Newswire Influencer Marketing Guidebook
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## Marketing Guidebook

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1.1 Defining Influencer Marketing

Influencer marketing focuses on using online leaders to drive a brand’s message to the larger market. Rather than marketing directly to a large group of consumers, you instead inspire, hire & pay influencers to get out the word for you to people in their network or social groups.

Influencer marketing often goes hand-in-hand with two related marketing disciplines: social-media marketing and content marketing. Most influencer campaigns have some sort of social-media component, whereby influencers are expected to spread the word through their personal social channels. This style of campaign also carry a content element in which the brand has created the content for the influencers to share with their networks or give them the creative license to design original content to share. Though social-media and content marketing often fit inside influencer campaigns, they are not synonymous with influencer marketing.

1.2 What Makes an ‘Influencer’

There are quite a few different definitions for an ‘Influencer’ floating around and they can be present in many forms (content creators, brand ambassadors, product experts, micro influencers, celebrities, etc.) but in every situation these folks do exactly what it sounds like help to drive the decisions of others. It is this ability to drive the behaviors of others which most often drives Brands to utilize them in marketing their products or services to their audience instead of the brand attempting to market to its target consumer directly. The most important factors that define influence are an engaged audience and a level of advocacy that is driven by conviction. A lot of people tend to use the words “influence” and “followers” interchangeably, but you don’t always need a large audience to have influence—you need conviction and trust. This is what helps us distinguish between an earned influencer and a paid influencer—an earned influencer being a brand advocate or fan, and a paid influencer being someone who has simply been paid to promote. Both can be effective, but end results occur in very different ways.

1.3 Brand Challenges Advertisers Face in Influencer Marketing and How to Overcome Them:

Influencer marketing is more than advertising and for companies that engage paid and organic influencer marketing, there are three big challenges:

1. How to find and develop relationships with the “right” influencers
2. How to decide when to pay influencers and when to collaborate for mutual benefit
3. How to comprehensively measure influencer marketing ROI
2.1 Key components in helping clients build influencer campaigns:

The first step in creating your campaign is having a strategy for your campaign. Which market of influencers, and subsequently market of audiences, would you like to connect with? Consider not only the existing content or themes generated by influencers on their profiles and platforms, but also the specific demographics to which they best appeal. One food blogger might have a strong college-aged following, while another might be rooted in an older crowd. Ensure that the influencers you find are not only reputable and relevant in a certain industry, but also reputable and relevant among your targeted demographic.

Next, decide which social media platform(s) are best for your campaign. Do you see your campaign being most effective through photographs, videos, or written posts? Which mode is the best way to both inform audiences of the brand/product and convince them to support it? After determining the platform(s) you’d like to utilize, you can then pick and choose influencers that fit your thematic mold from each platform.

From that point on, decide which kinds of content you’d like the influencer to create. Giveaways, reviews, DIY projects, and discounts for followers are all effective ways to spark the interest of audiences as well as increase their accessibility to your product. You might offer influencers a variety of options, or give them conditional creative freedom—both will increase the authenticity and trustworthiness of your campaign.

2.2 Influencer Identification & Selection

Depending on budgets and scope of your campaign there are (4) main ways to identify influencers to work on your campaigns.

1. **Databases** - Databases do site scraping for you, pulling publicly available data. These are great places to start but be prepared to spend time vetting each influencer and communicating with them directly.

2. **Networks** - This method of connecting with influencers sits in the middle of a database and a marketplace. A network has relationships with the influencers, but will require that you go through them to reach out.

3. **Marketplaces** - A marketplace will offer the best of database by pulling in real-time information, along avoiding the middleman like you get with a network.

4. **Google** - This use to be the main way brands and agencies found influencers to connect with. This method requires individual searches, then scanning webpages for contact info, and then populating spreadsheets to keep track of it all.
2.3 Micro-influencers Compared to Celebrity Influencers

Celebrity influencers can be very expensive and do not always generate the ROI that micro-influencers can provide. As such, a brand needs to be able to determine what option can provide the best mix of reach and engagement with their target audience. Based on that knowledge, most brands will be able to make an educated decision on which type of influencer they’d prefer to work with to achieve their goals.

Celebrities have been used in advertising since the 1900’s, whereas measurable influence in comparison is still in its infancy. Micro-Influencers (paid media) and digging deeper, brand advocates (earned media) come with smaller communities, but with higher engagement rates and better results. Statistically, Micro-influencers drive 60% higher engagement rates in campaigns, which are 6.7 times more efficient than that of larger influencers, and are much more cost-efficient per post. This is especially relevant with influencers of niche interests, who are seen as more trustworthy by followers when it comes to a specific product within that niche.

Though social-media and content marketing often fit inside influencer campaigns, they are not synonymous with influencer marketing.
2.4 One central Piece of Influencer Marketing Advice for Brands

Brand advocates have the power of earned media on their side, and provide a brand with valuable offline and online brand advocacy in the form of recommendations and conversations. They truly have the power to build a brand in the long term, turning their friends and followers into brand advocates that buy into the brand. Micro-influencers can contribute to that long-term brand-building process.

