

How to Succeed at Influence Marketing with Shane
Barker

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Roger Dooley

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How to Succeed at Influence Marketing with Shane Barker

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Welcome to the Brainfluence Podcast with Roger Dooley, author, speaker and educator on neuromarketing and the psychology of persuasion. Every week, we talk with thought leaders that will help you improve your influence with factual evidence and concrete research. Introducing your host, Roger Dooley.

Roger Dooley: Welcome to the Brainfluence podcast. I'm Roger Dooley. I'm really excited about today's show because we're going to focus on a very practical approach to an increasingly important topic, influencer marketing. We've probably all had the experience of launching anything from a new blog post to perhaps even a new line of products. Queue up great social media content, post it, and then not much happens. One way to get traction for whatever it is you want to promote is getting influencers, people with bigger followings than you to share it with their audience.

With us today, we have Shane Barker. Shane is a digital marketing consultant who specializes in influencer marketing, product launches, sales funnels, targeted traffic, and website conversion. He's consulted with everyone from Fortune 500 companies to influencers with digital products, and even top celebrities. He's been published on sites like Ink, Huff Post, Forbes and more, and teaches a course in personal branding at UCLA. And today, he's going to help us all become better influence marketers. Welcome to the show, Shane.

Shane Barker: Hey Roger. Thanks for having me.

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How to Succeed at Influence Marketing with Shane Barker

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Roger Dooley: Yeah, so Shane, your LinkedIn page says that you've been doing what you've been doing as an entrepreneur since 2003 when you finished college. Those early years, social media and online influence wasn't really around. Explain why you chose an entrepreneurial route, and how what you were doing evolved.

Shane Barker: Yeah, I mean it was,... It's funny. It is 2003. That's when I graduated from college, but the journey started even before that. I had my own businesses and stuff, and that's how I jumped in the marketing space is that I had these businesses and they were all bootstrapped in the beginning. So I didn't have a lot of capital so I was like, "God, either A, I can go and try to find some money, some investors." But I was early on in my career, so probably not too many people would want to invest and I thought, "Oh, I gotta bootstrap this thing and learn how to do marketing." So I've always been real fascinated with marketing and how to evolve, especially when it comes to online marketing and when it comes to influencer marketing and all that stuff.

So 2003 was when I graduated from college. Graduating from college obviously was a great thing, but there was a very small percentage of what I learned in college that I use today, unfortunately. I mean, a lot of my stuff has just been the last 20 years of marketing and working long hours and figuring stuff out. So that's been awesome, but probably the last five or six, maybe seven years now, we've been real heavy in the influencer space, really heavy in influencer marketing because this was ... I mean, seven years ago it wasn't even called influencer marketing. It was just people that have a good social

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media following, and what we want to do is have our products and services and whatever that is, and then we have clients that would go and have these people talk about that, because they have influence over their community.

So it's been a long haul, man. I've done SEO. We've done anything that has to do online. I mean, for the last 20 years we've been a lot of different stuff. But today we really spend our time with influencer marketing. Obviously, I teach at UCLA. It's a personal branding and how to be an influencer. And then the other part of the course is how to work with influencers. So it's one side is more for brands and agencies and the other side is more for the influencers. And then we do heavy content marketing. So as you've already touched on, I write for Ink and Forbes and Huffington Post and it was about 120 websites that I've written for consistently over the last probably 6 or 7 years. And so, a lot of our stuff is that inbound marketing because of the content that I write, and also the speaking engagements and stuff like that I do.

Roger Dooley: We're gonna have to squeeze a guest post out of you for Neuromarketing, Shane. You can increase that total by one.

So let me start off by lobbing you a softball. Can you explain what influencer marketing is and why it's important? And I'm sure that some folks are thinking of it as, "Well, it's celebrities. Kim Kardashian and so on, getting them to show off your beauty product." But I think that for most of our audience, they're looking for

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something a little more on the practical end of things, at least a little bit smaller scale than that.

