

Three Reasons Brands Should Be Using Influencer Marketing



By *Lyle Stevens*, Co-founder and CEO, [Mavrck](#)

If you're on [social media](#), it's likely that you browse through your news feeds at least once a day. You skim what your friends are doing and sharing, but do you ever stop and click on the branded ads?

For brands today, it's not enough to push the same message out to all consumers via every channel and expect to make an impression. Whether you're a consumer goods brand, a brick and mortar retail store, an e-tailer or all of the above, one thing is certain; traditional ads are no longer enough to convert browsers to buyers.

When it comes to truly connecting with consumers on social, some brands are doing it exactly right – by engaging their most influential fans and followers to do it for them. With Americans spending more time on Facebook than they do on email and search engines combined, brands are investing more energy into generating fan content on Facebook and other social networks, particularly because users know and trust 80 percent of their Facebook connections – and look to those connections for recommendations on where to shop.

Here's where micro-influencers come in. These are the everyday social media users who are highly engaging about particular topics and have 500–5,000 followers on average. When one micro-influencer can get their friends to take action on a

branded campaign, it's far more effective than a celebrity endorsement or relying on traditional ads for sales conversion – and far less expensive, especially for small-medium sized businesses.

Here are the top three reasons why **brands** should be leveraging micro-influencers as part of their overall digital marketing strategy:

Build Trust

Trust is the basis of any good relationship and it's no different for brands. In fact, 81 percent of U.S. online consumers' purchase decisions are influenced by their friends' social media posts. Having current fans advocate the brand message is much more authentic and credible than paid news feed ads that are simply overlooked.

Unilever's CLEAR shampoo brand is just one example of how brands can use social media to spread trust among a network of users. With the help of MAVRCK's social influence marketing platform, CLEAR identified and activated relevant micro-influencers to generate content around the CLEAR seven-day healthy-hair challenge. Micro-influencers who shared content received a full-sized shampoo and conditioner, while their friends and followers were driven to download a coupon from influencer's posts. Nearly 1,000 micro-influencers created and shared posts that earned more than 11,000 engagements, with micro-influencers five-times more likely to recommend CLEAR to a friend after the campaign was over – a huge win.

Beat Ad Blocking

More than 198 million Internet users now deploy ad blockers to shut out advertisements, making the pool of people who view digital ads smaller and smaller. In fact, ad block users have risen 43 percent from last year and a whopping 41 percent of American Millennials use some form of ad blocking software.

While this improves the user's Web experience, for many brands the secondary effects of this technology are costing them billions of dollars. However, posts about a brand from micro-influencers are amplified. They can't be blocked by this technology and still appear within social news feeds – allowing brands to stay visible, relevant and engaged in the conversation.

Optimize SEO

Whether it be a Facebook post, tweet, blog post or product review, content generated by influencers is a huge part of organic online search results. Twenty-five percent of search results for the world's 20 largest brands are links to user-generated social media content. And here's where things come full circle; 51 percent of American consumers trust user-generated content over information on a company website.

In a time when advertisements are so prevalent on our phones, computers, tablets, TVs and everywhere else we look, it's easy to tune them out. This means that brands have to work extra hard to rise above the noise. On the other hand, when an objective micro-influencer talks about a brand, their audience is likely to take notice, which leads to more engagement and better search results.

For brands that don't find a way to engage with consumers beyond traditional advertising, the writing is on the wall. Influence marketing is an impactful, cost-effective way for businesses to thrive and empower their biggest weapon – their customers.

***About the Author:** Lyle Stevens is co-founder and CEO of Mavrck, an influence marketing platform that powers premier consumer brands to drive more sales on social. A self-described data nerd and hacker, Lyle drives product operations for the company, delivering value to numerous Fortune 500 consumer brands. A firm believer that data*

delivers dollars, Lyle has been specialized most of his career around helping drive tangible enterprise value from large social data sets.