

*Grow Your Captive Audience with*

# **BLOG TOURS**



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## Grow Your Captive Audience With Blog Tours

Are you looking for a way to increase traffic, sales, and your online community? A blog tour may be exactly what you need. Generally, blog tours are a marketing tactic that book authors and publishers utilize.

However, it can be quite effective when you’re launching an information product like a webinar, a home study course, or a coaching program. They can also be exceptional tools to build your following whether you’re launching a new book, releasing a new product or service, or you simply want to grow your business.

### What Is a Blog Tour?

A blog tour is probably what you imagine it is. You visit several blogs and publish guest or joint venture posts on the blog. The content is often print, but you can most certainly share a video blog post, as well. Generally speaking, a blog tour works best when you guest post on blogs that are relevant to your product, service, or your book audience. For example, a romance author wouldn’t get great results if they posted a guest post on a horror reader’s website.

Likewise, a health and fitness blogger probably wouldn’t want to publish a guest blog post to a blog on pet training. Unless, you could come up with a unique blog post approach that appeals to both fitness and pets.

## What Goes into a Blog Tour?

A blog tour requires a bit of advanced planning. It's not something that you can just decide to do today, and start posting tomorrow. We're going to focus on strategy quite a bit, because once you have a strategy for your blog tour, the rest is as simple as following through.

A blog tour requires you to:

1. Identify your goals and objectives for your blog tour.
2. Identify and research potential blogs that you want to post on.
3. Review their guest post submission guidelines if they have them.
4. Brainstorm content ideas for each blog that you'd like to guest post on.
5. Send your pitch. You'll have to reach out to blog owners, tell them what you'd like to do and what you want to write about, and then wait for their response.
6. Write (or hire a ghostwriter to write) your guest blog post.
7. Edit and polish your post.
8. Submit it to the blogger.
9. Add the blog date to your calendar. (Ideally, you can line up your guest blog posts so that you're present online on different blogs several days in a row.)
10. Market that blog post. Tell your audience on social media, your email list, and your own blog followers about the guest blog posts. Invite them to visit and join you.
11. Respond to comments in real time, if possible. The new connections that you make on a guest blog tour can be significant, and of course, they help you grow your audience.

So, those 11 steps aren't too tough, right? Many of the steps are intuitive and easy for you, or an assistant, to accomplish. Let's talk about the more challenging components of a blog tour, and discuss tips and tricks to make the most of your blog tour.

## Setting Your Goals - What Do You Want to Accomplish with Your Blog Tour?

As mentioned, many authors leverage blog tours to launch books that are about to be released. A blog tour is an effective tool to create momentum and enthusiasm. It can build awareness for your company, your products, and your services. And if you're getting ready to release something new, a new promotion, product, or service, then a blog tour can be exactly what you need to create awareness and excitement.

Now, of course, you want to create a captive audience with the blog tour, but that's just the first step. What are you going to do with that audience? What's the end goal?

Options include (but aren't limited to):

- drive them to your email opt in page
- send them to a sales page
- create brand awareness

- Position yourself as an authority in the industry
- Drive traffic to your website (good for affiliate income and traffic numbers for ad revenue)
- Build backlinks to your website.

Establishing your goal and objective is an important first step. It lays the groundwork for the rest of your strategy. It helps you format your content, find the right blogs to approach, and to create content that supports you to achieve your goals. Spend some time on this. Take a look at your existing marketing strategy, and explore how a guest blogging tour can fit into your existing marketing tactics, goals, and efforts.

For example, if one of your overarching marketing goals for the year is to build your email list by 15%, then you might leverage a blog tour to help you achieve that overarching goal.

Get as specific with your goal as possible. Try creating a SMART goal: specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and time bound. Once you have a goal that you're satisfied with, let's look at one of the more time-consuming steps in the process, identifying blogs that you'd like to post on.

## **Finding Your Blogging Opportunities**

There are a number of excellent ways to find good guest blogging opportunities. Keep in mind that a good blog tour has you traveling from blog to blog over a series of days. For example, you might post on blog A on Monday, blog B on Tuesday, Blog C on Thursday and so on. They might not be that tightly packed, but it can be more powerful (and create more momentum) when you're present in a number of locations over a period of days.

The first step to finding blogging opportunities is to make sure you know and understand your audience. Who is interested in your information, products, or services? What problems do you solve and who do you solve them for? Know your audience and then research where they hang out. Where do they go to solve their problems?

For example, maybe you have an information product for non-fiction writers about how to sell 5000 + books per launch. SO, your audience either has a book that they're trying to sell or they are an aspiring author who might be motivated to finish their book once they've read your book on how to sell them.

They are probably visiting writing websites and book marketing websites, right? They're looking for tips and tricks to finish and sell their book. In this case, you might then look for bloggers who provide that type of information, how to start a book, how to write a book that sells, and so on. Those would be the bloggers to approach.

This is why it's so important to know your audience. You must understand where they are in their process. What questions do they have and where do they go to find the answers? Your products solve one problem, but what happens before and after that?

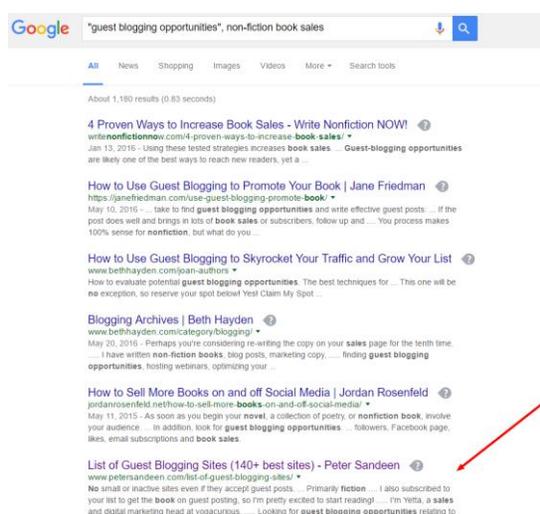
Where to look:

Social media - use hashtags that your audience might use and find relevant bloggers this way. You might also take a look at the people your existing customers and followers follow. This can lead you to some relevant bloggers.

