Transcript of:

020 Social Media: How to use Nano Influencers to grow your sales with Neal Schaffer

[00:00:01.590] You're listening to the Keep Optimising podcast to increase your traffic, improve your conversion rates and grow your profits.

[00:00:11.670] Hello and welcome, if you're looking to improve the performance and return on investment of your marketing, then you've come to the right place. I'm Chloe Thomas, the host of this marketing focused podcast, and it's very, very cool to have you tuning in. We've now been live for four months and I am blown away by how many people were already helping.

[00:00:31.710] So far we've been listened to in over 60 different countries, its kind of, kind of mad. And in six of those years, six of them. We are a top 10 marketing podcast, according to Apple podcast. That is beyond my wildest dreams for what we'd achieve in the first four months live. So thank you, all of you, for tuning in, for spreading the word, because without you doing that, we, quite frankly, wouldn't be there.

[00:00:54.780] You know, it's always cool to get the we're top 10 in this country. You were number one in that country. Those are very cool. But really, the bit which which keeps me going, the bit which inspires me, the bit which makes me create this podcast for you is the fact that I know that behind those rankings and behind those download numbers, there are people just like you who we are helping to improve their marketing, to improve their business, to improve, in some cases their lives, I suspect, because often, you know, if you can get your business working, then the rest of the life tends to feel pretty good too.
Keep Optimising Podcast: https://keepoptimising.com

[00:01:25.740] - Chloe Thomas
Yeah. So the rankings are cool, but really for me, it's knowing that with every play, with every lesson, someone, somewhere is getting what they need to take the next step, solving a problem for them, because that's what we're here to do to help you improve your marketing, to help you solve your marketing problems.

[00:01:42.810] - Chloe Thomas
Now, what I'd love to know is that if the shows helped you, I'd love to know how. And you can let me know on social with the hashtag #keepoptimising.

[00:01:50.400] - Chloe Thomas
Okay, in today's episode, I am talking to Neal about Influencer marketing because this month is all about organic social media. Yeah, I know Influencer marketing you might end up paying a bit to. Maybe it is a bit advertising, but when we're talking organic, I think it's a really key thing to be talking about. We're talking social media and a lot of the tactics Neal can be talking about. You don't necessarily need to put any money out there anyway.

[00:02:16.290] - Chloe Thomas
More on that later. In this episode, you're going to learn what the best way is to run an Influencer marketing campaign for your business. Neal is going to be sharing the latest tactics because he really knows the goodness in this space, the key things you should be doing to talk about how to do it, the nuts and bolts, the strategies to use, we'll get into payment and all that kind of great stuff, too, on the great news actually is that the latest tactics are not at the Kardashian level of budget.

[00:02:46.740] - Chloe Thomas
Okay, so these are easy and low risk for even the smallest operation to test and give a go to. We're going to meet Neal in a second. But before we do, please do check out the sponsors.

[00:03:00.010] - Chloe Thomas
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[00:03:38.100] - Chloe Thomas
Today, I'm chatting with social media expert Neal Schaffer. For over 10 years, Neal has been deep, deep in the world of social media running an agency, PDCA social, teaching at three universities
around the globe, speaking at conferences on pretty much every continent known to man and hosting the Maximize Your Social Influence podcast. Neal is also the author of the brand new and very good best selling book, The Age of Influence The Power of Influencers to Elevate Your Brand.

[00:04:08.160] - Chloe Thomas
Hello, Neal.

[00:04:09.390] - Neal Schaffer
Hey Chloe, thanks so much for that very generous introduction.

[00:04:13.380] - Chloe Thomas
Well, thank you for achieving it all. You know, we couldn't run a social media month on the podcast and not talk about Influencer marketing. And quite frankly, with all you've achieved in the space, you're the only person we could possibly ask on. So thank you very much for saying yes.

[00:04:29.790] - Neal Schaffer
Well I'm honored.

[00:04:31.650] - Chloe Thomas
Cool! Me too. Now, before we get fully into Influencer marketing, you've been in social media a surprisingly long time, like almost from the beginning. So how did you end up in the world of social media?

[00:04:44.790] - Neal Schaffer
So before social media, I had a career in it was actually B2B and it was more sales and business with a little bit of marketing. Before we started the podcast, I mentioned I lived in Asia for 15 years. So I speak Japanese and Chinese and I was country manager, regional VP of Asia Sales. I had those sorts of roles and I had to do business with a lot of different companies and a lot of different countries with varying cultures and various languages.

