

11 Things You Should Know About Influencer Marketing

Table of Contents

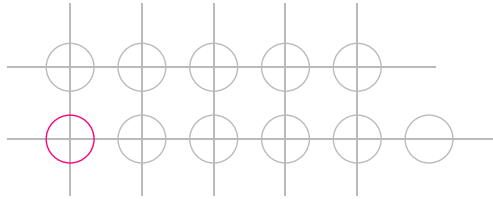
1	<u>Introduction</u>	13	<u>Niche Influencers Often Create the Most Engagement</u>
2	<u>Influencer Programs Must Have Clear Goals</u>	15	<u>Authentic Content Creates Trust</u>
4	<u>Advocate vs. Influencer: What's the Difference?</u>	16	<u>Influencer Marketing Facilitates Earned Media</u>
5	<u>What to Look for In an Influencer</u>	17	<u>Online Activity Is A Core Part Of The Decision-Making Process</u>
7	<u>Influencers Are Brands... Treat Them Like Business Partners</u>	18	<u>People are Already Talking Online... Be Part of the Conversation</u>
9	<u>Activate The Creation Of High Quality, Provocative Content</u>	19	<u>Next Steps</u>
11	<u>Reach Is Not The Most Important Metric</u>		



Introduction

Influencer marketing is the practice of working with influential people online to spread the word about your products and services through social media and blogs. However, running a successful influencer program involves more than just asking these people to write a positive review for your brand or product. To be successful, you need to know these eleven best practices.

Influencers :
Mike and Megan Gilger
The Fresh Exchange



Influencer Programs Must Have Clear Goals

The first step in building an effective influencer program is to determine what the program goals are. An influencer marketing campaign without clear goals is a recipe for failure. Brands must determine what they are looking to achieve by working with influencers. They need to outline success metrics, such as:

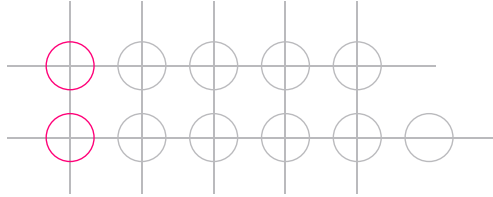
Awareness
generated for a
new program
(measured in impressions)

Traffic driven
to a website
(measured in clicks)

Increase in
fan base
(measured in follows)

Quality of
content
(measured by shares)

Level of
Engagement
(measured by comments)



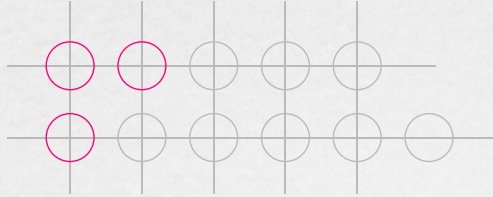
Advocate vs. Influencer: What's the Difference?

Brands often mistake brand advocates—those who are avid fans of their products—for influencers. While you can certainly rely on an advocate to speak positively about a brand, in order to truly rally consumers, brands must partner with people who can actually influence other people's purchase decisions.

For brands, working with people who are influential online is a great way to increase brand awareness and drive customer engagement. These influencers amplify the

brand-consumer relationship because they have earned their followers' trust. This enables them to deliver branded messaging that their audiences are willing and eager to consume.

Traditional banner or display ads must capture readers' attention by distracting them from other content. In contrast, influencer messaging blends seamlessly into the content that drew readers to a site in the first place.



What To Look For In An Influencer

Marketers are beginning to understand that leveraging the influence of bloggers and powerful social media personalities can maximize the ROI of their digital marketing strategy. But for many industry professionals, accurately identifying the right influencers to activate remains a challenge.

In order to select the best digital influencers, seek out the following qualities:



High Quality Content

Focus your efforts on people who produce authentic content that resonates with audiences, prompts discussion, and is shared across social platforms.

