

HOW TO FIND AND CONNECT WITH SOCIAL MEDIA INFLUENCERS



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www.lilachbullock.com

Generate leads that convert

Building strong social media connections should be an essential part of any marketer's or businesses' digital marketing strategy, and some of the most important connections are with social media influencers. In this blog post, I will be exploring the importance of social media influencers, where you can find them and how you can connect with them.

WHAT ARE SOCIAL MEDIA INFLUENCERS?

Influencers are social media users that have a strong following in your niche and have the power to influence the buying decision of their followers – they can help with shares and engagement on social media, writing reviews about your service or product, or simply by being thought leaders in your industry.

So the question here is, who in your niche has the power to influence their followers to potentially buy your product or service?

WHY YOU NEED SOCIAL MEDIA INFLUENCERS

As I mentioned in the introduction, social media influencers should be a part of any digital marketing strategy, as they can be of huge help to your business. People are more likely to trust an influencer that they've been following for some time and who has always given them sound information, rather than advertising.

There are several ways a social media influencer can help you and your business:



- Sharing your social media updates with their follower base, which should be of considerable size if they are truly influencers;
- Helping you reach a bigger audience online and spreading the word about your business: a true influencer will have a following base that trusts their opinion, so hearing about your brand from them can be very beneficial to your success.
- Reviewing your product/service on their blog: a review on their blog could reach a large group of readers and massively increase your reach, as well as your sales numbers.
- Helping you get more engagement on social media: just a share from a social media influencer can get you tons of engagement, such as retweets, likes and comments.
- Helping you improve your search engine optimization results with more backlinks and more activity online surrounding your brand, such as conversations about your brand, engagement on social media and blogs
- Helping you to provide better content for your audience: once you identify an influencer, look at the type of content they usually share and what types of results they get. This way, you find out what kind of content is relevant to your audience and what you can do to improve your content marketing strategies.

Another important aspect when it comes to connecting with social media influencers, is that it doesn't cost you anything to create and grow this relationship; or, at the very least, it's much

cheaper than ads and other paid promotions. All you need is time, patience and maybe a tool to help you identify influencers – the rest is just engagement.

HOW DO YOU KNOW IF A SOCIAL MEDIA INFLUENCER IS RIGHT FOR YOU?

To figure out if a social media influencer is the right choice for you, you need to look at two main things: the type of content they provide and share and their blog traffic and social media follower numbers.

Start by checking out their website and blog to see what type of content they write: are they writing the same things as you? Are they writing about products and services similar to yours? Do you share the same interests and values? Next, check to see what other content they are sharing on their blog and on social media – is the content relevant to your business and your target audience?

Then, you have to look at their social media presence, meaning how many followers they have and how much their followers engage with them and the content they share. Check out their blog engagement as well: are their blog posts getting lots of shares, likes and comments?

Keep in mind that engagement can be a much more relevant stat than follower numbers. A person might have 100,000 followers and yet have low engagement levels, and in cases like this one, they might actually not be much of an influencer. On the other hand, if they're getting lots of retweets every time they post something interesting, or they get a lot of comments and questions from their followers, that shows that their audience is interested in their opinion and their updates – which makes them influencers.

HOW TO FIND SOCIAL MEDIA INFLUENCERS

There are several tools and ways to search for and identify social media influencers. Here are some of the top tools and methods:

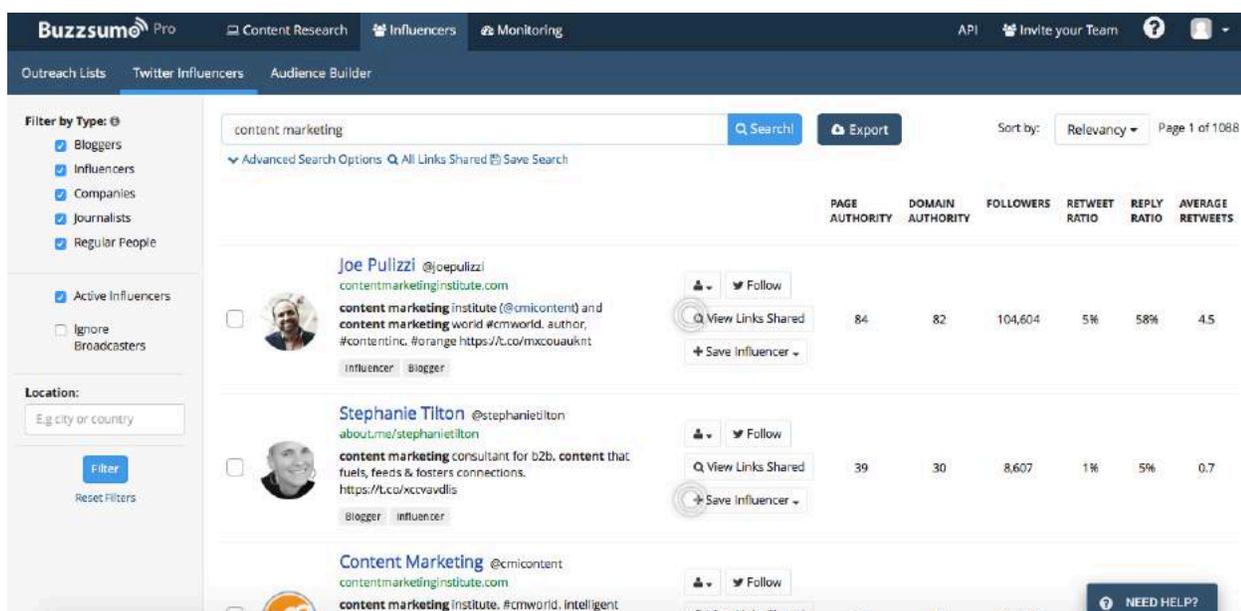
BUZZSUMO

BuzzSumo is a tool that helps you identify the top content being written for any given topic, as well as the key influencers. It is heavily based on content insights and research, but it is also a strong tool for identifying key influencers in your niche.

You can use BuzzSumo to find influencers for any topic you could think of, or location, and then analyse and organise them by reach, authority, influence and engagement. You will also get to see exactly what content each influencer shares, including what types of topics and domains they share.

Once you've identified influencers, you can follow them on social media directly within the BuzzSumo tool as well as reach out to them and start engaging.

To start your search for influencers on BuzzSumo, after you've logged into your account, go to the top of the page and click on the Influencers tab. From there, it's as easy as entering the keywords you want to search for:



From there, you can start sorting and filtering your results to find the most relevant influencers for you.

Go to Sort By to select which influencers you want to see first, such as the ones with the biggest domain authority, or the ones with the most followers or retweets.

To filter your results, your main options are on the left hand side of the screen. You can filter them by location, both by city and country, which is great for those whose business has a physical location, or those who sell products and services only in one city/country. You can also filter them by type, such as bloggers, influencers, companies, journalists and regular people. If you want to search for multiple keywords, simply write OR between them, rather than a comma.

You can also use BuzzSumo to search for particular influencers by entering @ followed by their username.

Once you've identified an influencer, you can check out the links they shared in the recent past by clicking on 'links shared' at the right of their name. You will be able to see a list of all of the content shared by that particular user in the recent past, and by clicking on the "other sharers" button at the end of each link, you'll be able to see who else has shared it as well.

Links shared by @lilachbullock

Links Shared Analyze Links

These are recent links shared by @lilachbullock on Twitter . You can click any link to open, share or press 'Other Sharers' to see other users who have shared the same piece of content.

How to win digital marketing clients JSB Talks Digital Episode 10 digitaltraininginstitute.ie/how-to-win-digital-marketin...	Aug 12, 2016	Q Other Sharers
The Competitor Problem: What To Share On Your Blog? maximizsocialbusiness.com/competitor-problem-share-blo...	Aug 12, 2016	Q Other Sharers
Social Business Spotlight Blog ibm.com/blogs/social-business/2016/08/11/create-fi...	Aug 11, 2016	Q Other Sharers
How to Design Beautiful Infographics Tips, Tricks & Useful Tools lilachbullock.com/tools-design-infographics/	Aug 5, 2016	Q Other Sharers
How Being Sandwiched Between 2 Turkish Brothels Corrects Your ... bloggingfromparadise.com/2-turkish-brothels-bigges...	Aug 4, 2016	Q Other Sharers
5 Important Tips for a Successful Social Media Campaign reviewzntips.com/successful-social-media-campaign/	Aug 2, 2016	Q Other Sharers
How to Build the Most Effective B2B or B2C Website by Monika B... sheownsit.com/build-effective-b2b-b2c-website/	Aug 2, 2016	Q Other Sharers

