

# The influencer *EFFECT*

## Supplemental Report



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The Influencer Effect - Supplementary Report  
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Since the release, *The Influencer Effect* (<http://amzn.to/2vF516y>), I've been asked all sorts of questions about influencer marketing, including the nuts and bolts about how to find influencers, how to become an influencer, and how to calculate the return on investment for an influencer campaign. Much of this information can be found in a book by Joe Sinkwitz of Intellifluence titled "The Ultimate Guide to Using Influencer Marketing (Kindle Edition)". This bonus section uses this reference and addresses some of those questions.

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I recently met a young entrepreneur named Caleb Mattix. Caleb is a 15 year old entrepreneur, author, social media influencer, and the world's #1 success and entrepreneurship mentor for kids. His videos have been seen more than a million times.

Just a few years ago, it would have been ludicrous for a teenager to have a million views on YouTube or Instagram. But these platforms have led to the rise of a new generation of influencers that have amassed huge followings on niche subject matters, such as gaming, beauty, food, and fashion. Those same teenagers are negotiating with big brands and calling the shots, always careful to ensure that they don't "sell out" and just become a product pusher. For example, Michelle Phan started a series of YouTube videos featuring simple make-up demonstrations and tutorials. Phan's YouTube channel has over 8 million subscribers, 1.1 billion lifetime views, and 385 uploaded videos. The personal brand she has been able to build has made Michelle Phan a cosmetics authority that many consumers have come to trust...to the point that L'Oreal actually co-branded a cosmetic line with her.

Another example is Felicia Day, who built her own YouTube channel for giving herself an acting platform. *The Guild*, shown on the YouTube channel *Geek & Sundry* and portrays Felicia's life as a gamer and has 1.6 million subscribers, has allowed her to get acting roles on mainstream television and films.

And the examples don't stop there. People of all ages are able to take advantage of the new mediums sprouting up on the internet and become influencers within specific niches and industries. Smart brands are hitching themselves to these internet sensations. Here's why:

Think through your past several years of purchasing and ask yourself the following questions: When you were shopping for a car, did you rely on a car commercial you saw? A banner ad? An email? Or, did you rely on some very specific information, whether it be a friend who knows a lot about cars, a forum discussion on cars, or perhaps even an article written by a well-known and respected car reviewer? I suspect I know the answer.

Influencer marketing is no longer just celebrities being paid to tweet (although that is still part of it). Brands are discovering that influencer marketing can be even more effective when brought down to the level of people who know a lot about a particular subject and can generate a following. These people don't necessarily have 10,000 hours of experience. Studies have shown that while the 10,000 hour mark is still the mark of an expert, you can become more knowledgeable than 90% of the market with about 400 hours of learning. In other words, people just like you and I can become a credible source of information that is capable of influencing others, even at a young age.

## **SO, WHAT EXACTLY IS INFLUENCER MARKETING?**

It's the grey territory between an official testimonial and a subtle product mention, which is done almost in passing. Influence isn't just having a lot of followers. It's also driven by expertise and credibility on subject matter and the relationship between the influencer and his or her followers.

The best example is to imagine that you are back in high school. You walk down the hallway and as you stroll past the "popular crowd" of girls, you hear one of them say, "I love my Fashion Nova jeans." Instantly you feel as though you know something no one else does. You know what she wears, and what she considers to be cool. This is exactly what has happened with Kylie Jenner on Instagram.

Kylie partnered up with affordable clothing brand, Fashion Nova, and in one Instagram post made this clear point: you don't have to buy designer clothes to look like a superstar. You just need Fashion Nova. The photo gathered a stunning 2.2M likes.

Brands are willing to pay big bucks for that kind of off-hand endorsement. And it's not just exposure they want. Pure numbers and big promises of "impressions" are only half the value.

The other, more important, half comes from association. It's happening everywhere, from a-list celebrities all the way down to tiny niche thought leaders. Even small businesses and boutiques will spend a bit of money for a social media influencer with a few thousand followers in their market.