Engagement with Their Audience

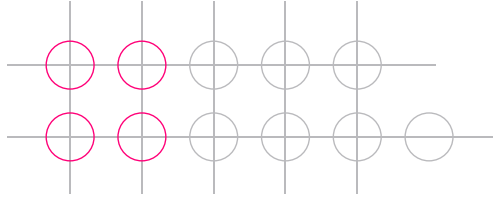
Look for influencers whose content inspires interaction from readers. This can take many forms, but some of the most recognizable are comments, questions, re-posts, and shares to social media.

A Presence Across Platforms

To maximize the impact of your influencer marketing efforts, seek out influencers who maintain an active presence across multiple social channels.

Audience Demographics

An influencer's personal attributes do not necessarily reflect those of their audience, so don't limit your evaluation to these characteristics. Instead, consider the nature of the influencer's content. For example, if you're targeting moms with children between the ages of 1-3, choose bloggers who talk about parenting that age group over bloggers who have toddlers of their own.



Influencers Are Brands... Treat Them Like Business Partners

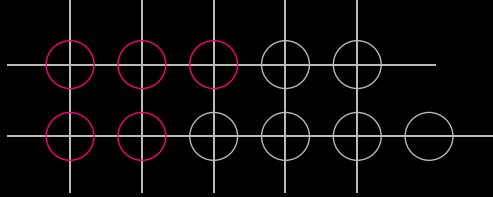
It is crucial to remember that influencer marketing is a business relationship between the brand and the influencer. Brands are looking for authentic and engaging content to rally consumers around a particular brand, campaign, event, etc. Influencers are seeking opportunities to generate revenue while producing content that reflects their own passions and experience.

A brand-influencer relationship is mutually beneficial—an exchange of money for the provocation of brand awareness, consideration, and preference.

In order for the relationship to be successful:

Share **program goals** with influencers and provide them with the tools they need to achieve them.

Clearly define content requirements, but leave room for **creativity and personalization**.



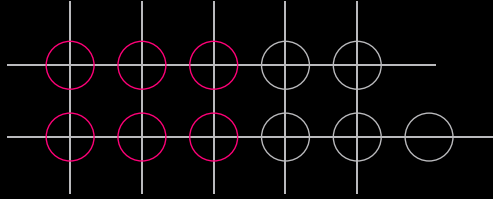
Activate The Creation Of High-Quality, Provocative Content

Brands often assume that consumer conversations about products mimic the commercial tone of traditional advertisements. In reality, the discussion is much more casual and driven by personal experiences, both positive and negative. For example, an online publisher would never authentically write, “Buy it today!” or use a brand’s trademark in their own content. Use these best practices when crafting an Influencer Marketing program:

Create brand messaging and calls-to-action that feel native to authentic influencer content.

Allow the influencer to tell a story and connect your product or service to something personal.

Sponsored content should not disrupt discussions that are already developing online; instead, they should contribute to them.

