

Using Influencers to Pivot Your Marketing & Comms Strategy

INTRO

There is an unprecedented global shake-up in traditional marketing happening right now. As our ability to hold in-person events, conduct field marketing and offline relationship building is constrained, many marketers will have to find innovative ways to **create compelling campaigns** and deliver **crucial outcomes around awareness & demand generation to their businesses**.

This guide will outline how you can harness the power of key influencers, thought leaders & content creators in your space to drive those results. From **new ways to share thought leadership content, suggestions on how to pick the right influencers** to collaborate with and specific **tactics for building relationships with key influencers & peers** in your network, we hope this will provide valuable advice to help you deliver against targets.

These frameworks are drawn from Onalytica's best practices for influencer relations, employee advocacy & digital marketing. if you want to know more, don't hesitate to contact your Onalytica Customer Success Manager.



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1. PLANNING

PLANNING

There are a range of activities you can consider to **overhaul traditional approaches** in favour of influencer collaborations. Influencers have **engaged audiences on your key topics** which they can use to **promote & enrich your key messages**.

Below, we'll outline activities you can run live and those you can use to bolster and expand your efforts to drive brand awareness, lead generation, social selling, employee advocacy & account-based marketing outcomes.

92%

of marketers surveyed say that putting on successful online events will be critical or important in coming months

Econsultancy

What activities can I run with influencers instead of live events?

Online Panel Discussion

Any panel discussions you had planned can still go ahead in digital format. There are many online solutions available to help you hold a panel-style discussion with a moderator, panellists & attendees viewing live or on-demand. Influencers can be invited to participate or moderate these panels as they would in person.

They can promote the panel to potential attendees beforehand and use their expertise to enrich the discussion.

Objectives this helps drive: Brand Awareness, Key Reputation Drivers, Lead Generation (if gated through sign up)

Example: [Healthcare IT Today panel HIMSS discussions hosted online](#)

Example: [SXSW Festival collating resources to host sessions online](#)

Livestream

Major speeches like keynotes can still be viewed by a remote audience by livestream. You can organise to have speeches which influencers were due to deliver streamed for the audience to watch live or on-demand. Bear in mind that live views might be limited, but recordings can still perform well in the following days.

PLANNING

Objectives this helps drive: Brand Awareness, Key Reputation Drivers, Lead Generation (if gated through sign up)

Example: [AT&T HIMSS Event on Periscope](#)

Live Demo

If you have any new products launching at an event, consider setting up a live demo with an influencer. Set up a briefing beforehand to talk them through the product and give them access for a few days to let them get familiar with it. Then set up the video conference to share the demo live & on-demand. The influencer(s) can use their industry knowledge & experience to highlight key use-cases and lend an outside perspective to the demo.

Objectives this helps drive: Product Awareness, Lead Generation (if gated through sign up)

Localised Meet-ups

Where safe to do so & in line with government advice in your area, you can consider hosting meetups in local offices to allow activities like networking to take place on a smaller scale. You can invite local influencers to host or participate in panel discussions, give a speech or run a product demo.

Objectives this helps drive: Brand Awareness, Key Reputation Drivers, Lead Generation (if gated through sign up)

Example: [AWS recaps of major conference held across Europe](#)

How will you keep the audience engaged?

To combat some of the distractions and potential fatigue from more online events, have a plan in place to keep audiences engaged throughout your online event. Done right, their impact can be spread over a much longer period, driving audience engagement & lead generation for your organisation. Influencers can have an important role in this, offering audiences a different perspective to your brand with industry expertise & skilled content creation.

Gamification & Audience Participation

One of the key advantages of online events lie in the opportunities to make the audience part of the conversation. This mostly requires only a little added effort & planning to execute but can greatly increase meaningful engagements like sharing the content with a colleague or subscribing to your marketing database.

Influencers can help run these activities and encourage their audiences to participate in the event if you involve them.

Many livestreaming tools will have functionality for the audience to send questions – if they're not directly involved in the event itself, influencers can field queries from the audience while a live event is ongoing, adding their own commentary.

Holding a live chat directly on a social network like Twitter or LinkedIn can be a useful way of drawing more people into the discussion. All you need is a dedicated hashtag, and anyone will be able to join in the discussion. Once your audience see others from their network engaging, they'll be more likely to join in.

