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Identifying and Measuring the Impact of Influencers

In a recent study, nearly 60% of marketers stated that they are planning to increase their influencer marketing budgets in 2015 (Tomoson).

Variety magazine found that six out of ten teens are more likely to believe and buy from YouTube stars than movie stars.

And another study announced that 12-to-32-year-olds spend 30% of daily media time consuming UGC (user-generated content)—compared to 13% of total media time spent watching live TV and 10% watching pre-recorded shows.

What we’re trying to say is, influencer marketing is now a vital brand strategy for building credibility and boosting sales.

This guide explores how to identify, engage and measure the impact of partnering with influencers in marketing campaigns, with tips from beloved influencers themselves along the way.

What Is an Influencer?

In the world of social media, some consumers have louder voices and reach either much broader or much more niche audiences than others. These people are “influencers.”

Celebrities have traditionally been tapped by marketers to enhance marketing efforts, but social media has given rise to a new generation of people with significant influence. These influencers are passionate about a particular topic and have invested time to develop trust with a significant following on their social networks.

As a result, they have the ability to influence others on these topics or areas of interest.

Companies looking to bolster their social presence and build consumer trust often find themselves turning to this group of online “elites” for brand advocacy. These social media power users have the ability to strengthen brands’ reputations through well-targeted word-of-mouth campaigns.

The relationship between the brand and the influencer is mutually beneficial: as the influencer endorses the brand’s credibility, the influencer’s stock rises because of its affiliation with the brand.

Advice from a Pro

“Influencer” is such a mainstream buzzword nowadays. It’s generally used in reference to people with significant networks, including followers and readers, who can speak to a broad range of products and services with the ability to sway opinions in their favor. It all depends on the relationship the brand has built with that influencer.

Jess Estrada
Content Strategist at Bezos Family Foundation, FreshJess.com Creator, and Lifestyle Influencer
Earning Engagement with Influencers

Technology has significantly changed the purchasing behavior of consumers by bringing a world of information to their fingertips. For instance, 87% of potential car buyers research vehicles on social channels before making a decision (Crowdtap). Thirty-three percent (33%) of millennials rely mostly on blogs before they make any kind of purchase, compared to fewer than 3% for TV news, magazines, and books. (Forbes/EliteDaily)

Today, 70-90% of the buyer’s journey is completed prior to engaging with a vendor (Forrester). The adoption of technology initially caused a rise in digital advertising as marketers attempted to reach a new generation of consumers online. However, this quickly became challenging for several reasons.

First, consumers developed “banner blindness” and stopped seeing the ads being pushed at them. Second, these ads often weren’t properly targeted, so a 29-year-old, vegan, yoga devotee was being served up campaigns from hamburger fast food chains.

As people specialize their social spaces more and more to reflect their true interests, so do the social networks themselves. Facebook, for instance, shows you more content from the people and brands you “like” content from, and less from those you don’t.

These changes have forced brands to reconsider traditional “push-based” marketing strategies and seek out “engagement-based” approaches. One of the key drivers for this shift is that while consumers have begun to tune out traditional ads, they have also become increasingly connected to each other and now more than ever before are turning to their trusted networks to share and gain recommendations.

With recent findings telling us that the average consumer engages with 11.4 pieces of content prior to making a purchase (Forrester) and that consumers are five times more dependent on content than they were five years ago (Nielsen), brands need help to reach consumers in this new reality.

By engaging influencers, brands are able to generate earned media, which has quickly become recognized as the most effective form of media in reaching today’s consumers.

On average, marketers who implemented an Influencer Marketing program in 2014 received $6.85 in earned media value for every $1.00 of paid media value (Burst Media).

What makes it so effective? Earned media addresses many of the challenges brands face today by breaking through noise online and driving not only awareness but also purchase intent.

Building influence and connecting with influencers has become an essential part of today’s marketing strategies. Yet, getting started can be easier said than done.
How to Identify Influencers

Brands should be able to identify influencers by the following attributes.

