

Unbeatable Media Relations Pitches

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Gini Dietrich, Founder and CEO of [Arment Dietrich](#)

Now that you understand what the [PESO model](#) is and how [owned media fits into it](#), it's time to move on to earned media—the backbone of every communicator's job.

This isn't going to be your grandmother's media relations, however. Your sole goal for marrying owned and earned media is

to gain a link to your website.

That means you will pitch blogs *and* media outlets—those that have slightly higher [domain authority](#) than your own.

And you will not pitch interviews or features or stories about your organization. You will create contributed content.

It's very, very important you pitch it this way. Earned media is where you'll get the [high-quality link](#) back to your site that Google values.

If you don't get the link (or links), your content will probably just hang out on page two of search results and not work for you while you sleep. But if you marry owned and earned media, Google will see you're not only an expert on the topic, other highly valuable sites do, too.

I'm going to repeat this: it's very, very important you pitch it this way.

Craft Your Media List

Head over to Google and do a search for your priority keyword—the one you put in your main hub of the [content map](#) you did last week. Which media outlets and blogs show up on the first page? What about the second page? I'd even venture to the third page of results for this exercise.

Let's use "earned media" as the example.

When I do a search for that term, there are lots of blogs and media outlets on the first page. For example:

- Inc.
- HubSpot
- Forbes
- Content Marketing Institute

- AdWeek

When I move to the second and third pages, I have even more options:

- AdAge
- Social Media Today
- BrandWatch
- Small Biz Trends
- O'Dwyer

Just glancing at this list, and because I have a gazillion years of media relations experience, I know they all accept contributed content in some form. That makes these 10 outlets my media list for my “earned media” content.

But, if you don't know, you'll have to do some research before you finalize your list. Go to each site and find their editorial calendar and guidelines. Every one of them has a way for you to contact them and you'll use that to begin your earned media outreach.

Once you've solidified your list, add them to your content map.

You Have an Unfair Advantage

This part of your content plan is where you, as a communicator, have an unfair advantage over other content marketers. Even if you're only a year out of school, you know how to pitch an editor. And that's exactly what you're doing here.

Now it's time to pitch! In your email to the contributed content or guest post editor—whichever term they use—introduce yourself and note you are interested in writing a piece about

your main topic.

It doesn't have to be the exact thing you have in your content map so you can go off the range here. You do want it to be on topic, but you can choose another "earned media" story that works for the blog or media outlet. It has to be on the topic because...

I Call Baloney

..you are going to link to something you published on your own site in your contributed piece.

This is the part where every communicator on earth gets tripped up. EVERYONE says, "No one will include my link!" That just isn't true.

Because we are people pleasers by nature, we're scared to ask media outlets and blogs to include our links. But in all of the years I've been doing this, I've only seen two publications refuse—TechCrunch and MediaPost.

My advice for those two publications is to avoid them. You can pitch them for other stuff, but for marrying your owned and earned media, they are not useful to you.

Without a link to your incredible content creation masterpieces, earned media will do you no good. You have to, have to, have to get a link from them to you. No excuses. No exceptions. Just do it.

What Do I Pitch?

And now comes the inevitable question: do I pitch what I have already published on my site?

The answer is no. You do not pitch what you've already published on your site. No media outlet in the world will run something that has already been published elsewhere (unless

it's syndicated, but that's a different strategy, altogether).

What you do want to do with your already published content, though, is link to it in the content you've pitched to media outlets. Today we call this contributed content, but it's also known as editorial, OpEds, bylines, or guest blog posts.

The next question I get is: if I pitch content, will they tell me no when I ask for the link?

The short answer is no. The long answer is there are a handful of media sites and blogs that will not include a link to any external site. From my perspective, that's short-sighted on their part. From your perspective, skip those sites. They may be good for other communications efforts, but not if you want to attribute your efforts to results. (That or buy [AirPR](#) and then you don't have to have a link in any of your articles.)

Once we get through those two questions, seasoned communicators start to freak out. They're concerned no one will take their content, or they won't get the link or myriad other reasons to procrastinate and not do the work.

Stop it.

There are plenty of other marketers who now pitch contributed content for the sole purpose of link building. Do you really think an SEO expert can do this and you cannot? Earned media is the backbone of our discipline, which means you have the upper hand when pitching.

Make sure your content is valuable, interesting, and exclusive and get to work.

Formula to Craft an Unbeatable Media Relations Pitch

If you're still nervous about pitching this way, here is a formula for crafting an unbeatable media relations pitch that

drives measurable results:

1. Start with your priority keywords.
2. Identify media outlets already publishing—and ranking for—your keywords.
3. Create high-quality owned content on those topics.
4. Craft a personal pitch, that reflects what you know they've published, and shows your expert's thought leadership in that area, as supported by your owned content.
5. Optimize your content with anchor text and a link to something very specific on your website, such as the article you wrote on the same topic.

If you follow this process, not only will you do all of the great things communications does (build awareness and thought leadership and credibility), you'll increase website visitors, search rankings, and marketing qualified leads.

[Gini Dietrich](#) is the founder and CEO of [Arment Dietrich](#), an integrated marketing communications firm. She is the author of [Spin Sucks](#), co-author of [Marketing in the Round](#), and co-host of [Inside PR](#). She also is the lead blogger at [Spin Sucks](#) and is the founder of [Spin Sucks Pro](#).