

THE IMPACT OF

*Identifying  
&  
Measuring*

INFLUENCERS IN MARKETING

## Identifying and Measuring the Impact of Influencers in Marketing

Social media has given consumers an extremely powerful platform for sharing their voice. As a result, consumers today want to be heard, just as much as brands want their message to be heard by consumers. In fact, the most powerful brand messages often come directly from consumers, not from the brand themselves. This shift has not gone unnoticed. The world's largest brands have recognized how beneficial it can be to engage in dialogue with their customers rather than push a message at them. However, in the world of social media, some consumers have louder voices that reach much broader audiences than others. These people have come to be known as “influencers”. Online influence is a subject frequently discussed and debated today. Nearly everyone has their own idea for how influence should be defined and who should be considered an influencer. Despite that, everyone agrees that connecting with the people who can drive others to take action is an important marketing tactic. This guide explores how to identify, engage and measure the impact of partnering with influencers in marketing campaigns.

### What is an Influencer?

Although celebrities have been tapped by marketers for their voice for nearly a century, social media has given rise to a new generation of people with significant influence. These are people that are passionate about certain topics and have invested time to grow and develop trust with a significant following on their social networks. As a result they have the ability to influence others on these topics



or areas of interest. For our purposes, we're focusing on how to curate relationships with the “citizen influencers” – regular people with a large share of voice on social media, who have the potential to drive brand awareness and advocacy.

Companies looking to increase their online presence and build consumer trust often find themselves turning to this group of online “elites” to build brand advocacy. These social media power users have the ability to strengthen brands' reputations through word-of-mouth campaigns targeted to their own online following. Influencers are important to brands who want to provide a personalized experience with their product, but who don't have the resources

to reach out to each social media user or customer individually. The relationship is mutually beneficial; as the influencer endorses the brand's credibility, the influencer's influence rises because of their affiliation with the brand.

We asked Jess Estrada, founder of [Fresh Jess Media](#) to weigh in on the definition of an "influencer". As a social media strategist and freelance writer, Jess focuses on helping brands, small businesses, and non-profits build their online presence. She explains:



*"Influencer" is such a mainstream buzzword nowadays. It's generally used in reference to people with significant networks (followers, readers, etc.) who can speak to a broad range of products and services with the ability to sway opinions in their favor."*

It all depends on the relationship the brand has built with that influencer.

## Earning Engagement Through Influencers

Now let's consider why the topic of influence and influencers has become so highly discussed and debated in recent years. Technology has significantly changed the purchasing behavior of consumers by bringing a world of information to their fingertips. 74% of consumers rely on social media to inform their purchasing decisions (ODM Group) and 40% of Millennials use their smartphones or tablets while shopping in stores.



In fact, today, 70-90% of the buyer's journey is completed prior to engaging with a vendor ([Forbes](#)). The adoption of technology initially caused a rise in traditional advertising as marketers attempted to reach a new generation of consumers online. However, it also quickly became a challenge for marketers for several reasons. First, consumers developed "banner blindness" and stopped seeing the ads being pushed at them. Second, organic reach on Facebook has been steadily declining. Social@Ogilvy estimated that by February 2014 organic reach was hovering as low as 6%, a decline of 49% from the previous October ([Social@Ogilvy](#)).

These changes have forced brands to reconsider traditional "push-based" marketing strategies and seek out "engagement-based" approaches. One of the key drivers for this shift is that while consumers have begun to tune out traditional ads, they have also become increasingly connected and now more than ever before are turning to their trusted networks to share and gain recommendations. Nielsen found that 90% of consumers trust peer recommendations, while only 33% trust ads. For brands to reach consumers in this new reality, they need the help of influencers ([Nielsen](#)).

By engaging influencers, brands are able to generate earned media, which has quickly become recognized as the most effective form of media in reaching today's consumers. In fact, 90% of marketers say Earned Media will have a significant impact on their strategy by 2014 (Adobe/eConsultancy). What makes it so effective? Earned media addresses many of the challenges brands face today in breaking through the noise online and driving not only awareness, but also purchase intent down the line. Studies have found that earned media drives 4x the brand lift of paid media and 51% of Millennials are more likely to be influenced by earned media ([BazaarVoice 2012](#)).

Earned media is the result of the most powerful content creators online (aka Citizen Influencers) sharing their experiences and lending their voice to a brand. It's what happens when brands stop pushing messages out to their audience and begin listening and engaging their audience to help share their message instead. Building influence and connecting with influencers has become an essential part of today's marketing strategies. Yet, getting started can be easier said than done. This is why, just as consumer behavior online has evolved, so too have the marketing technologies that support them.



## How to Identify an Influencer

There's a lot of debate in the social media marketing industry about working with influencers. The benefit of influencers lies in their large audience base and their potential for message amplification is huge. Citizen influencers are more trusted than celebrity endorsements because their recommendations are much more personal. They often have some relationship to their audience, and their audience feels they can trust in the influencer's opinion.



So what makes an influencer? How does a brand identify influencers within their industry to help drive word of mouth campaigns? These questions are not easy to answer because an influencer might look very different depending on the brand, the industry or the campaign. The general consensus is that they are users who have a greater-than-average share of voice, impact, or reach within a certain market segment.

SO WHAT MAKES AN

# *Influencer?*

REACH. RELEVANCE. RESONANCE.

Brands should be able to identify influencers by the following attributes:

## Reach

Influencers are people who reach a brand's target social media audience – whether for the overall brand, or a single campaign. An influencer's reach is important in defining the influencer's ability to speak to market segments a brand wishes to target. However, the value of their reach is not a function of the size of their audience, but more that audience's value to the brand. Influencers may have the right kind of reach for a brand based on their popularity or their proximity to the audience segment.

## Relevance

An Influencer's relevance is a function of their alignment with the brand – whether it's the creation of content that's relevant to the brand or the brand's audience. Influencers develop relevance through their affiliation or advocacy with the brand's industry. They often have a certain expertise on a topic that makes them an authority on a piece of content or a topic. Their audience segments likely trust the content influencers produce – whether positive or negative.

## Resonance

An influencer's resonance is a function of their ability to create or engage with relevant content or audiences that a brand finds valuable. The scope of both content and audiences in this regard is broad.

