

Influencer marketing: A powerful addition to your next media campaign

EDINBURGH OPINION SOCIAL MEDIA

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A couple of weeks ago Snapchat dominated industry headlines following an overnight \$1.3bn loss in market value. Why did this happen? One social media influencer sent a seemingly casual tweet.

The influencer in this case was Kylie Jenner, a reality TV personality with a massive social following (105m Instagram & 24.5m Twitter followers). In response to Snapchat's highly criticised redesign, Kylie sent out a tweet which read: *"Sooo does anyone else not open Snapchat anymore? Or is it just me... ugh this is so sad."* 50k retweets later, Snapchat's stock plummeted.

The idea that influencers such as Kylie Jenner can have such a big impact on people's attitudes towards a brand, product or service is a sobering thought. The press called the

tweet 'the death of Snapchat' however in reality, Kylie's tweet was just echoing the frustrations of existing users towards the redesign. That said, there is no denying the massive reach influencers like Kylie have at their fingertips and the opportunity that this offers advertisers.

Influencer marketing was the buzz word of last year, with 84% of marketers saying they would launch at least one influencer campaign in the next 12 months. The Instagram influencer market has also been predicted to be worth \$2.38bn by 2019.

The concept of influencer marketing isn't anything new. It's simply a new type of 'celebrity' endorsement where a brand partners with an influencer to access their following which may be across one platform such as Instagram or a range of platforms, to promote their products or service in an authentically positioned way. Influencers can be high profile celebrities or someone who has created their own personal brand by consistently posting on their social channels, positioning themselves in a particular light. For example, a health enthusiast posting in real time, the nutritious meals they eat and the workouts they undertake to maintain a healthy lifestyle. Followers get a daily insight into the influencer's life which in turn creates a strong and trusted connection.

This large and loyal following is an advertisers dream and as many people are now turning to social media as their first port of call for advice, inspiration, and information before they make a purchase, it's even more important that brands are considering boosting their products, services, and credibility by including influencer activity in their campaigns.

This is especially important when targeting a younger audience as a recent study by Marketing Network Affilnet found that more than half of young adults in Britain, aged 18-30, have made an online purchase after being directly influenced by a social media influencer (including bloggers & YouTubers). In addition to this, over two thousand generation Yers & Zers (those born 1982- 1996 and from 1997 onwards) were included in the survey and most of them said they believed that they were five times more likely to buy something promoted by an online star. The most common products being clothing, make-up/beauty products and video games.

Here at MediaCom we have run several influencer campaigns for our clients and so far the results have been positive, with our client's own social media following often boosted as a result.

Other benefits to be had include cost efficiencies compared to more traditional channels as brands don't have any production costs to cover, just the cost of sending a product to the influencer. Brands also don't need to have massive budgets to be able to afford influencers. A study by Markerly found that on Instagram, micro influencers (those who have a following of 10-100K) actually have a greater impact than celebrity influencers. On unpaid posts, micro influencers see a higher like rate than influencers with over a million followers (2.4% and 1.7% respectively). Influencer activity is also trackable and offers an authentic element to a campaign.

Like all advertising channels there are of course areas of caution to bear in mind. One of the key from my experience in this area so far, is the fact that advertisers must be prepared to relinquish creative control and trust that the content produced will appeal to the influencer's following and therefore with the desired target. After all, it's the influencer that knows their audience better than anyone. It is also essential that before running any activity, brands do their research to ensure that the influencer/s they are considering collaborating with are a natural fit with the brand. If they're not, then their followers (and potential consumers) may smell a rat and the activity could have the opposite effect on what was planned. It's also important that the influencer/s in question have had experience in the sort of activity that you are looking to run, in order to avoid any unwanted surprises. For example, if video content is required, with the idea that it can be used across the brands owned channels too, the influencer must be experienced in producing videos to a certain standard.

For more detail on how to win with influencer marketing, our colleagues at Mediacom Beyond Advertising have some handy tips here:

<http://mediacombeyondadvertising.com/winning-influencer-marketing/>

Source

Canvas 8: Canvas 8, Young Britons' Shopping Habits Swayed By Influencers

<http://www.thedrum.com/news/2017/07/25/social-media-influencers-not-just-the-brand-big-guns>

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