

Thinkers360 2023 B2B Influencer Marketing Survey



Our 3rd annual study of the current and future state of B2B influencer marketing – FEBRUARY 2023

RESEARCH REPORT | [THINKERS360.COM/ENTERPRISE](https://thinkers360.com/enterprise)

Survey Background



Thinkers360 3rd Annual 2023 B2B Influencer Marketing Survey

Thinkers360 – Connecting global brands with the world's premier thought leaders and authentic influencers for game-changing results

2023 B2B Influencer Marketing Survey

- **Objective:** To examine the current and future state of B2B influencer marketing from content creator and content consumer perspectives
- **Date:** Q4 2022
- **Target Audience:** Thinkers360 members as well as other creators and consumers of B2B influencer marketing content
- **Question Set:** 19 questions (6 for influencer content consumers and 13 for influencer content creators)

Acknowledgements: Our thanks go to the Thinkers360 members and other B2B content creators and content consumers who kindly participated in the study.

For questions about the survey, please contact info@thinkers360.com

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*Connecting global brands & audiences with the world's foremost thought
leaders & authentic influencers for game-changing results*

Key Findings: Consumers of B2B Influencer Content

Current State

Making Purchase Decisions

82% see influencer content as moderately important or higher for **making purchase decisions**



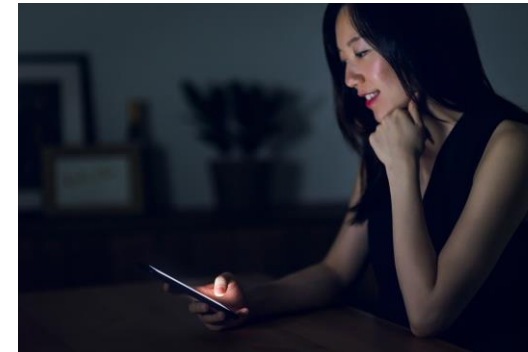
Impact and Relevance are Key Attributes

Impactful (96%), Relevant (89%), and Actionable (88%) are the key attributes in world-class influencer content

*Rated as extremely important or very important attributes of influencer content

Looking Beyond Social Media Influencers

Primary sources of influencer content include **authors (49%), social media influencers (46%), entrepreneurs (42%)** and **consultants (32%)**



Key Findings: Creators of B2B Influencer Content

Current State

B2B Influencers Identify with Multiple Personas

Influencer content creators cited **consultants** (70%), **advisors** (61%), **social media influencers** (61%), **authors** (59%) and **speakers** (57%) as the personas they most identify with



B2B Influencers build Brand Relationships

Over **87%** of B2B influencers work with 10 brands or less per year, with just 4% working with more than 20

In B2B, Tangible Deliverables Beat Social Media Metrics for Measuring Results & ROI

Tangible deliverables were cited by over **1.5x** as many B2B influencers as the most effective measures and metrics compared to **social media metrics**

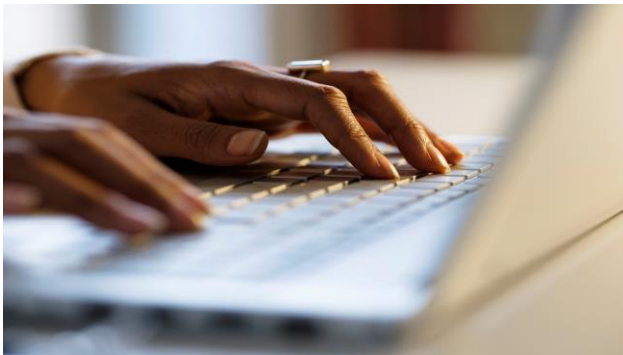


Key Findings: Creators of B2B Influencer Content

Plans for 2023

Specialist Communities amplify Content

Over **95%** see **specialist communities** as either primary or secondary outlets for distributing influencer content in 2023



Articles & Blogs are the Primary Format

Articles & blogs (87%), **social media** (81%) and **speaking** (69%) are the primary formats for influencer content creation in 2023

Conferences & Events on the Rise

Social media channels (89%), **conferences & events** (51%) and **specialist communities** (49%) are primary outlets for distributing influencer content in 2023

*What are the primary outlets for the influencer content you plan to distribute in 2023?





B2B Influencer Content Consumers

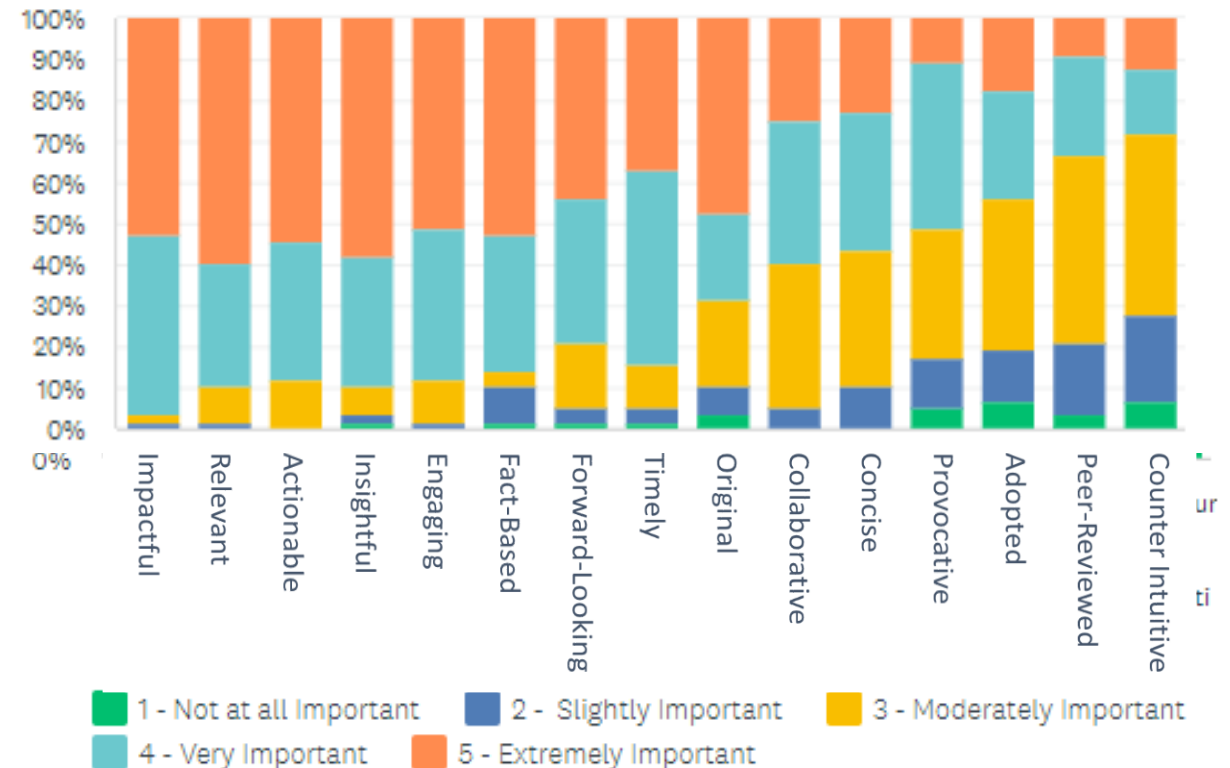
B2B Influencer Content Attributes

Influencer content consumers cited “**impactful**” (96%), “**relevant**” (89%) and “**actionable**” (88%) as extremely important or very important attributes of influencer content.

Traditional notions of thought leadership such as “**peer-reviewed**” (46%), “**counter-intuitive**” (44%) and “**adopted**” (37%) were cited by the majority as only moderately important.

In contrast to thought leadership content, the primary requirement for influencer content is that it’s “**impactful**”. While “**insight**” is also important, there’s less emphasis on it being “**forward-looking**”.

