



# Ultimate Guide to **Influence Marketing**



# Meet the Authors

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Lyle is Co-founder and CEO of Mavrck, the leading micro-influencer marketing platform that powers premier consumer brands to drive more sales on social media. A self-proclaimed marketing engineer, Lyle continuously found himself searching for ways to make social media marketing more human. Prior to Mavrck, Lyle deployed an enterprise social network and identity services platform for a Fortune 100 company.

## Dan Ragan

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Dan Ragan is Head of Influence Marketing for GroupM North America, the largest media investment company in the world. Obsessed with connectivity culture, Dan seeks out technologies and innovations that enhance the way people communicate with each other and the world around them.

# Introduction to Influence Marketing

In our increasingly connected world, influence marketing has become more decentralized and impactful than ever before.

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Every day, an estimated 150+ million Americans log onto Facebook, while millennials spend 5+ hours messaging friends through various mediums. We've become a society influenced by the thoughts, actions, and purchasing habits of those we choose to follow and connect with online.

## We're also a society suffering from ad fatigue.

Consumers are continually bombarded by brand messaging at every turn, both on- and offline. When they get overwhelmed, consumers tend to revert back to things they're comfortable with and trust, especially human relationships. In the context of marketing, this gives influence marketing a major advantage when compared to more traditional advertising methods.

So how can advertisers take advantage of this reality? Until recently, the challenge with influence marketing was in achieving the scale necessary to meet marketing objectives and move the needle.

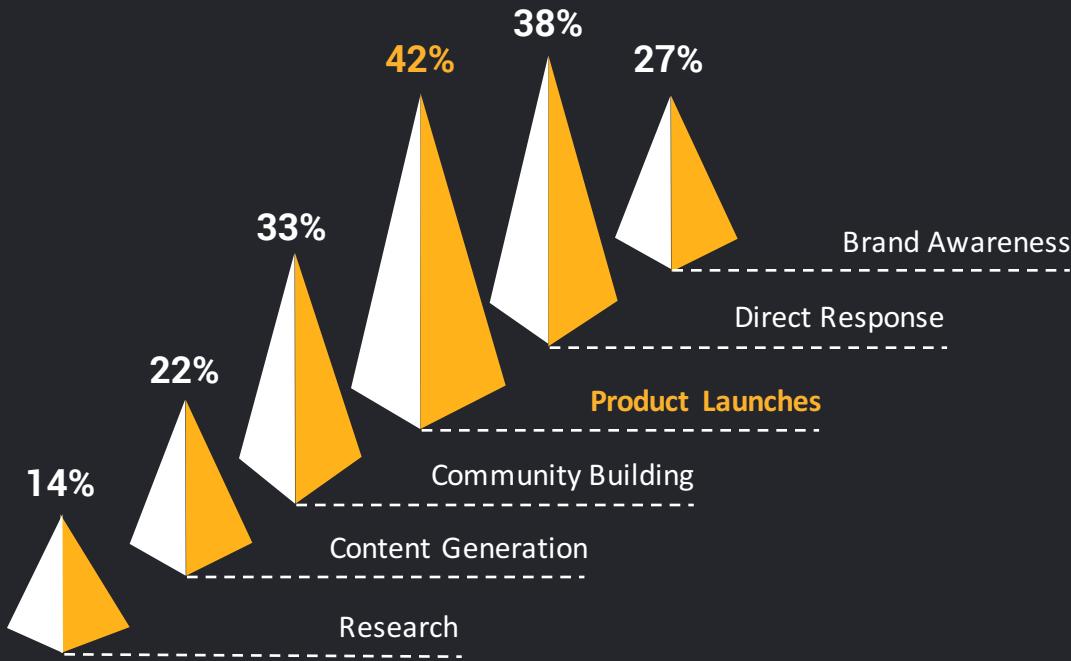
However, in just the past few years new platforms and technologies have emerged, enabling large agencies and media companies to play in the influence marketing space for the first time ever. Companies like Mavrck can now activate thousands of relevant influencers to deliver brand messages with impact.

Follow this step-by-step guide to get started with influence marketing.

- Dan Ragan, Head of Influencer Marketing, GroupM

# **Step 1:** Choose Your Goals & KPIs

# The Most Common Campaign Goals\*



## How Marketers Use Influencers

After activating more than 140,000 influencers across 110 campaigns, we've seen influencers used in many different ways. Here are the top 6 most common goals we saw across our campaigns.

