



Beating your brains out trying to get business media coverage? Have you considered HarvardBusiness.org? The Harvard Business School produces some of the best thinking in the world, and since late 2007, so have readers of its web site. The guy who runs the show there is Eric Hellweg, whom you may remember from the original Business 2.0. He'll open your eyes to all the different pitching and participation opportunities for you and your clients. You'll see.

[SWMS Audio Link](#)
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Highlights:

Beat futures

"Conversation starter - As far as pitchable locations, that's a pretty likely place."

"The three rules that I have for how to launch a product" or "The best way to retain talent in a downturn." Personal takes on things, things that are related to leadership."

Digital Media

"We're doing a whole lot to add a lot of interactivity to those magazine articles, putting interactive tools in there, doing audio, video, as well as kind of bringing just some new kinds of content divorced from the magazine "

Social Media

"Twitter is actually our second biggest source of traffic. People re-tweet our content like crazy. It's really pretty remarkable. As you can see we send out everything that we publish, which is 5-10 or 5-8 or so stories a day. These articles gets tweeted and it just drives a tremendous amount of traffic and additional coverage opportunities for our content."



Eric Hellweg
HarvardBusiness.org

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[Traffic](#)

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[HBR's Bloggers](#)

[HBR Voices](#)

[Conversation Starters](#)

[Twitter - a two-way tool?](#)

[CEO Contributors](#)

[Scott Berinato](#)
associate editor, HBR Online

[IdeaCast](#)

[Redesign](#)

Traffic

We were at 1.1 million uniques for the month of May... Half are coming from outside the U.S. We are really targeting a group that we're internally referring to as 'emerging leaders' as well as 'established leaders.' Emerging leaders are people who are clearly designated for success in the organization, but who are still on their way up as well as the established leaders, those who've reached some of the upper echelons.

Who visits?

It cuts across a number of different industries... technology... consultants... manufacturing services, a whole host of industries. As far as where in the org structure people sit, we're all over the place. We tend to skew our editorial towards that kind of upper area, but we occasionally on the site run content like how to write an email that gets results, and how to run a meeting. While we're aiming that a little bit lower, we also see that, not surprisingly, some of the CEOs don't know how to run a meeting and so we're seeing them jump in on those kinds of content as well.

[HarvardBusiness.org](#), [HBR.HarvardBusiness.org](#)

HBR.org is the home of the magazine, the Harvard Business Review, the 86-year-old publication monthly that has been around. HarvardBusiness.org has been around in its current form for about five months, and we really have seen some tremendous growth there as well, about double the traffic in the last year or so. Really trying to build off that marquis brand, and there the content revolves around the magazine in its current state. At the core of it are the magazine articles.

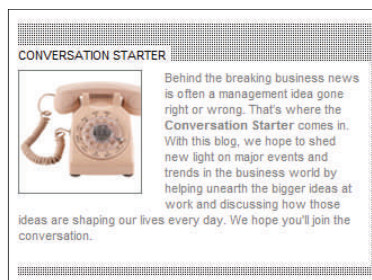
We're doing a whole lot to add a lot of interactivity to those magazine articles, putting interactive tools in there, doing audio, video, as well as kind of bringing just some new kinds of content divorced from the magazine there, so that's how that is. That's how that's delineated.

The HarvardBusiness.org site does not have a magazine necessarily at its center — and if anything it's really targeted more at those emerging leaders versus the review, which is really targeted at those established types of leaders.

[Conversation Starter](#)

As far as pitchable locations, that's a pretty likely place.

...is one of our blogs that we created a couple of years ago. We're up to about 40 regular contributors. We needed a blog that could house one of our more one-off contributors, people who didn't want to write





Eric Hellweg
HarvardBusiness.org

every week, or who just really wanted to jump in with a single idea, and that's why we created the conversation starter. In the year and a half that followed since we launched it, the conversation starter has really become, frankly, our most popular blog. It's because we really kind of attract a really high quality contributor there. We made news about a week ago:

Example: [Men Follow Men and Nobody Tweets](#)

What works, what doesn't

We don't do news. We don't do product announcements. What we were looking for is kind of really what the name suggests, a conversation starter, someone who's got a really smart idea, someone who can relate a personal experience to something at work or their role in an effort. If someone has "The three rules that I have for how to launch a product" or "The best way to retain talent in a downturn", "The best way to fire talent in a downturn" although probably people wouldn't want to talk about that. Personal takes on things, things that are related to leadership, either to high level or kind of a more personal management thing. Also, personal tips on productivity, on personal effectiveness. These are all really rich topics that we see quite a big audience for.

Example: [Why non-profits are good at social media](#) We've done a lot of coverage of social media. We've got the former CIO of Taco Bell, Yum Brands, a woman named Susan Karam who writes for us about IT, so certainly again if it's not – if it is a legitimate story about how a company is using something versus a thinly veiled kind of pitch around a product, then we would absolutely be interested in those kinds of posts.

Sam: *Can it be ghost-written?*
Eric: *Sure.*
Sam: *Music to our listeners' ears.*

Audio, video, high res photography?