Impact (96%) and Relevance (89%) are key attributes in world-class influencer content



Source: Thinkers360 2023 B2B Influencer Marketing Survey. Q2. Influencer Attributes: Please rate the importance of these attributes in world-class influencer content:

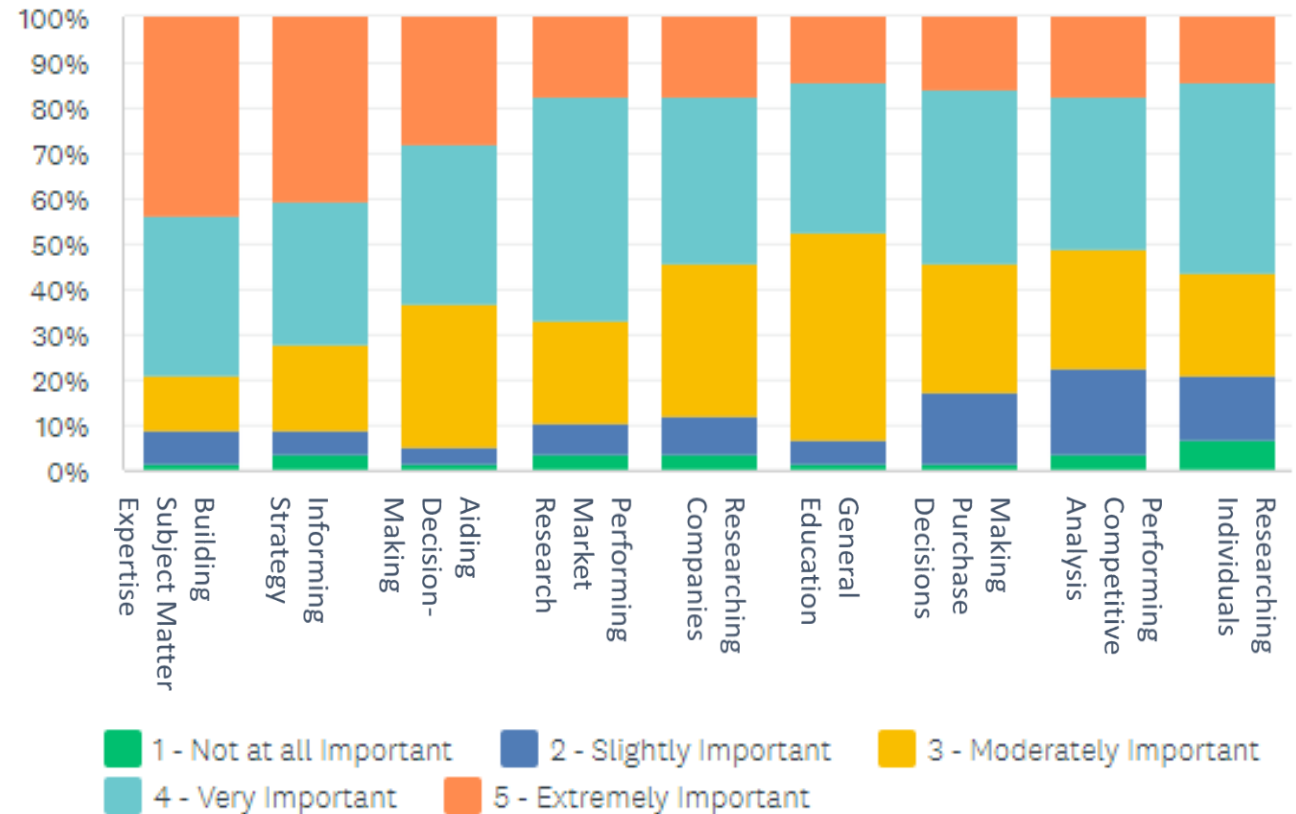
B2B Influencer Content Benefits

Influencer content consumers cited “**building subject matter expertise**” (79%), “**informing strategy**” (72%) and “**aiding decision making**” (63%) as extremely important or very important.

“**Making purchase decisions**” was rated as extremely important or very important by 54% and a total of 82% cited it as moderately important or higher.

While motivations and benefits of consuming influencer content vary widely, over 77% consider it moderately important or higher across **all potential benefits**.

Motivations for consuming influencer content vary, but benefits are widespread



Source: Thinkers360 2023 B2B Influencer Marketing Survey. Q3. Influencer Benefits: Please rate the importance of influencer content you consume in supporting the following:

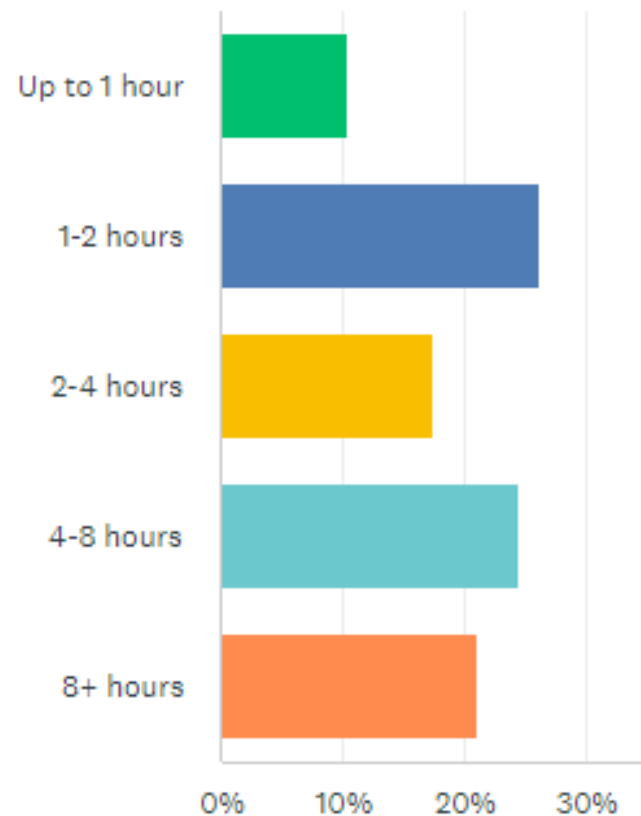
B2B Influencer Content Time Investment

Influencer content consumers cited 1-2 hours (26%) as their average amount of time spent per week reading influencer content.

Over 45% of respondents reported spending 4 hours or more, with 21% spending more than 1 day per week.

Compared to the LinkedIn/Edelman Survey which polled B2B marketers (only 17% were spending 4+ hours), Thinkers360 members spent far more time in consuming influencer content (45% were spending 4+ hours) - likely because to be strong producers they also need to be avid consumers.

Strong influencer content producers are avid consumers



Source: Thinkers360 2023 B2B Influencer Marketing Survey. Q4.
Influencer Content Time Investment: On average, how much time per week do you spend consuming influencer content?

B2B Influencer Personas

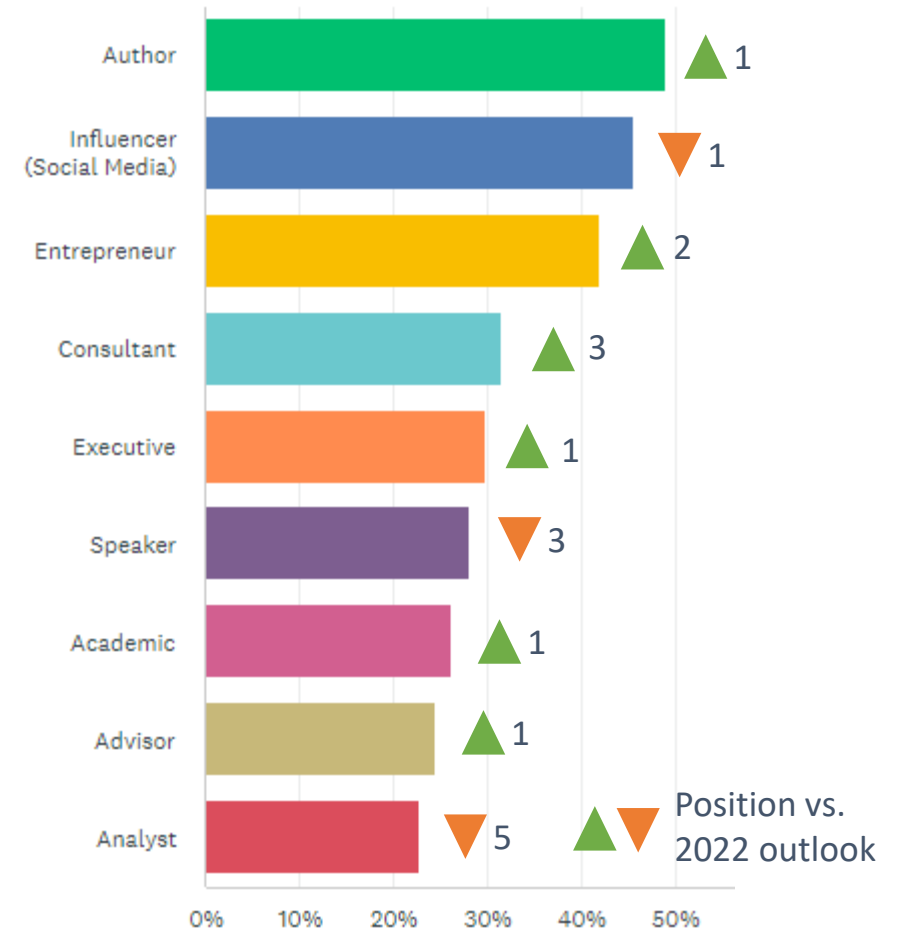
Influencer content consumers cited authors (49%), social media influencers (46%), entrepreneurs (42%), consultants (32%) and executives (30%) as their primary sources of influencer content respectively.

