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A BEGINNER'S GUIDE TO SOCIAL OUTREACH



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WHAT IS SOCIAL OUTREACH?

Social outreach is a technique whereby relevant social influencers are identified across social media platforms and approached with the intention of creating a dialogue and a relationship through which your content marketing assets can, through these influencers, reach much larger audiences.

Social outreach employs best practice from link building and product/service advocacy to develop working relationships with key social influencers with pre-existing, relevant audiences to enhance content marketing reach by tapping into conversations which are already happening across social platforms.

The aim of this is to, by earning the trust of influencers, leverage their particular cache with their audience to increase the reach and improve the performance of campaigns, as well as visibility and trust with a demographic.



WHAT IS INFLUENCER TARGETING?

Influencer targeting shares a lot in common with keyword research. In fact it should really stem directly from it. Across your site, you will be targeting specific industry keywords with product and service descriptions, blogs or other forms of content, headers, meta descriptions and so on. If all is well, you should therefore have some kind of keyword strategy document – a list of what keywords you're targeting and for what part of the site, product or service.

This list – while unwieldy – with editing and prioritisation can serve as a fantastic resource for influencer targeting. The reason for this is that the appropriate influencer is likely to be targeting the same set of important keywords as your brand, and happily, there are plenty of tools that allow you to search specifically for those keywords prior to approaching your ideal candidates.

Though, obviously, as an expert in your industry, there may be key industry influencers that you would add to your dream team for brand promotion – and we would certainly encourage you to approach them. However, the better known the influencer, the more likely they will be to have been inundated with requests similar to your own.

The best way to approach this is to think of your list of industry superstars, the top of the pile desirable influencers as a kind of 'work-in-progress'. There will come a time when you will work with them, it may (in exceptional circumstances) come from the first contact, but in most cases they will remain an aspiration.

Instead target influencers with a similar status to that of your own brand. While agencies may have relationships with high-profile influencers that they can begin to employ immediately, if a brand is starting out in social outreach, it is best to start at an appropriate level.

DECIDE YOUR OBJECTIVE

The thing to consider first when planning any social outreach activity is what you hope to achieve through it. This will impact who you approach, and how and when you approach them.

It is important to set achievable goals – while ‘become Apple Inc.’ is a satisfyingly ambitious objective, it is unlikely to be achieved by your first efforts at social outreach. So, are you looking to increase traffic to your blog? Improve the reach of your social media posts? Reach a specialised audience? Do not even begin looking at potential target influencers until this has been decided.

IDENTIFYING TARGETS

There are obviously ways to search across each social platform – you can look for various keywords from your keyword strategy document in search bars and look into the authors of well shared posts or groups, you can look at popular hashtags etc. You will, as discussed, probably already know of various influencers in your own sphere.

While these are certainly useful, they can be time consuming and to resolve that issue, there are platforms which enable searches of social influencers (such as GroupHigh, BuzzStream and BuzzSumo – Neil Patel has a useful list from mid-2016 [here](#)).

The important thing to remember is that the influencer should be relevant and, while framing mechanisms can be found to make certain products or services relevant to any blogger, social outreach is ultimately about reaching potential consumers rather than improving your link profile and leveraging the power of various influencers to help conversions for your brand.

However well you refine your list of targets on these sites, there are always methods of further refining it to ensure your time is spent efficiently. By looking at influencers that are at or around the level of your brand, you can increase the chances of building a successful working relationship.