[00:05:11.790] - Neal Schaffer
And I got a lot of really, really great holistic business experience. So when it was two thousand eight and I was looking for a job for the first time in the United States where I'm from, and I did not have a local network where I lived, I went straight to LinkedIn and as I use LinkedIn to build a network, I realized some really, really powerful features about it. When you looked at it as a tool which very, very few people did back then.
So I began actually, you know, networking and contributing to the used to be something called LinkedIn Answers, which was a Q&A forum, LinkedIn groups. And when I found my job, I launched a blog and I wanted to share all the information I learned as a way to continue to network with people. So that blog is really what started everything, which after the Lehman Brothers crisis. I’m going back in history here, it seems. But late 2008, you know, I got hired three and a half months later, they decided they needed to shut down international sales.

And there I was in transition again. But this time I decided to, for various reasons, to turn my blog into a book which led to speaking opportunities, which led to me starting my consultancy in January 2010. So it really came organically and it really came you know, you could say I had a niche, which was LinkedIn back in the day and it was not as crowded and noisy as it is today. So my book was well known and what have you.

I got well known locally and businesses were just I mean, businesses are still trying to figure it out, but a lot of businesses were saying we just don’t know what, we don’t know. We want to hire you. How can we work with you? So at the time, because my background was more B2B, I didn't really have that agency experience. I went for the consultancy route, but I've pretty much been doing what I started doing then, which is I believe that companies need education and they need strategy.

Right. So that pretty much defines my podcast being here on your podcast and everything I've done since then.

And it's the interesting thing about social media, isn't it? It's like I often hear people saying, oh, we're going to hire a child or teenager and give them our social media. It's like, well, I'm not sure that's the right move. Yes, you need someone to who understands the tools.

But actually, in my experience, I've always found that learning the tools is an awful lot easier than learning how to use them successfully. The strategic part is a lot harder than knowing which button to press on Instagram, for example.
People look for easy solutions, right? Instead of learning it yourself and trying to, you know, deep dive into your strategy and what's working and what's not, we'll just bring on an intern. He'll just do it all for us. And we can check that box, right?

Mm hmm. Which it is has led to some utter howlers which which I've been guilty of, including in many a presentation.

Me too

some awesome. But let's let's not let's not straight into that, because we're really here to talk about Influencer marketing.

Yes.

Because it's you know, people get confused by social media. I think people get really confused by Influencer marketing. And I've had, you know, highly successful people come on the podcast. And it's not this because my other podcast where I interview retailers and say they don't believe it, the Influencer marketing exists.

So you get kind of from that to someone who will, you know, taken it to just just throw money at the problem and not really solve it. So I guess before we even start talking about how to do it, what is Influencer Marketing?

Yeah, so I guess, you know, before I even get into my definition to Influencer marketing is a very, very interesting one because, you know, you were saying it's really hard to find people to talk about it because the people that are talking about it are making money from it.
Right. Basically, they're Influencer marketing agencies, Influencer marketing tools. It's almost like I remember the days of Google Plus when everybody was evangelize that you got to be there. Right. So people that have money in the game that have a vested interest talk about how great it is. But it fails to convince the average person who looks in the blogosphere, the media, and just sees all those negative things I have found. And I don't have any skin in the game.

Right. I'm very neutral when it comes to this. The age of Influencer is actually my fourth book. My previous book was all about social media strategy and are two books on LinkedIn. But the more research I did and the more I kept getting questions. When I spoke from marketers, I realized that Influencer marketing, as it should be defined, is extremely powerful. Really, the right way to define it is that every Influencer first of all, as a content creator. So influencer marketing is leveraging content creators and their communities.

And I differentiate between leveraging content creators in the communities because there's more and more Influencer marketing being done, not just to have content creators share the word about what you're doing, but to actually create content for you. So, for instance, Chloë, there's value for me being on your podcast because this is Influencer marketing. You're going to share this podcast with your community and I'm going to share it with my community. Right. But I could also say, Chloë, you are such a great podcast or I'm going to hire you to do all the podcasts for my brand.

And that might have more value than simply you promoting me over one episode. So that's what it is, because, you know, and you think, well, everybody's a content creator and social media. Well, that's really not the case. 70 to 80 percent of, if not 90 percent of social media users are mainly lurkers. They're not really posting original content. And there are some platforms like Instagram where it pretty much all is sort of original photos and videos.

But even then, it's probably not more than 10 percent that actually post on a regular basis. So when we talk about content creators, you're talking about the top few percent on any given social network and they hold the power. And it's really interesting that we went from social media to Influencer marketing because that's where I found the power. When we begin with that definition, we also look at the trends, the trends that say social media is becoming pay to play, that people just don't trust ads.
[00:11:06.740] - Neal Schaffer
And companies seem to be saying, OK, if organic social doesn't work, we'll just throw money at Facebook ads, which some of them might work. But the whole you know, Chloe, when social media first came out, it was all about this viral word of mouth marketing that you can't do from an ad. Right.

