

WINFLUENCE

—reframing—

**INFLUENCER
MARKETING**

to ignite your brand

jason falls

Foreword by David Meerman Scott

“The term ‘influencer’ often refers to some celebrity-wannabe on any social media platform. It’s time to burst that bubble! Jason’s book provides clear examples of how to have REAL influence, something that connects and is meaningful. Don’t be a falling star. Be a rising star.”

—JEFFREY HAYZLETT, PRIMETIME TV & PODCAST HOST, SPEAKER,
AUTHOR, AND PART-TIME COWBOY

“*Winfluence* is one of those rare books that has practical, how-to advice, while also providing a broader, more strategic context. Learn why influencer marketing is passé and why leaders must replace it with influence marketing, or as Falls declares, *Winfluence*. Get a fresh marketing perspective on how to drive lasting brand value by getting this book for you and your team.”

—CHARLENE LI, *NEW YORK TIMES* BESTSELLING AUTHOR OF *THE DISRUPTION MINDSET*, FOUNDER AND SENIOR FELLOW AT ALTIMETER, A PROPHET COMPANY

“The expertise inside *Winfluence* is worth 100 times what the book costs. Eventually, influence marketing will be the only marketing that works, and this is the must-have handbook that teaches marketers precisely how to do it (and do it right).”

—JAY BAER, FOUNDER OF CONVINCE & CONVERT AND
COAUTHOR OF *TALK TRIGGERS*

“Jason Falls has outdone himself with *Winfluence*. Marketing leaders should read this book now because it teaches us how to do ‘influence marketing’ the right way. It is so easy to get caught up with just Instagrammers and YouTubers, but Jason challenges the status quo and encourages us to build influence strategies across all online channels, and offline channels, too. I love this book and so will you!”

—LISA JOY ROSNER, SENIOR VICE-PRESIDENT BRAND & DIGITAL,
ORACLE CORPORATION

“The recurring magic trick of Jason Falls and his work is that he digs into topics that are often poorly handled and makes a piece of work that becomes essential to understanding a concept. If this book weren’t written by Falls, I wouldn’t read it. Because it is, I trust it.”

—CHRIS BROGAN, *NEW YORK TIMES* BESTSELLING AUTHOR, *TRUST AGENTS*

“I wish I could share with you how impactful, insightful, and actionable this book truly is, but words simply won’t do justice. This is one that you MUST read on your own. This book will change your focus from the noun to the verb; influence instead of influencer.

A worthy investment.”

—RANI MANI, HEAD OF EMPLOYEE ADVOCACY, ADOBE

“Influence is a verb, not a noun. Jason’s fantastic new book shows you how to create a marketing strategy based on true community and real engagement, and he lays out an actionable plan for what that means in an increasingly social/digital world. *Winfluence* is the approach your business needs!”

—ANN HANDLEY, *WALL STREET JOURNAL* BESTSELLING AUTHOR AND
CHIEF CONTENT OFFICER, MARKETINGPROFS

“Only Jason Falls would ask a non-influencer like me to influence you to buy *Winfluence*. But when I read it, I understood it’s the influence, not the influencer that is important. Jason taught me social media as we together reversed the then-declining sales of CafePress and grew it like a weed. *Winfluence* is my graduate-level education. It will be for you, too.”

—BOB MARINO, CEO, THANKYOUBACK AND FORMER CEO, CAFEPress

“Jason Falls is a marketing genius and an all-around great guy. I loved reading this book. Jason and I share many of the same philosophies and it’s never been a better time to be an influence marketer!”

—JO ANN HEROLD, CMO, THE HONEY BAKED HAM CO.

“This book can simultaneously lead us to humanistic and responsible practices in today’s cluttered landscape of messages and media. It is my hope that this book pushes us from a nascent idea of influence as an action and away from wasting resources on distracting approaches.”

—EMILY KIRKPATRICK, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR,
NATIONAL COUNCIL OF TEACHERS OF ENGLISH (NCTE)

“Whether you are arguing for budget increases to invest in this space or navigating the pitfalls of influencer outreach, the guidance in this book arms even the seasoned marketer with new insights and tactics for effective campaigns. Aside from Jason Falls’ notoriety and expertise in the social media realm, his thoughtful examples and easy-to-digest strategies are impactful and distinctive. This is the ultimate handbook of how to do it . . . right.”

