

**John McIntyre:** Its John McIntyre here the auto responder guy and I'm here with Mike Fishbone. Now Mike is a guest, I don't know exactly what ...to introduce himself in a second, but basically he's a guest blogger and he has been on sites like entrepreneur.com, the Huffington Post, the Content Marketing Institute. And so basically he's mean published himself on some of the biggest content on new sites on the internet, which is great because then you can obviously get those as seen on, put the as seen on section on your website with the logos of these sites and a lot of people I think struggle with getting on these sites. So, they want to go and pay an agency \$5,000 to figure it out for them, instead you can just follow Mike strategies and you can do it all yourself and ... so he's also self-published a book on Amazon called the "Guest Blogging Master Class" which goes to exactly how he does it and that's why we're having a chat today. So, thought to be a great guest to chat about. Guest blogging or guest posting is a way to get traffic and built up your sales. So, Mike! How are you doing?

**Mike:** Thanks for having me. I'm doing well.

**John McIntyre:** Good to have you on the show man. So, before we get into the guest blogging needy greedy strategies, can you give the listener bit more background on who you are and what you do?

**Mike:** Sure, yeah, I'm a blogger, content marketer and a serial self-published author on Amazon. I started blogging about three or four years ago now and it's been a long and fun journey in the blogging and content marketing world.

**John McIntyre:** Nice, nice, okay, very cool, very cool. So, let's get into it and let's get discuss blogging thing. Imagine that most people understand what it is. It's where you go on and blog a blog post or put on someone else's site, talking on some of the misconceptions. What do you get wrong about guest blogging?

**Mike:** I think a lot of people avoid it. I think them sort of have this kind of syndrome where they sort of think that their site is like a sort of a special snowflake and I was certainly guilty of this when I first got started. I was thinking man; I have this new site up. I can't wait to build it up. I have such a great content. I can't wait to get out there, but you know what I was doing no matter how hard I worked on the actual content or how hard I worked on the promotion of the content, I just wasn't getting much traffic. I was looking at my Google Analytics account and it was not saying good things that were very inspiring to me. So, you know guest blogging really helped me just get right in front of my target audience and so I guess the issue there is like people are very concerned with sort of owning their content and focusing on their own blog exclusively which certainly is value, when I still do certainly post on my own site, but I think guest blogging is a great way to sort of expedite that process. Yeah, you mentioned before like you need to hire a big PR firm or something like that to get published and I actually, you know, again I've done that as well. I paid a lot of money and it hasn't helped all that much and conversely when I just do it myself with things as simple as a well articulated cold email. I have been able to get on a lot of these sites. So, it doesn't hurt your main domain and it's relatively easy to do if you just do it right.

**John McIntyre:** Okay, okay, so one interesting thing, I was just actually reading a book recently by ... called the end of jobs and he mentions this and he give some examples of his planning to the book launch. In the back of the book just sort of described

goal setting process and tasks managing process and he made a really interesting point which a lot of people don't think about, which is that a lot of people go out there and not published 300 blog post or you know a couple of years, but then they have got barely any traffic and they don't make any money and the solution is to keep publishing more blog posts, that's what they used to do. The challenge though is that you'd be better off creating 5 or 6 amazing blog post. So it's really, really just the best blog post in the entire industry on your topic, putting those on your site and then spending the rest of your time working on the distribution which basically means instead of going if you're not gonna spend money in advertising you want to do all this with PR, instead of right publicity to amazing blog post for your own site and then spent the rest of your time doing any more blog post for yourself. Going right, just going right guest post for as many different sites as possible. That would be a more effective strategy then publishing an average mediocre guest post every week, something like that.

**Mike:** Yeah, I like that strategy a lot. Especially, I think is content marketing, blogging is getting a little bit more competitive. I mean nowadays you can build a website literally within a few clicks of a mouse. So, lots and lots of people are you know creating content, I guess the quote from Gary Vaynerchuk is you know everybody is a media company now. So, you know I'm seeing some other things you know what I put in the effort to go the extra mile and create a better post, you know disproportionately higher returns. So, I agree with you know putting a lot into individual posts.

**John McIntyre:** Okay, so let's get into how it actually happens? How do you go on entrepreneur.com? You mentioned well-crafted cold emails, so let's start there, how do you find the person to email and what does the email say?

**Mike:** Yeah, so a lot of the sites will have some kind of contact page or contribute page and you know again like a lot of sites are actually looking for your content. They're in the business of content, like entrepreneur is a media company, so you know they thrive on traffic in the way they get traffic is through really good content. So, if you have it, they want it and so a lot of sites will have a contribute or write for us or guest post for us or just simply a contact page and that's often in the header or in the footer or you can try just goggling for like entrepreneur write for us or entrepreneur guest post you know and usually you will either find in header or a specific email address you should reach out to you if you want to contribute or some kind of contact form. Again it can be different for every site. Once you find that, what I like to do is actually have a post already written. That's something that I do, that's a little bit different. This just got to me better results than simply saying here is a few ideas or here's a bit about me and like that I just like to say send a specific posts and it seems like it makes easier for them to give the GO-NO-GO and that I'm contributing quality stuff and all that and then the email that I sent is literally like five sentences long. Its hey, you know address it personally, you know would you be interested in a post on a topic?