You can also click on “analyse links” at the top of the ‘links shared’ popup to get a full breakdown of which domains that particular user has shared:



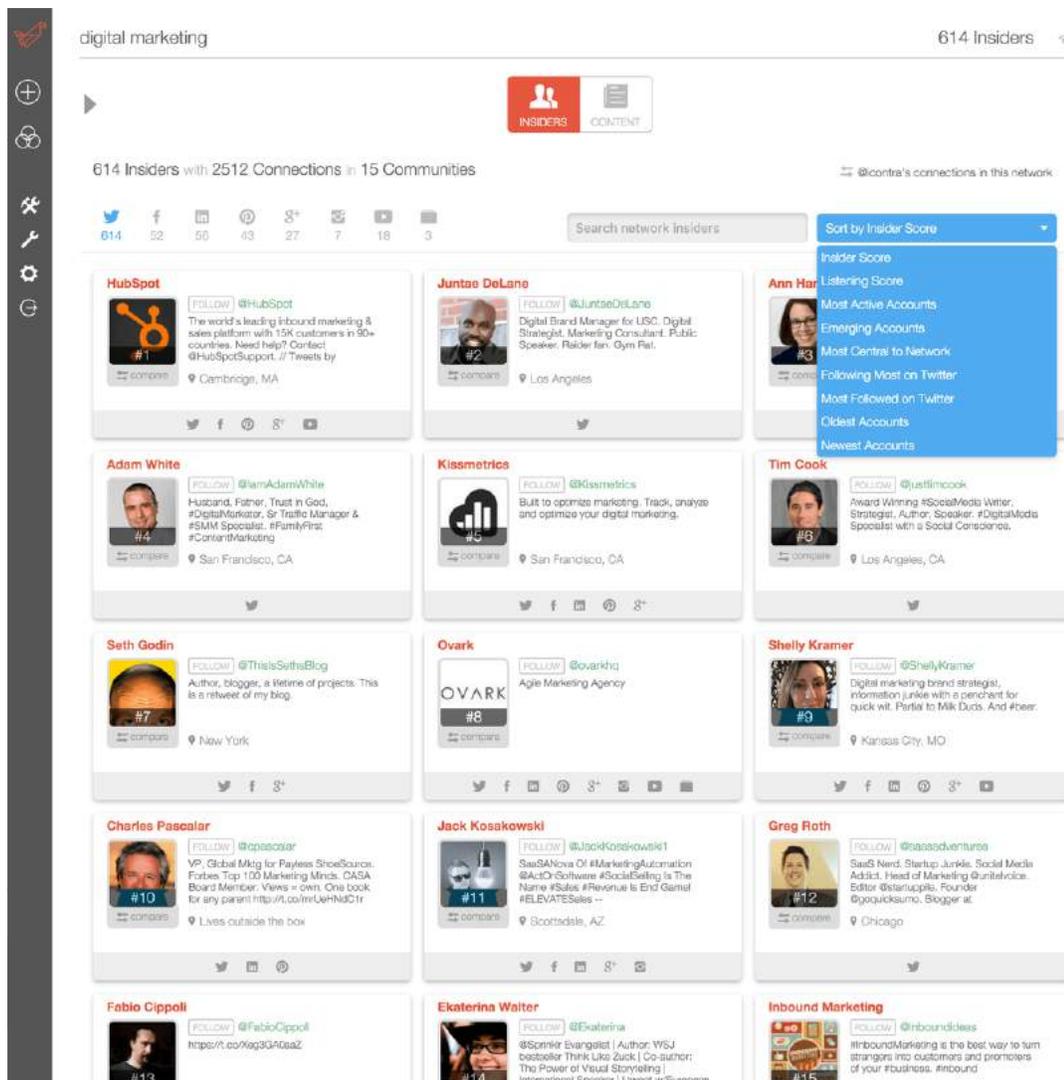
If an influencer has caught your eye, you can easily save them in your outreach lists by clicking on “save influencer” and creating/selecting a list.