Why?

Because what they'll get in return is targeted exposure to the right kind of consumer, one who is already interested and will likely pay attention.

It is important to realize that influencer marketing isn't advertising. The reason influencer marketing works is because followers respect the opinions of the influencer, just like the high-school girls wanting to be like Kylie.

## WHAT TYPE OF INFLUENCER IS BEST, CELEBRITY, EXPERT, PERSONAL?

Let's face it – celebrities have a large reach, which is why brands try to identify with those individuals.

I have a friend on Facebook who recently posted an article about how Tom Hanks probably wouldn't go to the white house if he was asked to do so. The post was captioned, *"You're an ACTOR. You got rich pretending to be someone else. No one cares what you think, HollyWierdo."* I make it a rule to not comment on political posts, but I couldn't help myself. *"Actually, people DO care about what Tom Hanks thinks. That is what my book, The Influencer Effect is all about. It's not a question of whether or not they should agree with him, but celebrities do in fact influence a lot of people."*

But, as my friend pointed out with his post above, celebrities often lack other important factors in creating conversions for your product or service, such as relevancy. If we rate each influencer factor from 1 to 3, with 3 being the highest score, this table shows you how micro-influencers (experts and family & friends) can have a bigger impact on your success than celebrity endorsements might.

TYPE	Inform	Trust	Relevancy	Reach	Score
Celebrity	1	1	1	3	6
Expert	3	2	2	2	9
Personal	2	3	3	1	9

But, you might argue, that a celebrity's reach is more important than the other factors. All of the factors shouldn't be treated equally and be given the same weight. And I agree. So, let's say that reach is 10 times more important than the ability to inform. Relevancy is 5 times more important than simply the ability to inform, and trust 4 times more important than information alone. That gives the celebrity's reach a significant edge. When we look at this table with the weighted values, we now see numbers that show that a celebrity actually has higher

influence than your personal contacts do. But the expert actually has the highest influencer rating.

TYPE	Inform	Trust (4x)	Relevancy (5x)	Reach (10x)	Weighted Score
Celebrity	1	1 (4)	1 (5)	3 (30)	(40)
Expert	3	2 (8)	2 (10)	2 (20)	(41)
Personal	2	3 (12)	3 (15)	1 (10)	(39)

Is it any wonder why brands want to work this type of influencer – they are the ones who can make a big difference to your sales!

## HOW DO YOU SELECT AN INFLUENCER TO WORK WITH?

There are several factors that should be considered. In order to achieve your desired outcome, consider the following formula:

Influence = [Audience Reach (# of followers) \* Strength of Relationship with Followers (engagement) \* Brand Affinity (expertise and credibility) ] - Cost

Let's look at each of these variables.

***Audience Reach or Number of Followers.*** In this definition, we are just considering the primary reach. There are ways to measure secondary reach based on how many people are seeing a message when it is shared, retweeted, or re-pinned, but for the sake of our calculations, we're using audience size as a measurement of reach. That audience size is based on a single social channel. Otherwise, comparing someone's Pinterest reach to someone else's Facebook reach would be comparing apples to oranges.

***Strength of Relationship with Followers, or Engagement.*** Engagement is a measurement to show what percentage of posts receive some degree of liking, sharing, or comments, etc. This is important because it is possible that an influencer has an extremely large audience of followers who ignore the content produced. Also, it helps to identify which audiences are fake—it isn't hard nor expensive to buy 100,000 Twitter followers. It is, however, difficult to buy 100,000 Twitter followers and get daily engagement from them. The simplest way to measure engagement is as a percentage, looking at a random sampling of posts and seeing how many of those posts had any engagement.

