

# **The Kick Off:** How to Get Started on Building Your First Influencer Collaboration

# Table of Contents

## Introduction

The Influencer Economy	3
Things to Consider at the Very Beginning	4

## Influencer Marketing Basics

**5**

Types of Collaborations	6
Influencer Archetypes	7
Pricing Models & Considerations	8
Setting KPIs	9
Incremental Ideas & Food For Thought	10

## Getting Organized

**11**

Campaign Kick Off Considerations	12
Influencer Campaign Brief: Key Elements	13
Influencer Campaign Brief: Assignment Checklist	15
Sample Campaign Timeline	16

## Influencer Casting & Content Review

**17**

What To Look For During Content Review	18
--	----

## Measurement

The True Measure of Success: Examining KPIs	19
---	----

## In Closing

Considerations When Building An In-House Influencer Team	21
--	----

## More About ACTIVATE & INFLUENCE

**22**

## An Extension of Your Team: Activate Studio Offerings

**23**

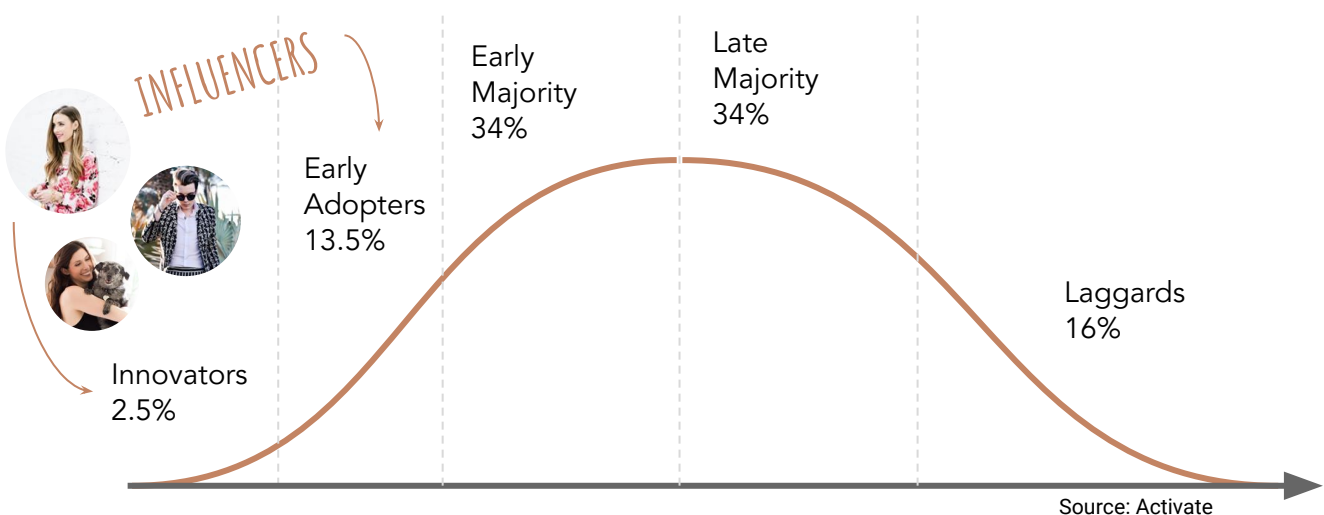
# Introduction

## The Influencer Economy

Brands have long understood that to launch a new product or shift brand perception, the innovators and early adopters must first be convinced in order for it to spread to the rest of the economy. The concept is the diffusion of innovation. This is why, in the past, brands paid such a premium to purchase full-page ads in Vogue or Architectural Digest. Those ads made an impression on the trendsetters: the early adopters and innovators.

In today's social media landscape, influencers are innovators and early adopters that have managed to attract an audience through their expertise and authentic, relatable voice. When they share recommendations they are taken as expert friends giving opinions on the latest products on the market. Imagine that amplified to millions of faithful followers on social media.

Influencer marketing is simply the diffusion of innovation, infinitely amplified by the power of social media.



# Introduction

## Things to Consider at the Very Beginning

### Understand Your Collaboration-Specific Goals & Your KPIs/Measurements of Success

Think about what your influencer collaborations goals are - which metrics would be helpful here? Once you define your goals, it's equally important to think about what the measure of success is. Take two examples of goals and KPIs you can use to gauge success:

- Goal A: Brand Awareness *Consider looking at impressions and engagements.*
- Goal B: Driving Traffic to Site *Consider CTRs.*

### Taking a Step Back....Now Define Broader Objectives

Consider what objectives you want to achieve in your influencer marketing strategy. Some examples can include:

- Content creation
- Determining which influencers to work with for the long term
- Gathering product feedback
- Content strategy ideas

### Think About Your Budget & True Cost

Similar to most other marketing costs, influencer marketing has varying budgets. For example, influencers of varying verticals, content creation abilities, reach/engagement size can have different prices. Additionally, the scope of work/assignment will also result in different costs. Video, as an example, tends to be more costly than a simple static post.