Another tool at your disposal is the use of interactive content like quizzes. Viewing a session remotely can involve a while waiting for the session to start, or gaps between speakers. Aim to fill those gaps with a task the audience can complete themselves – consider offering prizes for winners to inject a bit of competition.

What other content can I create with influencers?

Along with any recordings of live video sessions, there are numerous options for follow-up content to engage the target audience. Depending on the specific format of this content, it can drive a range of objectives from Brand Awareness to Demand Generation or Employee Advocacy.

Podcasts

Already a popular format in B2B marketing, podcasts offer an opportunity to capture audience attention outside of business hours. Podcast listeners are growing as a group, and (in the US) are [more likely to be affluent](#). Surveys of LinkedIn users suggest that [senior management & C-Suite executives are more likely to listen to podcasts](#).

There are 2 ways you can deploy this content format:

1) Publishing your own podcast

Advantages:

- The content is your own
- You'll have good visibility over metrics like clicks & listens

Challenges:

- You might not already have a dedicated audience or necessary equipment & expertise

Top influencer types to use:

Event speakers, KOLs

2. Appearing on an influencer's podcast

Advantages:

- Influencers will have an engaged audience on your key topics already
- They will also already have the relevant equipment & know how to run a podcast

Challenges:

- You will lose direct visibility over the metrics, but you should be able to negotiate visibility & promotional arrangements with the influencer
- You'll need to arrange a spokesperson within your organisation who is confident communicating your key messages

Top influencer types to use:

Content Creators, Professional Influencers

Objectives this helps drive: Brand Awareness, Employee Advocacy

Infographics

Infographics are very well suited to promoting your messages on social. They can quickly summarise key information, are easy to share & capture user attention on social platforms. Research shows that visual content improves user retention of key messages and infographics in particular can drive up to [12% more web traffic](#).

With around [65% of B2B marketers making use of infographics](#) as part of their content strategy, you'll be one of many taking advantage of this compelling format. To drive this, collaborate with influencers who have a proven ability to drive a wide audience to content & include them in the creation of your infographic, e.g by adding a quote of theirs to the final content. By involving them in the process, you make the content far more share-worthy.

65%

Audiences recall **65%** of the information in visual content 3 days later, compared with **10%** of purely written content

PLANNING

If your infographic is designed to promote something else, remember to share relevant image files, UTM tracking links & embargo dates ahead of time. With the right set-up, infographics can drive greater **brand awareness & site traffic**.

Video interview

Given the choice, [59% of senior executives say they prefer to watch video](#) than read the text version of content. Video interviews with keynote speakers & execs are a great way to take advantage of this, presenting your campaign messages in an easy-to-consume format. Influencers can act as interviewers, asking your spokespeople about the context around your new product releases or their predictions for the industry. To really get the benefit of an influencer's expertise, you should also ask them for their thoughts about the future of the industry and possible applications of your new technology.

If looking for influencers to interview: Industry Practitioners, Event Speakers

If looking for influencers who can interview your execs: Professional Influencers, Content Creators, Event Speakers

Objectives this helps drive: Brand Awareness, Employee Advocacy

Explainer videos

These are particularly effective as a follow-up to any live demo or educational online events you've produced. Over [70% of Youtube users](#) say they watch video to help solve a problem at work, home or study, so **keep the content educational and focus on a challenge your target audience might be having**. You can break the longer format down into smaller sections to provide a summary.

You should have influencers participate in the creation of the content, either using video skills, or as narrators/hosts.

With [54% of senior executives](#) reporting that they share video content with colleagues on a weekly basis, harnessing skilled content creators to help deliver your messages can be a highly effective way to reach decision-makers.

If the videos are targeted more at practitioners, you can embed the content on a landing page with links to gated content or free trials to help potential users evaluate your solutions further.