*\*Campaigns often have multiple goals.  
Percentages don't add to 100%*

# 4 Common KPIs



## Impressions

Can be measured on content generated or destination landing pages. Easy to measure, but the least valuable.



## Clicks

Requires a unique link for proper attribution. Easy to measure, but can be gamed with click farms, decreasing value.



## Engagements

Includes any social action (like, comment, share, retweet). Requires a hashtag or unique link for proper attribution. More value than a click.



## Conversions

Includes installs, sign-ups, form completions and purchases. Hardest to measure, requiring a pixel & unique link or a promo code for attribution.



# Other Influence Marketing KPIs

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## User Generated Content

Gathering user-generated content can be a key element of an influence marketing campaign.



## Net Promoter Score

Determining whether a customer is more likely to promote your product is a very common indicator that your influence marketing is working at a strategic level.



## A/B Test Results

Often times, influence marketing campaigns can be used to A/B test creative or content prior to a larger paid media campaign.



## SEO Impact

Content created by influencers, especially journalists and bloggers, will help raise your search rankings.



## Survey Responses

Gathering feedback from your most influential customers can help your brand with the rest of your customers.



## Trending Hashtag

Influencers can be used to make a specific hashtag trend on Twitter or Facebook, but requires high velocity to do so.

# Step 2: Choose the Right Social Networks

*Americans spend more time on social networks than email and search networks combined.*

# Top Social Network Comparison

Not all social networks are created equal. Each has advantages that you should consider.

Social Network	Monthly Users	% of Web Referral Traffic	% of B2C/B2B on Network	Monthly Time Spent on Network	Influencer Usage Pattern
Facebook	1.32 Billion	23.9%	97% / 89%	887 minutes	I like #this, you should too
YouTube	1 Billion	0.06%	60% / 52%	60 minutes	Watch me do #this
Google+	540 Million	0.06%	51% / 59%	11 minutes	We both do #this, cool
Twitter	284 Million	1.03%	81% / 86%	265 minutes	I'm doing #this right now
Instagram	200 Million	No Links	34% / 19%	220 minutes	Look how beautiful #this is
Tumblr	199 Million	4.71%	1% / 1%	197 minutes	Read, watch, listen or look at #this
LinkedIn	187 Million	0.02%	59% / 88%	22 minutes	#This is what I'm good at
Pinterest	53 Million	5.72%	51% / 41%	138 minutes	I have or want #this

# Social Network Factors to Consider

Here are four critical factors to consider when choosing a network for your influence marketing campaigns.

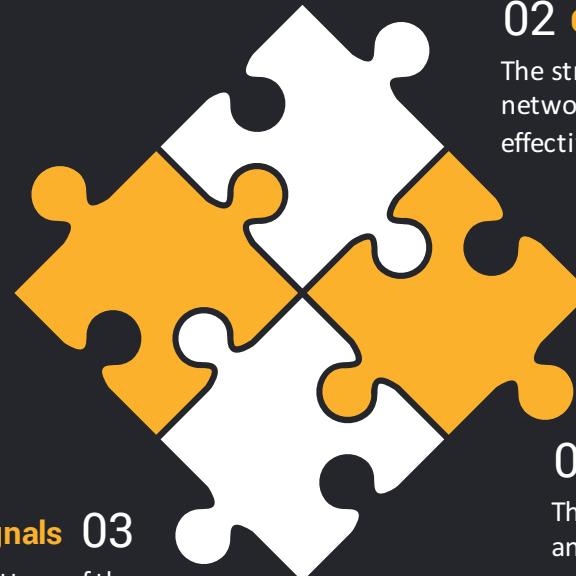
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## Feed Consumption & Filtering 01

The most important factor to consider when choosing a network is how the content is consumed and filtered in the network's feed. Networks with the most time spent on their site and engagement-based filtering are by far the most effective for influence marketing.

## Search Engine Signals 03

Search engines are usually at the bottom of the funnel when it comes to a customer's buying journey.



## Content Structure & Half-life

The structure and useful life of content on a social network varies greatly by network, and can limit the effectiveness of your influence marketing campaign.

## Social Relationship Strength

The nature of the relationships between influencers and their connections dictates the type of campaigns a social network is effective for. For example, Facebook and Pinterest are best for driving conversions, while YouTube and Instagram provide great brand awareness.

# Facebook for Influence Marketing: 30 out of 36

Facebook is the most versatile of all the social networks, and can be used for almost any influence marketing campaign. Since it is the network that most closely mirrors your real-world relationships, it is often the most effective network for direct response and conversions.