Interested in learning more? Read on!

# Influencer Marketing Basics

Let's Get Started

**1 Types of Influencer Collaborations**

**2 Influencer Archetypes**

**3 Pricing Models**

**4 Setting KPIs**

# Influencer Marketing Basics

## Types of Collaborations

There are so many ways to work with influencers. Whether it's content creation, event attendance or something completely out-of-the-box, influencers love to hear your ideas! Share your campaign KPIs with them and see what they come back with. See a few of the most popular influencer collaborations below:

### Sponsored Content

Work with influencers as content creators and amplifiers. Ask them to create content for blog, social, your website, etc!

### Surveying + Product Innovation

Tap the tastemakers that matter to provide valuable insights on your products and industry trends as well as lend credibility to product and brand launches.

### Sampling + Creative Deliveries

Send out product samples to a wide range of influencers to see which influencers will be responsive. Keep an eye out across blog and social for the content they will post!

### Ambassadorships + Endorsements

Explore long term partnerships with the right personalities to bring your brand values and identity to life via various brand key dates.

### Events + Experiential

Design experiences and events at a range of scales that foster influencer relationships and valuable brand immersion.

# Influencer Marketing Basics

## Influencer Archetypes

Consideration of influencers is well beyond follower count. We recommend thinking about creators based on the value that they can drive to the brand.



## Our Takeaway

Consider testing different archetypes. Each influencer archetype has various strengths that can compliment each other nicely on a campaign. For example, a campaign with one Brand Amplifier and 12 Micro-influencers can result in varying types of content as well as an opportunity for the micro-influencers to promote the Brand Amplifier's content, giving it more exposure.

# Influencer Marketing Basics

## Pricing Models & Considerations

### Fixed Fee

#### Influencers work for same rate

**Pros:** Ability to budget for a specific # of influencers

**Cons:** May limit range of influencers in terms of reach, type of content created, etc

### Influencer Bid

#### Influencers propose a rate to you based on SOW

**Pros:** Ability to receive more applicants. Insight into pricing & influencers interested in your campaign. Ability to negotiate

**Cons:** Uncertainty of final deliverables and/or engaged influencers

### Affiliate

#### Performance based payment

**Pros:** May incentivize some influencers to create more content, promote more, etc

**Cons:** Not all influencer content may drive immediate conversion

### In-Kind

#### Payment is product/services. No monetary compensation

**Pros:** Less spend on campaign

**Cons:** Less control/review ability for content

### Fixed Fee + Commission

#### Combination

**Pros:** Ability to cast out wider net than pure affiliate. Paying for content and incentivizing for performance

**Cons:** Potentially more spend on campaign

## Our Takeaway

Friendly reminder - no matter which pricing model you decide to go with, keep FTC in mind! Influencers using any of the models above should disclose the partnership with #sponsored or #ad.



# Influencer Marketing Basics

## Setting KPIs

It's important to set specific KPIs and goals you'd like to achieve at the very beginning. This can dictate your influencer selection, how you measure for success, and of course, how you communicate to influencers. Just as influencers are expected to be clear and upfront with their capabilities, brand-influencer collaborations perform best when the brand expectations are clearly stated up front. Here are a few popular Key Performance Indicators in influencer marketing:

Traffic	Social Media	Engagement
Driving qualified and targeted traffic to a blog or brand site	Growing brand social media footprint via increase in social following or blog UVM	Focusing on social engagement (likes, comments) & conversation with online audience
In-Store	Conversion	New Audience
Highlighting in-store visits & driving potential customers to brick and mortar store	Turning potential customer or interest into a sale or download	Targeting new audience on social - perhaps to support new product release or rebranding

## Our Takeaway

Goals and KPIs for the brand can differ from those of the influencer campaign. While they are both certainly conjoined with the goal of driving the brand forward, influencer marketing campaigns can have specific goals relating to social media. For example, an influencer campaign can have the goals of increasing their social following for the holidays while the brand goal is to drive more holiday sales. Therefore, it is important to consider both brand KPIs and influencer campaign KPIs.