**John McIntyre:** You address a person; you just do it like hi David, something like that?

**Mike:** Yeah, I use the person's name. Sometimes, I use the site name in the subject line somewhere, like contributing to entrepreneurial.

**John McIntyre:** How do you know, like entrepreneur.com is a big company? So, how do you find, how do you know who you're emailing, so you can put their name on it?

**Mike:** See, well some sites directly say like reach out to you know Emily or whatever it is. Otherwise, a lot of sites have like a team page and you can look at the name and either is like a contributor's editor or just like an editor. You can see their names. I've also used LinkedIn to browse through company to bring up the company page on LinkedIn and see if I can find an editor's name if I can.

**John McIntyre:** Okay, okay ... you say hi David, what happens after that?

**Mike:** It's usually just you know would you be interested in a post on your site or entrepreneur on the topic of X. Do like one sentence introducing myself like I do XYZ or maybe you know I've been published on you know so and so sites previously, but that's not even necessary. Then I say I just wrote a post titled this, it covers XYZ and then I'll just say would you be interested in publishing a post on this topic or you know maybe something like you have any feedback but usually yes you know would you be interested in publishing this and I fire away you know some ... that's all it takes, like literally I have been published on sites with just that. But a lot of times it takes a lot of follow ups, especially with the site like entrepreneur and entrepreneur particular is probably the hardest one for me. It took me months of following up.

**John McIntyre:** Interesting, interesting because I have a friend who writes for entrepreneur and I haven't actually asked him how he does. I think he recently did, you go on the Sales force blog and you get response blog and he did like everything was just like chatting to Sales force on twitter and just emailing back and forth and may have just ... and they went for it and then the same thing happened with Get Response. So, a lot of the time it sounds like just the hardest part is just reaching out. I don't know a lot of people would play with on entrepreneur.com and they wouldn't even bother reaching out to them because they're like oh I could never write for these people.

**Mike:** Yeah, you can do it. Again, like if it's a mutually beneficial arrangement, like I am not. My posts are like play in the promotional for my site or anything like that, like again the site wants traffic and really good content. So, if I can provide with them at that and they you know they have staff writers that they would otherwise be paying a full-time salary to do this stuff, so if you do, if you really are providing by making it mutually beneficial, you can definitely do it and you know there's definitely some truth like I said to entrepreneur being harder to get to but a lot of sites that are smaller and more focused can be a lot easier and still deliver really great results.

**John McIntyre:** I think a big part is, I was actually chatting to someone ... get a deal with the site. I get a ton of traffic in the online business space right now. We're doing a blog post every week for them and the blog post it will be doing that be good that be great blog post, but they're not personal sites, like this sort of thing you'd expect in a blog, like 10 things of this or fifteen templates for this, so that's sort of thing. And it's been working well, but when I spoke to the guys on the site today, we're chatting about brainstorming ideas for better posts and then some interesting points because ...tens of thousands of customers that

need help with email marketing and I come in there and I'm like instead of saying he is ... filling the blank subject lines which is one of the most we did. Instead, we go in there and we say something like the story about how I built a business that allows me to live anywhere I want to travel in the world with email marketing and so adding it instead of just going straight for needy greedy like tactical blog post that you see on almost every site on the internet. You start like opening up with. I don't know if this will work as well with entrepreneur or some of these sites, may be it would, but getting more personal about the stories and the struggles, and because that really connect with people a lot more than sometimes just generic blog post material.

**Mike:** Yeah, I love that. I mean people love stories and that's really what people engage with, like when you can get an emotional reaction with people and you know that subject probably is great and just telling a story and using like actually illustrate the advice that you're going to give. Again, I think that's something that's super evaluable and I think that's something that you know the smart editors who know what their readers want like that's definitely something that you know ... resonate.

**John McIntyre:** Yeah, yeah, I mean what sort of stuff do you write about?

**Mike:** I do a lot about marketing and yeah this is something else you know tactical posts and that's really definitely valuable in term of you get some response or if working more on, talking more about my blogging journey and some of the campaign's that I have actually done and giving more behind the scenes look at stuff I'm actually doing.