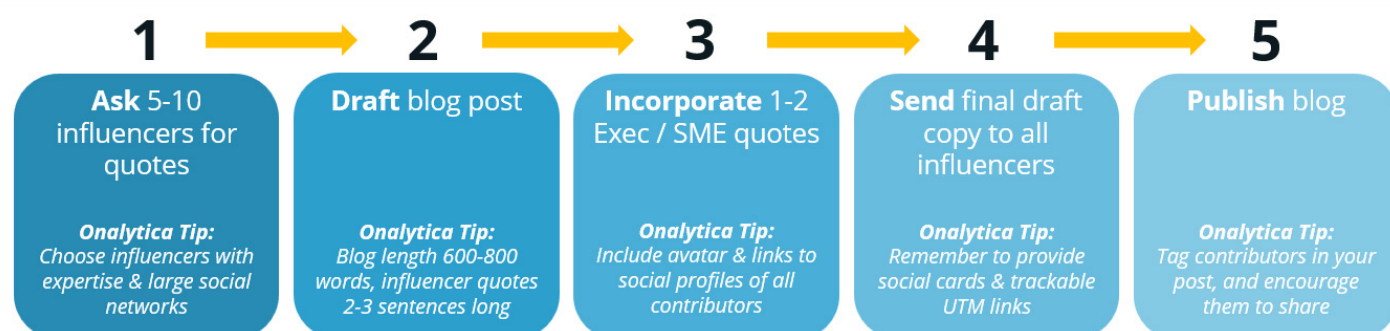
Objectives this helps drive: Brand Awareness, Product Awareness, Demand Generation

Round-up blog posts

These should serve as short, digestible summaries of key messages from your event or campaign. Invite influencers to participate by having them contribute quotes to the article.

Use the guide below to work through the steps required to create & publish a blog post rounding up key insights from your event.

Influencer Generated Content - Thought Leadership Blog Post



Time Investment: 2-4 hours		Case Study Examples	
Content Outputs	Outcomes	Finastra	IBM Systems Europe
Blog post	2,500 Pageviews	Cisco	Ricoh
Influencer social posts	1-2m Impressions	Schneider Electric	Refinitiv
Employee Social Posts	150 Engagements	IBM Tech for Good	Cherwell

Objective this helps drive: Brand Awareness, Site Traffic

Examples: [Finastra](#), [Cisco](#), [Schneider Electric](#), [IBM Tech for Good](#)

Whitepaper, eBook or Research

High-value, evergreen content like this can drive results for your marketing organisation over a significant period. However, to make sure that content like this gets seen by your audience, you will need to ensure that it stands out from similar tactics your competitors are using.

Influencers can help this in 2 ways:

Promotion – influencers have engaged audiences on their key topics and a community of

like-minded thought leaders who interact & engage with their content. Publishing through their channels as well as your own is vital if your content is to be seen by as many of your target audience as possible. Social networks use signals like engagement and number of people in your network sharing something to decide whether individuals see it in their feed – the more times your content is posted, shared & engaged with, the better the chance people will see it.

47%

of senior management say they are more likely to read content **shared by an industry influencer**

Raconteur, 2017

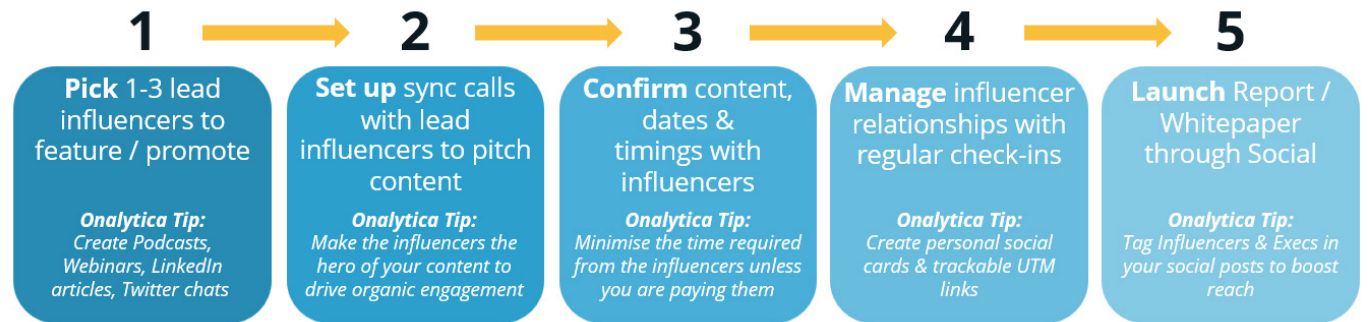
Content Contribution – adding expert opinions into content makes it more credible to your audience. Influencers can draw on industry experience & knowledge of marketplace trends to draw original insights. Offer influencers early access to the content so they can add their own perspective. Your audience will be more likely to pay attention, and the influencers will be invested in helping to promote the content. If you have budget, you can ask a professional influencer to write a foreword & to appear in other promotional activity like a podcast or

50%

of business leaders say they engage with content if the **author is an industry expert**