# Influencer Marketing Basics

## Incremental Ideas & Food For Thought

There are many ways to get creative when it comes to working with influencers. Here are three strategies to think about for your next campaign:

### Go Local: Geo-Targeting Filters

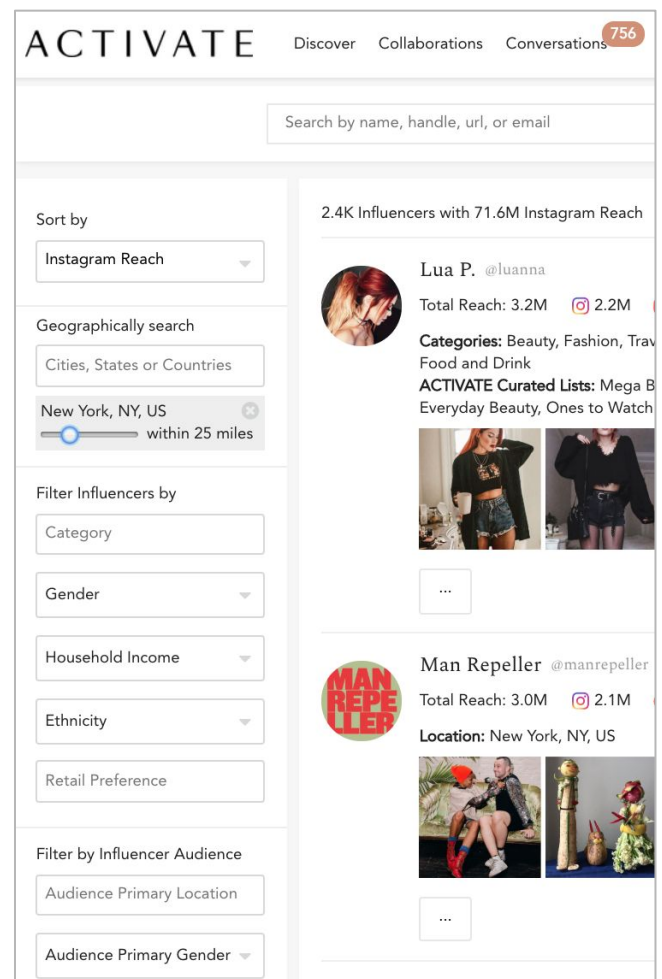
Use radius filters to really zoom in and recruit influencers who live local. This works well for in-store promotions, new markets, and brand activations targeting specific neighborhoods. Strong localized activations can achieve organic content creation from locals who can speak authentically about the area.

### Target Major Life Events

Whether it's a graduation, a wedding, or welcoming a new member to the family - consumers make significant changes to their purchasing behavior during key life moments. Tap influencers to share their own stories of life moments coupled with your brand. This works well for a wide range of verticals - from fashion, to CPG, life insurance, and more!

### Go IRL to Grow Your Online Talent Roster

Influencers often team up with other creatives and content creators for collaborations, and/or meet each other at events. Ask your trusted influencers to recommend their in real life influencer friends for specific activations, or just to grow your roster. Coming from a trusted friend, we've seen influencers share more competitive rates because they are excited to work with their friends.



# Getting Organized

Let's Get Started

- 1 Campaign Kick Off Considerations**
- 2 Influencer Campaign Brief: Key Elements**
- 3 Sample Timeline**

# Getting Organized

## Campaign Kick Off Considerations

Get started on the right foot - here are five best practices on how to start your influencer marketing campaign:

1. **Communicate!**
  - Message them routinely, checking in to see if they found the influencer brief clear, if they received product, how things are going, etc.
2. **Share Campaign KPIs and what you are hoping to achieve.**
  - As influencers are getting more experience, they can also come to you with ideas on how to help you achieve your KPIs from their past campaigns, monitoring of their data, and more!
3. **Show gratitude & share feedback.**
  - This is a partnership, afterall! Giving thanks and feedback can help build more impactful and long term relationships between you and influencers.
4. **Send a detailed brief.**
  - In this case, more is more! Share as much relevant information about the product, the assignment, creative thought starters, and let the influencer take it from there! Remember, they will put their own unique twist on things, so don't be afraid to overshare and see what they come back with.
5. **Stay organized & up-to-date on the latest & greatest.**
  - Timelines, content deadlines, content engagement - all of these things can become a blur in your inbox once you start to work with more influencers and grow your relationships. Keep a routinely updated editorial calendar or use a influencer marketing platform to keep track of all the different moving pieces so you don't miss a thing!

