



Influencer Marketing Handbook.





Introduction.

Sharing your message in the digital age

With over a billion tweets shared every two days and around [52 million Instagram](#) photos shared every day, your customers are quickly overwhelmed by information – and your marketing message is easily lost in the noise.

Facebook's decision to [limit the organic visibility](#) of posts made by businesses has only added to the complexity and cost of getting your message in front of your target audience. In fact, organic reach for your posts may now be as [low as 2%](#). But in today's digital landscape you are not only competing for a customer's attention, you are also competing for a customer's trust. Study after study has found that consumers' trust in advertising is in a free fall. One frequently quoted statistic from [Satmetrix](#) suggests that only 2% of consumers trust advertising more than personal recommendations.

So with customers' trust in brands at an all-time low and the competition for customers' attention at an all-time high, how can your brand reach potential customers?

The answer: **Influencer marketing.**

The genuine connection that exists between influencers and their audiences has become irresistible to marketers who are finding it increasingly difficult to engage with customers. And with 70% of adults stating that their purchasing decisions are influenced by [online content](#), it is easy to understand why big brands are spending big bucks on getting influencers to share their content.



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Introduction.

Defining influencer marketing

Influencer marketing has become the “go-to” marketing strategy for brands striving to connect with online audiences, but what exactly is influencer marketing? Well, the term has actually accumulated several different meanings in the marketing landscape, but if you want to truly understand the purpose of influencer marketing, you must first understand the definition of the word *influence*.

According to Merriam-Webster, *influence* is defined as having “the power or capacity of causing an effect in indirect or intangible ways.” Therefore, in the marketing sense, an *influencer* is someone who can persuade consumers to take a desired action.

However, since big names like Justin Bieber or Kim Kardashian have become so synonymous with influencer

marketing, the term has become more associated with generating reach rather than swaying behavior. But as a marketer in the digital age, it is imperative that you not only rely on legacy marketing metrics.

By focusing on the cause-effect relationship that is at the heart of influencer marketing, you should be able to accurately measure the effect that an influencer’s involvement has on your sales, engagement or lead generation - not only reach.

If you are interested in generating reach, there are more effective marketing channels than influencers. But if you are interested in motivating your consumers to buy, share or comment, then choosing an influencer marketing program is an effective strategy.

Definition:

Influencer marketing involves promoting products or services through individuals who have the capacity to have an effect on your target audience’s purchasing behavior.





Introduction.

Creating valuable relationships

Why should you invest?

When done right, an influencer marketing program can create new value for brands, influencers and customers alike. For example, through an influencer marketing program:

- Brands are able to gain the attention of their desired target audience and establish credibility
- Influencers are able to enhance their credibility as an influencer and create new content that is relevant for their audience
- Customers are able to view content that is of interest to them and receive valuable recommendations from a trusted source

By using an influencer marketing program to address one or more of the various inflection points that occur throughout the customer decision journey, you can change the way your customers make purchasing decisions. But as with any type of marketing program, getting the budget or buy-in from the necessary parties can be a challenge. So grab the attention of either your CMO or CFO with the statistics below.

\$6.85

\$6.85 is the average amount of media value that brands earn for every dollar invested in influencer marketing, according to [Burst Media](#).

40%

40% of [Twitter](#) users report having made a purchase as a direct result of a Tweet from an influencer.

51%

51% of marketers believe that they get better customers from influencer marketing according to a poll from [Tomoson](#).



Around **47%** of Online Consumers **Use Ad Blockers**
to Avoid Branded Messages, Making Your Desired
Target **Audience Harder to Reach.**

[IAB/YouGov](#)

2.

What Are Your **Marketing Objectives?**



Defining Measurable **Goals.**

Determining your marketing objectives

Building a successful influencer marketing program begins with outlining a clear set of objectives. So before you even dare begin contacting influencers or thinking about working with a specific influencer, you must identify your marketing objectives. Defining the objectives of your influencer marketing program will help you identify relevant influencers and metrics later on.