—WENDY TREINEN, DIRECTOR OF BRAND AND PRODUCT COMMUNICATIONS,
GE APPLIANCES, A HAIER COMPANY

“Falls correctly pinpoints that ‘influencers’ are just the beginning of a much larger game of influence marketing; a game that is determining the success or failure of every brand and business.”

—ERIK QUALMAN, FIVE-TIME BESTSELLING AUTHOR; *SOCIALNOMICS*, *DIGITAL LEADER*, *WHAT HAPPENS IN VEGAS STAYS ON YOUTUBE*

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“For anyone who has ever ignored the opportunity of influencer marketing because it feels fake and scammy, this book will change your mind forever and help you take your brand to the top.”

—AMY LANDINO, FOUNDER OF AMYTV AND BESTSELLING AUTHOR OF
GOOD MORNING, GOOD LIFE AND *VLOG LIKE A BOSS*

“As traditional advertising continues to decline, influencer marketing is on the rise and Jason gives a practical guide with a powerful step-by-step approach on making it work for your brand.”

—LEWIS HOWES, *NEW YORK TIMES* BESTSELLING AUTHOR,
THE SCHOOL OF GREATNESS

“Finally, a book that combines influencer marketing with the strategy that actually makes it work. If you work in sales—and we all, in some way, work in sales—this book should be at the top of your reading list.”

— LAURA GASSNER OTTING, BESTSELLING AUTHOR OF *LIMITLESS—HOW TO IGNORE EVERYBODY, CARVE YOUR OWN PATH AND LIVE YOUR BEST LIFE*



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— chapter —

10

THE FOUR PURPOSES OF INFLUENCE

Up to now, we've talked a lot about who wields influence, how to find them, and the practical and tactical methods of employing influence marketing for your business or brand. We've touched on the strategic side of influence marketing in terms of meeting your goals and objectives. There's even been a bit of discussion on how to measure the success of your influence programs, though we'll talk about that even more in Chapter 15.

One topic we have yet to really flesh out is the purpose of your influence marketing. Driving sales or brand awareness are the practical results of your purpose, but they aren't really the purpose itself.

What is the definition of a purpose? It is the *reason for being*. That's more significant than whatever KPI or metric you're trying to achieve.

In this chapter, you'll learn influence marketing's four reasons for being and see how they connect to advertising, public relations, ratings and reviews, and word-of-mouth marketing.

INFLUENCE MARKETING'S REASONS FOR BEING

Depending on which college textbook you look in, there are between five and ten methods, or modes, of marketing communication. In general, they boil down to advertising, sales, public relations, customer service (which I translate to ratings and reviews, the voice of the customer online), and word of mouth. Some lists also add direct or sales force (which are just part of sales, in my opinion) and offer event, digital marketing, or other subdivisions as modes of their own. Others leave off customer service or word of mouth as if they fit into one of the other modes.

The four reasons a company or brand might engage a person with influence align with four of the major modes of marketing communications. These reasons for being are:

1. to persuade (aligns with advertising)
2. to associate (aligns with public relations)
3. to validate (aligns with ratings and reviews)
4. to enthuse (aligns with word of mouth)

Take a look at Figure 10–1 on page 139 to see how these align.

In the next four chapters, we'll not only dive deeper into each of these purposes but also illustrate how they come to life in businesses and brands like yours. But let's define each before we dissect their how and why.

Employing Advertising Influence (Persuade)

The default purpose of most influence marketing programs is to advertise a product or service. In fact, most of the influence marketing examples

