

Blogs Outrank Social Networks for Consumer Influence: New Research

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Are you wondering how to influence potential customers and prospects?

The latest findings from show that “consumers are turning to blogs when looking to make a purchase.”

In fact, blogs rank favorably with consumers for trust, popularity and even influence.

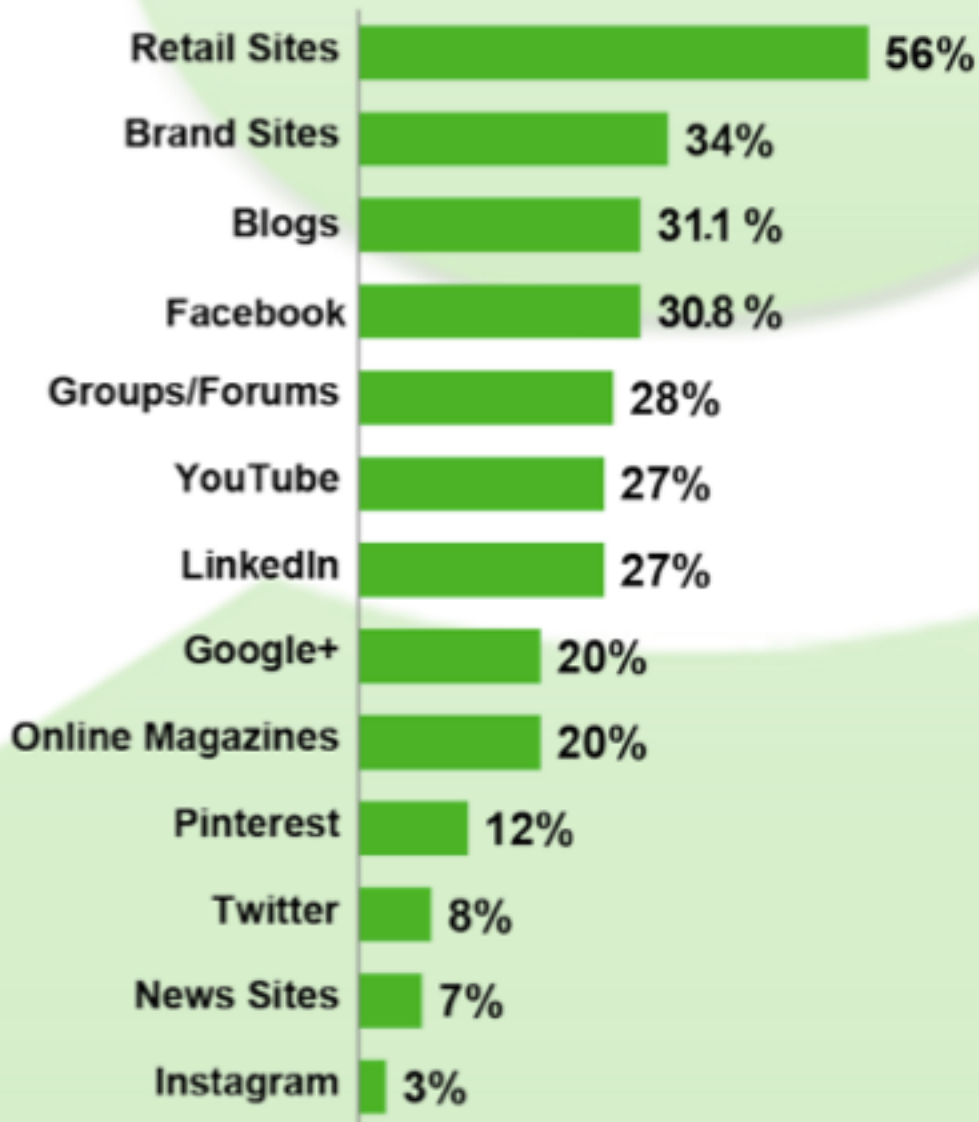
Here are **some interesting findings from the Technorati report.**

Blogs Influence Consumers’ Purchasing Decisions

The report found that **blogs are now the third most influential digital resource (31%) when making overall purchases**, behind retail sites (56%) and brand sites (34%).

Consumers said that blogs rank higher than **Twitter** for shaping their opinions and higher than **Facebook** for motivating purchasing decisions.

ONLINE SERVICES MOST LIKELY TO INFLUENCE A PURCHASE



Consumers consider blogs to be trusted sources of information.

Why are blogs so influential? **Bloggers tend to be very honest and sincere in their reviews of products and services.** They talk about both negative and positive aspects of a brand, and in doing so become a trusted source of information. Trust drives action, and thus consumers look to bloggers before they buy.

You may have heard that recently **Robert Scoble** (a very influential blogger in the tech industry) **announced** he was switching to Android because “Apple has slipped.”

Robert has a ton of clout in the tech world, so it'll be interesting to see how consumers (and techies in particular) respond to his moves.

Consumers understand this. But brands often get hung up on acquiring massive communities, sometimes at the expense of user experience.

In fact, brand marketers often pursue popular A-list bloggers to advocate on their behalf, hoping this strategy will help a message go viral and explode the size of their community.

The problem is that while a message blasted by a popular blogger might reach the masses, it doesn't always produce the desired result. That's because **trust drives action**, and popularity doesn't necessarily translate into trust. **It may even be more effective to pursue a less popular blogger** who has earned the trust of and subsequent influence over his or her own small community.

