ARE YOU DOING INFLUENCER MARKETING RIGHT?
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**ABOUT**
COMPLIMENTS OF:

.tapinfluence
influencer marketing platform
INTRO

Let’s talk about what we’re going to cover over the next several pages. The title of this book is “Are You Doing Influencer Marketing Right?”. That question is another way of encouraging the marketers, agencies, and social media managers executing social content strategies with influencers to use best practices.

Simple enough, except it’s not.

Influencer marketing has been around a long time, but not in the way we use it today: digitally, expansively, and usually managed from the console of just one human being’s laptop. That’s no small undertaking!

And yet, we’re seeing more and more that in order to get big bang for your brand, scaled, always-on influencer-led social marketing is the ticket.

So before you dive right in and get swallowed by the sea of communications, planning, and execution (don’t forget measurement!), make sure you know the basic best practices for doing so.
WHAT IS INFLUENCER MARKETING?
WHAT IS INFLUENCER MARKETING

Partnering with key influencers in your space to co-create content that is engaging and meaningful to consumers.

There are a million different plays on this, many of them just as good (or better!). It’s less important which exact definition you want to go with.

What you need to know is this:

“A brand is no longer what we tell the customer it is—it is what the customers tell each other it is.”

-Scott Cook, co-founder of Intuit

That’s the real reason we’re all here and talking about influencer marketing, and why it has become such an incredible piece of the marketing strategy.

Influencer marketing is a way of paying attention to and responding to the conversations people are having with each other about particular products, services, and trends.

If your audience is on Pinterest, Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, Google+, or Tumblr, shouldn’t you be right there listening to them?

Are You Doing Influencer Marketing Right?
The influencers are, and partnering with them connects you directly to consumers in your vertical. You don't have to try to pull them outside of the platform to do it.

To set the stage for what we're about to walk through, we'll preface this with some context and a semi-disclaimer. Influencer marketing is what we do. We're steeped in it every day, receiving constant feedback from all sides: the brands and agencies executing influencer marketing programs, and the influencers themselves. But in particular, we spend our time watching and learning from those who absorb influencer content: consumers, customers, audiences—people like you and me, who respond only to that which feeds a hunger for what inspires us, makes us smile, teaches us—something good and real.

That something, we've come to discover, can come from influencers in powerful and far-reaching ways. Furthermore, we've been able to put some structure around that process, whittling influencer marketing down to four key components.

Follow the specific best practices of these components, and you'll not just “get” influencer marketing; You'll be on your way.
STEP 1: IDENTIFYING INFLUENCERS
We hear directly from marketers, brands, and agencies every day that they “totally get the idea of working with social content creators, but ...”.

“But” there’s a hurdle right out of the gate: How do you identify who the influencers are in your space?

Whether you’re in the entertainment industry, parenting, technology, automotive, healthy living, or retail, there are influencers in every vertical online. It can be really overwhelming to identify which ones you should be working with.

Here are the best ways to do it right and ensure you are approaching it in the best way:
1. DON'T JUST LOOK AT UNIQUE VISITS

It's really tempting as a marketer to just look at unique visitors. But that's just one number. Yes, it's appealing when a blogger has 100,000 unique monthly visitors, or a million followers on Twitter. But how relevant and influential they are in your space is based on much more.

Make sure, instead, you look at content relevance.

Influencer Content Relevance Check

Look for these things with regards to an influencer's content when identifying influencers in your space.

- **Framework:** What mediums of communication do they use? Does it work well for your customers?
- **Context:** Does their location matter to your business? How well do they frame other sponsored content?
- **Quality of content:** What are your quality standards? Are they reasonable? Does the influencer meet them?
- **Their Perspective:** What is unique or "perfect" about their life situation or style that offers great potential to your brand?