Influencers adhere to these basic three rules, but there's often more that comes into play. For example, the idea of independence among influencers has become a big topic among clothing retailers. The influencer may be seen as more trustworthy if they are acting independently of the brand by disclosing benefits they may receive for working with a brand. Many influencers are trendsetters, adopting digital trends and social networking platforms long before their widespread usage. Influencers are also often people who play some sort of social role – they're often some sort of activist or leader within their community, which helps contribute to the authority they hold. There's a big difference between brand advocates and brand influencers. What makes an advocate? Jess explains:

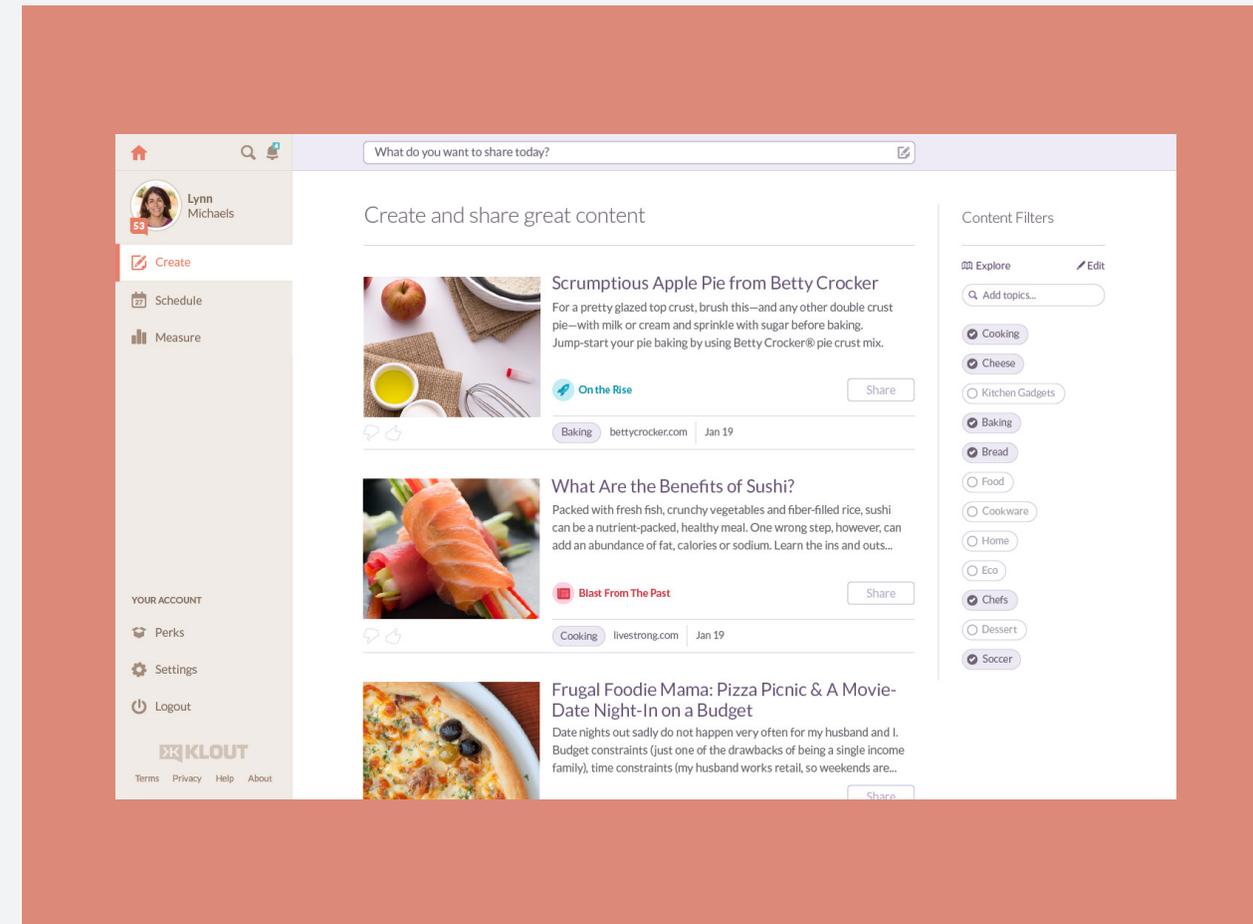
*When I see a blogger or social media user post numerous times about a brand, I'd consider them a brand advocate - but I know that while some are compensated, not all are. Some just really want to share about that brand because they believe in it.*

## Klout's Influence Metric

One way to measure the reach, relevance and resonance of influencers is by using Klout. Founded in 2008, Klout is a pioneer in measuring social influence at scale. The company was built around the mission of helping people be discovered for their passions. Klout's best known influence metric is the Klout Score, a numerical value between 1-100 that combines social, search and real-world data to calculate the impact that people have online. While at times controversial, the Klout Score remains one of the most advanced online influence algorithms deployed at scale. The Klout Score is an easy way to understand the reach and resonance of an influencer.

In addition to the Klout Score, Klout has developed an industry leading topical analysis system to provide important context about the interest areas that people have influence in. The Klout Topics system represents the relevance of an influencer.

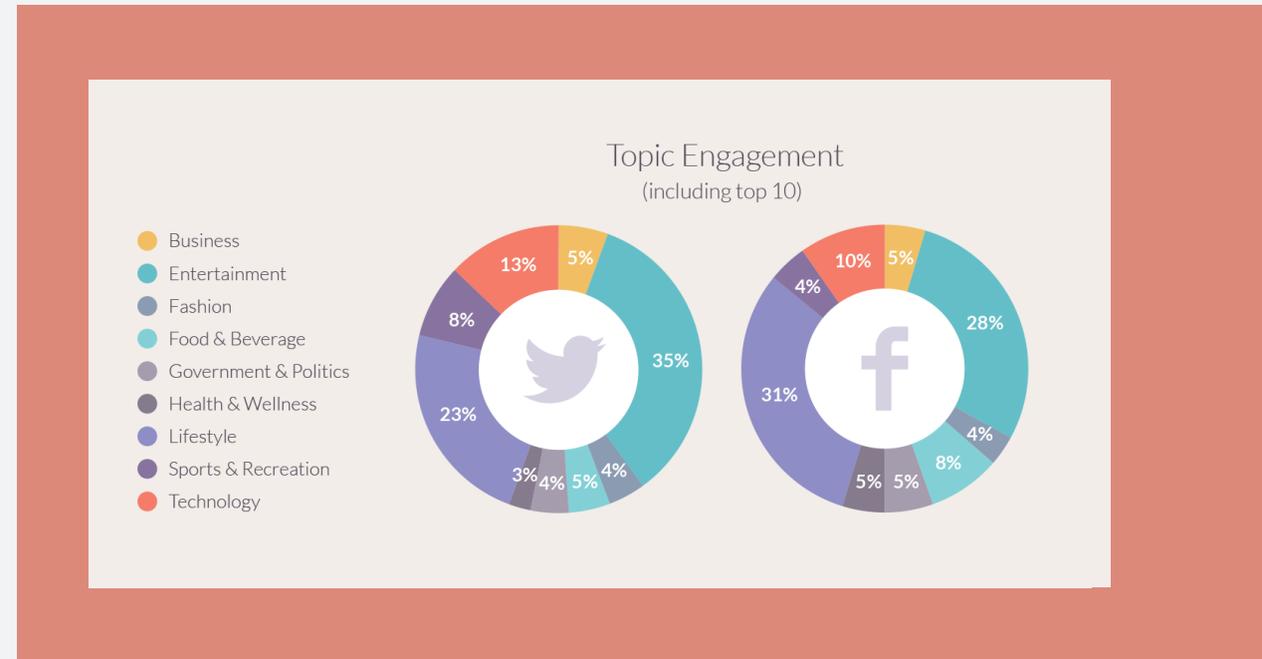
Klout continues to evolve the platform regularly; most recently launching a suite of tools to help users not only measure their influence, but improve it through content creation. The combination of Klout Score, Topics and content creation provide a unique and extremely effective way for marketers to tap into the most powerful distribution channel in existence - people.



