



IZEA

## INFLUENCER MARKETER'S GUIDE TO INSTAGRAM

Learn the ins and outs of becoming an Instagram Influencer. See the approaches that both brands and leading influencers take when utilizing Instagram Influencer Marketing.



CONTENT / INFLUENCE / SCALE



## THE PATH LESS TRAVELED: A GUIDE FOR INSTAGRAM INFLUENCERS

**T**he influencer marketing trend may seem to have just popped up out of nowhere, but it's actually been brewing for several years, largely due to the increase in ad blocking technology in online media.

The shifting buying patterns of Millennials (those young people aged 18-34 who have come of age in the 21st century) had a big impact on how brands generate awareness and increase engagement, thus fueling the rise of the influencer marketing movement. Millennials typically want to examine things and come to their own conclusions. The atypical Millennial doesn't always trust what other people promote.

This makes influencers their prime source of brand information, as opposed to more traditional methods of advertising and TV broadcasting. Millennials are avid "cord cutters" too, foregoing television and using social media as their primary source for news and other information. This just further entrenches influencers into their digital worlds.

### INSTAGRAM FOR INFLUENCERS

Influencer Marketing began with popular bloggers several years ago and has now spread into other

channels such as Instagram and YouTube, largely because of their visual appeal and ability to connect instantly with readers.

Furthermore, studies show that brands retain 37 percent more customers attained through word of mouth than through traditional advertising—and influencer marketing is an elevated form of word of mouth.

The numbers support this theory, too, as Instagram is one of the most popular social media platforms with just over 600 million active users. Brands work with Instagram influencers to promote their businesses, launch new products, share corporate culture, establish their brand stories, and more.

### INSTAGRAM INFLUENCER MARKETING CAMPAIGN TYPES

Instagram influencers have many opportunities to promote content in different types of campaigns. Here's a quick overview of common Instagram Influencer campaigns:

## Branded Content

When companies want to share their brand stories, they will often push branded content in collaboration with influencers, who will deliver it in their own styles, as expected by their followers.

## Product Placement

Sometimes brands will want to introduce their products via an influencer's channel or platform. The influencer will have the opportunity to showcase the product within his or her style, leading to increased awareness of the product and the brand.

## General Creative Campaigns

Sometimes influencers have freedom to create content in the form of imagery, videos, and more, with the brand giving them only a general topic or concept. This allows for the influencer's personality to emerge, all while increasing likes and shares from followers.

## Hashtag Campaigns

Brands can gain great momentum by running hashtag campaigns, especially if they go viral. Hashtags are great conversation starters and are very socially actionable, which adds to their overall value.

## Increase Followers

Sometimes brands will run campaigns with Social Media Influencers in an effort to increase their number of followers. By aligning with an influencer who has a highly engaged audience, a brand can dramatically increase its social exposure and increase its own follower base.

## Contests

Brands can engage with influencers to promote a contest, sweepstakes, or giveaway in order to generate conversations and interest. When an

## MOST FOLLOWED INSTAGRAM ACCOUNTS

(IN MILLIONS AS OF FEBRUARY 2017)

**SELENA GOMEZ**  
111.42M

**TAYLOR SWIFT**  
98.12M

**ARIANA GRANDE**  
98.02M

**BEYONCE**  
95.78M

**KIM KARDASHIAN**  
93.52M

**CRISTIANO RONALDO**  
111.42M

**KYLIE JENNER**  
87.21M

**JUSTIN BIEBER**  
78.63M

**DWAYNE JOHNSON**  
78.32M

influencer participates, this will dramatically increase the reach and exposure of the contest, creating lots of goodwill, and hopefully new followers for the brand.

## GETTING STARTED AS AN INSTAGRAM INFLUENCER

Instagram is huge in terms of influencer marketing, and it's relatively easy to get started. But there are a few things influencers can do to set themselves up for success.

**First of all, refine the niche.** What makes you unique? What are you passionate about? What product or cause can you get behind unfailingly? Influencers need to live their niche as it defines what they post on Instagram. It's critical that an influencer's passion shines through in every post. Authenticity is critical.

**Second, determine your goals.** Why do you want to be an Instagram influencer? Why do you want to achieve by working with an influencer? What do you hope to accomplish through your influencer activity? As best as you can, define your goals when you start out in terms of target audiences, objectives, success measures, etc. Your influencer goals will probably change as your activity increases, and you will need to adjust your objectives as your influencer marketing ramps up.

