

— SOCIAL MARKETING —

ADVANTAGE



GUIDE 6:

SOCIAL FOLLOWER QUALITY
TRUMPS QUANTITY

Social Follower Quality Trumps Quantity

What is your objective with your social media campaign?

A lot of individuals and companies alike (especially the companies!) will answer this by pointing to a number or some kind of chart or graph. In other words, they have quantitative goals which involve growing followers and growing influence over time.

That sounds like a good aim. It is useful to have a yard stick with which to measure your success.

But it's also entirely misguided.

What's much more important is the *quality* of your social followers. And I'm not talking about good genetic stock here!

This is a very important concept to understand, so let's dive a little deeper into what that means.

What is a Quality Follower?

A high quality follower is a follower who is engaged, who is targeted and who would describe themselves as a 'fan' of your brand.

In fact, one of the best known books on marketing and branding is *1,000 True Fans*, which suggests that as soon as you get 1,000 *real* fans – loyal followers – your brand has made it.

And the subtext here is that having a million followers who don't care about you, is worth pretty much nothing.

So why is this?

Well, let's consider what it would mean to have an army of highly engaged fans for a moment. These high quality followers would be eager to hear more from you. They are genuine fans remember, and so they're highly excited to read your blog posts, they want to see your next YouTube video and they can't wait to hear your podcast.

These are the kinds of people that will actively seek out the content you put out, rather than needing to have it stuffed down their throats – just like you probably actively seek out new episodes of your favorite TV shows.

So, if you have 1,000 true fans, then that means 1,000 views guaranteed for every single one of your new videos and 1,000 people viewing every single one of your blog posts and your social media posts. That also means some guaranteed profit from every single piece of content you put out.

What's more important, is that a true fan will be likely to click 'like' on each of your posts on social media. Now, your Facebook posts will be seen by roughly 1,000 x the number of people in these viewers' networks. That's a pretty big boost. And not only will the link be seen, but it will also be talked about and those contacts will see that their friend recommends your site as something that they should check out – which makes a huge difference.

Now imagine that you want to sell a product. Or imagine that you go onto Patreon – a site where you ask for donations for your work. Your

average visitor is *not* going to be willing to pay for you to keep doing what you love doing! But someone who absolutely loves your brand and who can't get enough of your content will – especially if they get to see their name in your next post or video as a thanks.

On top of all this, you'll also find that true fans buy your products. Of course, they do – they have been won over by the quality of the work you're putting out and so they more than anyone will be willing to buy *more* of it!

You have a bottomless revenue stream – guaranteed sales for pretty much any product you put out – and your own, free marketing agency that is shouting about every single thing that you do and that is making sure that the world hears about your incredible brand! As you can imagine, this does make rather a difference!

The Alternative

Now imagine the alternative: having an account with 10,000 completely *unengaged* fans. I've actually experienced this seeing as I had a YouTube account that was highly successful when I first launched it but which then got kind of *abandoned* seeing as I didn't have time for it. So when I came back to revive it, I still had the followers but they had forgotten all about me and were not at all engaged!

Posts that I put out would get 10 or 30 views at first. 10,000 subscribers with 10 or 30 views...

And unfortunately, *many* businesses find themselves in this exact position because they essentially trick people into following them (with a free gift or promotion, or even by forcing them to sign up) and then they do nothing but advertise to them. The subscribers that are still there are

only there because they haven't been motivated enough to click 'Unfollow'! This is worse than useless because not only are you not making any impact, but you're also *completely* skewing your data and making it unusable.

How to Create High Quality Followers

So now you know why you need high quality followers, the next question is how you go about making that happen.

There are several steps and strategies to that end...

Target Your Followers: The first thing to make sure you are doing is targeting your followers to begin with. We've talked about this in previous reports so to keep things brief, the general idea is that not all followers are made equal. You want to get people on board who fit your 'buyer persona' and your ideal customer. That means they should be a certain age, sex, gender and have specific interests.

There are lots of ways you do this. It comes down partly to how you market yourself and it comes down partly to where you are marketing. Look for the 'route to market' – the place where your ideal customers congregate. That could be an online forum, or it could be a real-world club that you can attend and speak to the owner of.

Have a Great Brand: This is one of THE most important things for your social media campaign as well as for your success in business as a whole.