Interestingly, advisors and analysts fared quite poorly with only 25% and 23% citing them as a regular primary source (among the top three sources), perhaps due to their less frequent ability to engage with these personas.

As per our thought leadership survey, the trend appears to be towards “Always On” influence where the most accessible, online and social personas are gaining the most traction.

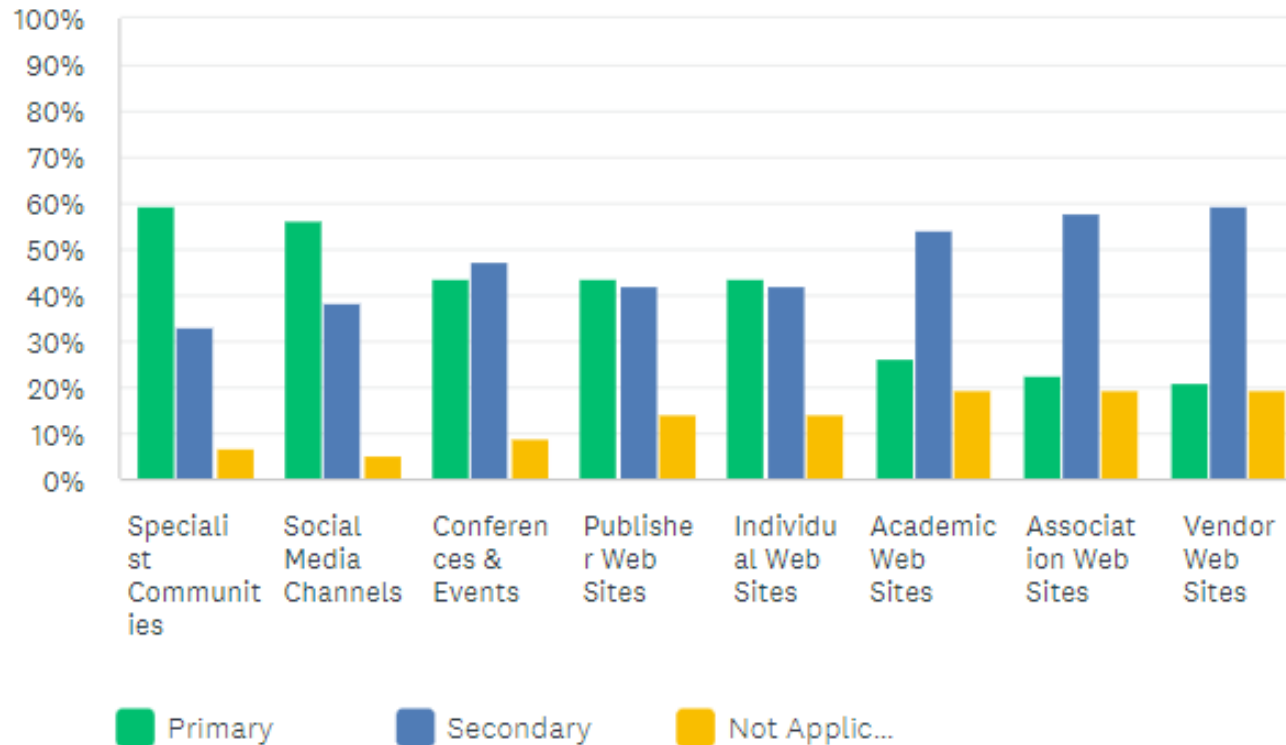
As per last year, this makes a powerful case for academics, advisors and analysts to ramp up their online influence via specialist communities as well as social media.

Authors and entrepreneurs are natural influencers



Source: Thinkers360 2023 B2B Influencer Marketing Survey. Q5. Influencer Personas: Which personas do you most regularly source your influencer-content from? (please select the top three):

Specialist communities (60%) and social media channels (56%) are again the tip of the spear for accessing influencer content



Source: Thinkers360 2023 B2B Influencer Marketing Survey. Q6. Influencer Sources: What are the primary and secondary sources for the influencer content you consume?

B2B Influencer Sources

Influencer content consumers cited “specialist communities” (60%) and “social media channels” (56%) as their primary sources for influencer content.

All other destinations, other than individual and publisher web sites, were seen more as secondary sources than primary sources with academic, association and vendor web sites seen by over 19% (each) as not applicable.

Specialist communities (such as Thinkers360) and social media appear to be the tip of the spear for access to influencer content.



B2B Influencer Content Creators

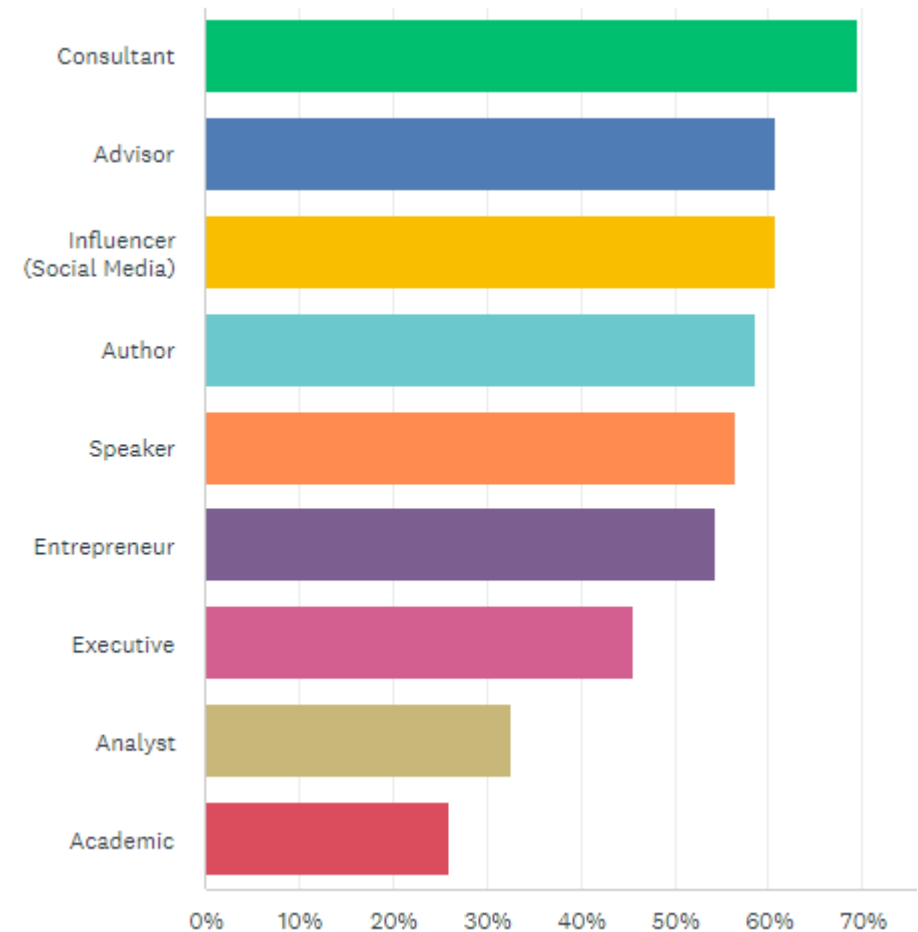
B2B Influencer Personas

B2B influencer content producers cited consultants (70%), advisors (61%), social media influencers (61%), authors (59%), speakers (57%), entrepreneurs (54%) as the personas they most identify with.

The results show that unlike B2C influencers, B2B influencers identify with multiple personas not just that of social media influencer.

In fact, over 60% identified with 3 personas and over 50% identified with 6 personas.