[00:11:22.790] - Chloe Thomas
Yeah.

[00:11:22.790] - Neal Schaffer
And what happens now is people just trust you know, people have always trusted people like them and with the likes of visual social media, like an Instagram or what have you or YouTube, people just trust people that they relate to that look real.

[00:11:35.960] - Neal Schaffer
And I hate to use the word authentic because it's being overused, but but, you know, that are just like them. And that's the key difference here. So for me, I define what Influencer marketing is, but the strategic value is that if you are trying to get any traction on organic social media, you need to get people talking about you. And that's the role that Influencer marketing can play.

[00:11:55.010] - Neal Schaffer
So if you look at what you do in an organic social media and look at what you're doing in paid social media, you can probably replicate this and probably be more effective leveraging other people. So that's where I'll stop the original definition. But my definition of who are Influencer is that is much broader. It's not just Instagram, it's not just photo or video. It's any social network in any content medium.

[00:12:17.000] - Chloe Thomas
I think it is so right to say that because it is. I like the fact, you know, you focus in on the content creators because if someone's not creating great content, that's their content. You know, you don't want someone to share your own photography. You want someone to share something that's about them if they want to have the influence about it.

[00:12:35.000] - Neal Schaffer
Yeah.
But also, I think the point you are making about how. If you want to leverage organic, you've got to get other people talking about you. It's kind of like, you know, if you had, I don't know, let's say ten thousand dollars, a large budget to spend on social, you could plow it all into growing your own following on insert name of platform of choice here. Or you could spend it on Influencer marketing with content creators who already have a following.

And I would have thought you get a lot more bang for your buck with the Influencer side of things than plowing it all into your own follower acquisition growth.

Yeah, you know, the one time ten thousand dollar spend may make you feel good, but I've you know, I say this when I talk to eCommerce business owners. Are you there to build a following? Are you there to build influence? Right the following on social media doesn't necessarily lead to sales, as hopefully we all know by now. Right. It's the building Influencer when you talk or when someone talks about you, people listen.

So when you think about it that way, instead of investing money in a one time purchase where you think you're building long term asset, but if the fans don't see your content, it doesn't really matter anyway. It's not really an asset, is it? But when you invest it in people. Right, that has a chance to have really, really long term impact.

Now, another interesting thing, two other interesting points about this Influencer marketing industry that I began with that I think are really important for this conversation. Number one, the definition of who is an Influencer as the Influencer marketing industry has been so into itself that the market price for these influencers has gone through the roof.

And now brands are saying, you know what, we want to work with people that have less influence, that maybe we don't need to pay as much, but maybe with less influence does less fraud. They didn't buy as many followers. They're not participating in sort of fake engagement and what have you.

And what we find now is it began with micro influencers, which was a minimum of ten thousand followers maybe four years ago. And then as I was writing the book, the term nano influencers came out. And that's the minimum of a thousand followers. Right.
[00:14:44.040] - Neal Schaffer
So when we look at people that have a thousand or two thousand followers, they’re not necessarily in it for the money. They’re not going out of their way to buy fake followers and make themselves look big. A lot of them will do it for free product. Right. And in fact, there’s new platforms that have evolved that say send products. We’re going to match free products with people that want to try them out.

[00:15:02.640] - Neal Schaffer
Now, that, to me, sounds a heck of a lot more authentic. But let me take it one step further, because I had a thousand followers look around you, look at your employees, your partners, your affiliates, your customers, your followers. How many of them have a thousand followers, a thousand connections in any given social network that opens up the possibility that people that already like and trust your brand are you know, some of them are already at this nano influence.

[00:15:30.650] - Neal Schaffer
So I tell brands when it comes Influencer marketing now we get deep into it. I’m sort of connecting the dots with my own digital marketing pass. We get into things like employee advocacy and brand advocacy. Right. And we can incorporate these once we treat these people as influencers instead of well here’s content please share for us.

[00:15:48.350] - Neal Schaffer
Or hey, refer a friend. You get five pounds off your next purchase. Big deal. When you start treating these people treated like influencers as they are and you create a program about that, you begin to see pretty phenomenal results.

[00:16:00.560] - Neal Schaffer
And by the way, if you do it right, you don’t need to create any more organic content. You can be sourcing it all from your fans. And as word of mouth spreads and as the hashtag spreads and what have you, you know, you now don’t necessarily need to pay money or pay as much money for content creation, for photo shoots, for video shoots.

