



BLOGGER OUTREACH

5 STEPS TO SUCCESSFUL

BLOGGER OUTREACH

[TIP SHEET]



INTRODUCTION



Getting big names like Calvin Harris, Rita Ora, Zayn Malik or Brooklyn Beckham to endorse your product is a dream come true for most PRs. The latest research says bloggers are way more influential than celebrities when it comes to promoting products and services. So how exactly do you get through to them? Our essential tip sheet lays down the law on successful blogger outreach. From negotiating payment to researching the right contacts and giving bloggers the credit they deserve, *5 Steps to Successful Blogger Outreach* explains how to get it right.

Over the years we have spoken to hundreds of bloggers who have shared countless stories with us of PRs reaching out to them without having taken the time to read their blogs. With the likes of influencers like Zoella earning more than £50,000 a month, most bloggers are no longer prepared to work with PRs for little or no money. So perhaps it's time to learn about what influencer outreach is and what it isn't. How can it benefit PRs? And what are the best practices? Look no further here is our definitive guide to blogger outreach.



1. DO YOUR RESEARCH

Many of the bloggers featured in the spotlight interviews we have done over the years have told us stories of being contacted about working on campaigns without the PR or marketer actually taking time to familiarise themselves with their content.

Monica Scott, founder of The Travel Hack said:

"I receive over 200 emails per day from brands, PRs and fellow bloggers and the ones I respond to are written from one human to another human. They've done their research, they know what The Travel Hack is about and they understand how bloggers work".

A big part of your blogger outreach strategy should involve understanding what the blogger covers, what kind of things are they interested in, and what campaigns have previously worked on. Time and time again bloggers talk about being approached by PRs who approach them with little understanding of what the blog is about and whether their brand matches with the PRs.



1. DO YOUR RESEARCH



When asked what PRs could do to work better with him in a blogger spotlight, Tom Briggs, author of *Diary of the Dad* said:

"Take a couple of minutes to read a recent post and my 'about me' page before getting in touch. I get several emails every day but only end up working with a fraction of them as, a lot of the time, the pitch isn't relevant to me or my blog. It's a waste of time for all concerned."

London lifestyle blogger Poppy Loves says that in order for her to have a great relationship with PRs there needs to be a match. She said:

"I always hope that the PR has looked at my blog, reviewed my style and made the decision to contact me based on these things. And this may sound obvious, but the best campaign briefs I have received are those where the expected deliverables, timings and budget available are all stated clearly at the very beginning. These small things really are an enormous help!"

1. DO YOUR RESEARCH

To help you match with the right influencer, blogger database companies such as Vuelio allow you to search a database of contacts. For example, the Vuelio database features 11,000 UK bloggers with profiles featuring both online and offline contact details, contact preferences, topics of interest and biographical information. These databases are valuable resources for PRs who want to target the right bloggers and deliver a relevant message.

Bloggers who have a substantial following are often inundated with offers and can instantly tell whether you have taken the time to read their blog. Our recent [survey](#) revealed that 34 per cent of bloggers reported being pitched to seven or more times a week.

Despite the frequency of pitches received, 70 per cent of UK bloggers said that only one pitch a week or less resulted in content on their blog.



1. DO YOUR RESEARCH

Prominent men's Fashion blogger Matthew Pike of Buckets and Spades said:

"When it comes to blogger outreach it's important to tailor the experience to the individual. The amount of times I'm addressed with the wrong name on an email is sadly far too often."

If you want to catch the attention of an influencer make sure your outreach feels personal and specifically targeted to the blogger. If you are too busy to give your emails that personal touch there is always the option of outsourcing by contacting one of the many agencies that represent bloggers and can manage the campaign on your behalf.

According to [Technorati](#), bloggers most prefer receiving a first look or review opportunity for new products, offering prizes, samples, and giveaways to their blog's audience. So, perhaps you should think of sending one of these enticements to your chosen blogger before you click send.



2. PAY BLOGGERS BASED ON INFLUENCE

As blogger outreach is still a relatively new thing, there is no set guidelines as to when, if and how much you should pay a blogger for their time.

The best place to start is to look at how much influence a blogger has. Many bloggers will expect payment of some sort for their time but if the blogger you have approached has twenty followers it is unlikely that they are going to be able to deliver a return on investment.