From improving customer retention to increasing social media follower counts, influencers can be used to support a variety of marketing objectives. According to

one [survey](#), influencer marketing programs are best at creating content, generating engagement and driving website traffic.

Obviously you cannot only think about your own needs, you must also consider the needs of your customers. Ask yourself: What type of content would be of value to my consumers at the different points throughout the consumer decision journey?

By understanding the needs of your customers and the specific actions you want them to take, you can better align the needs of your customers with your marketing objectives.



Brand awareness

Whether you are launching a new product or looking to increase brand recall, influencer marketing can extend the reach of your message.



Engagement

By connecting with an influencer's audience, you can strengthen your relationship with customers and create brand evangelists.



Content creation

More than half of [B2C](#) and [B2B](#) marketers struggle to produce enough engaging content - luckily influencers are expert content creators.



Sales

With the introduction of shoppable tags and trackable links, there are several ways to monitor the amount of revenue that an influencer marketing program generates.





Defining Measurable **Goals.**

Outlining your marketing metrics

Now, how will you track your progress?

An estimated [84% of marketers](#) plan on executing at least one influencer marketing campaign during the next 12 months, and, like those that came before them, many will struggle to prove the [value of their influencer marketing program](#). But by taking the time to outline outcome-oriented objectives at the start, you can avoid a similar fate. This process will help you define a clear set of metrics to track in order to measure the cause-effect relationship of your influencer marketing program. So if you have not already defined your objectives, go back one step.

Are you considering using sales revenue as a metric of success? Fashion retailer Lord & Taylor did not. And although the company recently sold out of one of its dress designs after employing [50 influential instagrammers](#) to pose wearing the same dress, the main objective of the company's influencer marketing program was to create awareness for its new Design Lab collection - not drive sales. So engagement-based metrics, such as likes and website traffic, actually carried more weight with the company's CMO. And with some of the posts receiving over 13,000 likes, it is clear that their target audience saw the message.

Brand Awareness

- Website traffic
- Views
- Mentions
- Share of conversation

Engagement

- Comments
- Likes
- Shares
- Downloads
- Clicks

**Try It
Yourself**

Your Objective:

- Metric 1:
- Metric 2:
- Metric 3:



Influencers With **10,000 to 100,000 Followers**
Offer the Best Combination of **Resonance and Reach.**

[Markerly](#)

3.

What **Type of Influencers**
Are You Going to Utilize?



Influencer **Groups.**

Identifying relevant types of influencers

Once you have defined your marketing objectives, you can begin identifying the types of influencers that will help you achieve your goals. But, once again, before you start thinking about a specific influencer, think about what type of influencer would be most relevant to your audience and qualified to support your objectives.

In order to know what type of influencers you should work with, you need to understand your consumers. So

ask yourself: Who am I trying to influence? Knowing your audience will allow you to more easily identify the type of influencers that resonate with your audience - and what type of content interests your audience. Only then you can begin evaluating whether or not this type of influencer will help you reach your desired objectives.

There are a variety of different types of influencers that you can leverage, such as: industry experts, customers, employees and celebrities. Different types

of influencers are more suited for different types of objectives.

And although each influencer group has their own set of pros and cons, you will most likely want to choose the influencer group that resonates most with your audience. After all, the key to an effective influencer marketing program is being able to tap into the relationship that exists between an influencer and their community in an authentic manner.



Industry Experts



Customers



Employees



Celebrities





Influencer **Groups.**

Understanding your audience's viewing habits

With organic reach on Facebook [falling by 52%](#) in 2016, it is becoming harder for your brand to reach your customers - which is why you cannot underestimate the value of peer-peer communications.

[92% of people trust brand recommendations](#) from individuals (even if they do not know them), while only 2% of individuals trust information shared by brands.

Many of the most prominent influencers today are actually ordinary individuals. So although celebrities are the original influencers, the democratization of the internet and social media has allowed ordinary individuals, not only celebrities, to become influencers.

