

@taliadoux Startup Outreach & Growth Guide

Introduction

This guide provides practical steps for early-stage founders and students to land internships, connect with mentors, and grow their startups. It includes step-by-step tutorials, cold email templates, and instructions for using tools like Apollo.io, RocketReach, and LinkedIn effectively.

Using Apollo.io for Outreach

Apollo.io is a powerful tool for building lead lists of potential investors, mentors, or customers. Here's how to use it:

1. Sign up for a free account at <https://apollo.io>.
2. Use the search filters to find your target audience (e.g., investors, analysts, founders).
3. Save the contacts you find into a list inside Apollo.
4. Export the list as a CSV file by selecting your list and clicking 'Export.'
5. Open the CSV in Excel/Google Sheets. You'll see Name, Role, Company, Email, and LinkedIn URL.

Pro tip: Keep your lists organized by audience type (e.g., investors vs. early customers).

Cold Email Templates

Here are simple, proven cold email formats you can use:

Internship Cold Email

Subject: Inspired by your work at [Company]

Hi [Name],

I came across your work at [Company] and really admire [specific project or contribution]. I'm currently a [student/early professional] interested in [field]. I'd love to hear any advice you have on breaking into this industry or how you got started.

Thank you so much for your time,
[Your Name]

Startup Outreach Email (Investor/Mentor)

Subject: Quick intro — [Startup Name]

Hi [Name],

I really enjoyed your [article/podcast/tweet] about [topic]. I'm building [startup name], which [one-line description]. We've [traction metric, e.g., 100 beta users or early revenue].

Would you be open to a 15-minute call to get your thoughts?

Thanks so much,
[Your Name]

Customer Outreach Email

Subject: Helping [their company] with [problem]

Hi [Name],

I noticed that your team at [Company] is working on [specific challenge]. I'm building [startup/product] that helps solve this by [solution].

Would you be open to a quick call to see if it's a fit?

Best,
[Your Name]

LinkedIn DM Template

Hi [Name], I came across your profile and loved your post on [topic]. I'm currently working on [your project/startup] and would love to connect and swap notes sometime.

Startup Hacks & Playbooks

How to Land Internships Without Job Boards

1. Go on LinkedIn → search for the role you want + filter by 'People.'
2. Find employees at the company you want → usually analysts, associates, or interns.
3. Use RocketReach (free trial) to find their work email.
4. Send a short cold email using the template above.
5. Follow up after 3–5 days if no response.
→ One thoughtful cold email a day = more opportunities than 100 applications.

Startup Outreach Playbook

1. Use Apollo.io to build a lead list (investors, mentors, or potential customers).
2. Export the list into a spreadsheet (CSV format).
3. Write one 4-line cold email (Intro → Compliment/Insight → Ask → Thank You).
4. Send with GMass or Apollo's free email tool.
5. Track opens and replies → double down on what works.
→ Outreach is a numbers game with personalization.

The \$100 Growth Hack

1. Spend \$50 on Reddit ads → hyper-target niche communities.
2. Spend \$30 on Twitter ads → promote a thread about your product.
3. Use \$20 for a micro-influencer shoutout on TikTok/IG.
4. DM everyone who likes/comments → invite them to try beta.
5. Ask for feedback → turn best feedback into testimonials.
→ Your first 100 users should feel hand-picked.