# Getting Organized

## Influencer Campaign Brief: Key Elements

Once influencers are recruited and secured for the Collaboration, you will provide them with two resources (in addition to product you may send):

1. Campaign Contract
  - Legal document to officially start a partnership with the influencer
2. Campaign Guideline Brief
  - This document will serve an informational booklet for influencers to refer to prior & during content creation. We've listed the key elements for this brief below.
3. Assignment Checklist
  - This handy list will allow the influencer to make sure they have completed all parts of the assignment. It's simple to make & useful for the influencer to refer back to!

### Campaign Contract:

- Scope of Work
  - Clearly lay out what is expected of the influencer (See Assignment Checklist as a reference guide)
- Total Fee for this program
  - Include payment terms if applicable
- Discuss content re-usage/re-posting rights
- Exclusivity, if any

### Did You Know?

Using an influencer marketing technology platform can assist in influencer contracting and payment terms. Some provide Terms & Conditions and Payment terms for influencers to opt into when joining the platform or agreeing to participate on the campaign.

# Getting Organized

## Influencer Campaign Brief: Key Elements

### Campaign Guidelines:

- Brand history or product information
  - The more information you provide, the better! Influencers may not use all of the information you send over, but they may pull things that stand out to them!
- Key messaging points: influencers will put their own twist on the content, but providing a few suggestions as thought-starters can be helpful
- Images and/or aesthetic guidance as thought-starters
  - Refer to your IG or FB page if there is a good collection of images there
- Deadlines - content approval (if applicable) and content go-live date

The screenshot shows a web form titled "New Custom Content Collaboration". At the top, there is a progress bar with five steps: 1. Setup (highlighted in orange), 2. Assignment, 3. Influencers, 4. Compensation, and 5. Review and Publish. The form is divided into two main sections. The left section contains four input fields: "Collaboration Title" (with an example: "Example: Love beauty? Partner with Sephora for an exciting brand launch this fall!"), "Collaboration Description" (with an example: "Example: Sephora is launching an exciting new brand this fall in stores and we need your help sharing the incredible products we have with your beauty-savvy audience!"), "Collaboration Manager Email", and "Collaboration Image" (which includes a camera icon and the text "Add Photo"). The right section is titled "Step 1: Setup" and contains the instruction: "Define your campaign details and add an eye-catching image. You will be able to edit this before publishing." At the bottom right of the form, there are two buttons: "Save for Later" and "Next".

# Getting Organized

## Influencer Campaign Brief: Assignment Checklist

Use our handy checklist below to make sure you've covered all the bases:

### Assignment Checklist for Influencers Before Going Live:

- Scope of Work:
  - X # of FB posts
  - X # of shots on IG Stories, etc.
- FTC Compliance:
  - Did you include #ad or #sponsored on all content?
- Tagging:
  - Is the proper campaign hashtag and handle tagged?
- Trackers (if applicable):
  - Are the trackers or specific links given to you by the brand correctly implemented?

The screenshot shows the 'New Custom Content Collaboration' form in the ACTIVATE interface, specifically Step 2: Assignment. The form is divided into several sections with input fields and checkboxes.

**Platforms:** Choose at least one platform for influencers to share their content on. Influencers will be required to connect these platforms before they can apply for the collaboration. Platforms listed: Blog, Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, YouTube, Instagram, IGTV.

**Content Review:** Select 'On' or 'Off'. 'On' means you review all posts before they go live. 'Off' means influencers can post without your approval, but you can still pick the influencers.

**Collaboration Goals:** What goals are you trying to accomplish with this collaboration? This will help influencers tailor their content strategy to fit your goals. Input field: None.

**Assignment:** Example: Instagram - One Instagram story with swipe up link. Input field.

**Conversion Tracking:** Conversion Tracking allows you to concretely track the impact of your collaborations. Generate a personalized link for each of your influencers to measure how much ROI each of your influencers are driving. Check 'Enable Click and Conversion Tracking'.

**Content Guidelines:** Example: No other logos should be showing. We'd love to see creativity with unboxing and lifestyle content. Input field.

**Draft Deadline:** Example: All drafts must be submitted by September 5th. Input field.

**Content Publishing Deadline:** Example: All content must go live between September 2nd - 5th. Input field.

**Files and Images:** Upload files and images that you would like the applicants to see. Tip: uploading sample images may help influencers understand the type of content you would like them to create. Button: Browse.

