FREE PLAYBOOK · LINK BUILDING WITHOUT OUTREACH

The Citation Hub: Earn Backlinks & AI Mentions Without Cold Emails

A step-by-step process to build the one page in your niche that bloggers, journalists and AI tools have to cite, so the links come to you.

4	50+	0
steps	primary-source stats per page	cold emails needed

Based on a tactic shared by an SEO on X, expanded with templates, Indian examples and checklists.

Growth by CC
Organic growth, explained simply

THE IDEA

Why a stats page earns links on autopilot

Every blog post, news article, landing page and AI answer needs a number to back up its claim. Whoever is the first credible, well-organised source of that number gets the link.

✍️ A writer, journalist or AI tool needs a stat: **“How many UPI transactions happen in India?”**

↓

🔎 Searches: **“UPI statistics 2026”**

↓

📊 Finds **your Citation Hub**: every number sourced, dated, easy to quote

↓

🔗 Quotes the number and **links to your page** as the source

↓

📈 More links → higher rankings → more writers find you → more links (it compounds)

✅ What you get

- Backlinks from blogs, news sites and SaaS pages
- Citations in ChatGPT, Perplexity and Google AI Overviews
- A page that keeps earning links for years

❌ What you avoid

- Cold-email outreach and begging for links
- Paid links, link farms, PBNs
- One-off campaigns that stop when you stop

STEP 1 OF 4

1 Pick the term people are forced to cite

Don't target “best [product]” (buying intent). Target “**[topic] statistics [year]**”: the search a writer does at 11 PM when they need a number for tomorrow's post. It has citation intent and the demand never goes away.

❌ Low citation intent

- best accounting software
- top CRM tools India
- how to start a cloud kitchen

✅ High citation intent

- accounting statistics 2026
- CRM adoption statistics India
- cloud kitchen market size India 2026

Formula

```
[your niche topic] + statistics / market size / trends / facts + [India] + [year]
```

How to find yours

1. Google “*[your topic] statistics*” and note the autocomplete and “People also ask” questions.
2. Check the current top results. Are they old (2022–2024), unsourced or US-only? That's your opening.
3. In Ahrefs/Semrush/Ubersuggest, look at **backlinks** to the top stats pages, not just search volume. Lots of links = proven citation demand.
4. Pick a topic close to what you sell, so the authority helps your money pages too.

Then map every sub-question

Market size · Growth rate · Users / adoption · By city / state · By age / gender · Spend / pricing · Top players / share · Trends & forecasts · Challenges · India vs global