Reach + Relevance
Ideal influencers reach your brand’s target social media audience, whether for the overall brand or a single campaign.

The value of an influencer’s reach is not only the size of his or her audience, but also the relevance of those audience members to your brand. How many of the influencer’s audience members fit into your brand’s target demographic? Are they likely to be customers of your brand? Do your brand and that influencer’s audiences, missions, and interests truly align?

Pro Tip: Conduct an audience analysis to discover which topics an influencer’s followers are talking about, and how they define themselves.

Resonance
An influencer’s resonance is his or her ability to create or build buzz for content with audiences that a brand finds valuable.

This will give you a good idea of whether you should pursue this influencer further.

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![Top Keywords in Audience Profiles](image)

One way to find out if your influencer’s audience matches up with your dream audience is by looking at the top keywords in that influencer’s followers’ Twitter profiles. You can find out what that influencer’s audience feels most passionate about, connected to, and likely to react well to on social media.
Who?

Now that you know what influencers are, how do you find the ideal influencers for your brand?

First figure out which qualities matter most to you in an influencer:

- How many followers they have
- The wealth, interests, geographical location, or influence of their followers
- How much engagement they get on average per month
- How active they are on the social networks you’re focused on
- How well they are able to amplify content

Then identify the influencers who have the desirable traits you prioritize within the pool of people who already follow you and/or engage with your brand’s social content. In essence, these people are acquaintances you’re turning into close friends.

This chart shows @UAGolf’s top influencers sorted by followers.

These are people who post regularly on social networks, engage often with their followers, have a high ratio of followers to people they’ve followed, and often have a high post count.
But, don’t forget to look outside your pool of social followers for influencers who might be a fantastic fit for your brand.

By looking at who is driving the buzz around a particular hashtag or topic on any given social network, you’ll quickly be able to build a list of relevant potential influencers for your brand.

You may also choose to work directly with an influencer agency like Team Epiphany, Evolve!, or Socialyte for a lower lift (but higher cost) experience on your end.

Another worthwhile tactic is reaching out to your customers via surveys or conversations on your social networks to ask them which influencers they admire and turn to for product suggestions and reviews.

This chart shows the most active users, most followed users, and top users by Klout Score for the hashtag #socialanalytics—all useful lists to look at when building your influencer list.

Advice from a Pro

Look for influencers everywhere. Okay, maybe not “everywhere,” but look in a variety of places. Some influencers make themselves easy to find because they’re already talking about your brand via blog posts or social media. A simple Google or social search can unearth those influencers. Work with affiliate networks like GLAM Media, who vet, reach out to, and sign bloggers to their network. Affiliate networks are an easy one-stop shop for a brand to reach multiple influencers at once. The network acts as a third-party facilitating the contract and partnership with that influencer.

Jess Estrada
Content Strategist at Bezos Family Foundation, FreshJess.com Creator, and Lifestyle Influencer
When?

Now that you have your list of influencers to target, connect with them organically by understanding:

• When they are online: Is the influencer online during the workday, or mainly after hours? Which social networks does the influencer use during which time periods? Which time zone is the influencer in?

• When your social audience is online: Your influencer’s most active times, of course, should match up with when your brand is active online.

The more aligned that your influencer’s temporal social rhythms are with those of your brand’s followers, the greater the chance that your influencer will be able to get your brand in front of relevant eyes.

Advice from a Pro

Ideally, influencers only support and promote brands and products that completely align with their values. An influencer will be much more intrinsically motivated and passionate about a brand if there is a natural alignment in personal values. Build out a dossier on each prospective influencer before making the initial contact; strive to find out his or her top values and favorite hobbies. These values may be most evident from a personal Instagram and/or Facebook profile.

For instance, it’s apparent from my personal shares that I’m crazy about my Bengal cat, my roses and garden, singing and piano lessons, and healthy organic foods to name a few. From a business standpoint: I love to support forward-thinking, conscious companies that provide exemplary customer service. There’s plenty of scope, therefore, for someone like myself to be a raving evangelist for a number of brands, not just the obvious social media-related products.