Raconteur, 2017

Influencer Generated Content - Research Report / Whitepaper



Time Investment: 8-10 hours (excluding production time)			Case Study Examples
Content Outputs	Engagement Approach	Outcomes	Cisco Capgemini UBS Mitie Analytica
Report	Organic	500 - 2,500 downloads 250% increase	
Podcast	Paid	500 – 2,000 listens	
Influencer & SME Social Posts	Organic	3m Impressions 750 Engagements	
LinkedIn Article	Paid	200 Engagements 5,000 pageviews	
Summary Launch Blog	Organic	7,500 pageviews	

Objective this helps drive: Brand Awareness, Demand Generation, Employee Advocacy

Examples: [Capgemini](#), [UBS](#), [Mitie](#)

Practical Considerations

Some of the tactics & collaborations outlined above may require some adjustments to your on-the-day planning. Below, we've outlined a few key areas to consider to ensure the day can run as smoothly as possible.

Conference & Broadcasting Software

Video conferencing is a vital way to connect with audiences & get your message in front of the right people. The list below is designed to offer some suggestions which can help you get started but is by no means exhaustive.

[Zoom](#), [Webex](#), [Google Hangout](#), [Microsoft Teams](#)

These online meeting solutions allow you to host audio & video conferences. Limitations might apply to the number of people you can host depending on your subscription, but there are upgrades available for all the above to host webinars or large meetings.

PLANNING

You can use these for smaller or exclusive events, embargoed briefings with execs or sync calls with influencers prior to collaboration.

LinkedIn Live

This feature allows you to stream an event as it's happening natively in LinkedIn. When you start broadcasting, many of your followers will receive a notification, allowing them to join the livestream. Once they're online, they can ask questions & chat with each other.

To use LinkedIn Live, you'll need to complete 2 steps:

1. Apply to have the feature enabled. This may take some time as LinkedIn work through a large volume of applications, so plan well ahead & have an alternative ready. You can apply [here](#).
2. Subscribe to a video streaming partner service. LinkedIn has partnered with a number of third parties to enable you to "go live". You can find the full list of verified tools [here](#).

This is ideal for streaming a keynote, panel discussion, product demo or presentation.

Periscope

Periscope is a livestreaming tool owned by Twitter. It is primarily designed to enable broadcasts from a phone but has some functionality for use through a web platform.

You can find out more about Periscope functionality [here](#).

Periscope lets you add up to 3 guests to a livestream, making it an excellent choice for broadcasting **interviews** after a session or streaming a **panel discussion**.

Streamyard

Streamyard is an independent livestreaming tool compatible with most major social platforms. It is one of the approved partners for LinkedIn live and can also be used to broadcast on Facebook, Youtube & Periscope.

Streamyard is well suited to hosting **panel discussions**, **interviews** or **podcasts**.

Ringr

Ringr is designed to help you capture high-quality audio from calls. Its most common useage is for podcast recordings.

Audience Engagement Tools

During or before your online event, you might want to use additional tools to keep the audience engaged. This could involve conducting polls, setting up a quiz for attendees or adding a Q&A with the host or a third party, such as an influencer.

Slido

This solution allows you to launch polls & field questions from your audience using a unique code. You can deploy these to keep audiences engaged in between or before sessions.

Polleverywhere

Similar to Slido in functionality but can be integrated into a ppt. presentation more easily.

Kahoot

Kahoot allows you to launch quizzes quickly & easily. Designed for a range of settings like schools & conferences, the UX is very easy to understand.

Hosting & Monitoring

If you create an online forum for discussion or questions to the speaker, you'll need to ensure that this channel is adequately staffed with people who can respond or pass the questions on. Relying on the speaker to do this is likely to detract from the quality of your event as they'll be distracted while trying to present. It's unlikely you'll need more than 1 additional person to monitor the livechat/Q&A.

2. INFLUENCER SELECTION

What should I be looking for in potential influencers to collaborate with?

As with other kinds of influencer activation, think about the audience & skills you want an influencer to bring to your event.

If you're running a live demo of a product, the influencer will need to have industry knowledge to add value to the demo. If your event has a wide-ranging appeal but needs greater promotion, the influencer should have a proven ability to reach an engaged audience on your key topics.

Content



Creator

What do they look like?

Lots of influencers create content. What sets them out as content creators is a regular stream of original video, audio or blogs on their chosen theme

Example Campaign Opportunities

Guest blog, content contributor, SME on podcast/video

Social



Amplifier

What do they look like?

