6 Steps to Creating & Launching Authentic Influencer Campaigns

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At the intersection of brand awareness and brand ambassadors is influencer marketing, an upper-funnel marketing tactic that uses authenticity and customer connections to augment long-term growth.

Influencer marketing is a mutual partnership between brands and creators, who share the goal of telling compelling stories with authentic content.

Like other social and content marketing, influencer marketing is about making the right investments in the right places in a way that demonstrates authenticity and credibility within your industry or market, continually creating new opportunities to build brand awareness. For influencer marketing, this also includes making the best matches between brands and influencers. And the stakes for getting influencer marketing right are higher than ever.

By the numbers:

- Influencer Marketing Hub has found influencer marketing is set to grow to approximately $16.4 Billion in 2022.
- 68% of surveyed marketers plan to increase their influencer marketing spend in 2022. Influencer Marketing Hub reports an increase of B2B business over B2C, with 38% of those surveyed identifying as part of B2B – up from 30% in 2021.
- Fashion & Beauty remains influencer marketing's largest industry, represented by 15% of respondents, with Health & Fitness a close second at 13% and Travel & Lifestyle at 12%. Gaming, Parenting & Home, and Sports also hold a significant space. The remaining 39% of respondents fell into the "Other" bucket, which includes just about every other vertical you can think of – up 10% from 2021. The upshot of that increase is that influencer marketing is everywhere now, though just a few years ago it was still primarily seen in tight niche markets.

$16.4 B

Influencer marketing growth in 2022

+75%

of brand marketers intend to dedicate a budget to influencer marketing in 2022

68%

marketers to increase their influencer marketing spend in 2022

Overview of Influencer Programs

Powerful influencer programs incorporate the following:

- Well-planned strategy with established goals and KPIs
- Influencer sourcing based on criteria aligning with your target audience
- Successful content creation spearheaded by the right influencer partners
- Influencer-created content and audiences that amplify the program and messaging






Six Steps for Influencer Marketing Program Success

Now that we've outlined the stakes of great influencer marketing, let's get into how to build a successful program.

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1. Develop a Creative, Goal-Focused Influencer Campaign

First, define your goals. You need a clear desired result for your campaign – it should help you reach KPIs such as post impressions, conversions, or traffic, or broader initiatives like brand awareness and recognition. What will a successful campaign look like for your brand? Is it to drive new consumers or re-engage your current audiences? Are you trying to increase revenue or awareness?

Next, remember to flex your creative and opportunistic muscles. Not only does your campaign need to be creative, but it must take into consideration current trends and moments in time it can be tied to.

In 2021, as concern about climate change continued to rise, Levi's teamed up with actor Jaden Smith and influencer Emily Chamberlain for their "Buy Better, Wear Longer" campaign. This sustainability campaign aimed to bring awareness to overproduction and overconsumption in the fast-fashion industry, and to position Levi's as a sustainable, responsible brand. Smith and Chamberlain (with 17.5 million IG followers, 8 million Twitter followers, 11 million YouTube subscribers, and 14.4 million IG followers, respectively) shared Levi's messaging about shopping second-hand and committing to sustainability in their own videos and genuine content.

In 2021, Levi's quarterly sales jumped 22% year over year to $1.69 billion. Revenue was 7% higher than in the same period two years ago, pre-pandemic.

Is there an upcoming holiday or awareness month your brand can connect to? Has a new trend or challenge started circulating? Are you releasing a new product? Try to tie ideas to timely events, launches, and notable occasions.

2. Build Personas and Criteria to Inform Your Casting

Identify your top criteria and evaluate influencers based on audience data, engagement rate, how well they align with your brand and values, and more.

Influencer personas are a representation of your target customer and add a human element to data. Rather than just looking at sterile data points, personas combine different traits of your customers for a more well-rounded audience analysis. Some things to consider in your personas are age, income, interests, common pain points, and where they spend their time. You should also ensure that your influencers share similar values to your brand.

By identifying multiple consumer segments and demographic groups along with brand-relevant attributes and values, brands can target ideally matched influencer personas who share an affinity for the brand and help guide the discovery process.

Are you trying to build your audience and brand awareness? Sell a new product? Break into a new industry? Gather data? Be sure to partner with influencers who understand your goal and can help you meet it.

innovo

For example, INNOVO, a new direct-to-consumer women's incontinence tech product, sought to increase its customer base through brand awareness-based influencer activations from 2021 to 2022.



The campaign aimed to create buzz and positive brand affinity around INNOVO. WITHIN's influencer team leveraged creator relationships to forge a long-term brand ambassadorship between INNOVO and Y7 Yoga studios, leading to pelvic floor yoga events, and social posts. The five-month campaign drove 3.7 million new social media impressions, with more than 130 unique code redemptions for a high-value product.