Mari Smith
Social Media Thought Leader, Top Facebook Marketing Expert

These charts show the most popular time zones for @UAGolf’s followers, along with the top time zones for influencers specifically.

Of course, if your efforts are more focused on getting social influencers to blog about you than to post about you on their networks, you widen your possibilities of which influencers you can utilize.
Where?

Now that you’ve whittled down your influencer list, you’ll want to know where your influencers:

• Are the most active – Which social networks do these influencers spend the most time on?
• Have the greatest impact – Which social networks do these influencers drive the most engagement on, or have the most followers?
• Interact with your content the most -- On which social network do these influencers organically prefer to engage with your brand’s content?

Don’t try to fit a square peg in a round hole. Meet your influencers where they’re strongest.
What?

What content is driving engagement among your influencers? This is one of the most important components of your influencer strategy. If your content is attracting the attention of influencers, half your outreach work is already done for you.

Creating quality content both on your site and on social ensures that influencers will respect your brand and promote your content to their social audience without a whole lot of wasted energy spent coaxing and prodding.

IDENTIFY TOPICS THAT INTEREST YOUR CURRENT AUDIENCE

To create content that enraptures your audience and potential influencer partners alike, analyze your current audience. Get a good idea of your audience’s interests, needs, and feelings about your brand.

Knowing demographic details helps you target content that speaks to your audience’s age group, gender, and location. You can use this data to determine what your audience is like, understand which influencers fit into your target audience personas, and even identify other possible target audiences you may be missing out on.
Advice from a Pro

The beauty of social media is it allows you to build rapport with someone before you reach out to them directly. This can be done through a variety of social signals, some more flattering to the influencers. If you’re a brand and want to work with an influencer, why wouldn’t you want to retweet their content or share their Instagram photos?

If they are that aligned with your brand, it will only help you better engage with your fans through a different lens AND flatter the influencer that you’re consuming and sharing their content. It will make it that much easier when you want to reach out to them because you’ve built a relationship in advance.

Neal Schaffer
Global social media speaker, creator of the Maximize Social Business blog, and Forbes top-ranked influencer

Topics of Interest

When you’re analyzing your audience, look into their topics of interest. Having a clear picture of what interests your potential influencers will help you personalize content that speaks to both these influencers and their followers.

How do you identify these topics? Look at what your likely influencers and current audience are posting. You might find that topics and posting behaviors vary network-by-network.

Keywords in your influencers’ profiles, their followers’ profiles, and their post content hold clues to what they find most important. Looking at the content your influencers produce and share, and how many Retweets, shares, favorites, Likes, replies, and comments this content receives will tell you what resonates with your influencer’s audience.

This also gives you insight into how your influencers interact with their audiences, which will teach you how to personalize your approach to these influencers and foster deeper partnership opportunities.
FIND POTENTIAL INFLUENCERS THROUGH AUDIENCE AND COMPETITIVE ANALYSIS

After analyzing your current audience, your influencers, and your influencers’ audiences, give yourself healthy dose of competitive intelligence.

In addition to looking at general topic influencers – through Klout, organic search, and the social media channels themselves – you’ll want to take stock of your competitors’ network of influencers.

These are people who have access to target audiences similar to yours, and have a large amount of engagement with that audience. Find out how many influencers your competitor has. As best you can, determine whether these influencers have an official affiliation with your competitor’s business.

If you find influencers who have no affiliation with the business, look at their content, their profile information and their audiences to pinpoint reasons they engage with your competitor’s brand and not yours, or that brand and yours.

Your influencers may have project collaborators who also have their own sphere of influence. By finding out who these collaborators are and studying their social activity, you may be able to glean even more information about your audience or gain access to an audience you didn’t know about. You may find that you want to consider these collaborators in your influencer quest.

This is lifestyle influencer Lauren Conrad’s Retweet of a Tweet from The Little Market, a brand she is closely affiliated with.
Set Goals

As you go through this process of analyzing influencers, tracking keywords, and assessing other audiences, note any areas where there’s a gap in your strategy – whether it’s keywords you’re not yet targeting, content that you should be producing, or other audiences you haven’t considered. Then, set goals to cover those gaps with a timeline of deliverables and a plan for measurement.