Important members of their topical community who curate and share relevant content for a large audience

Example Campaign Opportunities

Featured quotes in a report, event amplification

Event



Speaker

What do they look like?

Experienced speakers who regularly appear at events. Often have a large offline network or traditional influence

Example Campaign Opportunities

Keynote, panel appearance, round-table

Industry



Practitioner

What do they look like?

Has direct experience of their industry, can speak to common challenges & solution for others working in this field

Example Campaign Opportunities

Help grow their profile, promote their expertise

INFLUENCER SELECTION

Industry



KOL

What do they look like?

A thought leader driving debate in their sector, usually based on their knowledge & experience. Will sometimes influence media or analyst discussion

Example Campaign Opportunities

Connect them to other KOLs, offer partnerships that use their skills for your campaigns

Professional



Influencer

What do they look like?

Established opinion leader in their field with proven ability to drive key outcomes for organisations they partner with, often on a paid basis

Example Campaign Opportunities

Collaboration on evergreen thought leadership campaigns to maximise impact

The personas above represent the most common types of influencer which you are likely to encounter.

You'll need to balance using professional influencers who can deliver proven results with industry practitioners who can amplify content to hard-to-reach topical communities on niche topics.

Activities

Paid Activation

Creating high-value evergreen content with proven thought leaders

Organic Content

Regular activation to build relationships with rising stars

Light Touch Engagement

Use tracking & notifications to spot opportunities relationships with rising stars

of influencers?

5-10 Tier 1 Influencers

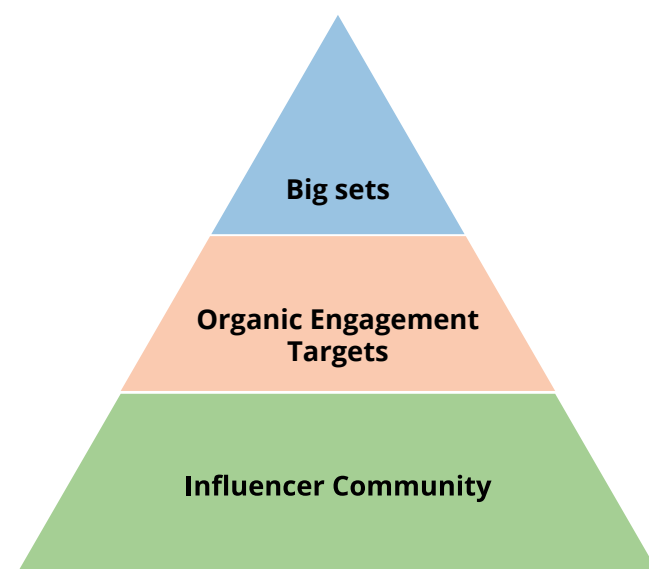
*Event Speakers
Key opinion leaders
Professional Influencers*

20-30 Tier 2 Influencers

*Industry Practitioners
Independent Content Creators*

200-2,000 Tier 3 Influencers

*Longer Tail of Influencers
Social Media Amplifiers
Employees (Execs & SMEs)*



Use this diagram as a guide to the ratios between different kinds of influencer to engage.

How can Onalytica help with this?

The influencer personas listed above can be found in the Onalytica Discover database. You can read more about how to find them in the platform in the help centre article on influencer personas.

If you have any questions on this, you can always contact your Onalytica Customer Success Manager, or get in touch with the team on success@onalytica.com.

3. BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS

*THROUGH ONLINE
ENGAGEMENT*

How do you create & deliver a value proposition online?

Pivoting to an online event should not affect your ability to deliver a quality value proposition. However, there may be some adjustments required. If you were planning to offer influencers networking opportunities with key execs, consider setting up an exclusive session to **deliver the briefing by video conference** under embargo before the same information is made public.

For **ongoing relationship-building activities**, you can continue to engage key influencers online, by **responding to their content & sharing your thoughts with peers** as you would usually. The best practice of inviting an influencer to a quick sync call before you finalise the terms of your collaboration still applies.

Value

Key Question:
What's in it for the influencer?

Common answers:
*Networking opportunities
Access to insights
Access to top execs
Recognition & promotion*

Logistics

Key Question:
What are you asking the influencer to do?

Common answers:
*Ideal word count
Event/release date
Embargo date
Video-conferencing details*

Future

Key Question:
What's the longer term vision?