Shane Barker: Yeah, absolutely. So the thing is, influencer marketing is really just a process of promoting your products or services through influential individuals such as ... It can be bloggers, journalists. It can be industry experts. It can be celebrities. The cool part about influencer marketing is that just about anybody can be an influence, and what I mean by that is it doesn't have to be ... As you touched on Kim Kardashian, you don't have to have 10 million followers or 5 million. You don't even have to have 1 million. The idea of it is, that if you've built a community, whether that be through Snapchat or Instagram or LinkedIn or Twitter or Facebook, the idea of that is that you have a community that is engaged with your content, whatever type of content you're producing. And so, the idea of that is, okay, if you have somebody that ... I use yoga as an example. Somebody that's heavy into yoga and they have a thousand people following, those thousand people could be heavily engaged with that yoga instructor. And so, when they talk about products or services from other yoga companies or other yoga studios they visited, or yoga books or whatever that may be, or a product launch that's coming out for that yoga instructor, they're going to be heavily engaged. And so, that's what's awesome about it.

It doesn't have to be the Kim Kardashians. It doesn't have to be Snoop Dogg. It doesn't have to be anybody that has these huge followings that are also gonna have a huge price tag. Now these days you can go and find ...

Nanoinfluencers is a common term that's being thrown

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around, or also microinfluencers. So they look at this in regards to the number of followers you have. But I always tell people, and I tell brands this, because there's still a common misconception of, hey, if they have a huge following then I'm going to get more eyeballs and I'm going to get more sales, and that's not necessarily true. So that's important to think about when you're hiring an influencer, the number of followers they have is a variable, but don't make that the number one reason why you're hiring them. Because we've seen as the Kim Kardashians of the world or somebody has a crazy following like that, the problem is that engagement is a lot lower because they're just not going to have the time to respond to a thousand people.

And so, we look at the influencers with a smaller following that most of the time are more engaged. And once again, you have softwares and really cool stuff that we can use to be able to get that list together of, hey, let's say we want to work with 10 influencers. Here goes 100 influencers in the yoga space, and now what we need to do is actually go and take a look at those influencers profiles and really take a look at it. I mean, you're really looking to have some partnership, so you really want to dig a little deeper on each influencer to see if it's a good fit. And then I also interview influencers as well. I think that's really important to see where their head's at and if they've looked into your product that you're offering, if they have any idea of who you are and that stuff.

Roger Dooley: Okay. Explain what you mean by interviewing influencers, Shane.

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Shane Barker: Yeah. So when I interview influencers, the point of this is that if I send somebody a thing and say, "Hey, I'm working with Adidas, and what we're going to be doing is we're actually going to be coming out with this new shoe and we want to market it here in the Los Angeles area." And so, the idea of that being, hey, so we go and reach out to these influencers ... And of course most of these influencers, if you're Adidas, are going to say, "Yeah, I want to work with you." But what we really want to find out is that hey, if we send them a brief and talk to them a little bit of that campaign, I go and interview them and say, "Hey, what other companies have you worked with?" Oh hey, we've worked with Nike. We've worked with K-Swiss. So okay, that can be good.

But the problem is, is your audience confused on who you really like? If you're talking about Nike and you're talking about this, I also want to find out what they know about Adidas and what they know about the campaigns and if they've done any research, if they've tried the shoes on, if they're a fan of the product or if they don't like the product or ... There's just some certain questions because everybody's going to take a paid gig. I mean, if you're offering money on the table, 99% of the people are going to say, "Hey, yeah, I'd love to get paid to work with Adidas." I mean, even if it's a smaller company that's pitching them ... Let's use that as an example. So let's say there's a mom and pop shoe shop that's has their own shoe line that they're coming out with, and that's going to be a little hard to get influencers because it's not a common name. But what we want to do is make sure that they're a good fit. Make sure that they have looked into

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the product, they understand what the product's all about. They understand our mission.

I mean, it's no different than you're applying for a job. If I went to go ... Roger, you guys were hiring and I said, "Hey, Roger. I want to work for you guys' company." In your interview you're gonna say, "So what do you know about me? Have you read my book? What have you done to research to know who I am and what my company does? Do you understand our mission, our values?" And that's important. It's the same thing with influencers. You're literally hiring them to start to vouch for your company. You really should be looking for some type of a deeper relationship there.