The point in developing relationships with influencers is to augment your current strategy. Remember, partnering with influencers is often a business venture. Many influencers have policies in place to help protect their brand image and integrity to maintain their status.

Think about what your influencers might be able to provide for your company: Are you trying to boost traffic or conversions? Are you looking for content creation, or would you want to create guest content for your influencer’s blog, for example?

And, remember to build your value prop for these influencers. Why should they work with you? What benefit can you provide? This benefit doesn’t necessarily have to be financial. It could be something like helping that influencer widen his or her own net of influence, providing speaking opportunities, or offering to help with site design work or event planning.

When you have your goals clearly set, create metrics around them that allow you to measure the success of your work with a particular influencer. Popular metrics include growth in:

- Community size
- Mentions
- Engagement
- Web traffic

Having set goals will allow you to determine where your influencer strategy is working, and decide whether to continue partnering with the influencer(s) you choose.

Advice from a Pro

When we work with influencers, we gauge success by looking at how our content resonates with their audience.

In theory, an influencer’s audience should be like an extension of our audience. We’re looking for the indicators of well-received content: web traffic, engagement, and positive qualitative feedback.

Jade Furubayashi
Social Media Manager at Simply Measured
Tips for Engaging with Your Influencer, From Influencers

Discovering the influencers is the easy part – enticing them to engage with your brand is another matter altogether. Influencers are often very careful about which brands they choose to partner with and how they choose to engage. A lack of selectivity could reduce the influencer’s authority or damage their brand integrity.

When engaging influencers, start by recognizing the people who engage with your content and reward them for that engagement – either with special deals, sneak peeks, or free demos in exchange for feedback. When this has proven successful, you can begin to reach out to influencers outside your circle, using the following tips:

Impress, But Authentically
Ensure that the content, deals, or demos you’re offering show off your brand’s best assets, while still remaining personal and transparent. Be as authentic as you can in working with your influencers. Ask yourself – why should they engage with my brand? The more transparent and “real” the transaction is, the more enticing your offer will be.

Advice from a Pro

Make it easy for the influencer to work with you. Also ensure that you both win from the relationship. That can be in a variety of ways. This could be in the form of increasing both brands’ awareness, credibility, and also a financial reward for the influencer.

Each influencer will want different things from the relationship. Make sure you know what that is and it should be included in initial discussions and ongoing conversations because that could change.

Jeff Bullas
Social media marketing strategist and speaker, Forbes-ranked influencer
Advice from a Pro

One strategy is to first understand how influencers can shape the market and that they require a very specific engagement approach. At WCG, we follow the 1-9-90 model whereby the 1%, are the influencers who create content, shape the market and drive the conversation about a given topic. Our algorithms show that there are never more than 50 people who drive the majority of share of conversation for a brand or a topic in a given country or language. Once this group is identified, they require a different, more unique approach at reaching them than the others do.

The 9% are highly active online. They are brand advocates. They recommend, share, sign up, download, comment, and other actions that let their communities and peers know what they think about certain topics, products or brands.

The 90% are the great majority of any market. They lurk and learn. This rather large group is satisfied with using search or consuming the content of their peers. They decide how compelling the 1% and the 9% really are in telling your brand’s story.

The second strategy involves scale. Influencers are also consumers. It takes more than a phone call or email to reach them with a brand message. In many cases, they need to interact with branded content 3 – 5 times before they believe something. The ability to target influencers with paid media is somewhat of a new concept though. Twitter’s custom audiences allow brands to target specific individuals with content. So, in order for this to be successful, the first strategy of influencer identification must first be nailed down.

Michael Brito
Group Director and Head of Social Strategy, WCG
Get Personal
When you reach out to influencers, opt for personalized contact. Engage them through social channels, commenting on or sharing their posts. Let them know that your brand respects both their industry knowledge and their social clout.