Let's begin by understanding the Klout Score and how it can be used to measure influence. A Klout Score represents a user's ability to drive engagement across social media networks. Over 450 signals shape the score, including signals from 8 social networks, search actions, offline actions and human perspective. Scores can range from 1-100. Celebrities typically have Klout Scores above 80, with citizen influencers falling in the 50-70 range. A Klout Score of 53 represents the top 25% of all social media influencers and 65 represents the top 10%.

While historically Klout has been known for the Klout Score, Klout's platform also understands and can segment based on topical influence as well. Klout's custom Topic ontology is comprised of three levels and includes combined interests, skills and products to provide a level of specificity greater than other industry methodologies. So while the Klout Score represents a user's reach and resonance by showing their capacity to drive engagement across social media as a whole. Topics give insight into the relevance of content. For example, what content the user is more likely to engage with based on their interests. This combination of reach, resonance and relevance enables Klout to provide best-in-industry audience targeting. Marketers gain visibility into influence not only based on engagement, but also interests across over 12 social networks.

They are able to understand which types of content users are most likely to engage with across networks in order to optimize reach and increase engagement with campaigns. As part of the Klout Perk's program brands can also add demographical and geographical data to the list of targeting criteria to further improve the identification of key influencers and ensure optimal engagement with their campaign message.



*Who?* With this background on what influence is, and how to measure it, the key question is how do you find these elusive influencers?

## IDENTIFY INFLUENCERS

Using a social influence metrics tool can help you discover influential users that have authority for specific keywords and topics. Both Klout and Simply Measured offer influencer identification solutions. For example, the Simply Measured Twitter Audience Analysis pulls information to show you your followers broken down by certain demographics.

@ATTCustomerCare's Most Influential Followers							
Top Influencers Sorted By: Followers							
Username	Followers	Following	Followers-to-Following	Tweets	Listed	Klout Score	Topics
BlackBerry	4,062,467	3,530	1,150.8	21,242	15,161	81.1	web browsers, verizon droid, gadgets, multimedia, technology
DJKingAssassin	3,050,423	439,029	6.9	73,906	3,543	72.7	music, djs, hip hop, entertainment, detroit
jasonderulo	2,715,513	10,346	262.5	9,881	9,634	83.1	celebrities, music, mtv, never say never, television
SouthwestAir	1,639,751	10,486	156.4	17,143	13,168	88.9	travel and tourism, airlines, branding, business, aviation
BlackBerryHelp	1,433,675	36,882	38.9	48,331	9,250	71.1	bars, gps, blogging, porsche, hong kong
windowsphone	1,249,055	382	3,269.8	34,510	8,168	89.1	technology, microsoft, smartphones, business, tumblr
AmyJoMartin	1,180,743	25,109	47.0	16,484	6,124	64.5	social media, marketing, entrepreneurship, sports, celebrities

For example, you can see which users have the top Klout score, the highest followers, or the highest ratio of followers to how many people that user follows. The report even highlights topics that the users have authority in based on Klout metrics. The Klout Influencers & Advocates report shows similar data breaking down the user's reach and amplification data.

Top Influencers & Advocates Mentioning @burberry						
Sorted By: Klout Score						
Username	Klout Score	True Reach	Amplification	Network	Followers	Recent Tweet
FastCompany	94	257,006	10	58	842,086	RT @FastCoDesign: "Burberry's Culture of Creativity" at Innovati Design, featuring @Burberry CEO @AngelaAhrendts: <a href="http://fast.co/10W55Kb">http://fast.co/10W55Kb</a> ( <a href="http://www.fastcodesign.com/section/innovati-design-reference">http://www.fastcodesign.com/section/innovati-design-reference</a> ) #Innovation
ComplexMag	94	326,628	9	55	287,724	@Burberry launches the perfect rockstar cologne you've been v with its new Brit Rhythm cologne <a href="http://cmlx.it/15D93pT">http://cmlx.it/15D93pT</a> ( <a href="http://www.complex.com/r.php?">http://www.complex.com/r.php?</a>
Telegraph	93	226,082	9	57	311,087	#LFW: A homegrown @Burberry collection fused the sexy and tt protective   @LlDailyTel <a href="http://fashion.telegraph.co.uk/article/TMG10313375/London-F-week-Burberry-continues-2014.html">http://fashion.telegraph.co.uk/article/TMG10313375/London-F-week-Burberry-continues-2014.html</a> (Contul) <a href="http://t.co/1u">http://t.co/1u</a>
RCARecords	92	14,274	11	42	131,843	RT @Burberry: British musician @TomPeterOdell performing liv York tonight <a href="http://pic.twitter.com/kTBZPOXYE">http://pic.twitter.com/kTBZPOXYE</a> ( <a href="http://twitter.com/Burberry/status/377266228613484544/ph">http://twitter.com/Burberry/status/377266228613484544/ph</a>
vogue magazine	92	103,210	23	58	2,875,116	Like what you saw in Cynthia Smith's #5Days5Looks1Girl? #ShopV her @burberry trench coat and more: <a href="http://rstyle.me/n/pah5">http://rstyle.me/n/pah5</a>
thedailybeast	92	159,346	9	55	622,385	@Burberry is in full bloom for 2014 <a href="http://thebeast/1eV32wh">http://thebeast/1eV32wh</a> <a href="http://www.thedailybeast.com/articles/2013/09/16/burberry-spring-summer-2014-coming-up-rose10.html">http://www.thedailybeast.com/articles/2013/09/16/burberry-spring-summer-2014-coming-up-rose10.html</a>   <a href="http://t.co/1u">http://t.co/1u</a>

Another example of how to identify influencers is working with an influence platform directly. The Klout Perks program delivers full-service campaigns that enable marketers to target and directly engage with influencers based on Klout Score, Klout Topics, as well as demographic and geographic criteria such as age, sex and location. Customers also get insight into cross-network activity to know where influencers are engaging the most and what types of content their audience is most likely to engage with.

