The Most Effective Methods to Drive Traffic to Your Website

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Is your blog or website dead? Do you find you have to work hard for every single page view, only to see it all fall flat when you stop promoting like crazy?

Here's the thing...

Your goal should be to focus on [growing your organic search rankings](#) and then turning that traffic into fanatical recurring readers. This means targeting keywords, building backlinks and setting up effective email capture in prominent places on your site.

Why isn't it as simple as writing one viral post that gets shared 10,000 times then converting those visitors into subscribers?

Well, getting eyes on the page in the short term is a perfectly fine goal, but the endgame is to have a large, dedicated readership, right?

That's where this guide comes in. This guide will walk you through the process, including **every method you need to drive traffic to your blog repeatedly and reliably**.

1. Do keyword research before you write

Until you do keyword research, there's no way of knowing which topics your target audience searches for, and which articles you write will bring in heavy amounts of organic traffic when they rank.

It can be as simple as plugging a few topic ideas into SEMrush and picking the results with the best volume to difficulty ratio (high: low), or it can be a more involved process with the initial stages standing in as a kind of market research.

As a basic rule of thumb, you should always go to the places your target market hangs out and find out the kinds of questions they ask and topics that they're interested in.

From there, you'll be able to match your cornerstone content (more on that below) with real questions your audience care about.

Your SEO strategy needs to be driven and informed by a master list of keywords, like this one I created for my theoretical green tea blog in a few minutes just by exporting 'green tea' from the SEMRush keyword tool:

Keywords	Difficulty	Volume (desc)	Number of words	Results
how much caffeine is in a cup of green tea	27	170	10	862000
how much caffeine in a cup of green tea	27	210	9	819000
how much green tea should you drink a day	13	210	9	6840000
when is the best time to drink green tea	5	210	9	10600000
how to make iced green tea with tea bags	6	170	9	626000
how many cups of green tea a day	8	480	8	2550000
where can i buy matcha green tea powder	37	480	8	460000
where can i buy green tea ice cream	0	390	8	4750000
how does green tea help you lose weight	16	390	8	9410000
does green tea have more caffeine than coffee	23	320	8	4430000
is too much green tea bad for you	12	260	8	13800000
what are the benefits of drinking green tea	54	260	8	1210000
carrot root extract green tea extract and cocoa	0	260	8	255000
what does green tea do for your body	63	210	8	10000000
is green tea against the word of wisdom	2	210	8	950000
does drinking green tea help you lose weight	15	170	8	8370000
how to make green tea with tea bags	2	170	8	3320000
how to drink green tea to lose weight	24	170	8	1330000
what are the health benefits of green tea	65	170	8	3720000
how to drink green tea for weight loss	23	170	8	2550000
what is the best green tea to drink	12	140	8	17800000
does green tea help you lose weight	23	1900	7	9410000
how much caffeine is in green tea	27	1600	7	775000

As soon as I have this list, I'm infinitely better informed than I was before.

A quick tip: If you order keyword list exports by the highest number of words first, then you can get an idea of the natural language your audience uses and find tons of long tail hidden gems with low difficulty.

2. Create a strong foundation of cornerstone content

What's your blog really about? What kinds of posts *should* a blog like yours have on it?

If you're a green tea blog, you need to have content covering things like the types of tea, the best ways to brew it, and the health benefits. These posts will be your cornerstone content. They need to be:

- Extremely useful (answering a question your readers have)
- Comprehensive (examining the question from all angles)
- Over 2,000 words long (longer content ranks better in Google)
- Perfectly optimized in line with on-page SEO guidelines

Cornerstone content is the foundation everything else is built on. Without it, there's less point in driving traffic to your blog because the target audience won't find anything of substance worth sticking around to see. You'll get traffic spikes, but very few recurring readers.

It's also useful for deep linking. If you're talking a lot about types of green tea, you don't want to have to link to a Wikipedia article every time you mention *Sencha* — you want to be able to **link to *your* article about it**, and create a network of links that guide readers deeper into your site and increase the amount of time they spend there.

Simply put, you need substance, not just a lot of loosely related fluff. The keyword list you generated with the previous method will be an excellent starting point.

Examples of cornerstone content:

The Ultimate DIY SEO Tutorial (Step by Step) For Beginners — ReliableSoft

The Definitive Guide to Copywriting — Quicksprout

What is Content Marketing? — Copyblogger

As a general rule of thumb, you should be comfortably able to link to a cornerstone page in any article on the topic, safe in the knowledge that the link will explain in-depth the concept and really help your reader out.

Link building: Rank your content on the first page of Google

Link building is a gigantic topic, and there are *many* ways to go about it. Guest posting, outreach, broken link building, and syndication to name a few.

It's hard work. Perhaps the hardest part of the journey towards driving traffic to your blog. Why do people bother if it's so hard?

Well, the simple answer is that if no one's linking back to your content, Google doesn't believe it to be quality and won't rank it in search engines.

