

## CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE PARTNERS

## The Importance of Bloggers to Sales



Are consumers influenced by what they read online from bloggers? We believe they are, and several recent research projects, substantiate that—at least among moms. Consider:

- 18.3 million Internet-using moms report reading blogs at least once a month. ([eMarketer](#))
- 55% of active (daily) social media moms reported they had made a specific purchase because of a recommendation made by a blogger. (NPD Group, Inc. via [Technorati](#))
- One-in-four moms has purchased a children's product because of a recommendation from a social networking site or blog. (NPD Group, Inc. via [SFGate](#))

These findings evidence what social scientists have known for decades, that the word of another individual, even a person one has never met, is very often sought out to verify or confirm decisions. Personal media rule!

### Are Today's Bloggers Still Unbiased and Objective?

How much longer can the assumed purity of bloggers' opinions last? Some smart consumers are beginning to understand that a number of bloggers have cashed in – and that they are being paid by the corporations they write about. (See our *Issue XI-XX*) Up till now the matching of products to paid bloggers has been rather disorganized, but that is apparently about to change in a big way. Danielle Wiley, formerly of Edelman PR, has formed the Sway Group – a new marketing entity. Ms. Wiley is recruiting influential bloggers and will act as their booking agent. Her goal is to better match “appropriate bloggers” with needy PR agencies and corporate clients. While one of the first to lead this new industry, Ms. Wiley surely will not be the last to come up with this idea.

This move towards corporate sponsorship of bloggers will challenge the public's trust in them as providers of an unbiased voice on products and companies. And, companies who wish to compete in a more ethical way, will also be challenged as they attempt to find honest supporters of their products and brands.

### A Powerful Alternative

Looking for a more realistic (and possibly more ethical) alternative? How about identifying a select group of your current customers who are by personality and motivation your best *everyday customer advocates*. Then, give these customers open access to company information, samples of new products/services, special care, etc. and let them blog, call, text, Facebook, email, and talk to anybody they can about your brand. The result will be an “informal sales force” with a compelling and honest message. **Customer Experience Partners** will help you ‘**Identify and Arm**’ your everyday customer advocates. The more “professional bloggers” are matched with brands and paid to hype them, the less they will be trusted and the more everyday customer advocates will be worth their weight in gold.

Want to learn how you can build your own army of Everyday Advocates? Contact:

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