B2B influencers identify with multiple personas



Source: Thinkers360 2023 B2B Influencer Marketing Survey. Q7. Influencer Personas: Which personas do you most identify with? (Please select all that apply)

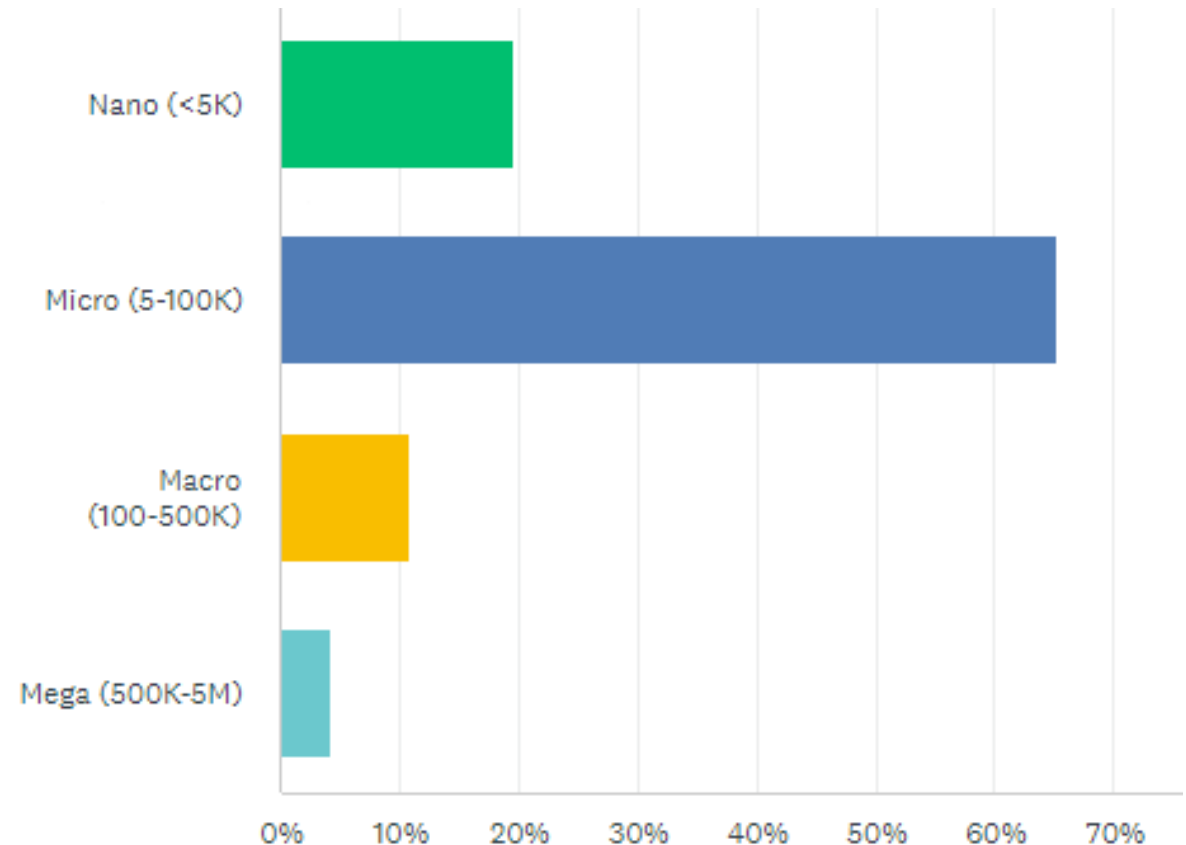
B2B Influencer Tier

In our survey, 20% of respondents were nano influencers (<5K), 65% were micro influencers (5-100K) and 11% were macro influencers (100-500K).

4% were mega influencers with 500K-5M followers across their largest social media channel.

In B2B Influencer Marketing, since influencers identify with multiple personas (e.g. author, consultant, speaker) as well as social media influencer, and provide a variety of services, it makes sense that all tiers of influencer have a key role to play with the brands they work with.

Over **80%** of respondents were nano or micro influencers with less than 100K followers across their largest social media channels



Source: Thinkers360 2023 B2B Influencer Marketing Survey. Q8. Influencer Tier: What tier of social media influencer are you? (In terms of total follower count across your largest social channel)

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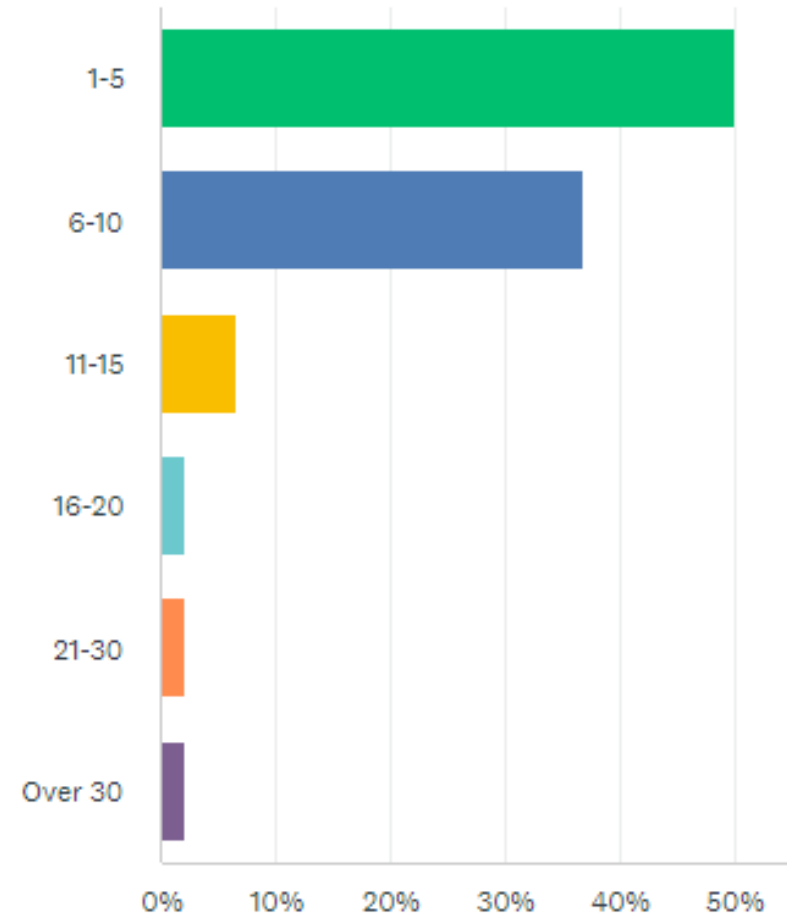
B2B Influencer Client Base

In our survey, 50% of respondents work with 1-5 brands per year, 37% with 6-10 brands per year and 7% with 11-15 brands per year.

Only 4% work with more than 20 per year and only 2% work with more than 30 per year.

B2B influencers clearly focus their attention on a small, targeted group of brands and typically average just 1 brand per month throughout the course of the year.

*Over **87%** of B2B influencers typically work with 10 brands or less per year, with just 4% working with more than 20*



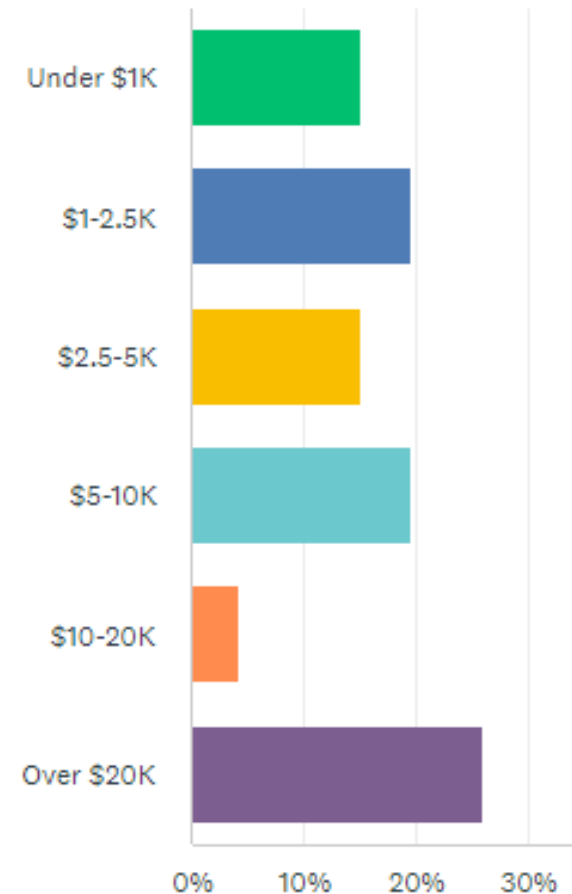
Source: Thinkers360 2023 B2B Influencer Marketing Survey. Q9. Influencer Client Base: How many brands do you typically work with each year?