9 + 6 + 6 + 9



## Feed Consumption & Filtering

Facebook has the most heavily consumed feed, and the one filtered based on the amount of engagement an individual drives.



## Content Structure & Half-life

Although Facebook allows many different types of content to be posted, the average life of a post is only 22 hours.



## Search Engine Signals

While only Profiles & Pages on Facebook are indexed by Google, Bing indexes content and includes engagement as a signal.



## Social Relationship Strength

Facebook closely mirrors real-world relationships, so you know and trust 80% of your Facebook connections.

# YouTube for Influence Marketing: 24 out of 36

YouTube is the next generation television, and similar to the “Be Like Mike” commercials of old, video content created by YouTube stars has become a cornerstone of any brand awareness campaign.



## Feed Consumption & Filtering

While consumers only spend an hour per month on YouTube, most of that time is spent engaging with only a few pieces of content.



## Content Structure & Half-life

Although the content is limited to videos, the lifespan is almost indefinite thanks to Google's search index.



## Search Engine Signals

As a Google-owned platform, engagement on YouTube videos helps boost search rankings.

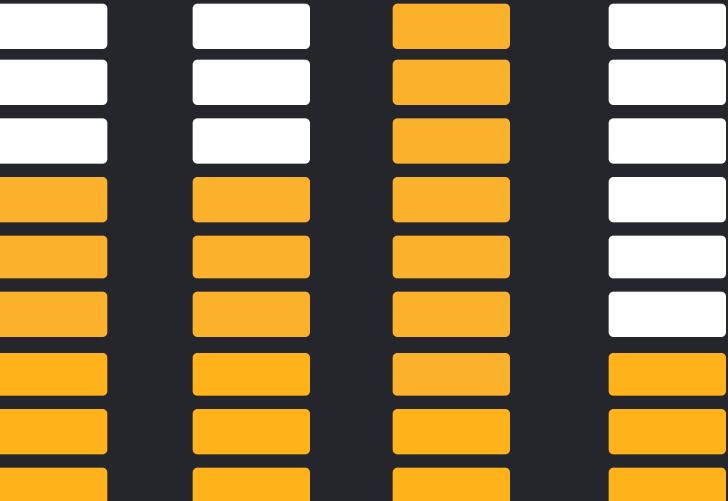


## Social Relationship Strength

Viewers rarely know the subject of a YouTube video in real-life, making consumer trust relatively low.

# Pinterest for Influence Marketing: 24 out of 36

The intent to purchase on Pinterest is second to only search engines. This, mixed with beautiful visuals, provides a potent combination for retail, fashion and beauty brands looking to drive direct response.



6 + 6 + 9 + 3



## Feed Consumption & Filtering

Consumed by users who want more #things, and filtered based on engagement, the Pinterest feed is very close to a checkout cart.



## Content Structure & Half-life

While limited to photos with descriptions and links, the beauty and longevity of content results in referral traffic that is second to only Facebook.



## Search Engine Signals

A big part of Pinterest's success is due to search engines, and the fact that boards commonly show-up on the first page of Google.



## Social Relationship Strength

While built on the back of Facebook mainly for acquisition purposes, Pinterest is more about discovery of #things, rather than connecting with people.

# Tumblr for Influence Marketing: 21 out of 36

Tumblr has become the blog tool of choice for the younger generation, providing them an unparalleled platform for expression. Tumblr's ability to easily show 7 different types of content has led to it being the #3 best social network for referral traffic.



6 + 6 + 6 + 3



## Feed Consumption & Filtering

Content consumption is based on blogs you follow only. Within that grouping, the posts with most “notes” earned rise to the top.



## Content Structure & Half-life

Tumblr allows text, photo, quote, link, chat, video or audio content. Its tagging system enables discovery.



## Search Engine Signals

All Tumblr blogs and posts are indexed by search engines, which is why it is #3 for driving referral traffic.

