

Brand Track Breakout #3

Working with Influencers -
Best Practices + Lessons Learned

Brand and influencer partnerships may seem magical, but the picture-perfect sponsored posts you see on Instagram are the result of careful planning, creativity, hard work, and analytics.

And they begin with pairing the right influencer with the right brand. Today, I'll share some hard-earned learning and you may see some familiar faces.



jennifer smiga

founder + creative director

ultra
violet



Jennifer Smiga is the creative catalyst behind ultraviolet, a marketing agency specializing in luxury manufacturers, designers, and creative brands. With over a decade of experience representing international companies and influencers, Smiga knows that connecting the right people and telling meaningful stories are the keys to engaging a loyal community. Equal parts visionary and tenacious executor, she has built a team that intimately understands the design ecosystem, empowering them to create custom brand blueprints that make companies stand out. To learn more about marketing at a higher frequency, visit [ultravioletagency.com](https://www.ultravioletagency.com).

what we do

ultraviolet is an expert marketing agency that understands luxury manufacturers, designers, and creative brands better than anyone. We believe that great work deserves to be seen and celebrated and we know how to build a brand blueprint that can make that happen. We develop and execute tactical strategies that connect the dots between your story, expanding community and inspired content. We are committed to increasing your industry influence so you can keep building your business and honoring your vision.



ultraviolet
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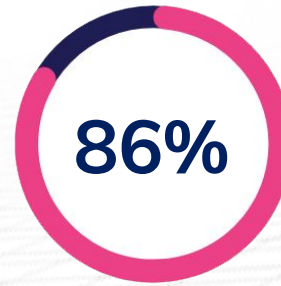


Today we'll review

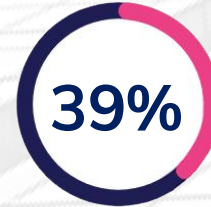
- Why work with an influencer?
- How do I vet an influencer?
- Lessons learned
- Q&A
- Why would an influencer work with you?
- Best practices
- Tracking ROI

stats on influencer marketing

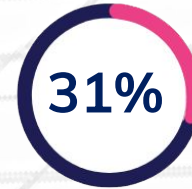
Brands and media are losing the influencer battle, while fellow industry trade and consumers now hold the cards.



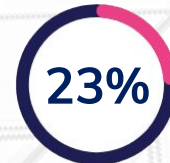
of people say **close friends** are influential over purchase decisions



of people say **distant friends** are influential over purchase decisions



of people say **influencers and celebrities** are influential over purchase decisions



of people say **non-friends (brands, media)** are influential over purchase decisions

nano to mega

finding your partners

Micro-influencers have seven times more engagement with Instagram followers than those with large followings.

Source: Omnicore Agency

Instagram influencer tiers



- **mega**
1m+ followers
- **macro**
500k - 1m followers
- **mid-tier**
50k - 500k followers
- **micro**
10k - 50k followers
- **nano**
1k - 10k followers

why SponCon?

Friends are listening to influencers they follow when styling and remodeling their homes. Often, they look to them first for recommendations and guidance.

Getting the word out about your company via a story on an influencer's blog and social media is the most authentic way to reach your potential customers.

Your company may also have more specific goals for the relationship.

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I always make sure any partnership I take on is the right fit because honestly... readers can smell BS a mile away! It's not worth it!

Joanna Hawley of jojotastic gets real about her life as much as she does about the products she endorses on social.

an influencer can help your brand:

- build brand awareness
- showcase projects featuring your products
- launch new products
- secure professional photography + video
- grow a community of engaged followers
- build presence at tradeshow, markets, CEU events
- and sell!



Kevin O'Gara from Thou Swell

the platforms they use

Instagram: 72% of users have bought a product they saw on Instagram. Source: *Hootsuite*

Blogs: 60% of Consumers Have Been Influenced by Social Media or Blog While Shopping at a Store.
Source: *Digital Marketing Institute*

Pinterest: 82 percent of weekly active users on Pinterest say they have bought products based on their brands' content on the platform. Source: *Oberlo*

Facebook: With about two billion monthly users across the world, Facebook is the most influential social media channel with 19% of purchasing decisions being influenced by the platform.
Source: *Digital Marketing Institute*

Twitter: not so much, but Tweet Chats yes

Why would an influencer work with you?

Influencers often associate with a brand for the prestige or credibility, to establish a long-term partnership, and to receive product and/or payment. And, for many, the start is simply their love for the product.

