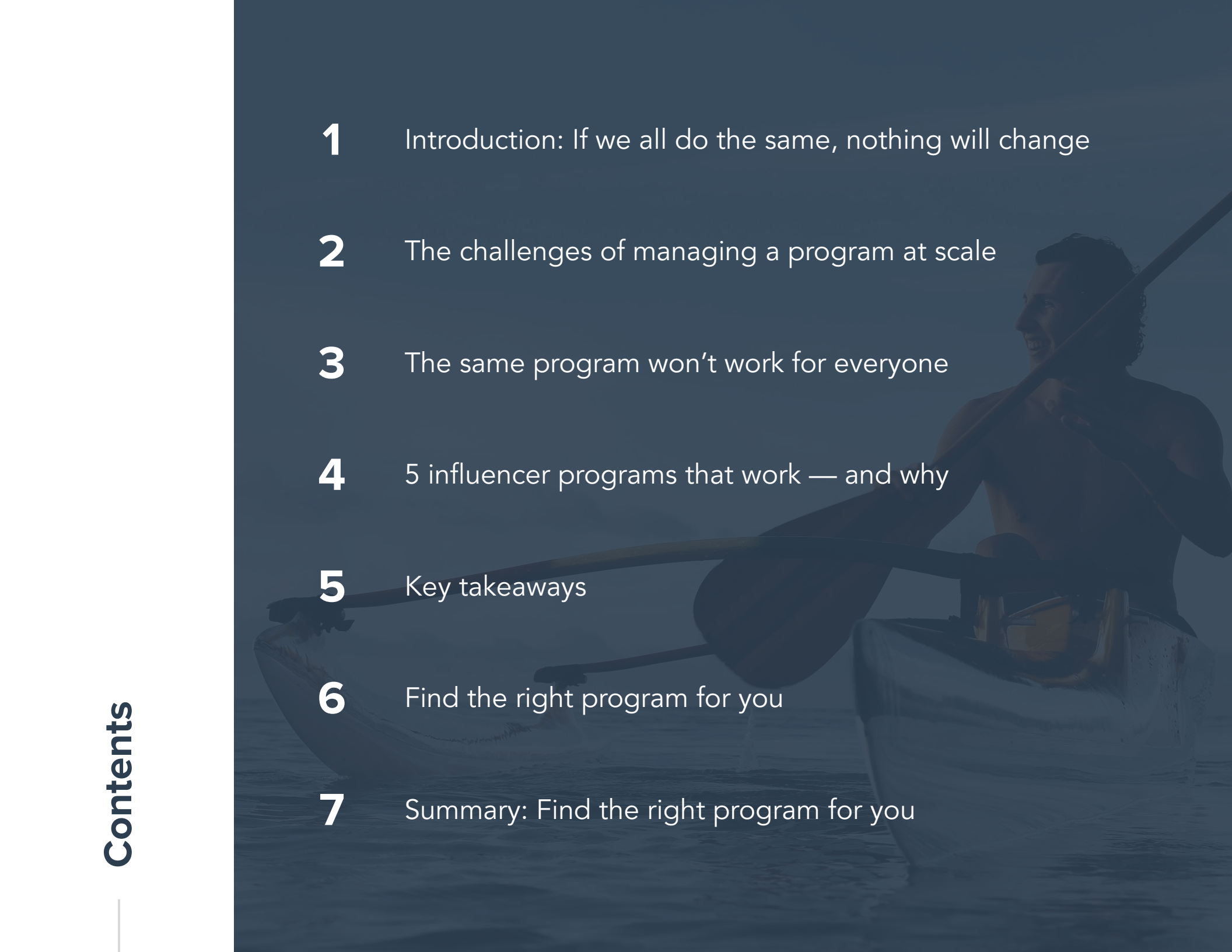




Different strokes for different influencer folks

5 examples that prove “one way” isn’t the right way

- 
- 1** Introduction: If we all do the same, nothing will change
 - 2** The challenges of managing a program at scale
 - 3** The same program won't work for everyone
 - 4** 5 influencer programs that work — and why
 - 5** Key takeaways
 - 6** Find the right program for you
 - 7** Summary: Find the right program for you

