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INSIDER: One Million Followers
Arjun Azavedo, MBA Candidate

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INSIDER: One Million Followers
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Twenty years ago, if you asked business owners how to reach ten thousand people, or even a million, they would talk about the use of print or telemarketing ads and marketing campaigns that were resource intensive. Recently, social media has developed means to support the concept of branding and marketing, making it available to the masses at a minimal cost. In his book One Million Followers, author Brendan Kane uses his own experiences and research to demonstrate how a person or organization can reach millions of eyes. He focuses on concepts and processes that are simple and require no major investment—but that have proven to build social media followings in the millions.

In this book, Kane demonstrates precise examples where the use of YouTube, Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, and LinkedIn have helped different businesses to reach millions of people. This article, however, focuses on how you can use these concepts in your real estate business social media platform to grow your own following.

THINK POINT #1: Target Your Audience

The first and most important idea Kane stresses is focused outreach. He explains that he never had trouble reaching millions, but rather had trouble understanding who in those millions wanted to be reached. Similar to the concept of targeted marketing, social media campaigns must also be highly specific. A large amount of wasted time and effort could go into creating a campaign with little to no results if the wrong group was initially targeted. There are two processes Kane suggests to target an audience.

The first concept is simple targeting, which requires research. The idea here is to know your audience. Use surveys and interviews to understand everything about an audience, and then tailor the message to the group. For example, a campaign for high-end condos would be wasted on a lower income group, or a Facebook post for a low-cost commercial rental space is wasted on a couple looking to buy their first home. A simple checklist that asks for age, location, and buying preference of a user can help segment your audience into groups. Furthermore, a detailed interview or online form can ask for their interests and price range of their ideal property. This will allow you to build a message for each group and maximize the benefits of the digital campaign.
The second concept Kane explains is hyper-targeting, which means to multiply the reach of your message by using others’ resources. He first suggests targeting influencers. Instead of creating a message to reach a specific audience, create a message for those who have a following of their own or those who frequently reshare posts and news. This could create a ripple that would help your message reach a large audience very quickly. Secondly, you must ensure messages are repeated to the same or similar audience groups, because frequency drives your point home. Assuming the audience understood the message in the first viewing may be a mistake—it will likely take a several views to make your message resonate. Finally, make messages specific so that you can reach the same people who will convert a click to purchase. This concept of hyper-targeting uses filters on social media sites to reach the group for which you may be looking.

THINK POINT #2: Create a Message for the Masses

Similar to the concept of clickbait, which uses catchy phrases or images to attract an audience—your message must have a hook point. The effects of a large percentage of social media campaigns are lost because the audience glances over the titles and are not “hooked.” When writing a social media post or campaign slogan, ensure it captures the idea behind your hook point. Kane demonstrates that Tim Ferris’ bestseller *The Four-Hour Workweek* would never have been a bestseller had it been called “How to Work Fewer Hours in a Week.” The headline must be short, catchy, and appeal to people. It is also important to test the post or campaign slogan. Create a crowdsourcing platform or ask your team or colleagues to vote on the best option.

It is also important to appeal to the correct emotion. Understanding the person who is receiving your message is vital to this process. Kane believes every person has a personality trait that can be tapped to ensure a message is most effective. For example, the thinker can be reached with logic, while the rebel can be reached with humor. The persistent can be reached by showing value, and some can be charmed. For example, a young businessman who wants the most cost-effective house but with all the amenities may be reached using logic rather than humor in the message. However, no matter who the message is for, the effects can always be amplified if the message is relevant and draws emotion. Finally, there is nothing worse than a message falling on deaf ears. Ensure that your messages are constantly tested. Use social media analytics or surveys to listen to your audience feedback, and then improve the message constantly to be more effective.

To ensure that a wider group appreciates the message, increase the value in your message. If the customer can satisfy multiple needs through one message, then the value of the ad increases immensely. For example, if a potential client needs assistance with rental information and interior design, then an ad that caters to both areas will have a higher value. Partnerships and collaboration with other businesses or individuals who offer complementary products or services will help you reach these dual-need customers. Such an approach may also help double the
audience the message reaches. Apart from individual collaboration, you can also leverage influencers and social groups to grow your network.

THINK POINT #3: Follow Through

Every day, we see new trends going viral on social media and dying out within the week. As much as the audience and message are important to success, the main driver to grow a business is consistency. Once you gain a following and reach your target market, how well can you hold on to them? You have successfully sold a condo as a vacation home to a family, but are you the one they will call to sell their flip or rent an office space? Rather than just being a firework on social media, it’s important to act as a guiding star that other real estate professionals can use as an example to grow their own influence. One of the key aspects of sustainability on social media platforms is authenticity. Know who you are and what you can offer, and then build a brand around that idea. You must be continuously communicating with your audience and only then will they stay engaged with the brand. Repetition is key, so use multiple channels to drive your point home, and always offer new opportunities to keep your audience interested.

Conclusion

The idea behind Brendan Kane’s One Million Followers is not to show how he or celebrities he knew became famous overnight, but rather to show how anyone can leverage the tools available in this digital world to grow their reach. From the book, we learn about small changes and simple concepts that may require a little time and ingenuity, may help readers reach millions with just a click.

Recommended Reading

Kane, Brendan (2018), One Million Followers, BenBella Books: Dallas, TX.

Reference

Ferriss, Timothy (2007), The 4-Hour Workweek, Crown Publishing Group.

About the Author

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Arjun Azavedo is a graduate student from Pune, India. He earned his Bachelor of Science in Economics and has experience in consulting, food and hospitality and the software industry working on automating delivery processes of HCM software. Arjun is pursuing an MBA with a dual MIS focus and plans to pursue a career in sales or marketing in the technology space with a focus on AI and Machine Learning.