



How to Establish Your Thought Leadership Through Guest-Posting

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Guest posts are becoming popular these days. But why would someone write a guest post or produce a guest column at someone else's website in the first place?

The fact is that many professionals find a guest post as a means to share their knowledge and experience and bolster their reputation and establish themselves as an industry thought leader.

However, some professionals and marketers also step back from guest posting due to the fear of giving away valuable knowledge or revealing too much for free or even concerns about a negative audience response. These fears could prevent professionals from receiving a range of benefits offered by guest posting. Some of these benefits include:

- Branding yourself as a subject-matter expert and an industry-thought leader
- Increasing your reach to a diverse set of audience
- Making new connections by building relationships with publishers and influencers
- Generating better leads by driving traffic to your website
- Increasing your credibility and brand awareness

So, if you are ready to choose guest posting as one of the strategies to reinforce your online reputation as a dentist, how can you get started?

Although there are many ways to begin guest-posting, we are outlining some initial steps through a few approaches, along with some valuable suggestions and proven best-practices.

1. Identify an Area of Expertise

Everyone is capable of writing better in a specific genre. Identify the topics you want to specialize in or can write about better. Once you identify your niche areas within the dental field, you can start searching for a website or online magazine that is an appropriate fit and covers similar topics. That way, you can reach an audience you always wanted to reach.

Start by asking yourself:

- What are my areas of dental expertise about which I know the most?
- How many topics can I explore?
- Do I have enough experience to write on these topics?
- How can I set myself apart from other authors with my write-ups?

2. Research about Potential Host Websites

Industry Websites

You may start guest-blogging with some dental industry websites to which you would like to contribute. Also, you should look for additional publications for wider opportunities.

Start by compiling a list of popular websites within the industry. Continue searching for better websites. Perform a regular Google search for your blog list and industry topics. You can also use digital tools such as BuzzSumo for discovering industry influencers also having similar blogs.

Explore Current Relationships

Being a dental professional, you might be having some industry connections who are managing a publication. Consider exploring these current connections for building a firm writing foundation before pitching to a new editor whom you do not personally know.

Identify Where Your Colleagues or Competitors Are Writing

You may directly ask your colleagues about the websites they prefer for guest-posting. You can also ask if they have observed any success with some specific websites. Odds are that your colleges may come up with a website you haven't initially considered. It may be worth getting a try to those websites as well.

In case you prefer not to ask directly, you can search for the name of your colleagues or competitors in Google blog search. Alternatively, you can include the term 'guest post' along with a name in a regular search. You can also search the backlinks of your competitors to identify the websites they are linking to from a guest post.

Skim Through the Contributor Guidelines

Once you have identified the websites which accept submissions for publishing guest posts, thoroughly review their guidelines for guest posting. In some cases, you may require to request the guidelines. But usually, they are accessible through the navigation or you can get the guidelines by searching with: title: guest post guidelines site: domain.com.

Some websites require a specific level of expertise for a contributor. Some may ask for a link to previous articles. Others may suffice with basic biographical information or proposed article ideas. Convey your qualifications in the best possible way if you believe you meet all the standards required by a website.

3. Prioritize the Websites

Consider your bandwidth for writing multiple guest posts in a short duration. Keep this in mind while pitching article ideas to multiple websites at once. How will you manage if they all show interest?

It may take some time in establishing yourself as a proficient writer and developing relationships with editors. Give yourself enough time and scope to write high-quality articles rather than focusing on quantity.

You may find it difficult to be a contributor to a prominent website in comparison to a lesser-known site. In case you do not have a strong personal branding and lists of previously published articles, you should keep a limited outreach until you have some quality articles under your belt.

You should prioritize websites as per your writing goals. Are you looking forward to generating leads and drive more traffic for your dental practice? Do you want to be known as an industry thought leader? Or do you just want to share some ideas and knowledge with your target audience?