***Brand Affinity, including expertise and credibility.*** This can be thought of as relevance. Similar to engagement, this item is also a percentage. It is also going to be different for every single product and channel combination you can think of. How can you calculate this figure? It is a guesstimate. Assign a relevancy percentage based on profile page, on recent posts, whatever you want—but be reasonable. If I mention "camping" once every few months on Twitter, I'm not 100 percent relevant to camping, but I might be 20 percent based on my perceived expertise

and what I share with my audience. Essentially, you want the influencer to be as closely aligned to your buyer persona as possible.

**Cost.** Cost is how much the influencer charges, plus the cost of any products or services you need to provide. Often this is just the product cost plus shipping. In some cases you might need to offer money as well. Cost is the biggest balancer on audience reach, as someone with a much larger audience will charge a lot more money.

Let's face it – money talks. If you pay an influencer in addition to the cost of the product, they will bend over backwards to provide you with a quality review. I have a friend who recently put a post on Facebook that simply said, *“I will PayPal \$50 to the last person who replies to this post. I will randomly decide when this contest ends. Go!”* He got over 700 responses in the first hour and ended the “contest” with over 11,000 replies to his post. You don't have to pay lots of money, but even \$50 is going to make a big difference.

Let's see how this formula might work for a company selling camping gear. Say Influencer A has a large following of 250,000 people; he is a local celebrity that the brand is interested in having him endorse their products. He is popular with young boys because he posts lots of YouTube videos playing music. His audience enjoys listening to his music, but they don't ask him lots of questions, they just idolize him. Influencer B has a much smaller audience of 20,000 followers, but concentrates on producing videos about camping. His audience asks questions about his content as well, in an attempt to be better educated.

Influencer A has a 5% engagement and is 20% relevant to our buyer persona. It will cost us \$2,000 to get his endorsement, so his score is calculated as

$$\text{Influence} = [250,000 * .05 * .20] - 2,000 = 500$$

Influencer B gets 20% engagement on his videos and is 50% relevant for our buyer persona.

The only cost is the cost of the product (\$100) for review, so his cost is calculated as

$$\text{Influence} = [20,000 * .20 * .50] - 100 = 1,900$$

If cost were not taken into consideration, Influencer A would be a better choice, but as you can see, this factor makes influencer B a better choice for this particular company, even if a small sum of money is paid.

## **HOW DO YOU DETERMINE BUYER PERSONAS?**

Rather than simply making an educated guess, you can follow these steps to quantify data about your ideal prospect.

1. Take a sampling of your existing customers, say your last 10 to 100 customers so you have some data. Research each of these customer's social profiles.
2. For each customer, who are they following? Who influences the customer on your particular subject matter?
3. Who are your customers' peers? Use the LinkedIn Sales Navigator and plug in each of your customers and look at first-level connections and start drawing comparisons.
4. Repeat this for your customer's peers, looking at their social profiles as well.
5. Determine which of these peers that seem to be influenced by the same celebrities and authority figures as your customers. This data is actually a targeted buying list if you're so inclined to reach out directly or advertise to them. It is also data you can use to build your buyer persona. What are the ages, genders, professions, socioeconomic factors, and interests? You now have a buyer persona that you can target.

## **HOW DO I FIND INFLUENCERS FOR MY BUSINESS?**

The best way is to simply do your research. As part of my coaching program, I do this with you, identifying potential influencers for your business and then making the introductions. There are also a number of online platforms that you can register with that can help you locate influencers for your niche. These include:

- Tomoson
- Intellifluence
- TapInfluence
- InfluencerMarketingHub

Since influencer marketing is still in its infancy, and there are new influencers every day, this list will be constantly changing. Your ideal influencer may very well be someone you meet at your next networking event.

## **HOW CAN I BECOME A TOP-TIER INFLUENCER?**

If you consider what brands are looking for (see question above), then you should work on the same factors: reach, engagement, and relevancy for your selected niche. Becoming an influencer is more than just becoming active on social media. You must be seen everywhere. Top tier influencers blog consistently. They speak at conferences, create videos, lead webinars, and participate in social media conversations. It is not one thing, it is the culmination of things that generates a following of people who know, like, and trust you. Further, it is not a one-time thing. All top tier influencers are committed and consistent over a period of time.