Here is where the homework you’ve already done pays off. You know who your influencers are, what their social profiles look like, and why they’re desirable to you.

Know exactly how you want to partner with an influencer before initiating contact. For instance, you might want them to wear a t-shirt repping your campaign and take an Instagram photo wearing it, or live-tweet a specific event for you.

Engagement takes time and you’ll want to build a solid foundation for your next move, so don’t rush this process. Once you’ve made initial contact on social, send out a personalized email or handwritten note, letting your influencer know that your brand is interested in working with them.

Ensure there’s some follow up after the project is completed, via phone, Skype, or email at the very least. This process is simplified for brands that use the Klout Perks platform. Klout acts as a trusted intermediary in engaging influencers for marketing campaigns.

It Goes Both Ways
Once you’ve established a rapport with your influencer, make sure that you keep that channel open and supportive.

Be sure to share out some of the influencer’s content related to your industry and/or brand. After all, the influencer did choose to work with your brand and deserves the recognition for promoting your content to their followers. Aim to evoke a positive experience using what you know about that influencer and their audience so that he or she will want to work with you again in the future.

Klout’s Topic Expertise
Klout’s Topic Expertise is a new way to help brands identify influencers on social. By analyzing the activity generated by influencers on the social, Klout determines who produces the most impactful content across over 10,000 topics. This information allows your brand to discover and engage with experts throughout your social and professional networks.
Employ Pull Strategy

Use a pull strategy in your influencer marketing efforts, rather than a push strategy. What does this mean? Instead of foisting content on your influencers, listen and source their ideas to create content and campaigns. Ask them if they’ve got promotional ideas, since they likely know things about your target audience’s preferences that you may not. This is not only a good way to come up with fresh ideas – it also shows trust in your influencers to help solidify your relationship. Just be sure these ideas mesh with your overall brand strategy.

Advice from a Pro

Treat everyone like a who. You might define your short list of the most influential influencers to work with specifically, but here’s my plea for a more generous mindset: Be generous with how you define “influencer” in any ongoing program.

A clear strength of our social, connected world is that everyone has a voice and can be heard. Everyone has a way of looking at things that can inform the thinking of anyone else. Everyone is a who in a who’s who scenario.

So consider incorporating less-obvious influencers from time to time in your program—nurturing them along as you nurture your own business and marketing, by making them part of your success story. I like how marketing agency head Lee Odden (an influencer in his own right!) puts it: “Working with an established influencer makes them your friend for a day. Helping upcoming talent become influential makes them a friend for life.”

Ann Handley
Chief Content Officer, MarketingProfs
Address Any Issues Right Away
As a brand spokesperson, an influencer might have feedback, may experience issues with your product or brand, or may find out about customer service issues before you do. So, when an influencer comes to your brand with a problem or issue, make sure you’re able to resolve the issue in a timely fashion.

Not only does this show that you care about your customers, it shows that you care about the influencer whose authority may be affected by negative sentiment surrounding your brand.

One of the most important parts of using influencers in your marketing strategy is interacting with them in a way that benefits both your brand and theirs.

Advice from a Pro
One of the biggest mistakes I see companies make time and again is shipping sample products to an influencer... and then not following up. Always remember: The fortune is in the follow up.

Mari Smith
Social Media Thought Leader, Top Facebook Marketing Expert

Advice from a Pro
Influencers are inundated with requests. The only way to capture their attention is to ensure your partnership is a win-win situation. Oftentimes, brands approach the relationship with a “me first” mentality rather than identifying what matters to the influencer and their community.

Take your time to properly piece together a pitch that clearly spells out the benefits. An influencer has the ability to lead a community and impact decisions, bringing your brand to a potential new marketplace. If you want to engage an influencer and allow them to be the voice of your brand, get to know them and their community before hastily making contact.