So the idea is, once again, everybody will take free product for the most part. Everybody will take some kind of paid gig if you say, "Hey, we're giving \$1,000, \$5,000 for this campaign," everybody will want the money. But you want to find the person that understands your company that's already done the research and that you guys can grow together. I mean, that really is the goal of this thing. Eventually, influencer marketing, you want to find somebody that's going to be an ambassador. Somebody that believes in your product and is willing to grow with you as a company.

Roger Dooley: To scale that in a little bit different direction, Shane. Imagine that what you're talking about there is you've got a brand or product that you think this person is a really good fit for and you're going to focus a lot of attention on them. But what about a broader, less in depth outreach where you're not going to be paying the influencers

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necessarily, but what you're really hoping is that maybe some of them will take a look at your product, whether ... It could be anything or even your blog post that you want them to share. So you're not gonna be paying them for that and you're not asking a lot of them, you're not asking them to become part of a longterm campaign. What about that kind of an approach?

Shane Barker: Yeah, absolutely. So the way that we do things, and Roger, I'm sure you get this as well ... I mean, if I had a dollar for everybody that sent me an email to promote their product or service or blog post, I could just retire. I could go buy that island that my wife and I have been talking about and drink Coronas and live my life doing yoga on an island somewhere, which is probably not gonna happen.

But what happens there ... I mean, what's important for me, what I look at it and what I also talk to my clients about is, if you don't have a big budget, that's okay. The idea of this is, how do you make this a win- win? And so, what I usually will do is ... I call it credits, but what I do is I usually go in ... If there's an influencer that I want them to share my content, what I do is I start engaging them a little early on, in the week or two weeks, and I share some of their content and I write comments and I'm sharing it with my audience. And now when I go in and say, "Hey, Roger. Once again, I wrote this post about influencer marketing and neurology, and obviously I think you would be a good fit to promote it. I've been seeing some of the blog articles you've been putting out. Here you can see that I've shared some stuff on Twitter. I'd like to maybe include you in a future expert roundup, or something like

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that. And once again, this was an article that I wrote that I think would resonate well with your audience. Is that something you'd be willing to share?"

Because the idea of this is, all day long people are asking for something. And that's okay, and I do read that and I still will share some stuff, but the idea is, when you're ... What's it called? Reciprocity?

Roger Dooley: Reciprocity, yes.

Shane Barker: Yeah. Where it's the idea of ... So you've already done some stuff for them and now you're asking for a favor of them. Most of the time those people are going to share because you're not just saying, "Hey, do something for me." You don't have your hand out going, "Hey, can you do me a favor?" You've already done them a favor, and so now it's a situation where they start to feel like, hey, I think this would be ... Shane's already shared some of my content. We've got a good relationship there. I mean, it's all about networking and having those types of connections, and change should be somebody that we would want to align our brand with and who's already sharing some of our content. So I think it'd be a good idea to be able to share his content so you have that connection.

Roger Dooley: Yeah. I think you hit on something else that's really important there too, Shane, and that is demonstrating that you are familiar with the person's work and also demonstrating relevance to whatever it is you want shared. I mean, as you said, I get daily many people wanting me to share stuff. I get these posts ... I need a

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Forbes post immediately on my new product. Okay, sure. That's what I was waiting for. My God.

But many of these outreach emails take the form of, Dear Roger, where it's been auto-populated, or occasionally Dear First Name, where they screwed up their merge. And then they mention a blog post that they really loved, which is absolutely totally irrelevant to whatever it is they want me to promote, and it's clear that this is just a totally automated process. Something is filling in the blanks, grabbing a URL and plugging it in there. It's totally ineffective where, if somebody ... Of course, the advantage of that is you can blast off a thousand of these things in no time, but the effectiveness is so low. It's like these robocalls. Yeah, I guess maybe one in a million robocalls actually gets somebody on the line to interact, but they do it because it's cheap. But if somebody spent 10 minutes on crafting a thoughtful outreach letter, it would make so much more sense and you'd probably get 10X or 100X the success rate that you would otherwise.