What this takes is looking at, reading, and digesting the content these influencers are producing. You need to look at their Twitter stream, the pins they post to Pinterest, and the content on their blogs.
## PROGRAM NAME
(ex. Yourbrand - Back To School - MonthYear)

### INFLUENCER NAME

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FRAMEWORK</th>
<th>CONTEXT: Location</th>
<th>CONTEXT: Sponsored content</th>
<th>CONTENT QUALITY</th>
<th>INFLUENCER PERSPECTIVE</th>
<th>REQUIRED EXPERTISE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What is/are the desired medium/s of communication for the program (video, text, photography, other)</td>
<td>Does the influencer's geographical location matter to the program? If so, what is the location(s)?</td>
<td>How specifically does your product need to be framed?</td>
<td>What does “quality” mean for this program? (ex. “perfect grammar,” “minor cursing acceptable, “high-quality photography a must”)</td>
<td>Does the program require a certain life stage, experience, or position? (ex. cancer survivor, new mother, small business owner, single father)</td>
<td>Does the program require special skills or subject matter expertise?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

WRITE YOUR ANSWER HERE: | WRITE YOUR ANSWER HERE: | WRITE YOUR ANSWER HERE: | WRITE YOUR ANSWER HERE: |

How well do the influencer's communication mediums fit with the program needs? | Do they meet the geographical requirements for the assignment? | How well do they integrate sponsored content into the context of their other content? | How well does their content exemplify “quality,” as defined for this particular program? | What is unique or “perfect” about their life situation or style that offers great potential to the program? | Do they possess the required skills or expertise? |

WRITE YOUR ANSWER HERE: | WRITE YOUR ANSWER HERE: | WRITE YOUR ANSWER HERE: | WRITE YOUR ANSWER HERE: |

CIRCLE/HIGHLIGHT ONE: • Not a good fit at all • Could fit, but not immediately sure how • Good fit • Extremely good fit | YES or NO | CIRCLE/HIGHLIGHT ONE: • Not well at all—it feels disjointed or too “pitch-y” • Okay—sponsored content is good but doesn’t seem well received by audience (too far off base) • Very well—audience is receptive and doesn’t seem put off by sponsored content | CIRCLE/HIGHLIGHT ONE: • Not well at all—content does not meet any required quality standards • Okay—content meets some, but not all quality requirements • Well—content meets most, but not all quality standards • Very well—content meets all quality standards for this program | WRITE YOUR ANSWER HERE: | YES or NO |

### INFLUENCER CONTENT RELEVANCE WORKSHEET

DOWNLOAD THE WORKSHEET

Are You Doing Influencer Marketing Right?
2. POST FREQUENCY

With bloggers in the deals and coupons space, it is both expected and desirable that they post several times a day since the current of deals and offers flows nary weaker than that of a busted dam. In another vertical it may be perfectly fine if an influencer posts once a week, as long as it’s rich, relevant, engaging content.

Think about what your industry AND audience expectations are around this, and write it down as influencer-identification criteria. There may be exceptions, but having a benchmark in mind will immediately narrow your search so you can more quickly identify.
3. AUDIENCE DATA

A lot of marketers stop short here.

They look at the demographics and psychographics of their influencers, and they do that because the audience data hasn’t been readily available until recently. But now it is! We use about 35 types of criteria you can use to search an influencer, including things about their audience.

Things like this:
- Is their audience predominantly male or female?
- Does their audience predominantly have kids or not?
- Where is their audience geographically?

We used to have to make a lot of assumptions about an audience. If we were aligned with the demographic of an influencer, it stood to reason we would be aligned with the audience. That’s not necessarily true.

With new data available, marketers can refine their attempts to reach their target audience. Because again—it’s more important to be meaningful to a few people than to mean nothing to a whole lot of them.
4. CONTENT QUALITY

Examine factors like:

- Photo Quality - are images placed well, visually drawing, or there at all?
- Post Relevance - do they follow timely issues or items relevant to their theme?
- Voice - How consistent is their tone with the audience? Do they swing from super-sarcastic to super-serious?

With all of these, “quality” should always be defined within the context of the audience.