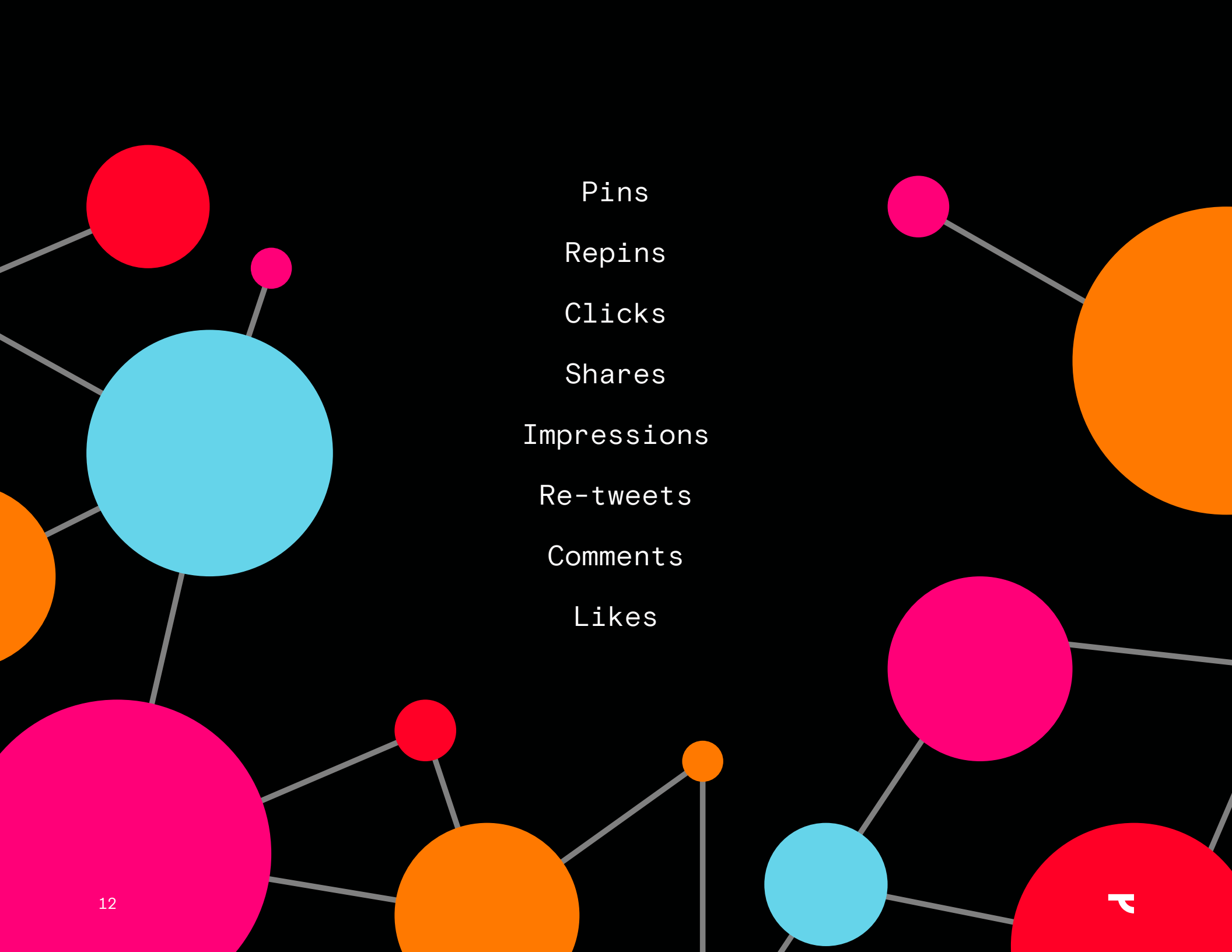


Reach is Not the Most Important Metric

Many brands evaluate influencer marketing campaigns based solely on **reach**—the number of people that viewed the content. However, **engagement**—an influencer’s ability to move their readers to action—is a much stronger indication of success.

Seek out signs that demonstrate readers’ interactions with content. When people are engaged, they are more likely to comment, share, and pass on their thoughts about a product to their peers. These actions show that readers have actively connected with the content and absorbed its message rather than just passively glancing over it.

To measure engagement, look for:



Pins

Repins

Clicks

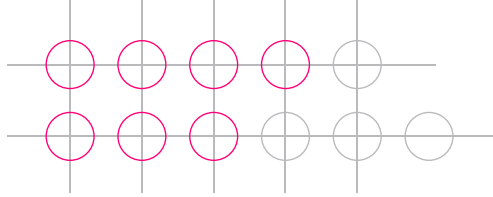
Shares

Impressions

Re-tweets

Comments

Likes



Niche Influencers Often Create The Most Engagement

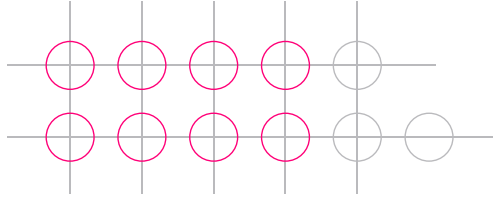
Influencers whose content appeals to a wide variety of interests and topics are often able to build large followings. However, influencers who focus on a specific niche usually drive better engagement from followers.

Why?

Because people who follow niche influencers do so out of strong personal dedication to the subject. As a result, they're more attentive to the influencer and more invested in their content, which means they're more receptive to messaging within it.