If you want to become more influential with your online community, **focus on providing value, building strong relationships** (with your followers and other trusted bloggers) and offering great content.

Top Social Media Influencers Blog for Themselves

According to the survey, 86% of influencers blog. Of these, 88% blog for themselves. Moreover, a majority of influencers (59%) don't produce much content outside of blogs.

Primary publishing platforms

A blog	59%
A website (non-blog)	11%
Facebook	10%
Twitter	10%

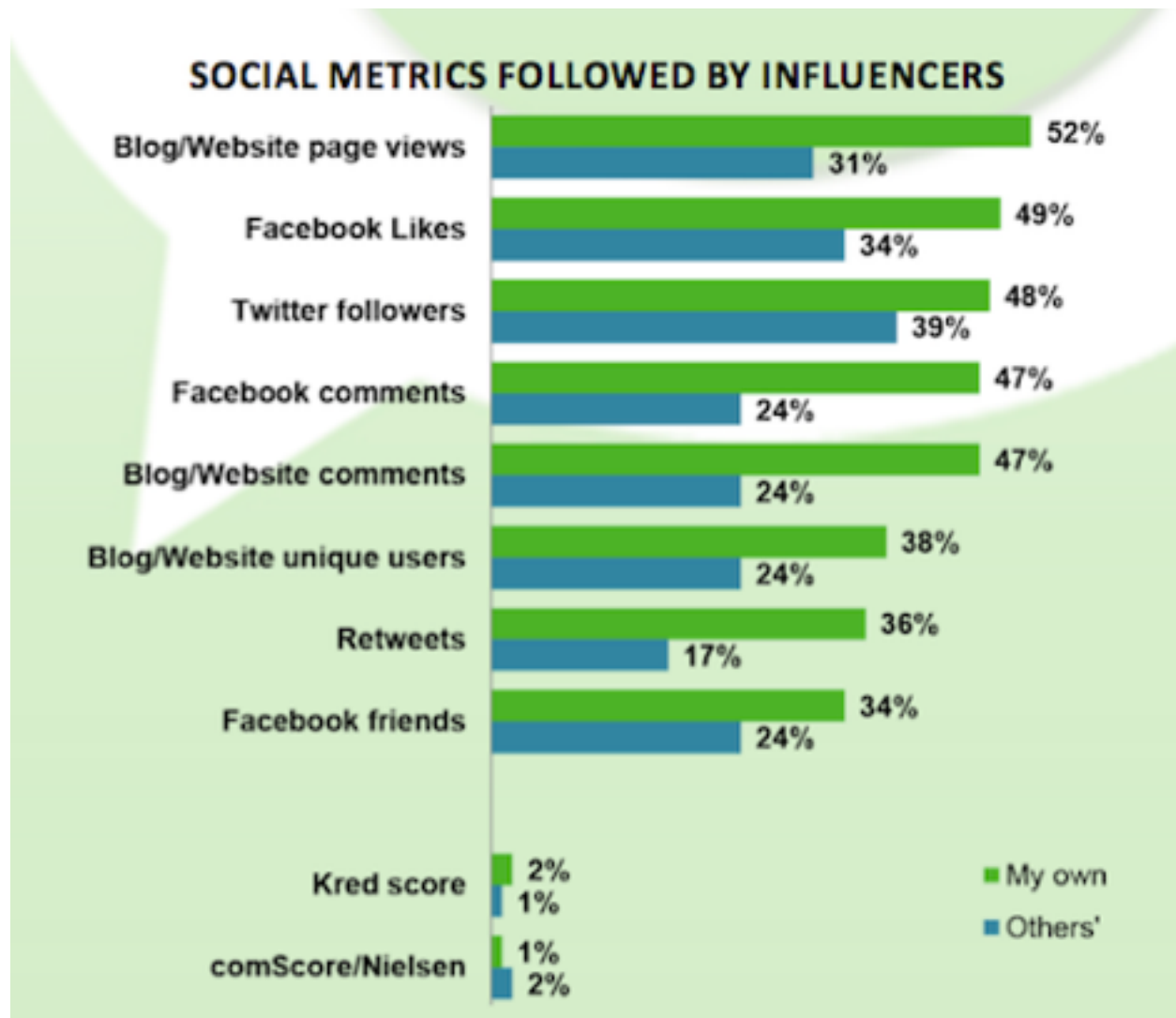
Influencers are more committed to blogs than other digital platforms.

We've seen that trust is the currency of influence and that consumers are looking for "trusted digital friends" to give them advice on what to buy and where to go. That's why **bloggers who offer such advice are influential —because consumers trust their guidance.**

If you want to grow your influence, the key is to become a trusted source of information in your industry. Provide compelling content on your blog and then amplify it through social media. People will listen and you will become their go-to resource for specific advice.

Brands and Influencers Measure Success Differently

When it comes to gauging the success of their campaigns, brands and influencers think differently. Brands see success as increased activity on Facebook, Twitter and their websites, while **influencers rank blog or website page views as the best measure of success.**



Influencers regard page views as the best measure of success.

The reason why influencers focus so much on their blogs is because their priority is to deliver prospects to a site where that trust factor can begin to be tapped. For them, **success is measured by the number of people reading their content.**

You too can build trust by publishing high-quality [educational content](#) on your blog and providing calls to action that lead people to a purchase opportunity.