[00:16:18.590] - Neal Schaffer
So it becomes very economical and very efficient. But it starts with the mindset and it starts with actually building that program, starting to reach out to people and saying, hey, we’d love to work with you.
The great thing is for eCommerce that Shopify there is a tool called CARRO C-A-R-R-O. It's getcarro.com that does exactly this. It's actually free. I know they're going to start charging soon. They just got a big VC investment, but it basically takes all the people from your email list, from your shopping cart history. You integrate it with email and then it goes in your Instagram followers and then it will actually in the dashboard show you all the influencers that are already in that that brand sphere of yours.

Right. There's another tool called Gatsby.ai does a little bit different. This is where you would add to your shopping cart or to an opt in on your website, basically provide your Instagram handle. And it's doing the same thing, looking at the Instagram handle of website visitors, in addition to, you know, people that sign up for your emails in your shopping cart.

So we're beginning to see the technology come around and the technology is saying you need to buy Influencer. No, no, it's saying leverage. What you already have people that already know you and then see how you can develop that into a win win relationship, basically. And in eCommerce free product can actually get you a lot of goodwill, a lot of karma. So you don't even necessarily have to pay money. Another misnomer that people have about Influencer marketing.

It strikes me that the idea of the idea, which I think a lot of people still have in their heads about Influencer marketing, that it's find beyond, say, or a Kardassian and give them a large sum of money and have it really insane spike. Is so far removed from the businesses who are actually having success with it.

Yeah.

And the good the even better thing is that, you know, to to start using one of these apps you just mentioned or even just dropping an email to your list saying we're recruiting some people, we'd like to test out a new product.
[00:18:15.590] - Chloe Thomas
You know, it takes like maybe an hour to write it and be happy with it and get it signed off and send it out. It's so low risk, so low, low risk and so on in terms of brand identity, in terms of finances, in terms of team time, that it makes Influencer marketing seem so much more accessible, I think, to the average eCommerce store owner and so much easier to test and less scary, which I think is a brilliant thing, because anything which can bring us a deeper connection with our best customers and our teams can only be a good thing.

[00:18:48.620] - Neal Schaffer
Yeah, it's once you get beyond everything, you really start to rationalize it. It's just common sense instead of, I mean, you know, a lot of eCommerce owners like any small business owner, they're constantly trying to recruit new customers. But we know that the cost of sale of actually getting new business from your loyal customers is much cheaper than always trying to recruit new customers. Right.

[00:19:11.390] - Neal Schaffer
And because these are content creators that have somewhat of a social media footprint, that’s where that potential vitality builds in. And even if they don’t and they create great content, you know, we already have data that says, hey, when we use sort of user generated content or Influencer content on our shopping cart. Right.

[00:19:29.180] - Neal Schaffer
Or on our website, or if we want to continue to do ads in our ads, they perform better because they’re more aligned with people's tastes. They’re more believable, more relatable. Right. So there's a lot of things, I believe that people listening a lot of different ways we can we can leverage influencers.

[00:19:44.390] - Neal Schaffer
But I think once we get back that mere content amplification and its content and guess what, its content created by people that already are there already your customers, they’re already using your product, you’re going to learn a lot from them. And I believe if you were to ask them for feedback on how your product compares to others, what have you, you now have like a great little focus group there right. Getting back to traditional marketing before digital.

[00:20:07.490] - Neal Schaffer
You're going to learn so much from these people that you'll want to keep in better touch with them. They're going to become an extension of your brand, as they should. And I think companies that do that find immense success.
[00:20:18.410] - Chloe Thomas
Yeah, because you can learn so much from those customers. And that's almost worth doing the activity and sending out the emails and asking them to talk to you itself, but then if you've also got them, then creating noise about you on social media, that's going to hit the right people because the chances are that friends will like your product as well. And then there's the content which that creating you can then use again.

[00:20:42.230] - Chloe Thomas
And just to get into a bit of the detail around that, Neal, we literally just talking you retweeted or you share it or you like it from your brand accounts, or would you kind of screengrab it, share it independently, ask them for the photos. What's the ways in which we can can help these content creators create content for us?

[00:21:02.130] - Neal Schaffer
Yes. So I think it begins obviously with starting the relationship. And I want people listening to start at the right way, because if all of a sudden you reach out to someone, it might seem a little weird on both parties. So I think there's a natural process. If I wanted to reach out to if I wanted to befriend an Influencer, I would first actually follow them on social media. I would probably engage with their content on social media. And I would hope that I would get some sort of a response.

[00:21:31.160] - Neal Schaffer
And only if I did get a response, I would really reach out. Now, you know, obviously email is another way to do this without going the social media route. But if these people are content creators and they have somewhat influence on social and they are there in your sphere of like, know and trust, you would assume that they would engage back with you if they're having a good customer experience.