You can also find influencers directly from the social media platforms themselves. Using Twitter as our example, performing a search for certain keywords will return a wealth of helpful information in determining whom to follow. You can see top users, top retweets, and lists of users tagged in lists related to your specified keywords.

Take note of which influencers already engage with your content – because they're already engaging, this group has a high value for your business. These are people who post regularly on social networks, engage often with their followers, have a high ratio of followers to people they've followed, and often have a high post count. Look at how they talk about or engage with your content, monitoring their engagement by sentiment and by the actions their engagement drives. Answer the questions: When? Where? What?

*When?* When are these influencers online? Which time zone are they in and is that a time zone you're targeting? Are they online during the workday, or do they appear prominently after hours? Answering these questions will help you target content during times your influencers and their audiences are active, increasing the chance your content will be seen.

*Where?* Where do your influencers interact with your content and where does that have the most impact? Your influencers very likely have a following in more than one area, so it's good practice to find out which social networks they spend their time on, and where they promote your content. Engage them on the networks where they're the most active and on the channels where they promote your content.

*What?* What content is driving engagement among your influencers? This is one of the most important components of your influencer strategy. If content is attracting the attention of influencers, that content has a high virality potential. Create more of it that influencers will promote to their followers, because those followers are very likely also interested in that same type of content.

Consider both influencers that have an affiliation with your business, and influencers who are acting as brand advocates independent of your business. Both groups have the power to build brand advocacy in different ways.

#### IDENTIFY TOPICS THAT INTEREST YOUR CURRENT AUDIENCE

If you've spent any time analyzing your current audience, you probably have a general idea of their interests, their needs, and why they look to your brand for answers. Knowing their demographic details helps you target content that speaks to their age group, their geo-location, and even demographics like home ownership. Use this kind of data to determine which influencers fit into your target audience personas. Knowing who these influencers will both strengthen your engagement with these influencers, and help you identify other possible target audiences you may be missing out on.

When you're analyzing your audience, look into their topics of interest. Having a clear picture of what interests these influencers will help you personalize content that speaks to both these influencers and their followers.

How do you identify these topics? Look at your current audience – especially your influencers - and analyze their post content. Keywords in your influencers' profiles, their followers' profiles, and their post content hold clues to topics that have the potential to build audience engagement.

For example, examining your influencers' Tweets will give you insight into recurring topics that they're interested in. Furthermore, looking at the content your influencers produce and share, that earns retweets and mentions will show you which of those topics resonate with their audience. This gives you insight into how they captured that audience in the first place, and will give you an idea of how that interaction has built their status as an influencer.

For marketers looking for a more comprehensive solution, Klout has an industry leading topical analysis system that provides highly effective targeting by providing context around the interest areas that people have influence in. We'll discuss Klout's influence metrics further in an upcoming section.

### FIND POTENTIAL INFLUENCERS THROUGH AUDIENCE ANALYSIS

We talked about analyzing your current audience, and your influencers in particular, but it's important not to forget competitive intelligence in your influencer strategy. Besides looking at general topic influencers – through

Klout, organic search, and the social media channels themselves – you'll want to take stock of your competitors' network of influencers. These are people who have access to target audiences similar to yours, and they have a large amount of engagement with that audience. Find out how many influencers they have, and whether these people have an affiliation with their business. If you find influencers who have no affiliation with the business, look at their content, their profile information and their audiences to pinpoint reasons they engage with the brand.

Your influencers may have project collaborators who also have their own sphere of influence. By finding out who these collaborators are and studying their interests, you may be able to glean information that you didn't find among your own audience. In addition, you may find that you want to consider these collaborators in your quest to find influencers.

Think outside of the box when it comes to influencer engagement. Consider Jetblue and American Express for example. The two companies have partnered together to offer specials to customers who use both. As a result, each brand has become a brand advocate for the other, leveraging the power of their combined social media presences to build brand affinity across a larger audience.





Jetblue also excels at building brand advocacy among employees on social networks, offering incentives to employees through their social profiles. Thinking internally and externally has helped them create well-recognized social media handles.

### SET GOALS

As you go through this process of analyzing current influencers, tracking keywords, and assessing other audiences, note any areas where there's a gap in your strategy – whether it's keywords you're not yet targeting, topics or content that you should be producing, or other audiences you haven't considered. Then, set goals to cover those gaps with a timeline of deliverables and a plan for measurement.

Your goals should mirror industry benchmarks for audience growth and engagement – whether or not your industry already accesses influencers as a means of developing both. The point in developing relationships with influencers is to augment your current strategy. Remember, partnering with influencers is often like a business venture. Many influencers – in the fashion world for example - have policies in place to help protect their brand image and integrity to maintain their influential status.

Think about what your influencers might be able to provide for your company: are you trying to boost traffic or conversions? Are you looking for created content, or would you want to create guest content for your influencer’s blog for example?

When you have these goals, create metrics around them that will allow you to measure the success of your strategy. This might be increase in community size, an increase in mentions or engagement, or an increase in web traffic. Having set goals will allow you to determine where your influencer strategy is working. We’ll dive into the measurement later.



## Seven Basic Tips to Engage with Your Influencer

Discovering the influencers is the easy part; enticing them to engage with your brand is another matter altogether. Influencers are often very selective in which brands they choose to partner with and how they choose to engage. And for good reason; a lack of selectivity could reduce the influencer’s authority or damage their own brand integrity. When engaging your influencers, start by recognizing the people who engage with your content and reward them for that engagement – either with special deals, sneak peeks, or free demos in exchange for feedback. When this has proven successful, you can begin to reach out to influencers outside your circle, using the following tips:

- 1 Ensure that the content, deals, or demos show off the best assets of your brand, while still remaining personal and transparent. Be as authentic as you can in working with your influencers. Ask yourself – why should they engage with my brand? The more transparent and “real” the transaction is, the more enticing your offer will seem to those influencers. Remember, you’re building brand advocacy among people who will be able to recommend your brand with authority, so you want to put your best foot forward.
- 2 When you reach out to influencers, opt for personalized contact on their terms. Engage them through social channels – commenting or sharing their knowledge. Let them know that your brand respects both

their industry knowledge and their internet clout. Here, it pays to do your homework: know who they are, why they're important and how you'd like to partner with them before initiating contact. Engagement takes time and you'll want to build a solid foundation for your next move, so don't rush this process. Once you've established a conversation, send out a personalized email or note, letting them know that your brand is interested in working with them. Ensure there's some follow up – through a phone or Skype conversation, or at least an email. This process is simplified for brands that use the Klout Perks platform. Klout acts as a trusted intermediary in engaging influencers for marketing campaigns. (For more on this, refer to the section on identifying influencers)

**3** Once you've established a repertoire with your influencer, you'll want to make sure that you keep that channel open and supportive. Be sure to share out any content related to your industry and your brand. After all, the influencer did choose to work with your brand and deserves the recognition for promoting your content to their followers. Aim to evoke a positive experience or sentiment using what you know about that influencer and their audience.