**Handles to use:** Example: @bloglovin @activate. Input field.

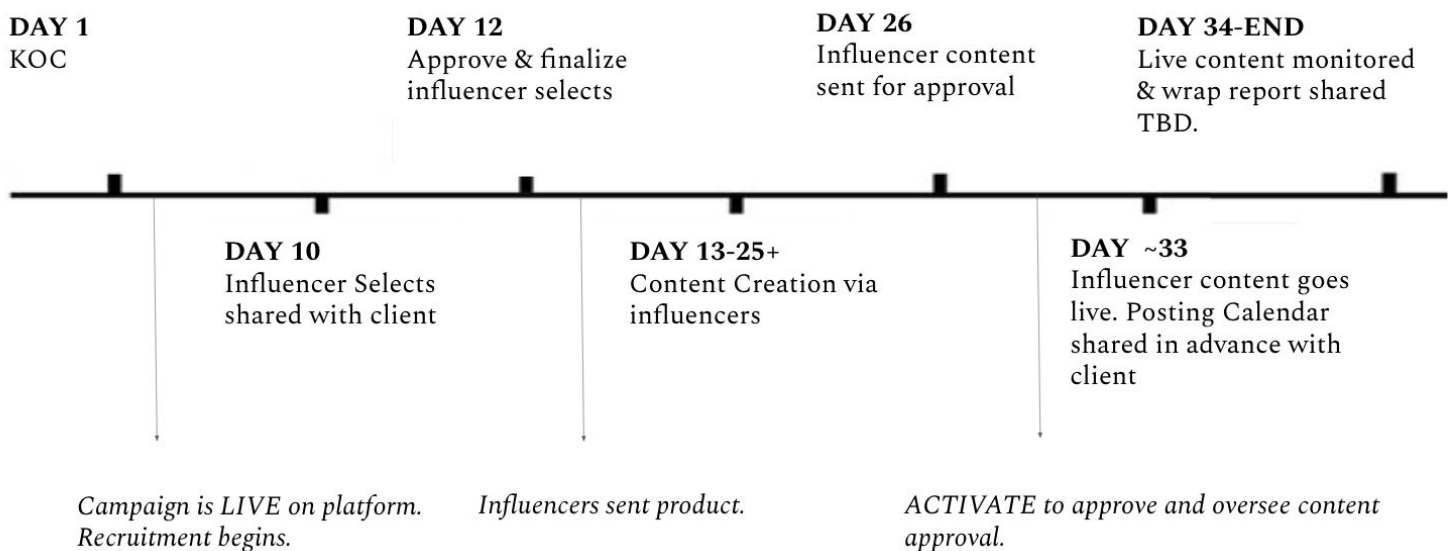
**Hashtags to use:** Example: #ad #sponsored. Input field.

Navigation buttons at the bottom: Back, Save for Later, Next.

# Getting Organized

## Sample Campaign Timeline

Sample 1-2 month sponsored post campaign is outlined below. This can be altered to the best of our ability as per client request and campaign KPI.



## Our Takeaway

Don't forget - whether an influencer is unavailable this week, or product gets delayed - remember to be flexible. It may be best to start planning for a campaign to go live at least 30-45 days in advance. Many brands will set a yearlong calendar with tent poles and specific key dates to have influencer content go live. This will help with organization and future planning of influencer campaigns.

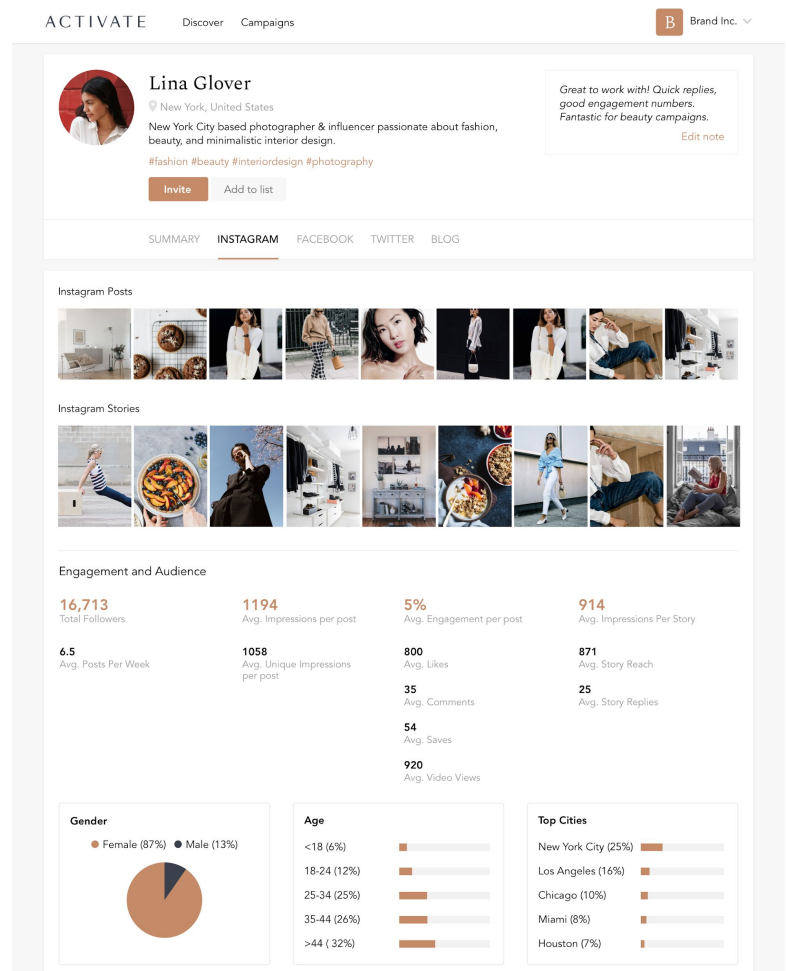
Additionally, keeping a growing list of influencers can come in handy for future campaigns. Brands have found success in re-partnering with a top performing influencer. You can also consider finding look-a-like influencers to further target that audience at a different point via a new influencer.