CHAPTER 1

If we all do the same, nothing will change

Influencer marketing used to represent a way to doing things differently

But many brands and agencies are using "off-the-shelf" solutions that piece together "best guess" influencer rosters including celebrities and mega influencers with superficially impressive metrics. Influencer marketing began as an innovative approach to reaching target audiences in creative ways, but has now become a little formulaic. Many enterprises and agencies are piecing together "off-the-shelf" solutions that rely solely on rosters of celebrity and mega influencers with superficially impressive metrics.

They continue to rely on "hope for the best" tactics over a tailored approach. It worked before, so it stands to reason that to replicate the same success at scale we just need to do it again, right? Not so much. The rinse-and-repeat method leads to stagnation and blocks the opportunity for discovering what really works.



It's a time for change

In this eBook, you'll find that there is no one way to run an influencer program — in fact, we'll show you five distinct approaches different enterprises have taken that prove there really are different strokes for different folks. And that holds true for influencer programs, too. You will discover:

- The true value from each approach
- The benefit of using adaptable tools to manage and measure campaigns
- How each program is adapted to suit overall business goals



We will prove by example that by maintaining a test-and-learn mentality and shaping each campaign to the influencer and audience, you can make space for creativity that will lead you down alternative routes to success, so you find what really works for you.

Ultimately, you will learn what creating a tailored approach really means, and how the different ways you can manage your campaigns and optimize performance can suit your business goals.

Why “one way” isn’t the right way

In 2017, 92% of marketers said that influencer marketing was an effective strategy. Fast forward to 2019, and that percentage has dropped to 80%.¹ This downward trend is predominantly caused by marketers relying on one set approach, the one that has worked before—even when trying to implement influencer programs at scale.

1. <https://mediakix.com/blog/benefits-of-influencer-marketing-social-media/>



It's fair to assume that a previously effective technique should be repeated and made bigger. If you think of it in terms of Pavlovian theory, the compulsion to repeat the same pattern again and again is only natural, especially if it's initially proven to yield results. But over time, when we repeat the same action and it doesn't deliver the same results, we eventually must accept that it doesn't work. In the case of influencer marketing, it's time to accept that bigger isn't necessarily better.

The same study also found that despite declining confidence in the effectiveness of influencer marketing, nearly two thirds still plan to increase their spend. So, despite some negative press and burgeoning doubts, the fundamental belief in influencers is still there. And it should be! But ramping up influencer activity at such an accelerated rate comes with a whole host of challenges, not the least trying to stay on top of myriad of administrative tasks and to effectively manage influencer relationships.



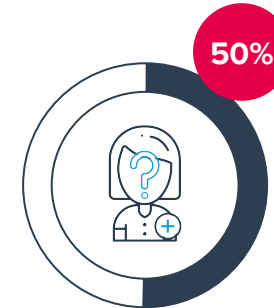
CHAPTER 2

The challenges of managing a program at scale

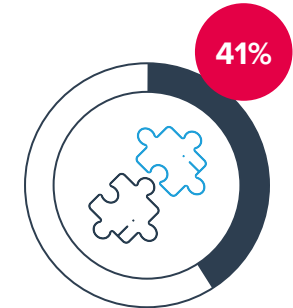
As more marketers up their spend on influencer marketing, they are beginning to face a number of hurdles along the way. In addition to those highlighted (right), top challenges for marketers managing an influencer program at scale include:¹

- Rising influencer costs (38%)
- FTC regulations and requirements: (18%)
- Moving more influencer marketing in-house: (12%)