**4** When working with influencers on a platform, stay present. This is a huge part of the influencer equation because if an influencer chooses to work with your brand, promoting and sharing your content, they'll expect you to continue to engage on that platform. Many brands overlook this crucial step in maintaining a relationship with an influencer,

opting to spread out their social marketing efforts instead. The problem with this is that your brand might come off as unreliable in your social networking strategy, which might turn other influencers off.

**5** When working with an influencer, make sure you're nurturing both your audience and their audience on the social media platform you've chosen to engage on. This also plays a role in your social networking visibility. Being part of the conversation increases your chance of being noticed by other influencers, who may reach out to you to work with your brand.

**6** Use a pull strategy in your marketing, rather than a push strategy. What does this mean? Instead of foisting content on your influencers, listen and crowd source ideas to create content and campaigns. Ask them if they've got promotional ideas, since they likely know things about your target audience that you may not. This is not only a good way to come up with fresh ideas but it also shows trust in your influencers that can help solidify your relationship. Just be sure these ideas mesh with your overall brand strategy.

**7** Address any issues right away. As your brand spokesperson, influencers might have feedback, may experience issues with your product or brand, or may find out about customer service issues before you do. So, when an influencer comes to your brand with a problem or issue, make sure you're able to resolve the issue in a timely fashion. Not

only does this show that you care about your customers, it shows that you care about the influencer whose authority may be affected by negative sentiment surrounding your brand.

One of the most important parts of using influencers in your marketing strategy is interacting with them in a way that benefits both your brand and theirs. Following these tips will help you do just that.

### Strategies for Working with Influencers from an Influencer:

What is an influencer's take on working with brands? What tactics should you use to get the best results? [Jess Estrada offered some advanced insight in how to partner with influencers:](#)

*Look for influencers everywhere. Okay, maybe not 'everywhere', but look in a variety of places. Some influencers make themselves easy to find because they're already talking about your brand via blog posts or social media. A simple Google blog or social search can unearth those influencers. Work with affiliate networks like GLAM Media, who vet, reach out to and sign bloggers to their network. Affiliate networks are an easy one-stop shop for a brand to reach multiple influencers at once. The network acts as a third-party facilitating the contract and partnership with that influencer.*

*Do your research. Don't just leave it up to the affiliate network or PR firm to vet bloggers or social media users out for you. Take a look at the influencer's blog and/or their social media presence, and only add the ones who truly resonate with your brand to the outreach list.*

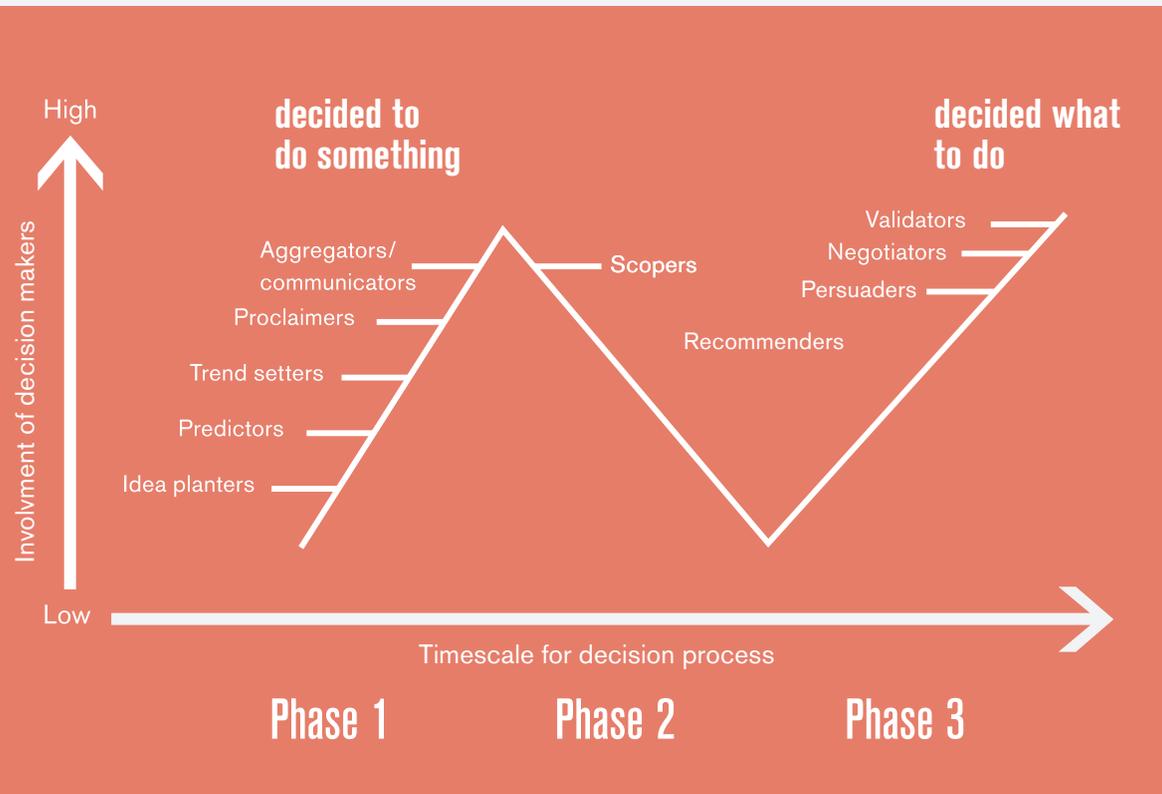
*Be specific. Outline the process of working with that influencer; from the initial email to every single thing you want them to do. Have a contract for the influencer to sign that outlines that process. The influencers who are worth working with will consider themselves professionals and need to know what their deliverables are before they can agree to work with you. I've had not-so-positive experiences with brands and PR firms who've initially asked for, say, just a sponsored post - then will send a follow-up email asking for a number of posts to different social media sites, THEN send another email asking to include specific brand usernames and hashtags to those social media posts (after they've gone out.) I'm not likely to work with that brand or PR firm again.*

*Set (appealing) parameters for editorial control. It's always good to give influencers some guidance when you want them to talk about your brand. While it's essential for influencers to have all the right tools (images, keywords, links, social media usernames and hashtags) from your brand, they typically don't want (or need) to be told exactly what to write. You want the influencer to tell a story about your brand, but it has to be told in their own voice. They've built their networks, and they know best how to talk to them.*

So now that you've built a solid relationship with your influencers, how do you work that into your marketing strategy?

## Adding Influencers to Your Marketing Strategy

Once you've gathered your network of influencers, you'll need to decide what types of roles you want them to play. Think about your audience the sales cycle for a product – should your influencer help customers decide to do something, or should your influencer help customers decide what to do?



