

BRAND INFLUENCERS

as a PR tool.

THE CONTAGION EFFECT.

the ability of the media to create a fad, craze, or epidemic

IDENTIFY.

Performing a situation analysis is needed in order to identify the course of action. This is the initial step for getting the promotional process started for your client. Brand influencers are key for reaching a unique online audience that may have otherwise been overlooked. Influencers are a PR asset and should be thought of as team members. The contagion effect is used by PR pros as a tactic to utilize a social media icon specific to your focused area as an influential asset to persuade a specialized group of the general public to use your product or service. Social platforms to consider include Instagram, Twitter, Facebook, and Pinterest.

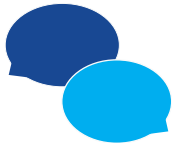


Elements to consider:

- > potential audience and size
- > relevant influencers
- > how likely they are to recommend the brand

ENGAGE.

After identification, the next step is locating potential brand influencers and engaging with them from a business relationship standpoint. An effective tactic is creating an online ad to make potential influencers aware of not only your company, but also what you have to offer to those who are chosen to join your team.



DEVELOP.

Developing a specialized strategic communications plan for influencers is crucial for mapping out goals and the plan of action. Influencers should be aware of the tactics that need to be used to accomplish the outcome in order to be considered a valuable entity. Collaborating with other PR professionals during the developmental stages is key for narrowing your collective thoughts into one, cohesive idea. Use the contagion effect to your advantage by creating a specific outreach method for the influencer to abide by. Determine how the influencer will be compensated for their work. They can be considered paid media, or earned media and not receive monetary funds. Their compensation could be in the form of free products or services.



EARNED MEDIA vs. PAID MEDIA

Earned media (or free media) is gained publicly through non-advertising promotional efforts.

Paid media is gained publicly through advertising.

Source: Google

MONITOR.

Remain aware of the influencer's progress by monitoring their activity, outreach, post frequency, community response, and engagement. How many people are being reached? Who has used the company due to exposure from the influencer's account? If an influencer is not gaining the amount of exposure that they should be, it may be beneficial to choose a different influencer to work with based on contract policies. Also determine whether efforts performed by the influencer that reflect the contagion theory are wholesome and fit your company's standards.



EVALUATE.

Evaluate the influencer's level of interaction with their community and measure if each influencer you work with is a beneficial element to the company's growth and development. Determine if the influencer is able to accurately use the contagion theory to boost the visibility and knowledge of your product or service through key messages projected through their online activity. Improve the brand by considering using recommendations from the influencers, as they are a direct source to your online community and target audience.



ONLINE SERVICES MOST LIKELY TO INFLUENCE A PURCHASE

Retail sites	56%
Brand sites	34%
Facebook	31%
Blogs	31%
Groups/Forums	28%

Source: Digital Strategy Communication