Having a great brand is the difference between being a corporate, dry and unexciting business, versus being a company that is exciting, passionate and something that people want to get behind. The reason

that people are so rabid about Apple has little to do with the technology (although this helps, of course!) and has a lot more to do with the branding and the marketing. It's what Apple *stands for* that matters to people, because they want to stand for that too!

People are excited about Apple because it represents artistry, free thinking, premium quality and thinking differently. These are all qualities that people want to express and so getting behind Apple is a great way to do that.

You can see the same thing with certain websites. These include the likes of T-Nation. T-Nation is a website for people who are seriously into strength training. It has your usual fitness and muscle building articles but also has a lot of content about the culture of weight lifting and life as being someone very strong. It talks about strong supplements and in short, it certainly is not for everyone. But that's fine, because the 'T-Nation' that do follow the site are incredibly dedicated. It speaks to *them*.

If your website is called 'GetASixPack.net' and the only thing you stand for is trying to make money from ads, then don't expect people to get excited!

Create a Sense of Belonging: Notice how I referred to fans of T-Nation as *the* T-Nation just then? There are many other people and brands that do this. They create a collective noun for their fans and this then gives those fans a sense of belonging and importance.

Suddenly, they are no longer passive users or visitors – they are people who actually *belong* to that brand. They are a part of it. It is theirs.

You can further this by giving away merchandise. Giving away t-shirts with your logo printed on it has obvious marketing benefits but what it

also does is to subtly influence the psychology of people who wear those shirts. Suddenly, they are part of an army of followers or fans.

Likewise, asking for money on Patreon can actually help this too. Believe it or not, asking for money can *boost* your status because the people funding your activities are now part-owners of your brand in a sense. This sense of ownership makes a massive difference.

You can also encourage people to follow your social media this way too. Instead of 'click here to follow', try something like 'click here to become a VIP'.

Interact: Another *very* important tip is to make sure that you are interacting with your fans. This is something that social media is perfect for, but which a lot of creators and brands simply forget to do.

If you just posted a picture to Instagram and someone posts a comment saying that it's fantastic and they're your biggest fan, what do you do? A shocking number of users do *nothing* because answering involves a bit too much work. It's hard to know what to say back.

But this is essentially *throwing away* one of your *most valuable assets*. A very small percentage of people will *actually comment* on your content. If someone does, it suggests they are engaged with social media and very interested in your brand. In turn, that means they have potential to become a top fan.

If you ignore them, then eventually they are going to get tired and fed up. It's normal to an extent but if post after post goes unanswered, then it is hard not to eventually start taking that personally!

But if you simply write back and say ‘thanks’, suddenly that person knows you’re there and knows you’re listening. This can make a massive psychological difference and it’s something that you should definitely put the time into doing.

If someone messages you with a long list of questions, it can involve a fair investment of time to answer. But if you do, that user will now feel indebted to you – they will feel as though they know you – and they will be much more likely to like and share your posts in future.

And better yet, don’t wait for them to interact with you – interact with them! Can you imagine how amazing it would feel if a brand that you know and love commented on one of your pictures, unprompted, and said it looked amazing?

Think of this as a relationship. And like any relationships, there must be give and take.

Build Real Relationships: Which takes us to the final point: build real relationships. If you can create a core legion of followers, then that passion will spread and that will lead to much more engagement with the *rest* of your followers.

That means it is highly worth investing some time to build some great relationships that will drive your brand onwards and upwards.

And one of the best ways you can accomplish *this*, is to spend some time on an online community. Some of the biggest names on the web started out this way. You spend time in the community and don’t do anything to promote yourself. What you *do* do, is make friends with other users, help them out where possible by answering questions and be supportive and helpful wherever possible. At the same time, you

demonstrate your expertise and your knowledge and you talk about your projects.

Only then, do you eventually reveal that you have your own brand/site/product and then invite them to check it out.

What you'll find is that this leads to a massive amount of visitors, of sharing, of likes and of support as those people that you've developed *genuine relationships* with are eager to not only see what you've created but also to help out.

And for that matter – don't forget your real world relationships either! Social media platforms like Facebook are originally for fostering your real-world networks and that means that you can reach out to old school friends, work colleagues and even family in order to support you and spread the word.

You'll never gain a bigger fan than your own Mum!

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