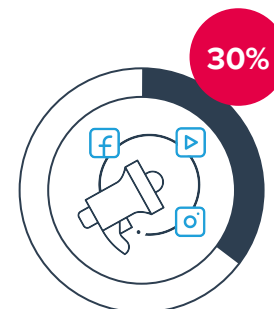
With 58% of influencer program managers² using tools developed in-house to execute their campaigns, one of the ways program managers appear to be tackling the issue is to create customized solutions that help them regain control of the activity at scale. The problem is that these are often designed to manage the “one way” they have been operating previously—in small measure and not scalable for rapid growth. In this situation, tailored approaches and nuances of individual campaigns can easily fall victim to a need to put in place a program that can be rolled out at speed. Say goodbye to creativity—and quite possibly your program’s effectiveness.



of marketers struggle to spot fake followers



Find building an always-on influencer strategy a top challenge



Struggle to reduce time spent managing influencer campaigns



Struggle with brand safety and brand alignment

1. <https://mediakix.com/influencer-marketing-resources/influencer-marketing-challenges/>
 2. <https://influencermarketinghub.com/influencer-marketing-2019-benchmark-report/>

CHAPTER 3

The same program won't work for everyone

It's worked before, it's how you've always done it right?

Returning to Pavlov's theory to illustrate the point, if you have always approached influencer marketing in the same way, whether that's one-off sponsored posts or only working with mega or macro influencers, you'd think it would continue to perform the same. What works in one situation will not necessarily work in another, and sacrificing adaptability will likely also end up compromising results.



Rather than upholding the splintering status quo, marketers need to first consider the business goals of the program. The size and shape of the influencer program needs to stem directly from a thoughtful assessment of what the most pressing business goals are, leading you to:

- Achieve more impactful audience engagement through nano and micro influencers
- Gain trustworthy customer journey insights to measure what matters to you
- Effectively understand each influencer's value based on those metrics
- Make predictable progress toward tangible business goals tied to real KPIs (not vanity metrics)
- Scale the program to become a significant channel of growth
- Increase the quality of content and reduce monetary and operational cost of production
- Nurture long-term engagement from quality influencers that become ambassadors

The five examples that follow illustrate what happens when influencer program managers use performance tracking and campaign management tools to take a holistic view of their programs. They are able to review results to adapt as necessary to ensure their influencer programs support their overall business strategy. Suddenly, different strokes are actually possible to implement—and effective, creative strategies become a reality.

CHAPTER 4

5 influencer programs that work—and why

Here are five brands who have embraced the multifaceted world of influencer campaigns, and are using varied approaches to produce staggering results. What each one has in common is that, as their influencer activity grew, they realized they needed a way to manage the entire process holistically in order to enable them to follow alternative routes. Please note that while the brands have been anonymized, the techniques used to get results are quite real. The five influencer program examples featured include:

1. **Brand awareness.** Quality content to drive traffic and engagement
2. **Performance-based results.** Creating a scalable model with revenue-based rewards
3. **Affiliate network.** Driving traffic through customized links
4. **Micro influencers.** Reaching a highly targeted audience through a high volume of niche influencers
5. **Content creation.** Using influencers to create content for the brand to use



1. Brand awareness model

Brand A: Direct-to-consumer home decor designer

Quality content to drive traffic and engagement

If you're a new kid on the block looking to gain traction in the market against industry-leading brands, or you're operating in a busy marketplace and eager to stand out from the crowd, this could be the approach for you.

Brand A used influencer activity primarily to drive awareness for particular seasonal products. Their focus was on driving engagement on Instagram by working with high-profile influencers who create quality imagery.



