

# INFLUENCER MARKETING: CREATING BRAND AND SALES

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by Ronn Torossian, CEO

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A recent study by Edelman, the largest PR firm in the world, showed that trust levels plummeted during the past year regarding media, government entities and officials, and business CEOs and leaders. That is one of many reasons why influencer marketing continues to be a fast-growing form of marketing, and one which builds brands and creates sales.

Influencers have earned a deep level of trust with their followers, who, in turn, share that with their contacts, building a faster and deeper bond of trust for new people as they are introduced to the influencer through their preferred form of contact. That's why Public Relations pros and marketers of all ilk should be finding the appropriate influencers to fit their brand and their target market. The right fit means the credibility influencers have built can be transferred to your brand faster and more effectively. Note the qualifier in those statements: the influencers need to be the right fit. Trying to force the brand to fit an influencer or an influencer to fit the target audience will just diminish the trust levels all the way around.

Let's review some important points...

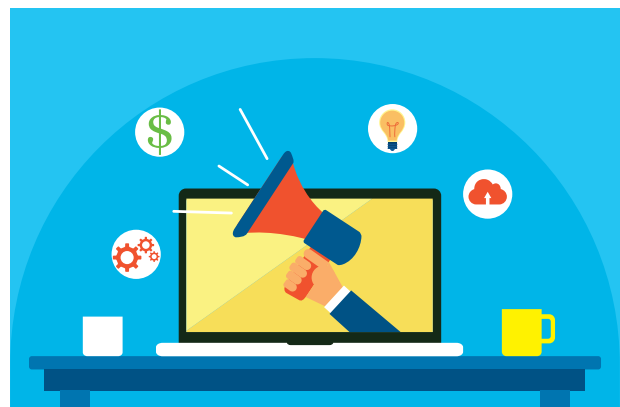
## TREAT INFLUENCERS LIKE CUSTOMERS

Ultimately you want your influencers to love your products or brand as a customer too. If

you need to, ignore the big names and look for micro-influencers – those people in your niche who are still building their base of followers, yet are uber-relevant.

Make a list and keep in contact with them; get them involved in the development stages to offer an advance tryout of products or services. Have an influencer event to bring them all together to meet and review or comment. Send them home with samples to try while also letting them you would love to have their input.

Don't stop after just one combined effort. You'll both get the most out of the affiliation if it is ongoing and constantly growing. Nurture those associations and figure out ways to help them that may not have much to do with your brand currently. You want to build trust and a reliable reputation with every one of your business associates – customers, influencers, staff, investors, and people just checking out what you have at the moment.



## MEASURE RESULTS

In almost all situations, you'll want to measure both quantitative and qualitative outcomes. Some of this is a numbers game (quantitative). When an influencer shares your information, how many unique views did they receive? How many likes, shares and comments? You will also want to measure how the influencer has impacted sales. There's also finding out how it may have impacted sales. However, the qualitative has more to do with brand reputation and whether or not it was enhanced. That's not going to be as easy to measure, but reviewing comments and asking people where they saw your products might give more information in that situation.



Also, before you ever start any campaign, whether with influencers or not, you should set your goals as to what you want to gain. Whether it's improving sales, increasing exposure to new people or building a deeper relationship with current customers, you cannot measure and determine success if you don't first understand where you want to go and what you want to achieve. Keep track of current trends and big data for measuring.

## EXAMPLES OF SUCCESSFUL INFLUENCER MARKETING

Let's look at a couple of examples, big and small, of how influencer marketing and PR can work for brands:

First, JetSmarter, a client of 5WPR, allows people to take seats on private planes for \$15,000 annually to & from locations including New York, Los Angeles, Chicago, Miami and more. They have customers who are CEOs and business executives, celebrities and consumers who travel frequently. Because of that, several of their clients are well-known to the general public and were happy to endorse the private jet app.

