



# BLOGGER OUTREACH

## CONVERTING INFLUENCE TO SALES

[WHITEPAPER]

# INTRODUCTION



Marketers are increasingly looking to bloggers as the new influencers to support their communications and SEO strategy. According to Technorati's Digital Influence Report, consumers trust information and advice they get from bloggers, and that blogs are the third-most influential digital-resource (after retail and brand sites) when making a purchase.

However, unlike B2B marketing, working with bloggers demands a different approach - an interpersonal one with just the right amount of professionalism and a dash of diplomacy. Because unlike savvy media buyers, bloggers are everyday people - a mum of three, a teenage shopaholic, a foodie, etc.

How do we know this? Because Vuelio is home to the largest and most up-to-date UK blogger database. We don't just store their contact details: we constantly engage with them to understand their pitching preferences, their pet peeves, the highs and lows of their blogosphere - which we share regularly on our blog as part of our popular Spotlight interview series.

In this whitepaper, we collate the intelligence gathered from our Spotlight interviews and break it down into five simple steps, giving you the insight you need to get smart about your blogger outreach strategy.



# IDENTIFY AND UNDERSTAND BLOGGERS THAT ARE RIGHT FOR YOU



Sure, bloggers are all online and active on social media but simply surfing the internet will result in a long list of contacts that are not necessarily right for you. Remember bloggers are only influencers in the areas they write about. Sending mass emails to a random list picked off the web will prove counterproductive.

As Ellie Myers, author lifestyle blog, Ellie Kate says: ‘There’s nothing worse than a mass email about car insurance or something like that – it shows that the marketer is trying to get a job done quickly and has given no thought as to whether it would be relevant to my blog.’

It is important, therefore, to identify key bloggers that are communicating to your core audience. Investing in a reliable database frees up time for you while ensuring targeted results.

Vuelio’s blogger database for example, not only helps you identify key bloggers but gives access to all the information to help you engage with them from the start. Further, Vuelio’s Influencer Score ranks bloggers and journalists within particular verticals across both social and mainstream media channels, so you understand the potential reach of your message.

# DON'T BUILD LISTS, BUILD RELATIONSHIPS



What can marketers do better in working with you?' is one of the questions we ask bloggers we interview which inevitably yields a similar response– get to know me.

As mentioned before, bloggers are everyday people, often with other jobs and responsibilities for whom the blog serves as an outlet to vent or simply a hobby.

Even though sponsored posts are often welcomed by bloggers, the approach taken by marketers can sometimes put them off. This is about person- to-person marketing which is why building a relationship is key to securing a long-term (and mutually beneficial) bond.

As Gabriella Simonian, content and website manager at BarChick Ltd and author of the food blog, Thyme & Honey advises: 'Read what I write and get to know me – I like to build personal relationships and be a little less formal. It's nice to be able to pick up the phone and speak to someone I know, and who's going to come to me with great ideas or opportunities that fit with the content of my blog.'

# BE UPFRONT AND HONEST



Bloggers are undoubtedly receptive to the opportunities presented by having a popular blog and many are in it just for the money.

However, from our conversations with bloggers, it is clear that marketers don't always treat bloggers with the same respect they do journalists, even though it is coverage they seek from both parties.

This is where your professionalism and diplomacy skills are best put to test.

Be upfront about what you want from bloggers and discuss expectations from the start. Don't demand coverage for a freebie and most definitely don't wrangle a story by luring them into fake competitions with non-existent prizes – just as you wouldn't with a journalist. Your duty is to get your pitch right and if you've followed the steps mentioned so far, bloggers will respond.

Danny, author of the daddy blog Danny UK, tells it like it is: 'I'm more inclined to work with you if you're fun, approachable and I don't just feel I'm being used. But if you want to feature something on the blog, talk to me. Ask if I'd be interested. Ask if I know anyone else or if you need more people. Tell me what you can offer me. Let's be honest, I want the money and the views as much as your clients want to be read about, but it needs to work for both of us.'

# LET BLOGGERS DO THE TALKING!



Good blogs have an established online presence and digital network. They do so for a reason which has to do with the content produced by the blogger that has proved to be appealing to its audience.

It is important, therefore, to let bloggers do what they do best and keep to their individual style so that your message benefits in their network.

To make sure your message is not distorted or miscommunicated, a brief on what you want communicated, and more importantly, what you

definitely don't want associated with your brand needs to be well-defined. A follow-up call or meeting is essential to iron out any doubts.

However, let the blogger do the talking, or else your message is no different from an advertorial, easily ignored by readers looking for perspective on blogs.

Hayley McLean, author of the mummy blog Sparkles and Stretchmarks explains: 'I think a good PR discusses expectations from both sides right from the start – when they would like the review/piece to go live by, what they would like to be included, etc – this way there can be no crossed wires and everybody knows where they stand.'

# BE A PART OF THE BLOGGING COMMUNITY



If you're looking for a one-off association with bloggers, you know the drill. But if bloggers are and will be an essential element in your marketing mix, it is important to stay on their good side. The blogosphere is vast but a close-knit community. A single negative comment or a tacky approach can evoke the wrath of the blogger and their network.

To understand bloggers, it is essential to be a part of their online community. While influencer data and outreach tools (like Vuelio's) give you direct access to such details, networking with bloggers personally at events and conferences is a sure way to inclusion. Moreover, engaging

with bloggers in discussions and debates also helps give your brand a voice among influencers and industry peers.

By maintaining a consistent relationship with bloggers - sharing industry insight or sending a free trial their way for nothing in return, you're more likely to establish a good understanding that goes beyond product pitches, opening a two-way communication stream that will be sure to give your brand the influencer edge.

Thu Tieu, author of the beauty blog Face Made Up sums it up for marketers: 'Bloggers are revolutionising the way companies promote their products and a lot of brands are beginning to realise that. The ones that don't, really need to catch-up and be more open in working with bloggers because I do think that we are becoming a much bigger voice.'

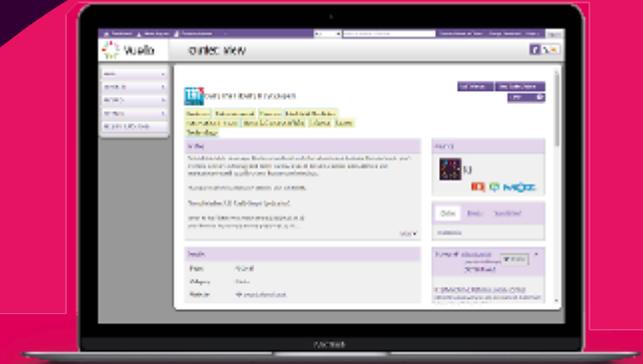
# Reviewing PR software?

## THE LARGEST DATABASE OF MEDIA CONTACTS

A good story is only half the PR challenge. The other 50%? Getting your brand heard. But if you have the story we have the platform to help you tell it.

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