Discovery, outreach, and onboarding

Influencer criteria setting and discovery

The steps Brand A took were to identify Instagram influencers that met their specific requirements using a social discovery platform that enabled them to filter based on the following criteria:



**200k+
followers**



**>20%
engagement**



**High engagement
quality**



**Top quality
imagery**

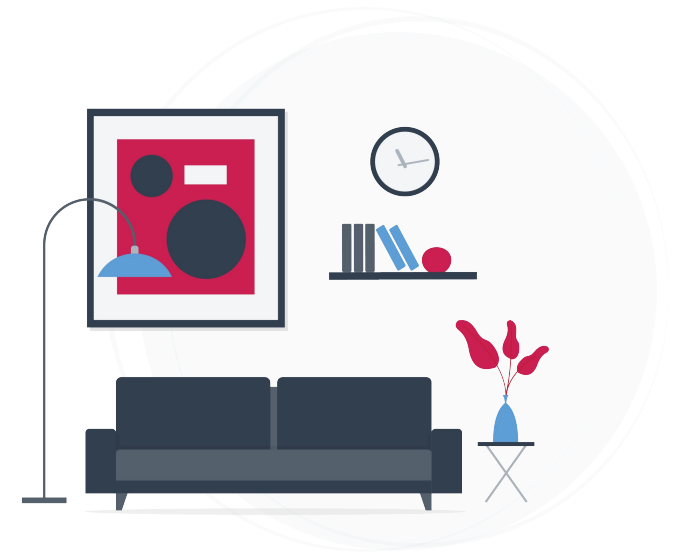
Customized influencer outreach

Using recruitment automation software, Brand A sent highly personalized emails to attract the chosen influencers and to build a relationship with them, using automated follow-up to cement the partnership.

Discovery, outreach, and onboarding

Onboarding and agreed terms

Short agreements were produced, including giving Brand A the rights to use any images the influencers create on their behalf so that they will have ongoing use of this valuable content. To ensure full transparency and best practice, they also included a reminder to disclose #ad on all campaign posts.



Measured approach and KPIs

Performance tracking and content approval

The products were sent to the influencers with unique product tracking codes, after which the influencers were required to submit their images and content for approval so that Brand A could ensure that all content created provided the correct brand messages of the campaign.

Campaign KPIs

Brand A based performance on the following KPIs / metrics:



Reach



Comments



Views



Shares



Likes

Feedback and communication

Through their influencer partnership automation solution, Brand A was able to monitor and review engagement levels and comments on the post while measuring the response to the activity.

Reviewing the benefits and value

Benefits of a brand awareness approach

Brand A was aiming to reach a wider audience. They wanted to introduce prospective new customers to the brand who would respond positively to the branded content to increase the demand for their featured products. To measure success, they monitored their influencers' branded posts for engagement metrics like reach and comments and continually analyzed audience demographics to ensure they were reaching the right people.

Key outcomes and value return

Through their influencer partnership automation solution, Brand A was able to monitor and review engagement levels and comments on the post while measuring the response to the activity.



2. Performance-based model

Brand B: Personal styling subscription service

Quality content to drive traffic and engagement

If you're a new kid on the block looking to gain traction in the market against industry-leading brands, or you're operating in a busy marketplace and eager to stand out from the crowd, this could be the approach for you.

Brand B used influencer activity primarily to drive awareness for particular seasonal products. Their focus was on driving engagement on Instagram by working with high-profile influencers who create quality imagery.



Discovery, outreach, and onboarding

Partner criteria setting and discovery

Brand B screened prospective partners through a social discovery platform using the following criteria:



5k+ followers



High engagement
quality



Brand safety

Customized partner outreach and brief

The chosen influencers were then sent a brief brand overview to introduce them to the company and demonstrate the value in a partnership. This personalized first email included an invitation to join the program, including partnership details and agreement terms to ensure everything ran smoothly. Manually, this could take a long time but Brand B used automated software that sent highly personalized emails to attract the chosen influencers. This saved the brand time by automating what was usually a laborious task. Brand B could then very quickly begin to build a relationship with influencers using automated follow-up to cement the partnership.

Discovery, outreach, and onboarding

Onboarding and agreed terms

Brand B developed a tailored onboarding system to provide the influencer with everything they need and help ensure they would have a positive relationship. Short agreements were then produced, including giving Brand B the rights to use any images the Influencers created on their behalf so they had ongoing use of valuable content. To ensure full transparency and best practice, they also included a reminder to disclose #ad on all campaign posts.