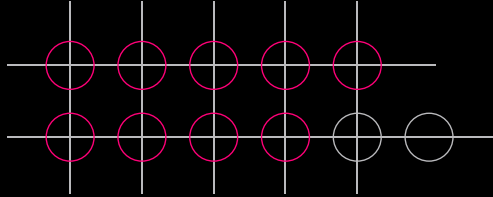
For example, let's say your brand makes high-end record players. The most efficient influencer marketing program would select an influencer with 1000 followers who writes about record players rather than someone with 10,000 followers who blogs about stereo equipment. Although the former's audience is smaller, the brand message will be highly relevant to them and they'll be more likely to engage with it.



Authentic Content Creates Trust

People gravitate toward digital influencers because they value the content that they create. Developing strategic relationships with these influencers allows brands to incorporate their messaging into that content, and share it with consumers through a trusted source.

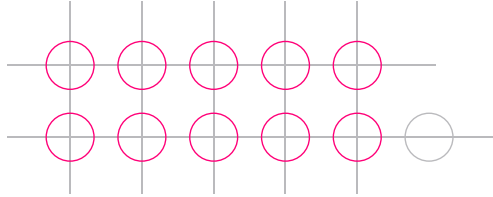
To make the most of this opportunity, brands must allow influencers the ability to stay true to themselves when working on sponsored content. Insincere or irrelevant content will rapidly erode an influencer's power by reducing their followers' trust in them.



Influencer Marketing Facilitates Earned Media

If brands want to be relevant to consumers, they must approach media as a way to attract, engage, and convert prospects. That means meeting consumers with content they care about and trust. Working with influencers is an effective way to fuel a conversation about a brand using trustworthy content.

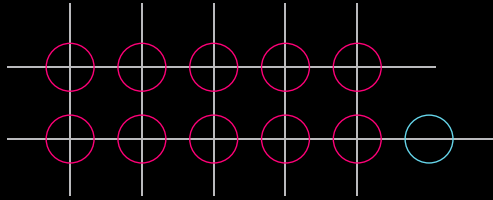
Since influencer marketing results in engagement, it also results in earned media. Influencers are experts at generating discussions online, so the content they create on behalf of a brand is talked about, shared, and reposted. That is earned media. The value of earned media is that it is trusted more by consumers. When influencers write about their own experiences and share compelling content about a brand, it can have a dramatic effect on their audience.



Online Activity is a Core Part of the Decision Making Process

In today's digital world, people can access information about products long before they reach a brand site. They turn to their peers online for recommendations about products, they look for information through search engines, and they read product reviews. According to a recent TechnoratiMedia study, online activity plays a very important role in the decision-making process. Blogs represent the third most influential resource for consumers looking to make a purchase¹. Therefore, it makes sense for brands to partner with bloggers and other social media influencers. They have the ability to share product and brand information that shapes purchase decisions.

¹ 2013 Digital Influence Report, TechnoratiMedia, <http://technorati.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/06/tm2013DIR1.pdf>



People are Already Talking Online...Be Part Of The Conversation

Social media has changed the way brands interact with consumers by fostering an environment where consumers have immediate access to information. Through social media, people gather input about brands and products and then make purchase decisions based on what they discover. Successful brands leverage social media to stay connected with consumers by actively participating in this online dialogue.

However, advertising is not the same as being part of the conversation. Instead, ads distract from it, pulling people's focus away from what's important to them. Working with influencers allows brands to add to the conversation rather than derailing it.

What's the next step?

By utilizing these best practices from TapInfluence, you'll increase your brand's credibility while building goodwill and trust with potential customers. Incorporating the expert voices of industry influencers engages your audience, highlights brand integrity, and helps further your marketing goals.

Want to learn more about how leading brands are influencing their audiences?

[Click here to get a personalized TapInfluence demo today.](#)

Visit our [Influencer Marketing resource center](#) for educational videos, webinars, ebooks, and success stories.

To learn more about TapInfluence's influencer marketing [platform](#):

Email: Info@tapinfluence.com

Call: 720-726-4074

Visit: www.tapinfluence.com