[00:21:50.420] - Neal Schaffer
If they're not, that's another story. But let's assume they are. Well, that's where you would reach out. And I would have this is where it goes from marketing to PR because it's easy as marketers, we just want to send one email out to like one hundred people. But we really need to do a one to one interview first because it all comes down to WIIFM, which is What's In It For Me, because everybody at the nano Influencer level, especially if they're if they're your customer, you know, we don't know what they want.

[00:22:17.210] - Neal Schaffer
Maybe they don't want free product for themselves, but they want it for their family. Right. Maybe they want a discount to give to their community. Maybe they want exclusive access to a product that you used to sell and you don't anymore. Maybe they want an introduction to someone. I mean,
I don't know. Right. But you're not going to know until you reach out and say, hey, you know, we appreciate you being a customer.

[00:22:36.020] - Neal Schaffer
We're starting a new Influencer community. We love for you to be part of it. You know, do you work with brands? Because a lot of brands are trying to do the same thing? If so, how do you work with them? And if not, how do you think we might be able to collaborate? And there you can say, you know, from our end, any content that you publish about us, we'd love to be able to source.

[00:22:54.440] - Neal Schaffer
So I do you can do it without a contract where, you know, on your Instagram profile, say, hey, if you use this hashtag, that gives us permission to republish your content on our handle. But wouldn't you like to get that free promotion, which a lot of people would like? But, you know, I've seen I believe it was Ritz Carlton who in their LinkedIn bio, you know, every every content that we publish abides by this contract, which you agree to if you use the hashtag please see LinkedIn bio and the link literally goes to a contract, Right.

[00:23:28.104] - Chloe Thomas
Wow!

[00:23:28.410] - Neal Schaffer
So, yeah, that's might be a little much, but there is something to be said for having some sort of an agreement in place. And, you know, in exchange for whenever you share content, we recognize that. And it means we hope to have a longer term relationship. And, you know, I don't know, it’s a little bit loose at the beginning because it depends on a lot of things and how you want to structure it.

[00:23:50.570] - Neal Schaffer
But that's where I would really begin. I think if you do a search like on we're talking Instagram specific here, but if you do a search and Instagram, I think you'll find a lot of accounts where, hey, and the other thing you can do is if people begin using that hashtag, you could reach out to them and say, hey, do you give us permission to republish this?

[00:24:07.220] - Neal Schaffer
So instead of you creating the content, you're sending a DM asking for permission once. And if you end up using the same people a lot, that’s where you may want to have a contract in place. But so I think that’s really the easiest way to get started.
[00:24:17.720] - Chloe Thomas
And I suppose we should say that you could go the whole way for a fully written by the legal department contract, or you could have, you know, a Google doc where you just confirm what you’re going to do for them, what they’re going to do for you, because I always think avoiding assumptions is a great thing to do. And that’s especially when it comes to this kind of relationship. Avoiding assumptions, even with something as simple as a word doc or Google doc can be can be priceless.

[00:24:43.820] - Neal Schaffer
Yeah. You know, that example was sort of like a one off content. But if you wanted to put something together where you’re starting to send them free product on a regular basis and you sort of expect them on a regular basis to be, you know, publishing that on Instagram, that you definitely want to have something written in place as you recommend it.

[00:25:00.800] - Neal Schaffer
You know, we’re going to be sending you free product. You know, once every 90 days, we expect that you would post, you know, two Instagram posts and four Instagram stories or whatever it is. I wouldn’t go as far as directing them as to what those photos and videos are about so long as they mentioned or show the product, but definitely having something in place. You’re absolutely right. You want to sort of manage expectations up front because you’re investing something. You’re putting some skin in the game and you expect the. To as well, and this is where you get down to the the what’s in it for me in the Winwin and people who really want your product, I mean, the idea is you’re really trying to convert everybody into becoming a brand advocate, right.

[00:25:36.490] - Neal Schaffer
So that they begin talking about you even outside of the contract. The contract only says, you know, two posts and now they’ve published 10 times. And if they really like you, they will because they’re human. And that’s sort of how all this works. And I think that’s really the end game. That’s why I say when you invest in people, you have that potential for that long term ROI that you don’t get in that single ad campaign that just goes on and off.

[00:25:58.210] - Chloe Thomas
Indeed. And I have to I have to ask you, because we vaguely mention kind of social media horror stories earlier, but are there any kind of tips in the world of Influencer marketing other than giving tens of thousands of dollars to one person? And that our audience should avoid that. You often see people falling into the trap of when they first get started.
Yes, there’s a few different traps that we have. The first one is just working with the wrong people. And I think that people make this mistake is when they reach out beyond people that know, like and trust their brand. When you don't know who they are, they don't know who you are.