When selecting the type of influencer that you want to work with, you cannot ignore demographic factors, such as age. [Age can play a major role](#) in determining the type of influencers that your target audience identifies with - as well as the platforms and content formats they engage with.



YouTube

[70% of teenagers](#) on YouTube say that they identify more with the influencers on the channel than traditional celebrities.



75% of Marketers Believe **Finding the Right Influencers Is the Most Challenging Part** of Establishing an Influencer Marketing Program.

[eMarketer](#)

4.

How Are You Going to **Identify
Relevant Influencers?**



Identifying **Influencers.**

Conducting qualified research

Instead of obsessing over raw follower count when searching for influencers, consider using a [more data-driven approach](#) by searching for existing links between an influencer and your desired target audience. You should always aim to connect with individuals

that your audience is already engaging with. Measuring the engagement level of an influencer's audience, will help you determine whether or not an influencer's content actually resonates with their audience and the strength of the relationship.

But given the amount of conversations happening online, you will likely need a [social media listening tool](#) to help you filter through the noise and identify the influencers within your own network.



Research

Search platforms like Twitter and Instagram for hashtags that relate to your industry, and business pains your product or service solves.



Identify influencers

Once you know how people are talking in your industry, the next task is to see who is doing the talking. What do they say? Who do they engage with? If you had to pick ten people to connect with, which would you choose?



Ask for recommendations

Use your existing customers' knowledge too. Who do they trust? Who do they ask for recommendations? Do they have any brand advocates?





Look Beyond the Major Platforms Like Instagram When **Searching for Influencers.**

Influencers exist on every platform - not just Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and Instagram. Smaller platforms, like music.ly and Twitch, have designated influencers with highly engaged audiences. And remember, your ideal influencers might be more at home on traditional channels, such as blogs and forums.



Identifying **Influencers.**

Evaluating your prospective influencers

Whether you're thinking about selecting a major celebrity or a YouTube vlogger as an influencer, you need to make sure that there is an authentic connection between your brand and the influencer.

Having an authentic connection between your brand and the influencer is essential because, according to a [Bloglovin'](#) survey, 59% of respondents said that they would not engage with content that appears to be inconsistent with an influencer's feed. So if you want a community to engage with your brand, then they must be able to identify a logical connection between your brand and the influencer you have selected.

And although it might be tempting to not disclose your brand's relationship with an influencer, transparency is the best policy. Your target audience may perceive any omission as a lie, and nothing destroys a relationship faster than a betrayal of trust.



To determine whether or not an influencer's community will find your sponsored content to be authentic, ask yourself:

- Do my brand values overlap with the influencer's values?
- Does the influencer address topics that relate to my brand messaging?
- Does the influencer reach my desired target audience?
- Is my brand present on the same channels as the influencer and my desired target audience?
- What type of content formats (blogs, videos, etc.) does the influencer leverage?





Identifying **Influencers.**

Defining relevant relationships

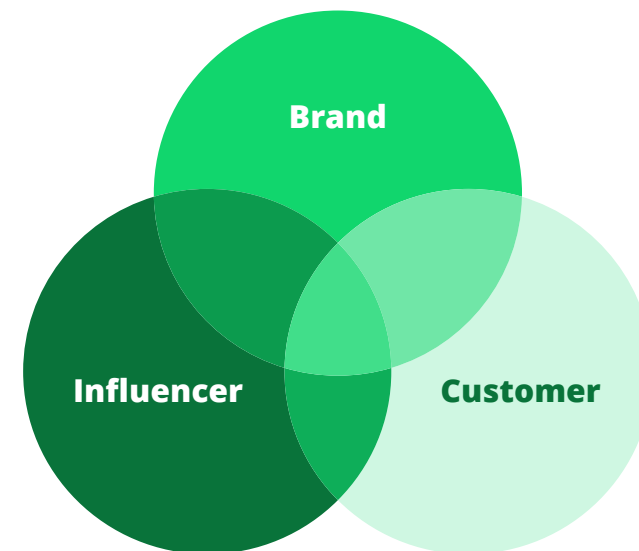
Unlike traditional spray-and-pray advertising, influencer marketing is about leveraging relationships - not only reach. The importance of relationship building is often overlooked when discussing influencer marketing; however, there are several relationships that must be considered during the process: the relationship between the influencer and their community, the relationship between the brand and the community, and the relationship between the influencer and the brand.

