

### Introduction

Brand community is a term used to describe like-minded consumers who identify with a particular brand and share significant traits. Consumers organize into these communities to share their experiences of a brand. Some believe that the brand community is the rightful owner of the brand.

Marketing is getting more personal. The consumer now plays a crucial role. They are not just one of the many receiving generic branded content. Display ads and traditional forms of advertising have lost their effectiveness as influence marketing comes in to reshape the way brands sell their products.

Influence marketing focuses on influencers, everyday people who have the power to affect the purchase decisions of their friends and family. These people don't have to be Justin Bieber or Beyoncé because social media has leveled the playing field so anyone can make an impact.

To activate influencers to share your branded content with their network, one tactic is to create a branded community of your everyday influencers.

Source: <https://www.mavrck.co/9-reasons-you-need-a-brand-community-for-your-most-influential-customers/>

### 1 -3

#### 1. Why do you need an exclusive brand community?

In a generic community, you can't tell who your top influencers are. Communities that live on social networks welcome anyone to like or follow their brand. Popular pages like Starbucks have millions of likes on Facebook. But, only a small percentage of Starbucks' Facebook fans actively engage with the page. This means brands don't know who their most influential customers are and they treat all fans the same.

When you create and own an exclusive community, every member is an involved, top contributor. With exclusivity you can ensure that every member in your closed community is both influential and relevant to your brand.

#### 2. Members of your exclusive community will be more intrinsically motivated to engage

Because influencers must apply for admittance or receive an invitation to your brand community, they have to earn the privilege of being exclusive members. With this in mind, once admitted, they will be more intrinsically motivated to be actively involved.

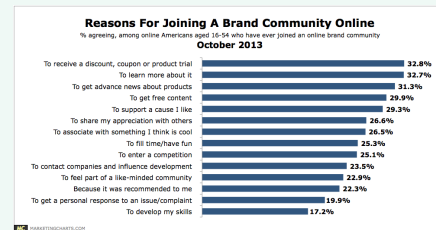
Influencers find value in contributing their ideas and opinions and are more likely to increase their engagement when they know your brand has chosen to listen to their opinions in a private environment.

#### 3. Brand community members can become its best promoters

### 1 -3 (cont)

Members of a brand community drive the brand message (and their passion for it) into the market. They have the ability to influence their friend's and family's purchase decisions through the power word-of-mouth.

### Branded Community



### 4 - 9

#### 4. Exclusive communities help influencers build relationships with each other

When a limited number of people are admitted into your community, members will likely connect with each other because the space is more intimate. Brand communities bring people together whom otherwise, may never have interacted despite having similar passions. In your community, members can discuss certain topics and enjoy the benefits of being exclusive members together. As a brand, this can amplify your overall impact.

#### 5. You won't lose your influencer relationships

With the declining reach in today's social media world, brands have to pay to reach the fans of their pages. But, why pay to rent your social media communities when you can own a community? Instead of continuously paying and struggling to find the right eyeballs, you can take action and own a community where your most influential customers will always see your content.

#### 6. Selective brand communities help you collect important data

A group of relevant and reliable consumers is an incredible resource for collecting both quantitative and qualitative data to get a better understanding and build a detailed profile of who you're selling to. Ask group members what they think of a certain campaign you're thinking of running, poll them about current operations, or get feedback on a new product before it's released.

With a selective brand community, you have the ability to crowd-source for customer opinion much more effectively than other tactics such as putting together focus groups.

#### 7. You can integrate your brand community insight with CRM

### 4 - 9 (cont)

As you continuously collect data from your influencer community, you can integrate your other systems to match. Integration allows you to leverage data from your community to improve your CRM system. Imagine if a top influencer went to one of your in store locations and, because of the integration, they were able to cut the line or receive a discount or gift.

#### **8. Membership programs can deepen customer relationships**

Because brand communities are cohesive groups, marketers can treat customers like subscribers and create membership-oriented programs to improve and lengthen customer relationships. Members can gain access to certain communication programs like magazines, websites, ebooks, live events, etc. This way, you can amplify the effectiveness of your promotions and lower your costs.

These members can also receive special discounts, sample items, and other rewards for being part of an exclusive community.

#### **9. Increase the effectiveness of your other marketing initiatives**

When you create your brand community, you'll have a group of your most engaged customers. As argued earlier, this group of influencers is inevitably the rightful owner of your brand. They are an incredibly valuable resource with a variety of insights.

Allotting some of your marketing budget to create a branded community of top influencers is a great way to gather opinions about your other marketing efforts. If you're planning to run a campaign, you can simply ask your community to see what ideas resonate best.



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