Measured approach and KPIs

Performance tracking and content approval

As influencers were rewarded based on results, Brand B needed to monitor the engagement metrics on influencer posts and track conversion. They used a partnership automation and growth platform that generates and distributes unique product tracking links and promo codes to influencers.

Influencers submitted their images and content for approval to ensure that all content had the correct brand messages. Once approved, influencers were then responsible for providing proof of post, which Brand B was able to verify using a scraper that extracted audit visuals and tracked their chosen performance metrics.

Campaign KPIs

Brand B based performance on the following KPIs / metrics:



Conversions



Comments



Revenue



Shares



Likes



Clicks

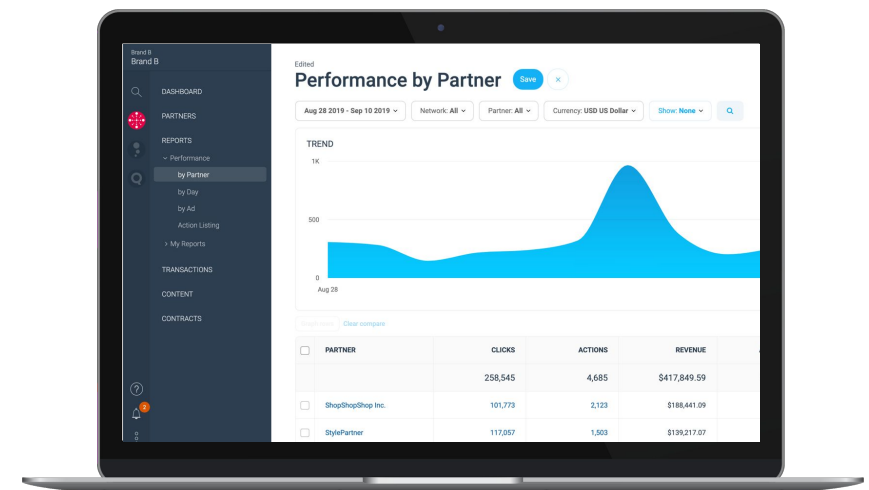
Reviewing the benefits and value

Benefits of a performance-based approach

Using an intuitive electronic contracting system, Brand B was able to implement an effective performance-based model. This meant that not only were influencers rewarded promptly and fairly, they were also able to tether influencer payouts to revenue goals and validate spend. Brand B's budget was used more effectively and influencers were able to earn considerably more than they would in a branding-based program. This process also helped Brand B to identify which influencer generated the best return and created synergistic influencer partnerships with those influencers for future projects.

Key outcomes and value return

Using a performance-based approach enabled Brand B to measure the ROI of their campaigns and understand how the activity was impacting their bottom line. They could also ensure they used their budget in the right place and got the most bang for their buck.



3. Affiliate network model

Brand C: Furniture retailer

Driving traffic through customized links

This is the ideal approach for anyone who wants to leverage the right influencers to generate affiliate sales at scale.

Brand C wanted to scale up an existing established partner program to maximize its effectiveness. To do this, they used an automated partnership platform to recruit quality influencers at high volume and reward them based on results to avoid wasted spend.



Discovery, outreach, and onboarding

Influencer criteria setting and discovery

Brand C was looking for influencers that have:



5k-10k followers



Brand safety measures

Brand C recruited influencers using automated outreach and follow-up, which was personalized to each individual influencer. An email invitation provided partnership details and agreement terms to bring the influencer into the program and ensured a smooth onboarding process.

Onboarding and agreed terms

As their focus was on traditional affiliate links, Brand C didn't need to provide or ask for any specific deliverables unless they were providing free products, which made for a simple, and very scalable, process.

Measured approach and KPIs

Performance tracking and content approval

In addition to using automated partnership software that generates audit visuals of influencer posts to monitor posted content, Brand C carefully tracked brand safety to avoid any potential issues.