# Influencer Casting & Content Review

## Influencer Vetting Considerations

- Relevancy & Credibility
- Multi-platform Audience Reach & Engagement
- Content Quality
- Audience Demographics & Affinities
- Brand & Retailer Affinities
- Past Brand Partnerships & Sponsorship Saturation
- Growth Trajectory Trends
- Relevant Projects in Pipeline



# Influencer Casting & Content Review

## What to Look For During Content Review

So, you're almost at the finish line and influencers are sending you drafts. What now? You're not quite done, yet! Use our checklist to make sure you've completely tied up all loose ends:

### 1. FTC

- a. Following FTC disclosure regulations is more important now than ever before. If an influencer was compensated (monetarily, in-kind of any model discussed in Page 8), please make sure #ad or #sponsored is clearly visible and above the fold (if applicable).

### 2. Hashtags & Tagging

- a. Did the influencer include the correct hashtag and tag the correct business/person in his/her post? Interested consumers can click over to your own business FB or IG page after reading the influencer content!

### 3. Show the love!

- a. Share the post with the rest of your team, re-post it on your business pages (make sure to discuss re-posting rights at start of the campaign), etc. You can also re-post the photo a few months later and credit the influencer to extend the longevity of that one post.

### 4. Check it twice.

- a. Give it a second read - it never hurts to re-read the content post carefully as soon as it goes up to ensure you and the influencer are aligned with what was published.

## Did You Know....

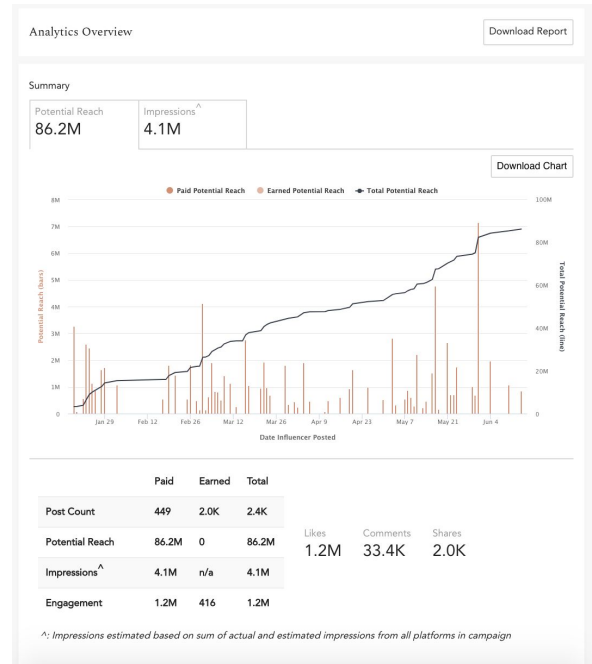
Only 52% of influencers and 60% of marketers feel that they have a good understanding of FTC guidelines for sponsored posts. Furthermore, only 56% of influencers and 31% of marketers were able to correctly identify how to disclose free product gifted to an influencer.