Rebekah Radice
Social media strategist, speaker and digital marketing specialist, Chief Experience Officer of Imagine WOW, and author of “How to Use Social Media to Virtually Crush the Competition”
Adding Influencers to Your Marketing Strategy

Once you’ve gathered your network of influencers, you’ll need to decide which role you want them to play. Knowing where your influencers fit into your product’s buyer journey is a great way to figure out what you want out of your influencers. You may find you want different outcomes from different influencers.

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<th>Engagement &amp; Advocacy</th>
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<td>Generate awareness</td>
<td>Generate interest</td>
<td>Encourage buyer to consider a purchase</td>
<td>Move buyer to the decision-making stage</td>
<td>Win a new customer</td>
<td>Encourage customer to use the product and promote it organically</td>
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<td>Buyer Mindset</td>
<td>Unaware of the problem your product solves</td>
<td>Aware of the problems your product solves</td>
<td>Interested in solving the problems associated with your product</td>
<td>Exploring your product as a solution. Committed to researching and understanding all available approaches to solving their defined problem.</td>
<td>Making the decision whether to choose your product or another product</td>
<td>Love your product, hate your product, are indifferent to your product, or want more information on how to use your product more effectively</td>
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<tr>
<td>Topics (To Drive Buyer to Next Stage)</td>
<td>- Industry and/or lifestyle best practices</td>
<td>- &quot;How to...&quot; problems and analysis</td>
<td>- What does “perfect” look like?</td>
<td>- Why your product’s approach?</td>
<td>- Why you?</td>
<td>- How can I insert the pain point your brand solves with insert your brand here?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Profiles of the best in class within industry/brand category</td>
<td>- Definitions within the field</td>
<td>- What are the consequences of not solving this problem?</td>
<td>- How do I know which solution is best?</td>
<td>- Why not your competitors?</td>
<td>- Why doesn’t insert your product here work?</td>
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<td>- What is insert the pain point your brand addresses here?</td>
<td>- Benchmarks for what success looks like in the field</td>
<td>- Why do I make sure I am not misunderstanding what I need?</td>
<td>- How do I solve this problem for my brand?</td>
<td>- Details about your product</td>
<td>- Hacks for using your product</td>
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<tr>
<td>Influencer Strengths</td>
<td>Trusted by broad range of people, has different touchpoints in different communities, good at building dialogue about new issues</td>
<td>Considered SME (subject matter expert) in your field, track record of driving people from awareness to product interest, active on networks where your target demographic tends to huddle</td>
<td>True, historical believer in your product and why it’s important, excels in this area he or herself, can offer personal narrative of how not having a solution hurt him/her</td>
<td>Familiar with different approaches to the problem your product solves, considered SME, able to articulate pros and cons, aware of the different persona types who are considering your brand, and loyal to your brand over the competition</td>
<td>Knows the ROI of your product, familiar with competitors’ products but loyal to yours, has access to network of people who also love your product</td>
<td>Is willing to jump into conversations when she/he hears your brand being talked about positively or negatively, has experience hosting on- and off-line events which build buzz for your brand and a sense of community among its users</td>
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<tr>
<td>Content Ideas</td>
<td>Product reviews, hosting your brand’s blog content, engagement with your brand on social media, product referral program, beta testing program</td>
<td>Giveaways, free “tastes” or samples of product, blog posts, original research or swag just for that influencer, more robust content like videos that the influencer can blast out on his/her social channels</td>
<td>Big emphasis on statistics/data/personal experiences with both the problem and your product, studies, blog posts</td>
<td>Twitter chat, video diary that shows how your product works and solves a problem, mini-campaigns involving developing platforms like Periscope, Snapchat, and Pinterest, which benefit both your brand and the influencer</td>
<td>Event partnerships, promo code partnerships, influencer-hosted demos, influencer-hosted giveaways, social posts about the ROI of your product</td>
<td>FAQs, how-to videos, on- and off-line events, regular social posting about your brand’s blog collateral and new releases</td>
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In the initial phases of your buyer’s journey, your influencers play the role of trendsetters. These influencers show off your product on social and pen blog posts that drive awareness. At this stage, influencers are using their reach to amplify your message.

