

## OTA – Marketing Considerations



1. “Small Ball” Marketing
2. Flash Sale Promotions
3. Content Contributor
4. “Play for a Cause” – Partnering with Non-Profits
5. “Cheapest Game in Town” – Promotions
6. Public Library Networking

## OTA “Small Ball” Marketing:

\*Advertising Plan for every school program being offered

### STRATEGIES: ASP Advertising Checklist

#### 1. On Campus

- Banners
- Yard Signs

#### 2. Electronic

- Social Media
- Email

#### 3. Take Home

- Flyers
- Newsletters
- Postcards

#### 4. Host Site Support

- Email Blasts
- Website Announcements

## Flash Sale Promotions:

\*When you are in reach of an enrollment goal with only a short amount of time before start of program

### Strategies Include:

- Targeted Announcement to a particular population in your database:
  - Customer Loyalty Program – focuses on return/repeat customers
  - Sibling Families – focuses on capturing younger siblings of existing OTA participants.
  - Birthday Promotion – focuses on any kid in the database with an upcoming birthday
  - School or Organizational Targets – focuses on families connected to specific communities
  - “Kitchen Sink” – Focuses on ALL Database Contacts

## Content Contributor:

\*Brand awareness strategy by providing content for outlets in need of filling space and reaching shared demographic

### Local Emphasis:

- Websites
- Magazines, Newsletters, Papers, etc.
- Social Media Influencer Platforms and Blogs
- *School Districts, PTA's, Parks and Rec's, etc. all have platforms and publications that need content*

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Here are some strategies for content contributors:

- Research: Read published content to develop a unique angle.
- Write for your audience: Consider who your audience is and write with them in mind.
- Pitch: Craft a quick and personalized pitch, and address editors by name if possible.
- Follow up: If you don't hear back from a publisher, send a follow-up message.
- Promote: Promote your article on your social media platforms and website.

# Building Your Brand? Tips for Becoming an Expert Content Contributor

Being a guest contributor increases your brand awareness. Here's how you can pitch your content to publications.

If you're looking to get your content seen by a larger audience and expand your reach, think about contributing to a publication or blog as a guest contributor. Contributing content to publications in your area of expertise is a great way to establish yourself as an expert in your industry. Your post will get your name and brand (service) out into the open and gain new exposure.

Below we've outlined why you should develop your writing skills, become an expert content contributor and how to achieve your goal.

## **Why become an expert content contributor**

Contributing content as a guest for a blog or publication establishes you as a voice in your industry and validates you by those publishing your work. Furthermore, publications want great content from experts because it expands their reach and potential just as it expands yours.

There are also back-end SEO benefits to being featured in a major publication. Contributing well-written content on a reputable site will increase the number of referral links, or back-links, to your site. Google's search ranking favors links from reputable, high-authority publications, so being featured on one increases your website search ranking, making you more likely to appear in search results and increase your traffic.

Being a guest contributor is different from purchasing a sponsored content slot. With a solid pitch and great writing skills you can be featured in major publications without having to pay for your place there.

## **How to start contributing content to a publication**

Following are some steps to take when looking to contribute content:

### **Choose the right publication**

There are two types of publications you should be looking into: major news publications and blogs and sites within your industry and niche. These will give you the widest possible audience, as well as an audience that is directly invested in the type of work you do. You also don't have to pitch to a site that is directly about your service. Think outside the box and compile a list of websites where you could have a unique angle to pitch to them.

While you may be seeking large publications, also look for smaller blogs. These typically have a large, active audience and having your work published there will give you more credibility when pitching to the more major sites.

Once you have an idea of which publications you'd like to pitch to, properly research them and the content they post. Read through published content to form your unique angle as a potential contributor and identify a voice and subject that you can share that isn't already on the site. Identify word count, tone, hyperlinks and break down the overall structure to increase your chances.

### **Write your article**

Typically, sites are going to want the full article first. Make sure you have your article ready before pitching it to a publication. Be sure to write with your targeted audience in mind and use the research you did to mimic the style of the site you're pitching to. It's also good practice to be sure you can write about the topic you're pitching and that it's more than an idea.

Don't heavily promote your brand in your article, otherwise it won't see the light of day. You can subtly make mentions of how your brand solves a problem or just let your byline do all the promoting.

### **Craft and send a tailored pitch**

Make it as easy as possible for editors to say yes to you. Make your pitch quick and personable. You'll want to format this according to the publication's guidelines and address editors by name, if possible. Typically, you can find this information on the publication's website. If not, reach out to an author who already has published content on the site. They may even be able to give you some advice on writing for the site, too.

### **Follow up**

It isn't uncommon to not hear back from a publisher, especially if they're big. If you don't in a few weeks, send a follow-up message. Editors appreciate a polite nudge when done respectfully. If your piece has been published, follow up on that as well to respond to any comments that readers might have and thank them for the opportunity.

