

17 Untapped Backlink Sources (2026 Edition)

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Whether you're just starting your SEO journey or you've been in the trenches for years, link building remains the backbone of domain authority.

It's cliché, but content is king. Link building is not just about acquiring backlinks; it's also deeply connected to content distribution—especially high-quality, evergreen content.

And let's clarify: link building isn't only about acquiring links. Even getting your brand name mentioned on authoritative platforms sends positive signals for your entity recognition and topical authority. This helps build and feed your Knowledge Graph presence.

For beginners: Backlinks can feel overwhelming at first—terms like domain authority, nofollow vs. dofollow, and anchor text are confusing. But think of each quality backlink as a vote of confidence from another site. It also boosts your visibility across AI platforms.

More high-quality citations = also more visibility in AI-powered search results.

Below are platform categories and strategies that are often underused but incredibly effective for earning dofollow backlinks *and* targeted referral traffic.

I never say "please submit any content, not unique value contents, bomb these platforms"

Just use it for your own good, distribute your high quality content.

Newsletter Directories

Strategy: Submit your newsletter to curated directories and arrange cross-promotions.

How to do it:

- See the newsletter directories [here](#)^[1].

npm Publishing

Strategy: Create and publish JavaScript packages on npm.io^[2] (DR 54) to generate high-quality backlinks from the developer ecosystem.

How to do it:

- Research Reddit on your niche.
- Find some ideas that can be "automated" and very simple.
- Use Cursor, Windsurf, Bolt, Gemini, Claude, ChatGPT, DeepSeek or Mistral.

- Choose a keyword for the title, place it natural.
- Build and submit it to the npm.io / or you can also use GitHub

Audio Sharing Platforms

Example Sites:

- [SoundCloud](#)^[3] (DR 94)
- [Bandcamp](#)^[4] (DR 93)
- [Mixcloud](#)^[5] (DR 91)
- [HearThis](#)^[6] (DR 82)

Strategy: Create educational or narrative-driven audio content and publish it on audio hosting platforms.

How to do it:

- Use [SEO tools](#)^[7] to find trending content.
- Convert articles into scripts and narrate using ElevenLabs.
- Include your site URL in the audio description and profile bio.
- Share in relevant forums and social media groups.

API & Developer Directories

Strategy: List your developer tools on specialized API directories with backlinks to your documentation.

How to do it:

- Focus only on one feature, solution.
- Use Cursor, Windsurf, Bolt, Gemini, Claude, ChatGPT, DeepSeek or Mistral.
- Ask LLMs for detailed API documentation of your tool.

Where to submit? Here is a great API directory [list](#)^[8]. (DR 60+)

Specialized Q&A Platforms

Example Sites:

- [Stackoverflow](#) (DR 92)^[9]
- [Server Fault](#) (DR 83)^[10]

Strategy: Provide expert answers on niche Stack Exchange sites with contextual links to your detailed content. (DR 80+)

How to do it:

- Visit [Stackexchange](#)^[11]
- Find your relevant platform
- Start sharing!

Slide Deck & Presentation Hosts

Example Sites:

- [SlideShare](#)^[12] (DR 92)
- [Speaker Deck](#)^[13] (DR 87)
- [Prezi](#)^[14] (DR 90)
- [SlideServe](#)^[15] (DR 77)

Strategy: Turn reports, blogs, or webinars into visual presentations. See my [BrightonSEO presentation here](#).^[16]

How to do it:

- Repurpose existing long-form content.
- Add CTAs, URLs, and visual charts.
- Post on these platforms and promote in communities.

PDF Distribution on Platforms

Websites:

- [Teachable](#)^[17] (paid) - See an example [here](#)^[18]. (Dr 91)
- [Thinkific](#)^[19] (paid) (DR 91)
- [Gumroad](#)^[20] (DR 91)
- [Payhip](#)^[21] (DR 89)
- [Buymeacoffee](#)^[22] (DR 91)

Strategy: Publish high-value, free PDF resources (e.g., templates, checklists) and distribute them through course marketplaces and creator shops with embedded backlinks.

How to do it:

- Design a branded PDF that solves a single problem.
- Insert subtle backlinks within footers or resource references.
- Upload the PDF as a free digital download on platforms like Gumroad or Ko-fi.
- Promote via niche communities or link to it from your lead magnets.
- Some creators will use it in their own courses, passing on your links.

Podcast Directories

Example Sites:

- [ListenNotes](#)^[23] (DR: 84)
- [Podchaser](#)^[24] (DR 85)
- [Podbean](#)^[25] (DR 91)

- [Apple Podcasts](#)^[26] (DR 97)
- [Podcast Addict](#)^[27] (DR 83) - paid

Strategy: Be a guest on relevant podcasts and ensure links appear in show notes.

