

How to Refresh Your Strategy With Influencer-Generated Content

In the past few years, influencers have exploded with the rise of social media. Today, they are a vital marketing tool and [93%](#) of marketers have used influencer-generated content. If you're in the 7%, we're guessing you know you're missing out but don't know where to start. Read on to discover how influencer-generated content can refresh your strategy.

What is influencer-generated content (IGC)

Let's start with the basics. An influencer is a social media user with typically over a thousand followers on channels like YouTube, Instagram, TikTok and Twitter. They have an active and engaged audience who trust their advice on life, the universe and everything.



Free to use image sourced from Unsplash
[alt text: An influencer taking a selfie]

Often, influencers cater to a specific niche like reading, family life, beauty and even [hosted VoIP solutions](#). As a result, they are part of specific communities based on their likes and interests. For instance, creators that post about reading on TikTok are known as 'BookTokkers'.

Sometimes, these influencers will mention brands and this is known as IGC. This might be organic or paid. Ideally, the influencer will mention your brand by chance but either way, they are a trusted source of information for their thousands of followers, so any mention of your brand is a win.

Why should I use influencer-generated content?

If your brand is looking for a new marketing strategy to revitalize your sales, IGC is a great option. Aside from the fact that social media platforms prioritize content from influencers' overpaid ad ROI, there are many reasons why IGC will increase your conversion rate.

Far from a faceless brand, an influencer is a friendly face that followers know and trust. As [research](#) shows, 61% of consumers trust influencer advice, while only 38% trust branded content. They also have authority on their speciality topic, whether that's beauty or interior design, they are seen as experts in their area.

Therefore, if an influencer uses your brand in their content, their endorsement makes your brand seem trustworthy and credible. No matter your marketing budget, this genuine and trusted endorsement is hard to find elsewhere.

Better still if the influencer endorses your brand multiple times. For instance, if a [restaurant influencer](#) announces you are their favourite place to eat, this can create a loyal audience for your brand as the influencer has shown they repeatedly and religiously choose you.

Engagement is also key when it comes to IGC. Followers feel they 'know' the influencer because they respond to comments and like fan posts. You can capitalise on this by replying to influencer-generated posts for your brand and engaging with users in the comments to build trust, authenticity and loyalty for your brand.

Influencers often have a specific topic that they focus on, whether that be fashion, football or cooking. Their followers will also be interested in that topic, giving you immediate access to a new segment of your target market.

So, influencers provide a trusted, authoritative platform with a following likely saturated by your target market. This will lead to increased conversions and more sales. The cherry on top? IGC is relatively low-cost.

In-house marketing campaigns can cost thousands of pounds but IGC passes most of the heavy lifting to the influencer, costs much less and generates better returns. According to one [study](#), brands earn \$5.20 for every dollar spent. This is in part because you can reuse influencer content across multiple platforms as many times as you like.

If your brand is in dire need of a refresh, IGC could be a great low-risk, high-reward option.

How to create Influencer-Generated Content

Identify your influencers

With [50 million people worldwide](#) considering themselves influencers, how can you find the right influencer for your campaign?



Free to use image sourced from Unsplash
[alt text: an influencer taking pictures of food]

Many marketers assume that you have to go for macro-influencers like Molly Mae and the Kardashians to achieve good returns, but that couldn't be further from the truth. In reality, micro-influencers could be a cost-effective and successful option for your next campaign.

Although micro-influencers have a following of at least 1,000, their followers are nowhere near top influencers. This is partly because they focus on niche topics for engaged, interested fans. So, what they lack in numbers, they make up for an engaged and interested audience which will most likely want to hear about your brand.

If your [marketing goals](#) are direct sales and profits are your objective, the high fees of a macro-influencer won't make much sense. You'll probably be one of many brand deals they are

posting that week and in all likelihood, you'll be ignored. Better to be recognised by a micro-influencer with 2,000 followers than forgotten by millions.

