

# THE ASHTON KUSHER EFFECT

Popular actor Ashton Kutcher is one of the very first celebrities to reach one million followers on Twitter. He ranks among the top 10 celebrities liked by fans of Kmart, Oral-B, Sega, Save the Children and Emilio Pucci. Should all these brands rush out and hire him as their spokesperson?

"Not necessarily," says Sree Nagarajan, founder and CEO Colligent, a technology company specializing in social network data collection and research. "For brands to make serious marketing decisions using this data, the insight needs to evolve beyond who is popular to who is also relevant for the brand. It is important to have mutual affinity between fans of the brand and the celebrity."

Colligent -the name stands for "collectively intelligent"- recently released a breakthrough in measuring the strength of connection between fans, brands, media and entertainment entities: MeQ™, or Mutual Engagement Quotient, measures the level and strength of engagement between two entities. The company cross-compares the Facebook "likes," Twitter "follows" and other engagement behaviors of more than 270 million consumers with an ever-expanding database of 36,000 music, TV, radio, movies, sports, magazines and brands. This information is used to create the MeQ score for every entity tracked in the Colligent system, enabling companies to identify the strongest business building opportunities via brand partnerships, sponsorships, media and communication programs and other wide ranging marketing and promotion activities. "We think of MeQ as measuring the mutual love between two entities, or the 'I like you, you like me factor,'" Sree says. "Our goal is to help companies identify those relationships where mutual love is the strongest. With this information we believe companies can grow their brand franchises through more successful partnering and increase the success rate of their initiatives."

With MeQ, Colligent has found a way to translate rich emotional data -the level of consumers' self reported engagement in the things they are passionate about to help find the right brand partner. Quantifying this reciprocal liking into a simple percentile score provides powerful insights that can drive business.



You may want to keep this new information in mind while reading our Focal Point feature –an opinion piece about the new age of marketing we've entered as an industry, written by Charlene May, founder and former president/chief creative director for girls clothing brand Gregggy Girl. Or while glancing through the many items of Industry News, Facts & Stats and Global Report. Or reviewing Up Close, an article on how to influence shoppers to buy, written by Penny Redlin of Insights Discovered. Virtually everywhere (pun intended) throughout this issue, you'll see it: Embracing standard marketing outlets such as exhibiting or attending key trade shows, traditional advertising, even email blasts is certainly fantastic for business, but it's simply not enough anymore. You've got to get creative, have a thoughtful marketing plan and execute it with passion to accomplish your business dreams.

So instead of relying on the "Ashton Kutcher Effect," who should the brands mentioned above partner with? Based on Colligent MeQ scores, better options might be Joy Behar with Kmart, Holly Robinson Peete with Oral-B, William Shatner with Sega, Jessica Stam with Save the Children and Brad Goreski with Emilio Pucci.

Interesting.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Janet Gray Muniz".

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