And there’s a famous one of a female bodybuilder who I think she’s from Australia and there is a line of bikini where that hired her to do a photo shoot and post showing her wearing the bikini as a female bodybuilder, not knowing that 90 plus percent of the audience was male.

So that that’s just, you know, completely irrelevant. And and that's why, you know, that alignment of picking the right person is one of the most critically important things you can do. So if you throw money at people, they'll take it right. And whether it’s good for your brand or not. And there’s no there's no police officer in between or there's nobody managing that. It really is sort of the wild west of supply and demand. So you really need to be careful up front.

And there's also the potential of working with people that seem to have a lot of followers, but they're not real followers. And there's a lot of tools out there that will help you see how real, how fake their followers are. One that I really like is a tool called Hype Auditor HYPEAUDITOR.com. It is paid. But if you plan on working with a lot of people outside of your sphere of influence, it's really great. Like today I had someone reach out to me.

They wanted to be interviewed on my podcast as an Influencer. But when I look at the graph of their followers on Instagram, it is literally from twenty thousand to fifty thousand over the course of six months. Literally a straight line. Right. And anybody knows you just don't grow followers in a straight line on a platform and not at that scale. Right. Unless you’re a politician or a musician, what have you.

So, so immediately. But without looking at that, she has a lot of followers, seems to get a lot of engagement. The the creatives look good. You just don't know. Right. So that that's another thing is avoiding the fake followers. So that's that's defining the Influencer.
[00:28:23.830] - Neal Schaffer
The next one is how you collaborate. Right. There’s a lot of brands that say we want you to talk about our product in this way. You know, you must include mentions of five hashtags and three user handles. And it just it gets absurd. And others, you know, please cut and paste this.

[00:28:40.150] - Neal Schaffer
And there have been influencers who literally cut and paste that included the please cut and paste this sort of text in the post. So the whole idea of working with content creators is that you value their creativity. Right, and their ability to create content that resonates with their community.

[00:28:54.700] - Neal Schaffer
So let them do that. Don’t overburden them. If there’s a hashtag, if there is a product name, if if you want to get one username tag, that’s totally understandable. But above and beyond that, I think you want to be a little you know, you want to you want to be a little laissez faire.

[00:29:09.610] - Neal Schaffer
Now you can say, hey, before you publish, would it be OK if we had a chance to preview the post? I think that’s totally cool, totally legit. It’s just saying, hey, we just want to make sure that it’s it’s in alignment with with our branding guidelines, what have you.

[00:29:22.790] - Neal Schaffer
So for those that are really scared about the about the prospects, you can definitely ask for that. And then there’s going to be no surprises.

[00:29:31.600] - Neal Schaffer
I think the other thing is when you reach out to people, first of all, not all of them are going to commit to doing it. And even those that commit to doing it don’t end up doing it. So it's almost like I mentioned that for a part of Influencer marketing, the outreach, it's like PR.

[00:29:47.920] - Neal Schaffer
There’s another part of it that’s like I go back to my B2B sales background. If you think there's one hundred Influencer you want to work with only 50, you’re probably going to respond to you. Maybe only ten are going to be interested in working with you. So to get a lot of people to convert, you need to, you know, number one, start by contacting a lot of people.
And then, number two, you need to do a lot of follow up, because even if they say they’re going to do it, you send them free product. If you don’t follow up, there’s going to be a lot of people and people get busy. Right. It’s not their full time job. You can’t expect them to put first priority on even if they have an agreement with you.

So things happen in life like coronavirus, like Black Lives Matter, so. Because of that, we have to understand that, but we also have to follow up to make sure that, hey, we had an agreement in place, just let us know when you think it’ll be knowing that there might be delays.

And then the last part is, you know, I love that the name of this podcast is Keep Optimising because the name of my company is called PDCA, Social and PDCA. Is this whole method of optimizing around the concept of plan do check action, right. So in Influencer marketing, you can be doing optimizing because it’s sort of the 80 20 rule, 20 percent of influencers are probably going to generate 80 percent of the results.

So what I recommend and what a lot of companies are starting to do is to create like an annual contract. So we’re going to send you free product over the course of a year or whatever it is. And at the end of the year, we’re going to see how you perform and we’ll each decide what we want out of the relationship and maybe we move forward and maybe we don’t. Right.

So you always want to be bringing new people in and you always want to be doing more with those 20 percent that outperform. And that’s how you optimize this for continually better results. Those that don’t perform well for whatever reason, then you may not want to work with them that second year or you may want to demote them so they don’t feel bad to, you know, just a very, very vague status or whatever it is.

