

Discover New Leads and Brand Growth with Influencer Marketing



The [COVID-19 pandemic](#) fueled significant growth in influencer marketing.

[Almost one in three Gen Z and baby boomers](#) said content creators provided a sense of community during the pandemic. With the need to appeal to Gen Z consumers and create a virtual experience, influencer marketing increased by [470%](#) from 2016 to 2020.

An influencer is a celebrity, public figure or content creator with an organic and engaged audience. Influencer marketing leverages the credibility of a popular content creator to [promote your brand](#) through paid endorsements and recommendations.

Partnering with influencers gives you direct access to a segment of prospects that need and want to buy your product.

It's more than liking a post or sharing images. Think of influencer marketing as a loyal customer recommending your brand to thousands of their closest friends. When consumers see their

favorite content creators wearing trendy clothing or using a new facial cleanser, they will likely purchase the items.

Still a relatively young [digital marketing](#) channel, there is a lot of uncertainty around how to use influencer marketing and how it can benefit your brand. Get answers to your questions and learn how influencers can increase your reach, followers and [site traffic](#), attract more leads, build brand loyalty and drive sales.

Types of Influencer Marketing Opportunities to Explore

More businesses are [using social media to engage with consumers](#). In 2021, [91.9%](#) of U.S. company marketers with over 100 employees planned to use social media marketing.

The expansion of [social media](#) marketing has given consumers more options, making social media influencers essential to cut through the noise and genuinely connect with customers.

Sponsored content.

The “classic” sponsored content is a paid post of a photo, video or blog featuring your offering. This type of content is favored because it's simple and effective. Sponsored content shouldn't feel like the influencer is selling something. It should be natural, tell a story and offer useful information.

You can secure sponsored posts by pitching a campaign brief that specifies your brand guidelines, posting instructions and requirements. Influencers may also contact you if they believe your brand fits their target audience.

Provide an influencer with a UTM link to your store or promo code to include in the content. Keep in mind that influencers are required to disclose when they are promoting sponsored content. If they use #ad or #sponsored, ensure they are visible and not buried in other hashtags.

You can compensate influencers with a flat fee or a pay-per-click arrangement with a minimum payout stipulation.

Affiliate links or discount codes.

Create a discount code and unique link for influencers to share with their followers. This content harnesses the influencer's audience to reach consumers and drive sales to your store. Send the influencer a product sample to help them create realistic content based on their experience. It's ideal to use this method with high-performing influencers that have the potential to scale.

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You can also use the link to track conversion and influencer reach. [Tracking your campaign performance](#) is essential to help you make informed decisions and monitor investments.

Affiliate links can be profitable for influencers. When a customer purchases using the link, the influencer generally receives a 10-20% commission.

Contests and giveaways.

Who doesn't like to win a prize or a free product? [Contests and giveaways](#) create buzz. They excite potential customers, get them talking about your brand and get your products into the hands of new buyers.

Influencers offer a prize (free product or service) in exchange for brand engagement. Followers will also share the opportunity with their network.

Center your contest around a valuable offering that makes people eager to participate. Provide clear giveaway instructions and winner selection criteria with minimum steps such as liking, sharing or commenting on the post, tagging friends, following your brand's social media channel, subscribing to a newsletter, submitting user content as entries (i.e., photos, videos or Instagram stories) or registering an account with your ecommerce store.

Since giveaways may only provide a short-term boost, combine them with other types of content to generate more traffic. You can compensate influencers with a free offering or discount.

Running content from influencers on your channels.

Promoting influencer blog posts and other content on your platform is a win-win for both parties. You're helping the influencer market their personal brand while driving their audience to your channels.

Influencers are content creators who love receiving features for their work. It's best to partner with influencers with a highly engaged audience for maximum exposure and conversion. Let influencers know when you post the content. Add backlinks to their channels and a copy or quote to connect the two brands.

Run content from different influencers separately, so they don't have to share the spotlight. The good thing about this type of content is that it doesn't require formal payment.

Brand ambassadors.