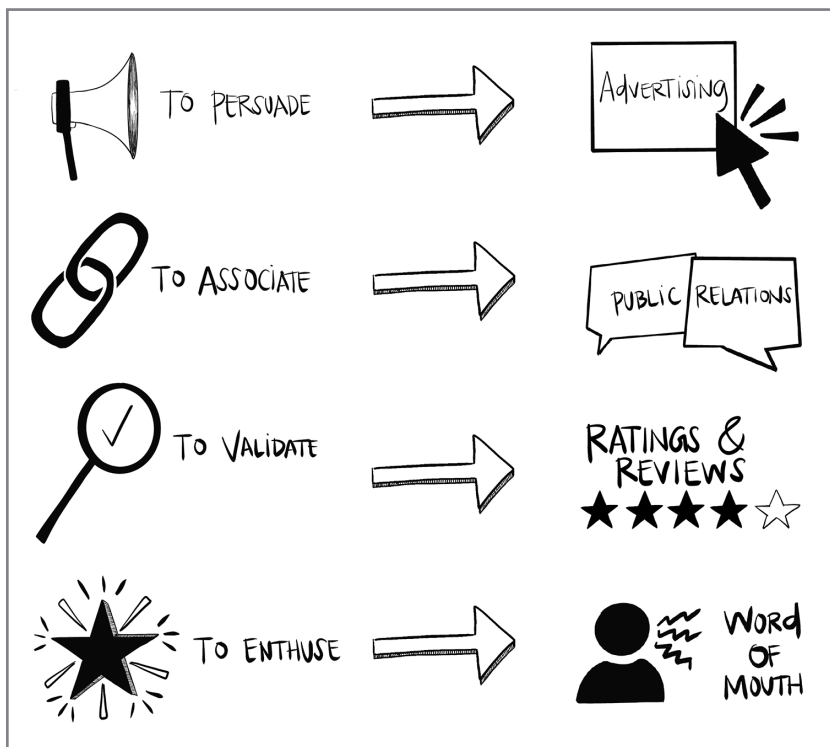


figure 10–1. The Four Purposes of Influence

you’ve seen are likely efforts to persuade the audience to try or buy a given product or service.

Leveraging influence partners as an advertising mechanism focuses their efforts on driving brand awareness to increase the likelihood of consideration or trial. Or they will offer an overt call to action to purchase or try the product.

This type of influence marketing dates back centuries. In 1765, Josiah Wedgwood had developed a more refined, cream-colored earthenware at his factory at Burslem. His work caught the attention of Queen Charlotte, who commissioned him to make a tea set. The enterprising Wedgwood called his new line “Queen’s Ware,” and the local newspaper announced he had been appointed “potter to the queen.”

By the time he died 30 years later, his pottery was popular worldwide. He was worth the equivalent of hundreds of millions of dollars in today’s measures.

The difference between having a reigning monarch in the days of British imperialism endorse your work and, let's say, having a fashion influence partner on Instagram wear your designer outfit in a post is substantial. But the activation is similar. You leverage their endorsement of your product, service, or brand to encourage others to buy it.

On the B2B side of the aisle, an influence partner may be used to persuade people to sign up for an email list or download a piece of content in exchange for their contact information. That lead is the B2B version of a B2C sale. It's not a \$49 pair of sunglasses or shoes, but that just might be what you have to pay per lead to convert one sale of \$49,000 or more.

Software companies are the best at using influence marketing in the B2B space. Most of them use webinars and white papers to lure prospects to sign up, handing over their email address or other contact information to do so and becoming a lead in their funnel. Sprinklr, an enterprise social media marketing solution set, leveraged communications guru Peter Shankman for a crisis communications webinar in 2019. Not only did the software company put significant social media and paid media resources into promoting the webinar, but Shankman promoted it to his audience as well.

This technique is how hundreds of technology companies have built a lead pipeline over the years. It is a content marketing-era version of advertising—instead of buying an ad in a trade magazine or even on a trade industry website, you put that advertising spend behind an influence partner to promote the webinar and your company to their audience. You also lay out advertising dollars along other channels to promote the webinar and the influence partner's involvement with your company for maximum effectiveness.

The focal point of the persuasion in an advertising campaign may be to convince people to try or buy a product, but it may also be to convince them to think differently about a company or a brand. In this connotation, you might easily confuse the activity with public relations. But, as you'll see below, persuading someone to think differently is still persuasion, not association.

Employing Public Relations Influence (Associate)

A softer purpose sometimes employed by brands in leveraging influence partners is that of association. Public relations, in many ways, is focused

not on a specific persuasive direction—trying to convince an audience to do or think something—but merely on associating a product, service, company, or issue with another in order to borrow trust or equity from them.

