

STIHL Influencer Summit 2.0 — EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

RESEARCH

With increasing numbers of women embracing do-it-yourself home projects, STIHL wants to build brand awareness and affinity among female homeowners, who are often driving household purchasing decisions. The introduction of STIHL battery products, offering lightweight, easy-to-start tools for homeowners, presented a new opportunity to directly target women. Meridian Group had observed over the years that while many female bloggers wrote extensive DIY tutorials about hand and construction tools, they rarely wrote about landscaping tools. To connect with these influencers, Meridian Group proposed hosting a three-day summit from Sept. 25-27 on the STIHL campus, providing a peek behind the brand.

To prepare, Meridian Group conducted extensive secondary research on influencers in the DIY and home and garden segments, utilizing Cision, Google and social media to investigate their content and reach. Once a list of 15 was identified, Meridian Group began conducting primary research with the influencers. We sent each influencer a survey to gauge her interest in learning more about STIHL and attending the event. From their responses, 10 influencers were invited to attend. Meridian Group arranged phone interviews with each influencer to learn more about her content development process and experience level.

PLANNING

The yearlong planning process for the 2017 STIHL Influencer Summit began shortly after the conclusion of our inaugural summit in September 2016. Using our initial research findings, Meridian Group drafted a PR plan outlining our concept of a women-focused influencer summit, including activities and storylines, along with biographies of our suggested attendees. Based on client feedback and planning meetings, this PR plan was continually refined, delineating client and agency tasks up to six months out from the event.

Meridian Group worked with STIHL to identify and coordinate activities, including product testing, a manufacturing tour, axe-throwing, a craft session and time to learn from Griffon Ramsey, a professional chain saw carver. Meridian Group also collaborated with our influencers and CI Travel to book flights.

IMPLEMENTATION

To ensure STIHL would achieve its goal of connecting with female audiences, Meridian Group also worked with the influencers to craft content agreements for 2018. This would help STIHL evaluate its working relationship with these writers and its resonance with their audiences.

At the Summit, influencers had opportunities to test a wide range of STIHL products, ranging from small battery-powered shears to a heavy-duty concrete saw. Many bloggers noted they had never operated equipment like chain saws or backpack blowers and felt more powerful after receiving proper training. They also learned tips for maintenance and safety, inspiring many to incorporate that messaging into their social media and blog content.

Every activity of the Summit was designed to tell a story about STIHL, from its commitment to building a skilled trade labor force to its unique distribution strategy to sell only through servicing dealers. Following the Summit, Meridian Group worked with the influencers to conceptualize video and blog content, coordinate product requests and delivery, and ensure key messaging was reinforced during the content development process.

We also seized the opportunity to tell a story in our local market about how STIHL is diversifying its marketing tactics to appeal to women. The local daily newspaper, *The Virginian-Pilot*, did a business section cover story about the Summit. One influencer was also inspired by her chain saw carving session to profile STIHL carver Griffon Ramsey for *HGTV.com*. In addition, we've continued to leverage our Summit in similar pitches to the *Wall Street Journal*.

The budget for this event was \$80,000 and Meridian Group was able to coordinate the entire Summit within that budget, including influencer travel and lodging, meals, vendor contracts and influencer content contracts. These resources were used to ensure the influencers had a memorable experience worthy of social media exposure, and would be motivated to post about STIHL in the future.

EVALUATION

STIHL wanted to build brand awareness and affinity among female homeowners, especially with the launch of its new battery products. By planning a targeted campaign with a researched group of influencers, Meridian Group was able to secure **132** pieces of social media and blog content with an estimated **20.5 million impressions**. Before the event, we estimated a minimum of 2.5 million impressions. More content is still anticipated to post before the end of 2018.

Our key performance indicators to evaluate success included coverage, including year-over-year compared to our inaugural summit in 2016. So far, the 2017 influencers have outperformed the first group, which to date has posted 104 pieces of content for an estimated 4 million impressions.

Another key performance indicator was evaluating the influencers' abilities to endorse or convey key STIHL messaging post-event. Bringing influencers to the STIHL campus has proven critical to helping them understand what makes the brand unique, and we've seen their content reflect the company's core values — including commitments to quality, service and safety.