Shane Barker: And that's exactly it. I mean, the issue is this. The templated emails that you get, it's really hard for me to want to respond to those because they didn't spend the time. So if somebody went in ... And this is the same thing when I talk about with influencers. I don't want to send a templated email to 10,000 influencers and say, "Hey, Adidas wants to work with you." Because that's a potential nightmare. You're gonna have 10,000 people that email you back and say, "Hey, I want to work with Adidas," obviously. Or with whoever that company is. The idea of it is, you grab the 100 influencers. Let's say you

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want to hire 10. Go and look at their profiles, make sure it's a good fit.

There's a lot of stuff in the media now like, influencer marketing doesn't work. Well, guess what? SEO doesn't work if you don't find the right keywords in PPC doesn't work if you don't find the right target audience. It's the same thing with influencer marketing. It's not a, "Hey, get Kim Kardashian or anybody with a million followers to go and put a picture of them wearing your shirt and then you're going to have a million dollars in sales." That's not how it works. It's a frequency deal.

And once again, if you're a company that doesn't have a big name, you need to explain to the influencer why you guys should work together. Hey, I've been watching your profile. You put up content. ... Let's use yoga as an example. I see the content you put up. You've obviously been a yoga instructor for about seven years. I see you've just had a baby three months ago. Congratulations on that. Looks like your blogs have been getting some good traffic, and let me tell you about a new patented yoga product that we have coming out. I'm sure you get pitched all the time, but let me explain to you why I think this is a perfect fit for you. Or, the reason why that we should talk. Because then they go, okay, they've looked into it. They talked about me just having a child. They understand that I have a studio in Los Angeles. They've looked into me. They're being very targeted on what you want.

The analogy I always use is that I'm very happily married, but let's say I wasn't happy married and I was single and I wanted to ... All I want, Roger, is I want to date a blonde,

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How to Succeed at Influence Marketing with Shane Barker

<https://www.rogerdooley.com/shane-barker-influence>

and so what I do is I send out an email to 10,000 blondes through a website and say, "I just want to date a blonde." I mean, I don't know how many responses I'd get, but the point being is you really want to say, "Hey, I like blondes, but I'm also looking to have kids. I like to travel. I like long walks in the park." Obviously I haven't profiled in a long time, but you get my point. The idea of this is you want to really drill down, you want to find that influence and explain why you reached out to them. That's just so important. Don't send out 10,000 emails, because if you've got money on the table then people are going to respond, but is it the right person? You really want to drill down and find that specific person.

Roger Dooley: So for identifying influencers, there are certainly tools that you can use to do that. Which tools do you find are the most effective?

Shane Barker: Yeah, I mean, it really depends on what you're doing. So if you want to launch a product or something like that, there's influence.co. Neil and those guys have done a great job where you can look at the campaigns and you can find influencers there. It just depends. There's so many different ways to do it. What I've seen a lot of ... If you're looking for like bloggers, let's say. So Group High has a great platform where you can go find bloggers that are talking about whatever your niche is, whether that be shoes or apparel or fitness or whatever, anything like that. So you can go and see stats there and see how much traffic they're getting and stuff like that. SEM Rush is another tool that we use to look at people that are ... What kind of traffic people are getting, what keywords they're indexing for. We also use Buzzsumo. It's a tool that we

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use to go and see ... If we want to write a blog article, we go and look on there and see which of the blog articles are getting the most shares. And we look at that key word and say, okay, we can build out an article that's similar to that because that seems to resonate with that audience.

There's Grin that we use as well, and Grin is going to be ... It's just Grin.co. What we use with Grin is we go in and take a look at potential influencers and we use it ...

There's hashtag searches and you can search certain niches or certain demographics, certain cities and stuff like that. It just depends on what you're going after. I mean there's also, software out there for YouTube. It just depends on your platform and what you're going after. If you're going after to bloggers or Instagrammers or YouTubers, there's so much great software out there. I mean, really the software is that first step and going and pulling that initial list all through keywords or hashtags or whatever that is, and then looking at that list and then drilling down and actually going and looking at their profile.

And I have a like a numbering system than I usually do and say, hey, I think this one was great because of ... These are the five factors that we're looking for. Because with a brand I tell them, "Hey, what are the things that you're looking for?" We're looking for mommy bloggers that are 21 to 28 and that live in this area and love the color pink or whatever. Okay, great. Now we have to look into that and drill down on those influencers and find out who fits that demographic.