But definitely there are different tiers of Influencer is that as you start working with them, you’re going to recognize some are just better for pure content creation. Hire them to create content. Right. Some are going to be better at really generating response from their community, do more with those.
[00:31:53.130] - Neal Schaffer
So that's the other part that I think a lot of brands miss out on. But I think it's really important if you want to really optimize the time and energy and money that year end product that you're investing in the program.

[00:32:02.790] - Chloe Thomas
The hot thank you Neal such such good advice and tips that. Well, look, everyone, we're going to pull from one of our sponsors and then we're going to talk about the wider world of social media.

[00:32:13.600] - Chloe Thomas
It's safe to say that most of us have been doing more shopping online lately. And if you're an eCommerce brand, that means you might be seeing more first time customers. But once they made that first purchase, how do you keep them coming back? Well, that's what Klaviyo is for. Klaviyo is the ultimate email and SMS marketing platform for eCommerce brands. It gives you the tools to build your contact lists, some memorable emails, or to make key messages and more way, way more. Whether you're launching a new business or taking your brand to the next level, Klaviyo can help you get growing faster. And it's free to get started. Is it Klaviyo.com/masterplan to create your free account? That's K L A V I Y O.com/masterplan.

[00:32:56.330] - Chloe Thomas
OK, now, so far, we've gone deep into Influencer marketing, now you get to wow us with your insider knowledge about the whole of social media.

[00:33:04.910] - Chloe Thomas
So for the following questions, your answers can be anything to do with social media, which, of course does include Influencer marketing. Neal, are you ready?

[00:33:13.460] - Neal Schaffer
Let's do it.

[00:33:14.550] - Chloe Thomas
OK, let's start with social media newbie advice. If we've inspired someone to take the first step with social media, what do they need to know to give themselves the best chance of success?

[00:33:24.770] - Neal Schaffer
Well, considering that we were talking about Influencer marketing, it begins with content creation, right. Of actually having content to publish without having content to publish, you’re not going to be
able to build a following. You're not going to be able to build engagement. And that content, really, you take a step back. It starts with really your digital marketing strategy. What are you trying to achieve? What content do you already have? What are dependent on your social network?

[00:33:48.710] - Neal Schaffer
What are the keywords? Right. What are the visuals? So I'd say before even starting to really have that content strategy, have that marketing strategy planned and really lead with that content and always trying to leverage tagging other people. And hashtags were permitted to bring other people into the conversation and to make your content discoverable. And you'll have the best chance of success in doing that.

[00:34:12.350] - Chloe Thomas
OK, now, once you've started, of course, you've got to Keep Optimising. So what's your favorite way to improve social media performance?

[00:34:21.230] - Neal Schaffer
So I think that at some point when you do begin a social profile as a business, there's probably a chance that you are going to be doing advertisements to increase your followers. And I think it's totally OK to do that as a one time thing, to get up to a certain level after a certain amount of time, hopefully your customers come into the fray, you do Influencer marketing, you organically growing. But what happens over time, and I've seen it on any given social network, is that the followers might stop engaging with you.

[00:34:50.840] - Neal Schaffer
Right. And the followers might stop engaging with you because they're no longer interested. Maybe they no longer use that social network. So I think it's part of optimizing your engagement, optimizing your content as a whole other story where you can analyze and figure out what's working and what's not and tweak that. But optimizing the engagement means literally going in. And there's various tools you can use of trying to find followers that are just inactive on the network or just never engage with you.

[00:35:16.130] - Neal Schaffer
And I would start you know, we call that process pruning, but I'd consider spending a little bit of time pruning out the irrelevance because the algorithm is going to try to serve your content to everybody. And if you have irrelevant followers, inactive followers, followers don't engage. It really brings down the engagement of everything you do.
Cool advice, OK? It's impossible to improve our marketing unless we're monitoring the performance, but the list of stuff we could monitor can be overwhelming.

So what for you is the number one social media KPI?

Wow. I think at the end of the day it comes down to how many people from social media are coming to your website and hopefully converting the whole idea, whether it is, you know, any given social network or any content that you published that you hope gets indexed by Google is that people come to your website where you have your shopping cart. Right. So are people coming or not? Is really the key thing from there, obviously, how far down that they go in the conversion funnel.

But if we're doing a lot of activity on three different social networks and two are generating a lot of traffic and one is generating crickets, then we probably don't want to spend any more time on that one and spend more time on those two networks that generate value.

OK, finally, the crystal ball time. Well, it's coming up in the next six to 12 months. We should be getting ready for in social media?