## BEST PRACTICES FOR POSTING

In the excitement to launch your influencer marketing efforts on Instagram, you may be inclined to start posting anything and everything just to get content out in the hopes of finding some followers. Not so fast. Just like you need to define your niche and overall objectives for being an influencer, it's critical to plan your posting activities too.

### Tell a Story

Storytelling is the basis of any great content marketing initiative, and your influencer posts should be no different. Great content is a great story, and influencer marketers must become great storytellers. Storytelling has been an important form of communication for ages because people can relate easily, and enjoy hearing about other people's experiences. There is something powerful about the emotional tug of a great story, and savvy influencers can translate that tug into sales and customer loyalty.

So, how do you create a story that engages people when you're talking about a product or company? The first thing to consider is that a company is the

people that make up the business, not merely an organization or a building. People have an easier time relating to human interest stories than anything else. The key is to make your business interesting to humans. There have been studies conducted that show that human brains experience a neural coupling with whatever a storyteller is sharing; they actually get on the same wavelength. Empathy is created when listening to someone share a story, and the listener can feel the pleasure or pain of the storyteller.

This gives brands the support they need to be able to share their value propositions via stories that are relatable with their readers. It's easier to connect with compelling stories than dry features and lists of benefits of products and solutions. Influencers that can turn the corner from selling to sharing will be the ones who win in the end.

### No Shortcuts

Quality rules with Instagram posts. That goes for content and images, but also applies to the frequency of your posts. It's better to post fewer times and have authentic, relevant content for your followers than to post unrelatable content many times per day in the hopes of getting a few more followers. People will find you and follow you if your posts have an undertone of authenticity. Be someone they can trust. Posting just for the sake of posting never really works.

No one can be that fascinating several times a day, right? So make sure that when you post, you're providing relevant information. One of your main roles as an influencer is to build trust, and you can't do that if you're constantly posting about irrelevant things. Make your posts matter and your followers will reward you with their loyalty.

### Picture Perfect

Let's face it: Photos rule on Instagram. So it's critical that the images you post are of the highest quality. If your shots are low-resolution, fuzzy, muted, or anything less than dynamic, they will show that you're just not concerned with quality, and that's the social death of any influencer. If you can afford it, invest in a DSLR camera in order to get the best quality photos. Don't think of this as an expense, but rather an investment. If you plan on becoming an important influencer on Instagram, high-quality images will rule your world. However, many smartphones have nice camera features and can work well until you are ready to upgrade.

There are Instagram guides for creating great images, but as a general rule, avoid flash photography. Shoot in natural light because it's more visually appealing. The exceptions might be product photography, where you need studio-like setups to properly showcase your products. Experiment with composition too. People are attracted to images that have interesting perspectives and angles. Don't do anything that doesn't feel natural for you, however, because your discomfort will come through in your photos, and that's the last thing you want.

Be sure to think square when composing and cropping images. Instagram works in a square format, so if you remember that when you're shooting photos, you'll

be happier with the end results as your images will have been created in the correct proportion.

### HOW TO MONETIZE YOUR CONTENT USING A CREATOR MARKETPLACE LIKE IZEA

Instagram is a dynamic social media platform and can be lots of fun for everyone who participates. But it's also a great tool for making money. Just look at all the fashion, food, entertainment, sports, DIY, fitness, and other influencers who have created wealth just by delving into what they love on Instagram.

## POPULAR INSTAGRAM INFLUENCER TOOLS



**CROWDFIRE**



**REPOST**



**BOOMERANG**



**LAYOUT**



**ICONOSQUARE**



**LATER**

The amount of money that influencers can earn from influencer marketing depends on a few factors, including the influencer's going rate, the scope of the work, the influencer's niche, and his or her reach. The amount that an Instagrammer (Instagram influencer) can make hinges on whether a brand will mesh with the influencer's audience of followers.

Instagram influencers have been known to make up to thousands of dollars per post with brand-sponsored posts and the trend shows every promise of continuing in a similar vein. Influencer marketing on Instagram can be big business for the influencer and brand alike so it's important to make the best match possible with influencer persona and brand personality.

Once the relationship between brand and influencer has been established, the sky's the limit. Instagrammers can earn good money to attend brand-sponsored events, travel to interesting destinations or even document a particularly moving experience. Those who are interested in influencer marketing especially for airlines, hotels and tourism departments earn top dollar in pursuit of their influencer goals.