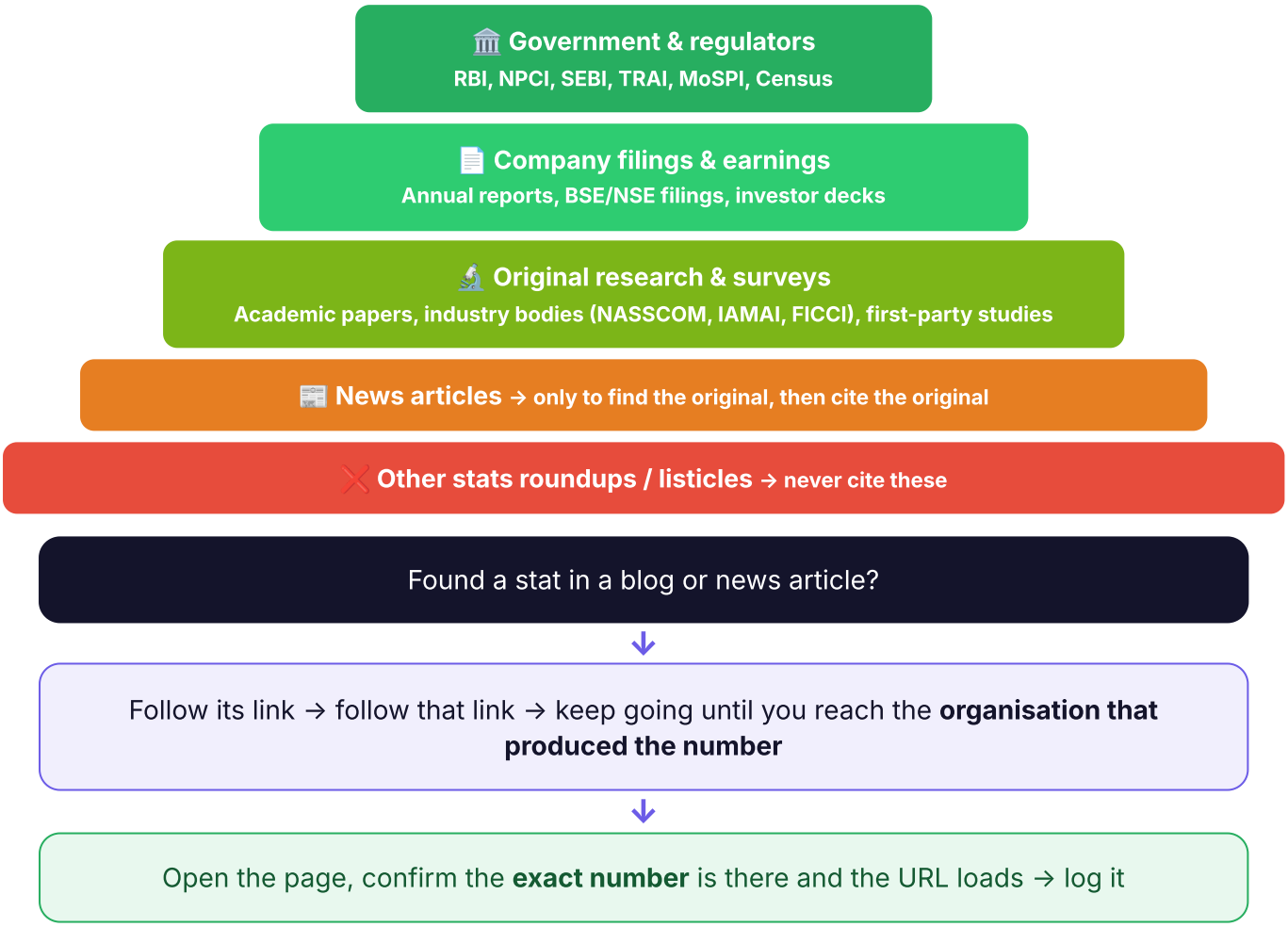
Keyword-research each section so you cover the topic wall to wall. Writers look for oddly specific numbers.

STEP 2 OF 4

2 Collect 50+ stats from primary sources only

This is where most people fail: they copy numbers from other roundups. Trace every stat back to whoever **actually produced it**. Journalists check the root source before linking, and so should you.

Source quality: use the top of the pyramid



Your verification sheet

Stat (one line)	Number	Publisher	Date	Source URL	Verified ✓
UPI monthly transactions	xx bn	NPCI	Sep 2026	npci.org.in/...	✓ 12 Oct

STEP 3 OF 4

3 Structure the page to be cited, not just read

Make every number easy to find, copy and attribute, for humans and for AI tools that break a question into sub-questions.

Page layout

H1: [Topic] Statistics 2026 (India)

"Last updated: 12 Oct 2026" · author + credentials

Key Takeaways: 10–14 one-line, quotable stats, each with its source

H2: How big is the [topic] market in India?
Answer in the first sentence, then supporting stats

H2: How many people use [topic]?
Answer first · stats · chart

H2: [Topic] by city / age / segment

Methodology & sources list · "How to cite this page"

Rules

1. **One stat = one line.** No fluff between the facts.
2. **Every stat attributed:** publisher, date, link.
3. **Each number appears once.** No duplicates.
4. **Question-style headings** that match how people and AI ask.
5. **Answer in the first sentence** under each heading.
6. **Add simple charts** with your site name on them. They get reused and linked.
7. **Add a "How to cite" box** with a ready citation and link.

