

The rise of digital influencers

 By [Hlumelo Ndoni](#)

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Social media influencer definitely sounds like a made-up job, right? Well, it turns out this is one of the hottest jobs right now, thanks to the rise of brands tapping into these digitally savvy content creators.



The rise of the brand influencer

Bradley Elliott 5 Mar 2018



These days people can make themselves famous on social media by building a following around their hobbies and passions, whatever those may be, and then convert that into a living by charging companies to include their brands on social media content. The next time your Dad tells you that you spend too much time on your phone you can tell him you're just building your career.

Social media influencer marketing might be buzzing but it's certainly not a new phenomenon. Celebrities have always been involved in advertising things like laundry detergent and cigarettes, but today celebrities aren't the preferred method of advertising online.



Influencer marketing for dummies: 2018 and beyond

Hlumelo Ndoni 25 Jan 2018



People tend to prefer their friends' and peers' recommendations over celebrity endorsements. This infographic has some great info about this buzzing trend. Maybe all that work you've been doing building your social media following will finally pay off!



BRAND AMBASSADORS THROUGH THE YEARS

- PIONEERS -

Starred in **early advertisements** and lent their names and faces to **reinforce brand values**



JOSIAH WEDGWOOD

Royal endorsements for his pottery in the **1760s**



LILLIE LANGTRY

Appeared on "trade cards" for Brown's Iron Bitters in the late **1800s**



FATTY ARBUCKLE

First recorded celebrity endorsement with Murad Cigarettes in **1905**

- CHARACTERS -

Created by brands to influence their image and **help consumers remember** qualities about the company



SANTA CLAUS

Popularized by **Coca-Cola** in **1923**



TONY THE TIGER

Frosted Flakes first introduced in **1952**



FLO

Created by **Progressive** in **2008**

- CELEBRITIES -

Famous for their offline career

Serve as **messengers** for branded content

Massive online followings, but typically **don't interact** with fans



SELENA GOMEZ
@selenagomez


Coach contract


122.9M
#1 most followed on Instagram


48.5M
#15 most followed on Twitter



CRISTIANO RONALDO
@cristiano


Nike contract


105.5M
#3 most followed on Instagram


53.9M
#12 most followed on Twitter



DJ KHALED
@djkhale305


Ciroc contract


KING OF SNAPCHAT
2m views on each post

- INFLUENCERS -

Famous for their online and social media channels

Co-create content featuring brand-related topics and products

Maintain close relationships with a community of followers



LILLY SINGH
@lISuperwomanll



Coca-Cola contract



11.9M

#73 most subscribed
YouTube account



**HIGHEST-EARNING
WOMAN**

on YouTube in 2016



ANDREW BACHELOR
@KingBach



Jimmy John's contract



16.1M

#1 most followed
Vine account



14M

#138 most followed
on Instagram



MICHELLE PHAN
@michellephan



Lancôme Video Makeup Artist



9M

#136 most subscribed
YouTube account



3.2M

Facebook likes



of teen subscribers think **Youtubers are more relatable than celebrities**, making them important marketing assets



of consumers **trust online recommendations** as much as personal recommendations

INFLUENCE MARKETING IN THE TECH ERA

- ORIGIN OF THE INFLUENCER -



Before 2004 advertisers had used **celebrities, characters, or even royalty** as brand ambassadors



The internet democratized influence and for the first time **regular people could create huge followings**



The rise of blogging and especially social media **shifted advertising towards word-of-mouth** with influencers