LITTLE BIRD

Little Bird is similar to BuzzSumo in terms of the information it provides – i.e. key influencers and top content shared – but it has a very different, but just as easy to use, interface.

Searching for influencers is very easy – just like with BuzzSumo, enter the keywords you want to search for, and then sort the results as you want them:



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Their sorting is quite different, including the accounts' age, insider score and listening score, and most central to network. You will be able to see how these influencers rank within a network, as well as find new, emerging influencers in your niche. This is a really great feature, as it allows you to grow along with the influencer by promoting and supporting each other.

By clicking on an influencers' profile, you will be able to see a more detailed analysis of their reach and influence with the network and niche.

The screenshot displays a social media profile for Ann Handley (@MarketingProfs) within a network analysis tool. The profile header includes the name "Ann Handley @MarketingProfs", her title "Head of Content at MarketingProfs; author of the WSJ bestseller, Everybody Writes. I'm waging a war on mediocrity in content marketing. https://t.co/nrKDAcczy0", and her location "Boston, Massachusetts". Below this, statistics are shown: 81,891 TWEETS, 123,728 FOLLOWING, and 323,413 FOLLOWERS. The network analysis section is divided into two main parts: "Following" and "Followers". The "Following" section shows 106 connections (16.8%) with a "Not Yet Converted: 14" indicator. The "Followers" section shows 141 connections (22.3%) with a "Missed Opportunities: 40" indicator. Both sections feature a grid of profile pictures, with some icons replaced by blue silhouettes. A central profile picture of Ann Handley is positioned between the two network grids, with arrows pointing up and down. The interface also includes a "Digital marketing" category at the top, "631 Insiders" in the top right, and a "BACK TO NETWORK" link. A vertical sidebar on the left contains various navigation icons. The "k|ert" logo is visible in the bottom right corner of the screenshot area.

Another cool feature is that you get to find out if you've missed any opportunities for connections with those who have already connected with you via social media.

You can also search for relevant content that is being shared on Twitter and blogs and getting the best results:

The screenshot displays a social media dashboard for the search term "digital marketing". At the top, it indicates "Showing Insiders from Community 3" and "63 of 614 Insiders". Below this, there are tabs for "INSIDERS" and "CONTENT". A section titled "Community 3" shows "63 Insiders with 128 Connections in 1 Communities". There are filters for "Blogs & RSS" and "Tweets", and a "Search network content" button. A timeline filter is set to "LAST 24 HOURS", and a popularity slider is positioned between "NOTABLE" and "POPULAR".

The main content area features three cards:

- Card 1:** A tweet by **Tyler L. Fielding** (@tylerfielding) from Jan 12, 2016. The tweet text is: "SEO Do's and Don'ts 2016 #SEO #digitalmarketing #emailmarketing #SocialMediaMarketing #PPC #BigData #StartupIndia ... twitter.com/booming_in/...". It has 20 retweets and 8 likes. A "SHARE TO:" button is visible with icons for Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, and StumbleUpon. To the right of the tweet is a thumbnail for a "DO'S AND DON'TS LOCAL SEO" infographic.
- Card 2:** A retweet by **Adelaide Seo** (@AdelaideSeoSA) from Jan 12, 2016. The text is: "RT StrivingSEO These 7 #Brands Prove #Instagram Is For Everyone b2c.news/vwIUTX #SocialMediaMarketing #socialmedia #smm #seo #inbo...". It has 2 retweets and 1 like. A "SHARE TO:" button is visible. To the right is a thumbnail for an article titled "These 7 Brands Prove Instagram Is For Everyone".
- Card 3:** A recommendation for **growthhackingnyc** (@hackers_nyc) with the tagline "GROWTH HACKERS The Customer Success and Marketing Intersection".