By using custom links Brand C were able to get the same benefits of Brand B's performance-based model but also fully track and understand what did and didn't work. They were empowered to make more considered decisions, such as whether to better leverage the high-performing influencer partnerships or attempt to replicate that success with other future partners.

Campaign KPIs

Brand C based performance on the following KPIs / metrics:



Conversions



Revenue



**Average
Order Value**

Reviewing the benefits and value

Benefits of an affiliate network model

The payment processing system allowed Brand C to use the performance insights from the custom link tracking to pay their influencers on a performance basis. This helped them to maintain smooth relationships and maximize the return they receive for their spend.

Key outcomes and value return

By focusing on influencers that provide the best value for the money, Brand C was able to simultaneously grow their affiliate program and improve their ROI.



4. Micro influencer model

Brand D: Vitamin and well-being manufacturer

Reach a highly targeted audience through a high volume of niche influencers

If you're looking to move away from the traditional model of celebrities and "celebrities" (the internet famous) and work with more highly targeted niche audiences through micro or nano influencers, then this could well suit you.

Brand D launched a relatively new product that had a very specific target audience. They worked with micro influencers that could talk straight to their potential consumers and educate them about why their product is better than their competitors'.



Discovery, outreach, and onboarding

Influencer criteria setting and discovery

To reach their audience of geotargeted health-conscious women aged over 35 in the American South or Pacific Northwest, Brand D looked for influencers that had:



1k-10k
followers



High levels
of engagement



Quality
engagement



Brand safety
measures



Target audience
demographic

Customized outreach and recruitment

As a relatively new product on the market, Brand D's automated introductory emails worked hard to explain the concept and engage the influencers with the brand, which enabled the influencers to effectively communicate the benefits to their audience.

Measured approach and KPIs

Campaign performance and in-store attribution

Brand D did not sell online, so they needed influencers to drive demand and motivate their target audience to walk into a brick-and-mortar store and choose Brand D's product over that of a competitor.

Automating influencer discovery, recruitment, and relationship management enabled Brand D to better leverage a higher volume of micro and nano influencers. They were able to take a holistic view of performance where influencers were rewarded based on genuine, quality engagement, which was enhanced by the ability to track in-store purchases.

Campaign performance and in-store attribution

Brand D based performance on the following KPIs / metrics:



Reach



Comments



Likes



**In-store
purchase lift**



Shares

Reviewing the benefits and value

Benefits of a micro influencer model

Despite the new product being previously unknown, Brand D was able to work at scale to engage a large number of health and well-being bloggers and influencers with a mature and local female audience. Brand D was also able to use audience demographic reporting tools to ensure that each new influencer they recruited was tapped into the right group of people.

Key outcomes and value return

With all of those trusted influencers talking about the benefits of Brand D's product, they were able to gain significant ground over competitors and establish their product as a strong seller within the market with a 30% increase in retail sales through the one-month campaign. While most brand awareness campaigns are difficult to measure, Brand D was able to not just rely on vanity metrics but also monitor in-store sales in their targeted geographies.



5. Content creation

Brand E: Fashion retailer

Use influencers to create content for the brand to use

Generating top-quality user-generated content at scale that can be used across all of your digital channels can be a challenge. Brand E was able to do this successfully and use the content for their own advertising and website as a consequence.

User-generated content (UGC) leads to higher engagement, drives more clicks, and increases conversions by 10%. Brand E knew this and wanted to create impact with more UGC for their social media advertising campaigns and also to support the conversion rate optimization of their website.



Discovery, outreach, and onboarding

Influencer criteria setting and discovery

Brand E also wanted to reach geotargeted health-conscious women over 35 but (unlike Brand D) they were primarily looking for UGC to use on their own channels. They were looking for content creators and not interested in follower numbers and engagement. Using a visual social discovery tool, they were able to identify influencers with a talent for creating high-quality imagery that suited their brand.

Customized outreach and recruitment

As a relatively new product on the market, Brand E's automated introductory emails worked hard to explain the concept and engage the influencers with the brand, which enabled the influencers to effectively communicate the benefits to their audience.