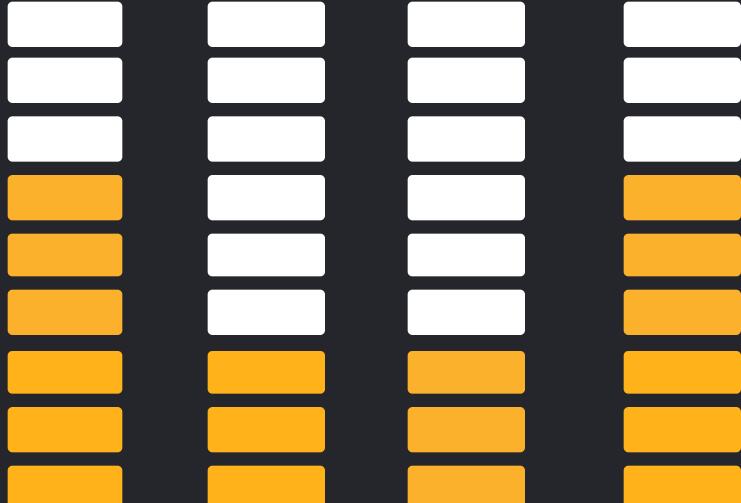


## Social Relationship Strength

Like Twitter, blog followings are largely aspirational, with users knowing few of the bloggers they follow in real-life.

# Instagram for Influence Marketing: 18 out of 36

Instagram is relatively new to the influence marketing game, but as the second most used network on mobile devices (Facebook being #1), it has become a go-to for brand awareness.



6 + 3 + 3 + 6



## Feed Consumption & Filtering

Although filtered by time, the feed is the second most viewed on mobile devices. One can argue it is also the most visually appealing.



## Content Structure & Half-life

The short life and lack of links in posts make Instagram tough for anything but brand awareness campaigns.



## Search Engine Signals

Profiles are indexed, but content is not considered at all in search engine signals.



## Social Relationship Strength

Built on the back of Facebook, consumers know the majority of the followers, with a few aspirational ones on the side.

# Google+ for Influence Marketing: 18 out of 36

Google+ is the darkhorse when it comes to influence marketing. Many marketers don't consider the network because of its limited adoption, but the return on effort can be huge, especially for SEO.



## Feed Consumption & Filtering

Despite having an engagement-based filtering approach, it is the least used social network.



## Content Structure & Half-life

While content does persist within Google's search index, the network's features are confusing and complicate content creation.



## Search Engine Signals

As a Google-owned platform, +1's are weighted extremely high in Google's search engine signals. For this reason, it is worth using Google+.



## Social Relationship Strength

While the network tries to help users form even closer social circles than Facebook, lack of adoption has hindered this aspirational goal.

# LinkedIn for Influence Marketing: 18 out of 36

As the go-to network for B2B brands, the power of influence marketing on LinkedIn is continuing to evolve rapidly. The network has recognized the potential, and built “Top Influencers” in as a feature to the feed.



## Feed Consumption & Filtering

LinkedIn is the #1 B2B consumed feed that is also filtered by engagement.



## Content Structure & Half-life

Mostly link based, the lifespan of a post on LinkedIn lasts about 24 hours.



## Search Engine Signals

Profiles are indexed, but since activity is limited compared to other networks, content and engagement is not considered in search signals.

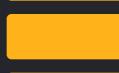


## Social Relationship Strength

The network mirrors professional relationships as strongly as Facebook mirrors personal relationships. You've met 80% of connections.

# Twitter for Influence Marketing: 15 out of 36

Twitter has a love-hate relationship with influence marketing. Its prowess with real-time events makes it great for celebrities, journalists and executives to use, but its content restrictions and rapid-fire feed limit effectiveness -- unless you can become a trending topic with the help of influencers.



6 + 3 + 3 + 3



## Feed Consumption & Filtering

While the Twitter feed is heavily consumed as a second screen during live events, the time-based filtering of content limits any other use case.



## Content Structure & Half-life

140 characters, nuanced interaction and short life-span limit content impact outside of real-time events.



## Search Engine Signals

Since launching Google+, Google's firehose agreement with Twitter was discontinued. Profiles are still indexed, however.



## Social Relationship Strength

Twitter followings are largely aspirational, with users knowing 20% or less of their followers in real-life.

# Step 3: Choose Your Influencer Type

**92%** of consumers trust word-of-mouth more than all other forms of advertising.

# Spectrum of Influencers

Not all influencers are created equal, and each serves a different purpose.





# Celebrities & YouTube Stars

Example: Michelle Phan

- Traditional view of influence
- Used by B2C or B2B brands mainly for awareness campaigns
- Activation typically involves product placement or endorsement via a Tweet, Vine, Instagram post, YouTube video or a combination of many social networks
- Influencer motivated by cash
- Influencer has limited brand affinity prior to the campaign

Best for Impressions

A photograph of Elon Musk speaking on stage. He is wearing a black suit jacket over a white and blue checkered shirt. A small orange lavalier microphone is attached to his collar. He is gesturing with his hands, which are open and slightly raised, as if he is explaining something. The background is dark with some blue stage lights visible.