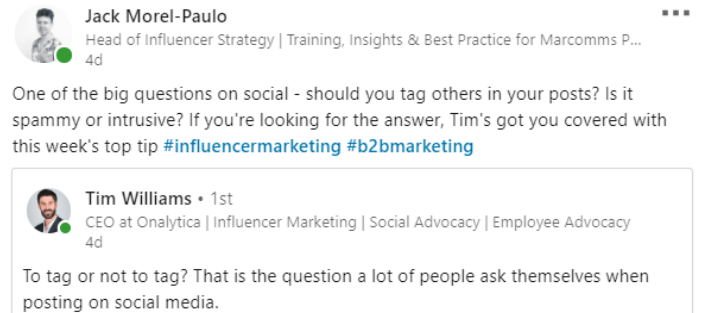
Common answers:
*Upcoming opportunities
Campaign Calendars
Guest blogging
Event speaking slots*

What can I do to engage influencers & peers online?

Light touch engagement

Making sure you follow any influencers, peers or important audience members should always be the first step. Then make sure you're getting notifications when those people post on relevant topics - speak to your Analytica CSM about setting these up if you don't have them already. Once this is done, you'll be able to like or share content from the people most important to you regularly. These engagements are best used when you're short on time and want to keep yourself top-of-mind with someone you plan to engage deeply at a later date.

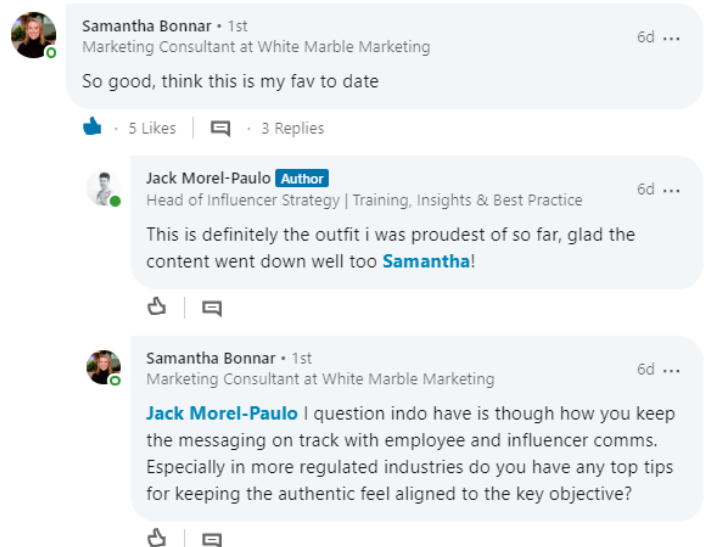
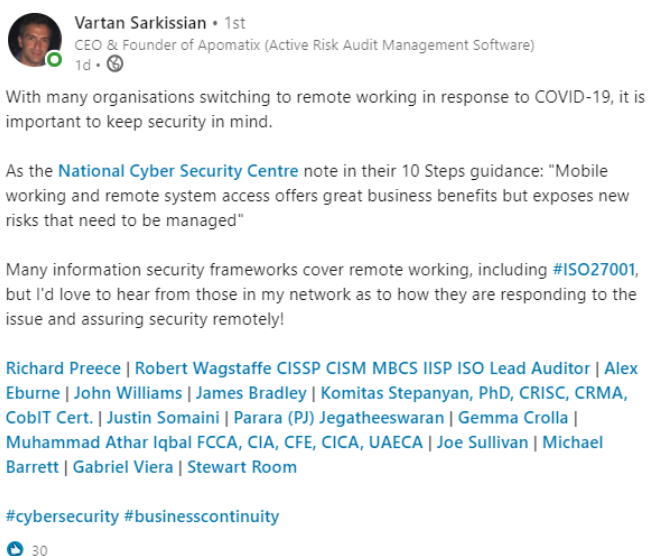
BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS



Active thought leadership & engagement

The next step in this process should follow naturally from the lighter touch approach. To deepen engagements with influencers & peers, look for opportunities to share your thoughts & join discussions.

This can be as simple as commenting on an influencer's post rather than liking it, or it can mean tagging peers & influencers in your own posts. Striking up a conversation not only helps you engage the person you're addressing, but also offers an invitation to others interested to get involved.