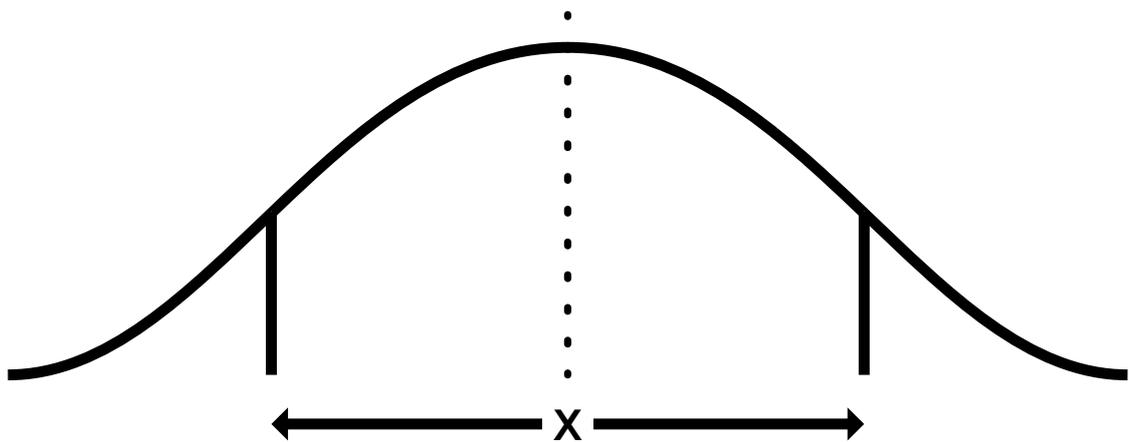


FINDING YOUR LEVEL

For lack of a better known paradigm, I'm going to employ a football metaphor. Think of your industry the English Premier League and industry influencers as transfer targets. In order to ensure the progress of your team, you need to ensure you're capturing the best talent you can.

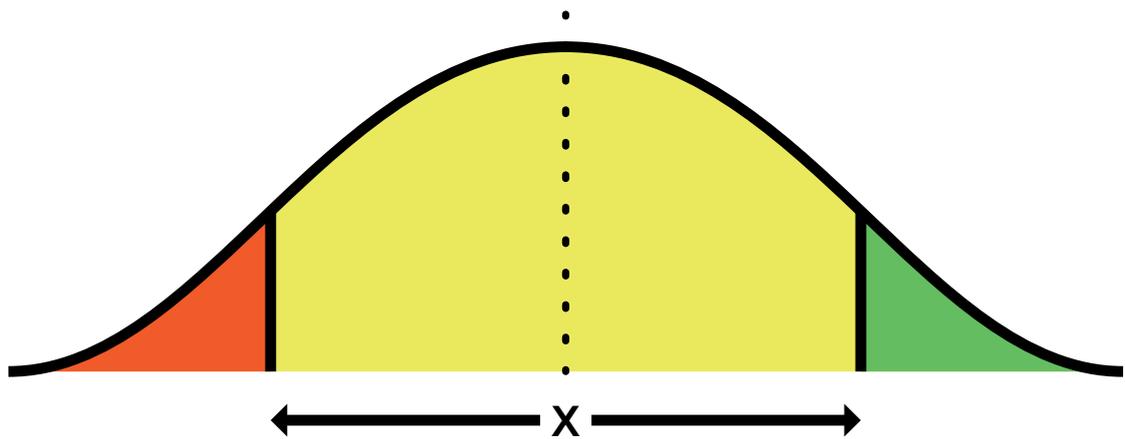
However, it is never a level playing field – and unless your team is already at the top of the league, the chances are you will have to look for talent that isn't already on the radar of your competitors.

This means looking for up-and-coming talent and talent that currently plays at a similar level to you.



Think of your brand on a bell curve – while your position is X, the desirability of the influencer increases to the right, along with their esteem in the industry and vice versa, decreasing desirability and esteem to the left. Your curve represents your ability to harness their influence versus the desirability of that influence.

With social outreach, the best way of reaching a more desirable influencer is by shifting the position of X to the right and therefore the attractiveness of your brand to influencers (hence why Apple has no shortage of social influencers seeking to work with them at the launch of a new product). As this is tough to achieve in the short term, it is therefore best to target influencers around the top of the curve.



In this instance, that means looking to focus on influencers in this (albeit arbitrarily selected) pale green area.

Things to consider when deciding on your position along the access, and therefore your target range, will be your brand’s audience on each platform and your average reach on each and your general rate of engagement and your industry relevance (hopefully top marks).

By comparing this to the same factors of potential targets (you can implement basic 1-10 or 1-100 scoring systems for each data point for a total desirability score, and different attainability multipliers above and below your own position in the rankings to achieve a workable curve based on desirability vs attainability by sorting desirability and plotting a total score), you will be able to increase your rate of success when approaching influencers.

While we wouldn’t discourage brands from reaching out to influencers in the green area (low attainability vs high desirability) as the quality of the content you are seeking to promote will at least contribute to influencer decisions. Equally, don’t dismiss approaches from the red area – as those who are there now, may be in the green next time around. Whatever is done with these two outlying areas, however, it is still better to focus the main bulk of your efforts on the pale green section.

Blogger	Followers	Average Engagement	Industry Relevance	Desirability	Approachability	Total Score
Bob Jones	1	1	1	3	30	33
Paul Rideout	1	1	1	3	30	33
Joe Blogs	2	1	1	4	40	44
Bertie Basset	1	2	1	4	40	44

ARE YOUR PROFILES SOCIAL OUTREACH READY?