When selecting influencers, you need to identify individuals who are relevant to your niche; people who are not only interested in your products and services, but those who have a social circle of like-minded individuals.

However, assessing the relationship between your target audience and a potential influencer is only part of the process - you also need to form a relationship with your pool of influencers. Building a relationship with your influencers will help you build a relationship with your customers - but connecting with social media influencers requires a strategy all its own.

Here's what we are talking about →

Relationship Alignment



Brands - Not Influencers - Are Blamed for a Misleading Promotion 83% of the Time, Which is Why You Need to **Ensure Your Relationship With an Influencer** Is Transparent and Authentic.

[Strike Social](#)

5.

How Are You Going to
Initiate Contact With
Different Influencers?



Contacting **Influencers.**

Preparing your outreach messaging

From phone calls to emails, there are several ways that you can reach out to potential influencers once you've identified the ones you want to work with.

But regardless of the method that you use to contact an influencer, it is important to remember that influencers are people - not distribution channels. So if you want to tap into an influencer's networks to distribute your content, you need to first establish a connection with them on a personal level.

Obviously, this approach can be labor-intensive, but establishing an influencer marketing program is not only a financial investment - it is also a timely investment. Building relationships with influencers takes time, even in the social media age - but it is often through these relationships that the most fruitful influencer marketing is realized.

And although initiating a conversation with an influencer can be intimidating, especially when contacting a celebrity, there are various outreach strategies that you can leverage to increase your likelihood of success.





Start Early and Allow Yourself Time to **Find the Right Influencers.**

Identifying the correct influencers takes time - but so do the introductory emails, face-to-face meetings, and conference calls that follow. Onboarding an influencer can take several months, which is why you should start early and consider formalizing the process to expedite future arrangements.



Contacting **Influencers.**

Connecting via social media platforms

If you are not following an influencer on their respective channels, start.

One of the simplest ways to begin establishing a relationship with an influencer is by showing them some social love. Liking, commenting and sharing your influencer's content will not go unnoticed. Over time these small acts of engagement with an influencer's content will increase the likelihood that an influencer will reciprocate. And, eventually, these interactions could lead to a two-way conversation offline with the influencer.

By following an influencer on various social or professional channels, you will be able to gain a clearer understanding of their values and interests. This knowledge will allow you to communicate the link between their brand and your brand when reaching out directly - while also allowing you to convey your interest in them (not only their network).





Contacting **Influencers.**

Writing an eye-catching email

A well-timed email will likely yield the best result when reaching out to an influencer, but when contacting well-known industry experts and celebrities, remember that your message is just one of a very long list of things they need to attend to. Pushed for time, there's a very good chance that your email will be ignored.

In order to be effective, your messaging needs to be finely tuned and targeted to the influencer's interests – and those of their followers. Without engaging the influencer's passions, there's little chance they will share your content. In effect, you must *influence the influencer*.

Catching an influencer's attention, and getting a response, requires delivering a compelling pitch.

Here are a few tips for making your email stand out →

- ✓ **An engaging subject line:** Catch your influencer's attention with an enticing and engaging headline.
- ✓ **Keep it short:** Again, these are busy people, so get to the point. Are you asking for a review? A collaboration? Or, something else? Whatever the case, make it known.
- ✓ **Make it personal:** Sharing your thoughts on why you see a connection between your brand and their brand will get you much farther than gushing over their beautiful photographs or thought-provoking blogs.
- ✓ **State the benefit:** Both an influencer and an influencer's community should gain some sort of value from the partnership, so make sure that you mention the partnership's mutual benefits.