Discovery, outreach, and onboarding

Customized social discovery

The ability to select influencers based on the quality of their content rather than followers enabled Brand E to be much more flexible in their approach, but also meant the usual filters and metrics used to shortlist influencers didn't fit their purpose. In this case, Brand E based their automated search on three criteria:

1. Content-specific keywords (i.e., styling, stylist, ootd (outfit of the day), fashion, composition)
2. Wishlist similarity (i.e., age/geo of audience)
3. Medium-specific sample posts

Brand E found influencers with quality content that used specific tags and keywords relevant to their target audience. This helped them to find content creators who were appealing to the right demographic.

It was also important to ensure that prospective influencers posted in the desired medium so that Brand E could browse a whole library of past work to assess how it could fit into their bigger strategy.

Discovery, outreach, and onboarding

Outreach, recruitment, and onboarding and agreed terms

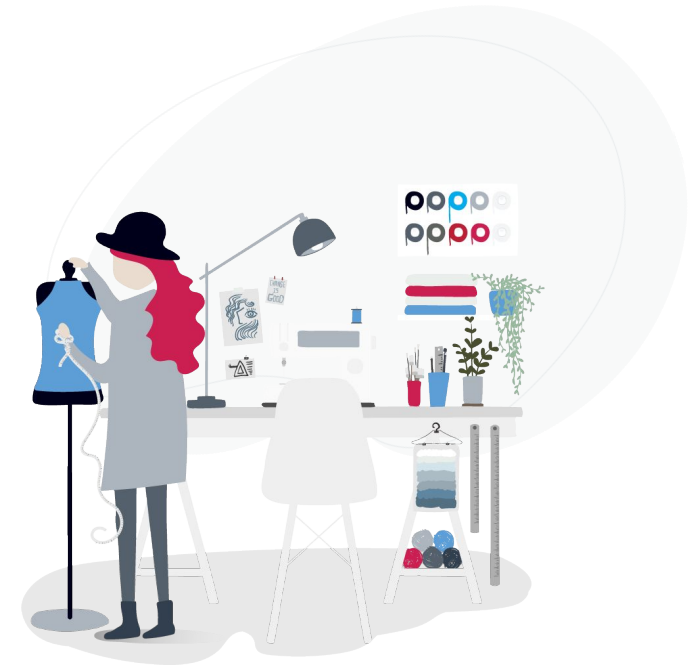
To generate quality UGC and establish a good working relationship that would lead to a higher volume of usable assets, a customized approach was imperative. Using an automated partnership solution, Brand E was able to initiate first contact with influencers at scale and still add a personal touch that would engage the right content creators. Through the same system, Brand E was then able to shortlist, recruit, and begin collaboration, which included sharing brand guidelines and in-depth briefs on the types of content they needed and sending sample product.



Measured approach and KPIs

UGC creator incentives

Influencers were paid a flat fee and/or supplied with free products to provide Brand E with beautiful lifestyle imagery with their products in stylish settings. Given that all of the content was delivered through Brand E's digital channels, visually recognizable influencers also received a greater fee. Engagement tools were also used to automate the content review process to ensure that only the very best images made the cut.



Measured approach and KPIs

Quality content metrics

Brand E's KPIs for their UGC influencer program were largely based on how well the campaigns in which the content was used performed.

Campaign KPIs

Brand E's main measures of success were:



**Operational
cost per
conversion**



Likes



**Conversion rate
on UGC-enhanced
pages**



Shares



Reach



Comments

Reviewing the benefits and value

Benefits of a content curation model

Brand E was able to run continual social media advertising campaigns with quality, impactful imagery. This meant that not only could they show the odd recognizable name and face, they could also show online shoppers how the products look on real people in natural, beautiful settings.



Key outcomes and value return

The ability to engage quality content creators at scale and automate the relationship management helped Brand E to continually build a bank of creative and authentic content that builds trust and engagement with their target audience.

