




STRATEGY + BEST PRACTICES FOR PUBLISHING CONTRIBUTED ARTICLES

Demonstrate your expertise and
become a leading voice for your cause



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Writing and publishing contributed articles is a great way to share your expertise, expand your audience, and enhance your reputation.

If you are looking for ways to increase awareness of your company and become known as an authority in their field, writing and publishing articles is a fantastic way to share your expertise, insights, and opinions.

Byline articles (articles in which you are the author) can cover just about any topic. They can be specific to an industry and thus shared with trade publications, or serve as informational or inspirational articles for mainstream media.

There are myriad publications and websites that publish well-written content and provide the opportunity to build your reputation as an industry leader and sought-after expert.

Contributed articles typically include a short author bio and a link to their corporate website which creates great backlinks, search results, and builds clout for corporate leadership.

The following guide will help you map out your contributed article strategy and get your first article published.

#1: Define Your Objective

The first step in creating a contributed article strategy is to ask yourself “Why?” What are you hoping to achieve with this strategy? A contributed article strategy can accomplish a variety of objectives with variations in the content and publication focus. The first step is always to clearly understand what you’re trying to achieve as this goal will then define the specifics of the strategy.

Why are you doing this? I want to...

- Build social proof and credibility (the “As seen in...” factor)
- Create awareness
- Promote a product/service
- Generate leads/potential customers (direct CTA)
- Drive sales (e.g. link to book/sales page)
- Drive traffic to blog/website

#2: Define Your Expert Identity

Once you've identified the objective, the next step is to define your expert identity. Why should people listen to you? What is your unique perspective or expertise that no one else has? Editors receive submissions from many highly qualified writers, why should they choose to publish your work over someone else's? To define your expert identity we recommend taking the time to answer several key questions:

- What do you have to say?
- What do people need to hear?
- What do you want to convey?
- What do you stand for or against?
- What do you represent?
- What are the conversations you want to start
- What are the conversations you want to join
- What do you want to be known for?
- What do you know that other people need to know?
- What's your story?
- What do you believe?
- What do you most want people to know?

#3: Define Your Audience

Who is your target audience? Who, specifically, are you writing for? Really defining the audience will be instrumental in determining which publications to pitch to and will help define the tone, area of focus, and content for your articles.

- Who do you help?
- Who do you serve?
- Who is he/she?
- What are they reading/watching/following?
(It's likely the same as you)
- What are they searching for on Google
- What trends are they likely following?
- What stories/themes do they keep coming back to?

#4: Create Your Media List

Media lists can include thousands of online outlets, blogs, and publications. There are a plethora of outlets covering every topic under the sun and in any medium you can think of - print, online, broadcast, podcast, social, etc. Working from a 1,000 contact media list is overwhelming for anyone, so we always recommend identifying 10-15 top targets first. Include some low hanging fruit to garner early wins.

Identify your top 10-15 targets:

- Don't go big at first; get some wins and then ladder up
- Think local, national, niche, trade

Also, don't forget open/self-publishing platforms such as Medium and LinkedIn

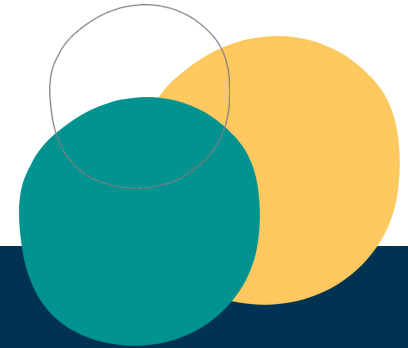
#5: Create a List of Article Ideas

Before pitching story ideas to editors, create synopses for several potential article topics. Editors frequently ask for alternate story options or may want to pick and choose from a few ideas.

Types of stories:

- Helpful/value-driven
- Timely/event-driven/emotional/controversial
- How to
- Bold perspective
- Listicles -
- “X Ways to...”
- Vulnerable share
- Feature
- Seasonal
- Spotlight
- The one thing I did/I know/that/to do...

#6: Pitch Your Ideas



Email editors and follow-up as necessary to get a “YES!” before you start writing.

Before you write the full article, email a pitch to editors and include information about yourself, your expertise, and your unique perspective, as well as some background information such as your website and/or links to past articles you’ve published so that they can research you and monitor your clout. You’ll also want to include a sample title as well as a brief 2-3 sentence synopsis of the article. Be open and ready to the editor’s request for tweaks to your idea or for them to ask you to go in a new direction when writing the article to adjust to their audience and publication’s interests.