Make Note of Every Phone Call, Like, Comment or Email You've Exchanged With an Influencer.

When you are courting a variety of influencers on a variety of channels, it is easy to lose track of your efforts. Having a detailed history of your engagement with an influencer will allow you to easily see who you have contacted and who has expressed interest in a partnership.

6.

How are You Going to
Structure Your **Influencer
Partnership?**



Partnership **Strategies.**

Selecting a collaboration model

Congratulations! You have attracted the attention of an influencer.

Now you are finally ready to start discussing the specifics of your collaboration.

The partnership model that you select for your influencer marketing program will likely be influenced

by your budget, your timeline, the size of an influencer's audience and the number of posts an influencer agrees to share. Also, it is essential to choose a partnership model that will be beneficial to all parties - not only you.

But no matter the size of your budget or brand, there are several different ways that you can work with influencers to achieve your marketing objectives, such as: contests, guest posts, social media mentions and events.



Sponsored
Content



Gifting



Brand
Ambassador
Programs



Competitions





Partnership **Strategies.**

Sponsored content

A sponsored post is essentially an advertisement that an influencer has agreed to place in their content stream. Usually, a brand will send an influencer an image or blog that has been created in-house along with specific instructions for when and how the asset should be shared.

Reality TV star, Scott Disick, once [accidentally disclosed the instructions](#) for a sponsored post for a weight loss supplement - exposing the inauthenticity of the product endorsement.

Since the most common objective with sponsored posts is reach, there is a risk that the collaboration may come across as inauthentic if you have selected specific influencers based on audience size - rather than brand relevancy.

Tip: Always monitor the messages that your influencers share.