Evaluating success can be challenging because traditional models — click-throughs from press coverage or online purchases — cannot be measured since STIHL chooses not to sell its products online. In the future, Meridian Group hopes to work with STIHL to develop creative ways to identify whether the influencer content is driving sales.

2017 INFLUENCER EVENT

Updated: July 19, 2017

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The inaugural STIHL SUMMIT was a successful trial event. Impression goals were achieved within three days following the event, and positive feedback was received from nearly every attendee. Whereas the 2016 event focused on digital media platforms reaching Willie Wannabe and Eddie Expert audiences, the 2017 event will take a female empowerment theme serving as a platform to reach new digital segments to include: do-it-yourself, home improvement/design, gardening and women's lifestyle.

This year, Meridian Group (MG) recommends hosting 10 female digital media influencers covering a variety of topics to experience the STIHL SUMMIT 2.0 with an immersive three-day STIHL experience in Virginia Beach, Va. during the week of Sept. 25.

Each attendee will receive a custom itinerary of STIHL experiences relevant to their audiences taking place over the event, in exchange for content and coverage on their various platforms throughout the experience. Influencers will learn the STIHL story from "Real STIHL Women" including its manufacturing operations, product lines and equipment expertise, choosing the right tool for the right job and support of independent businesses.

STIHL Goal: Build and expand upon "brand advocates" to share STIHL YouTility content, grow awareness for STIHL Lightning Battery System™ and expand the STIHL reach in new digital media by garnering approximately two million impressions in do-it-yourself, home improvement/design, gardening and women's lifestyle outlets.

The enclosed document provides an outline of the plan to include the following:

- WHO: TARGETED INFLUENCERS (pg 1-3)
- WHAT: THEME & ACTIVITY RECOMENDATIONS (pg 4)
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WHO: TARGETED INFLUENCERS

The following list was built by first identifying a broad list of influencers, who reach DIY and female audiences, through keyword searches using Vocus and Cision, and online research. We then prioritized the influencers based on initial response about the experience and who will have most impact through their most popular channels, using a reach of 75K through at least one platform as a baseline and with feedback from IMRE.

See separate PPT addendum with full outlet/contact descriptions.

- [Remodelaholic](#): Cassity Kmetzsch
 - Rationale: Remodelaholic offers a large following and high social engagement, partially because she showcases reader projects alongside her own. In addition, Kmetzsch is the daughter of a chain saw artist who used STIHL throughout his career, so she already has affinity for the brand.
 - Feedback on event: My father is a retired chain saw wood carver named Rand Oertle. He has worked with STIHL tools all my life, we even have some adorable family pictures (when I was 3) all in STIHL orange t-shirts! You will have to see

the pictures!

- [Pretty Handy Girl](#): Brittany Bailey
 - Rationale: As a licensed contractor, Bailey wants her readers to feel comfortable operating power tools and tackling projects. She was invited to the inaugural STIHL Summit, but could not attend, and is still interested in working with STIHL. Although her social audience is smaller compared to the group, she keeps them engaged with frequent and timely content.
 - Feedback on event: Interested to know “What makes [STIHL] a top brand for outdoor power tools.”
- [Ugly Duckling House](#): Sarah Fogle
 - Rationale: Fogle is a self-described “power tool junkie” who has been tackling many outdoor projects for her home, building in some good opportunities for STIHL exposure. Her Pinterest following is substantial.
 - Feedback on event: Interested in “All of it! I (and my audience) love to learn about badass stuff. I'm not afraid to get my hands dirty (which hopefully, you'll be able to plainly see in my blog).”
- [Wilker Do's](#): April Wilkerson
 - Rationale: Wilkerson specializes in woodworking YouTube tutorials, and her content is closely aligned with existing STIHL storylines. Her videos get great engagement and feedback from followers
 - Feedback on event: “I would like some good hands on sessions if possible of different chainsaws. Covering the basics of chain saw use would be great too. How to pick the correct bar size, motor size for different jobs. Tightening chains, replacing chains, sharpening them correctly. Anything of that nature would be interesting and useful.”
- [DIY Made + Remade/Merrypad](#): Emily Fazio
 - Rationale: Fazio contributes to at least two outlets. She maintains a personal blog, is an editor of the DIY Network Made + Remade blog and is married to 2016 STIHL Influencer Pete Fazio. She has already worked with STIHL to produce content for the DIY Network blog.
 - Feedback on event: Interested in “Product innovation, product maintenance (i.e. learning how to sharpen pruning shears, sharpening a chain saw, etc.)”
- [The Handmade Home](#): Ashley Mills
 - Rationale: Handmade Home blogs about everything from décor ideas to sewing tricks to recipes, and while their existing content is more décor-focused, we are excited to see how Mills interprets STIHL for this new audience.
 - Feedback on event: Interested in “Benefits over other available tools. New products and product development.”
- [One Project Closer](#): Jocelyn Hagan
 - Rationale: One Project Closer presents a unique opportunity to reach both male and female audiences, and explore a variety of potential ways to cover STIHL, from traditional tool reviews to DIY projects.
 - Feedback on event: Interested in “Best features and uses” (for STIHL products).
- [Creative Green Living](#): Carissa Bonham
 - Rationale: Bonham’s DIY blog focuses on “green” living, and offers reviews of environmentally friendly products. Her audience may be very receptive to learning about the STIHL Lightning Battery System™.