Brand ambassadors are long-term influencer partnerships. They are the face of your brand and build credibility, trust and awareness. Ambassadors can help promote product launches and diversify content to showcase your brand.

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You may work together for several weeks, months or even years. The additional time gives the influencers the freedom to create ongoing, diverse posts and offerings. As their audience becomes more familiar with your brand, it increases sales and traffic.

While some companies choose a celebrity ambassador, collaborating with multiple influencers can [maximize brand visibility](#), campaign momentum and ROI. Current followers and customers make excellent ambassadors because they know your brand and enjoy your product.

Why Influencer Marketing Continues to Grow

When influencer marketing first appeared in 2006, they were bloggers who shared content about their lives and favorite products. They occasionally received a small fee or a free product.

PayPerPost was the first to compensate influencers, but many marketers were skeptical of the longevity and authenticity of influencer marketing. The industry has changed significantly in the last 15 years. Now influencing is a content marketing career that produces a living wage.

The good news is that more influencers increase your chance of finding the best content creator for your ecommerce store. No matter your industry, you can [discover influencers](#) to promote your product to their audience.

More people are becoming influencers.

Social networks and blogs have traditionally been influencer's chosen forums. But with a growing need to connect to a Gen Z customer base and new platforms for content creators to transform their hobby into a profession, there are more opportunities than ever to break into the influencer marketing industry. Now anyone can be a successful influencer.

Content creators can choose from various channels to create and share content — Instagram posts, traditional blogs and video stories, etc. As the industry continues to innovate, more creators are inspired to become influencers and get a piece of the action.

Influencer marketing agencies are growing in popularity.

Influencer marketing provides independence for content creators and brands seeking a new way to connect with leads. But the industry is still regulated and becoming more standardized.

Influencer agencies are available to help ecommerce brands who prefer a hands-off approach. They can connect you to the best influencers for your strategy, so you can take advantage of influencer marketing and rising trends without investing time and resources into mastering the field.

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There are more content options.

There are influencers in every interest and sub-niche. From kidfluencers promoting the latest toy trends on YouTube to lifestyle Instagram influencers, and financial guru podcasts, new platforms provide more opportunities for influencers to use their personality, skills and knowledge to build a following.

Beauty, technology, health/wellness, business ownership, whatever your industry, there's an influencer already connecting with your leads daily. They possess the language, tone and content to promote your products on Instagram, Facebook, TikTok, LinkedIn and more.

How Ecommerce Stores Use Influencer Marketing to Scale

Referrals are among the most effective marketing tools. Influencer marketing uses the same technique on a larger scale. Their followers learn about your brand from a trusted confidant, allowing you to capture the interest of new audiences from a single content creator or engagement effort.

Mutually beneficial partnerships with high-quality influencers can also be replicated throughout your content strategy to yield a significant return on investment, offering a more cost-effective option for increasing brand awareness and your bottom line.

Brand visibility.

Influencers uniquely share your brand story, appealing to their follower's emotions and triggers. In a 2021 survey, [eight in 10 users](#) globally reported that social media platforms helped them learn about new products and brands.

For startup brands, it can take years to build a solid following. Influencers can help shorten your process and build brand awareness faster.

Enhanced brand awareness may increase your social following and improve SEO. Social media isn't technically a ranking factor, but it still signals to search engines that you have a substantial online presence that adds to your brand's quality. You can also use content to drive organic traffic to your website.

Share user-generated content.

Followers value the opinions of influencers over that of the [brand](#) and celebrities. Partner with an influencer to source content for your page. Repost content to showcase the partnership using their images, copy and hashtags. It's one thing to say how great you are, but it's much more valuable when someone else says it.

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It's best to have a UGC plan that outlines when to share content so you can save influencer posts for upcoming product promotions, holidays or sale seasons.

Trusted testimonials.

Online shoppers are skeptical of unknown brands. Adding testimonials to your store site can ease a customers' apprehension during purchase.

Having influencers provide honest feedback about the pros and cons of your product, service or customer care experience adds a layer of social proof.