2.5 The Biggest Misconception Brands have about Influencer Marketing:

Brands that treat working with influencers the same as advertising channels. Companies that treat working with influencers purely as a transaction often waste money with little to show in return. Far more can be gained by creating mutual value, through collaborating and developing a long term relationship based on shared values.
3.1 Key Metrics for Finding the Right Influencers

We look at a number of different values that we consider to be important to clients.

- [https://www.newswire.com/why-us](https://www.newswire.com/why-us)
- The “Why Choose Us section” seems to be well supplied with industry terminology

The main social platforms are Instagram, Twitter and Facebook.

The first thing that we look at for an Influencer is their follower count. Our focus is Influencers with fewer than 100,000 followers, commonly referred to as the power middle, because statistically these influencers offer the best reach/engagement/cost combination.

Engagement rates are crucial, as an example to qualify for our database an Influencer with 50k followers should hit at least an average engagement rate (covering 3 or more posts) of 2%+

By loading their profile into a social CRM (Customer Relationship Management) platform, we can generate a bit more insight across their social channels, such as their social streams, biography, keywords, influential topics, location etc. Our CRM is a simple, accessible interface that takes the work out of independently researching your own influencers and their backgrounds, followings, and content—Newswire Influence does it for you.
3.2 Ensuring that an Influencer is the Best Match for Your Brand:

We ask our clients a lot of questions. We use elaborate briefing sheets that give us a clear picture on what the client wants – not only from the campaign itself and the influencers, but also what they look for in an influencer’s audience.

We use our existing influencer database and outreach team and check for engagement rate and content relevancy, and we check their audience profiles to make sure that these match the client’s requirements.

Upon request, we create a list for our clients with all the stats, so they can pick and choose which influencers they prefer to work with – some clients really enjoy that level of transparency. We also use previous campaign results, so when an influencer has performed below expectation, we provide them with a warning. This helps us decide if they are a good match for a brand in the future.
3.3 Measuring the Results and ROI of your Influencer Marketing Work

We focus on quantitative and qualitative ROI for all of our campaigns. Quantitative focuses on benchmark and engagement rates, web traffic, video views, unique visits to blog posts, UMVs, downloads, content scores, reach, and impressions as per Instagram Analytics. Newswire Campaigns provide all the analytics on an influencer that participated on a campaign including comparing them to other influencer that participated on the campaign as well in order to see which influencer is driving the most engagement to your campaign.

For Newswire, the real ROI lies in the long-term. We want to generate qualitative insights from influencers so that we can come back with brand advocacy.

We’re after building a brand in the long run. A quick reach, traffic, download or content boost isn’t enough.

4.2 Top 3 Mistakes Advertisers Should Avoid When Evaluating Influencer Marketing for Their Brand:

1. **Avoid focusing too much** on influencers purely based on network size and popularity. Finally reach.

2. **Assuming that all Brand** advocacy needs to be paid. Finding common ground and shared interests can be a great framework for collaboration as well as a grassroots way of growing your own Brand Influence.

3. **Approach influencers** with a focus on what the brand wants. The best way to get an influencer’s attention and buy-in is to find a way to create value for that influencer. Understand what they’re not getting and find a way to give it to them in a way that leads to brand and community benefit. A great example of this is the common relationship between the blogging community and product drops of new books, makeup, toys or technology. By providing influential bloggers with coveted new or yet-to-be-released products in exchange for reviews can easily promote discussion, reviews and excitement around the products providing tremendous insight for the your Brand.
Content is the most valuable currency brands can create with influencers. It builds relationships and the resulting content gives both the brand and influencer exposure. That same content can also be leveraged by the brand for marketing programs.

Another missed opportunity is that brands do not pay enough attention to identifying who is already advocating for the brand and influencing communities at all levels – not just those in the celebrity category. Activating advocates at every level should be a part of every brand’s influencer and community management efforts.

- **One central piece of influencer marketing advice for brands:** Give to get. Always lead influencer engagement with what the brand can do for the influencer. An empathetic view of influencer collaboration will inspire far more effective outcomes than just a transactional approach alone. See working with influencers from a long term perspective, not just as advertising campaigns.

- **Monitor & Analytics:** Different metrics and methods for measurement can be used to define your success as it ladders to your original goals. Here are some actions that map out the consumer decision journey:
4.5 The Uncharted Future of Influencer Marketing

It’s hard to make predictions, but looking at how micro-influencers have proven their worth when it comes to being cost-effective content creators and delivering better results than traditional talent/celebrities.

Authenticity is becoming increasingly important and so is earned media and long-term value. Research has also shown that generating brand advocacy is becoming an increasingly important goal for influencer marketing strategies.

Taking all these things into consideration, true influencer marketing will be the future. It’s a little different than what we’re seeing right now, but should become the norm in the near future.

This approach will focus more on combining earned with paid media, creating influencer marketing programs that utilize existing brand advocates as well as paid content creators to create a powerful mix of influence and reach – the emphasis will be on the importance of nurturing and harnessing relations and long-term strategies in order to generate more than just advertising ROI.

Influencer marketing will hopefully become the center around which brand advocacy, content and influence revolves. It will be the go-to strategy to deliver long-term, in-depth, brand building KPIs that will really help grow a brand.

Community management will become an increasingly important part of influencer marketing in the future, because in this day and age, we are more pulled in by content that relates to us on a personal level and this translates to brands requiring a more bespoke and personal approach when it comes to the consumer journey and influencer marketing fits in perfectly.