Whether or not you have approached social outreach in the past, it is important to make sure your profiles give potential targets everything they need to know about you. While you will almost certainly be the party to make contact, the chances are that if your contact provokes any interest or curiosity in the target they will check out your profile – and that’s where you’ll make the largest initial impression.

WAYS TO PREPARE:

Tell your story

You may not have a great deal of room to work in, but try to explain exactly who you are and what it is you do, your bio should leave any visitor no doubt as to your industry, position and USP. It should also, of course, link to your site to help them find more information.

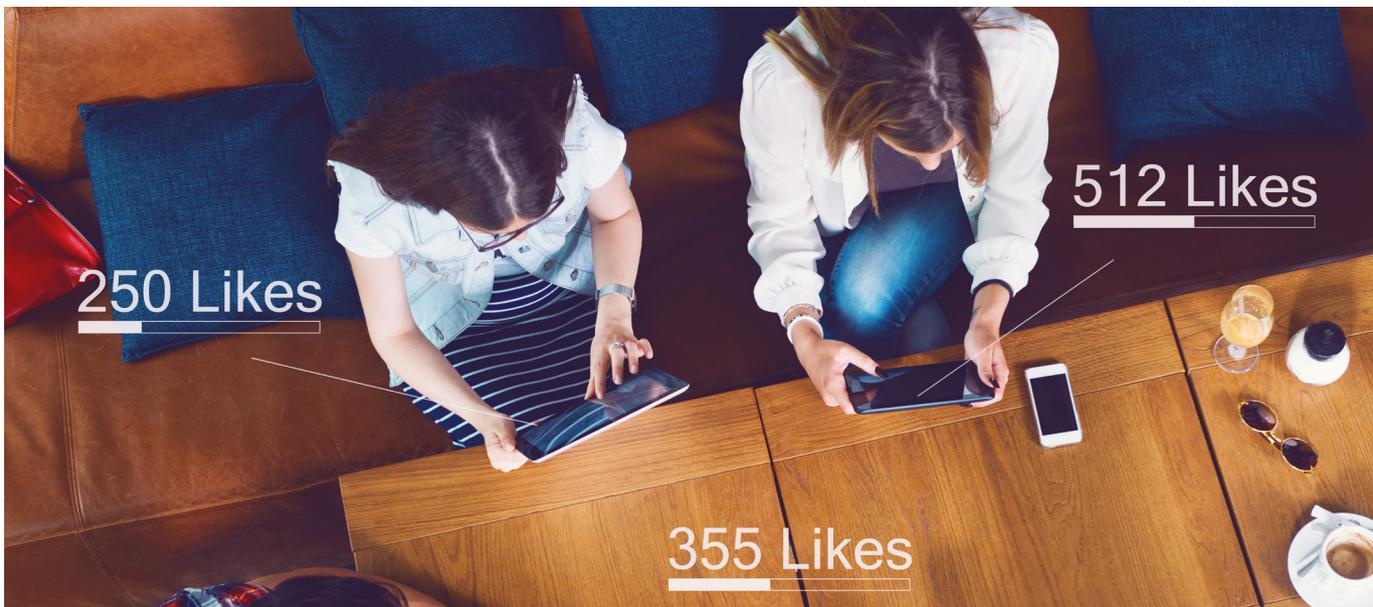
Keep it professional

Or at least maintain a consistent image – stick to the tone and seriousness of your brand across all social media platforms; that includes wording, header images, profile images and profile names.

Use a sticky post during outreach periods

If you have more details to offer than the bio room allows, make a sticky post to convey the information and a CTA.

The image displays a business profile for 'Click Consult'. The top section, titled 'About', features a map with a location pin at Willow House Oaklands Office Park, Hooton Rd Unit B1, Hooton, England, United Kingdom. Below the map, contact details include the phone number 0845 205 0292 and the email address hello@click.co.uk. The 'HOURS' section shows 'Open Now 09:00 - 17:00'. The 'BUSINESS INFO' section lists 'Business Details' and 'Parking: Car park'. The 'ADDITIONAL CONTACT INFO' section repeats the email address. The 'STORY' section contains a bio: 'We're Click Consult, a multi award-winning search marketing agency that has been specialising in organic and paid search since 2003. Our team of experts work exclusively with a portfolio of brands and SMEs who are looking to increase their online visibility and return on investment through our bespoke search marketing solutions. We've achieved impressive results for clients operating within a di... See more'. To the right, a social media profile card for 'Click Consult @ClickConsultLtd' is shown, featuring a teal circular logo with a white 'C', a profile picture, and bio text: 'Click Consult is a multi award-winning search marketing agency with a focus on organic and paid search.' It also lists 'Cheshire, United Kingdom', the website 'click.co.uk', 'Joined June 2011', and '1,400 Photos and videos'.