Looking at this diagram you can see that the short game uses trends, ideas, and predictors to drive decisions on a topic. The inverse is the long game – helping people decide what to do requires much more persuasion and in-depth research. Influencers can play any of these roles, but ultimately your brand's marketing needs and purchase cycle will dictate which roles your influencers play. Nikon, for example, used influencer Ashton Kutcher to plant the idea that with the Nikon J1 you can have interchangeable lenses on a point-and-shoot camera body.

But is Kutcher really a persuader or a validator when it comes to driving actual customer purchases? For this, Nikon might turn to influencers who would test-drive the product and review it, promoting their review to their social network audiences. But the value of the influencer doesn't stop there; the true value lies in becoming a validator.

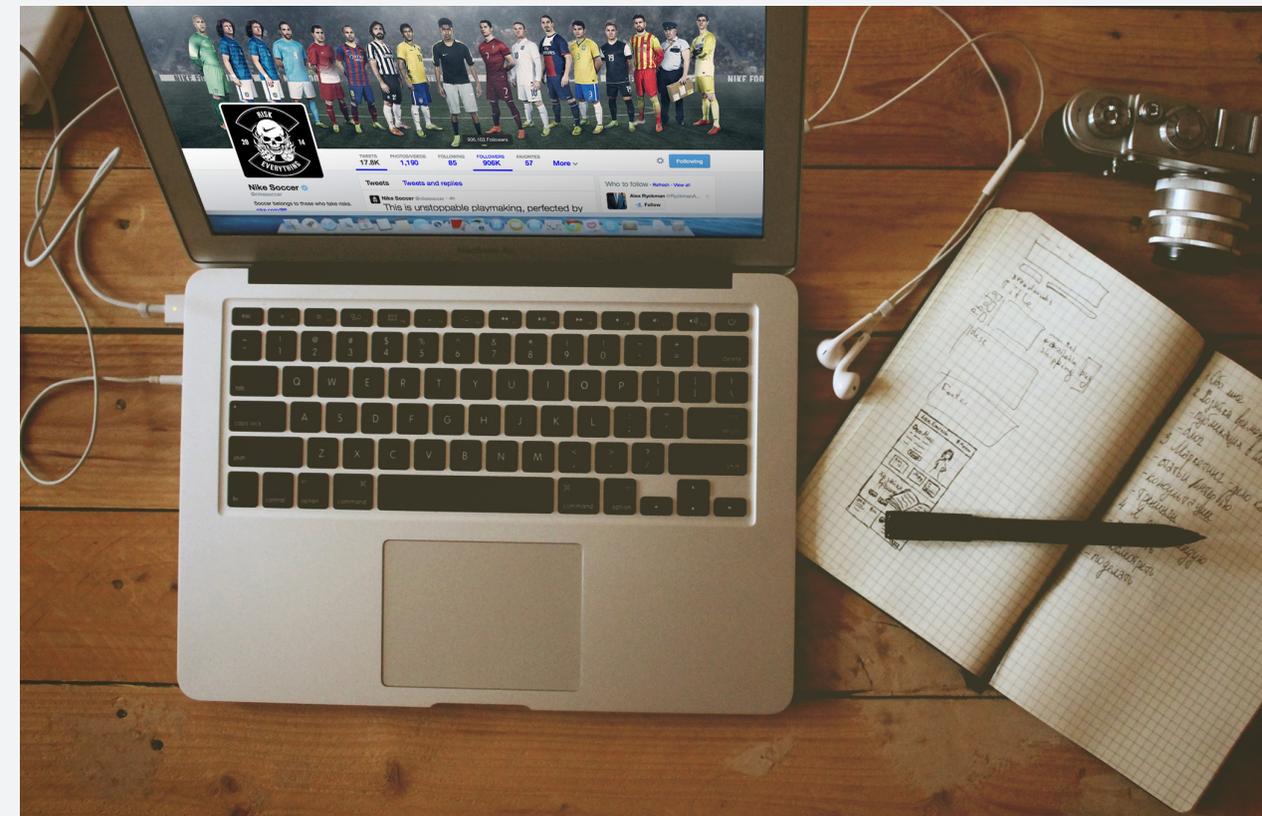
Does Kutcher take the Nikon J1 to his next movie premiere, taking selfies of himself with his friends using that camera? Now he's not just an influencer – by using it, he has become a validator. That's why it's important to leverage advocacy among influencers. If Kutcher were to, for example, host a Twitter chat to answer questions about his own use of the J1, Nikon would be able to leverage the power of both his fans and an audience who cares about the product itself.

We mentioned that in the beginning phase of your sales cycle, your influencers would play the role of trendsetter. These influencers might show off your product through social media or blog posts that will drive awareness. At this stage, the influencer is just that – they're using their reach to amplify your message.

As you move through the sales cycle, though, your influencers will become more of a thought leader or conversation starter. For example, sending product to an influencer to demo or test, to spark conversation among audience members. This is where the power of bloggers and their social networks comes in handy. At this stage, you'll benefit from influencer reviews and feedback.

At the end of your sales cycle, you'll have built brand advocacy with your influencer - whether through offering product for review or other collaborative efforts. The influencer then starts to become a validator; they might host a contest or recognize audience members who also use the product. They may run promotions, create content for your social properties, or collaborate on projects. But more importantly, the influencer begins to actually use your product in their day-to-day world, proving that your product is worthy to buy. This is the most in-depth job for influencers because it requires a level of intimacy with the product. Would they suggest the product to their best friend – not because they are a spokesperson for your company, but because they are a real person who needs your product?

Influencers might do the following: show off your product, review your product, incite discussion around your product, give feedback or collaborate on producing your product, produce content for your brand, offer incentive to your target audience, or appear in your marketing campaigns. They may even become lifelong brand advocates. The route you take with influencers all depends on your target audience and your sales cycle.



