

Move Over Kardashians: Why Average Joes Are More Influential Than Celebrities on Social Media

Author : Fabrizio Perrone

Date : January 30, 2016



Who wouldn't want **Kim Kardashian** and **Kendall Jenner** endorsing their product? The only problem is, you have to pay them [more than \\$200,000](#) each for a single **brand** post.

The traditional perspective of influencer **marketing** is that celebrities have more influence over audiences than others, and if they encourage people to get behind a product/service, **brand** affinity rises.

But now there's a new breed of stars – the average Joes – who in many cases have a good amount of **social** media influence, and don't demand big pay checks.

These are the folks who continue to break Hollywood's long-held monopoly over **social** media influence.

Average Joes Are Reshaping Influencer Marketing

The key to benefitting from influencer **marketing** is to identify the right **social** users with the influence in a particular field.

Brands normally think of celebrities when fitting individuals in this category, but there are influencers in all industries. Marketers should rate the personality and relevance of an individual higher than their popularity when making a decision about who to collaborate with.

Just ask **Birchbox**, the New York web-based monthly subscription service that sends a box to its subscribers consisting of 4-5 selected samples of makeup and other beauty products. They sent one to **Cherish Michelle** (a.k.a. [PrettyPistol86](#)), a long-tail influencer on **YouTube** and **Instagram**.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qAGcKsNABOI>

She informed her followers about **Birchbox**, and then gave an honest review about the products she received. There's also a sign-up link for people who're interested in signing up for **Birchbox**.

Even though she doesn't have millions of subscribers, her content makes followers think about signing up to **Birchbox**. She also receives decent views considering she has under 9000 followers on **YouTube** and 2000 followers on **Instagram**.

Also, most of the comments on her videos are positive.

Cherish's **social** influence is based on her close contact with her audience, having conversations with them, and using their ideas. Her relationship is more personal than the relationship celebrities have with their followers, and therefore is the foundation of her power to sway opinion.

On the other hand, someone like **Kylie Jenner** may come off as biased for the audience, and the **brand** would also have to pay her more to promote its line. Research by Oracle [found that marketing](#) messages featuring athlete and celebrity endorsements resonate the least with people.

Image source: [Oracle](#)

Reyne Haines revealed the following in [a blog post](#) on The Huffington Post:

Many **brands** see very low conversion rates on celebrity engagement. However **social** tastemaker followers often have a 40-50% respond ratio.

From a practical perspective, consumers take celebrities as financial beneficiaries of endorsements. On the other hand, everyday experts serve no duty to **brands**. Thus, consumers trust their opinion compared to the façade fabricated by the heavily-paid stars.

Another plus point of these influencers is that many of them are still in their early twenties. Consumer segments like millennials find it easier to identify with these experts as they share the same tastes and views, along with the love for **Instagramming** and **Snapchatting**.

Average Joes have “average followings”

Cherish Michelle’s following was just average compared to other beauty and makeup influencers on **YouTube**, but the fact that she generated good results indicates that the future of influencer **marketing** is ripe for long-tail influencers.

Long-tail influencers? These are the individuals who not intuitively make it to the list of top **social** media stars. They are simply the individuals people love to follow and their opinions carry weight.

While a **social** media star with 3 million subscribers may give more exposure to your **brand**, engagement driven by long-tail influencers are more likely to turn audiences into actual customers. Also, when you combine engagement with lower costs, you can start to see more effective campaigns.

It should also be noted that the audience of long-tail influencers don't consume his/her content just because everyone else consumes it but because they find it valuable.

Finding right influencers for your brand

Now that you're aware that influence is not in the number of subscribers/followers, you should work towards finding the right influencer for your **brand**. This is easier to do with long-tail influencers because

- It's less likely that several **brands** are chasing them.
- It's more likely that they fit within your **marketing**

But you need to understand the content creators' interactions with their audience to find the right fit for your company. Mentioned below are some measures you should take:

Review ongoing conversations: Check how many comments the influencer you're considering receives on average and their response to those comments. You want someone who scores well on having active conversations with people.

Use niche hashtags: Hashtags can help you discover which experts are trending on **social** media. Niche hashtags like #gothicfashion should work well than hashtags like "fashion" to help you discover long-tail experts.

Work with multiple influencers: While one endorsement from a long-tail expert might not make your business famous on **social** media, collaborating with a few can get the job done. You'll need to create a pool of ideal influencers to work with for the purpose.

Note: Sometimes it can be difficult and challenging to uncover the right influencers on your own, especially if you want to work with multiple long-tail experts. If you find influencer hunt time-and-resource consuming, it would be wise to utilize automated platforms that track real-time data on influencers and provide metrics on their performance.

With such options, you have your work cut out when it comes to making a decision about who to partner with for your next **marketing** campaign.

Be prepared for a surprise: your next **brand** ally could come from an unexpected place.

Image courtesy of [Helga Esteb](#) / [Shutterstock.com](#).

//