B2B Influencer Engagement Size

In our survey, when influencers work with brands, the typical size of an engagement varies considerably from under \$1K to over \$20K per engagement.

While engagement size was evenly distributed, the three most common engagement sizes were under \$1-2.5K (20%), \$5-10K (20%) and over \$20K (26%).

The typical size of a B2B influencer engagement varies considerably from under \$1K to over \$20K per engagement



Source: Thinkers360 2023 B2B Influencer Marketing Survey. Q10. Influencer Engagement Size: When you work with brands, what's the typical size of an engagement? (In U.S. or equivalent currency)

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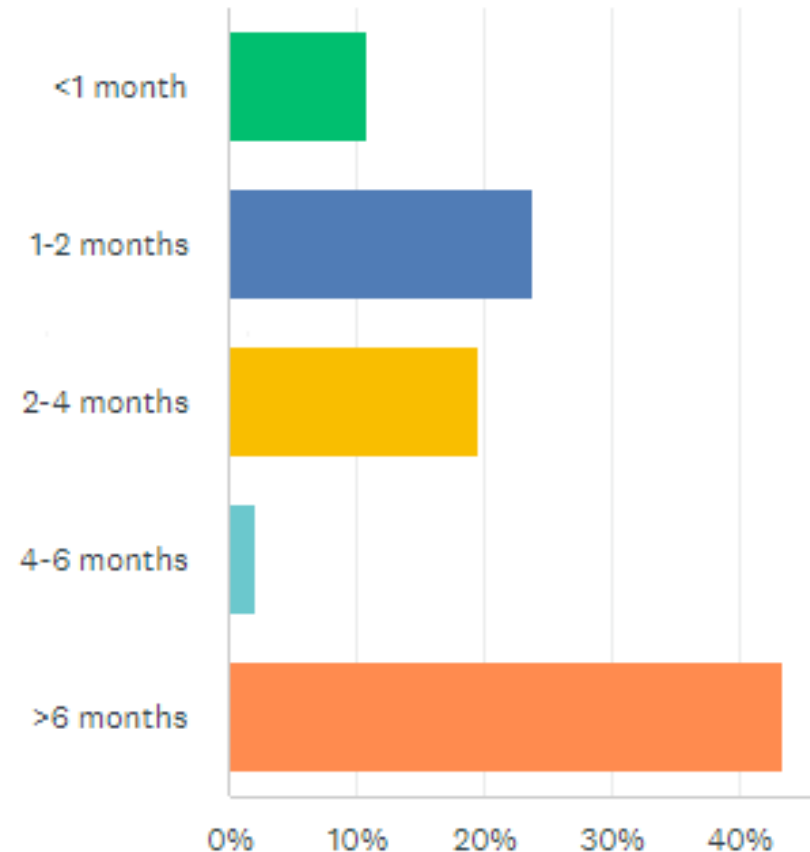
B2B Influencer Engagement Duration

In our survey, when influencers work with brands, the typical duration of an engagement varies considerably from under 1 month to over 6 months per engagement.

While engagement duration was evenly distributed, the two most common engagement durations were under 4 months (54%) and over 6 months (43%).

It's clear that B2B influencer marketing engagements are more than transactional, as in the B2C case, and often last in excess of 6 months per engagement.

*Over **40%** of all B2B influencer marketing engagements with brands last over 6 months in duration*



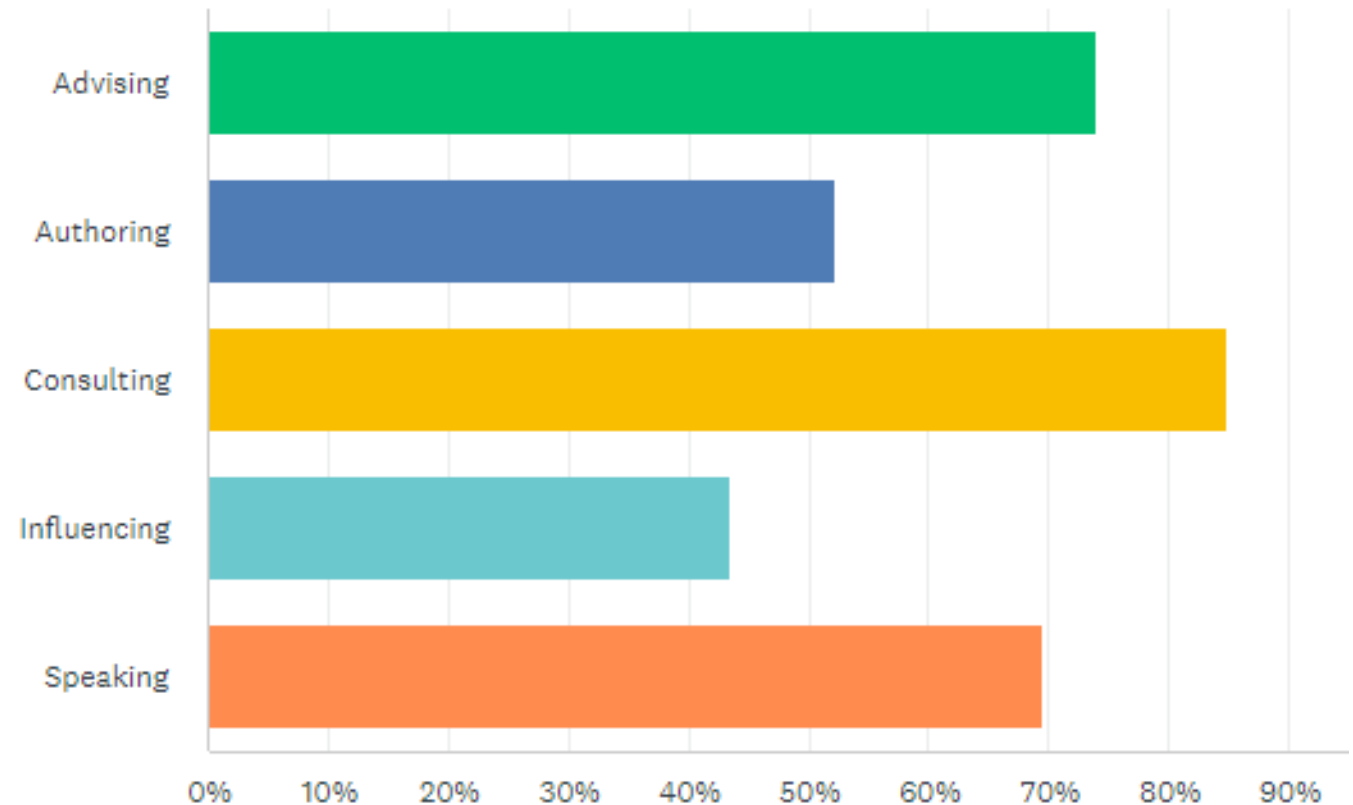
Source: Thinkers360 2023 B2B Influencer Marketing Survey. Q11. Influencer Engagement Duration: When you work with brands, what's the typical duration of an engagement?

B2B Influencer Services

In our survey, when influencers work with brands, they provide a variety of services including consulting (85%), advising (74%), speaking (70%), authoring (52%) and influencing (43%).

Since B2B influencers identify with multiple personas, it makes sense that their services also mirror this fact. B2B influencers may start with social media services, but often bundle a variety of services including consulting, advising and speaking as part of an engagement.