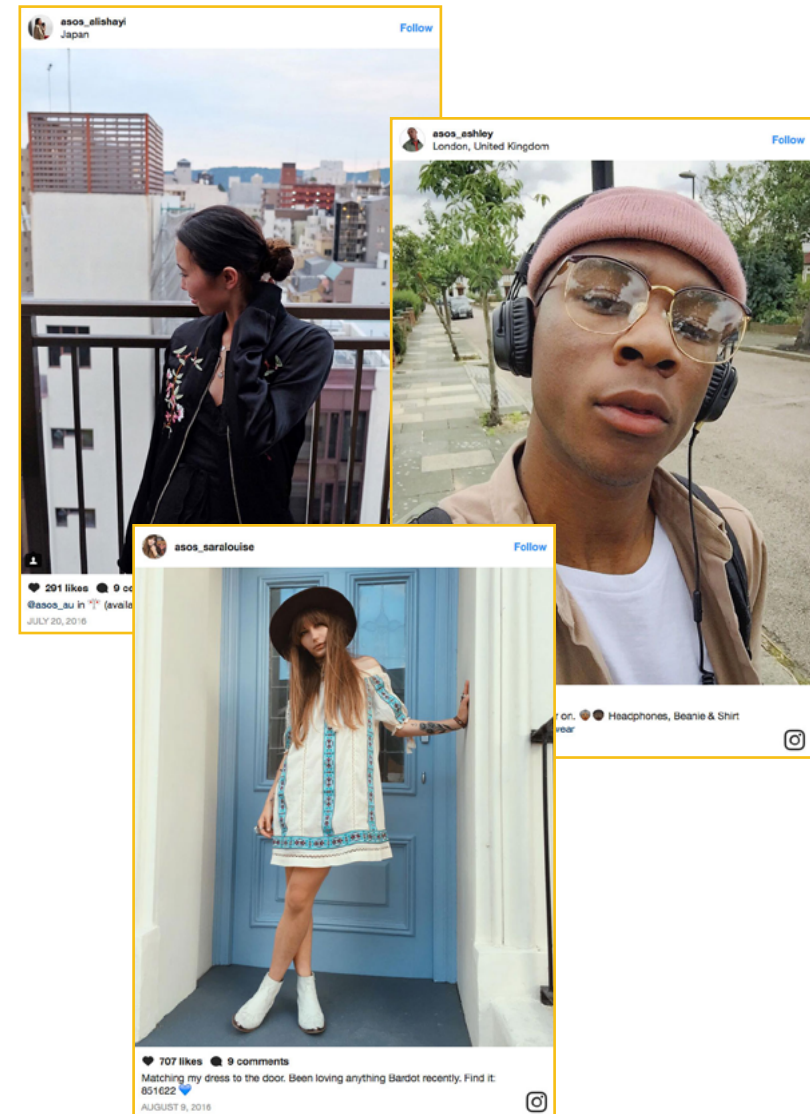
Partnership **Strategies.**

Gifting

Although gifting may require the least amount of effort, there is no guarantee that an influencer will share the products that you have sent them. But, by taking the time to identify relevant influencers and nurture the relationship, you can increase the likelihood that your content will be shared. You may also consider sending influencers a sample of your product along with a request to review the product. The review may feature some criticism related to your products or brand, so be prepared for an influencer to share their honest opinion.

Instead of gifting relevant influencers free clothes, retailer [ASOS sends vouchers to influencers](#), inviting them to make a purchase and then share a review of the product with their followers. The program, which relies on micro-influencers (500-10,000 followers), has been lauded as a huge success for its authentic approach.

Each of the company's "Insiders" have been selected for their aesthetic rather than their social media following. And the vouchers from ASOS help support the fashionable 20-somethings build their wardrobe - and their influence.



86% of the Most-Viewed Beauty Videos on YouTube Were **Made by Influencers** - the Remaining **14% Were Made by Brands.**

[Pixability](#)



Partnership **Strategies.**

Brand ambassador programs

A brand ambassador program is an endorsement agreement between a brand and an influencer that lasts for a set duration. Given the consistent revenue stream that brand ambassador programs provide, influencers are beginning to favor this model over unreliable deals for sponsored posts.

Cristiano Ronaldo, the football legend, signed a [\\$1 billion](#) lifetime contract with Nike. Since the vast majority of Ronaldo's more than 100 million followers are interested in sport – Nike's core business - any social media endorsement of a Nike product made by Ronaldo is likely to reach the company's target audience.

And although \$1 billion is a jaw-dropping sum, the contract has actually proven to be a great deal for the brand. According to one [report](#), Nike earned \$474 million in media value from Ronaldo's activity on social media in 2016 - meaning they could recoup their investment in a little more than two years. So not only does this partnership have a high degree of relevancy for all parties, but the cause-effect relationship is clearly measurable.



Nike scored a deal with its partnership with Cristiano Ronaldo - earning a reported **\$474 million** in media value in 2016.





Partnership **Strategies.**

Competitions and contests

Free stuff? Sign us up.

Partnering with an influencer to run a contest or competition can be a great way to engage an influencer's audience around your products and services. Remember to find a way to tie the contest to your marketing objectives, so, for example, you could require entrants to follow your brand's social media

channels in order to grow your follower base.

When British Airways wanted to connect with influential members of the tech community, the company put a twist on an influencer competition by asking the influencers themselves to be participants. The airline's "[UnGrounded](#)" program invited executives

from companies like Google and Microsoft to brainstorm ways to connect tech talent with big problems around the world during an 11 hour flight from San Francisco to London. The solutions were then presented at the UN's Decide Now Act Summit.



* This advertisement was used during the campaign to promote the company's innovation lab in the sky





Partnership **Strategies.**

Pros and cons of different collaboration models

Less than [a quarter of B2C brands](#) have established continuously running influencer marketing programs.

Many brands are still testing various influencer marketing strategies and the effectiveness of various influencers. And when building your influencer marketing program, you too might want to experiment with different influencers and partnership strategies. For instance, you may want to develop long-term partnerships with influencers or focus on employing influencers only when the need arises for one-off campaigns. But before you choose either strategy, you need to understand the tradeoffs of each strategy.