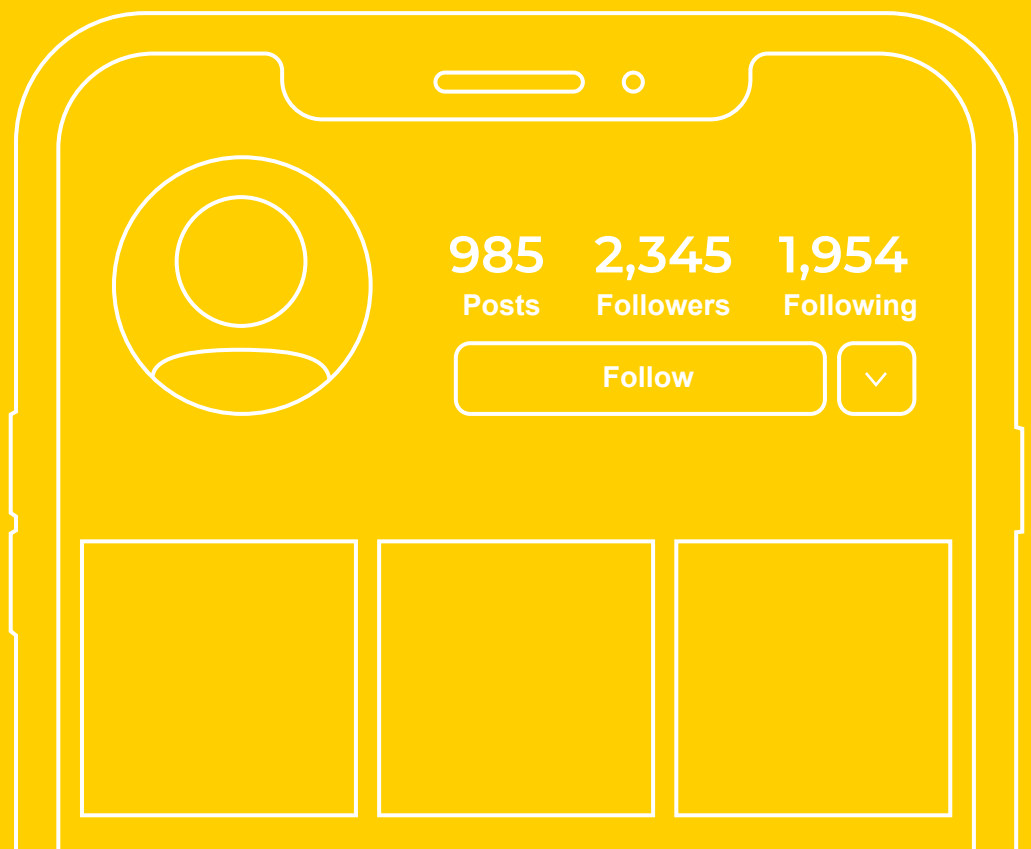
3. Personalize Outreach and Negotiate Your Needs

Influencers get approached by brands all the time, so make sure your invite stands out! The best way to do this is to build relationships with both influencers and their agents or managers. (At WITHIN, our team has built out a robust, highly engaged influencer network that spans a variety of retail categories. When they see our name pop up in their inbox, they recognize it and are more likely to respond.)

Once you've built a portfolio and reputation that will streamline new partnerships, head to the negotiation table - you should make sure you're getting the best deal to secure usage rights and deliverables you need from your influencer partners.

Usage rights are usually secured for a set duration of time - three months, a year, or even more.

Be clear on where you want to use an influencer's content, too - social media is the most common, but this could extend to website and email use or even "real world" opportunities such as in print or in stores.



4. Work Hand-in-Hand with Influencers to Create Engaging and Authentic Content

While skilled influencers know what works best for their style of content and their page, you should create a toolkit or guidelines that outline what you are looking for in the partnership content to ensure you are getting the most out of your collaboration.

These are best shared in a deck format and usually include several slides detailing the campaign overview, the deliverables and terms agreed upon during negotiations, key messages to incorporate in copy, some creative direction and a mood board for inspiration, as well as the required tags, hashtags, and any other requirements when posting. You should also provide your influencer partners with any brand guidelines, logos, graphic elements, and marketing tool access where relevant.



"While there are key pieces of information that the influencers need in order to make the partnerships mutually beneficial, it's important to remember that you partnered with this influencer because you were impressed by their content and creativity," explains Heidi Mika, Director of Influencer at WITHIN. "They also know what their audiences will react to best and must stay authentic to their own brand, so keep this in mind when sharing the brief and receiving content."

5. Leverage Influencer Content via Whitelisting & Boosting

Once you've established trusted influencer partnerships, you can negotiate advertising access. Ad access, or whitelisting, is obtaining appropriate permissions from influencers to run paid ads through their identity.

Take advantage of paid ads and boosted content to increase brand awareness and drive your audience to sales and engagement.

For Halloween 2021, WITHIN's Influencer team supported Playboy.com in sourcing notable photographers to direct and shoot a series titled "Bunnies In The Wild." The series featured models and influencers wearing the iconic Bunny costume. These assets were used across owned social channels, on the Playboy website, email newsletters, and even paid ads. As a result, the classic Playboy Bunny costume drove 44% of all Halloween revenue.