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Roger Dooley: Yeah. I can vouch for Buzzsumo. That's probably one of the few moderately expensive tools that I subscribe to. I use it in a slightly different way. Certainly, as I approach an upcoming book launch I'm going to be using it to find people I might want to contact, but also it helps me screen the bazillion contacts that I get every day where somebody says, "Hey, we'd like a quote for this article we're writing because we've got a bazillion listeners or readers," and you chuck Buzzsumo and find out that none of their content has gotten more than two shares. It's like, okay, that's probably not worth investing the time to do something good, because I don't know about you but if somebody says, "Hey, we need you to write something," I'm going to put some time into it-

Shane Barker: It takes time.

Roger Dooley: And make sure that it's good stuff. So it really helps both ways, not just identifying people who might help you, but also identifying those opportunities that are worth investing time in.

Shane Barker: Absolutely. Buzzsumo, Stephen, those guys and Susan, they have an awesome tool. I mean, it really is. There's so many different things. You can find influencers on there. You can find how many shares to an article. I mean, it's a great first step to be able to go in and just do some initial research on, once again, somebody that's reaching out to you or maybe somebody that you want to reach out to. They've definitely got some really cool features on their platform.

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Roger Dooley: Shane, you mentioned SEO and of course one of the key driving factors in SEO are links. What do you see going on with links? It seems to me that compared to some years ago, getting good links is tougher and tougher mainly because people are now just using social media where before a lot of people would do daily blog where they list some of the favorite stuff they've read or that sort of thing, and you see much less of that. And people do write big blog posts and some of those round up posts may have 50 or 100 links in them or something. So people are still linking out, but that general flow, at least more on, I guess, the business side of people who were blogging daily and linking to three or four places. That seems to be way down and if you look at the link totals in Buzzsumo or one of the other tools you mentioned, it looks like that's really the case. It's pretty hard to get links these days. Would you agree with that and is there something that people can do to get more links?

Shane Barker: Yeah, I mean I think that the link thing, it's always real interesting, because everybody's always looking for good, authoritative websites that you can either A, write for and B, be mentioned in. I mean, we got early in the game ... I guess it's probably seven or eight years ago when I started writing for my blog, and now we have, like I said, 120 different websites that we write for. The cool part about that is obviously those were all back links for us. I mean, I don't do a lot of paid. I mean, all my stuff's all inbound marketing, all done through the writing that I do. So we don't have an issue as much with getting links because of the sites that I've written for in the past.

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Now for anybody else's looking to get links. I mean, there's a lot of creative ways to do it. One thing that we've found that's been real successful is we create really cool infographics or gifographics that tell a story on whatever it is, whatever that is. The 10 fitness biggest influencers in Los Angeles or whatever that is. So we have those and then what we'll do is we'll actually go and have those infographics and we'll share them and go to what other influencer websites or platforms or something and say, "Here goes this great infographic. We'll write 300 or 400 words for you of original content, and then all you guys have to do is include this code and then it'll back link to our website." And a lot of the times, depending on the content, we can get a lot of back links that way.

Another thing that we do is we have a program ... Because mainly what we do, like I said, is influencer marketing or content marketing. We actually have a plan that we help people get more back links, and really it's more brand mentions So that's how we talk to our clients, and say, hey, it's brand mentions and driving that traffic. And a lot of the times, in 98% of those times, that includes some type of a link. So we do a PR thing through content marketing, we're telling the story of the brand or maybe it's a review or something like that, which is obviously great for back links.

There's so many different ways to get back links. I mean, you just have to get creative with it. Obviously you can go and look at a post ... And we get pitched on this a lot is, hey, there was an expert roundup of 49 people for ecommerce or something. And then somebody will say, "Hey, you forgot to include Joe Smith. Joe has written this

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How to Succeed at Influence Marketing with Shane Barker

<https://www.rogerdooley.com/shane-barker-influence>

book and has done this. Would you include them in that expert roundup?" So we see a lot of that. Or, "Hey, you have the top 15 SEO tools. Can you guys make us number 16?" And so we get a lot of those.