ENGAGE YOUR LIST

The next stage probably the most difficult part of the process and comes with a variety of pitfalls. It is important to remember that you are aiming to build relationships with influencers, and that you will not be the only one seeking to do so.

It is tempting to pitch with a first contact – to make a request for help or share a post etc. However, with the building of relationships it is often better to share their posts, earn their buy in with communication – you’re looking to work with them for a reason, so compliment their work, share it with your audience and look to interact with them.

While it may not provoke them to share your posts without having to ask, the process of earning an influencers trust improves the chance of them eventually agreeing to any request for help you may have.

Another problem that can arise with attempting to engage influencers is a lack of attention paid to their own positioning. It’s important that the content, which you’re looking for them to promote, must gel with their own branding – so ensure you read their blogs, mention their past work when discussing projects you can work on together (We think this would work like your posts on [x] from back in [y]).

Remember that, while they may not feel drawn to your first proposal, it is a relationship with the influencer that will benefit you the most in the long run. Share their posts, keep in touch and pitch them your next idea too, show them that your request to work with them is based on respect for their work, not just on what they can do for you.

Someone who feels genuinely valued will be far more receptive to working with you. However, even if they do agree to work with you first time, maintain contact – check in with them from time to time and listen to them if they have any of their own suggestions.

BUILD A COMMUNITY

The final step in the social outreach process – one which may not be taken for some time, but is achieved generally through persistence – is to build a community. Not only do you want a broad spread of inbound links and a broad range of audiences seeing your content, it also serves to avoid content fatigue – ensuring you have a base of influencers who do not become overwhelmed or bored by your content.

Ideally you want to become a thought leader in the industry, a brand to whom social influencers and consumers alike both turn for the best content in your industry. Not only does this build consumer trust and increase the reach of your content, it also has the benefit of slowly shifting your brand's position to the right on the x-axis, rendering more and larger influencers available to you for your next project.



HOW TO BE A SOCIAL OUTREACH NINJA

TARGET THE RIGHT
INFLUENCERS

KEEP IT SHARP
KEEP CONTENT SHORT
AND TO THE POINT



BE FLEXIBLE
AIM TO ASSIST CONTACTS,
HELP THEM TO HELP YOU

TREAD SOFTLY
DON'T MAKE DEMANDS,
EARN ENGAGEMENT

MAKE IT STICKY
KEEP CTA POSTS AT THE
TOP OF FEED



GET IN TOUCH WITH US TODAY

ABOUT US

Click Consult is a multi-award winning search agency and winner of the FSB's Digital and Social Media Business Award 2016. Working with SMEs, we turn social media and content marketing into measurable returns on a brand's budget.

Our [website](#) features a comprehensive [resource](#) page, full of useful eBooks and actionable insights. We also write a [blog](#), where you can find an abundance of search marketing tips.

If you're feeling social, get in touch on [Google+](#), [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) or [LinkedIn](#).

To find out how we can help you to grow your business and strengthen your search profile with social outreach, call us today on

0845 205 0292

WHAT OUR CLIENTS SAY

"From the outset of the project, Click Consult clearly understood our business objectives and formulated a search strategy that would help to deliver commercial results across key product areas. They have been professional in their approach, shown great attention to detail and the results achieved to date have been thoroughly impressive. We are looking forward to a successful future partnership."

LloydsPharmacy Online Doctor

"Click have really stepped up to the plate when it comes to performance marketing, their tenacity and desire to help us as a company improve is second to none. They're always offering up the best in cost per lead performance, which is seeing our ROI on digital marketing grow exponentially as our relationship goes on. Brilliant project planners, superb project delivery and results to boot, what more could you ask for?"

Adjustamatic Beds

OUR ACCREDITATIONS



Accredited Professional | Bing ads



OUR TECHNOLOGIES

monitor **TRAX**™ rank **TRAX**™ feed **TRAX**™ link **TRAX**™ pro **TRAX**™



EXPERTS IN SEARCH. SIMPLE.