The more links, the higher the placement. Backlinks have been proven to be the single biggest ranking factor, so to you as a blogger they're the lifeblood of what you do.

Let's look at why you might get links back to your content organically:

- You have original data that's being sourced

- You have an impactful original opinion that's being sourced

- Your content is being discussed by bloggers, podcasts and businesses

Of course you want your content to achieve these criteria, but it's never enough to sit about and wait in the world of online marketing. You need to go out there and get to work, and here's how...

3. Link building tactic #1: Guest posting to build high-quality links from relevant domains

Even if you don't have an audience of your own, you can be certain someone else does and you can leverage that for your own ends.

Most blogs accept guest posts because it's good for their own audience and it's free, quality content. Bloggers are keen to write for other blogs because it means getting more links from other domains.

The more unique domains that link back to your content, the better it will rank.

That's because authority works on the principle of diminishing returns, and 3 links from *Fast Company* will equate to much less authority being passed to your page than if you were to get one link each from *TechCrunch, Forbes, and Business Insider.*

For Google, variety is a sign of trustworthy links being built because more than one source chose to link it. And the good news there is that rule makes guest posting the ideal solution.

Here's the basic process:

Pick a piece of content you're trying to rank for a difficult keyword — this is likely cornerstone content targeting a high volume term.

Find blogs that accept posts you could use to link back to the high value content you identified in step 1 — for example, if I was trying to rank a piece about the benefits of green tea, perhaps a health blog would accept content about the 4 best alternatives to coffee.

Use [SEMRUSH](#) to find 100-200 relevant blogs and export the list of domains into a spreadsheet.

Using an email finding process, look for the emails of the blog editors at each publication (or assign this to a VA)

Write a list of 20 titles and break them into 4 groups of 5

Load the blog editor's email addresses and company names into a CRM

Write 4 pitch email templates, each asking for a guest slot, showing your past credentials and pasting in 1 of the 4 groups of titles. Make sure to use custom fields to fill in the first names, blog names, etc.

Send pitch email #1 (with the first set of titles) to the first quarter of the list, #2 to the second quarter, and so on, until every editor has received an email.

When you get a positive response back, make a note of the title they wanted and add it to a list in something like Trello or Todoist.

Write the guest post, inserting both links to *their* domain and your content you want to rank

Watch the backlinks roll in!

The email template:

```
Subject: I'd love to write for [blog name]

Hi [first name],
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I'm a fan of the [niche] content on [blog name], and I'd love to write
a guest post for you. I've previously appeared on [site names] if
you'd like some samples of my work: [links to samples].


Here are a few ideas for your blog:
[5 titles]
What do you think?
[your name]
```

Some notes on this process: You might frown on the impersonal blanket approach being used here, but trust me — it works. Every 100 emails sent usually gets back 10-15 acceptances, mostly on valuable domains.

4. Link building tactic #2: Contacting sites for syndication opportunities

Syndication (if done properly) is an incredible thing. It's usually a big site like *Business Insider* picking up content from a small blog and publishing it on their domain (like this). This means you get numerous high quality backlinks without even having to write new content.

The only problem is ... you're going to have to deal with journalists. Journalists are busy people with tight deadlines and almost zero time for you.

You're lucky if you get their attention, but with enough work finding the right angle of approach, you've got the chance to reach a *huge* audience, build credibility, and get links.

Sites that syndicate don't exactly shout about it, and that can be a real problem when it comes to hunting them down. From what I know, *Business Insider*, *The Next Web* and *Lifehacker* all accept syndicated content but I only found those by chance. For a big list of sites that syndicate, [check out SumoMe's guide](#).

When contacting a syndication editor, use a template like this:

```
Subject: pitch: [title]


Hi [first name],
I'm getting in touch to find out if there'd be a chance for you to
republish a piece of mine on [blog name]? It's gone down well on our
site and got [share count] shares so far. There's been a lot of
interest, so I thought it'd go down well with [blog name]'s audience.
Title: [title]
[summary of the piece]
[URL of the piece]


What do you think?
```

Keep it simple, and respect the fact that the journalist is looking to maximize the amount of quality content coming through their channel while saving as much time as possible.

No rambling, prove yourself straight away and don't make them go on the URL to find out if it's even relevant.

5. Link building tactic #3: Outreach

We've all received those emails from other bloggers asking if you can link back to their article in yours. And we've all read them and thought 'why bother?'.

The last thing you want *your* outreach emails to do is create that reaction, so you need to offer something in return. The only kinds of outreach emails that get a reaction out of me is when the blogger offers a link in exchange. Something like this:

Offering a Backlink

```
Subject: A link in your article on [topic]

Hi there,

I noticed you have a great piece of content on [topic], and wanted to
show you a piece I wrote recently that I think would go well as a
resource for your readers in that post.
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```
[description of the post]
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```
If you're happy to link it, please send me over a URL you'd like
linking in a relevant post on our blog, and I'd love to help you out
in return.
```

This quid-pro-quo deal will surely interest a lot of bloggers, because it's obvious that it's easier to edit a post to add a link than it is to earn one.