The important thing is that if you are going to be an influencer, you need to create a large following that has an engaging audience. You need to generate lots of content, and have that content be viewed and shared on various platforms including not only your blog and website, but social media sites like Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, Pinterest, and LinkedIn.

Being an influencer is not something you get to decide. You are only an influencer when people trust you enough to follow you. You are not the one that decides whether or not people listen to you. You need to be totally authentic and create lots of original content that you truly want to share. Influence will come once you've proven you are worthy of people's attention. Be consistent – creating regular, high quality content is the way to grow your channels.

As a respected industry expert, you should also be a regular guest on podcasts, other people's blogs, and even conferences. Your audience should look to you as a go to expert when it comes to your field.

If you wish to become a top-tier influencer, stick to your guns until you reach the level of notoriety you desire. Here then are some suggestions on how you can become a top-tier influencer.

***Always Be Broadcasting*** To build up an audience and keep them following you, you need to always be thinking about what you're going to share, when you're going to share it, and how you're going to go about post-production engagement. There's no way to get around this unless you're a massive celebrity. Salesmen need to

always be closing. Educators need to always be teaching; influencers need to always be broadcasting. One thing you should strongly consider is how to syndicate your content across multiple platforms – create it once and have it post automatically to as many other channels as you can. A good way to do this is with the use of a website called IFTTT (if this, then that).

**Blogs.** Blogs are a primary tool for top tier influencers, but most of the influencer/brand connection networks ignore them because reach is difficult to quantify as there is no standard way to blog. Technorati was once the go to source for blog search and blogger discovery thanks to their authority scores, top lists and blog claiming processes. The Technorati Authority score was a status symbol, something that companies fought hard to improve. But in May 2014, they announced that they were dropping their blog search and rankings. There are still over 100 blog search sites, but as I said, there is not a standard. You can find a list of some of these at [bit.ly/blogregistries](http://bit.ly/blogregistries). As a result, influencer sites find it difficult to quantify the content. If you do create a blog post, they will likely have you add some code to your post so they can verify it.

Never-the-less, as a top tier influencer you need to be blogging once per week. Your blog (or vlog) is the cornerstone of your online presence. It is the one single property that you have total control over that no one can take away from you. It is where your tribe will congregate and where speech coordinators will find you. Ask questions and work on engagement, as brands can and will look at your comment thread.

**Email Newsletters.** This may or may not be tied closely to blogs. Personally, my email lists are larger than my blog readership or any of my social media channels except LinkedIn. When I write a blog post, it is automatically syndicated to my social media channels and into a pre-formatted newsletter. Again, influencer/brand connection networks are likely to ignore newsletters as they can't measure them, but this is a good way for you to promote a brand's products when you are working with them directly. Like blogs, you should be sending out weekly emails.

**Podcasts.** Podcasts are the single best way to engage with other influencers in your industry, by having them on as guests to your show, and being a guest on other's

shows. Strive to air your own podcast once a week and be on as many other podcasts as you can.

**Engage.** The more you engage with other influencers, in a collaborative and supportive fashion, the more likely you are to have success. When I'm writing material relevant to influencer marketing, I want someone like Joel Comm seeing it, due to his role in the industry. Likewise, interacting in a positive manner with his material increases the likelihood of success. It's very difficult to be a top-tier influencer on every single major social channel, yet alone all social channels. However, it is possible to maintain a presence on all the major channels, the goal being to push the audience toward your preferred channel. If you want to be top tier on YouTube, there is nothing wrong with reposting videos on Instagram, embed posting on Facebook, and sharing the video on Twitter — so long as you are genuinely active on the other channels, you can use them to funnel traffic to where you want attention the most.

