



THE 3 STEPS TO BUILDING INFLUENCER RELATIONSHIPS

[TIPSHEET]



INTRODUCTION



It's that time of year again. Some call it the world's greatest manufactured consumerist holiday, others call it the ultimate day of love. Whatever Valentine's Day means to you, it is invariably an opportunity to celebrate (or reassess!) your relationships.

For comms practitioners like yourself, it's an opportunity to establish and cement the working relationships that will help push your business forward.

In this tipsheet, we will teach you how to build those all-important relationships with journalists and social influencers.



1. FIND YOUR MATCH

When it comes to pitching and building a relationship with an influencer, whether they are a journalist or a blogger, you have to make sure you target the right person. You don't want to waste time and effort pitching to an influencer who doesn't cover the topics you are interested in.

Before connecting with an appropriate contact you need to have done your research - who are they, what are their interests, how they like to be contacted, when are they most likely to respond, etc.

For example, not every influencer wants to be contacted by email, so no matter how many emails you send or how strong your pitch, you will not get a response from everyone. Increasingly, influencers prefer to be contacted on social media networks like Twitter or Facebook. Social media has completely changed the way we communicate, and to a large extent has changed the way PR professionals do their jobs. Knowing which influencers to email and which to tweet can lead to a much better response rate for your outreach communications.

Once you've done your research and identified the relevant influencers, you can start sending press materials that they would be interested in. In the end, it will save you time, and it will save the influencer time.

When it comes to what PRs should do when contacting her, Stephanie Jones-Berry, Assistant Editor at the Nursing Standard, said:

"There's nothing worse than an ill-informed approach from a PR. I can't count the number of times that we got (still do!) sent content that is irrelevant to the publication's needs. Journalists don't have time to wade through press releases that have no obvious connection to the area or industry they are working in. Learn to explain whatever you are offering in the first sentence! No one wants to have to read 800 words to find out what you are on about. Be concise, well-informed and target your audience".

If you don't have the time and resources to research the thousands of influencers out there, [you can make use of media databases such as the Vuelio Media Database](#) whose advanced search capabilities allow you to quickly and easily find the most current and complete information you need to succeed: names, bios, contact details, profiles, pitching preferences, and pet hates.



2. COME TOGETHER

So you've done your research and identified the influencers you want to contact - what next?

Well, it's time to get in touch and start building relationships.

Once you've found the journalist or blogger you want to work with, look at different ways in which you can collaborate with each other to create content. Rather than telling an influencer how you want them to promote your campaign, how about getting them more involved in the creative process of generating ideas? Make them feel that their voice and input matters.

Also, rather than thinking short-term collaborations, perhaps think about how you can work with a journalist or influencer on a more long-term basis. Building a successful working relationship takes time, so why rush? Look at how you can create partnerships that spread over a longer period.

Laurence Norah, author of the blog Finding the Universe, says that although he has worked on a wide variety of campaigns since he started blogging in 2009, he is currently focusing on building longer term partnerships with brands:

"I'm known for my photography, so I've partnered with photography related brands that I use and love, like Panasonic and Vanguard, and work on longer term projects with those brands, creating content using and featuring their products that I can share on my channels. It's a lot more natural to your audience when you can work with a brand on a longer term basis rather than hopping from one project to the next, which results in an inconsistent message".



3. WORK AT THE RELATIONSHIP

Once you've established a relationship with an influencer you should not get complacent.

After all, the most fruitful partnerships are the ones based on continued support and communication.

Make sure you keep track of all your interactions with an influencer and take note of any ideas they may have for future campaigns or any insights they might have in terms of best approaching their audience - after all, influencers know their audience better than anyone else.

Everyone likes to know that their opinion is valued so the more you listen to your partners, the stronger your relationship will get.

Also, don't forget that relationships are not a one way street - get in touch with the influencers you work with and share any information that might help them - whether that is how a campaign performed, a useful piece of research or anything that will aid them in their personal goals and objectives.

Once you establish relationships with several influencers, it can become difficult to track every conversation and interaction you have. If you are struggling to keep on top of it all, it might be [worth having a look at the Vuelio Stakeholder Engagement tool](#). Our tool allows you to log any interactions you have with influencers and other stakeholders and create a single point of access for tracking engagements across your organisation.

A lack of communication and a failure to respond to a message can be detrimental to any relationship - so make sure you have a way to prevent anything getting lost or forgotten.



CONCLUSION

When it comes to building and cementing working relationships you need to find your match, whether that's the most appropriate journalist or blogger to work with.

But before you reach out, make sure you know what their contact preferences are, what areas they cover, and how this relates to the work you do.

Look at different ways in which you can collaborate with a blogger or influencer, exchange ideas, and make them feel that their insights are of value.

Connecting with influencers is tough. It might take time, but with the right tools and information at your disposal you can make sure you are ready to expand your network and build strong relationships.

RESEARCH



COLLABORATE



NURTURE



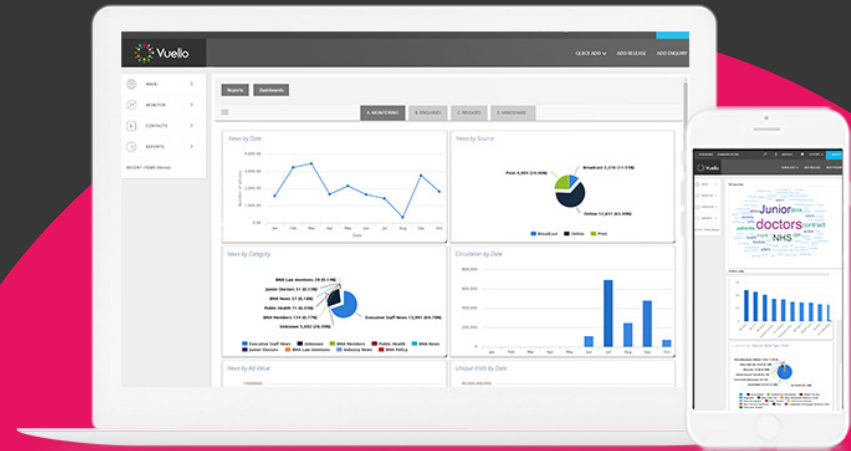
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