# Executives & Journalists

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## Example: Elon Musk

- Traditional view of influence
- Used mainly by B2B brands and PR firms to amplify press, thought leadership or lead generation
- Activation typically involves sharing articles on a blog or social networks like Twitter and LinkedIn
- Activation is often earned out of respect or relationships, not purchased directly
- Motivated by credibility, trust and status

## Best for Impressions



# Semi-Professional Bloggers

Example: Blair Eadie, Atlantic-Pacific

- Used mainly by B2C and B2B brands for direct response and lead generation
- Activation typically involves product placement or endorsement in a blog post that is then shared on Twitter, Facebook or Pinterest
- Determining whether blog traffic is relevant or authentic may be challenging (click farms)
- Motivated by cash for themselves and product prizes for their readers

## Best for Engagements



# Micro-Influencers

## Example: Crossfitters

- Used by B2C brands for all campaign types: awareness, content generation, direct response or lead generation
- Activation may include re-sharing content, creating original content, tagging or referring friends or completing surveys
- Most effective social networks include Facebook, Pinterest, Instagram and Twitter
- Finding individuals with relevant engagement is the biggest challenge
- Motivated by VIP treatment or Branded incentives, due to strong brand affinity

## Best for Conversions

# Step 4: Choose Your Content Type

Influencer-generated content is trusted over **50%** more than other media

# 3 Content Types

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Brand  
Generated



Co-developed  
Content



Influencer  
Generated

- Brand creates the content and influencers are activated to share it with their networks.
  - Influencers don't add any personalization; they simply retweet or share the content.
  - Least risky
  - Least potential impact
- Brand develops guidelines for the content and influencers create their own rendition.  
"Share a picture of a holiday themed Starbucks cup"
  - Mild risk
  - High-impact potential
- Content is almost completely in the hands of the influencer
  - Brand gives loose direction (e.g., "create a video" and influencers create and share what they want)
  - Most risky, unless a review process is established
  - Most potential impact



# Yankee Candle

## Example of Brand-Generated Content

Yankee Candle held an Instagram contest in which they asked their followers to repost a branded picture and include a branded hashtag for a chance to win a \$100 gift card. It took little effort on the part of participants, but had less impact than content that was original to the participant.

Impact



Low

Risk



Low

# Starbucks

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## Example of Co-Developed Content

Taking a cue from customers doodling on cups, Starbucks held a White Cup contest in which customers were encouraged to decorate their white Starbucks cup for a prize. Participants submitted their design by posting a photo of it on Instagram using the hashtag #WhiteCupContest. The winner received a \$300 gift card and re-usable cups with the winning design. The contest gave clear instruction (including limitations on colors), but still allowed for enough creative freedom for influencers to express their style. This resulted in thousands of photos being posted on Instagram with the Starbucks logo front and center.



Impact



Risk





# GoPro

## Example of User-Generated Content

GoPro has been running a non-stop contest for customers to show off their photos and videos. Participants enter for a chance to be featured as Video of the Day or Photo of Day on GoPro's social media channel, and earn a 50% discount on gopro.com. They also award \$5,000 for the Creator's Challenge. While GoPro reduces the risk of negative content with a review process, there is a lot of time and effort required.

Impact



Risk





**When In Doubt Use  
Co-Developed  
Content**

**Co-developed content** is the most powerful type for influence marketing. It's a balance of branded direction and user creativity. Without personal endorsement, **branded-generated** content falls flat. **Influencer-generated** content can be too off- brand, random, or open-ended to make an impact. If you want to create and share impactful influence marketing content, **Mavrck can help you identify and activate influencers** to share powerful co-developed content.