Example of a quotable stat line

```
UPI processed xx billion transactions in September 2026. (NPCI, Oct 2026) [link]
```

💡 Around 40% of the links the original author earned used the statistic itself as the anchor text (e.g. "56% wage premium"). Every clean, verified number is a hook someone will eventually quote.

STEP 4 OF 4

4 Stamp it fresh and keep it alive

Freshness is both a ranking and a citation signal. Writers and AI tools prefer a 2026 stat to a 2023 one, so an outdated page gets replaced by a newer one.

Maintenance calendar

Monthly
Check that every source URL still loads. Fix broken links.

Quarterly
Swap in newer numbers as reports come out. Update the "Last updated" date.

Yearly
Change the year in the title, H1 and Key Takeaways. Keep the same URL.

Always
Add new sections when a new sub-question starts trending.

⚠️ **Keep the same URL every year.** Use something like `/upi-statistics/`, not `/upi-statistics-2026/`, so every link you've earned keeps counting. Put the year in the title and H1 only.

Bonus: help people find it (our addition, no begging required)

- Link to the hub from your homepage, blog and related posts
- Post 3–5 of the most surprising stats on LinkedIn, X and Instagram, linking back
- Answer journalist requests (Qwoted, Featured) with a stat from your hub
- Turn the key stats into a shareable infographic with your URL on it
- Submit it in Search Console and add it to your sitemap

Track it

Metric	Where	How often
New referring domains	Ahrefs Webmaster Tools / Search Console → Links	Monthly
Rankings for "[topic] statistics"	Search Console → Performance	Monthly
AI citations	Ask ChatGPT, Perplexity, Google AI Mode your 10 target questions	Monthly

SHORTCUT

Prompts to build it faster with Claude

> “I run a [business] in India. Suggest 15 ‘[topic] statistics’ page ideas with high citation intent. For each, list the sub-questions writers would need numbers for.”

> “Find the most recent official statistics on [sub-question] for India. Only use primary sources (government, regulators, company filings, original research). Give the exact number, publisher, date and URL for each.”

> “Here is a stat and the article I found it in: [paste]. Trace it back to the original source and confirm the number matches.”

> “Turn this verified stats sheet [paste] into a page: a Key Takeaways block of 12 one-line stats, question-style H2s with the answer in the first sentence, and a source line under every stat. Don't add any number that isn't in the sheet.”

> “Check every URL in this list loads, and that the stated number appears on that page. Flag any that don't.”

⚠️ AI tools can get numbers wrong. Always open the source and confirm the number yourself before publishing. That verification is the whole point of a Citation Hub.

KEEP THIS HANDY

Citation Hub checklist

- ☐ Topic = “[niche] statistics / market size [India] [year]”
- ☐ Mapped 8–12 sub-questions as sections
- ☐ Every URL opened; number confirmed on page
- ☐ Key Takeaways: 10–14 one-line stats at top
- ☐ Publisher + date + link under every stat
- ☐ Year-free URL; “Last updated” date visible
- ☐ Monthly link check; quarterly number refresh
- ☐ Checked top results are old, unsourced or US-only
- ☐ 50+ stats, each traced to the original source
- ☐ No stats copied from other roundups
- ☐ Question-style H2s, answer in first sentence
- ☐ Charts with your URL; “How to cite” box
- ☐ Linked from homepage; in sitemap; indexing requested
- ☐ Monthly AI-citation check for 10 target questions

What the original author reported

Across 5 pages built May–August: **80+ backlinks**, **10 from DR 60+ sites**, one page earning **20 links** on its own, and **23 new links in a single month** once a page gained traction. These are the author's own figures, shared on X and not independently verified. Your results will depend on your niche and how good the page is.

Growth by CC · Organic growth tactics, explained simply. Follow on Instagram for more.

Citation Hub tactic shared by an SEO on X (author not recorded). Process expanded and adapted for Indian businesses by Growth by CC. Source names are examples; check each source's terms before reusing its data.