And so, the idea of that is once again, people come in and say, "Hey, we want to include this. This is our CEO. He's an awesome guy." And I go, "Okay, that's cool." But like there's no reciprocation. It's, "Hey, will you do us a favor?" And it's not that I don't want to do people favors, but it would be a lot better if somebody came in and said, "Hey, we shared your SEO ebook and we've been doing that. We've been promoting it for the last few weeks. Hey, would you be interested in maybe interviewing our CEO?" And I'll look at it and say, "Hey, I'll definitely keep you guys in mind for future roundups or something that we do." That's a better way to get on the radar because at that point it shows that you've looked into me and that you've shared some stuff and that you're trying to build some type of relationship there other than just, "Hey, can you do me a favor?"

Roger Dooley: Writing for 120 sites is pretty impressive, Shane. One thing that I've found is that I share a lot of content, mostly through Twitter, but through other channels as well. And some sites really do a good job with their guest authors, and others not so much. One thing that I think is really great if you are trying to attract perhaps somebody who would be an influencer to post on your site is to, first of all give them a good bio on the page, and then also the author page. I mean, author pages are ... I bet 90% are just a list of articles that author has published, when it's so easy on WordPress or most other platforms I would guess

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How to Succeed at Influence Marketing with Shane Barker

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to create an author page that has a short bio and includes maybe a link or two to the author's website or Twitter handle or wherever they're interested in. That's such a benefit. And even for folks who are unknown from a personal branding standpoint, you know how important reputation management is to have content that is specifically about you, which often then can be promoted. If there's something about you that's not so attractive, this kind of content is great. So having a good author page and good author bio on the post itself, I think, make it so much more attractive for somebody to post on your site.

Shane Barker: It is. It is. And that's the thing is that, foundationally ... And we actually have a program that is called the Thought Leadership Program, and so somebody has a good company and let's say the CEO isn't ... People don't know about them, but yet they want to be known as a thought leader. That's a thing that we've put together as well because it is difficult. It's taken me 6 or 7 years be able to get on 120 websites. Well that's obviously we were grinding it out early and we started off on some sites at that weren't quite that authoritative and said, "Hey, we've written here, written here," and then all of a sudden we got an in with SEM Rush, let's say, and then we're a little higher and higher, and next thing you know I'm able to get in with Search Engine Journal. And then a little higher and the next you know I'm able to do Forbes and Ink.

Now, obviously it took a number of years to put that together. And now we have a program where we do help people and say, listen ... Because we know the editors and we know the angles and this is going to be able to help get you guys out there. It's about a year program that

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we put together. It doesn't get any better than that when it comes to thought leadership. I mean, as an example, the way that I got my job at UCLA wasn't because I applied for a job. UCLA actually reached out to me and says, "Hey, we have this influencer course. We read your content and we want to talk to you." Which the initial email that I got, I thought somebody was joking. I thought it was a friend playing a joke on me or something. And then I realized, wait a second, like this is really UCLA. And that was all due to content. So that was because of the thought leadership and the space. They were looking for a practitioner, not somebody that could just talk about it, but somebody who's actually done it.

So the content marketing, once again, we invested early, it's just a no brainer. I mean, it's one of those things that you write for these sites, people ... There's obviously some validity to that. They assume there's some credentials there. People look at that and go, "Wow, if he writes for these sites then he must be ... He'd be great as a keynote speaker," or, "He'd be great for that" ... It's all foundational stuff that you're building for your own personal brand.

Roger Dooley: We've had Dorie Clark on the show in the past and I think she would echo that sentiment that all kinds of opportunities open up if you can be authoritative in a content area, particularly a niche content area. You can't pick something that's already way over populated and suddenly become the top dog in that area. But if you can find your niche, just continuously generating good content both on your site and perhaps on other sites as well as is really huge.

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Shane Barker: Yeah, it really is. And we've gotten to a point now and then ... Like I said, because we've been doing this for years, that now our domain authority on our website ... But we look at what's called the KD, which is like the difficulty score of being able to be number one for certain keywords, and now we know that if a website has a domain authority of let's say 50 or 60 that we can compete and probably get on the first page for most keywords. So now we break that down further of, now we do our content ... Not always around keywords, but there's definitely some strategy there that goes into that and say, "Okay, who are we competing with?" If I'm going to go up, I'm probably not going to knock down Wikipedia or anything like that. But if there are some good keywords in there, there's some weaker competition at number one, two, three, and four, then we look at, what do we need to do to produce some great content to be able to push them down?