Long-term partnerships

Offer continuous exposure, but at a financial cost.

Pros:

- ⊕ Enhances brand recall
- ⊕ Conveys a sense of authenticity
- ⊕ Allows for favorable terms with up-and-coming influencers
- ⊕ Transforms influencers into brand evangelist

Cons:

- ⊖ Requires a costly up-front investment
- ⊖ Requires more vetting of influencers
- ⊖ Requires an influencer to continuously grow their community

One-off campaigns

Offer flexibility, but risk appearing disingenuous

Pros:

- ⊕ Provides access to new audiences
- ⊕ Requires less time and financial commitment
- ⊕ Allows you to test different influencers and platforms

Cons:

- ⊖ Reduces exposure to your target audience
- ⊖ Appears disingenuous, potentially
- ⊖ Allows your competition to engage the same influencer



Do not be Afraid to **Walk Away.**

If an influencer is underperforming or has changed the focus of their content, then it may be time to go your separate ways. Brands often are forced to terminate contract agreements with celebrity influencers due to bad publicity.

7.

How Are You Going to
Compensate Your Influencers?



Compensation Models.

Structuring a financial partnership

Money is not the only way to compensate an influencer.

Depending on your business objectives and the level of expected commitment from your influencers, you may want to explore a variety of compensation methods. There are several ways that you can structure a contract agreement with an influencer depending on your budget, goals and preferred distribution channels.

Keep in mind that the method of compensation can vary greatly depending on the specific platform (YouTube, Instagram, etc.) that an influencer favors - and regardless of the type of agreement, any partnership should be disclosed.

✓ **Commission:** Promo codes are a popular way to promote sales through an influencer, who receives a percentage of the sales. You can track the amount of sales each specific influencer generated by customizing the promo codes.

✓ **Flat fee:** Many of the larger influencers and celebrities have established a flat fee pricing structure. The average cost of an Instagram post is around \$300, but some celebrities have been known to charge six-figure sums per post.

✓ **Freebies:** Influencers that are still building up their audience are usually willing to share or create branded content in exchange for access to exclusive events or free products. Although there is no guarantee that an influencer will recommend or share your product.

✓ **Pay-per engagement:** Some influencers are interested in receiving a fee every time a customer clicks on a link to your website or leaves a comment on a sponsored post. While bloggers used to rely on the income generated through banner ads, influencers are increasingly favoring more reliable streams of income.





Compensation Models.

Understanding regulatory guidelines

Setting up an influencer marketing program requires you to include various departments from across your organization—especially the legal department.

Influencer marketing can be a highly profitable business for brands and influencers, but any business relationship needs to be disclosed to consumers. In an effort to make the relationships between brands and influencers more transparent, social networks are reviewing the way that content is shared by publishers and influencers. Instagram recently added the ability to include a sub-header that reads, “Paid partnership with,” followed by a tag to the business partner’s account on sponsored posts or stories.

Additionally, the growing ubiquity of influencer marketing on social media has promoted both the American Federal Trade Commission (FTC) and the British Advertising Standards Authority to draft new laws that require influencers to disclose brand partnerships in more transparent ways.

55%

of marketers know the latest [FTC Guidelines](#) for working with influencers.

25%

of influencers report being asked [not to disclose](#) their paid partnership with a brand.



78% of Marketing Professionals
Struggle to Prove the Value of an
Influencer Marketing Program.

[Linqia](#).

8.

How Are You Going to
Measure the Results
of Your Program?



Measuring **KPIs**.

Quantifying the value of influencers

More and more brands are investing in influencer marketing programs - and it is paying off (literally)!

70% of companies running influencer marketing programs are earning \$2 or more for every \$1 spent on influencer marketing - with some brands earning [up to \\$11.33](#).

Still not convinced? Twitter's results suggest that getting a branded tweet in front of influencers [increases purchasing intent by 2.7x](#). Where your campaign can combine branded tweets with recommendations from an influencer, purchasing intent nearly doubles to 5.2x.