3 Top Tips for online networking & influencer relations

1. Keep at least 80% of your content focused on your industry, not your brand
2. Ask questions to encourage discussion and engage with responses
3. Connect & follow people you engage with and tag them in future posts on the same subject

Outreach & Sync

Once you've built relationships with your key influencers & peers, you can plan outreach for your collaboration. Think about the marketing tactics you'll use and the ways influencers can contribute – have a few options ready for how they could be involved.

When you send the initial outreach message, make sure you know what you'll offer in return. Long-term influencer relationships depend on your ability to help build your chosen influencers' network and grow their influence. You can offer this by giving early access to new insights and products, exclusive opportunities to network with key executives & using your brand's platform to amplify their voices.

52%

of influencers named **growing their influence on key topics** as their most important motive for working with brands

Your message should clarify what your brand will offer and what the influencer will be asked to do, along with the potential scope of the future relationship. Aim to set up a sync call with the influencers so you can agree how you will collaborate - while limits remain on in-person meetings, this step is even more important.

4. METRICS

METRICS

The metrics you use to determine the success of your new tactics should be driven by the underlying objective you'd like to reach. When you set up your online event & follow-up content, think about how you can accurately measure the impact influencers have on these objectives.

Some metrics can be captured by the Onalytica team, like social engagement & reach. For others, you will need to set up trackable links or landing pages to capture sign-ups. If you are setting any of these up, be sure to **share all relevant content & links with the influencer in advance**. They will be able to help drive performance of your campaign if you communicate the objectives clearly & give them the best possible chance of helping.

BRAND AWARENESS & PERCEPTION	EMPLOYEE ADVOCACY	ACCOUNT BASED MARKETING
Volume of Influencer Brand Posts	Volume of Influencer Brand Posts	Volume of Influencer Brand Posts
Influencer Brand Posts (on key topics only)	Brand Share of Voice vs. Competitors	Influencer Brand Posts (on key topics only)
Brand Share of Voice vs. Competitors	Number of influencers engaged	Brand Share of Voice vs. Competitors
Brand Influencer Reach	Number of influencer & employee interactions	Influencer Shares of brand content
Audience Social Engagement	Audience Social Engagement	Audience Social Engagement
Site Traffic		
DEMAND GEN	EVENT IMPACT	ISSUE TRACKING & BRAND REPUTATION
Volume of Influencer Brand Posts (gated content)	Volume of Influencer Brand Posts	Volume of Influencer Brand Posts
Brand Share of Voice vs. Competitors	Brand Share of Voice vs Competitors	Brand Share of Voice vs Competitors
Influencer CTAs in Brand Posts (% posts)	Total Reach of Influencer Brand Posts	Brand Influencer Reach
Influencer Targets in Advocate stage	Brand Key Topic Association Trend	Influencer Positive Reputation Driver Brand Posts
Influencer Shares of gated brand content	Number of influencer advocates	Influencer Brand Posts Key Message Penetration
Site Traffic	Influencer Brand Posts (on key topics only)	
	Influencer Content Shares	

Use this framework to explore possible metrics aligned to your overall objectives

5. WIDER CONSIDERATIONS

User Experience is key

Running an event online can bring new challenges along with the great opportunities it affords to engage audiences remotely & at scale. Make sure you test all software in advance & think carefully about whether your event will be engaging and shareable to audiences.

Keep it educational for best results

As many brands find themselves in a similar position of trying to pivot towards online content formats, there will be a temptation to try and win share of voice by talking about your products and services extensively.

However, the last few years have shown that this approach usually gets drowned out in the noise. The way to cut through is to produce high-value content which helps your target audience learn. Influencers are in a great position to deliver this, bringing an outside perspective to your messaging and bringing engaged audiences with them when the opportunity is right for them.

“Connecting brands and influencer communities to create inspiring content.”

REQUEST DEMO

GET IN TOUCH

Analytica provides consultancy-led Influencer Marketing software for industry & B2B marketing and communications professionals looking to identify and engage with social media Influencers.

Their software enables brands to implement and run structured Influencer Relationship Management programs with large Influencer communities to improve brand awareness, perception and demand generation.

Founded in 2009, and backed by Bebo founders Michael and Paul Birch,

Analytica have created over 1000 B2B and B2C Influencer programmes for global clients which include Microsoft, Coca-Cola, Amazon, Lenovo, Centrica, British Airways,

Key questions we help solve

LEARN MORE



Who are my relevant influencers?



How do I engage them and build relationships?



What influencer generated content can I create?



How do I measure success and ROI?



How do I structure and scale my program?