

INFLUENCER MARKETING

How can you extend the reach of your communication effort and tell your community story in a compelling way that helps create a positive buzz? You leverage the power of influencers. Influencers are people and organizations that a decision maker trusts and listens to. Influencers are seen as objective, third party opinion leaders, often with more credibility than you.

Who are some external influencers that help CEOs make an informed capital investment decision? For economic development they include -

- ✓ Site Selection Consultants
- ✓ Industry Organizations
- ✓ Non-government Advocacy Organizations
- ✓ News Media
- ✓ Bloggers
- ✓ Academicians
- ✓ Politicians
- ✓ Community members

It is important you do a thorough assessment of who the key influencers are for your community. The best source of insight comes from asking capital investors where they have learned about your community. There are a number of standard market research approaches ranging from qualitative to quantitative and varying in cost.

Once you have identified the highest leverage influencers, you are ready to create a communication plan that shares your story in a way that it will get retold.

In general, influencers care about the following big themes. Build your story line around these themes and you will have a higher probability of success.

EXPERTS	MEDIA
Business impact - All experts want to have their business positively impacted by their support of a message.	News Worthiness - They like the latest information. Their favorite sayings are "This just in" and "Breaking news".
Appreciation - They want to be appreciated and liked by their followers.	Visual Impact - Powerful images help them please current subscribers and attract more.
Self Esteem - Pride is a powerful motivator. They want to be viewed as among, if not the first to know the "latest" on a topic.	Human Interest - People stories are always appreciated. How does the news affect the typical person on the street?

Not every influencer target is equally important. Take the time to select the top few you believe will best augment your efforts. Be certain you know what type of information meets their needs and have a process in place to take your story and communicate it to them in the way they want to hear it. Finally, influencer marketing can be measured, so be certain you put measures in place (e.g. # of tweets).