See an example here: [dijipod on Apple Podcasts](#)^[28]

How to do it:

- Pitch yourself with a tailored topic.
- Confirm link placement when scheduling or after the interview.

Document Sharing Services (PDF, DOCX, etc)

Example Sites:

- [Scribd](#)^[29]
- [Issuu](#)^[30]
- [SlideServe](#)^[15]
- [Google Docs](#)^[31] (Publish on internet)

Strategy: Upload branded PDFs, guides, or market reports.

How to do it:

- Design PDFs with headers/footers linking to your domain.
- Use keyword-rich descriptions and titles.

WordPress.org Plugin Directory

Strategy: Create a free WordPress plugin with your domain as the official plugin website. (DR 98)

How to do it:

- Come up with one unique idea/feature. Solve only one problem
- Use Cursor, ChatGPT, Gemini, Claude, Windsurf, DeepSeek or Bolt.
- Build your plugin and submit it.
- Use keyword-rich title.

Web 3.0 & Decentralized Directories

Example Sites:

- [FreeAdsTime](#)^[32]
- [DappRadar](#)^[33]
- [State of the DApps](#)^[34]
- [CoinMarketCap](#)^[35]

- [OpenSea](#)^[36]

Strategy: Submit your project to decentralized platforms and link to technical pages.

How to do it:

- Fill out detailed listings with links.
- Share the listing in active crypto communities.

GitHub Pages & Repositories

Example Sites:

- [GitHub](#)^[37] (DR 96)
- [GitLab](#)^[38] (DR 92)
- [Bitbucket](#)^[39] (Dr 91)
- [HuggingFace](#)^[40] (DR 90)

Strategy: Create technical tools or documentation with backlinks to your main site. See [my GitHub profile](#)^[41] here. See another example [here](#)^[42].

How to do it:

- Add contextual URLs in README.md and documentation.
- Link to your tool from open source lists and subreddits.

SaaS & Browser Extension Stores

Strategy: Develop browser extensions **or** app integrations that link back to your main product. You can target Shopify, Webflow, Joomla or others.

Mozilla ve Chrome extension stores are great too! (DR 90+)

- Come up with one unique idea/feature. Solve only one problem
- Use Cursor, ChatGPT, Gemini, Claude, Windsurf, DeepSeek or Bolt.
- Build your plugin and submit it.

Link Roundups & Resource Pages

Example Sites:

- [Hacker News](#)^[43]
- [IndieHackers](#)^[44]

Strategy: Share high-value content with roundup curators. -OR- Tell your story!

How to do it:

- Pitch roundup owners with a short, relevant message.

- Make your article easy to include (snippets, summaries).

Scholarship .EDU Pages

Example Sites:

- Individual university domains

Strategy: Launch a small scholarship and list it for backlinks.

How to do it:

- Create a compelling, niche-specific scholarship.
- Reach out to relevant university societies. Google this: `[site:.edu [your keyword] society]`
(<https://www.google.com/search?q=site%3A.edu+ai+society>)

.EDU & .GOV Resource Pages (it's still confusing for me)

Example Sites:

- [DOE.gov](#)^[45]
- [NIH.gov](#)^[46]
- [data.gov](#)^[47]
- [USA.gov](#)^[48]
- Local university/college departments

Strategy: Offer a toolkit, whitepaper, or guide to public and educational sites.

How to do it:

- Contact webmasters and department editors.
- Focus on the value it brings to their visitors.

Note: I tried outreach but they're not responsive.

Broken Link Reclamation

Tools:

- [Ahrefs](#)^[49] (Outgoing links -> Broken links)
- [Semrush](#)^[50] (Backlink Analytics -> Outbound Domains)
- [Screaming Frog](#)^[51] (Outgoing Links)
- [Check My Links \(Chrome Extension\)](#)^[52]

Strategy: Identify dead links and offer a relevant replacement.

How to do it:

- Scan broken links on high-authority domains.

- Create or match the content.
- Contact the webmaster with a simple replacement suggestion.

OR

- [Try the Link Lazarus Method](#)^[53]

Conclusion

For beginners: Start small. Pick 2-3 easy tactics like audio uploads or slide decks. Measure what works.

For experienced SEOs: You already know the usual playbook. These platforms offer new opportunities that most competitors miss. You already know many hidden gems that never shared in public.

Innovation in link building means discovering future best practices before they go mainstream.

Build with intent. Scale with precision.

Backlink sources still matter for AEO because AI citations in ChatGPT, Perplexity and Gemini follow authority. The 17 sources here are inputs to a broader answer engine optimization program.

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