



# Entrepreneur Incubator

## Reference Article

---

### Mind Your Manners

*To take advantage of free buzz from bloggers, make sure you follow the code of conduct.*

Blogging has flipped traditional PR on its head. It used to be that ink begot buzz.. Life was simple then: You sucked up to the The Wall Street Journal, one of its reporters wrote about your company, and the buzz began.

Nowadays buzz begets ink. Journalists no longer create buzz- they react to it: "Everyone is buzzing about Facebook, so I better write a story about it." And blogs are one of the best ways to get buzz. They have changed everthing because they represent a cheap, effective podium for creating buzz on a massive scale. Here is a guide to the process:

1) Create a great product Bloggers have a very low tolerance for bull shiitake – even lower than journalists do because bloggers seldeom rely on editors to "cleanse" their writing. It's easy to say you're going after bloggers, but this assumes that they'll like your product or service. The most important thing you can do to attract bloggers is to create a great product.

2) Cite and Link Linking is the sincerest form of flattery. It's hard to trash a company, product, service or person that links to your blog. Personally, I've never met a person who linked to my blog that I didn't like.

3) Stroke them Marketers are already inundating popular bloggers with generic praise like "Not a day goes by that I don't read your blog," or "I've forwarded your blog to many of my friends." To break through the noise, craft a compliment about a specific entry. For example: "I found your entry about rainmaking very helpful, and I'd like to make you aware of a new customer relationship management software product that we make."

4) Give Swag Most bloggers don't make a lot of money from their blogging efforts. Thus, product samples, T-shirts, tickets to sports matches and so on can go a long way. I'm not saying you can buy bloggers, but you can make them happy pretty easily. Dollar for dollar, swag for bloggers is one of your best marketing investments.

5) Make connections before you need them Mediocre marketers try to befriend bloggers when they need them. Godd marketers befriend bloggers before they need them. Great marketers befriend bloggers while they were working at their previous companies. Make lots of connections. Today's egocentric, self-indulgent blogger with five page views per day may well be tomorrows Technorati 100 stud.

6) Be responsive This common-sense "duh-ism" is violated almost every day: If you want buzz, you have to return bloggers' phone calls and emails. You are operating on their schedule; they are not operating on yours.



## Entrepreneur Incubator Reference Article

---

7) Use a rifle, not a shot gun Any person who carpet bombs bloggers should be shot. The effect is the same as sending two dozen people in a company the same email requesting help. Not only will this approach fail, but bloggers will conclude that you're a bozo.

8) Be a source There are times when your company simply isn't worthy of coverage. Don't take your ball and go home. Instead, pay it forward and help the blogger out by acting as a source of information, introducing him or her to other sources and offering insightful analyses. The next time, you may be the subject of the blog, not just a source.

*By Guy Kawasaki, the former chief evangelist for Apple Inc and the author of eight books – most recently The Art of the Start*

Taken from *Entrepreneur* magazine, July 2008