However, if the blogger you have approached has a large following and if they have a solid track record of working on campaigns with other PRs then you will need to make sure you compensate them for their time.

Some influencers like Medina Umandap and Jonathan Howe of Two Monkeys Travel explicitly state on their blog how much they charge when it comes to working with PRs:

"We actually have a standard package rates for the different levels of promotion we can offer through our campaigns. We can then use these packages as the starting point for tailor-made campaigns to suit the particular brand".



2. PAY BLOGGERS BASED ON INFLUENCE

According to our recent [survey](#), agreeing payment or compensation is ranked as the number one biggest challenge that bloggers face when working with PRs which is also highlighted in most of our spotlight interviews.

Most bloggers are keen to work with PRs, but as our recent survey outlined, many still feel that their output does not have the credibility or status of journalists and traditional media.

The casual assumption that bloggers will work for free reinforces these feelings and devalues what bloggers bring to the table. This sentiment was reflected in an interview we did with Laura Agar Wilson, author of *Wholeheartedly Healthy*. She said:

“A lot of bloggers now do this as a business and I think the biggest thing PRs can do is come to the table with an understanding that we are legitimate methods of marketing for them and that there are costs involved with that. Therefore they shouldn’t come with the expectation that we should write for free.”



2. PAY BLOGGERS BASED ON INFLUENCE



You get that quite a lot as a blogger, and I think just PRs need to respect that we do have massive reach, we're able to reach a massive amount of people and even those who don't have a massive number of followers still have really good relationships with the people who do follow them and are much more likely to act upon a recommendation than if it was mentioned in a magazine. So, I think it's about knowing how bloggers work and understanding that there is PR and marketing in it for them as well".

A big part of building relationships is negotiating appropriate rates which doesn't leave the blogger feeling like they're being taken advantage of. Be professional about it, and don't give PRs a bad name.

3. COLLABORATE

If you successfully manage to bring a blogger on board for a campaign, don't just tell them what you want them to do with their influence, spend time talking about how you can work together.

Most bloggers are highly creative and will have many ideas of their own. When bloggers tell us of the most enjoyable campaigns they've worked on, it's always the ones where they were given the creative freedom to shape and mould the content.

If you want a blogger to promote a product or service. They will know their audience more than you, what they will respond to and what they won't, so trust them to do what they do best.



3. COLLABORATE

Laura Agar Wilson of Wholeheartedly Healthy said:

"Bloggers not only have the reach of big audiences but also good quality relationships, and that enriches the content they produce. People really do value what bloggers have to say. For instance, if a blogger recommends certain makeup products and I trust that person then I'm much more likely to make that decision to purchase it".



Also, where do you envision your blogger promoting your campaigns, what social channels would you like to tap into. Research from our [bloggers survey](#) showed that Twitter and Facebook are the preferred way to promote content, while women in particular are also active on more visual channels like Instagram and Pinterest which reflects the categories of blogs most often authored by women such as fashion, beauty, and lifestyle.

Considering whether the blogger has the level of influence on the channels you want to use should play a big role in your outreach strategy.

4. BUILD LASTING RELATIONSHIPS

When it comes to building productive relationships with bloggers, think long-term and not short-term. Most bloggers we speak with tell us that if they establish a good working relationship with a PR agency they will happily work on multiple campaigns.

Kach Medina Umandap and Jonathan Howe of Two Monkeys Travel said:

"We love working with the same brands over multiple campaigns, because it demonstrates a greater level of trust to our audience and we work with brands which we would use ourselves. However, we find that some brands and PRs miss this, preferring to work with different bloggers on each campaign."

Founder of The Travel Hack Monica Scott said:

"I tend to work with the same marketers and PRs over and over again. I prefer to build up professional relationships and friendships with them and work on lots of campaigns throughout the year. We then know how one another works and it's a much easier process. I try to avoid one-off collaborations whenever possible."



4. BUILD LASTING RELATIONSHIPS



When it comes to the early stages of blogger outreach, try befriending them on social media, following them on Twitter, comment on their blog, and interacting with them on the platforms where they are most active.