Anatomy of a perfect pitch:

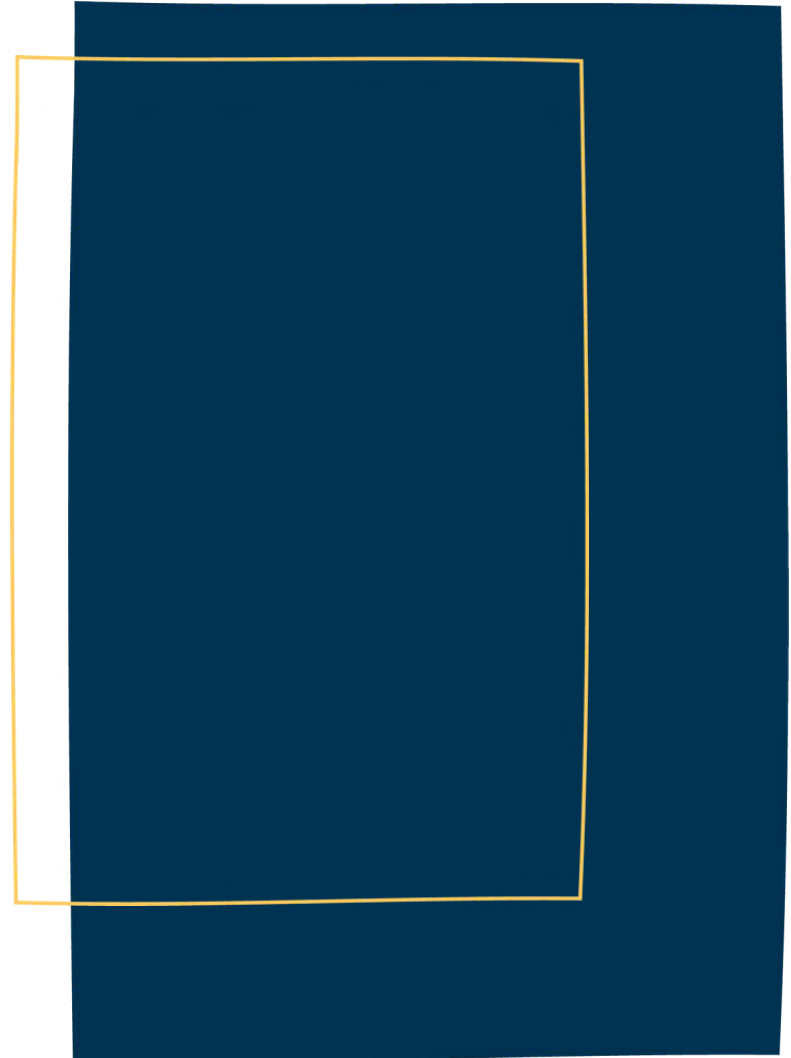
- Sell yourself. Why are you the expert on this topic? What uniquely qualifies you? Why should the editor trust you and want content from you?
- Get specific about your article idea. Provide a sample headline and 2-3 sentences about the article with examples of the points that would be included
- Provide background info about yourself at the end. Ex. Links to other published articles, social handles, websites, etc.

#7: Write the Article

Publications and websites usually have writer's guidelines so be sure to confirm with the editor before you start writing. Contributed articles are usually less than 1,000 words (average 600-700 words).

Your article should contain these elements:

- A catchy headline
- A strong introduction
- Teaching
- Subheadings for readability
- Links to outside sources
- Summation
- Relevant call-to-action (CTA)



#8: Post-Publication To-Dos

Once the article is published, follow this checklist to make sure you maximize the audience and reach of your work:

- Share on all social channels
- Email to your list (if relevant)
- Add to email signature and website
- Run traffic ads for retargeting

Repurpose your content (*check for publication exclusivity restrictions)

- Post on LinkedIn
- Post on Medium, if you have an account
- Post on Thrive Global, if you have an account
- Post on your personal blog
- Use in email newsletter

And finally, don't forget to thank the editor who published your piece. Building a strong relationship with your editorial partners ensures you will have more opportunities to share content down the road.

We help purpose-driven organizations share their stories and expertise to increase visibility, grow their business, and become a leading voice for their cause.

Leverage the power of PR and thought leadership to drive business growth, influence, and authority

For more tips and best practices to help you amplify your message and accelerate your impact, visit our blog at orapinmarketing.com/blog