Today's B2B influencers identify with multiple personas and provide multiple deliverables as part of their engagements



Source: Thinkers360 2023 B2B Influencer Marketing Survey. Q12. Influencer Services: What services do you typically provide? (Please select all that apply)

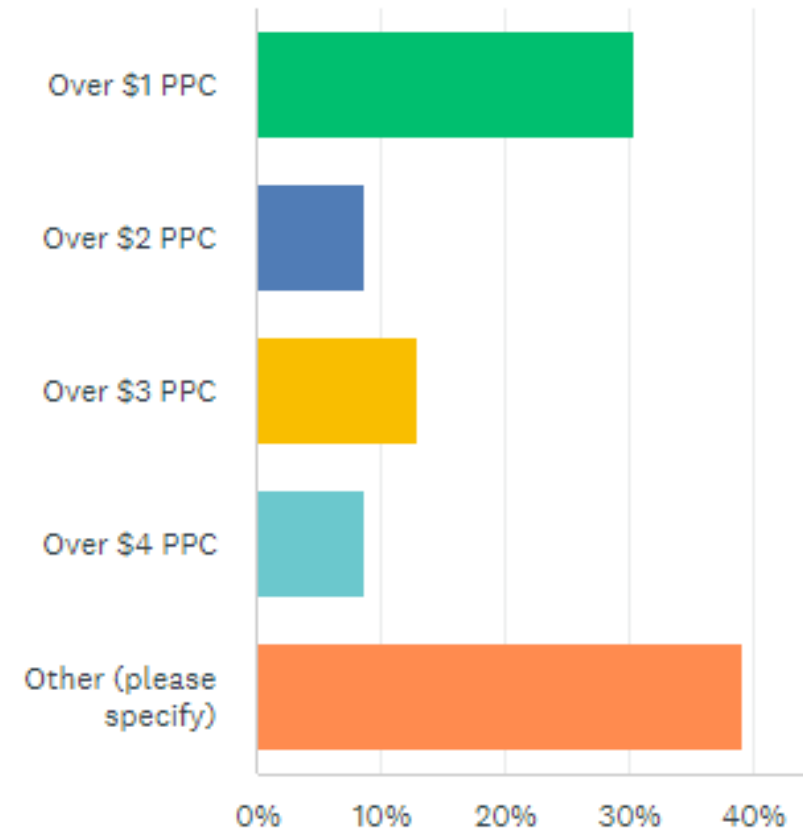
B2B Influencer PPC Campaigns

30% of B2B influencers stated that their typical rate for pay-per-click influencer marketing was over \$1 PPC.

Furthermore, 9% cited over \$2, 13% over \$3, and 9% over \$4 PPC. In the “Other” category, B2B influencers told us that either PPC was not applicable to them or that it was an area that needed more standardization.

In many cases, B2B influencers also told us that they provide the social media aspects at no cost as part of their overall engagement with a brand.

Rates for pay-per-click campaigns vary widely for B2B influencer marketing and are often provided free as part of larger engagements



Source: Thinkers360 2023 B2B Influencer Marketing Survey. Q13: Influencer Rate: What's your typical rate for pay-per-click influencer marketing?

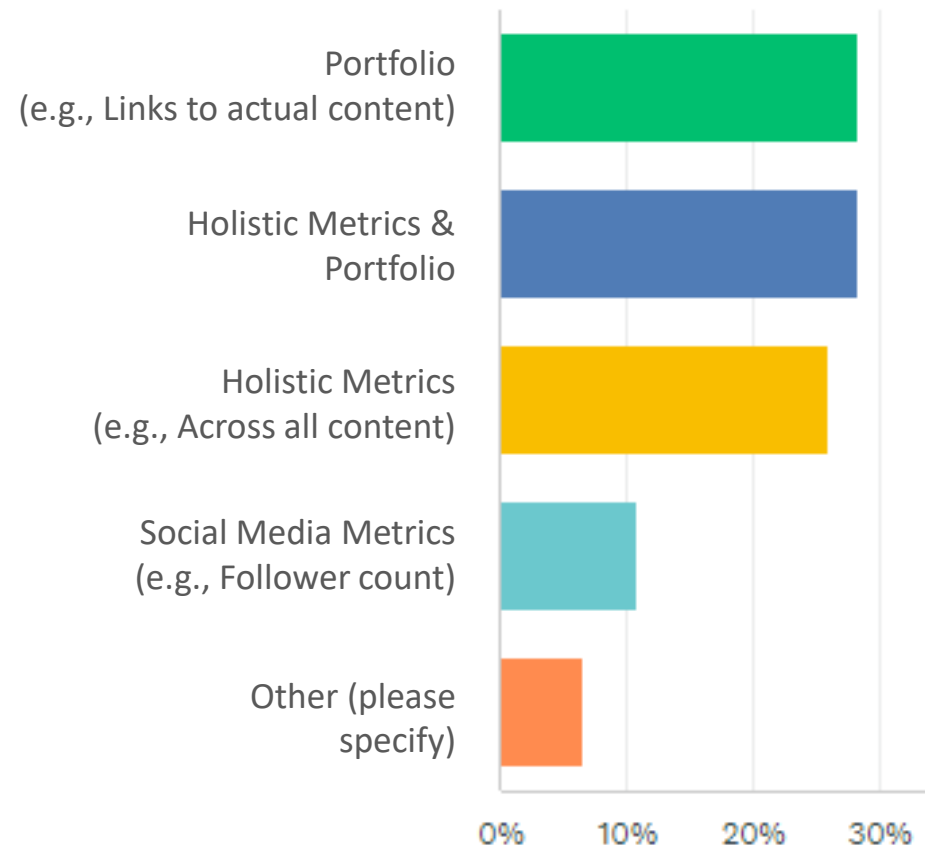
Measuring B2B Influencer Expertise

B2B influencers stated that **“Portfolio (e.g. Links to actual content)”** and **“Holistic Metrics & Portfolio”** were the most effective measures and metrics for brands to gauge their expertise.

Interestingly, **“social media metrics (e.g. follower counts)”** were cited by only 11% (down 10% from last year’s survey) as the most effective measures and metrics for brands to gauge their expertise.

Since most B2B influencers are delivering more than social media services for the brands they work with, it makes sense that holistic metrics and portfolio were cited by influencers as the most effective measures and metrics when compared to social media metrics.

Holistic metrics and portfolio were cited by B2B influencers as the most effective measures and metrics for brands to gauge their expertise



Source: Thinkers360 2023 B2B Influencer Marketing Survey. Q14: Influencer Expertise: What measures and metrics are most effective for brands to gauge your expertise as an influencer?

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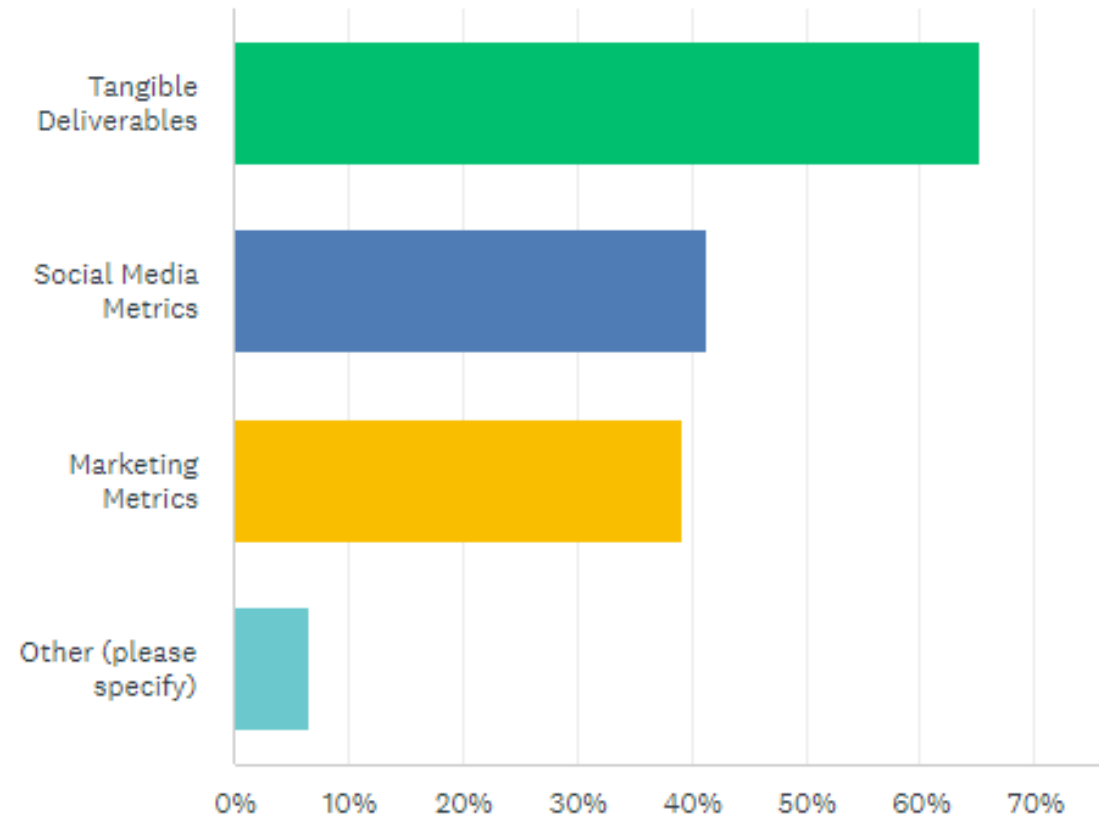
Measuring B2B Influencer Results & ROI

Influencers stated that “**tangible deliverables**” (65%) were the most frequent means of measuring results and ROI with the brands they work with.