Authenticity + street cred

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“

I approach brand partnerships a few ways: either I've used the product before, in my own time, and want to make an official partnership to promote the product, or I have heard great things from consumers or fellow bloggers. Aesthetic fit and corporate culture also play into my decisions.



Ariel Garneau of PMQ for Two

how do I vet an influencer?

Pursuing someone with a large amount of followers isn't always the best match for your company.

The best match is an influencer who speaks to your target audience and....

- Is a natural fit for your brand
- Posts consistently (min. of 2-3 times a month)
- Writes well
- Professionally shoots projects
- Engages with his/her audience
- Is responsive to your communications



Eva Amurri of Happily Eva After

best practices

who are you talking to?

From the consumer, brand and content creator perspectives, it's clear that pushing product on the wrong audience is worthless.

I always try to work with brands that relate to the content/subject matter I'm creating. I always ask myself if the brand aligns with my mission/goals/reason for why I have the account. If it's questionable, then I don't do it.

- Sanda Hadzisabic, [Design Playbook](#)



get to know one another

On a call or in-person meeting, take notes on their projects in the works. Personal or clients renovations, room reveals, including:

- One Room Challenges
- blog hops
- house tours
- showrooms

These are great opportunities for your brand to expand its reach.

Get feedback on your products, site, social media (after all they are the experts so why not get their recommendations to make things better, more creative, more engaging).

Ask to see examples of campaigns with other companies they worked with. Ask about background on their story, family, business and how they built their network. Their style. Brand favs.

All this knowledge is fodder for your content and part of the story you are going to tell.

make a style match

Sarisa "Risi" Munoz, the insta-famous creative guru behind [The Indigo Leopard Home](#), was a style match for global home décor brand [SmithHönig](#).

In the past, my poor guest room has been the catch-all of décor not used in other places in the house. Like a graveyard of random unused décor, I guess you could say. I had been on the fence about doing a mini makeover in the room, so I was so delighted to partner with a line that provided luxe textiles to give this room the facelift it needed. The pieces from SmithHönig were the decision makers for this room. I designed the rest of the room around those.



Sarisa "Risi" Munoz of The Indigo Leopard Home

trust in the process

Kate Pearce of [Kate Pearce Vintage](#) says her biggest pet peeve is working with a company who wants to micromanage a campaign.

If you're interested in working with an influencer because you trust and believe in their work, you should place a certain amount of trust in their creative process. It's certainly OK to want to pre-approve any posts, but asking them to say certain things in a caption, or to style your product in a specific way is going to have counter-productive results, as the presentation of a product in a style authentic and organic to the Influencer is going to be essential to the success of the campaign.



Kate Pearce of Kate Pearce Vintage

your ROI

what to track

growth, reach, impressions, engagement

conversions

referral traffic (influencer blogs, pr, social)

e-commerce

how to track

social media analytics

[landing pages](#)

google analytics

promo codes

lessons learned

the more you know

- Is this a paid and/or product partnership? Agree on the amount and how much product.
- Align your publishing timeline and event deadlines with the influencer's project.
- Know your product availability (Is the product in stock?) Is your product accessible if a distributor is involved? Shipping time must be disclosed.
- Will you recommend additional professionals (eg. installers for product) in the process or will you advise the influencer to use their own experts? You may need to also sell your network on donating their time in order to execute on the project. If not, you may underwrite these costs or explicitly say in the agreement that this cost is the responsibility of the influencer.
- Who's running the show? Make one point of contact for the influencer. This may be two people if you need a technical adviser from your company involved. Both should always keep one another in the loop in communications. Share notes in one doc from calls, meetings, site visits.
- Are you documenting the process or just the finished installation? i.e. You may consider shooting the installation process for a separate campaign. Will the partner provide you raw images and b roll video to repurpose for other assets at another time?

matchmaking doesn't end at the product

Influencers are creative, hard-working professionals.
Choose a team to work with that is:

- Knowledgeable
- Responsive
- Enthusiastic
- Respectful
- Creative
- Opportunistic

Your campaigns will reflect the double dose of energy, professionalism and creativity.



q+a

Join us for sparkling rosé
at the Genius Bar:
Mingle & Matchmaking for
Brands and Influencers

Sunday ● 3:00-3:30 pm

Monday ● 3:15-3:35 pm



What's your greatest marketing challenge?

let's
connect

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