However, there is another way you can bring your content to the attention of bloggers that might want to link back to it and already have a vested interest, and that is by emailing the companies and individuals you linked to.

Notifying About a Backlink

```
Subject: Hey [name]! I mentioned you in this post
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```
Hi [name],
```

```
Just wanted to let you know I mentioned you in my post, [title]. You
can take a look here: [url]
```

```
Thanks!
```

What's the point in this? Well, people are much more likely to want to link back to something if it serves their interests. It's as simple as that! You can test this

email template where you ask for a link back, or ask for social shares, and see what works best for you.

List building: Turn traffic into recurring readers

There's no point in relying on viral traffic, social shares and referral traffic from sites like reddit. While it can't hurt to get a few thousand page views, it's not really doing much in the long term.

You'll get short spikes followed by 0 visits and always have to work hard to get attention, every single day. Brian Dean calls this kind of promotion 'treadmill traffic'. You can't rely on it for passively building your blog, and you can't free up time to work on more important things.
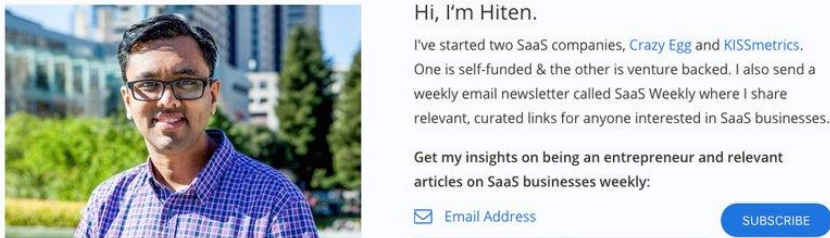
What's the solution? The first solution that we've already looked at is organic SEO. That will make sure that plenty of people consistently see your content. But what if they never come back? You have to capture that traffic and turn it into email subscribers.

There are three main ways to do this: opt-in boxes, lead magnets, and content upgrades. I'll look at each of these ways individually.

6. List building tactic #1: Opt-in boxes

Every blog needs to have an email list to make sure that readers keep coming back. The simplest way to build a list is simply to put a static opt-in box on your blog.

Here's an example from Hiten Shah:

This way, you have a solid way to capture your reader's email addresses, send them newsletters and keep them coming back again and again.

Opt-in boxes are easy to make with tools like SumoMe and OptinMonster, plus they plug right into WordPress and push emails to email marketing platforms like MailChimp and ConvertKit.

But the problem is, that unless someone specifically wants your newsletter, they're not going to subscribe. What if you offered them something better? That's where the next two tactics come in.

7. List building tactic #2: Lead magnets

Lead magnets are an offer of something free in return for the reader's subscription. Usually an ebook, email course or set of exclusive videos that will be enticing to pretty much everyone who could be your ideal reader.

Here's an example on our blog:

As you can see, it's not purely offering to get the newsletter, it's also offering a free ebook. This is much better than a newsletter, as it's something tangible and

valuable the reader can get right now for free (most probably that's how you ended up reading this guide!).

Great lead magnets include:

- Templates

- Guides

- Checklists

- Ebooks

- Reports

- White papers

- Resource list

- Assessment

They're immediate, they're specific, and they're likely to be something your audience values and needs.

But wait! There's something even better...

8. List building tactic #3: Content upgrades

Let's take it one step further than a generic lead magnet and make an offer to our reader that's totally irresistible. **Content upgrades** aren't just generic guides or resources like lead magnets. They're so laser-specific that they're unique in every blog post. Think back... maybe you've seen something like this before?

It's *not* a generic opt-in or lead magnet but an actual extension of the post itself.

Why does it work so well?

It works because the reader is already in the mindset that they want to read whatever your post has to say, then creates a curiosity gap and makes them feel like they're missing out on the full value of the post if they don't unlock the bonus.

It's not like you're ripping out parts of the post and putting them behind an email wall — you're actually offering *extra* value if they choose to take it.

Like lead magnets, content upgrades can be checklists, spreadsheets, ebooks, guides, or videos. They can be anything that adds value to the post in exchange for an email address.

When you click to get the bonus, you'll be prompted to enter your email.

We've found that around 70% of the people who click the upgrade enter their email address, even if they didn't know they'll have to. That's how powerful a content upgrade is.

When it comes to actually implementing them, there are some tools that can make the job easy, including:

SumoMe (List Builder tool with Click Trigger)

Leadpages (Leadboxes tool)

Content Upgrades Pro

Piecing the puzzle together

At first, it seems like an impossible challenge. How can you even start getting traction with a blog if no one cares about it? With these strategies, however, it's all broken down into a step-by-step process with some passive parts that will work on their own.

To summarize:

1. Find the keywords your audience is using
2. Write awesome content to match those keywords
3. Build links back to that content to rank it in Google
4. Capture the organic traffic and turn it into recurring visits

When you look at it that way, it's not so hard after all. It just means you need the foundation in place first to set yourself up for success.