Well, I think we're already seeing obviously tik tok and Instagram reels and the implications that that has it. It becomes visual. Social media has made it very, very hard for eCommerce companies to compete unless you're able to take that sort of photography that content creators take. I think when it comes to including a musical element into your content obviously makes it even more challenging. So, you know, it is sort of new and on the horizon. I don't think everybody needs to stop what they're doing and all of a sudden create musically 15 second videos either.

So there are some trends that you're going to hear about in the blogosphere, what have you, but they're not always necessarily relevant for us. Now, if you're an eCommerce you for teenagers, then you might want to take more notice. But if you're not targeting the teenage demographic as of today, this might change. You don't need to go head over heels over this. We've seen the same thing with Snapchat maybe two or three years ago, and then Instagram and stories and it all sort of fizzled away.
[00:37:37.880] - Neal Schaffer
And now it's very mainstream, isn't it? And it's also changed the beginning Instagram stories, we're really stories. It was a sequence of events over the course of five or ten different images or videos. That's not how we use them today. So I do believe that reels is going to be it's going to be similar. And once again. It's the teenage demographic versus the general demographic. So always remember that and just keep your sanity as anyone and everyone contacts you saying we'll do two tiktok for you for, you know, a nice amount of money.

[00:38:08.780] - Chloe Thomas
I love that. Keep your sanity. Well, Neal we're nearly at the end of the show. So could you please let the listeners know where they can find you, your business, your book on the web and social media please?

[00:38:18.140] - Neal Schaffer
Sure. Well, my name is Neal Schaffer where NealSchaffer.Com Neal Schaffer on social media. It's the real Neal N E A L and there's a lot of us Schaffer's out there in sales and marketing. So S C H A F F E R I also have a podcast called To Maximize Your Social Influence podcast, if you want to delve deeper into this concept of digital influence and the name of my book, which is available wherever fine books are sold, as we like to say, is called The Age of Influence

[00:38:44.450] - Chloe Thomas
Excellent! Nicely put together there. So, Neal, thank you so much for coming on the podcast and talking about such a practical angle of the Influencer marketing. I really do hope we've inspired several of the listeners to really get stuck in as we as we as we head towards Christmas in twenty, twenty one. So. So thanks for coming on. It's been a pleasure.

[00:39:04.640] - Neal Schaffer
Thank you. Chloe, I'm going to say this publicly for the first time, but I just want to remind people that influencers aren't fake. Only your perception of them is fake.

[00:39:13.580] - Chloe Thomas
Oh, nice, nice. I like them.

[00:39:16.430] - Neal Schaffer
Well, thank you Chloe. It's been awesome. And I really hope that everybody listening gets value. I know that it was a lot of information, but I truly want to provide that content to to really help you Keep Optimising your marketing. So hopefully it helps.
[00:39:30.490] - Chloe Thomas
So there we have it, you're Influencer marketing latest and greatest tactics, how exactly to go about leveraging those content creators in their communities to get your message out and also, you know, to improve the quality of your marketing generally, you can get Neal's book, which goes into a lot of what we talked about a lot more.

[00:39:47.440] - Chloe Thomas
This is a great read. Lots of good, good, good tips in that you can get get it. It's called The Age of Influencer. It's available via Amazon as Kindle audiobook, paperback and audio C.D. Audio CD, not format. I've tried with my books. Maybe that's what I need to get into some audio CDs now. If you want my books in audio CD, do let me know.

[00:40:08.140] - Chloe Thomas
Now. So you get Neal book on Amazon and all those different formats. You can also get the links to everything we discussed today, including those tools. He mentioned the full transcript of this episode, Important notes and much more at Keepoptimising.com. Remember that with an S, not a Z. And as part of my mission to help you improve your marketing, I've invited all of our social media specialists from this month's episode to join us for a Q&A webinar at the end of the month. That's where you get your chance to get your questions about social media answered.

[00:40:38.860] - Chloe Thomas
Go and get yourself registered right now for the webinar, or you can, of course, watch the replay at KeepOptimising.Com. Thank you so much for tuning into this episode of the Keep Optimising podcast.

[00:41:04.030] - Chloe Thomas
Last month, we got a group of eCommerce experts to share their Black Friday Cyber Monday tips. So if you're looking for a few last minute ideas to make this year's event really work for you, then make sure you have a listen to Episode 14.

[00:41:04.030] - Chloe Thomas
Please also tell your fellow marketers about the show, because I want to help as many marketers as possible to improve the performance of their marketing. And I often find that social media is one in particular. We end up spending a lot of time achieving very little. So please do pass on that. That's what we're covering this month.
[00:41:18.680] - Chloe Thomas
Have a great week, all of you, and make sure you listen to the next episode so I can help you to Keep Optimising your marketing.

[00:41:26.600]
Access everything Keep Optimising at keepoptimising.Com, that's with an S, not a Z.