Additionally, find what’s unique about an influencer’s content and note it so that if you do reach out to them, you can present to them an example of what you like about their work. This will show them you’ve done your research, and they’ll be more likely to accept an invitation to partner.
5. AUDIENCE ENGAGEMENT

How well does the influencer communicate and keep the conversation about content going? Do they respond to comments thoughtfully, or at all? Scan comments for general audience tone toward the influencer. To what do they respond positively (or negatively)?
6. LOOK FOR PROFESSIONALISM

If you’re looking at an influencer who has created sponsored content previously, check out that content. Is it professional? Do they follow FTC guidelines? Note that here “professionalism” doesn’t necessarily equate to perfect punctuation or shiny clean language. What you’re looking for are indications that they run their blog like a business: They take care of their visitors, market their product (their content), and keep a close tab on how it is received.

Identifying influencers doesn’t end after you’ve invited them to partner. It’s not even over after the post goes up! One of THE best things you can do to stabilize your process for launching social content programs is to keep your chosen influencers close. Here are three quick tips for making sure your hard work identifying the perfect influencer doesn’t go to waste once one piece of content goes out the door.

**Three easy ways to build a relationship with an influencer**

1. Be responsive
2. Be clear about expectations
3. Compensate them
A note about compensation: Worthy of a book in and of itself, there are camps on every side of the coin. Some believe paying influencers damages the credibility and authenticity of the content.

The reality is that right now in the social media/blogging/influencer marketing environment, the partnership and exchange of compensation for advocacy and sharing content is a widely-accepted part of the ecosystem.

It's understandable what those who disagree don't want (and it's really what we all don't want!): to be annoyed, to be duped, and potentially fed non-truths about a brand, and worse-yet, to have that come from someone we trust. That's just bad business for everyone, brands, influencers, and audience alike.

Here's what can be done to make sure it doesn't happen to sponsored social content:

• It should be disclosed and transparent
• The content should be consistent with the type of content that influencer would be creating anyway

When there's a disconnect between those things, the idea of compensating someone for incorporating a brand or sponsored material into their world becomes tarnished.

Why does it matter? Influencers spend a lot of time, effort, resources, and talent building their audience and creating content. They have significant sway over an audience that is not uncommonly bigger than the audience of the brand working with them.
STEP 2: MANAGING INFLUENCER RELATIONSHIPS
Now that you've identified the influencers that are key to your space, how do you want to work with them and build the relationship?

Christine Wilson, the CEO and founder of MtoM Consulting, is an expert at working with influencers. She says a big piece of successful social content programs is getting to know your influencers so you can:

- Identify their strong suits and quickly know who might be great for a certain content format or audience vertical
- Trust them to tell an authentic story (and they, in return, can trust you to let them)
LET INFLUENCERS TELL AN AUTHENTIC STORY.

It becomes very difficult for people who manage brands or PR campaigns not to just feed the message you want to share about your product or brand. But the best stories come out when you let go a little bit, and let the influencer do what inspires them around the pillars you’ve set for the program.

HERE’S WHAT YOU DO GIVE THEM:

• Guidelines and expectations for the co-created content (example: the theme of the program is a “before and after” organizational project in the home, so each blogger should understand they need to include images of both.)
• Points around what you would like them to share (example: product safety features)
• Links to anything they should point to (a specific landing page or social profile)
• Key imagery or logos they might need

Outside of that, let them tell their story about their experience with your product or brand.
You might think the number one reason attributed to a negative experience (from the perspective of a content creator) would be not getting paid enough. But when we polled influencers, they told us what really lost points was a poorly-organized campaign.

Communicate early and often, and respond to influencer questions or concerns without fail. Give them everything they need in an organized, easy format.

