

SEO TEMPLATE

Backlink Outreach Swipe File

12 outreach emails that get replies, plus the qualification sheet that stops you sending them to sites that were never going to link.

Outreach fails at targeting far more often than at wording. This pack starts with the qualification sheet, because a great email to a bad prospect still gets ignored, then gives you 12 scripts for the situations that actually produce links, with the tracking sheet to run them.

WHAT'S INSIDE

- | | |
|---|--|
| 01 How to use this swipe file | 05 Scripts 5-8 - you found a problem |
| 02 Qualifying a prospect first | 06 Scripts 9-12 - relationship and follow-up |
| 03 The four rules behind the scripts | 07 The tracking sheet |
| 04 Scripts 1-4 - you have something they need | |

How to use this swipe file

Reply rate is mostly decided before you write anything. Qualification is the lever; wording is the polish.

- 1 Qualify before you write.** Twenty well-chosen prospects beat two hundred scraped ones, and take less time in total.
- 2 Send from a real person.** A named human at a real company, with a signature that checks out.
- 3 Lead with what is in it for them.** Every one of these scripts gives before it asks.
- 4 One follow-up, then stop.** Two is acceptable. Five is why outreach has the reputation it has.
- 5 Never buy links.** Beyond the guideline problem, paid links stop working the moment the payments do.

THE REALISTIC NUMBERS

Well-qualified outreach with a genuine reason to link runs at roughly 5 to 15 percent reply and a lower link rate again. If a tool or agency promises far more than that, they are either buying links or counting something other than links.

STEP 1

Qualifying a prospect first

- ☐ The site publishes new content, dated within the last three months
- ☐ It links out to other sites in normal editorial context
- ☐ There is a named human to write to, not just a contact form
- ☐ The topic overlap is real, not merely adjacent
- ☐ It is not an obvious link farm, private network, or paid-placement site
- ☐ A link from here would send actual readers, not just a signal
- ☐ You can name the specific page a link would sit on
- ☐ You have something that page genuinely lacks

PROSPECT	TARGET PAGE ON THEIR SITE	WHY THEY WOULD LINK	QUALIFIED

THE LAST TWO LINES DO THE WORK

If you cannot name the exact page a link belongs on and what it lacks, you are not ready to send. That pair converts more than any subject line.

The four rules behind the scripts

Under 120 words

Long outreach reads as a template regardless of how personal it is. If it needs more, it needs a better reason instead.

One specific detail

A real reference to their actual page proves a human read it. Merge-tag personalisation does the opposite.

Give before you ask

Lead with the thing that is useful to them. The ask goes last, in one sentence, and it is easy to decline.

No pressure, no guilt

No fake deadlines, no follow-ups that reference how busy they must be. It reads as manipulation because it is.

Delete these from every draft

INSTEAD OF	WRITE
I hope this email finds you well	(delete entirely)
I was browsing your website and	Your guide to X says
I think your readers would love	This fills the gap where you mention
Quick question!	(delete entirely)
Just bumping this to the top	One follow-up, with new information or nothing
We are an award-winning agency	(nobody has ever linked because of this)

You have something they need

1. You published original data

THE HIGHEST-CONVERTING REASON TO REACH OUT

Hi name, your piece on topic cites source for the statistic figure. We ran our own numbers across sample and got result, which is different enough to be worth a look: link.

Use it or ignore it, either is fine. Happy to share the raw data if it is useful.

2. You built a free tool or template

WORKS BECAUSE IT IS USEFUL TO THEIR READER, NOT TO YOU

Hi name, your page walks through process but leaves readers to build the artifact themselves. We made a free one, no email required: link.

If it saves your readers a step, it might be worth a mention. If not, no problem.

3. You have first-hand experience they lack

FOR ROUNDUPS AND COMPARISON PAGES

Hi name, you list tool in your page roundup. We ran it in production for duration and hit specific finding, which is not obvious from the marketing.

Happy to write up two or three sentences you could quote, or just send you the detail. No link needed either way.

4. Resource page addition

LOW CEILING, HIGH HIT RATE

Hi name, your resources page points to existing resource for topic. We publish a free thing covering specific gap: link.

Worth adding, or not a fit? Either answer is useful.

You found a problem

5. Broken link

LEAD WITH THE FIX, NOT THE ASK

Hi name, the anchor text link on page is 404ing. Looks like old site moved it.

If you need a replacement, alternative covers the same ground, and we have one here too: link. Either works.

6. Outdated statistic

SEND THIS ONE EVEN WHEN THERE IS NO LINK IN IT FOR YOU

Hi name, page cites the year figure for metric. The current number is new figure as of date, source here: source.

Thought it was worth flagging since the page still ranks well.

7. Unlinked mention

THE EASIEST YES IN OUTREACH

Hi name, thanks for mentioning brand in page, genuinely appreciated.

If it is easy, a link to url would help readers find the thing you referred to. If not, no problem, and thanks either way.

8. Wrong information about you

CORRECT IT GENTLY, ALWAYS

Hi name, small correction on page: it lists incorrect detail for brand. It is actually correct detail.

No need to link, just did not want the wrong figure travelling. Details here if useful: link.

Relationship and follow-up

9. Guest contribution

PITCH THE GAP, NOT YOURSELF

Hi name, you cover topic thoroughly but I could not find anything on specific gap. We deal with that constantly and could write it properly.

Rough angle: one sentence. Interested, or is it already commissioned?

10. Expert quote request, reversed

GIVE THEM A LINK FIRST

Hi name, we are writing about topic and want to quote people who actually do it rather than the usual sources. Your take on specific thing was the sharpest I found.

Two sentences on question? We will credit and link. No obligation to reciprocate.

11. The single follow-up

ADD INFORMATION OR DO NOT SEND IT

Hi name, following up once on the thing below in case it got buried.

Since I wrote, new fact or addition. If it is not a fit, just say so and I will stop.

12. The graceful close

WORTH SENDING, AND IT OCCASIONALLY WORKS

Hi name, assuming this is not one for you, which is completely fine. I will stop here rather than keep emailing.

If it is ever useful, the thing lives at link. Good luck with specific thing they are working on.

SCRIPT 12 EARNS ITS PLACE

The polite close gets a reply surprisingly often, because it is the first email in the sequence that asks for nothing. It also means you never become the person who sent six.

The tracking sheet

PROSPECT	SCRIPT	SENT	FOLLOW-UP	REPLY	LINK LIVE	NOTES

Numbers worth watching

METRIC	THIS CAMPAIGN	HEALTHY RANGE
Prospects qualified out of researched		Under half is normal
Reply rate		5 to 15 percent
Links placed out of replies		20 to 40 percent
Links per 100 sent		1 to 5

IF REPLY RATE IS LOW, LOOK AT TARGETING FIRST

The instinct is to rewrite the email. Nine times out of ten the list was the problem: prospects with no reason to care, no named recipient, or no page the link would sit on.

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SEO strategy

Technical fixes, topical coverage, and search visibility work measured against clicks, not scores.

Content marketing

Research-led articles and editorial systems your team can keep publishing without us.

Conversion design

Landing pages, service pages, and forms designed around the decision the reader is actually making.

Need this handled instead of templated?

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