**John McIntyre:** Ok give an example, like what was the last blog post that you wrote or guest post that you wrote?

**Mike:** I think one of the more recent ones was on content marketing Institute. I wrote about you know how to get published on top sites was really just about the process of kind of like you know reaching out and following up and all that stuff and I told this one story about networking and how I used some networking to get in. There is it was the story about how I actually met Arianna Huffington from the Huffington Post and I just talked about how I was so nervous and I didn't feel what are the and all this stuff and I think that's the kind of stuff that people can relate to and yeah I guess kind of it inspires people but it also illustrates some good advice about getting out there at networking.

**John McIntyre:** The fascinating thing about this stuff is like I teach people to write emails, you know great emails that connect with their target market and a lot of it comes back to I mean not just telling stories like once upon a time kind of stories but opening up and big real as a person, revealing more of who you are yeah as a real human being instead of just talking in a conceptual nature about a topic. You know I did a thing recently wrote a blog post about a trip to Necker island with Richard Branson and it was being the most popular blog post ever written and there was some takeaways and then there was a few like you know actionable takeaways, but that wasn't really the focus. The focus was just to use the story and use a few things I learn and how I struggled and all that sort of stuff and it really resonated. People were really; really responsive and so its fascinating how you can take instead of ... like oh I have given so much value and overwhelming with you know just help them and solve all their problems and yes that's true but instead of going, I say here's

five tips to do X, Y, Z. What's going to work a lot better is going to be like, here's how I achieved ABC and then XYZ just happens to be the tips. So, then you have a story about how you always down and out how you almost ran out of money, ...bankrupt or you broke your leg, whatever happens the story becomes the sort of the foundation for the value that you've given the stories at entertainment value, but when you still giving value in the phone tips or strategies or advice or something like that, but when it's built on a story it just connects and goes through so much more.

**Mike:** Yeah definitely that's strategy, that's... a great post.

**John McIntyre:** So, what's next? So, you go on to entrepreneur.com, you email them and send it off and then what happens? Do you need to follow up with them three times, five times, ten times or something like that or what are the next steps or do you just wake up you know a week later and they say use your article already published.

**Mike:** Yeah it often takes some following up. I mean entrepreneur for me was like the most extreme case where that really took me like two to three months of following up like almost once a week. Some sites that can be easier like literally just one email, especially if you're already in a relationship with them, but usually I find it the averages about you know 1-3 follow-up emails. Usually, follow-up is about like once every five to seven days which is the quick note. It is just because a lot of these editors are very, very busy. They maybe even get a lot of pitches for press coverage in guest posts and feedback in a million... things. So, it does often just take you know if you follow up emails.

**John McIntyre:** Okay and then what do you say in the follow up emails?

**Mike:** I usually just ask have you had a chance to check out the post. Is there anything I can do to improve it, something like that like just two sentences?

**John McIntyre:** So, no ... like hey how about a chance to look at it, any good that sort of thing.

**Mike:** Yeah, like I try to do like a lower pressure ask, like hey do you want to publish this. That's like a lot of work on their end. Like hey have you had a chance to review it that's like a much smaller action, much smaller next step.

**John McIntyre:** ok that's really very simple strategy just going out there you email. How many people would you have to get in contact for like you got a hundred percent hit right or?

**Mike:** Oh! No, yeah, I definitely don't get a hundred percent hit rate. I would guess that I am like 50 or maybe a little less maybe 40 percent but you know that's fine. This is sort of you know what it takes. You know no hard feelings or anything like that and it's all pays off even with all the reaching out that doesn't lead to the publication.

**John McIntyre:** Right, have you been able to get feature on sites like The New York Times or The Wall Street Journal?

**Mike:** Those have been tough. I don't think I've tried those sites specifically but there's definitely been a couple a really big sites that are like still chipping away at.

**John McIntyre:** Okay, okay this is interesting. It's a fun little game to play to see like what it takes. I like the fact that you followed up, it took you three months with some of with entrepreneur.com, that 12 follow-ups. Most people would follow up twice. A lot of people asked me about this with the podcast that I do with some of the guests that I get and the answer every time I just follow up, like I will follow-up on once a week until they say no and most people never say no. They eventually just do it. All they just stopped replying and after 10 or 15 or 20 none replies I use to start to get a little bit easier on them but it really isn't a follow-up. That's really where the magic happens.

**Mike:** Yeah, so many things. I was just joking with a friend recently about like probably like how much money I made from setting follow-up emails, like it's annoying, but the truth of the matter is that it works and it's really important.

**John McIntyre:** Yeah, cool man. That's pretty cool. Cool little strategy. If people want to learn more about this and get more information, get the strategy to get on the books that you've written, where should they do that and how should they do that?

**Mike:** Yeah, I got the book on Amazon just called the guest blogging master class. You can also get a free chapter at [guestbloggingmasterclass.com](http://guestbloggingmasterclass.com) and I'll send you to my blog which is [mfishbein.com](http://mfishbein.com).

**John McIntyre:** Perfect! Mike thanks for coming on the show man.

**Mike:** Thanks for having me John.