

Five FAQ's about influencer marketing



By Bianca Quinn-Diavastos

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Influencer marketing (IM), undeniably the industry buzzword of the time - multi-faceted, complex, and ever-evolving. I answer five frequently asked questions (FAQ's) on the phenomenon.



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■ *Is IM evergreen, or a passing craze?*

Definitely not passing – locally, as well as abroad.

In South Africa, I question whether IM has reached its full potential. In my opinion, it has not quite found its feet here the way it has in some other countries. There are a few local industries that rely on IM quite heavily, whereas others don't make use of it at all.

For example, I have found that the fitness industry in South Africa has found their groove and know how to utilise a powerful visual platform like Instagram to their advantage. In other industries like beauty, travel, and restaurants we do have bloggers who act as influencers. They participate in talking about products or experiences, but they do not necessarily endorse them.

With regards to America, I am not convinced IM is utilised in an authentic manner. For example, a constant and apparently generic use of and association with some main-stream celebrity personalities. In their case the influence might be there

with millions of fans hanging on to their every post and pic but, I am a bit unsure about the authenticity of their support for these products.

■ ***What are the ingredients of a successful IM campaign?***

1. The right person
2. The right product
3. The right time

These elements are essential for a successful campaign. Furthermore, it is important to find an influencer who genuinely loves your product or service, as supposed to being signed on for an endorsement without understanding your brand. You are getting it right when the brand and the influencer is an authentic match and it does not feel to the consumer like a financial transaction.

■ ***What led to the trend to use influencers to market your brand?***

The mere fact that the John Lewis pastel-coloured Fair Isle “Baby Luxury Sheep” knit cardigan Princess Charlotte wore in her second birthday photo shoot on Tuesday, 2 May of this year sold out soon after the photographs became public knowledge, is a clear, practical demonstration of the fact that we live in an age of influence and aspiration.

In current marketing times, IM can assist your brand in reaching customers you might not reach through traditional advertising, all through the power of aspiration and the need to belong.

■ ***Any brands you’ve seen recently that’s got it right?***

In the USA, I think a brand who really gets it right with style, is Draper James. They use Reese Witherspoon with great success in their campaigns. She is a great fit for the brand and, in my opinion, seeing her in one of their outfits make you want to click and buy their products.

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Brunch prep. #MatchyMatchy in my @draperjames of course! 💎💎💎💎

A post shared by Reese Witherspoon (@reeseewitherspoon) on Jul 2, 2017 at 10:23am PDT

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■ ***Is there any specific online channel most suited for influencer campaigns or does it depend on the product, service, target audience and or influencer? (How do you pick a channel?)***

All the social channels work well for IM campaigns. It depends on the audience that you want to influence. It is important to know where they are.

Instagram has become a firm favourite because it is such a visual medium. It is also easier to feature near relevant content, you can also reach an audience much greater than the followers of your influencer.

ABOUT BIANCA QUINN-DIAVASTOS

Bianca Quinn-Diavastos is the managing director of the digital marketing agency Jetweb - "Digital on Demand". She has worked in media and publishing since 2006, and has gained a diverse range of experience spanning the marketing and strategic digital industries.

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