

Title:

Influencing the influencer

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Summary:

Marketers/advertisers usually focus their efforts on the people responsible for making the purchase. In many cases, this is an effective approach but in other cases it can make for a totally useless marketing campaign.

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Article Body:

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Virgin Mobile took a more effective approach in marketing their cell phone service by focusing not on the people that would be making the actual purchase, but instead focusing on the influencers of the people making the purchase. To make this campaign work, Virgin developed a viral website called [Parental Enlightenment](http://enlightenmentkit.com/) Kit which offers many tips (often fairly funny ones) to convince their parents to purchase a Virgin Mobile phone for them. By enlisting the teenagers Virgin has multiplied the effectiveness of their marketing campaign for 3 reasons:

1. The teenagers will continually mention the phone/service to their parents until they get it - Virgin's campaign will continue to work long after the teenager has left the computer.
2. This approach is exactly the type of thing that spreads virally. As teenagers tell their friends about it, it will increase exponentially in it's effectiveness.
3. They have targeted the most likely decision maker rather than the person responsible for the purchase.

Companies in other industries have take the same approach and achieved amazing results. For example, Pfizer targeted men with erectile dysfunction (a more PC

term for impotence) rather than the doctors who would actually prescribe the drug (Viagra) to treat it. You can take the same approach to market your product/service and reap tremendous rewards.