But as the marketing industry becomes increasingly more data driven, there will be added pressure on the more than [half of marketers](#) that plan on increasing their influencer marketing budget over the next 12 months to report tangible results that justify their increased spending. However, delivering tangible results, begins with setting measurable goals.

So take another look at the marketing objectives and measurement metrics you defined at the start of your program to ensure that they are in fact measurable.



From likes to downloads, there are a variety of metrics that you can use to assess whether or not you achieved your marketing objectives, such as:

- Subscriber growth
- Engagement per post
- Share-of-voice
- Website traffic
- Sales





Measuring **KPIs**.

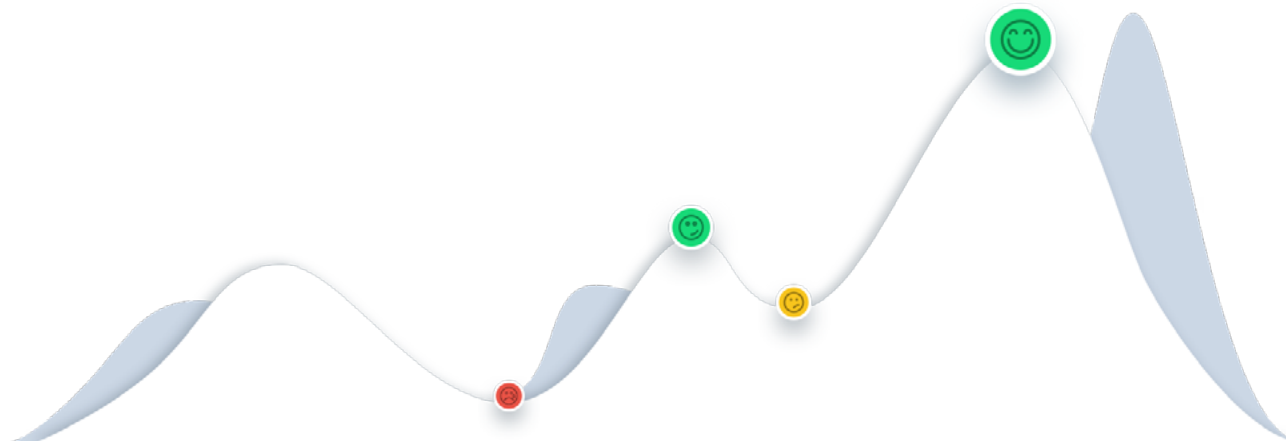
Monitoring concrete objectives

Taking the time to define measurable KPIs at the start of your influencer marketing program will make it easier for you to state the results of your influencer marketing program - and justify the investment to your boss.

Using outcome-oriented objectives allows you to measure the effectiveness of an influencer and clearly attribute any change in sales, engagement or website traffic to an influencer's involvement. For example, outcome-oriented objectives could involve increasing your Instagram following by 15% or selling 400 units of a new product. Both

of these outcome-oriented objectives are specific and can be monitored through clearly defined metrics that are readily available on a variety of platforms.

But whatever your objective, remember to track everything - even the values that cannot be measured in dollars. Social listening tools, like [Falcon](#), can help you track key metrics like engagement, mentions and sentiment that are relevant to your influencer marketing campaign. As the marketing landscape evolves, so too does the emphasis on accurately measuring the effectiveness of your marketing investment.



Did You Know That Over **\$1 Billion is Spent** on
Influencers Every Year?

[Mediakix](#)



Falcon.io Offers a **Platform** for Every Kind of **Social** **Media Marketer.**



Manage all social channels with a collaborative platform.



Monitor social media channels and the web to collect insights.



Schedule and publish content with an easy-to-use Editorial Calendar.



Measure impact and create reports with advanced analytics.

To learn what **Falcon.io can do for your business**, request a demo online

[REQUEST DEMO](#)

