friday and Wednesday both trailing at 21 percent. While Monday and Tuesday have response rates close to 20 percent, publishers aren't as likely to respond on those days. Weekends are still terrible times for responses, with a lower than 15 percent chance of getting a reply email.

This data isn't entirely surprising if you look at your own workweek. Monday is typically a catch-up day from the weekend when employees respond to emails and prepare for the week ahead. Most people focus on immediate priorities and then turn to optional emails once their workload lowers. Later in the week, people have more time to work on projects and respond to emails, which is why the last three days have the highest response rates.

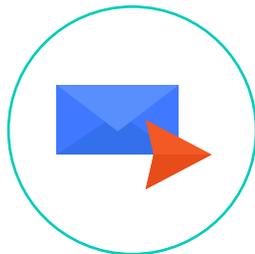
The average number of days publishers take to reply also supports this information. Wednesday has the lowest lag time with 0.37 days to reply, on average. Conversely, Friday has a high lag time of 2.3 days, and Monday is a close second with 1.9 days. If you have ever put off responding to a Friday email until Monday or pushed an email you received on Monday back to a less busy day, then this data should make sense.

Reaching out to bloggers in the middle of the week (e.g., Wednesday or Thursday) provides the highest chance of getting a response from bloggers quickly.

HOW MANY FOLLOW-UPS SHOULD YOU SEND?

If you're still struggling to get responses after you change your pitching date, subject line, and email body, then consider your follow-up strategy.

Some marketers hesitate to send follow-ups to bloggers or publishers when they don't hear a response. They don't want to pester the publisher to the point of creating a bad relationship instead of the neutral one. This led the team at Pitchbox to ask: How bad are follow-up emails, really? Do they damage or help relationships?



The answer is that follow-up emails can boost your outreach strategy if you're persistent. On the first email attempt, marketers typically experience a response rate of 12 percent. This means you're unlikely to get a response from almost nine out of 10 pitch emails if you don't follow up.

Conversely, marketers who send one follow-up email to publishers average a 21 percent response rate, and marketers who send two follow-up emails average a 28 percent response rate. You more than double your chances of getting a response and building your influencer list by being persistent and sending out follow-up emails.

The average person [receives 88 emails per day](#) and sends 34. This number is likely to skyrocket in industries that are highly technological and dependent on email communication. Your pitch email needs to stand out against these dozens (if not hundreds) of emails. By sending follow-up messages, you're proving that your brand is worth paying attention to and you're eager to work with that publisher.

HOW PERSONAL SHOULD YOUR EMAIL BE?

One mistake many people make when they tackle influencer outreach is sending templated emails. They only change the name of the person addressed and leave the rest of the email the same. If a publisher opens your email and takes the time to read it, don't drive them away with the same template they've read a thousand times. Take the time to get to know them and make something personal.

[According to Cision](#), 58 percent of influencers said displaying knowledge of their past work encouraged them to pursue a story. By tying your pitch to their past work and suggesting content that would fit naturally on their website, you can prove that you have thought carefully about your relationship and how you both can benefit.

Never waste your time and the time of publishers by sending mass email blasts. Those who do respond likely won't produce the quality results you want in an influencer campaign.





OUTREACH MARKETING REQUIRES QUALITATIVE AND QUANTITATIVE EXPERTISE

Outreach marketing is both a science and an art. Through analytics, Pitchbox was able to find technical ways to fine-tune your outreach pitches and discover ways to increase your chances for success. However, a successful outreach program also requires a creative mind and quality content to keep publishers and audiences engaged.

The content side is where CopyPress comes in. Our [content specialists and outreach experts](#) find creative ways to connect with people through quality content that converts. Our content keeps publishers and audiences coming back because it's engaging, insightful, and unique. Together, our team is able to work with Pitchbox for successful outreach marketing from beginning to end.

If you're interested in growing your content outreach strategy, contact the specialists at CopyPress today, and discover how [great content](#) can skyrocket your outreach and grow your brand.

pitchbox

Pitchbox is a platform for agencies, publishers, and brands to help with link building, influencer outreach, and content promotion

COPYPRESS

CopyPress is a full service content marketing company with over 5 years of experience creating and promoting digital content.