

Research: How to Identify Influencers

This is Susan and in this lesson we're going to tackle the big question, how do I find influencers? Let's start with publishing influencers. We should already have saved searches for the content topics we write about. For help with this check out the "How To Search Lesson".

Open one of your topical saved searches and head over to Content Analysis. For influencer identification we need the chart at the bottom of the report called Most Shared Domains. The sites listed here are powerful distributors for information about the topic. Audiences look to them for insight and when they publish a blog post about our subject, the post is heavily shared. For example, in content marketing, the sites with the most influence are Content Marketing Institute, LinkedIn, Entrepreneur, and Business 2 Community.

We'll want to add several of these to our influencer outreach plan. Now it's time to check out the influencer section of BuzzSumo to find more publishing influencers. Select Top Authors from the menu and enter your topic. BuzzSumo will show us the people whose content drives the most engagement. These authors are respected voices in the industry. Remember, a publishing influencer can boost awareness of our product, service, or knowledge by mentioning us in their own content or linking to our website, providing a valuable boost to our search rankings.

Now, let's look at social influencers. We'll start with search bios. We can use this part of BuzzSumo to find people on Twitter with a solid interest in our topics. Twitter is a great place to reach out to influencers because of its open conversational atmosphere and its history as the fastest moving social network. News breaks and industry leaders swap information on Twitter.

We'll start by entering a topic here, for example, SEO. BuzzSumo finds more than 4,000 people with SEO in their Twitter bio. That's a lot of people. Our next step is to refine and narrow this list using the metrics provided for each influencer. I'll walk you through each one.

Domain and Page Authority help us to see how well a site would rank in search engines. One hundred is the best possible score. Twitter followers gives us the size of the influencer's audience. Retweet and reply ratio point us to the people who are actively interacting with others on Twitter with replies or retweets. Newcomers to an industry or topic may find these numbers are especially important as they often point towards people who are interested in conversations. Finally, average retweets is an engagement indicator. It's the average number of retweets and account gets every time they tweet.

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What to look for in an influencer varies from brand to brand. It can be tempting simply to look at audience size, but average retweets is often more significant. A good rule of thumb is to look for influencers with an average retweet number of two or above. If we're in an industry with high average retweets we can raise that to five or even 10 average retweets. If we're in an industry with less Twitter engagement, we should adjust downward choosing people with one or even .5 average retweets. The filters on the left side of the screen offer us other ways to refine our searches. Test them out for projects in your topic area.

The next step is to add these best fit Twitter influencers to an Outreach List by selecting the box next to their name, then choosing or creating a list for them. We'll talk more about Outreach Lists in the next lesson.

We can also use this part of BuzzSumo to find Instagram influencers. Just select "Has Instagram Profile". The list will then be filtered to display only people with an Instagram account. The Instagram authority score is an engagement calculation. One hundred is the highest possible score. We can use it to find the people who interact the most with their Instagram followers.