**Live Events.** Remember the adage that people do business with people they know, like and trust. There is no better way to build that know, like and trust factor than to attend live events and meet people in person. If you want to grow your following, attend live events. If you want to meet companies that can hire you, attend the conference where they hang out. Yes, you can be an internet star by being present on various social media networks, but if you want to grow as an influencer, you still need to attend as many live events as you can. The idea is to be seen everywhere, and that include IRL (In Real Life).

**Become an author.** Perhaps the best way to get invited to be on podcasts, give public presentations, be asked to write articles for magazines and other blogs, and to collaborate with other influencers is to have a book. The word author is the root of the word authority, and being an authority in your niche is what being a top tier influencer is all about. So, get a book. Have it ghost written if you can't do it yourself, but become an author in order to become an influencer.

**Amazon.** Amazon isn't a typical social network in that you won't find a lot of reviewer interaction outside of heavily commented product threads and in the reviewer support forum. However, brands won't know about a reviewer unless

they can FIND an influencer, which means leaving a high volume of quality product reviews. Let's get something out of the way: Amazon is cracking down on incentivized reviews, but there's still value in having an active profile, because Amazon's meteoric rise as a product search engine means some Amazon sellers are using it as a means to find influencers for other networks as well. In fact, I personally get contacted a couple of times a week because I am a top 25,000 influencer on Amazon and have made my profile public.

But like any social media site, you must remember that your Amazon reviews don't belong to you, they belong to Amazon, and Amazon can take down your reviews to suit their needs. I have had my Amazon account turned off and lost all my reviews, simply because Amazon chose to, even though I had done nothing wrong. If you are relying on any site other than your own to build your influence, be aware that you can lose everything without warning. All social media sites, are rented space. Make your mark as an influencer by being seen everywhere, rather than relying on any one site, especially one you do not control.

**Social Media.** Social media sites are how you get discovered. These are the sites that influencer/brand connectivity sites look at, so if you want to get influencer gigs from these sites, it is critical that you grow your followers on these sites. Specific tips for each of these sites are discussed below.

**Facebook.** Facebook is huge. Now that we got that out of the way, you need to know that there's a difference between fan pages and personal profiles, which makes life difficult for networks. If you're intending to grow your visibility primarily on Facebook, you'll want to get a fan page and do the majority of your interaction through this profile, because it is easier for brands and networks to track your activity .... It's a privacy issue and alleviates the follower cap problem associated with hard limits on personal friend network size.

Other Facebook tips? Join as many relevant groups as you can and stay active in them. Post and comment on other's posts: Like and share content, and you'll find your content getting liked and shared in return. Go live! Until it is ubiquitous, Facebook is algorithmically preferring going live, which means if you have an idea for a quick live video, this idea is a fantastic way to stay top of mind and improve

the probability of getting shared to a broader audience. A caveat though is to not abuse this format. Going live with videos that nobody wants is a quick way to losing followers and digital friends.

**Instagram.** Instagram is currently the most popular network for brand influencers for a few reasons. It is very easy to use; imagery has a high consumption rate, and ecommerce brands in the fields of fashion, cosmetics, health, etc. can't get enough influencers to satisfy demand. The problem is that for information-rich industries like technology, it is difficult to upload infographics to Instagram unless you are using a desktop app like Blue Stacks so you can upload images from a computer. Growing visibility here is easy: It's all about the hashtags. Unlike Twitter and its 140-character limitations, Instagram's larger limit means you can use significantly more hashtags on your content. This use comes into play in three ways: You should be following as many relevant tag searches as you can to get a better sense of what is popular for your interests. Leave relevant comments and like as much as you can without being perceived as a thirsty spammer. Follow as many of those posters as you can. (There are daily limits, so be aware that getting too aggressive might earn you a temporary suspension.) Produce as many high-quality posts as you can, using those same relevant tags. Interact with the comments left on your posts. Shout out to slightly bigger and slightly smaller accounts. Shoutouts are the closest thing to sharing Instagram has at the moment. You can shout out to whatever content you wish, but peer psychology effects will be greater if you're of a similar size...it'll help you grow faster.

