

MARKETING SUPERPOWERS



Build a **brand so good**
that getting customers
feels like magic

JON DAVIDS

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Free Book Sample

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CHAPTER 1

Busting Myths

Let's get one thing straight. Getting popular is not complicated. It follows a simple path. The path is not straight, nor is it predictable. And it's definitely not easy.

But it is simple.

I know this because I've been around influencers for many years. More than a decade. I've studied thousands. And I've done it all for myself.

Understanding how influential people carve their path makes total sense. In retrospect. Which means we can reverse-engineer it.

Once you learn how to do it and put these steps into action, the results are ludicrous. You feel like Mario jumping on the mushroom. Everything is just a bit easier.

People assume that getting popular is a matter of luck. And while there is some luck involved in the velocity and timing of your influence, a lot of it can be architected. You just need to understand the mechanics of becoming popular.

Whether it's a person, a brand, or a combination of both, there's a deviously simple road that will move something from complete anonymity to household name.

And I can explain it all to you right now, with the *Axis of Influence*.

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CHAPTER 2

Welcome to the Axis of Influence

The Axis of Influence is my visual explanation of precisely how anyone or anything gets popular.

Within the Axis of Influence there are 2 factors:

1. How much reach you have. This is the “Y axis”.
2. How known, liked, and trusted you are. For short, I’ll refer to this as *KLT*. This is the “X axis”.

You can see a visual of this in Diagram 1.

We need to understand both the Y and X axis for the next part to make sense. So let’s look at each one now.

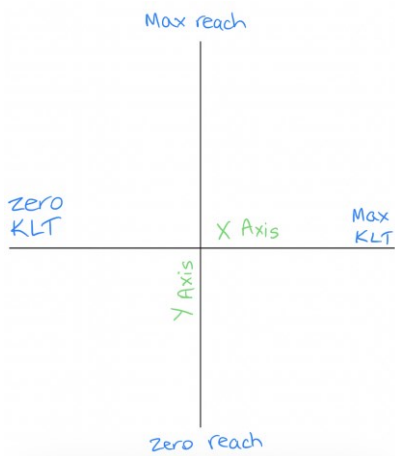


Diagram 1: The Axis of Influence. Notice the Y axis and X axis.

Reach: the Y Axis

At the very bottom of the Y Axis is “zero reach”. And at the very top is “maximum reach”.

Think of *reach* as how loud your voice is. To explain this, I’ll use a character named Jake.

Jake is sitting in a room by himself. He has zero reach. He can certainly speak, but no one will hear him. Even if Jake yells, he remains silent as far as anyone else is concerned. He’s isolated and alone.

Now let’s say Jake wanders out of his little room and finds a group of 10 people mingling in the lobby. He asks for their attention and starts to speak. These 10 people are all within earshot of Jake. So when Jake speaks, all 10 people can hear him.

He’s not saying anything different. It’s the same stuff as before. His words hold the same meaning, but they have a bit more value now because 10 people are around to listen. They may or may not be interested, but at least he has the opportunity to grab their attention.

Jake keeps walking and opens the door to an auditorium. He steps up onto a stage and grabs the microphone. Out in the audience, there’s a crowd of 100 people. He starts to speak. Again, he’s saying the same things as before. But now his words are carrying even more value because there are 100 people listening. Just like in the lobby, some people are really interested and others aren’t. But at least they can all hear him.

Now a red light flickers on. It’s a camera and it’s pointed straight at Jake. He’s being live streamed on YouTube. And 10,000 people are tuning in. His mouth opens and the same words come out. He’s repeating what he said in his little room by himself, in the lobby to 10 people, and on the stage to 100 people.

His reach is growing because more people are hearing him when he speaks.

But keep in mind, these people don't necessarily know who Jake is. He's able to reach them because of the mechanisms at his disposal. First the lobby, then the stage, and then the livestream. Reach grows simply because you can connect with more people at one time.

But do these people care what Jake says? Are they seeking him out? Will they remember him tomorrow?

Not necessarily. Having reach is just half of the Axis.

Think about it. Jake could just be the dude calling out the letters at a BINGO tournament. Everyone hears him, but do they know his name? Are they going to stand in line to meet him? Or buy a product because he recommends it?

Nope.

Jake is reaching people, but reach alone is not influence. You also need KLT. The two work hand in hand.

For now, you know what reach is. So let's look at the X Axis.

Known, Liked, and Trusted: the X Axis

For someone to be influential, they must be known, liked, and trusted. We call this KLT.

At the far left side of the X axis is zero KLT. And at the far right side is maximum KLT.

Being *known* is when you have some recognition in other peoples' minds. They know your name, or your face, or your logo, or your symbol. Or something that represents who you are. That's the starting point.

Being *liked* is when those same people who know you, have an affinity towards you. They relate to you. They derive value from you. They associate good things with you. And they feel good when you enter their mind.