Quite often this is more effective than approaching them to work on a campaign right off the bat. In fact when it comes to approaching them directly with an offer to promote your product or services they are likely be most open to it when you have taken the time to get to know them. A connection with your brand will enhance their ability to create a campaign that will speak to both your brand and to their audience.

Be consistent with your outreach, regularly comment on their posts and try and get their attention by being friendly and approachable.

4. BUILD LASTING RELATIONSHIPS

Once you've started communicating with your chosen blogger, perhaps invite them out for lunch so you can get to know them on a more personal level.

Travel blogger Victoria Philpott, founder of VickyFlipFlop said:

'I like to keep things personal. I'd much rather meet up with a PR in person and have a chat to see how we could work together. In my experience, that's what has produced the best results for a destination and for us.'

'If I understand them and they understand me, we can work together on a plan and itinerary that suits both of our needs and goals''.



5. CHOOSE BLOGGERS THAT AUTHENTICALLY REPRESENT YOUR BRAND



When it comes to finding the right blogger to act as your brand ambassador it is important that they are in line with the product and services you are trying to sell. While it might be tempting to select bloggers by how much followers they have on social media, this should not be the deciding factor behind your selection.

Having a large following on social media does not always automatically equate to influence.

In the making of our weekly rankings that list the top movers and shakers within the blogosphere we look at factors such how often bloggers post content and the quality of relationships they have with their followers.

In the process of selecting a blogger to be your ambassador you will want an influencer that has strong relations with their following to promote your product or services.

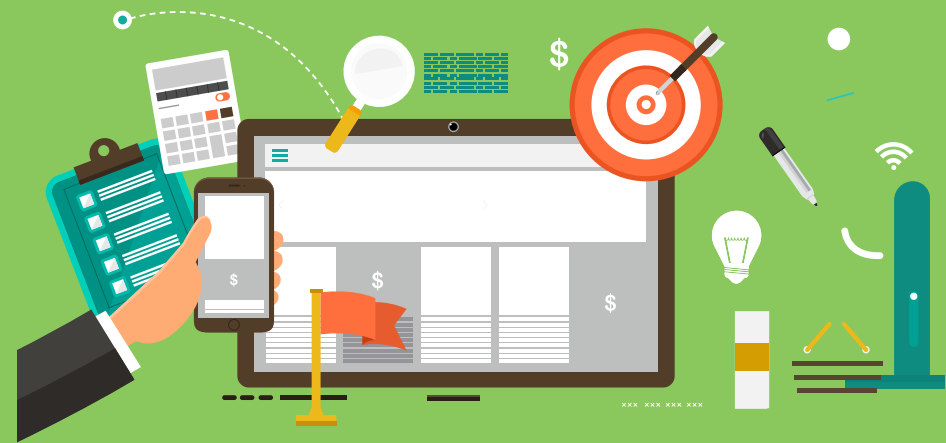
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However the success of your outreach will also be dependent on your selecting and building relationships with the right blogger. Does the blogger represent your company values? Do they have access to the audience you want to connect with? And how does their brand connect with yours? Think of matching with the right blogger as you would match with someone on Tinder. Do you have similar interests, do you follow similar people? It's these important things that will help you to figure out whether you've found the right match.

The success of all campaigns highlight the importance of finding the right match between the blogger, the services that are being offered, and using the influence of the right bloggers who will most resonate with your target audience.

Now you know what blogger outreach is and what it isn't you can build solid and long-lasting relationships that will be advantageous for both sides.



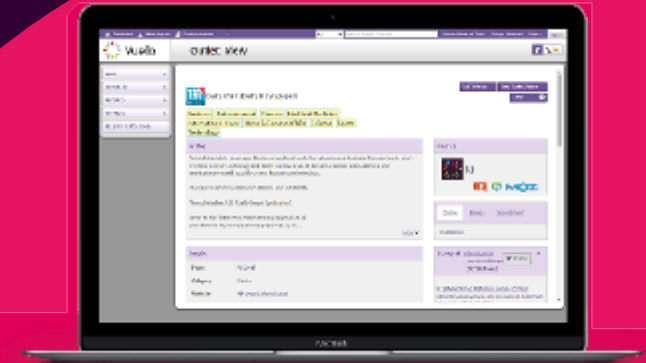
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