THE CHALLENGE

By 2020, ad blocking will devour \$12 billion in online revenue



THE SOLUTION

People rely on people, even people they don't know

- SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS SUPPORT - DIFFERENT ADVERTISING OPPORTUNITIES



2B users



SPONSORED POSTS



VIDEO ADS



BANNER ADS



1.5B users



INFLUENCER/CELEBRITY VIDEOS



VIDEO ADS



BANNER ADS



700M users



SPONSORED POSTS



VIDEO ADS



STORIES



328M users



INFLUENCER/CELEBRITY TWEETS



PROMOTED TWEETS



255M users



GEOTAGS



STORIES



CELEBRITY ACCOUNTS

- IMPOSING RULES ON INFLUENCERS -



- The Federal Trade Commission (FTC) says that influencers **must state when they are in contract** with a company
- Tries to ensure that **consumers know they are watching an ad**
- While this is a good thought, the **FTC has only enforced the rule 4 times**
- They use **#ad, 'sponsored', 'promoted' or 'ad'** in a post to fit requirement



FOLLOWING ALL THE LEGAL REQUIREMENTS IS ONLY HALF OF WHAT MATTERS. AS AN INFLUENCER, MAKING SURE YOU BELIEVE IN AND CAN STAND BEHIND NOT ONLY THE PRODUCT BUT THE BRAND YOU PROMOTE IS CRUCIAL TO TRUST AND CREDIBILITY WITH AN ALREADY SKEPTICAL AUDIENCE.



Connor Blakley

Founder-CEO of YouthLogic

Since influencer marketing is so new, **changes in trends and rules continue to rock the evolving industry**

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

- LONG TERM RELATIONSHIPS WITH INFLUENCERS -



Influencers are **free agents** looking for better deals and



Companies are creating **longer contracts** to ensure

can be stolen by competitors

exclusivity and longevity



COMPANIES BETTER BE READY TO COMMIT TO BETWEEN 6-12 MONTHS OF 5 FIGURE CHECKS IF THEY WANT EXCLUSIVITY FOR THEIR INDUSTRY.



Joel Contartese

Top-Rated Influencer Marketing Expert

- BEYOND VANITY METRICS -



Enterprises and mid-sized businesses are beginning to demand more than just engagement



Influencer marketing is now about tracking performance and attributing sales



GONE ARE THE DAYS OF BLINDLY THROWING MONEY AT TOP-FUNNEL METRICS LIKE VIEWS, REACH, AND IMPRESSIONS. INFLUENCER MARKETING MAY BE BUZZWORDS, BUT HERE'RE TWO THAT MATTER MORE: BOTTOM LINE.



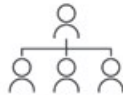
Travis Hawley

VP of Business Development at Viral Nation

- COMPANIES FOCUS ON MICRO-INFLUENCERS -



Mega influencers are increasingly expensive and often personally disconnected from their audiences



Companies are turning to micro-influencers with smaller, but more responsive followings



Micro-influencers are 4X more likely to get a comment on a post than macro-influencers



YOU CAN ATTAIN THE SAME OR LARGER REACH WHEN SPREAD ACROSS A HANDFUL OF MICRO-INFLUENCERS FOR A FRACTION OF THE COST, WHILE ADDING A MORE DIVERSE, YET TARGETED AUDIENCE.



Troy Osinoff

Author and Head of Customer Acquisition at BuzzFeed

- AUTHENTIC RELATIONSHIPS WITH CONSUMERS -



Millennials and Generation Z can tell when promotions are based solely on a contract



84% of millennials don't trust traditional advertising



Influencers are giving more authentic endorsements because they like a product, not because of compensation



TO QUOTE SETH GODIN, PEOPLE CAN 'SMELL THE AGENDA OF A LEADER.' THIS HAS NEVER BEEN MORE TRUE WHEN IT COMES TO INFLUENCER MARKETING. TO MAINTAIN FIERCELY LOYAL FANS, YOU MUST LOVE AND BELIEVE IN WHAT YOU'RE ENDORSING



Mari Smith

Facebook Marketing Expert & Author of The New Relationship Marketing

**ANYONE CAN BE AN INFLUENCER—
WHO ARE YOU REPPING?**

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ABOUT HLUMELO NDONI

My twitter bio uses buzz words such as ass kicker, tech geek, and Internet ninja. But when you get down to it- I'm a marketer, a blogger, a social media enthusiast and budding growth hacker.

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