Being *trusted* is when those same people who know and like you, truly value what you say. They seek out your recommendations, feedback, advice, commentary, validation, strategies and insights. They put weight in your words. They might even buy a product purely because your name is on it.

Put these ingredients together, along with reach, and now you actually have influence.

Obviously, there are different degrees to all these things. A gal on TikTok might be known. And the President of the United States is also known. But one is clearly *more known* than the other.

Similarly, you could like a novel you just read. And you could like your favorite rock band. But you might like one more strongly than the other.

And when it comes to trust, it's one thing to trust a tech guy on YouTube and another to trust a surgeon who's about to perform a medical procedure. It's a different degree of trust.

Generally, the more intense your KLT, the higher your level of influence.

It's also important to cover the opposite side of KLT. I'll call it anti-KLT. I'm going to get into this more in Section 6, but here's a brief overview.

Everyone has haters. Critics. Nay-sayers. Frenemies. And as you gain more KLT, the anti-KLT gets louder.

Anti-KLT is when people know you, but they don't like you, they definitely don't trust you, and they want everyone to know that. They scream it from the rooftop, evangelizing how outrageous your thoughts are and how people would have to be nuts to take you seriously.

Thank goodness for these people. You're going to need them. But again, I'll get to that later.

Now you understand reach and KLT. So let's zoom out to the full Axis of Influence.

CHAPTER 3

Understanding the Axis

The Axis has 4 quadrants: Top left, top right, bottom left, bottom right.

We'll start at the bottom left quadrant.

Bottom left: Anonymity

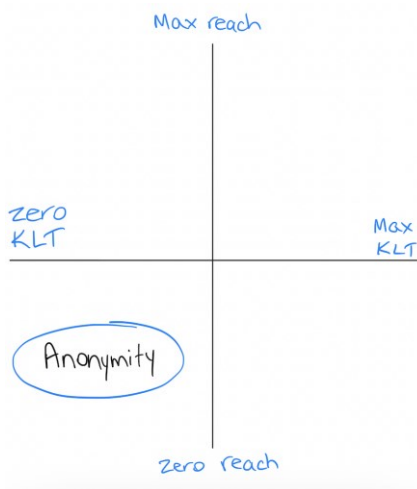


Diagram 2: The bottom left quadrant on the Axis of Influence. This is called Anonymity.

The bottom left quadrant is called *Anonymity*. You can see this in Diagram 2. It's a sad name and a sad place to be if your goal is influence. But cheer up my friend – everyone starts here.

Well, almost everyone. If you happen to be born into a famous family, then you might never be anonymous. Similarly, if a mega-

company launches a new brand, they might have a hard time keeping a low profile.

But these are edge cases and the playbook is similar either way. So let's assume that your brand – like 99% of the planet – is starting from anonymity.

When you're in the bottom left, you have zero reach and zero KLT. In other words, you're a total unknown. Get comfortable, because you're going to be here for a while. And that's a good thing.

You'll use this time in anonymity to sharpen your skills. When you're an unknown, you have the luxury of messing up in the dark.

We make mistakes in the shadows so we can shine in the sunlight. No judgment, no prying eyes. And that's a serious luxury.

Top Right: Mass Influence

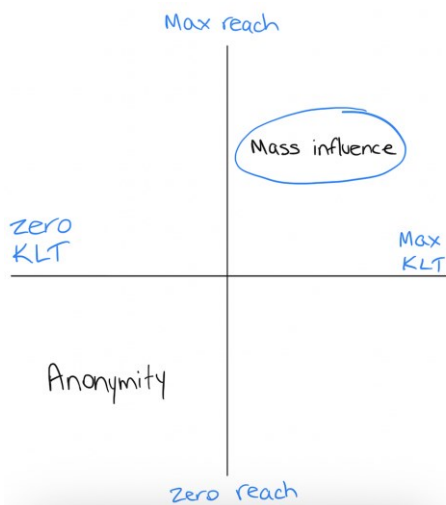


Diagram 3: The top right quadrant on the Axis of Influence. This is called Mass Influence.

Let's move our attention to the top right quadrant, as you'll see in Diagram 3. This quadrant is called *Mass Influence*. Here we'll find the most well-known, liked, and trusted icons in the world.

Think Coca-Cola, Oprah Winfrey, Google, Taylor Swift, and The Pope. These people and brands are at the peak of reach and KLT.

When they make a move or utter a word, the world listens. They create echoes. Gossip. Headlines. Water cooler talk. Taylor Swift can say something on X and it will be re-posted to multiple platforms, hundreds of times a minute for hours to come. It will trend on social media. It will be picked up by news channels and podcasts. It will be dinner table conversation. Forwarded in emails. Praised and ridiculed. Analyzed like crazy. Just a few simple words posted online by someone who sits in Mass Influence will reverberate endlessly.

Cool. So how can we get there?

