



The Blogger Outreach Checklist

BY: **The Shelf** : Find and work with relevant bloggers and social influencers



1

RESEARCH

- What topics does the blogger cover?
- Does the blogger do sponsored posts?
- Do her posts get quality engagement?

If you scan someone's blog for even a few minutes you will get a good grasp of the topics they cover. Go through their navigation bar to see if you can identify categories, such as fashion, travel, food, lifestyle, or whatever it may be. Read at least a few blog posts to get a sense of the writing and style. Reference a previous blog post that you loved. If you can tie it back to your brand, great. If the blogger covers similar brands, she will most likely be interested in yours, so feel free to bring that up. For example: "I saw that a number of your looks have a real vintage flair. I especially liked your last post about that Modcloth denim jacket. We have a number of items that would look great with that very jacket."P



2

TARGETING

- Has she worked with brands similar to yours?
- Will your product resonate with her audience?

Blasting out every blogger on the planet won't bring you the results you're hoping to achieve. Not only are you wasting everyone's time, you're potentially wasting money on a collaboration that doesn't target your customers. While some bloggers might be interested despite the fact that your products don't match her style, most will either turn you away or not respond at all if they don't see a match. It's always worthwhile to do a little research upfront so you don't find yourself working with bloggers that have zero fit with your brand.



3

PERSONALIZATION

- Did you use the blogger's first name?
- Did you reference her blog or a specific blog post so she knows your email is personalized?

Always address the blogger by her first name. If you don't know it, you can usually find it on an About Us or Contact page. If it's not there, click into a blog post and scroll down to the bottom. Look for either a bio or a signature. You also might find it at the top of the post where there's usually a date and an author name. And if you still don't have any luck, check each of her social handles. Her name DOES exist somewhere online. However, if you want to avoid playing Where's Waldo, our influencer marketing platform, The Shelf can really help you out. Our site does all the research for you so you never have to go on these wild goose chases while assembling your outreach spreadsheet.



4

FLATTERY

- Did you tell her what you love about her blog?
- Did you reference a past post or her style so she knows you're being authentic?

It goes a long way. Don't be afraid to tell the blogger how much you LOVE her site...and why. This might sound a little cheesy but you chose that blogger out of the millions of bloggers out there, for a reason. What was that reason? Did you like her photo style? Did you like the unique locations where she does her photoshoots? Do you like her personal style or outfit pairings? Do you like the posts where she includes her dog, kids or husband? You get the idea. You know why you chose that blogger, so just take a few more minutes to let her know the reason why!



5

CREDIBILITY

- Did you give the blogger a little backstory on your brand?
- Did you establish credibility for your brand or mention any other great bloggers you've worked with?

Bloggers get bombarded by pitches so it's important to establish credibility right from the start and even provide a little backstory. For example, we're the husband and wife duo behind [brand name]. We sell very high-end luxury goods that are sold online and at luxury retailers, such as Nordstrom and Holt Renfrew. Our handbags have been seen on high caliber bloggers, such as [insert names] and we think you'd really love our brand as well.



6

CLARITY

- Did you make it clear that you want to work with the blogger in some capacity?
- Did you use a call to action so it's easy for the blogger to respond?

Be clear on why you're emailing the blogger and don't make it difficult for the blogger to understand what you want from her or how she should even respond. If you want to be somewhat vague in your first email, that's ok but at least make it clear that you want to work together in some capacity. Oftentimes pitch emails are way too vague or just lack a call to action all together. For example, I once received a pitch from a PR agency that detailed how much they loved my blog and that I would love some of the brands that they represent. Unfortunately, there was no call to action beyond telling me they loved my blog. For this reason, it was very unclear if they wanted to collaborate, do a campaign or work together in any capacity. It would have been helpful if they included more info.



7

BENEFIT

- Did you outline what the benefit is to the blogger or what's in it for her?
- Did you put more focus on her as opposed to the brand?

How will this collaboration benefit the blogger, not just YOU. All too often brands and PR professionals go into great detail about how the blogger will help them raise awareness, add credibility to their brand or improve their ROI. But, have you taken the time to outline why this collaboration will benefit the blogger? What's in it for her? Will you be sharing her sponsored content across your social channels, thus exposing her to a new audience? Will the collaboration add credibility to the blogger's portfolio? It's just like a job interview in the sense that if you're pitching a collaboration you need to show the benefit to the blogger as well.



8

A/B TESTING

- Did you A/B split test the subject line?
- Did you A/B split test the contents of the email?

Once again, don't just blast out the same email to every blogger. Test out two different subject lines to see what gets a higher open and/or response rate. You can track this with a tool like Yesware, or when using an outreach tool like ours! Perhaps try one subject line that is super clear versus one that is more vague and intriguing. Once you've established which one works better, you can do an A/B split test on the message too. Do note, personalizing at least the opening paragraph of your email is ESSENTIAL.



9

BONUS POINTS

- Did you follow them on social media channels and engage with their content?
- Did you read any of her blog posts and leave comments?

If you take the time to follow them on Twitter or Instagram and engage with their content. Get on their radar! This tactic can be used before and after you send your cold email.

Sample Outreach Email

Use first names. →

Hi Jenny,

Explain how you found her →
and work in some flattery.

I recently came across your blog on Pinterest. I saw your picture of the J.Crew statement necklace that you posted a few weeks ago and loved the photo. You cropped the photo in a really unique way and I always find myself drawn to that more atsy style of photography.

Show that you respect her time →

Tell her about your company →

Explain why she's a good fit. →

Anyway, I know you get tons of these emails, so I'm going to keep this super quick! I started my own jewelry line a year ago. We started on Etsy and are now launching a real store. I'm looking for bloggers that have a classic style with a bit of an edge. When I saw your photo on Pinterest, I was positive that you'd be perfect for this! And I'm even more positive after clicking through the last few months of your posts.

A clear ask. →

I wanted to see if you'd be up for collaborating. I'd love to explore options with you. Perhaps we could do a sponsored post or even a giveaway might be fun. Here's a [link](#) to my site!

Make it friendly, not formal. →

I can't wait to hear what you think!
Becky