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Subscribe to daily mission alerts from Little Bird and you'll get daily email alerts for each of your networks with the latest news and hottest content, as well as suggestions of accounts you should be connecting with. It's a very useful feature that helps you make sure you are always on top of your influencer marketing campaigns and never miss an opportunity to connect:

LITTLE BIRD 

BIG DATA NETWORK: DAILY MISSION FOR EL JEFÉ

1

Whom to Follow in big data



Big Data & Society @BigDataSoc Follow

6809 FOLLOWERS | FOLLOWING 1437
(DOES NOT FOLLOW YOU)

Insider Rank
65
Followed by
48 Insiders

Open access peer-reviewed journal connecting debates on emerging Big Data practices & how they reconfigure academic, social, industry, & government relations.

More about Big Data & Society on Twitter:

- 761 tweets since October 2013 (0 times per day)
- The first big data insiders to follow Big Data & Society were [Big Data Made Simple](#), [dataCloud LLC](#), and [BigData Opines](#).

Also found on [Klout](#).

[Remove Big Data & Society from future missions](#)

2

Hottest content to share and engage



Machine Learning (does not follow you) @AppliedML Follow

RT @mashable:  vine.co/v/MIHU7HuQP0

Followed by
3 Insiders

17:47 +00:00 - 14 Jan 2016

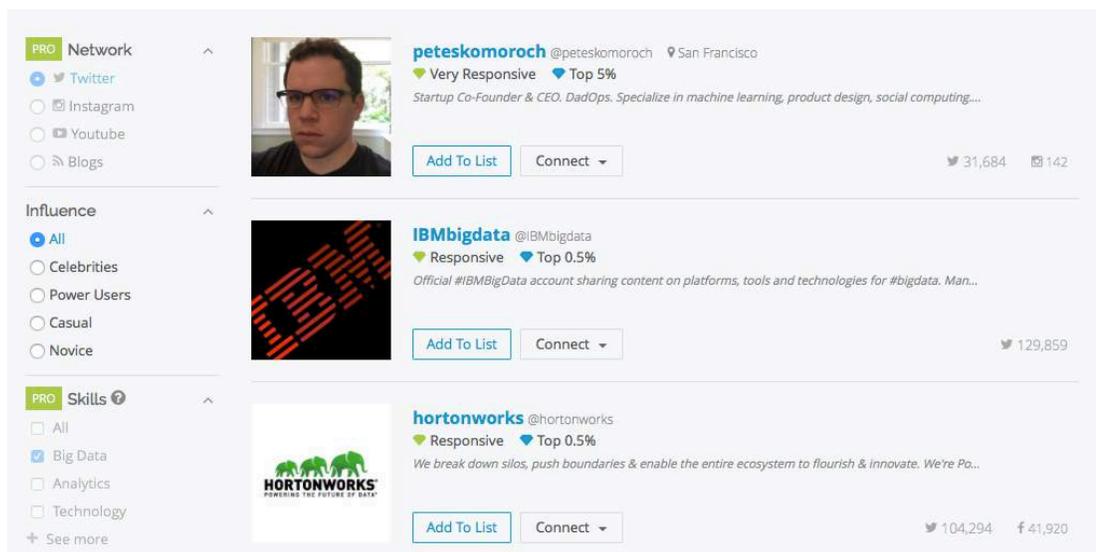
  2,713  0

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KLEAR

Klear is mainly a monitoring and reporting tool for social media, but it also has a pretty good influencer search tool.

Simply enter the keywords you want to search for and you've got the results:



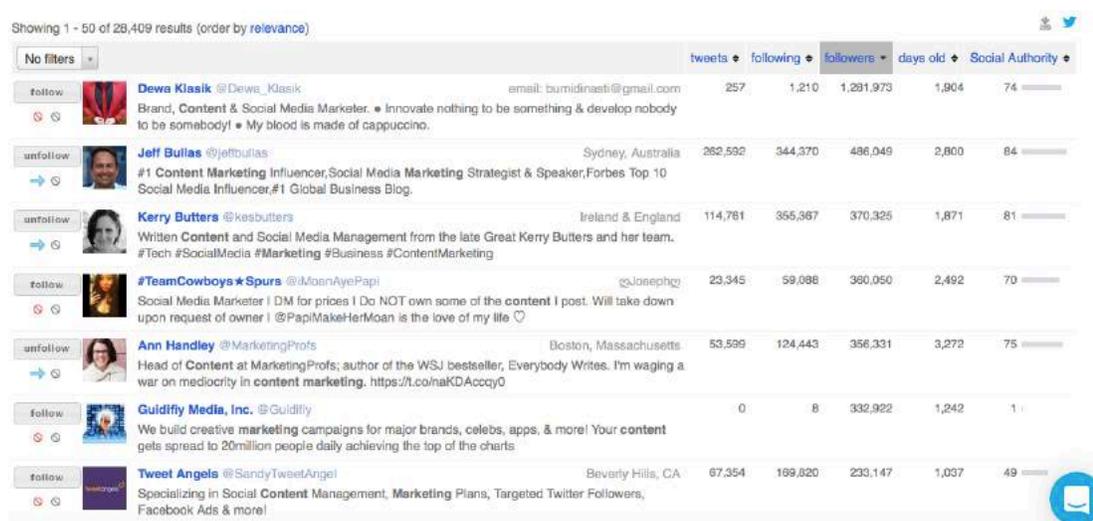
From here, start filtering your results; for users of the free Klear version, you can only sort by type of influencer (celebrity, power users, casual, novice) and location. With the Pro version, you go much further with your searches: choose the network (Twitter, Instagram, Youtube and blogs), skills (these differ as you search for different industries) and even choose the gender you want. You can also choose to exclude some from searches, such as those with low activity and popularity, brands, and those who rarely engage.

One of the things I like about Klear is that just under the name of the influencer you see how responsive they are on social media, or how often they engage with their followers and other users.

FOLLOWERWONK, BY MOZ

Followerwonk from Moz is a Twitter analytics tool that also allows you to search for key influencers on Twitter.

Once you've created an account (you can easily create a free one by connecting with your Twitter account), go to Search Bios and enter the keywords you want to search through Twitter profiles, or Twitter bios. Unless you're searching for someone specific, use the Twitter bios option to find influencers:



Showing 1 - 50 of 28,409 results (order by relevance)

No filters	tweets	following	followers	days old	Social Authority
Dewa Klasik @Dewa_Klasik Brand, Content & Social Media Marketer. • Innovate nothing to be something & develop nobody to be somebody! • My blood is made of cappuccino.	257	1,210	1,281,973	1,904	74
Jeff Bullas @jefbullas #1 Content Marketing Influencer, Social Media Marketing Strategist & Speaker, Forbes Top 10 Social Media Influencer, #1 Global Business Blog.	262,592	344,370	486,049	2,800	84
Kerry Butters @kesbutters Written Content and Social Media Management from the late Great Kerry Butters and her team. #Tech #SocialMedia #Marketing #Business #ContentMarketing	114,761	355,367	370,325	1,871	81
#TeamCowboys★Spurs @MoanAyePapi Social Media Marketer DM for prices I Do NOT own some of the content I post. Will take down upon request of owner @PapiMakeHerMoan is the love of my life	23,345	59,088	360,050	2,492	70
Ann Handley @MarketingProfs Head of Content at MarketingProfs; author of the WSJ bestseller, Everybody Writes. I'm waging a war on mediocrity in content marketing. https://t.co/naKDAccqy0	53,599	124,443	356,331	3,272	75
Guidify Media, Inc. @Guidify We build creative marketing campaigns for major brands, celebs, apps, & more! Your content gets spread to 20million people daily achieving the top of the charts	0	8	332,922	1,242	1
Tweet Angels @SandyTweetAngel Specializing in Social Content Management, Marketing Plans, Targeted Twitter Followers, Facebook Ads & more!	67,354	199,820	233,147	1,037	49

You can then order them by relevance, follower or following numbers, tweets, days old or social authority to explore all of the results.

This is the perfect tool for small businesses that want to get their foot in the water and start exploring the key influencers in their niche in a fast, cost-free way. But for more in-depth results and for those who want to start an influencer outreach campaign, it would be more useful to invest in one of the more extensive tools, such as BuzzSumo or Little Bird.

HOW TO CONNECT WITH SOCIAL MEDIA INFLUENCERS

So now that you've found a list of social media influencers, what is the next step? How do you connect with them and start building a relationship that could be mutually beneficial?

