

# Finding and Engaging Influencers on Social Media

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Influencers are the people on social media who are interested in you, are vocal, and have a large network built to share their opinions. Winning an influencer's support for your brand can be magic, but it takes a strategic approach.

## Set clear goals and objectives to reach influencers



You need to know what you want to achieve in order to find the influencers to get you there. Your goal will be specific to your business. Some

examples:

- *Media coverage*
- *Exposure for an event*
- *Grow social following*
- *Increase reach for your online content*
- *There are more valid goals. You must decide on the goal before you can launch an influencer strategy.*

## Find influencers

A number of social media monitoring tools have functions which can help find influential users. Once you've typed in a relevant product category and/or a relevant topic, they'll show you a list of people that have mentioned it.

### **Options to try:**

- *Traackr*
- *Buzzsumo*
- *Brand24*
- *Mention*
- *Klout*

Another way to find influencers is to monitor your competitors and choose people who have mentioned your competitors. Chances are, if they're interested in their product/content, they'll be interested in yours too.

### **Research influencers**

Now that you have a list of influencers, you need to prioritize. Building relationships requires personalization and a lot of effort, so you want to narrow your list based on both your chances to succeed with the outreach and the potential results of the established partnership.

### **Consider:**

Do you already have a personal connection? A personal connection – even a minor one – can make things much easier for you. Check if you're connected on LinkedIn, Twitter, or any other social network. Don't forget offline world, too – maybe you've met at a conference, know someone who knows them personally. Check if they've already mentioned your brand and are, therefore, at least aware of you.

Are they already promoting your competitors? That means they're interested in your industry, have enough knowledge about it, and don't mind doing some promotion.

Is their community engaged? It is possible to buy followers, so several hundred thousand followers doesn't necessarily mean a user has influence. Make sure to check if the audience actively commenting, liking, or sharing the influencer's posts.

Who is in their community? If you're approaching an influencer who hangs out with other influencers, you'll likely be able to reach a much bigger audience.

### **Make contact**

Reach out to your target influencers. Keep in mind that you need to let them know what is in it for them. Find out what kind of benefit they want in exchange for talking about you.

Be sure to be authentic. This means no automation and no templates. The Internet is full of tools and message templates for approaching influencers. Chances are the influencer you're approaching can spot these easily. Take time to write an original message and send it from your actual account.

### **Keep these concepts in mind:**

People generally feel a need for reciprocity. If someone has done you a favor, you'll most likely feel obliged to somehow return it. Do something that benefits the influencers first. That will increase the chance that they feel obliged to do the same for you.

Start with small, simple engagement. Ask for something small (e.g., reading your post and sharing their opinion) and then asking for something bigger (e.g., mentioning your post in their blog).

Now you have a plan!

Your influencer marketing strategy starts with defining your goals and defining the ideal influencer based on those goals. Find the influencers, choose the ones to start with, and then reach out to them authentically.

Keep at it. Remember you are not the only one asking for their help.

**About the Author:** *Jill Kurtz founded Kurtz Digital Strategy to help clients see the communication potential of the newest trends and technologies. She is an expert at website strategy and redesign, social media planning, and developing exceptional content.*[/author]