



How To Launch Your First Influencer Marketing Campaign

BY TOM WARD

As social media use increases every year and platforms like Instagram, Snapchat, Facebook and Twitter becoming a larger part of our lives; influencer marketing has quickly become the fastest growing and most effective form of advertising.

According to eMarketer, 84% of marketers plan to launch an influencer marketing campaign in the next 12 months. So, whether you're looking to launch your first campaign or want to change your influencer marketing strategy, here's a quick guide to help you:

1. Pick Your Platform, Determine Your Target Audience

Who are you trying to reach? Is your demo young? Then Snapchat might be your best bet. Are you a beauty company, trying to introduce a new product to women? Instagram or YouTube would be the best platform. Don't try to master all the platforms at once. Pick one or two at most and focus on them.

2. Set A Budget

Set your budget first, it'll help set realistic expectations. You're not going to get Jake Paul for \$5,000 so don't try to. A really big influencer (over 10m followers) told me that a popular publication offered her \$20 to post something on Instagram. She thought it was a mistake. It wasn't. She was so offended she vowed to never work with them and she told all of her influencer friends to do the same. That ridiculous offer had big repercussions. Be realistic on your budget. The average cost of a post, with someone who has less than 100,000 followers, is \$300. So, expect a real campaign to cost at least \$5,000.

3. Pick Your KPIs

How will you determine if your campaign is successful? Typical KPIs include reach, impressions, views, engagement rates, and increase in followers and shares. Begin with one metric. Be clear on the purpose of your influencer strategy. Are you trying to build brand awareness? Then track the traffic to your site or track new follower growth. Is the goal conversion? Then measure the specific conversions like sales, downloads, etc.

4. Have Somebody Pick Your Influencers For You

If this is your first campaign, I would *highly* suggest using a self-serve platform, like [FameBit](#) or [Speakr](#). Or, try an influencer agency, like [MediaKixx](#). There are several reasons to use a third party:

- **Data, Data, Data**

They've got it and you don't. Are you looking for 18-24 year beauty vloggers, in New York, with 50-100k followers that have a 10% engagement rate? These self-serve platforms and agencies have proprietary technology that will help find the influencers that you're looking for.

- **Negotiation And Contracts**

They handle both the negotiations and the contracts. They know the verbiage to include in the contracts to protect you. They also know the current rates, metrics to track, etc.

- **Experience**

They do this everyday. They know the industry. They know who's easy to work with, what influencers give the best bang for the buck, etc.

5. Pick The Influencers Yourself

You cheapskate! Alright, I get it. You're a small brand and don't have any money, so you want to do it yourself. The first challenge is that there isn't a good free solution that can give you the data that you need. [SocialBlade](#), [Iconosquare](#), and [VidStatsX](#) all have free, updated top lists but they won't help you to find the micro-influencers. To find these guys on your own, there are two ways to do it:

- **Go For A Paid Solution**

To find influencers on Instagram, you need to be able to perform complex searches. You need both quantitative (keywords, industry type, location) and qualitative (number of followers, engagement rates) You're not going to be able to find all of this information on your own. Using a paid solution is going to be less expensive than using an agency or self-serve platform. There's a bunch, like: [BuzzSumo](#), [Affinio](#), and [Onalytica](#). Onalytica is the most straightforward deal I've seen. They're charging \$195 a month for the software and they offer a free 7-day trial. Try it out and cancel it if you don't like it.

- **Do It For Free**

It's going to take some work, and you're not going to have the data to help guide you. The first thing to do is to do some hashtag searches on Google. The beauty of searching hashtags on Google is that they search all the social platforms. So, if you're trying to find gamers in LA you could search #LAGamers and it'll pull up the most popular posts from Instagram, Twitter, etc. and you can go from there.

Start looking for people who are using those hashtags and look to see who's getting engagement. You can also do relevant searches on YouTube to find influencers over there. Every Instagrammer or YouTuber will have contact info in their bio. Send them an email, send them a DM, or tag them. Trust me, they want brand deals so they're going to make it easy for you to connect with them.

6. Prepare A Campaign

I've found the most effective way to work with an influencer is to allow them to use their unique voice to deliver your message. Before you can start having those creative conversations, though, you need to have a brief outline of the campaign, talking points, goals, etc. Then, when you bring the influencer into the conversation, he or she knows what you're looking to accomplish.

7. Negotiate Rates And Contracts

This is fairly obvious, but you'd be surprised how often these deals are done without contracts. You need to spell out the publishing schedule, deliverables, compensation, payment schedule, etc. The compensation can be something as simple as free merch, but you still need to spell out EXACTLY what the influencer's responsibilities are. You also need to have language in the agreement protecting yourself in case the influencer doesn't meet their end of the agreement. I've heard of a million influencers missing their posting times because they forgot to post. There needs to be penalties in the agreement in case this happens to you.

8. Approval Process

Alright, you've got your influencers, you've given them an outline of what you're looking for, and you signed a contract. Now you get to sit back and wait for them to develop their content. During the approval process, you'll review the content to ensure it aligns with your brand, make sure it meets FTC guidelines, etc.

9. Publish

Now's the fun part. You get to see them publish their content, get a bunch of engagement, and watch the money roll in! If it were only that easy. You'll need to monitor the campaign to make sure they're posting on schedule, they're using approved content, etc. It's always a good idea to take screenshots (or have them present them) of the campaign for your records.

10. Report And Analyze

Remember when you set those KPIs? Now you get to see whether the campaign has been successful or not. You should gather all the metrics, including views, engagement and impressions for your campaign report. Screen shots are great visuals to have in there too. Compare your social activity (likes, comments, etc.) to posts and videos that you ran before your campaign. Also, look at other influencer campaigns that you've done to see how it stacked up.

About Me

I'm a New Jersey native living in Los Angeles with my wife and toddler.

I'm a sales guy by trade but I also write about influencer marketing for Forbes and other publications.

Thanks for stopping by! If there's anything I can do for you, hmu. I respond to each and every email. Even the trolls!