Roger Dooley: And indeed just being ranked highly in Google lends you authority. It's pretty strange, but people assume that if you are ranked at the top or ranked just behind Wikipedia, that you are actually a leader in the field. Of course, Google strives to make sure that's the case too. They're not being gamed. But I think that these days you probably aren't going to spam your way to the top, but if you can actually create some good stuff in a targeted way, as you suggest, look at the keywords, look at the competition, you can get that done.

Shane Barker: Yeah. It's really a long-term strategy. I mean, you're not going to ... When I was writing content five years ago, Google wouldn't even put me on page 10. I mean, I was

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nowhere to be seen. I knew it was a long-term play, so we knew that by producing great content and then eventually writing for great websites and those back links and that traffic and stuff like that really was a strategy that, like I said, we invested early and it really is now a point where my website is very authoritative just because of the amount of back links and because of the amount of content that we've written over the years. And it's just brought us up to that point and so now we're really, really seeing the fruits of our labor because anything that we put up ... Not anything, but a good amount, now we can be really strategic. When before it was like, "Hey, let's just write content." We didn't necessarily have a keyword strategy because we didn't think we would be on page one, two, or three.

So now we see that with a lot of other websites, companies that we work with, where if they have a good amount of content a lot of the things ... One of the little secrets that I'll ... Actually, it's not going to be a secret because now it's going to be on your podcast. But one of the things that we do is the revamping of content, which we've seen huge successes with. So that's where you have some content where you're on page two or three, and what we do is we go look at that content, make sure it's focused around a certain keyword ... Once again, so where you're on page two or three, and then revamping that content. Google loves it when you revamp, when you redo some content and you update a list or you add some more stuff, and then we have it pinged. We've seen phenomenal results for our clients from an SEO perspective and it's ... Once again, that was a little secret,

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but it's no longer a seat because now Roger and his team and the whole world knows.

Roger Dooley: Right, well you heard it here first. No, actually that updating is a great strategy too because it can bring stuff that was already getting traffic up to the front again, get more social sharing, more links since it's been updated, and it's really all good. And it's also usually much easier and faster than trying to create new content that does as well as that, because sometimes you don't know what content is going to really work. You can write five articles that you think are all great, and only one of them is really going to have staying power that's going to get more shares and more links and so on.

So Shane, imagine this. You are a small business and you've identified maybe 50 or 100 potential influencers that you want to reach out to, not to become spokespeople, but just maybe to share a blog post or mention you in some way that wouldn't be compromising their brand. We've identified these. We can probably get their email addresses through a variety of ways. It's pretty easy these days. So is there a ... And we've also determined that what you don't want to do is do some merge with random stuff. You want to personalize each outreach as much as possible. So is there an email tool or a CRM tool or something that you use, or are there several that help you manage this process?

And I'm curious too about follow ups. I know I get frequent followups on all these folks that spam me once. I typically get three more followups after the initial spam, and of course the same from legitimate context to that aren't

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necessarily spammy. Do follow ups actually work? I imagine you have some experience with this. If people didn't respond to the first email, is it worth hitting them again and again? And where's the sweet spot for that?

Shane Barker: So we do have a lot of experience with this with talking to influencers and brands and pitching them. So usually, like I said, the pitch really needs to be spending ... You talked about 10 minutes. I mean go and take a little look around. I mean, they're sharing all their stuff. You can look on Twitter, you can look on Instagram, you can look on their LinkedIn. You can get a lot of information. I mean, people are putting their information out there that they ... Once again, if they just had a kid, if they just got a new job, if they just got funding for their company, if they ... That first few lines should be something very personal to show that you've spent some time to look into them. I mean, that's essential. If sending out the 10,000 emails and you're going to get 1% response rate, okay, if that's what you're looking for, then great, do that. But it's not the right people. The idea is you want to spend a little more time.