In other words, the Tom James Co. may work through public relations channels to get *Esquire* to feature their latest suit designs, but their goal isn't for *Esquire* to tell people to buy custom clothing from Tom James. It's more about simply associating the clothier with *Esquire*. The brand equity transferred by association elevates the Tom James Co. in the mind of the reader.

This technique is often employed in more long-term relationships, where the influence partner is using the product but not openly asking people to buy it. Or when they talk about the social issues or nonproduct aspects of a brand or company to further associate the brand with their stance on the issue.

A strong example of this is the relationship Dove Men+Care has with many bloggers, podcasters, and those influential in the dad and fatherhood space. The men's personal care brand from Unilever regularly sponsors events like the Dad 2.0 Summit in order to connect and partner with fathers. It works to amplify advocacy for passing paid family medical leave legislation and including paternity leave in that legislation.

"Unilever and Dove Men+Care, part of the larger Dove family, are so committed to finding purpose within their brands," Jordan Lewis, brand manager at Unilever U.S. for Dove Men+Care, said. "[They are committed] to finding sustainability, both environmentally and socially. That is one of the most incredible things about the Dove portfolio, is that they are highly driven by their purpose. For Dove Men+Care, that has always been expanding and creating opportunities for men to show care."

So Dove Men+Care influence engagements may mention the brand, but they are focused on associating it with social advocacy that supports its core audience of men, many of whom are fathers.

In a B2B context, we can go back to the example of Shankman and Sprinklr, but think of their association as more of an investment over time. IBM created fantastic awareness of its Watson computer by challenging *Jeopardy!* champions Brad Rutter and Ken Jennings in 2011. The computer,

designed to understand natural human speech, beat both humans to win a \$1 million prize, and overnight nearly everyone in America suddenly knew what IBM's Watson was.

But they didn't know how to leverage the publicity, so IBM's Watson marketing team decided to engage people with influence to solve the problem. It invited 24 notable speakers, authors, bloggers, and analysts in the enterprise software, technology, and marketing space to join a new program called the Futurists.

These futurists were not just treated as sponsored content outlets or product endorsers, however. They were invited to IBM events, asked to contribute content to IBM's blog, and engaged to host webinars and contribute to white papers.

The Watson marketing team wasn't leveraging them for advertising calls to action or lead generation. They wanted to build a relationship and association with these influential people over time. In that relationship, they were pushing some advertising levers, with webinars and the like, but the central point was to ensure that these notable people, whom enterprise software purchasers looked to for advice, were telling the story of Watson and its applications to companies.

The first year of the IBM Futurists program was so successful that they expanded and invited me to be a part of the group. I was compensated at a modest level to write blog posts for their website about social listening, which included explaining how Watson's marketing engine can make the process of analyzing millions of data points in social conversations quicker and more efficiently than other platforms. They also flew me to a couple of conferences to speak, live tweet, and report for both their channels and mine.

At no point was I ever asked to sell Watson. None of us were. We were simply there to associate ourselves with a big company and a new product that other companies could use.

Employing Ratings & Reviews Influence (Validate)

If expert reviews are one of the fundamental triggers that push consumers to buy a product, and we can agree that influential people are viewed as experts, then leveraging your influence partners to recommend your

product or service should be their primary function. There are two things that snag the thinking of most marketers here.

First, this is another area where our bastardization of the term “influencer” distorts our thinking. An “influencer,” we believe, is someone who takes a selfie while wearing your makeup or hat or watch. They don’t do useful things like link to your website or post a rating or review of your product on your website. Or someone else’s website.

And that begets the second snag. Many sites that host customer reviews have policies against incentivizing or paying people to review your product or service. Marketers, especially SEO types, thus keep a big, strong wall between the two practices.

But product reviews hosted on your website—and thus curated by you—are still fundamentally critical data points for search engines. And places like Facebook treat reviews like posts—as long as you abide by the community ethics standards, and the Federal Trade Commission’s (FTC) guidance on disclosures, it should be fine to ask people to post reviews.

And your influence partners will do so if you ask.