Interestingly, “**social media metrics**” were cited by only 41% (i.e. less than half of respondents) as a means of measuring results and ROI.

Since most B2B influencers are delivering more than social media services for the brands they work with, it makes sense that tangible deliverables were cited by over 1.5x as many influencers when compared to social media metrics.

*Nearly **2/3** of B2B influencers cited “tangible deliverables” as the most frequent means of measuring results and ROI with the brands they work with*



Source: Thinkers360 2023 B2B Influencer Marketing Survey. Q15: Influencer Results & ROI: How do you measure results and ROI with brands you work with? (Please select all that apply)

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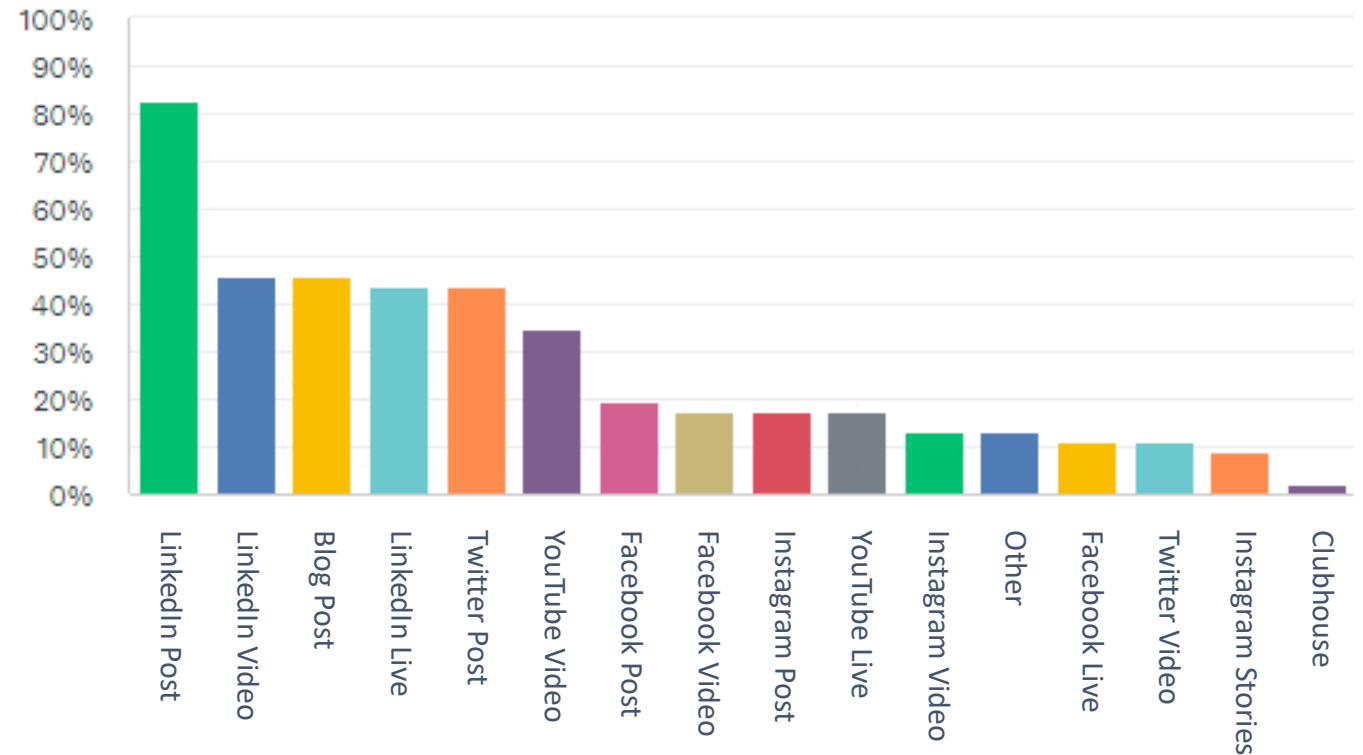
B2B Influencer Social Media Formats

Influencer content producers rated “LinkedIn Posts” (83%), “LinkedIn Videos” (46%), “Blog Posts” (46%), “LinkedIn Live” (43%), “Twitter Posts” (43%), and “YouTube Videos” (35%) as the most effective for B2B influencer marketing.

Facebook and Instagram posts and videos came in lower (under 20%), among B2B influencers likely due to their B2C orientation.

While LinkedIn, Twitter and YouTube predominate as most effective for influencer marketing, B2B influencers also cited blog posts (46%) on any channel as a preferred content format.

*While LinkedIn, Twitter and YouTube were cited as most effective for influencer marketing, over **45%** of B2B influencers also cited blog posts on any channel among their top 3 most effective formats*



Source: Thinkers360 2023 B2B Influencer Marketing Survey. Q16: Influencer Social Media Formats: Which content formats do you find most effective for influencer marketing? (Please select top 3)

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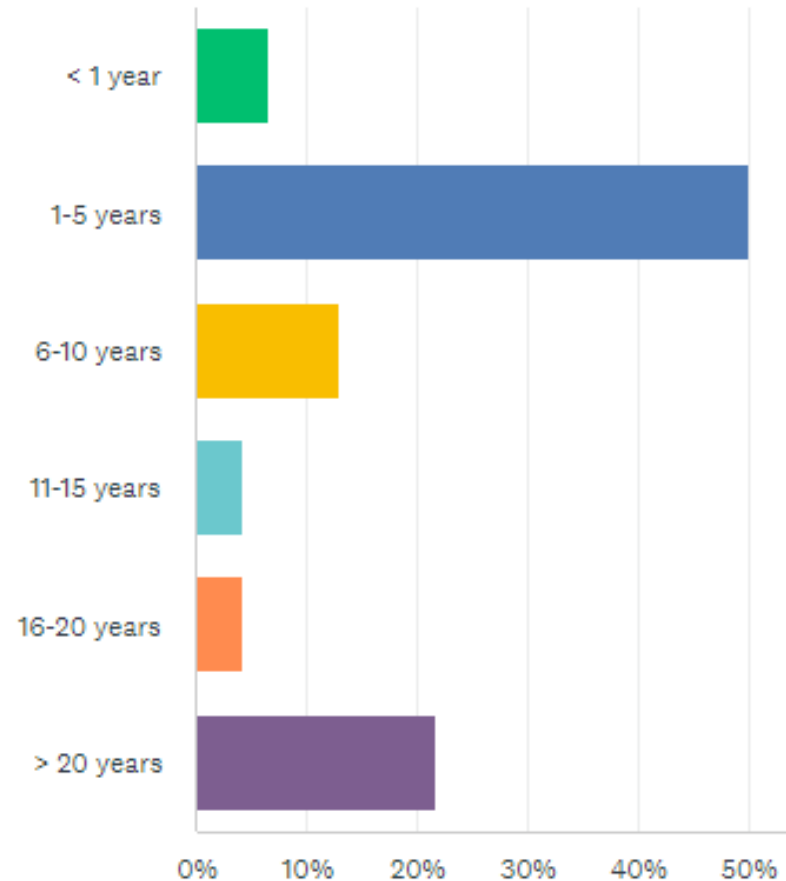
B2B Influencer Experience

Over 43% of influencer content producers who participated in the survey have been producing influencer content for over 5 years, with 30% over 10 years, and 25% over 15 years.

Over 55% are relatively new entrants with less than 5 years producing influencer content.


Judging by the number of relatively new entrants, influencer content production continues to be a vital ingredient to sales and marketing strategies.