- Feedback on event: “I am specifically interested in electric tools and learning tips for safety and use that I can pass on to readers who may not feel confident using power tools on their own.”
- Savvy Saving Couple: Amy Desrosiers
 - Rationale: Desrosiers blogs primarily about DIY, family, food and décor, but they have documented outdoor projects and tool reviews, especially on YouTube. Amy mentioned her husband has usually done DIY projects and she’d love the opportunity to blog about becoming empowered to do some of these outdoor tasks herself.
 - Feedback on event: “We have such a large tool/DIY interest on our You Tube channel. Since my husband does most of the DIYs and tool things, I would love to learn more about how to use these products as a woman and encourage other females to get out and get things done. I would love to learn how to work yard equipment and power tools which would be empowering.”
- Just Call Me Homegirl: Tara Boettger
 - Rationale: Boettger is currently working with STIHL and is making gardening and landscaping a priority for her home in the next year. She will be posting a STIHL pole pruner how-to guide later this spring. Her highest engagement is on Facebook and she’s interested in experimenting with Facebook Live.
 - Feedback on event: Interested in “Different uses of the products, safety precautions.”

KEY FINDINGS FROM INFLUENCER APPLICATION

Meridian Group conducted a brief survey of targeted influencers as part of their application process for STIHL Influencer Summit participation. The following are a summary of key findings. Feedback received was taken into consideration within the plan on forthcoming pages.

- Email and Instagram are the primary ways the influencers promote their articles/videos
- 3 out of 12 influencers are STIHL customers already
- 10 out of 12 influencers cited “quality” when asked “When you’re considering new outdoor power equipment products, what are the top two things you generally consider?” “Value” then “Price” were also ranked high.
- The following are ranked by which were the most appealing to the influencers:
 1. Product Demonstrations
 2. Product Sneak Peeks
 3. Manufacturing/How Stuff Works
 4. Fixing/troubleshooting equipment problems
- The majority ranked “Individual projects” (I.e: Building a lantern, making a wood carving) over “Large Group Projects” (I.e: Building a garden with seating, building a fire pit) and “No Preference”

WHAT: THEME & ACTIVITIES

MG recommends a similar but separate approach from last year, tailoring themes and activities to the do-it-yourself, home improvement/design, gardening and lifestyle audiences. It is important for every activity to be visually appealing for this segment of influencers and by extension their audiences. The female empowerment theme provides a platform for women to learn about outdoor power equipment from other women.

Event name:

MG recommends “Ladies Who Lawn” as the external name for the 2.0 all-female influencer summit. Last year, the external description of the “Influencer Summit” was misleading as many of the attendees didn’t feel comfortable calling themselves influencers.

This year, we'd like to play off of the female empowerment theme of the event. "Ladies who lunch" is a phrase often used to describe well-off, well-dressed women who meet for social luncheons, usually during the working week. Typically, the women involved are married and non-working. This year's STIHL Summit is all about throwing gender roles of lawn maintenance in the wind, and empowering women to do their own lawncare. We'd like to play off that old but well-known phrase to create the "Ladies Who LAWN" STIHL Summit. We'd like to use the name in communication with attendees, ask attendees to tease the event using #ladieswholawn on their social channels to get a conversation started about how they tackle lawn, home and DIY projects, and have the event name included on event collateral. An alternative name along the same lines could be "Ladies Who Lawncare."