## Influencers and Killer Content

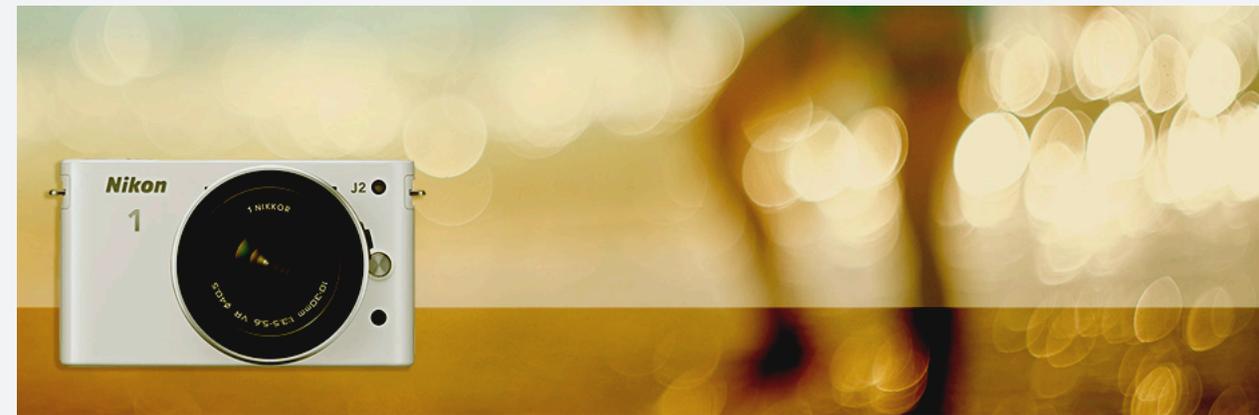
Content is often one of the most tapped resources when it comes to working with influencers. Different forms of engagement can provide a variety of user-generated content that can be used by your brand. But many marketers overlook the incredibly high value of citizen influencers as a way to create engagement.

Consider the Nikon J1 again. Obviously, Ashton Kutcher is a major influencer when it comes to that product, but what about all the other thousands of people who use the J1? Most people often recommend things they use regularly – whether to friends and family, or to their social media or blog audiences. These people are often much more accessible and are generally already brand advocates (making less work for marketers who want to utilize their product knowledge and authority to drive marketing campaigns).

Citizen influencers are a major part of campaigns that require audience participation. For example, Nikon might run a social media campaign to collect user-generated photos taken with the J1, and allow people to vote on their favorite. Many users will ask their friends and family to participate, showing off the product the J1 is able to produce. In this way, asking for user-generated content brings a host of lesser-known influencers into the limelight – people who may not have otherwise appeared on Nikon's radar. When it comes to sourcing content from influencers, you may consider asking for guest blogs, quotes or reviews. But don't let your content

marketing strategy stop there. Use your imagination when thinking about content, and trust your influencers to help you dream up new and creative ways to talk to your target audience. For example, via Google Hangouts, webinars, online radio shows and podcasts are all innovative ways to partner with influencers to produce content. A few brands have even launched video contests and the winner is featured as part of their broader campaign or promotion. In this way, a minor influencer may see a spike in their online influence, bridging the gap between their target audience and yours.

Using influencer marketing in your content strategy can help you segment out different audiences by specific criteria. For example, Sucker Punch Productions may target male gamers a review of Infamous Second Son in Game Informer and also target female game designers with a slick webinar, featuring game writer Amy Henning from the Visceral Games studio. This kind of segmenting opens up the breadth of your audience, allowing you to prolong the life of your campaign by increasing engagement over time.



## Measuring Your Success

Any marketing strategy must have measurable goals to assess whether or not your dollars are wisely spent. Marketing with influencers is no different. We already mentioned a few different metrics you could use to measure the success of your campaign: increase in community size, an increase in mentions, or an increase in engagement.

So let's take engagement as our example. The first thing you'll want to do is establish a baseline for your current engagement. Take a set time frame – say the month prior to your campaign – and find out your engagement metrics for that month. Once you've determined how much engagement you're currently getting, you'll want to set a goal for your influencer campaign. For example, let's assume you want to increase engagement by 10%. You'll outline steps to achieve this goal:

### 1. Content

- Produce one branded piece of content that educates or engages the customer.
- Have one piece of content produced by the influencer that engages or educates the customer.
- Engage with the influencer and the customer to answer questions and field commentary surrounding these tandem pieces of content.

### 2. Social Network Promotion

- Offer a promotion through the influencer on one or multiple social channels to drive engagement.
- Engage with the influencer and the customer to build engagement through the content and your promotion.
- After the promotion is over, continue to promote both your brand and the influencer, and engage the influencer and their audience.

Once you've outlined the steps in your plan, determine how to track your engagement growth for the period. You'll want to know how much of this engagement growth can be attributed to normal trends and how much can be attributed to your influencer campaign. You can track much of this success using social media measurement tools that will report on which social media profiles contributed to your peak impressions for a time period. [Take the Simply Measured Twitter Activity Report for example:](#)



Here, you can pinpoint which Twitter handles drove the bulk of your impressions and what percent contribution those handles made. Being able to pinpoint this data will give you a sense of how well your influencer is driving results. Be sure you and your influencer(s) are on the same page when it comes to measuring success.

When you know what you're measuring, how you're measuring, and what your goal points are, you can begin to implement your campaign and collect data to determine the impact of that campaign on your social media marketing strategy. At the end of your campaign, compare your results to both your beginning baseline and your target goals. You should be able to identify successes and areas of improvement and modify your future campaign strategy based on that information.

### Walkthrough: Finding Industry Influencers with Simply Measured

In this section, we'll walk through the steps of finding industry influencers for a brand – Gap. Feel free to follow along with your own social media accounts! Note that we're just using the primary Gap brand account and only the brand's primary Twitter handle.

First off, we would look at Gap's Klout Influencers & Advocates report. Under the "Mentions" tab, we have the ability to sort by Klout score. For example, after sorting by Klout score, taking into account each user's reach, and then looking at the user's profile, we were able to find several bloggers who are already brand advocates.

Username	Name	Update	Followers	Friends	Klout Score	True Reach
Fashionably_Lo	Lauren Price	Can't wait for this Thursdays #STYLDYBY @Gap event at @LenoxSqMall!	732	367	66.369	48
coolmompicks	Cool Mom Picks	We are so thrilled and honored to have wonan Iris Award for our work with baby Gap! @Gap #mom2summit <a href="http://pic.twitter.com/LVu47tv7Y2">http://pic.twitter.com/LVu47tv7Y2</a>	399471	5920	66.2734	8438
alittlebitetc	A Little Bit etc	New outfit post today on the blog featuring @Equipment_FR @ManoloBlahnik @Gap @gilesandbrother and more > <a href="http://bit.ly/1pOduOS">http://bit.ly/1pOduOS</a>	606	196	66.1946	363
timmelideo	TIM MELIDEO	It's a hot one today in LA. @Gap, @AEO, @JShoes, @JackThreads, @GarrettLeight, @ASOS A lilac look feat. @gap @Dorothy_Perkins @boohooousa @kendrascott	895	40	66.1758	146
sameve	Samantha Tananbaur	@topshop @AmazonFashion! <a href="http://bit.ly/1mUqxfp">http://bit.ly/1mUqxfp</a>	1785	1287	64.6979	942
MOMISHStyle	stephanie ford: ♥	RT @SarahScoop: Don't be afraid to mix and match different shades of the same color like I did here @Gap @SaksOFF5TH #LegendsStyle <a href="http://pic.twitter.com/TJIsYyK5b4">http://pic.twitter.com/TJIsYyK5b4</a>	2173	2383	64.6778	2667
KatiesBliss	Katie Manwaring	.@gap just gets me when it comes to dresses >> <a href="http://bit.ly/1hrMTOe">http://bit.ly/1hrMTOe</a>	3552	773	64.6647	372

By building relationships with these users, Gap has the ability to leverage the users' audiences based on things like number of followers, Klout score, and reach. We only found a few of these potential influencers, but Gap has the potential to mine many more potential influencers out of this data.