### **Promote and network**

Once your article is published, share it with the world! Promote your article on your social media platforms and website and continue to build your network of contacts in the media industry to land future opportunities. You can also use the published work to pitch to other sites to continue to build your network.

## “Play for a Cause” – Nonprofit Partnerships:

\*Partnering with Non-Profit organizations or aligning OTA’s Brand with a specific cause can produce a number of beneficial results for the business.

There are TWO APPROACHES to aligning with non-profit organizations:

1. Passive Approach – Here, the corporate entity would work towards some sort of contribution for the nonprofit organization in mostly an independent capacity. Outside of an altruistic purpose, this would ultimately be leveraged for promotional purposes.
2. Active Approach – Here, the corporate entity would seek a direct relationship with the nonprofit organization that could manifest itself in a variety of ways including financial arrangement, database cross-branding, workforce support, event participation, marketing assistance, etc.

Business can benefit from partnering with nonprofits in a number of ways:

- Brand recognition: Businesses can enhance their corporate image and gain marketing and brand visibility.
- Community engagement: Businesses can engage with their communities and make a social impact.
- Networking opportunities: Businesses can gain access to new contacts and potential business partners and customers.
- Fiscal benefits: Businesses can gain fiscal benefits from their partnerships.
- Business development and growth: Businesses can benefit from business development and growth through their partnerships.
- Legal and regulatory benefits: Businesses can gain legal and regulatory benefits from their partnerships.

\*Here are some EXAMPLES of Non-Profit Organizations to investigate.

\*\*Pay attention to whether or not your competitors have created brand alignment between themselves and nonprofit organizations.

\*\*\*Creativity is an essential piece to formulating relationships that result in win-win situations for both organizations involved.

### Health

- American Heart Association
- National Pediatric Cancer Foundation
- Doctors Without Borders
- Global Health Charities

### Community Centric

- Habitat for Humanity
- Water.org
- Environmental Defense Fund
- No Kid Hungry

### Youth Sports Space

- Special Olympics
- Good Sports
- Fresh Air Fund
- Soccer Without Borders
- Living Classroom Foundation
- Every Kid Sports
- Challenged Athletes Foundation
- Athletes for Hope
- Play4Autism



## **“Cheapest Game in Town” – Promotions**

The concept of running a “Cheapest Game in Town” Promotion centers on pricing the program at such a reduced registration rate that it can’t be “ignored” by families.

In essence, it is the OTA Version of Groupon. It is a “shock and awe” tactic to get customers to notice the service.

Scenarios where this discount deal should be considered include:

1. New Franchise Territory Launch – Introduction to Community/Customers
2. New Facility or Location hosting a camp – Testing a Local Market
3. Investment Strategy to test specific service – New Program Offering
4. Training Strategy to understand Staff Management, Program Management, and Customer Service

### **Promotional Model - \$99 Camp Offer: SAMPLE**

- Half Day Camp – Flag Football (9am – 12pm)
- Monday – Friday Session (5 Days)
- Determine Enrollment Max and Min (establish breakeven point)
- Determine Staffing Needs (for Max and Min)
- Determine Equipment and Gear Expenses

Remember – offering this promotion should mean that your registration rules are very clear.

- Is there a payment plan option? (Not recommended)
- Is there a refund option? (Not recommended)
- If camper needs to move weeks, does \$99 fee apply to any week, or would family be charged increased fee for difference in weeks?

## Public Library Networking

There are all kinds of reasons to get to know your local library(s). These spaces have historically been a community HUB and even with the advent of the Internet and “Online World”, libraries have done an amazing job adapting to the rapidly changing environment and staying current with their place in the community, the services they offer and promote, and the events they host.

Libraries are community centers. They connect people to information and connect people to people. They are safe havens for kids, providing after-school programs, games, and book clubs. They offer classes, allowing both kids and older adults to stay engaged in the community and world. And library and community outreach programs help those living in remote areas and those who are home bound to remain connected to the community.

### **Libraries Represent:**

1. Community Partner
2. Marketing Ally
3. Event Hub
4. Programming Space Potential
5. Fundraising Partner

## Notes:

- **Programs:** Public libraries offer programs and events for kids of all ages, based on holidays, historical events, and more.
- **Community spaces:** Public libraries are places where people can gather and engage with each other, and where families can play together.
- **Social outlets:** Libraries offer social outlets like book clubs, yoga for toddlers, and new mother groups.
- **Free concerts and performances:** Some libraries offer free concerts and performances.
- **Health information:** Libraries can provide information on health and fitness programs (and how to access medical care).
- **Workspace:** Libraries can provide a workspace for business owners.
- **Partnerships:** Libraries often partner with local government, non-profits, businesses, and other groups to identify and fill gaps in community partnerships.

For many, library resources are an accessible way to explore entrepreneurship, build skills, and gather information that can be used to launch a new business idea, investigate a new way to earn income and make a living, or even get started with a new hobby to make extra money. In fact, almost 1 in 2 libraries in the US provide free services to entrepreneurs who wish to start and grow their business.