# **Step 5:** Choose the Right Incentive

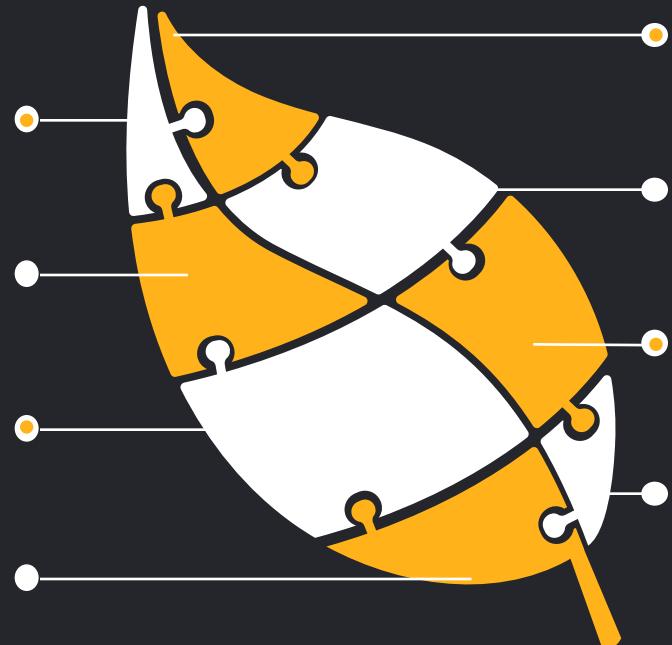
# Factors for Choosing Incentives

**Influencer Type**  
Pro or Semi-Pro influencers will require cash payment, while non-pros will prefer branded incentives.

**Brand Affinity**  
Using branded incentives will ensure the influencer is passionate and relevant for your brand.

**Brand Equity**  
The less known your brand is to the friends of influencers, the higher the incentive value needs to be.

**Influencer Effort Required**  
The more effort that is required by the influencer to create and share branded content, the higher the incentive value.



## Brand Type

The essence of your brand will determine the type of incentive you provide. For example, luxury brands won't use discounts.

## Influencer Quantity

Increasing the number of influencers will increase the value of your incentives.

## Fulfillment Process

Different incentives have differing fulfillment requirements. Ideally, you want to have digital fulfillments.

## Exclusivity

Incentives should be exclusive to only influencers in order to motivate participation in your campaign.

# 4 Types of Incentives

for Influence Marketing

## Cash

For professional or semi-professional influencer types, you will have no choice but to pay them. However, using cash with non-professional influencer types will decrease relevance and trust.



## Branded Rewards

The most common incentive for influencers is a branded reward. This could be in the form of a discount, gift card, product giveaway, free-trials, etc. Like VIP experiences, this incentive ensures the influencer is passionate about your brand before they participate in your campaign.



## VIP Experiences

Offering an exclusive experience is often one of the top ways to incentive non-professional influencers. It ensures they are actually passionate about your brand and can be cheaper than other incentives.



## Recognition by Brand

Sometimes, giving the influencer a few minutes of limelight in front of your customer base is enough to motivate them. Whether it is through a "X of the Day" post, or by featuring their content on your website, this cost-effective method works.

# 10 Branded Incentive Ideas

for Influencer Marketing

Work with influencers usually requires a value exchange. They will expose your brand to their friends & followers as long as you continue to reward them.



Exclusive Events

Early Access



Discounts

Free Trial



Contest Entries

Celebrity Greeting



E-Gift Cards

Swag



Product Sample



Priority Service

# **Step 6: Consider Those Close To Your Brand**

# 4 Valuable Sources of Influencers

Many brands think they need to go find influencers. However, most have plenty to work with already; they just don't know it. Here are four sources that you should look at first to identify and activate influencers.

## Fans & Followers

Identify the top 10% of your fans or followers who engage their friends the most around topics relevant to your brand, and give them an exclusive community to connect with your brand.



## App Users

You've invested time and money into development and acquisition. Why not determine which users drive the most influence and create features to activate them?



## Loyalty Members

Move beyond loyalty cards and numbers, and provide the most influential members with a community to interact with your brand.



## Email Subscribers

Imagine segmenting your email list by topical influence, and running email campaigns just for them.



# **Step 7:**

## **Engage with Influencer Content**

# Tactics for Engaging with Influencers

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Monitor the Hashtag

Hashtags allow all content from your campaign to be organized and searchable. They also verify someone's participation in the campaign and create emphasis from other posts in the news feed. It also allows your campaign to stay cohesive across multiple social networks.



Start an Influencer Community

Build long-term strategic relationships with your most influential customers by providing them with an exclusive digital experience for news, content and rewards. This enables them to connect with other influencers, which will amplify their engagement across social networks.



Interact with Content

Once you find the content generated from your campaign or from a general hashtag search, interact with fans' content by reposting, liking, and commenting. Make sure top contributors feel recognized so that they will continue to be loyal to your brand and produce more content.

# Thank You!

*To learn more about how influence marketing can work for your brand,  
contact sales@mavrck.co*