The Klout Influencers & Advocates Report aggregates keyword data that your audience might be interested in based on their profile data. You can use this to expand your circles of reach when looking for influencers. On the "Topics" page of the report, you can get a count or percentage of people using certain keywords. For Gap, it seems that the audience uses the following keywords most.

Topic	Count	% of People
photography	125	0.0709
fashion	93	0.0528
politics	86	0.0488
blogging	71	0.0403
food	66	0.0374
music	65	0.0369
barack obama	54	0.0306
shopping	53	0.0300
media	51	0.0289

**Kristin Booker** @fashionstbeauty  
Freelance fashion & beauty writer, editor of Fashion.Style.Beauty. Obsessed with self-expression. Life doesn't end at 30. Celebrate yourself!

**Arabelle Sicardi** @fashionpirate  
I wear stuff and write about stuff. @rookiemag @teenvogue and other bright corners. I co-edit @thestylecon & @powderdoom. tweets are my own.

**wendy lam** @nitrolicious  
"dress:eat:play:sleep" ~ nitro:licious | Instagram: nitro\_licious

**fashionpulse** @fashionpulse  
FashionPulseDaily.com founder, naturally addicted to fashion, shopping, & beauty! Multi-hyphenate gal - designs, teaches, freelances, consults, & loves kitties!

Fashion photography, blogging, music, shopping are all heavily targeted keywords by Gap's audience. Performing a Twitter search for the term "fashion" brought up a host of user lists – lists of bloggers interested in fashion - who may be great candidates for an influencer campaign.

At this point, it's worth doing a little digging into who the bloggers are, and what their Twitter user stats look like. To check out metrics like engagement, reach and impressions, run a Multiple Twitter Channel analysis with some of the top names. When Gap has narrowed down an attainable sample of influencers, they would reach out to those bloggers and users to begin building a relationship.

Another place Gap would look for influencers is among its competitors or sister companies. Since Gap Inc owns Banana Republic, Piperlime, Athleta and Old Navy, running reports on those audiences may shed light on influencers that aren't yet part of Gap's current audience. They would also do the same with their competitors' audiences – other fashion brands or fashion media who target users like their desired audience.

We recommend collating all this data into one manageable, easy-to-read spreadsheet that allows you to both categorize and weight each influencer based on their audience, and how influential they could be for your brand.

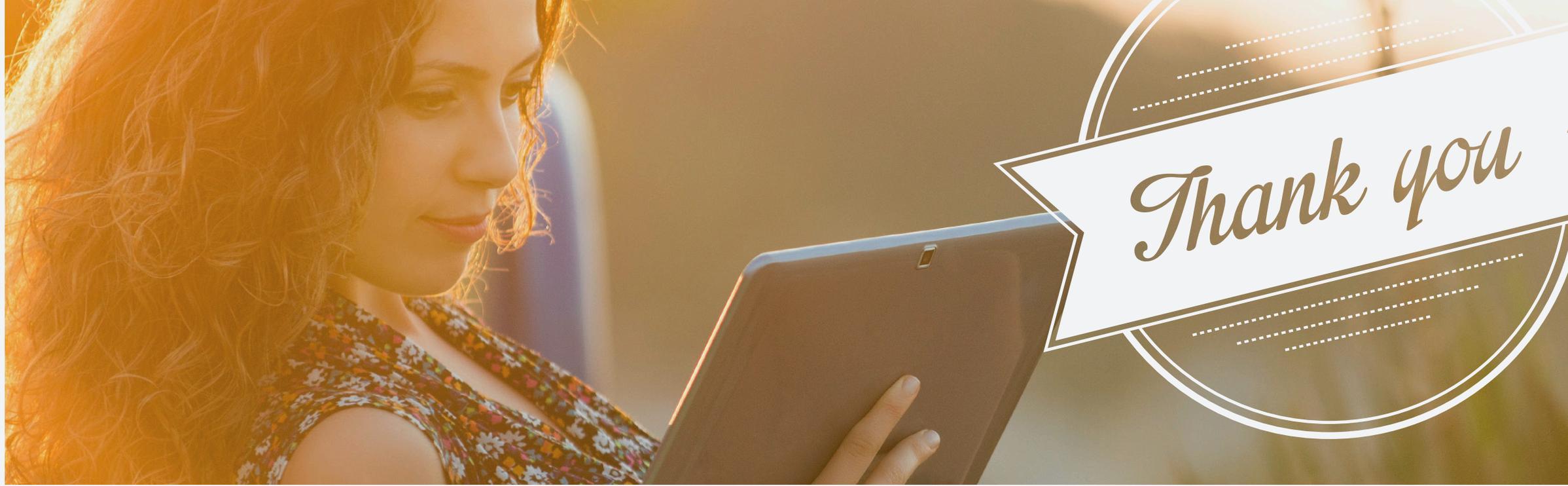
## Walkthrough: Identifying and Activating Influencers with Klout Perks

As discussed previously, Klout Perks provides marketers with a full service solution to identify, reach and activate influencers on behalf of their brand. A good example of how this works is a recent Perk that Motorola ran with Klout. Motorola's goal was to leverage influencers to drive awareness and consideration for their new Bluetooth headphones. Through partnering with Klout, they were able to target people with a Klout Score of 60+ with topical relevance in music, technology and sports. The 250 influencers who participated in the program went on to create nearly 5,000 pieces of social content about the headphones, generating nearly 62 million impressions.

To learn more about running a Klout Perk campaign for your brand, visit [business.klout.com](http://business.klout.com).



Klout Perks help marketers generate earned media, at scale, through authentic sources. Over 300 of the world's top brands including half of the AdAge 100 rely on Klout to find the most relevant people for their campaigns and increase brand awareness. Learn more at [business.klout.com](http://business.klout.com).



## Conclusion

Working with influencers is a partnership that can be incredibly beneficial for your brand. Influencers have the power to drive brand perceptions and encourage purchasing choices. Working with influencers gives you the power of a localized voice and specialized industry knowledge that your brand may not be able to offer. This partnership, however, requires the same level of professionalism you'd adopt partnering with other brands and can be time consuming because of the genuine nature of your interactions. Despite that, many brands find the return on investment to be more than worth it.

# ABOUT SIMPLY MEASURED



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