# Measurement

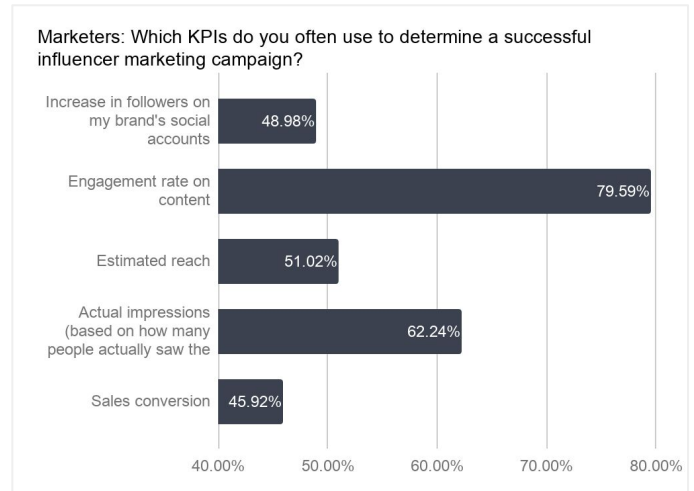
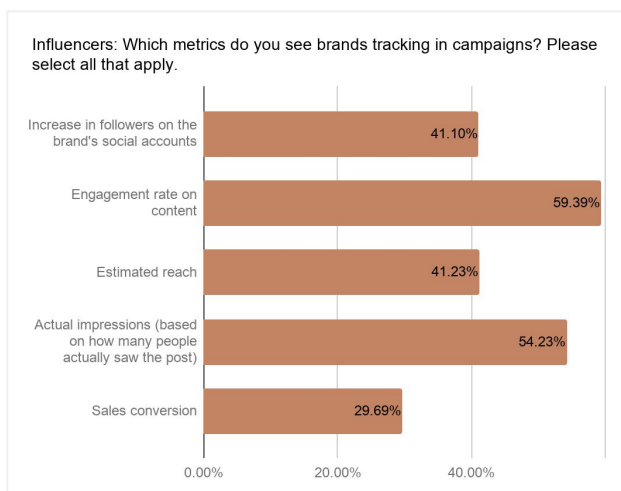
## The True Measure of Success: Examining KPIs

How do other brands measure the true success of an influencer marketing partnership? We typically see brands analyze performance for each influencer and piece of content, as well as slice data as follows:

- Platform specific metrics (ex: engagement rates, follower growth)
- External tracking (clicks, downloads, purchases, etc)
- As per influencer (reach, archetype, overall brand awareness, breakdown of high performers, longer term ambassadors, etc )



In a recent survey of 818 influencers and 104 marketers, we asked about their key KPIs and measurement when it comes to influencer-brand collaborations:



## Did You Know?

As recent as two years ago, "Estimated Reach" (based on Follower Count) was the most referenced KPI. Today, it's falling behind other KPIs like "Engagement Rate" and "Actual Impressions" as both sides understand that a partnership is successful when the content is not just seen but when it resonates with the consumer. We are now seeing more of a movement towards clicks and conversion.

# In Closing...

## Considerations When Building An In-House Influencer Team

Investing in influencer partnerships can help marketers and brands achieve long-term marketing goals and an active uptick in interest from potential consumers. Brands should consider this market if there is a decrease in conversational buzz or interest from traditional marketing ads, or a desire to more specifically target your ads via audience data.

**In 2017, brands spent over \$1 billion dollars on influencer marketing on Instagram alone - and it's not stopping any time soon.**

Thinking about getting started or wondering if this is a good match for your brand? Read below for our three points to consider when building an in-house influencer marketing team:

### **You know your KPIs.**

One of the benefits of influencer marketing is it's flexible nature. It can be adjusted and optimized for various KPIs, such as: brand awareness, conversion, engagement, and more. It's important to set clear goals! *See more on Page 9.*

### **You have people and time to dedicate.**

To be clear, you do not need a full team of 20+ or a massive budget to get started! However, you will need people and time to dedicate. Influencers are people too, and working with them is not the same as setting up ads and letting them run. There is a need for constant communication and sharing of campaign information. *Check out what you need to get started on Page 12.*

### **You understand influencer marketing short term vs long term goals.**

Influencer marketing can achieve many goals, but sales of exponential growth in mere hours isn't realistic. Short term goals can include: brand awareness & advocacy, while long term can be sales through reputable long term fans & brand ambassadors.



# In Closing...

## Considerations When Building An In-House Influencer Team

There will undoubtedly be plenty of opportunities to test various strategies and see what works best for your brand. From there, you can really focus on the influencers and strategies that work best for you and double down to scale.

Consider your influencer marketing strategy from a year-long perspective. Be open to trying new recruitment strategies, as well as different types of compensation models. Then, take your learnings and apply them to the next campaign.