On-campus event activities & storylines:

- One-hour manufacturing tour provided by Lorraine Wagner
 - Story Angle: Modern Manufacturing
 - Operational Efficiency (vertical integration, automation)
 - Quality Manufacturing (precision, reliability)
- Axe Women showcase/demonstration
 - Story Angle: Up close with female STIHL athletes
 - STIHL Strong
- Building a flower trough with Griffon Ramsey (TBD)
 - Story Angle: Hands-on with STIHL
 - Project-based DIY
- Tips with Tech Services with Jeff Taylor and female TM
 - Story Angle: Service after the sell
 - Servicing dealer
 - STIHL & dealer offers customer service/support
 - Operator training (online video on YT & SUSAs, safety manuals)
- Product and Proper demos
 - Story Angle: Purpose Built
 - Pick your power
 - Right tool for the right job
 - Operation & PPE tips
- Griffon Ramsey carving
 - Story Angle: Visual/social opportunity
- Tree climbing, care & planting tips with Mark Chisholm (TBD)
 - Story Angle: Team STIHL, Extreme STIHL
 - Team STIHL
 - When to Call a Professional

CONTENT DEVELOPMENT

MG to negotiate with all invited influencers to produce **customized** content from their visit. Many influencers specialize in different platforms, and content will vary depending on their outlet and following. **We'd recommend seeking some combination of the following, with input from each of the outlets on what works best for their audience:**

- 3 Blog posts
- 5-8 Instagrams

- 5-10 Tweets
- 3-5 Facebook posts
- 2-3 YouTube videos
- Sponsorship Opportunities

Note: As with the 2016 event, all paid content initiatives will require a content agreement outlining content & payment terms. Negotiations with 2017 invitees underway now.

PROPOSED ITINERARY

Note: First run of show doc to be delivered mid-August with additional detail.

DAY 1: ARRIVALS & WELCOME MIXER

- TBD Arrivals to ORF and transportation to host hotel
- 6 PM Welcome mixer at host hotel

DAY 2: FULL DAY EXPERIENCE

- 8:30-9:30 AM Breakfast & Introduction
- 9:45-Noon Full group morning activity: Product Demos
(Four rotating groups with 30 minutes at each station.)
- Noon Lunch in Avenger
- 1-4 PM Afternoon split group activities: Hands-On
(Two hours at each station.)
-Flower trough project Griffon Ramsey
-Axe Women Showcase
- 4:15-5:30 PM Free time for bloggers to write posts & updates
- 6:30 PM Group dinner at Eurasia with IWS presentation (Or NALP / Missy inclusion – TBD)

DAY 3: HALF DAY EXPERIENCE & DEPARTURES

- 7 AM Breakfast at hotel
- 8 AM Arrive on STIHL campus
- 8:30-9:30 AM Full group morning activity: Manufacturing Tour
- 9:45 AM Break
- 10-11 AM Full group late morning activity: Tips with Tech Services in Service Classroom
- 11:30 AM Farewell lunch in room beside cafeteria
- TBD Departures

BUDGET

The inaugural event (2016) came under the \$80K budget. However, product package donations were not included in the event budget. Based off last year's estimated budget and actual spend, STIHL has earmarked \$80K for the 2017 event.

Required Spend (\$101,200)

- Influencer Travel/F&B: \$24,000 / \$2,000 per
- Influencer Content/Event Fees: \$60,000 / \$5,000 per
- Post-event Product Package: \$7,200 / \$600 per
- *Note: Average product package MRSP for 2016 Influencer event was \$600
- Team STIHL experiences: \$10,000 / pending input on personality travel, fees, avails, etc.

Recommended Spend (\$1,000)

- Branded Swag Bag: \$1,000 / \$100 per



ROI/MEASUREMENT

Estimated minimum of 2.5 million impressions among targeted platforms. Pre-event and post-event survey will also be provided for all attendees. Success will be measured by a series of influencer campaign metrics.