Specify the type of testimonials you want to include in your [influencer marketing campaign](#) to ensure influencers capture the most relevant content. Review videos, online testimonials and honest product ratings can help generate new leads and increase sales.

Testimonials are especially beneficial for emerging brands, as a positive review from a trusted influencer can introduce your products to a large market segment and result in your first sales.

Offer a promotion with an influencer.

Partner with an influencer to offer an exclusive promotion to their audience. This proven strategy drives conversion because followers feel they're getting a deal unavailable to the broader customer base and are inclined to purchase the offer.

Provide influencers with a link in the promotion to create a direct pathway to your store or product page and streamline the process.

Work with micro-influencers.

A celebrity influencer may not be in your budget yet, but there are all levels of influencers. An influencer with a smaller following can have a significant engagement rate, while one with millions of followers doesn't guarantee clicks and product purchases.

Micro-influencers often have a loyal follower base. According to [one study](#), "82% of consumers are 'highly likely' to follow a recommendation made by a micro-influencer."

While micro-influencers may not have access to advanced features like the swipe-up option, they can utilize other meaningful methods, such as direct messaging, to connect with their followers and introduce them to your brand.

Influencers with a smaller following have a more targeted reach, authentic engagement and accessibility to niche consumers. Collaborating with a micro-influencer whose audience interests align with your brand may result in a more intentional marketing strategy.

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Connecting with Influencers to Find the Best Fit

You've strategized your goal. You know what you want in an influencer, what you hope to accomplish and which key performance indicators you want to track. Now it's time to find an influencer genuinely interested in your products.

You can use social communities to find influencers or partner with a company to save your team the legwork. An [influencer platform](#) provides the tools to source content creators and monitor your campaign performance.

Upfluence

Eliminate the need for spreadsheets, time-consuming search processes and reporting with [Upfluence](#), an AI-powered, all-in-one platform.

Upfluence helps you efficiently discover the most relevant influencers and build long-term relationships with creators. You get access to a suite of tools and a centralized location for tracking and managing data-driven campaigns and streamlined workflows.

You can hire influencers and affiliates, automatically generate promo codes, pay influencers, track sales and ROI, aggregate results and measure influencer performance.

Klear

[Klear](#) makes it easy to find influencers. Their sophisticated 900 million influencer database contains historical data/stats allowing you to browse over 60,000 categories, filtered by skill, location, social channel and more.

Klear is an influencer marketing hub allowing you to manage and track campaign performance using an integrated CRM. Access to real-time performance reports informs you of key insights and campaign reach. You can analyze metrics such as profile mentions, hashtags and follower/fan count.

You also have the option to create custom reports that use hard data to provide a complete picture of your strategy and impact.

Aspire

Get connected to the largest sponsorship marketplace and the leading SaaS tools with [Aspire](#). Considered the preferred marketing partner for TikTok, Meta and Pinterest, Aspire identifies as the influencer marketing platform for ROI-focused brands. It is the only platform capable of building customized relationship workflows and influencer programs.

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Aspire has a team of in-house experts to help you develop, manage and scale your campaigns for any strategy. You can choose from a custom, turnkey, á la carte or hybrid package.

By working with the full-service agency, you get features to support your entire funnel, including creator outreach, relationship management, measuring ROI, creating and promoting content, marketing stack integration and running performance-focused influencer campaigns.

Awario

If you need influencers who can work across a multi-channel campaign, [Awario](#) is your ideal platform. Awario is a [social listening and analytics tool](#) for monitoring brand growth and awareness.

While most software platforms depend on one third-party provider, Awario pulls data from 13 billion web pages. Instead of creating the conversation, you find, join and amplify discussions about your brand throughout the web, from news and blogs to videos, forums and reviews. The non-stop monitoring sends notifications when someone mentions your keywords in any language and location. Knowing how customers and content creators feel about your brand, the good and the bad, thoroughly enhances reputation management.

The powerful analytics makes it simple to track growth, reach and campaign progress and identify the top influencers for a profitable partnership. Awario works for brands of all sizes. In addition to engaging with customers on social media, you can find sales opportunities and reach the right influencers.