4. Brainstorm Your Article Ideas

You can write an effective pitch for crafting article ideas beforehand. Properly phrase your article ideas to create an influential first impression. You can certainly rephrase them later to improve quality and relevance.

Ask yourself:

- What topics are currently showcased on the website I am targeting?
- What topic should I write about?
- Which articles are most shared and trafficked?
- What topic would be most liked by the audience?
- What keywords to use for boosting SEO?
- What topics can help achieve my goal?

5. Pitch, Apply and Submit

Some websites require you to first make an application to become a contributor. Others may require a full article submission or an article idea pitch. Either way, it is always a good idea to contact the editors with an article outline first. The editors may express interest in your topic and would be more inclined to have your article published.

When creating a pitch, consider the audience you want to serve. Along with your pitch, you can also showcase your versatility and command as a writer by including a selection of your previously published articles. You may choose previous articles that are relevant to the new article idea you are pitching. Also, by presenting past articles from multiple websites, you can show that you are an experienced author and have been an active, dedicated contributor to multiple sites.

Guest-Posting Consistency

Depending on the preferences of a host website, you can become a regular contributor by submitting at least one guest post every month. When you include your interest to be a regular contributor, the selectors will be more likely to value your pitch.

For websites that publish guest posts occasionally, you may need to submit only one article in some time. In this case, it will be your responsibility to follow up and submit a pitch to the editor again.

Follow-Up Timeline

Once you have submitted an idea or pitched an article, it may take several weeks before the editors review your article and add it into the submission queue. In case, you do not receive a response from the editors within two weeks post submission, you can send a follow-up email.

Sometimes, publishers may take over a month in responding after submission even when they have accepted the article for publication. You must learn to work around it. You can avoid the situation by not submitting the same article to another publication until you receive a denial from the initial publication.

6. Write the Article

Remember to Follow the Site's/Blog's Format

The format is extremely important to bloggers. Consider the format of already posted articles on the website before you start writing. You should reflect the same format in your guest post. As a

best practice, you can create a text hierarchy for organizing your article and making it easier to scan. Follow the contributor guidelines rigorously including the length requirements, photos, as well as the citation from credible sources, if requested.

Keep SEO in Mind but Write for Your Target Audience

Whenever you write an article, you should always put your audience first. Optimize your copy for better user experience by placing popularly searched, relevant keywords in the title and headers of your article for increasing organic traffic and boosting your chances for more guest posts.

You can ask a friend or a colleague to review or edit your article. This gives you another perspective for improving the quality and accuracy of your article writing.

Focus on Evergreen Content

You may plan for producing evergreen content which is not time-sensitive. On the basis of a website's submission backlog, your article may take months before being published. Therefore, it is always a good idea to pitch an article topic before submitting a draft. Posting an evergreen content will help you drive more traffic to your dental website or blog over a long period of time and help boost your website rankings organically.

7. Analyze if Guest Posting is Generating Desired Traffic or Not

Employ different marketing tactics to measure and evaluate your performance. Depending on the goal you started with, you should determine if guest-posting is worth the efforts. Identify the following:

- Did your website receive any referral traffic?
- Did you receive increased traffic from social media?
- Is there any increase in your social following?
- Do you have return visitors from the referral sites?
- Have any of the return visitors turned into customers or leads?

If you find a website that outperforms others, it may be a good idea to focus on regularly contributing to that website.

8. Share on Social Media to Show Your Appreciation

You can show your appreciation for a guest post opportunity to the blogger and editor by sharing your article on your professional and personal social channels. This will also help the host website expand its reach. You can tag a publication in the social posts for possibly increasing your reach and

boosting your social media reputation.

About the Author

Naren Arulrajah is President and CEO of Ekwa Marketing, a complete internet marketing company that focuses on SEO, social media, marketing education, and the online reputations of dentists. With a team of 180+ full time marketers, www.ekwa.com helps dentists who know where they want to go, get there by dominating their market and growing their business significantly year after year. If you have questions about marketing your practice online, call 855-598-3320 to speak one-on-one with Naren.