Interactions Measurement to include:

- Amount of coverage produced by each influencer & reach
- Shares, comments, likes, retweets by influencer’s community
- Influencer’s ability to endorse/convey key STIHL messaging after the event

2016 Event Results (as of July 2017):

Pieces of Content Created	Total Impressions (UMV & Print Circulation)	Max Social Impressions (Page Likes, Followers/Friends)	Total Engagement (likes, tweets, retweets, views, shares & comments)
195	15,055,587	3,750,158	365,761

ACTION ITEMS & RESPONSIBILITY STIHL / TMG:

Date	Item	Responsibility
JANUARY-FEBRUARY		
Week of 2/13	Review plan, revised plan per meeting feedback	COMPLETE
By 2/24	MG to send revised plan per meeting feedback	COMPLETE
MARCH		
3/14	Meeting with STIHL for final approval – general plan, budget, dates	COMPLETE
Week of 3/27	-Create & distribute Influencer survey to top 25 targets based on tiered influencer structure -Survey will ask for activity preferences along with some initial measures to gauge brand awareness/knowledge	COMPLETE
APRIL - MAY		
4/7	Application / survey deadline	COMPLETE
4/21	Updated plan to include recommended attendee summary	COMPLETE
4/21	Develop general contract/agreement language for STIHL review and approval	COMPLETE
5/4 Received on 5/31	Plan feedback/approval – MG given greenlight to pursue content agreements with invitees	COMPLETE
JUNE - JULY		
6/5 – 7/24	Negotiate fees and customize for each influencer based on reach, capabilities, platform and audience	COMPLETE
6/12 – 7/25	Solidify event session experiences. Outreach to external spokespeople as it relates to sessions. Extend formal invitations to SUMMIT group.	STIHL/MG

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pending confirmation from Chishom, Ramsey and female tech – LS to follow up - Discussion on potential inclusion of Missy from NALP (potential dinner speaker? TBD) 	
7/20	Event plan review with RP	STIHL/MG
By 7/21	<p>Required equipment confirmation STIHL/MG coordination with Tech Services on which products will be needed for product demo/showcase. List to include:</p> <p>Mowers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (1) RMA 460 • iMow (TBD model) <p>SBLs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (2) AK Series full line • (2) AI Series full line <p>General:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10 sets of all required PPE <p>Project related:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (10) Chain saws (TBD models) • (10) Axes (TBD models) 	STIHL/MG
By 7/24	Provide estimates for event-related projects outside scope of plan. To included: logo, sweatshirt, creation of Snapchat filter, dinner décor	MG
AUGUST - SEPTEMBER		
8/4 – 8/18	Execution of all influencer content agreements	STIHL/MG
By 8/4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Coordinate influencer travel with CI Travel - Finalize Team STIHL sponsorship/personality travel 	MG
Week of 8/7	First full run of show provided	MG
Week of 8/14	STIHL Summit branded Swag Bag contents confirmed with M. Haney	STIHL/MG
Week of 8/14	Walk-through/trial of flower trough project	STIHL/MG
Week of 8/21	Finalize assets/influencer press kit to include links, (available) imagery, video, etc. for key products and initiatives.	MG
Week of 8/21	Pre-event meeting/run of show walk-through	STIHL/MG
Week of 8/28	Finalize all STIHL products and necessary props with product management.	STIHL
9/5	Send final schedules to participants & STIHL support staff	STIHL/MG
Week of 9/11	Onsite event walk through	STIHL/MG
By 9/13	Solidify run of show (by hour/minute)	STIHL/MG
Week of 9/25	Event begins	STIHL/MG
OCTOBER		

10/3	Send post-event influencer survey	MG
By 10/7	Post-event regroup/report	STIHL/MG
By 10/13	Coordinate delivery of AK Line & AI Series Product Packages	
Weekly	Report on coverage as it comes in	MG
NOVEMBER-2018		
March - May	Goal AK & AI Series content to begin publishing Spring 2017	Influencers
Quarterly/Ongoing	Seek additional long-term engagement opportunities: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Additional content ideas published in line with customized contracts developed• Monitor and evaluate coverage Continue to provide new product info and new technology exclusive previews ahead of schedule (embargoed) when relevant.	MG
Q1-Q2 2018	Plan 2018 Influencer Marketing Event and/or Strategy	STIHL/MG