Over 55% are relatively new entrants with less than 5 years producing influencer content



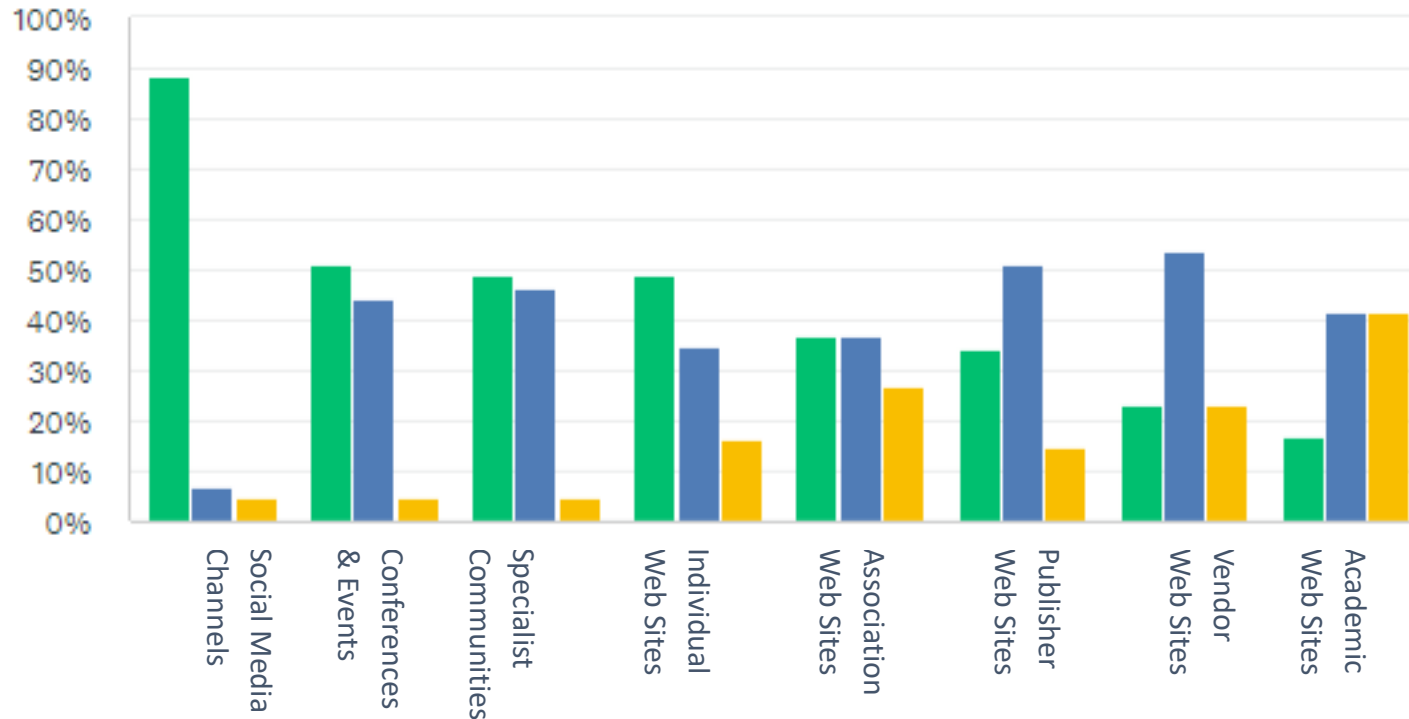
Source: Thinkers360 2023 B2B Influencer Marketing Survey. Q17.

Influencer Experience: How many years you have been working as an influencer?



B2B Influencer Content Creators Plans for 2023

Social media (89%), conferences & events (51%) and specialist communities (49%) are tip of the spear for disseminating influencer content in 2023



2023: B2B Influencer Content Outlets

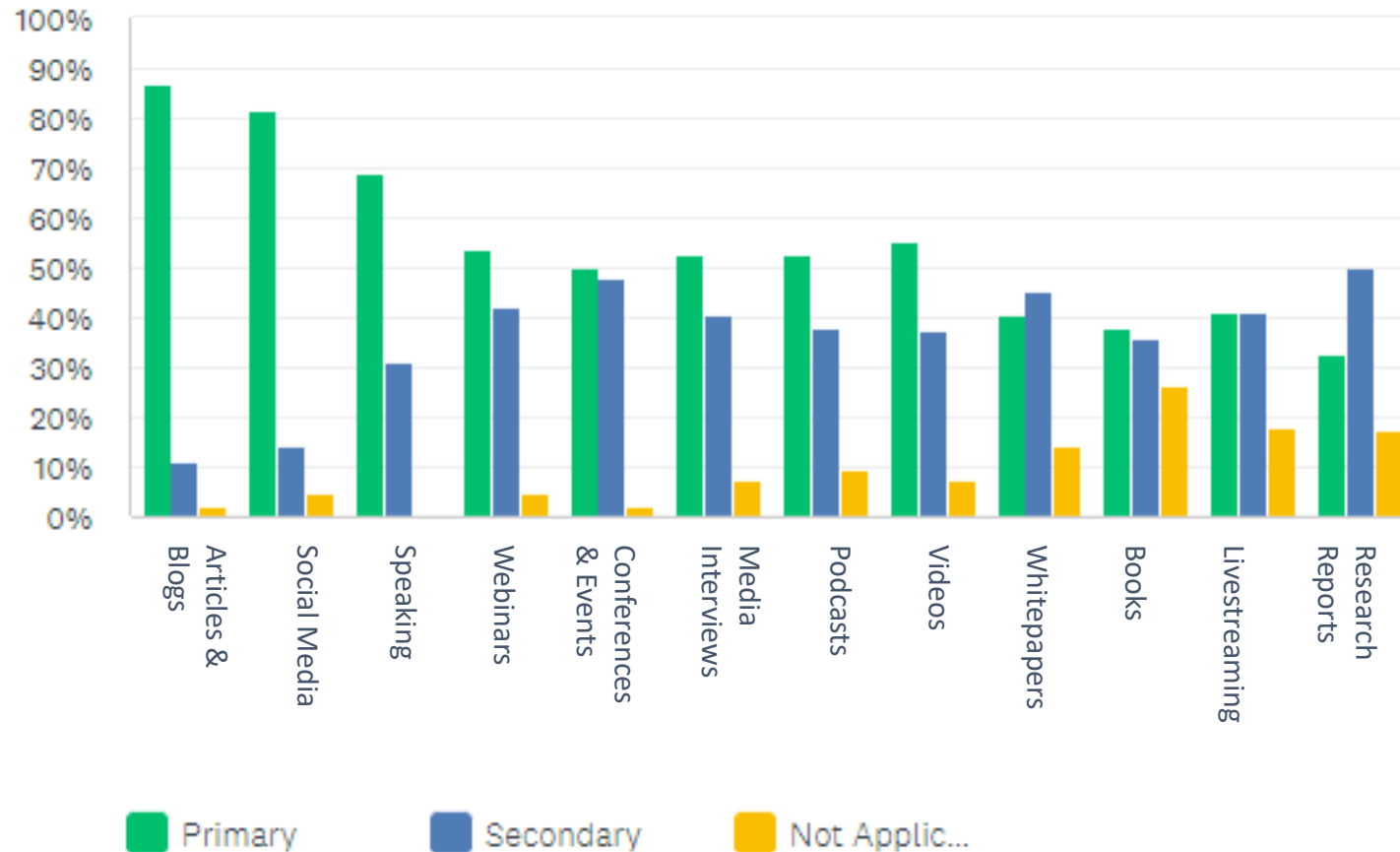
Influencer content producers cited social media channels (89%), conferences & events (51%), specialist communities (49%), and individual web sites (49%) as their primary outlets for influencer content.

All other destinations were seen more as secondary outlets than primary outlets with “academic web sites” seen by 41% as not applicable.

Beyond social media, nearly 50% of creators plan to leverage specialist communities as well as conferences and events as primary outlets for their influencer content.

Source: Thinkers360 2023 B2B Influencer Marketing Survey. Q18. Influencer Content Outlets: What are the primary and secondary outlets for the influencer content you plan to distribute in 2023?

Articles & blogs (87%), social media (81%) and speaking (69%) are the primary formats for influencer content creation in 2023



2023: B2B Influencer Content Formats

Influencer content creators cited articles & blogs (87%), social media (81%), speaking (69%), videos (55%), media interviews (52%) and podcasts (52%) as the primary formats for influencer content they plan to produce in 2023.

Conferences and events (50%) were another popular format for primary content with Livestreaming (41%) and Whitepapers (40%) being other popular formats.

Source: Thinkers360 2023 B2B Influencer Marketing Survey. Q19. Influencer Content Formats: What are the primary and secondary formats for the influencer content you plan to produce in 2023?



Thank You!

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- Unique Holistic Thought Leadership Ranking Algorithm
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- Content Curation, Syndication & Amplification on Social Media
- Highly-Differentiated Thought Leadership Leaderboards
- Press Release Service to “Influence the Influencers”

Content Marketing

- Custom Thought Leadership Content Creation
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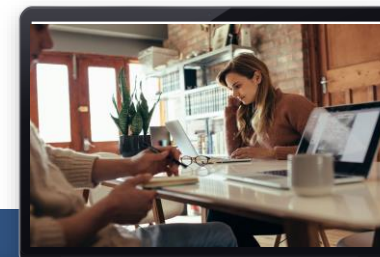
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