Further, it is beneficial to work with influencers who cater to your audience. One thing you will learn very quickly when searching for the perfect fit is that there are influencers for *everything*. Cybersecurity, coffee and even [NFTs](#). So there's sure to be someone out there that would your brand perfectly.

Once you have found a few good options, note their name, usernames and contact details to begin contacting them. Not everyone will get back to you, so make sure you have a few good choices. If your list is long, make sure you contact your potential collaborators in priority order.

Then, after you have received a few replies, it's time to decide which influencer you would like to work with. Here are some things you should consider:

- **Follower count:** whilst followers aren't everything, if you're choosing between influencers, it could be beneficial to go for one with the higher follower count.
- **Engagement:** have a look at their posts, do their followers comment, like and share? If not, this influencer might not be the way to go.
- **Do they post brand deals all the time?** If so, you might be lost in a sea of ads.

If you feel you have found a good influencer, try to establish a strong, positive relationship with them. Perhaps set them up in your company phone system and give them [VoIP phone numbers](#) so they can contact you at any time. This will mean you can work together in the future. If an influencer posts about your brand multiple times this will strengthen your brand's authenticity as it will look like the influencer genuinely loves your product.

Types of influencer-generated content

Now you have your influencer, it's time to decide what content you would like them to post. This all depends on what kind of campaign you want to run, your audience and your brand. For example, if you're a serious law firm, you probably aren't going to post a meme but you might hire a stellar LinkedIn influencer to share insightful industry news.



Free to use image sourced from Unsplash
[alt text: a Youtuber talking to the camera]

It's also useful to ask yourself what audiences want to see. According to [eMarketer](#), the top ten styles of content audiences want to see more of are:

1. 'How to' tutorials
2. Memes
3. Short-form videos
4. Photos
5. Reviews
6. Q&A
7. Lifestyle advice
8. Livestreams
9. Long-form videos
10. Offers

So, have a brainstorming session about how you can fit your brand into these styles of content. Don't forget to be creative and stay in communication with your influencer when deciding on an idea. A great way to do this is through a [virtual phone system](#), so you can contact your team whenever you need.

Also, don't forget to consider where you will use the IGC. A smart marketer will reuse good content on many different platforms such as their socials, blogs and marketing materials.

For example, if you embed an influencer's post about your brand in your website copy or a blog post, this will drive traffic to both of your sites and is a mutually beneficial way to reuse paid content. Try this with a 'How to' video in your [knowledge base](#) or a product review in your customer feedback section.

When you've decided, it's time to make a content guideline. This is a document which sets out what you expect from the collaboration. However, brands often make the mistake of providing restrictive content guidelines for influencers. Remember to allow for creative freedom. Influencers know their audience, so try to trust them to effectively deliver your message.

Still, there are key things you should include in your influencer guidelines including specific things (objects or words) to include, things not to include (e.g. swearing), content examples, storyboards and instructions like 'please include a shot of you using the product'.

Finally, don't forget to prepare yourself for an influx of sales using [inventory forecast models](#) and clearing your social media team's calendars.

Now for the boring bit: influencer contracts

After you have found the perfect influencer for your campaign, it's time to create a contract.



Free to use image sourced from Unsplash
[alt text: a woman signing a contract]

This should include a detailed scope of the work including brand guidelines and when, where, and how often the influencer will be posting.

Also, make sure to include image usage rights in your agreement. This will allow you to repurpose the content on your various marketing channels and ensure you have stellar [intellectual property management](#).

Finally, there are many legal aspects you must consider including FTC clauses, copyright and grounds for cancellation. Check out [NeoReach](#)'s blog for more info.

Levelling up with likes

Remember, IGC is a great way to refresh your brand, but don't hold back when it comes to creating great content. Be creative, and flexible. Think of your influencer as a collaborator, not an employee so you can mix your brand knowledge and their audience expertise and creativity for the best possible outcome.