Problem #2: They didn't like the product. Identifying the right influencers for your brand is essential, so do your research, and don't ask a caveman to test out a car seat.
BE TRANSPARENT.
Set your program goals and expectations clearly, and leave the conversation open for questions from influencers. Since they'll be coming up with content you couldn't have imagined on your own, you can't anticipate every question. It's also a good practice to start with less (within reason). An influencer isn't likely to have time to read a 75-page brand style guide. Give them what really matters, and work out concerns as they arise.
INCLUDE OPPORTUNITIES TO REFERENCE YOUR SOCIAL PROFILES

Include any elements of social media that can expand an influencer’s reach. Some social influencers are stronger in certain platforms. Some are great at creating video content, some take unbelievably beautiful photography, some are on Twitter all day every day. Let the influencer run with what he or she does best.

GIVE PROPER INFLUENCER ATTRIBUTION (YES, IT’S POSSIBLE)

When an influencer creates and shares an incredible story and you post it across your website or social platforms, it can be as simple as saying “thank you” and including a link to their website.

GIVE THEM ONE CLEAR CALL-TO-ACTION TO INCLUDE IN THEIR CONTENT

If you try to do too much with co-created social content, it becomes confusing to the readers and viewers. What’s worse is it loses authenticity by taking over what value someone might get out of consuming the content. Additionally, your influencer could have a very different idea of what to write about that may not execute on the primary goal you set for the program.
THINK OF YOUR INFLUENCERS AS ALWAYS-ON

A one-time campaign can be great for a brand, but there’s equal or more boon in being able to activate influencers at different times, for different customers. As much as we would love to control exactly the best time for a message to go out, we can’t always do that. If you have influencers at-the-ready, and you keep them in mind with regard to every customer need your brand encounters and responds to, you’re going to stretch your share of voice and footprint well beyond a company blog post or social update.
STEP 3: OPTIMIZING CONTENT DISTRIBUTION
You've got the influencers, you're building relationships, and now ... wait, what happens now? Oh, right. You've got to USE the content and get it out there!

We're talking more than just putting it on your Facebook page and calling it a day. With fresh, unique content from an outside source with a large social following, you have a myriad of opportunities to share it, repurpose it, turn it into new forms of content, let it live where it's primed for the right audience, and more.
DON'T ISOLATE CONTENT.

Your bloggers are going to create incredible content in the form of pictures, stories, video, how-tos about your brand or product. Don’t limit their potential by keeping them isolated to the influencer’s site.

Presumably, you have your own social platforms where you can very easily feature even just one photo from one influencer each day, and make a stockpile of content last over a period of weeks or months.
AGGREGATE IT! BUILD A PLACE IN WHICH ONE CUSTOMER CAN TALK DIRECTLY TO ANOTHER.

We offer clients a Social Hub page to go with their social content platforms. Any way you can pull lots of enticing, customer-endorsed content together (because essentially your influencers are customers, too), you’re putting a new spin on how your brand markets itself.

What’s a social hub?
A social hub is an aggregated “preview” of activity taking place around your brand on a variety of social networks like Facebook and Twitter.

Social Hubs might feature:
- Aggregated blog, video, and other social content
- Conversation widget allowing ongoing, on-page engagement around content
- Robust analytics to measure the effectiveness of the page
INTEGRATE WITH OTHER MARKETING CAMPAIGNS

Don’t keep social content in a silo! Work it into your email campaigns, social media efforts, and even your traditional paid marketing programs. Rich content works best for this. Think of how influencers inspire your customers to take action. Let it inspire you, too. How?

• Play off of their content
• Respond to videos (or use the more creative ideas in your own branded version of them)
• Share repurposed content with influencers to post
• Add it to your company blog, community site, and social streams to make them more dynamic, engaging places to be.

A great example is this eBook! What started out as a conference presentation by our CMO and co-founder, Holly Hamann, along with Christine Wilson (our expert influence marketer mentioned earlier), turned into a webinar, a blog, several social posts and emails, and was then transformed into the readable format that currently appears before your very eyes. Magic.
MAKE IT EASY TO SHARE ... AND DON'T FORGET TO SHARE IT WITH YOURSELF.

Put sharing links on everything. Don’t make people work to pin, share, vote, like, tweet, or anything else. Don’t forget mobile in this mix. As more and more content is consumed on phones and tablets, it’s hugely important your influencer content can be viewed and shared on mobile devices easily.