So we always do at least a three email sequence, and the reason why is because if you're working with these influencers a lot of the time they get pitched 4 or 5, 6, 7, 10 times a day. And so, it's how do you differentiate yourself? So obviously a great subject line. Write something that's catchy. Not, "Hey, we're looking to work with you." That's pretty bland. So hey, we have this patented product that we think would be a good fit for you because you're one of the number one yoga instructors, which ... That's a little long, but you get my point.

Something that when somebody reads it on their phone,

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they're going to go, "Wow, that's really something behind that. Let me take a look what they've got."

Once again, in the pitch, just define what you're looking for, explain why they're going to be a good fit. If they don't respond to that, then usually what I'll do is I'll send up a followup like, "Hey, John. Just wanted to make sure that you received the last email that we sent. Once again, if you don't think we're a good fit, please let us know." What I usually do in the first emails is a scarcity thing and say, "Hey, right now we're interviewing 100 influencers, but we only need 10. So if you don't think this is a good fit, I can absolutely take you off the list. But if you take a look at our product and you think that you want to be interviewed, please let us know because I'm only setting up 15 interviews a week, and we want to make a decision in three weeks." Or something like that. Because it's not always ... There's a scarcity thing. You got to tell them, it's you got to react and if they don't react and you send a second email and you say, "Hey, did you not see the first email?"

And then usually my third email is something funny. I'll put something like, "Hey, John. Haven't heard from you so I have to assume either A, you're just making way too much money or B, you're not looking for a new cool product to work with or that you've been kidnapped by aliens. But either way I want to wish you the best, and once again we'll take you off the list of people to potentially interview." So if they look at all three of those and say, hey, it's not for them, that's awesome. That's good. That's somebody you just take off the list and that's why we would look at 100 if we want 10, as an example. It

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doesn't always have to be a 10%, but you want to be very specific on those emails that you send. And after three times if they don't respond, usually that's a good sign because what I mean by that is that if you .. You get somebody that's engaging and then all of a sudden you pay them some money and they don't respond for a week or two, then that's a problem. You want somebody that's engaging with what you're putting out there and if they respond right away, then that's a great reason to take them off the list. We're always looking for reasons to take somebody off the list.

Roger Dooley: And actually, somebody who is pretty engaging might respond and say, "Gee, this isn't for me," or, "I'm already doing something with somebody else on this topic."

Shane Barker: Absolutely.

Roger Dooley: But just that lack of response probably is indicative of how they might behave in the future if you need a little help or something else.

Shane Barker: Potential work ethic. Yeah, that's exactly it. That's the issue is that if they don't respond that can be a good thing, because now I'm taking you off the list because you just don't respond. Because you don't want to find out they don't respond after you paid them, or after something was going on there. So I look at everything. People go, "Oh my god, but that one influencer. They didn't respond to the three emails, but we absolutely need them." You don't. There's thousands if not millions of potential influencers. It's not that big of a deal. That's what's awesome about it. Back in the day, if you had five

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celebrities and you're like, "These celebrities that would fit with our brand," you were praying that one of them was gonna respond. Now there's hundreds of influencers, and you might have somebody that looks like a great fit, but if they don't have the work ethic or if they're not on top of it or if they're not producing great content, whatever that is, it's important to look at that. Once again, each influencer ... They just give me a reason not to work with them because there's plenty of them out there.

Roger Dooley: Good. Well that's probably a good place to wrap up. Let me remind our listeners that today we're speaking with Shane Barker, an expert in influencer marketing. Shane, I know you've got some free content for our listeners. Where can people find you?

Shane Barker: I do, absolutely. Yeah. So you can actually go to my website which is ShaneBarker.com. That's S-H-A-N-E, B-A-R-K-E-R.com. And I actually do have a free influencer ebook that you can actually just go into Google and put influencer ebook. I'm number one for that. Or you can actually go in, it's just ShaneBarker.com, and then you can actually just put an ebook and then you can see the ebook that we have there, that's once again free for everybody that wants to go take a look at it.

Roger Dooley: Awesome. We will link there and to any of the other many resources we mentioned on the show notes page at RogerDooley.com/podcast. And we'll have a text version of our conversation there too. Shane, thanks for being on the show.

Shane Barker: Hey, Roger. Thank you so much for having me.

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