Building relationships with influencers will take time, so you have to be patient – but, it's well worth it, as the benefits of connecting with an influencer will outweigh the time and effort you put into it.



First steps

Start by following them on social media and engaging with them as often as possible to get your name out there. Share and like their content whenever they post something good and retweet their best tweets. In order to really stand out though, you need to actively engage with them by actually talking to them on social media. If they are starting or holding a conversation on Twitter, jump in the conversation to give your input. If they are hosting a Twitter Chat, make sure you know when it's happening and do your best to make it on time and participate.

It's also useful to check their blog regularly and leave comments on their posts, so that you engage with them on as many platforms as possible, and therefore increase your chances of being noticed by them.

Mention them or their work in your own blog posts, and provide them with backlinks – this way, they are more likely to return the favour in the future.

Connect offline

You could also take it to the 'real' world – for example, is an influencer attending any event in your area? It could be a conference, or a networking event, for example, and if that's the case, there might be even more influencers attending. By attending these meetings, you'll get to meet and network with influencers, and other interesting people that could help you in the future and give you valuable advice.

Keep engaging

The important thing is that you need to keep engaging with them as time passes, and not just start connecting and then completely forget about them after you've gotten some results. It's important to keep engaging, so that these relationships you've formed remain strong.

Keeping track of several influencers and your relationship with them can be quite daunting though.

One of the ways to make sure you don't forget about engaging with your key influencers is to add all of their blogs in your preferred RSS reader and once a day (or at least a few times a week) check out their latest blog posts, share them with your social media followers, and leave a few comments.

If your influencers are on Twitter, you could create a few Twitter lists with all of them. Whenever you have the time to go on Twitter, simply go to your list and start tweeting the influencers – this way, you will be able to easily keep track of all of your influencers in one place, and it makes it easier to tweet each one.

Once you've connected with an influencer, and you feel as though you've created a certain rapport between you two, you can start working towards getting the results you need.

As I mentioned earlier, you should try to link to their content and website whenever appropriate. In order to get them to notice and take action (unless maybe when they're getting lots of traffic from your website), you shouldn't be afraid to let them know about the backlink and ask them to share with their followers. Most times, especially if the content is good enough, they will share it – after all, it can also be very advantageous for them.

Product Reviews

Another way to benefit from your relationships with influencers is to ask them to review your product so long as you're confident in its capabilities.

Once you've started a relationship with an influencer though, you have to remember that it has to be a two-way street. You can't just have the influencer do all of this work for you while you don't really do anything for them in return.

CONCLUSION

Building relationships with social media influencers can be extremely beneficial – you could get to increase your reach, get more engagement, more followers and more conversions with the support of a key influencer. Identifying the right ones can be very easy to do with the right tool and building a relationship, although it may take some time, is well worth it.



About Lilach Bullock

Highly regarded on the world speaker circuit, [Lilach Bullock](#) has graced Forbes and Number 10 Downing Street with her presence! In a nutshell, she's a hugely connected and highly influential serial entrepreneur – the embodiment of Digital Intelligence.



Listed in Forbes as one of the top 20 women social media power influencers and likewise as one of the top social media power influencers, she is one of the most dynamic personalities in the social media market and was crowned the Social Influencer of Europe by Oracle. A recipient for a Global Women Champions Award (by the Global Connections for Women Foundation, GC4W) for her outstanding contribution and leadership in business.

After launching her first business within three years of becoming a mother, her financial success was recognised by being a finalist at the Best MumPreneur of the Year Awards, presented at 10 Downing Street. Following a resultant offer and wishing to spend more time with her daughter, she sold her first business to focus on social media, developing a multi-site blog and online marketing portfolio that generated in excess of 600,000 + visitors per month.

Lilach is consulted by journalists and regularly quoted in newspapers, business publications and marketing magazines (including Forbes, The Telegraph, Wired, Prima Magazine, The Sunday Times, The Guardian, Social Media Today and BBC Radio). What's more, her books have achieved No 1 on Amazon for Sales and Marketing and Small Business and Entrepreneurship.

When Lilach isn't working she enjoys spending time with her family and is an avid fan of Zumba.