Check out the short [JetSmarter Video](#) to see highlights of 5W's influencer campaign. As you can see, none of the secured influencers wrote out an entire blog about JetSmarter, it's mostly just quick, one-line statements about how they feel about having the app available to them.

The video was attached to a campaign called "Who I Met," where JetSmarter members had the opportunity to fly with celebrity influencers like Jamie Foxx, Gerard Butler, Kim Kardashian, Emily Ratajowski, Jenny McCarthy and more. While on flight, members mixed and mingled with the celebrities. That allowed the brand to use the influencers' experience while the other customers went to their social media accounts and talked about

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what it was like to be on a private jet and sit next to Jamie Foxx or one of the others and how they enjoyed that “once-in-a-flight-time” opportunity.

The various approaches in the campaign also got a lot of media activity in print, television and online, hitting media sources such as *ELLE*, *Harper's Bazaar*, *The New York Post*, *People Magazine*, *US Weekly*, *TMZ TV*, *TMZ.com* and many more.

JetSmarter's influencer campaign has been a successful and large-scale one, but there are a lot of smaller companies that can use influencer marketing and PR understanding with in-house efforts, even if it's just a one-person show.

As an example, let's look at a small company called Little Sapling Toys. Little Sapling Toys started out about 10 years ago on Etsy.com, mainly selling wooden teething toys that were finished naturally without any toxins or other harmful products. Its makers were a husband and wife with a small baby and they wanted to be stay-at-home parents but still make a decent living. The husband, Nick, had a lot of experience with woodworking and natural restoration efforts, as well as being in charge of supplies for the military in the Middle East for a couple of years. The wife, Kimber, had design and artistic skills.

Together, the couple created teething toys in the shape of the states, animals, dinosaurs, guitars ... just about anything. Over time, as their oldest child grew and two more came along, they started adding toys, growth charts, and education aids – all of them made from naturally finished woods. Ultimately within a few years, they became the top toy seller on Etsy. That didn't just happen because they had a great product, although that helped a lot. They attended a lot of trade shows, expos and craft events and met a lot of people there, some in closely-affiliated industries and others with products that didn't seem to have much in common. But they joined together with different people on numerous occasions, participating in giveaways of their products by other craft-related businesses or small business owners.



They got write-ups as one of the top up-and-coming mompreneur businesses on Forbes.com and Tori Spelling's blog at [torispelling.com](http://torispelling.com) in a post about children and family naming one of their toys as an annual pick for its list of best kid products to have. They've been featured in several magazines including

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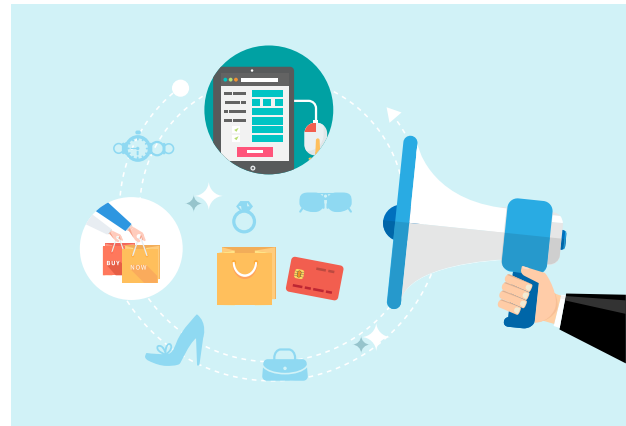
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Country Living magazine and *Mothering Magazine* as well. Most of those came out of their connections with other influencers they often work with on mutual campaigns. They ship all over the world and have grown organically. Their use of influencers and their being influencers in their business follows many of the practices listed in this article, and it's allowed them to live their dreams all while teaching their children about the value of hard work and innovation.

## WHY SHOULD YOU INCORPORATE INFLUENCER PR AND MARKETING NOW

Influencer-related and word of mouth sales happen about twice as often as those generated by paid advertising, according to [Mckinsey.com](http://Mckinsey.com), and those customers are about 37 percent more likely to remain with the brand. That's one of the best reasons to start finding a good influencer fit for your brand.