Slow down – I'm not even sure you should be there yet. We'll get to that.

First we need to look at the 2 other quadrants.

Top left: 15 Minutes of Fame

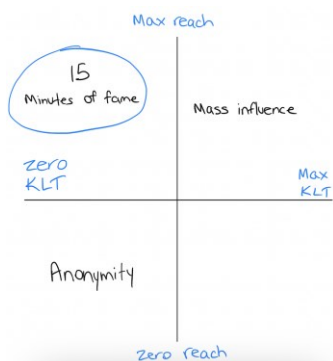


Diagram 4: The top left quadrant on the Axis of Influence. This is called 15 Minutes of Fame.

Let's look at the top left quadrant, as you'll see in Diagram 4. I call this *15 Minutes of Fame*. And you should try to avoid this at all costs.

You see, it's so tempting to rapidly climb the Y Axis, gaining reach as fast as you can. But there's a big problem. Without any KLT, you'll come crashing down just as fast. We see this happen all the time.

Songs that saturate the airwaves, only to be forgotten 2 weeks later. Social media trends that catch fire. Then fizzle out.

New restaurants that are so popular you can't get a table. Then they're out of business. (And you still can't get a table).

Reach gives you altitude. It makes your megaphone bigger. But KLT is your fuel. You need it to keep going. For the public to maintain their interest.

There are some cases where a brand seemingly comes out of nowhere and rockets up in popularity. And then they manage to hold their reach and relevance. But from all the cases I've seen, this isn't the reality.

These brands didn't appear out of nowhere. They've been around for a long time. Building KLT in the shadows. Nurturing their base of core fans.

Maybe you just heard of them 8 minutes ago, but that doesn't mean they're new.

These brands have been growing KLT for a long time. It just took a little longer for you to notice.

You should stay away from chasing a fleeting 15 minutes of fame. You need to build and nurture a community. And that takes some time.

Bottom Right: Niche Influence

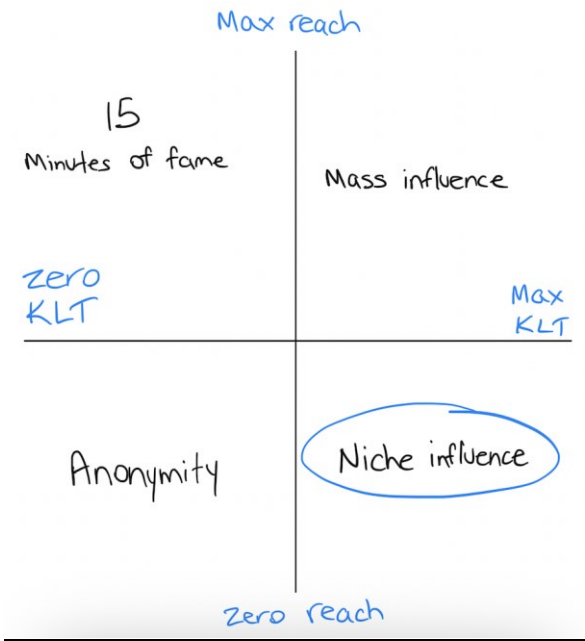


Diagram 5: The bottom right quadrant on the Axis of Influence. This is called Niche Influence.

We’ve arrived in my favorite place of all. It’s called Niche Influence, which you’ll see in Diagram 5.

Breathe it in my friends. We have now entered the coveted territory where so much brand wealth is built. Pay close attention here. Because there’s riches in these niches.

Niche influence is where 95% of successful brands live. They build a tribe, plant their flag, and dominate their category. In fact, many of the biggest companies in the world have niche influence. And this becomes more true every day, as attention splinters and consumers build their own brand bubbles.

Think about the software you use at work. Or your favorite dessert. Or that show you've been streaming. Or the app on your phone that you click into 7 times a day. Or that new band your friend just told you about. Or that book you can't put down.

If you walked up to a stranger on the street and mentioned any one of these things, would they know what you're talking about? Do you think those brands would mean as much to them as they do to you?

Probably not.

And that's a good thing. It means these brands have tapped into a hugely valuable market and asserted their dominance. Owning a niche can be enormous. It means you have loads of KLT and scalable reach. You don't reach everyone, just the people who really matter.

The consumer's optionality is endless right now. We live in a swipe and click culture. That means we can all dial in our preferences and find a product, person, or brand that's an exact match for what we want.

So as a business, when you find yourself in Niche Influence, you are doing very well. Your brand is thriving. It's growing. You can set up shop and stay right there.

Should you be tempted to keep going and chase Mass Influence? I'd be careful about that. In a lot of cases, Mass Influence is actually a step down. Exclusivity and pricing power are highest in the niches. So if you want to keep growing, you might be better off chasing KLT. Too much reach could dilute your brand.

For now, you understand what the Axis looks like. So let's explore how you move through it.

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