Blogs you follow - who do you currently follow in your niche? Identify industry leaders and visit their blogs. Are they relevant to your audience?

Google Search - Search online like your audience might search online. What keywords do they use to find information? You can limit your search to blogs. You can also simply search for the term “Guest blogging” plus your keywords to see what shows up.

You can see in the screenshot below, using the keywords “guest blogging opportunities” and “non-fiction book sales” a list of blogs and websites came up along with a great list of 140 guest blogging sites. That discovery alone might save you hours of searching time.



Guest blogging directories - MyBlogGuest.com is one example of a blogging directory. Consider using a resource like this for research purposes. You can also post that you’re looking for guest blogging opportunities and see who reaches out to you.

And don't forget to connect with your friends and associates, your existing customers who may also own a blog, and your list. Depending on your niche, some of your existing leads and customers may be ideal places to add to your blog tour.

Once you've found a list of the blogs that you'd like to post on, it's time to prepare your pitch. Keep in mind that not all of them will say, “yes,” so you may want to pitch to more blogs than you plan to write for. For example, if you want to hold a five-day blog tour, that means you're blogging for five different sites. You may want to submit to 10-15 different bloggers, to make sure you have the five lined up.

## Writing Your Pitch

When you're reaching out to the various bloggers that you've identified, it's important to keep a few things in mind. The first is that they want to know what is in it for them if they agree to a guest post. Make sure you have a good understanding of the blog's goals, audience, and

motivations. What can you offer them? For example, you may heavily promote your post on their site, so they can receive increased traffic. You might also agree to post about them on your own website or blog. One great way to get their attention and provide a benefit is to offer a giveaway along with the post. It's a bonus for them because they're giving their audience unique information and a gift, too.

- You'll also want to tell them what your goal is. What are you promoting and what will your guest post be about? Be specific about exactly what you would like to provide or do (guest post, interview, exclusive excerpt, etc.).
- Reach out and connect with them 6 weeks before your launch. This gives you time to establish a rapport, get your content organized, and to make sure everything is ready to go before the launch. It also gives you enough time to get all of the other blogs lined up and coordinated.
- If they say yes, get your material to them on time and thank them again for the opportunity.
- When you turn in your material, also include any images or your photo, a short bio, and buy links. While you may be creating unique content for different blogs, it's a good idea to make sure your buy links and your bio are consistent on all of the sites. Here are a few examples of signature lines or bio boxes.



**Author: Neil Patel**

Neil Patel is the co-founder of [Crazy Egg](#), [Hello Bar](#), and [KISSmetrics](#). He helps companies like Amazon, NBC, GM, HP and Viacom grow their revenue. The Wall Street Journal calls him a top influencer on the web, and Entrepreneur Magazine says he has created one of the 100 most brilliant companies in the world. You can connect with him on Twitter [@neilpatel](#).

Other posts by [Neil Patel](#)

Neil includes several links in his bio. They link to his websites along with his profile on twitter, and there's also a subtle invitation to read more content by him. Neil is a prolific guest blogger and presumably one of his goals is/was to establish himself as the go to expert, which he has been quite successful with.

#### ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Erika Napoletano is the Head Redhead at RHW Media, a brand strategy firm that helps people get UNstuck and over those annoying problems that keep them from being awesome. She's been hailed by Forbes as a "spainless spin doctor" for her uncensored perspectives on business, marketing, branding, and life in general. Erika is also a twice-published author, including [The Power of Unpopular](#) and [The Insider's Guide to Egg Donation](#), a columnist for both Entrepreneur Magazine and OPEN Forum, a speaker at TEDx Boulder 2012, and speaks at conferences across

the U.S. on the inherent power of truth in business... or as she refers to it, the power of unpopularity. Learn more about her (if you dare) at [www.erikanapoletano.com](#).

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READ MORE FROM ERIKA NAPOLETANO ▶

Erika has created a strong online brand. Again, like Neil, she includes a number of links in her bio including her website, her books, and an invitation to follow her on Twitter.



Ann Handley's bio also shares three different links to her books, information about her speaking gigs and experience, and a longer bio. She embraces her personality in her bio box and it's both conversational and informative.

Finally, be sure to promote your appearance and in fact, create a promotional strategy for the entire blog tour. Your promotions might include:

Announcements – Send emails to your list, share on social media, and publish on your blog the dates, times, and locations of where you're going to be blogging. If the content is unique at each site, and you are offering something special on each site, then be sure to share that information, as well.

Share the Love - If you can share a bit about the blogs you're touring, including why you are so honored to be blogging there and what is wonderful about the site, then you'll drive more traffic.

Promote the Appearance – leverage social media to promote each blog appearance. For example, you might Tweet about the appearance once it's live and @mention the blog/blogger.

Before we wrap it up, it's important to keep in mind that you are a guest on someone's blog. Match their audience needs, respect their blog style and format, and be present to answer comments on your post. Be a blogger that gets invited back and leaves an exceptional first impression. Then, the next time you're ready to go on a blog tour, you know that you have connections and resources.

Blog tours require a bit of planning and organization up front, however they can be enormously productive. Growing a captive audience with a blog tour requires a solid objective, relevant industry blogs to include in your tour, quality content, and a bio box that supports your goals and objective. Have fun!