Traditional advertising is losing much of its effectiveness; television as we once knew it has less power as consumers turn more to streaming options, like Netflix and Amazon Prime, while social media's influence is growing rapidly, especially since so much of it can be accessed through smartphones. Since social media platforms are so prevalent, consumers are not as easily maneuvered through traditional advertising either. Buyers want to have a closer connection with their favorite brands.



Influencer PR and marketing comes in many shapes and forms - many influencers want to review and comment on products without being paid so they can give an unbiased opinion. Brands that have excellent products win with this and often it only costs the price of one of their products, or maybe several of them that the influencer can use as a giveaway promo. Just consider how many brands got national recognition when Oprah would do giveaways to her audience, especially on her annual "Favorite Things" episode. If a brand had something Oprah had and her people loved, then simply providing enough of the item for her studio audience to each take one home free and could easily multiply annual sales levels.

The law of supply and demand means influencers, a large and little-tapped group, will provide a great bang for your buck. Right now, few brands are using influencers or SnapChat and Periscope, so getting in early on these before others flood the sites is a chance to get ahead of the competition.

CONTACT US: 212.999.5585

EMAIL: [info@5wpr.com](mailto:info@5wpr.com)



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## SAVVY CUSTOMERS

According to [NYTimes.com](http://NYTimes.com), most consumers in the U.S. are exposed to about 5,000 ads each day. Think about how many ads you see while scrolling through Facebook, your email inbox or even during your commute. Almost everything carries an ad or a logo. Truth be told, we are so overexposed to traditional advertising that many people barely even see it, even when ads are right in the middle of a page or screen. When the consumer is irritated by ads, it doesn't bode well for advertising success.

However, influencer and word-of-mouth PR and marketing often get people asking questions about how they can get one for themselves. A good example of this would be a satisfied customer who just bought one of your products. They love it. They take a picture of it and post it on their social media accounts, and people want to know things like how much it cost, where can it (or similar items) be found, do the sellers deliver or how long does it take between ordering and having it at your doorstep? That is so much better as a result than antagonizing people and it didn't cost the company a penny for the glowing reference.

## SEARCH ENGINE OPTIMIZATION (SEO INFLUENCER MARKETING)

The more articles by influencers, the more

likely your brand will win with SEO. The Social Media Revolution recently estimated that such posts make up about 25 percent of search engine results and are found relating to the top 20 brands in the world.

The great thing about that is almost everything on the internet — websites, pictures posted on social media, likes, shares, comments and more — can be tracked, and that means results can be looked at. Assessments can be made about great choices, good ones or the ones that just didn't work at all. Changes can then be made and performance levels can be measured to see what worked and what didn't.

## KNOWING GOALS HELPS CHOOSE AN INFLUENCER PLAN

Creating an influencer marketing campaign means some knowledgeable planning.

Some points that should be considered:

- Who are your target audiences and customers?
- What are the desired outcomes and results?
- What type of information do you want to present? Is there a way to do that while highlighting the unique attributes of the brand?
- Who are the key influencers in your niche? Which influencers do you believe would most enjoy your product or service?

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Have you previously started a connection process with any of them?

- Have you made your staff and the influencers aware of the desired outcome and the focus you prefer? Have you allowed them to be part of the planning process?
- What is the plan for measuring results?
- What are the best media and social media platforms to move company goals forward for now and in the future?
- Are you kicking off the campaign with an event for influencers to experience your product? Are you showing them how to use it, its special qualities and different ways to use it that wouldn't be within the first couple of obvious ways to do so?

There are more possibilities that you should consider just depending on what you offer, but those questions are a good start.

## IT'S TIME TO TAKE ACTION

5WPR excels at influencer marketing.  
Contact us directly to engage a campaign.

CONTACT US: 212.999.5585

EMAIL: [info@5wpr.com](mailto:info@5wpr.com)



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