The Final Word

Consumers want a marketing message that's "unfiltered" and less scripted. Unlike sales-driven posts, influencer content uses a conversational tone and human narrative to catch customers' attention and engage audiences. Their reputation adds a layer of trust that converts followers into sales.

For a seamless experience, integrate ecommerce platforms like BigCommerce into your influencer marketing workflow. You can easily offer your latest products and build a genuine relationship that boosts your brand.

[Start](#) driving revenue from partnerships today and get the most out of your influencer marketing strategy.

FAQs About Influencer Marketing

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How do I find the right influencers for my brand?

To find the right influencers for your brand, start by defining your target audience and identifying the platforms they use. Research influencers whose content aligns with your brand values and audience interests. Evaluate their engagement rates, authenticity, and follower demographics. Use influencer marketing tools to streamline the search and vetting process. Reach out with a personalized message highlighting how your brand aligns with their content. Ensure the influencer's style and voice resonate with your brand's message to create authentic collaborations that effectively engage your target audience.

How can I measure the success of an influencer marketing campaign?

To measure the success of an influencer marketing campaign, track key metrics such as engagement rates (likes, comments, shares), website traffic, and conversions directly tied to the campaign. Use tracking links or discount codes to attribute sales. Analyze social media reach and follower growth, and monitor brand sentiment through comments and mentions. Evaluate return on investment (ROI) by comparing campaign costs with generated revenue. By analyzing these data points, you can assess the overall impact and effectiveness of your influencer marketing efforts.

Which social media platforms are most popular for influencer marketing?

Facebook and Instagram remain the most popular social media platforms for influencer marketing. One-third of global shoppers identified Facebook as their favorite social ecommerce platform for online shopping in 2022, and one-fourth indicated a preference for Instagram. But the influencer market is evolving. Platforms such as TikTok, Snapchat and Clubhouse cater to the "everyday influencer" or content creators that feel like real people. Eighty percent of respondents to a Global Web Index survey reported that they plan to continue to use TikTok following the pandemic. It's also best to leverage your most active platform and the channel that makes the most sense for your industry. Beauty brands do well on Instagram, while video gaming finds more success on Twitch.

How do I make sure an influencer reflects my brand well?

You want an influencer that wants to promote your brand because they see value in your services and love the quality of your products. Your collaboration should be about more than money. Brand alignment is the most important factor for influencers. The offering should be consistent with an influencer's personal brand and current content. Research is key. Confirm that influencers have previously worked on similar campaigns and have a look and feel that complements your brand. Observe how they engage with their followers to assess their reach. Do they post a lot of organic content or paid posts? Is their audience enthusiastic and responsive, or

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do posts get few likes and comments? Outline your brand guidelines to share with influencers, including a narrative that speaks to the needs of your target demographic and how you can solve their problem. You don't want to limit an influencer's creativity, but having a standard set of guidelines ensures the content's tone resonates with your brand and fits perfectly within your marketing efforts without feeling disjointed.

What level of influencer should I target?

Your first inclination may be to reach out to influencers with a large following, but more isn't always better. Pursue the level of influencer that will provide the best return on investment. Consider how an influencer with millions of followers vs. micro-influencers will contribute to your overall marketing strategy. A niche or nano influencer with less than 15,000 followers may have a very engaged audience and provide more value than a celebrity endorsement. Their pricing will likely be less than macro-influencers or mega-influencers with a more extensive follower count.

What are some common mistakes to avoid in influencer marketing?

Common mistakes in influencer marketing include choosing influencers based solely on follower count without considering engagement or relevance to the brand, neglecting to set clear goals and KPIs, failing to disclose sponsored content, ignoring the importance of authentic relationships between the influencer and their audience, and not tracking the performance of campaigns. Additionally, poor communication with influencers and a lack of creative freedom can hinder the effectiveness of the partnership. Avoid these pitfalls by selecting the right influencers, establishing transparent and strategic collaborations, and continuously monitoring and adjusting campaigns for optimal results.