6. Review Your Campaign to Inform Your Next One

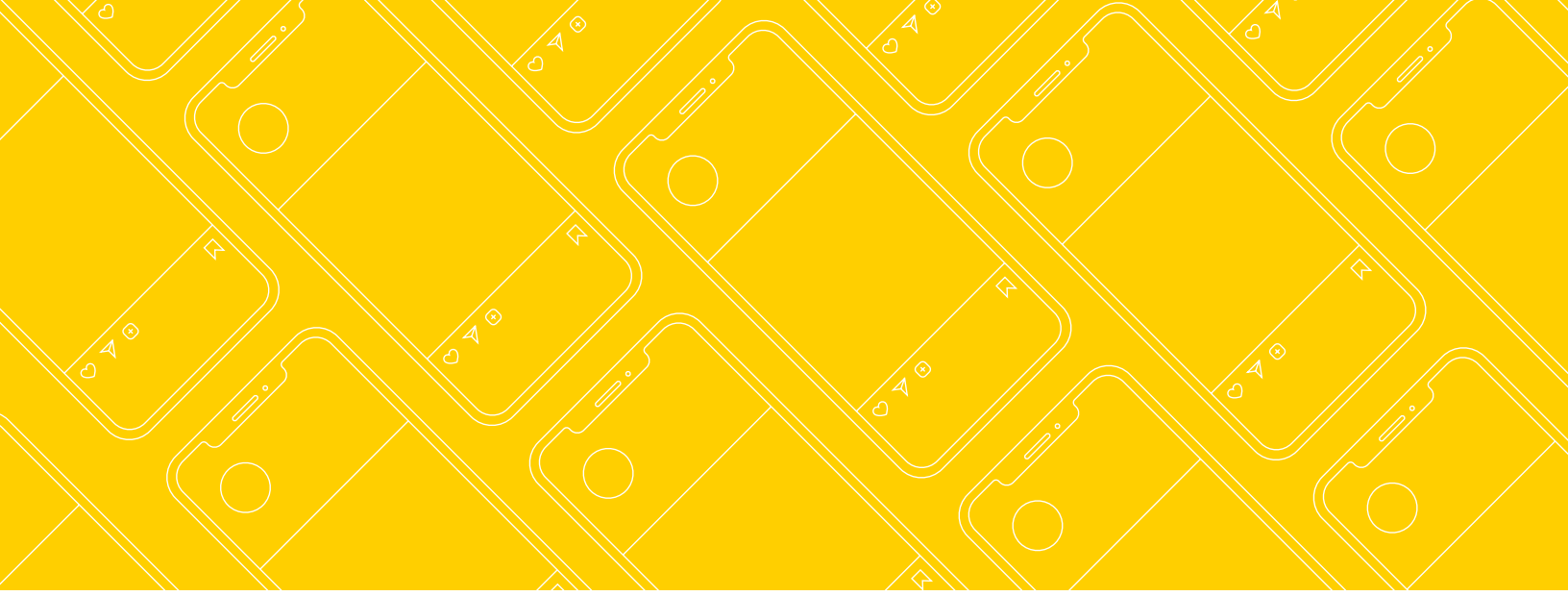
So you've run your campaign - how did it go? There are several factors that go into measuring the success of an influencer campaign, including:

- **Organic performance:** Impressions, Engagements, Reach, Clicks
- **Qualitative metrics:** Sentiment, Ease of Working, Over-delivery
- **Paid performance:** CTR, CVR, ROAS, Sales

There are also several ways we can test the effectiveness of influencer partnerships through paid media:

- **Part of the funnel:** Run influencer ads across prospecting, retargeting, and reengagement to see where they perform best
- **Use of handles:** Run influencer ads from both brand handles and influencer handles to see which performs best
- **Type of content:** Run still photos and videos to understand what visuals perform best. Consider enhancing influencer content with additional messaging and branding to make assets more conversion-friendly
- **Ad formats:** Run influencer ads in various formats (DPA, carousel, etc.)
- **Influencer Audiences:** Test already-engaged influencer audiences to understand if they're interested and purchasing your brand's content

Even if you nail all of these steps, consumer behaviors and trends will shift over time, and the impact of individual influencers will wax and wane. Make sure to evaluate influencers and their effectiveness over time to invest your resources where they're best positioned to pay off.



What Differentiates WITHIN?

As a performance branding company, WITHIN works to make sure you're engaging your highest-value audiences at each step of the buying journey. WITHIN can help you connect with influencers who will authentically represent your brand, craft creative for use in ads and toolkits, and analyze and measure your success metrics.

In today's digital landscape, your influencer program needs to be robust and cross-channel if you want to maximize your investments and ROI. Social media is a gold mine for influencer content - repost, re-share, and repurpose content to your brand's channels or create shoppable posts. Influencer content can boost your SEO with incremental touchpoints and backlinks, serve as effective destinations for paid ads, and share affiliate links and coupon codes. Take advantage of the entire influencer content lifecycle.

Ready to start working with experts to integrate full-service influencer marketing into your strategy? Let's talk.

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