Definitely don't need the high res photos to accompany a pitch. If it's something that gets green-lighted then maybe we would want to run a photo in there, but certainly not at the pitch level. Initially we're just looking for an idea. Tell me who this person is; tell me what the idea is and why you think it's right for the site.

As far as audio and video, we've actually got some real success around there. We were relatively early to the podcast game. We launch a weekly podcast called the IdeaCast about two and a half years ago, three years ago, and it's in the top 40 across all podcasts and across all categories on iTunes.

IdeaCast ("Gets over a half-million downloads per month")

Was launched more recently about a year ago, and it is in the top ten business video programs on iTunes and we have a page on YouTube. There are opportunities there. It's a lot easier for us to do a phone interview on audio than it is to arrange for a video shoot, but that's kind of a higher degree of commitment, but certainly if the idea itself warrants it or if the personality is big enough, [video is] certainly in the realm of possibilities.

It's a little bit of everything. We use the site as a source of content ideas, and certainly if we see a blog post really kind of ringing in the bell we'll call up the author and do an interview. Similarly if there's a magazine article that we're particularly fond of we can use that as a bit of source material, or as you mentioned it can be something that's completely divorced from any other placement on the site and can reach right there.

Pitching HBR thought leaders?

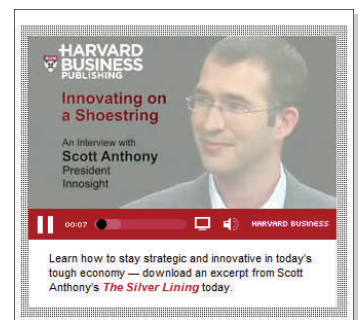
Boy, that's a really good question. We don't really have a policy there. We don't really act as their agents. I am happy to if someone was trying to reach John (Sviokla) or one of our other contributors I'm happy to kind of try to facilitate that. Obviously not something that I'd abuse, but most of our authors have their contact information or as you were pointing out, their blog information on their bios and I mean by doing so our welcoming treaty is there.

HBR caché

I think that there is a certain level of caché that comes with appearing under this brand that you're not going to get elsewhere. I think from a tonnage perspective — Business Week and Fortune are bigger than we are — currently we've certainly got some pretty nice trajectory of growth there, but I think there's a certain level of audience that we attract that's different from those people, and I think that really speaks to kind of a true value that we can offer.

We have an amazing community of readers. Jack Welch left a comment on one of our blogs two weeks ago. We get incredible caliber people interacting and engaging with our content that really you just don't see in those other publications, not to cast aspersions. They're more general interest. We're more of a niche play I think, a thriving niche. We routinely get 20 or 30 comments on blog posts and they're legitimate, really well thought out, really engaging comments. They really speak to the quality of audience that we can bring in.

Wharton really just publishes content from Wharton professors. Sloan is a much smaller – I'm not trying to toot the horn here, but we are definitely the biggest in our category. The magazine has a quarter-million subscribers. As I mentioned, we get over a million uniques. We're I think the broadest in that area.



Good success around audio and video





Eric Hellweg
HarvardBusiness.org

Twitter— [Twitter.com/harvardbiz](https://twitter.com/harvardbiz)

We have people on staff who monitor that. We also have a really active Facebook community. One interesting factoid for you folks is if you take out all our search engine traffic that we get, natural search, Twitter is actually our second biggest source of traffic. People re-tweet our content like crazy. It's really pretty remarkable. As you can see we send out everything that we publish, which is 5-10 or 5-8 or so stories a day. These articles gets tweeted and it just drives a tremendous amount of traffic and additional coverage opportunities for our content.

Scott Berinato, manager HBR.org site

Scott joined us about a year and a quarter ago. Many of you probably recognize that name. He's a multiple award-winning writer and editor formerly of Moore Technology Center Publications and CSO.CIO, so we're really thrilled to have him on the team, and he is kind of the point person who really manages the HBR site there.



Scott Berinato
HBR.org

Voices

The HBR crew are really people who speak to the upper echelons of leadership at large, global companies, so they talk about topics that we know to be of real interest to people at that level. In addition, they offer guidance on how to act upon those topics, and not everyone has the authority to take those kind of actions, and so those are the folks who really speak in that manner. The folks who write for Harvard Business are a little bit more general, who are writing about more personal effectiveness as well as ideas, but who aren't writing necessarily targeted at that top, top, top audience.

On the radar

One of the big topics for us is generational differences in the workplace. You've got Gen Y coming into the workplace in meaningful positions. The way that they interact with one another with different generations and kind of the way they conduct their other selves online is really changing office dynamics in some really interesting ways. I think that in part due to the prevalence of technology and its infiltration across industries, you're really seeing a kind of fundamental change to the way companies are organized from less of a command and control model to much more of a decentralized network model.

So there's a whole host of issues that come up with that, leading laterally and how to lead when you're not in control and just really some interesting, rich topics that we do cover, and we do cover the technology that facilitates that to be sure.

Does a Boston locale help?

If people are based in the Boston area and their executives are ever traveling with them or rather if they're traveling to the Boston area, we're located very close to Boston. Depending on who the person is, there are plenty of opportunities to arrange for in person meetings with some of the editors here.

If it's been on HarvardBusiness.org can it also be on HBR.org?
Absolutely. We cross-promote routinely.

Contact

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