The additional value of using micro and nano influencers helped them reduce their cost of creative production by 60% and improve the engagement they received on their owned and operated social account.

CHAPTER 5

Key takeaways

Each one of these five campaign types takes a different approach depending on the particular goals of the individual business. By understanding the end result they want to achieve, each brand has been able to find influencers that can meet the metrics they need to get them there.

Influencer campaigns are not “whatever floats your boat,” but they can vary depending on what you want to accomplish—there are different strokes for different folks.



Key elements of the five influencer campaigns

Model	Brand examples	Business goal	Campaign objectives	Influencer criteria	Performance metrics
1. Brand awareness	Home Decor	Increase brand awareness + engagement on Instagram	Brand awareness	Large followings High engagement	Reach Engagement
2. Performance	Personal Styling	Reduce spend and only pay based on results	Sales and demand	Engagement	Revenue Engagement
3. Affiliate network	Furniture	Scale up, improve effectiveness, and reduce spend	Sales	Medium following	Revenue Traffic
4. Micro influencer	Vitamins	New product launch and educate a specific target audience	Brand awareness Demand	Target audience demographics High engagement	Reach Engagement In-store sales
5. Content curation	Fashion	Increase UGC for CRO on their digital channels	Increase and enhance content	Brand imagery and style	Operational cost Engagement

Infinite scalability

By taking an end-to-end view of their influencer program and closely monitoring performance, each brand was able to achieve a form of customization that is infinitely scalable. Essentially when they found their own “right way” to run an influencer program, it could run and run but it could also be adapted, reviewed, and improved along the way.

With the right tools and automation, there is no limit to the types of influencer programs you can run to get the results you want.



CHAPTER 6

Find a program that works for you

As Brands A-E show, there is no one way to run an influencer program. But there is one way to ensure success — end-to-end campaign management that focuses on your ultimate goal. The trick is finding a unique approach that works for you — different folks, different influencer strokes right? No matter how capable your crew of influencers may be as individuals, you need to keep them rowing together at the right speed so you can win the race.

The options for customizing your influencer campaigns are boundless with the right partnership automation platform, but to help you get started consider which of these programs makes the most sense for your business goals. Do any of the approaches taken by Brands A-E resonate with you?





As a quick reminder, here are some of the techniques used in each of the programs made possible using [Impact's Partnership Cloud™](#)

- Targeted social discovery and customized outreach at scale
- Onboarding with in-depth briefs, brand guidelines, and agreed terms
- Product tracking links and promo codes to help you understand value return
- Incentives and rewards for influencers based on results and custom metrics
- Enhanced partnerships for high-performing influencers who earn more
- Managing UGC and monitoring quality through content approvals and visual audits
- Measuring in-store activity / the full customer journey to attribute conversion
- Full view of performances based on custom KPIs and metrics





CHAPTER 7

Holistic automation that adapts for purpose

Whatever approach you select, having a holistic automation process and putting performance at the center of your campaigns will enable you to oversee the whole program and make the adjustments you need to achieve your individual business goals. The benefit of Impact's Partnership Cloud is that pretty much anything is possible. If you like a bottom-line approach but also want to weave in some high-quality UGC and add a touch of brand awareness metrics, so be it. Every brand is different and every campaign needs a unique approach that actually measures and drives results.

Talk to us about how we can help you manage your custom influencer activity — so you can get the results you want. Contact a growth technologist at grow@impact.com.





About Partnership Cloud

Impact's Partnership Cloud™ provides an integrated, end-to-end solution for managing all of an enterprise's partnerships throughout the world.

From discovery, recruitment, and contracting to tracking, protecting, and optimizing – through the entire partner life cycle – the Partnership Cloud answers your need to drive revenue growth from partners across the spectrum, including traditional affiliates, influencers, strategic partners, app-to-app partners, premium publishers, and more.

To learn more, please visit <https://impact.com/partnership-cloud/> or contact grow@impact.com to schedule a free demo.

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