**Pinterest.** Similar to Instagram, Pinterest's focus is on very visual elements. The main difference is user focus. Pinterest is for saving imagery more for personal use, whereas Instagram's default nature is to share with the world. The overlap is significant and some of the brands focusing on Pinterest (primarily food and fashion) are doing quite well, but don't write it off as a niche-only female-centric network. It is far more diverse. Curate your actionable content from your blog (if you have one). Appropriately name it for SEO purposes: pinboard name, recipe name, full description. Join as many relevant boards as possible. Create loooooong pins — don't just drop an image in a pin and move on, use infographics

such as recipes, how to, and statistics. Load it up like a mini-blog post. Follow relevant pinners and boards, engage with them, and you'll receive the same in kind.

**LinkedIn.** LinkedIn doesn't get nearly as much love as it should. It is a great place to build a professional audience. Growing an audience on LinkedIn is relatively easy, but they cap it at 30,000. When someone wants to connect with you, accept it unless it is obvious spam. This isn't Facebook and most people don't share frequent updates on LinkedIn, so there'll be less pressure to constantly share, so let people into your network. Write articles for LinkedIn Pulse. LinkedIn no longer accepts applications to become an influencer, but Pulse is the next best thing because the posts are very easy to share within LinkedIn, and thus become network expanding. LinkedIn groups are a thing. While the activity is barely an echo of what occurs on Facebook groups for comparable subjects, some can be gold, with members directly friending each other. It can be a hidden gold mine to vastly increase your network size.

**Twitter.** Want to reach as many people as possible the quickest? Twitter is still king for this item. It is the social network that skews more toward topic and interest than friend network. In this manner, if you're able to latch on to a trending topic, the potential for building a network fast is incredible. How can you increase your visibility on Twitter? Hashtags are even more important than on Instagram. Due to message size constraints, one is forced to use only the most relevant hashtags, so tag use tends to be a bit more focused. Like, follow, and retweet as much relevant content as you want initially from the core tag searches you identify. Once you have a little bit of an audience, start producing your own thought-provoking tweets. Quote tweets also count for this approach — their use has shifted from providing commentary to more public commenting in a new thread. Keep using relevant hashtags in this comment and you'll start to build up a following to those passionate about the subject.

**YouTube.** YouTube is a channel that many brands prefer, as you can really show off their products. It can also be the trickiest network because the time component of content production is the steepest. Even if you don't have a great camera presence, YouTube can still be used effectively by showing screen captures and product

images. Assuming you know how to create a channel and upload videos, how do you go about increasing your visibility here? Comment on relevant videos. The YouTube community is fragmented into producers and non-producers. If you're leaving thoughtful and intelligent comments on videos related to your subject material, you're going to draw attention, which is important for later. Quality matters. Quality videos are very much appreciated, leading to subscribers. Collaboration is massive on YouTube. The ability to engage with other influencers in the creative process is very synergistic and is how a lot of the major channels keep growth constant. When you're new, start by producing reaction videos. As you pick up an audience, you can then pitch other creators on ideas for collaborations.

## **ARE YOU READY FOR THE INFLUENCER EFFECT?**

Scott Cook, the founder and CEO of Intuit, said it best, “*A brand is no longer what we tell the consumer it is--it is what consumers tell each other it is.*” He’s hit the nail on the head and the numbers show it. Influencer marketing is relevant to every business. If you are a brand, it is your job to find and engage influencers for your business. If you are an influencer, it is your job to continuously grow your followers and provide them valuable content. When done effectively, brands win, influencers win, and customers win. In business, that is a beautiful thing.

I am here to make sure beautiful things happen with your business. My coaching program walks you through every step of the GEARS system described in *The Influencer Effect* book. This is a comprehensive done-with-you program tailored specifically for you and your business. If you would like to be considered as a coaching client, fill out the application at [bit.ly/coachingwithgreg](http://bit.ly/coachingwithgreg).