As you move through the buyer’s journey, your influencers serve as thought leaders and conversation starters. In the final stages, you’ll benefit from influencer reviews and feedback.

At the end of your buyer’s journey, your influencer is a catalyst for brand advocacy, whether by co-hosting contests or collaborating on FAQ-related content. Your influencer starts to become a validator, recognizing audience members who also use your product and fostering a community around that product.

The most worthwhile effort your influencer can undertake is using your product in his or her day-to-day world and telling about it, proving that your product is a good buy to his or her social following. Do everything you can to encourage a level of intimacy with your product in your influencer cluster.

Ask the hard questions on a regular basis, like: Would he or she suggest the product to his or her best friend or most respected colleague?

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**Advice from a Pro**

Successful brand-influencer relationships need to be carefully nurtured over time, based on trust, open communication and reciprocity. As a brand, seek humility in an influencer. Observe the responses by the influencer’s audience - there should be tremendous trust, loyalty, and respect there, and an ability by the influencer to move his or her audience members to take action. This can be seen in comments and replies throughout social channels and blog posts.

**Mari Smith**

Social Media Thought Leader, Top Facebook Marketing Expert
Measuring Your Success

Any marketing strategy must have measureable goals to assess whether or not resources are being devoted wisely. Marketing with influencers is no different. A few different metrics you could use to measure the success of your campaign include:

- Increase in community size
- Increase in mentions
- Increase in engagement

Let’s take engagement as our example goal. The first thing you’ll want to do is establish a baseline for your current engagement. Take a set time frame – say the month prior to your campaign – and find out your engagement metrics for that month.

Once you’ve determined how much engagement you’re currently getting, you’ll want to set a goal for your influencer campaign. Let’s assume you want to increase engagement by 10%. Here are the first steps towards achieving this goal:

Content

a. Have your influencer create one piece of content that engages or educates the customer
b. Engage with the influencer and the customer to answer questions and field commentary surrounding these tandem pieces of content

Next, you’ll want to measure how this content is disseminated on social.

Social Network Promotion

a. Offer a promotion through the influencer on one or multiple social channels to drive engagement
b. Engage with the influencer and the customer to build engagement through the content and your promotion
c. After the promotion is over, continue to promote both your brand and the influencer, and engage the influencer and their audience.

Once you’ve outlined the steps in your plan, determine how to track your engagement growth for the period. You’ll want to know how much of this engagement growth can be attributed to normal trends and how much can be attributed to your influencer campaign.

When you know what you’re measuring, how you’re measuring, and what your goals are, you can begin to implement your campaign and collect data to determine the impact of that campaign on your social media marketing strategy. At the end of your campaign, compare your results to both your beginning baseline and your target goals. You should be able to identify successes and areas of improvement and modify your future campaign strategy based on that information.
Conclusion

Working with influencers is a partnership that can be incredibly beneficial for your brand. Influencers have the power to drive brand perceptions and encourage purchasing. Influencers give you the power of an independent, well-respected voice and specialized industry knowledge.

This partnership requires the same level of professionalism you’d adopt in partnering with other brands and can be time-consuming, but if you’re clear on your goals and respectful of your influencers, the opportunities for creative content and ROI are limitless.

Lucy Hitz is a Content Marketing Producer at Simply Measured, where she works on longform content and writes for the award-winning social analytics blog. Her favorite musical artist is Taylor Swift, and you can find her on Twitter at @LLHitz.
About Simply Measured

Simply Measured is the most complete social analytics solution, empowering marketers with unmatched access to their social data to more clearly define their social strategy and to optimize their tactics for maximum impact.

Our goal is to put the tools to understand business data in the hands of business users. We think reporting should be simple, attractive, and accessible for everyone – not just data scientists. Our software streamlines the process from data to deliverables and eliminates the countless hours spent on everyday reporting tasks. We do this by putting cloud data sources at your fingertips, providing a marketplace of best practice reports, and allowing you to generate beautiful solutions on the web, in Excel, and in PowerPoint with a couple of clicks.

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