But also feed that content to your own brand assets like microsites and content hubs. Again, extend the value of social content by using it in eBooks, blog posts, webinars, case studies, and anything else you create.
STEP 4: MEASURE PERFORMANCE
“I’ll tell you the way we used to do it. We used to have influencers submit the fact that they had posted, we would have a url for the post, take a screenshot of the Facebook post, and a link to the tweet.

We would send that to the client and we would say ‘Yep, they fulfilled their obligations, and I hope you got some clients out of it. Go check your Google Analytics.’ That’s all we could tell them! Now we can do so much more.”

- Christine Wilson, MtoM Consulting (a leader in the influencer marketing industry)
Tracking the right stuff is imperative in quantifying social content outcomes that can make your day.

**Track these ...**
- Posts
- Shares
- Tweets
- Comments
- Impressions
- Engagements

**... but also these:**
- Views
- Engagement
- Share of Voice
- Sentiment

Why track all of that? It’s what leads you down the yellow brick road to your Total Media Value, which is that would-be investment in traditional paid media. With your Total Media Value in hand, you are a subtract and divide away from your estimated ROI, or your Return On Influence.

**Total Media Value:**
The would-be cost if views and engagements had resulted from traditional paid advertising models on various social platforms.

We’ll put a success story upfront so you can see immediately why measuring the performance of social content by influencers is a big deal.

The client investment:

**$24,000**

Before you look: Ahead are the results from one of MtoM Consulting’s first influencer campaigns using the TapInfluence platform.
Want to know more about what goes into tracking and measuring the outcomes of social content? Check out "How to Measure Influencer Impact" where we dive into the why and how of each element, and walk through the formula for calculating your own Total Media Value and ROI.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Metric</th>
<th>Value</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Media Value</td>
<td>$226,766</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Content Pieces</td>
<td>189</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clicks to Posts</td>
<td>14,900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Million UMV’s</td>
<td>3.7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Comments</td>
<td>6,940</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Page Views</td>
<td>68,971</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
We’re not sure we need to say much more than what these numbers say for themselves, other than that because this can be done, it will become expected to be done going forward.

This is the way influencer marketing is going. We all have to answer to someone, and we (and they) want to know: Did we create brand awareness, drive traffic to a specific location, do something to achieve our business goals? Was it a measurably valuable part of our marketing program?

Measure your performance, bundle it up, and proudly hand that to your marketing management team. Then go back and check again … because it’s probably grown some more.

In fact, the Total Media Value of $226,766 in the example here is just the total from the end of MtoM’s client’s campaign. At the time of publish, the campaign had ended eight weeks ago …

... and the Total Media Value had grown to $246,678 — an increase nearly amounting to the initial client investment.
RECAP

We’ve covered four areas with challenges marketers face when implementing influencer-created social content into their marketing campaigns.

1. Identifying the right influencers
2. Managing and building relationships with them
3. Optimizing the distribution of social content, and using it to launch new initiatives
4. Measuring performance of all activity and engagement around influencer content to calculate Total Media Value and ROI

As with anything else, new methods and strategies for each are evolving—and in social content management, distribution, and measurement, there is no truer statement.

Our dissection of each of these into best practices can be your pillars of influencer marketing done right.
ABOUT TAPINFLUENCE

TapInfluence is a rapidly-growing software company full of talented people focused on one thing—making it easy for marketers to connect with their consumers in a meaningful, authentic way.

OFFERING

**Identity**
Find topic-specific influencers who are trusted by your target audience.

**Activate**
Mobilize influencers to create peer-trusted content that attracts and engages your target consumers.

**Distribute**
Amplify social content at scale across the web on blogs, Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, and more.

**Measure**
Track the performance, engagement, and ROI of a program.

CONTACT

tapinfluence.com
720.358.2564
info@tapinfluence.com
tapinfluence.com/blog
@tapinfluence