An influence partner campaign my team at Cornett ran for Tempur-Pedic’s LuxeAdapt mattress not only asked them to post on social networks but also leave a review on the Tempur-Pedic website, where the company aggregates reviews from various places. Our influence agreement clarified the nature of that review:

— “Talent will post at least one (1) honest, FTC-compliant review of the mattress on TempurPedic.com with the influencer’s legal name, city of residence, etc.” —

That program engaged 50 influence partners in the weeks following the LuxeAdapt’s release into the market, helping to seed qualified reviews for website visitors to consider.

We’ll look deeper into the ethics of influence review strategies in Chapter 13. In no way would I recommend violating a review or social networking site’s terms of service, not to mention your own sound ethics, to cheat the system. But there’s nothing wrong with encouraging people to

review your product or service as long as you are directing them to give honest reviews, not just positive ones.

To truly integrate influence marketing across disciplines and lift your brand, you have to think beyond your initial instincts and focus on awareness. Ratings and reviews are critical to your buyers' decision-making process.

"The Millennial Consumer Study," a 2015 survey of Millennials by Elite Daily and Millennial Branding, found that only 1 percent of Millennials trust advertising, while 33 percent rely largely on blog reviews before making purchases. If that isn't a motivation to use your influence partners to drive online reviews, you won't find a better one.

Employing Word-of-Mouth Influence (Enthuse)

The final, and perhaps most important, purpose of influence marketing takes a bit from each of the others but is distinctive in that it doesn't have to persuade, associate, or drive reviews. It is the art of using influential people to drive word-of-mouth marketing for your brand.

Yes, you can use word of mouth to get people to try or buy your product. In that regard, it functions like advertising. You can use it to associate your brand with a given influence partner, cause, or conversation, so it also functions like public relations. And leveraging word of mouth to drive reviews is almost a tactical execution of the purpose to drive recommendations.

But expertly executed word of mouth does all of them. It builds not just customers, but loyal customers. It drives not just online reviews, but genuine, proactive recommendations from one person to another. Someone saying "You have to try this!" in a conversation is infinitely more powerful than clicking on a star rating on Amazon or Google.

Dettol is the bestselling antiseptic cleaner in the world, but in 2011 it found itself lagging in third place in the biggest opportunity market: China. When surveys showed it was largely used just to clean floors, and not all the other surfaces it was intended for, the British company launched a convenient, hand-held spray bottle version of the cleaner.

It then sent the spray bottles to 4,000 influential Chinese moms whose online content indicated a passion for household care. (Remember, China

is a market of more than 1 billion people, so 4,000 is just a drop in the bucket.) The instructions were to try it but also pass along bottles to their friends. The brilliant technique of seeding product with influence partners who could then immediately influence their circles of people blew the campaign wide open.

Dettol's brand awareness numbers jumped 500 percent, purchase intent doubled, and sales increased 86 percent. The estimates from its agency, Singapore-based firm Advocaci, are that the campaign reached 46 percent of its intended target audience.

Chapter 14 will drill deeper into how influence partners can be engaged not just to add to your word-of-mouth marketing programs but to serve as the keystone for the efforts. After all, you want WOMM to come from expert, credible, and trusted sources. And who do prospective customers trust more than the influential people they already rely on for content, advice, and recommendations?

WHAT THE PURPOSES MEAN FOR YOU

When I have doubts, confusion, or just get caught up in the details of a client project, I always re-center myself by asking "Why?" Why are we doing this? Why is the brand using this advertising? Why are they paying for our time? Why are they leveraging influence partners?

The purpose—the *reason for being*—is the simple answer to the question. If that answer is that they are trying to persuade, I instantly know we should focus on making people try or buy a product, or perhaps think differently about the company or issue. If the answer is to associate with a given mindset, issue, or influence partner, I know we must deploy more relationship-building techniques aligned with PR to produce a positive association in the consumer's mind.

If the answer to "Why?" is to validate the value our product or service provides, I immediately know producing reviews is the output we're looking for. And if the answer is to build passion around what the client has or is, I know we're combining any or all of those to produce word of mouth driven through or by influential people.

These four *reasons for being* are your purpose. Your goals get closer to ground level, but not as close as your objectives or tactics. I find it

easier to express your purpose for using influence marketing in singular terms.

Why are you using influence? To . . .

- * persuade
- * associate
- * validate
- * enthuse

Let's look at each in greater detail and see how brands are paving their way to influence marketing success.