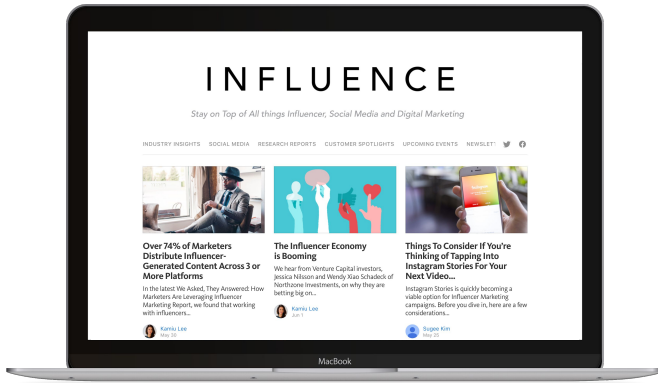
ACTIVATE has hired 75k+ influencers in last 12 months via our Studio team. Here are some examples of our favorite pieces of content:



# INFLUENCE

Stay on Top of All things Influencer, Social Media and Digital Marketing

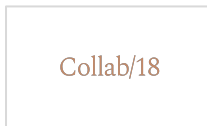
## Thought Leadership, Industry Analysis and Updates



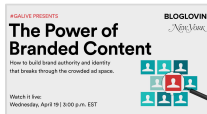
## Whitepapers and Research



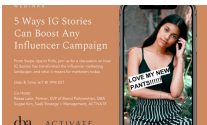
## Events and Webinars



COLLAB  
Activate Exclusive



The Power of Branded Content  
Activate X New York Magazine



5 Ways Instagram Stories Can  
Boost Any Influencer Campaign  
Activate X Digital Brand Architects

13K+

Newsletter Subscribers

1.7M+

Social Media Reach

## AS MENTIONED IN

ADWEEK

Aol.

BI INTELLIGENCE

CMO.  
by Adobe

DIGIDAY

eMarketer.

FASHIONISTA

FORTUNE

GLOSSY

Inc.

Luxury Daily  
THE NEWS LEADER IN LUXURY MARKETING

MarketingProfs

Marketing  
DIVE

MobileMarketingWatch  
The Pulse of the Mobile Marketing Community

racked

retail  
TouchPoints

StyleCaster

SocialTimes

THE DRUM

WWD

**ABOUT ACTIVATE:** At ACTIVATE, we partner with brands and influencers to tell engaging and compelling stories across social media, at scale. We are a team of influencer strategists, technologists, data scientists, brand partners and operations professionals. Over the last year, we have activated over 75,000 influencers and creators, to publish more than 6,500 pieces of sponsored content per month. We've come a long way since our inception. Our story began in 2007 when, long before the term 'influencer' was a thing, we launched BLOGLOVIN', an online platform and community for creators, tastemakers, and 12MM+ of their most avid fans. Through BLOGLOVIN', we learned to identify emerging creators, what makes their content compelling, and how to run influencers partnerships at scale to fuel our own growth. As brands and marketers caught on to the power of these creators and influencers, they began to reach out to us for help in identifying influencers and building partnerships. In 2014, this lead us to formally launch the ACTIVATE technology platform to help our own team and partners to run these influencer collaborations more efficiently. From there, the rest is history.



# An Extension of Your Team

## Activate Studio Offerings

Want a professional touch? Access **ACTIVATE Studio** to drive full-circle influencer engagement. Our services leverage proprietary data and technology as well as our unique relationships with an in-house team of specialists to drive thoughtful influencer activations that drive meaningful engagement and reach the audiences you care about.



### Influencer Strategy + Playbooks

We consult our clients to assemble influencer framework inclusive of 360 strategy, casting lens, consultation on pricing, content creation & distribution best practices, and KPI consultation

### Sampling + Creative Deliveries

Drive earned coverage and loyalty with influencers through organic conversations & carefully curated outreach

### Content Lab

Our team drives innovation and efficiency for brands through an professional services model

### Events + Experiential

Design experiences and events at a range of scales that foster creator relationship building and valuable brand immersion

# ACTIVATE

ACTIVATE

250 Lafayette St.

4th Floor

New York, NY 10012

[research@activate.social](mailto:research@activate.social)

Facebook [@activatesocialnyc](https://www.facebook.com/activatesocialnyc)

Twitter [@activatesocial](https://twitter.com/activatesocial)

Instagram [@bloglovin](https://www.instagram.com/bloglovin)

Bloglovin' [bloglovin.com](http://bloglovin.com)

[Learn more about influencer  
marketing at Activate.](#)