As mentioned, one way is to create sponsored posts, which are paid for by brands you align with.

## **ACHIEVING HIGH MONETIZATION ON INSTAGRAM CAN BE DIFFICULT AS AN INDIVIDUAL, BUT YOU CAN GET THERE IF YOU'RE WILLING TO DO THE WORK**

Companies often reach out to influencers for content on a repeat basis, which can be very lucrative for the brand as well as the influencer. Some brands that have made profitable connections with influencers include Birchbox, Johnnie Walker, Taco Bell, Playstation, Red Bull and many more. One of the byproducts of social media and influencer marketing has been the establishment of influencer marketing agencies that help influencers and brands find each other in order to create visibility and profitability.

Another popular way to monetize your Instagram content is to sign up for accounts with creator marketplaces such as IZEAx, which can help facilitate sponsorships between brands and creators. Their marketplace technology can promote you and help

you gain introductions to companies who like your content and are interested in purchasing it. Aligning with a creator marketplace can speed up the growth of your recognition and get you well on your way to creating wealth as an Instagram influencer.

The world of social media influencers has created a whole new way of looking at brands, and has made celebrities out of regular people who just happen to have passion and engaging personalities. As the social media landscape continues to morph and evolve, one thing will remain: the influence of people who share their passion with authenticity, and who provide relevant information to their followers.

The digital age demands a more sophisticated channel for "word-of-mouth" marketing, which is the boiled down definition of influencer marketing, and Instagram is a great vehicle to leverage the initiatives created by savvy marketers. Instagram is the perfect vehicle for influencer marketing because of its amazing visual capacity to share stories.

Plus, each one of those stories, images and videos creates actionable data to be analyzed and used for improvement.

Overall, Instagram is popular because it's so easy to use. It's also highly actionable which means that influencers can build follower communities which grows customer loyalty, visibility and profits. Brands understand this more and more, and the role of influencers is firmly entrenched not only in the social media landscape, but also in the hearts of those who follow them. What a gratifying journey for those who take on the challenge.

# HOW TO GROW YOUR FOLLOWER BASE

Starting out as an influencer on Instagram can seem a little daunting. You want to have a large number of followers, and sometimes it takes a little time to get there. Not to worry. If you follow some basic steps, you'll grow your follower base organically and reap the rewards for your patience.

## 1. MAKE YOUR PROFILE PUBLIC

This may seem elementary, but when you're setting up your Instagram account, be sure that you make your profile visible to all. Staying private as an influencer goes against the very nature of what you're trying to accomplish, so don't make this simple mistake.

## 2. POST EVERY DAY

Usually just one beautiful, relevant image will be enough, but stay active with your account. People will gauge your interest in your topic and will come to look for your posts because they are meaningful and interesting. There's no need to bombard your followers with rapid-fire posting. A sure, steady presence is the key.

## 3. IMAGE DESCRIPTIONS

Every time you upload a photo, be sure to create a title or description to help your followers understand what they're seeing. Tagging people in your comment will help increase reach. All you have to do is type the @ sign followed by the person's Instagram user name.

## 4. ASK FOR FEEDBACK

When you post a new image, ask people for input on it. People love to give their opinions, and when they share, their followers will also become aware of what they're commenting on and will see your posts and ideally begin to follow you too. Conversely, if you're asked to provide feedback on someone else's post, do it. It's a great way to build relationships and increase your follower base.

## 5. USE HASHTAGS

Hashtags can be very important in adding new followers to your Instagram account. When you provide a hashtag label, it helps people who are interested in that topic find you and hopefully comment on your post or sign up to follow you. For example, if you're an influencer for chocolate candy, a few hashtags such as #chocolate, #chocolatecandy, and #chocolatebliss will draw those interested in chocolate candy to your posts. You don't need to create a lot — just a few that you feel are the most relevant and likely to attract other people.

## RESOURCES

<http://www.forbes.com/sites/deborahweinswig/2016/10/05/influencers-are-the-new-brands/#319179ef7fc5>

<http://www.nielsen.com/us/en/insights/reports/2015/global-trust-in-advertising-2015.html>

<http://whatis.techtarget.com/definition/millennials-millennial-generation>

<http://expandedramblings.com/index.php/important-instagram-stats/>

<http://statista.com/statistics/421169/most-followers-instagram/>

