

Transparency is Key: Fostering Long-term Success at Princess Polly

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Executive Summary:

Influencer marketing is on a consistent rise, and its success creates countless opportunities for businesses to utilize the digital marketing tactic. However, as the practice continues to grow and the industries learn more about the impacts, regulatory bodies such as the FTC have begun to step in and create guidelines to ensure influencer marketing remains an ethical marketing practice and abides by all legal guidelines. Brands face consumers who continue to educate themselves on deceitful marketing practices and are more aware of the content they are being shown. Consumers have become weary of advertisements and brands' authenticity but remain avid followers of various influencers. That said, audiences have also become aware of inauthentic brand relationships between influencers and companies. This has led to brands deciding to shy away from proper guidelines in hopes of regaining consumer purchases. As consumers continue to educate themselves, they have grown to value genuine and transparent brands and become more and more loyal to their chosen companies. This communications plan outlines the steps that need to be taken to ensure Princess Polly can continue to succeed in their chosen marketing practices. While Princess Polly has proven successful, to continue to grow and take advantage of new market opportunities and trends, earning their target audience's trust and loyalty is crucial to fostering a positive brand reputation as an ethical and sustainable brand. With the target audience being women aged 15 – 25, Princess Polly is consistently gaining new consumers, and this plan sets the objectives as the following:

- Create general awareness and education towards the FTC guidelines regarding influencer disclosure among target audiences and potential influencer partners to 35% in engagement with transparency campaign-related content over three months.
- Strengthen consumer trust and brand reputation by 25% by generating campaign-related content focused on transparency, legal compliance, and ethical marketing practices, measured through consumer surveys and feedback mechanisms over the span of three months.
- Continue to foster a positive attitude surrounding influencer marketing and partnerships with Princess Polly by demonstrating a clear commitment to transparency through the creation of sponsored content templates to be rolled out throughout the campaign's three months.
- Mitigate legal risks associated with influencer marketing and misleading disclosures that are non-compliant with FTC guidelines to work towards a 95% compliance rate and fewer legal risks through audits, compliance checks, and educational content starting at the beginning of the campaign, measured monthly for years to come.

The objectives will be met by rolling out a #HonestPrincess campaign that will utilize various media channels such as email and SMS marketing, influencer partnerships, social media posts, and Princess Polly's website over three months from April 1, 2025, through June 30, 2025. The campaign will be measured through various tactics such as regulatory audits, engagement rates, and feedback surveys. This campaign aims to position Princess Polly as a trustworthy and authentic brand that not only understands its consumers but also cares about them.

Situation Analysis:

Influencer marketing is often considered a trending digital marketing tactic. This tactic has been proven successful in various industries, especially fashion. Social media has seen influencers take over various audiences in the past few years. Their fan bases can have extreme loyalty and follow what the influencers say, do, buy, and wear because many influencers have the power to help dictate trends in the fashion industry. Part of the appeal of influencers is that their content can come off as authentic and genuine, making audiences trust their every word. However, in recent years, many audiences have felt they have been taken advantage of due to influencers partnering with brands and not properly disclosing their partnerships with brands. The Federal Trade Commission (FTC) has curated specific guidelines that outline the requirements that brands and influencers must use to disclose their relationships with brands. The FTC is aware of influencers that fail to uphold the guidelines and issues warnings to those with insufficient disclosure (Age, 2023). The lack of following these guidelines has resulted in the audience's questioning the influencer's motives. Due to this, while influencer marketing remains popular, audiences often resent the brands influencers endorse because the lack of disclosure makes the sponsorships feel inauthentic and greedy. According to a new report by the European Commission, 80% of influencers fail to disclose advertising content (Agius, 2024). As time passes, consumers are becoming more and more cautious of the advertisements and information they are being fed. It has become hard to recognize whether a product or service is genuine in how it reaches its audiences.

While various industries utilize influencer marketing, the fashion industry has proven the success of the digital marketing tactic through an array of influencer campaigns, whether it includes sending influencers new lines to showcase in their uploaded content or partnering with influencers to model or build their own "line" at big brands. The fashion industry has seen a remarkable shift in how their target audiences purchase their items (Fokina, 2024). The overall lack of in-person shopping has emphasized the importance of running genuine social media campaigns. The ability for consumers to buy products straight from a social media advertisement has changed how companies like Princess Polly target their audiences. Along with changes in how consumers make their purchases, there is a rise in consumers who value sustainable brands. Consumers directly seek clothing brands that are sustainable, relatable, and have a prominent online presence. However, brands are only successful in doing so when all legal considerations are met.

Statement of Purpose:

The success of Princess Polly's digital marketing campaigns using influencer marketing and its positioning as a sustainable brand relies directly on proper disclosure and adherence to all legal considerations. By guaranteeing transparent relationships, Princess Polly can continue to grow their brand awareness by utilizing popular influencers and gaining consumers' trust, all while fostering a trustworthy brand reputation against other competitors within the fashion industry.

Communication Objectives:

Princess Polly has consistently succeeded in creating an online presence for the brand. Through influencer partnerships and various social media accounts, Princess Polly has evolved as a popular brand that utilizes sustainable practices among the younger demographic. Through these communication objectives, Princess Polly will be able to continue to grow and succeed and mitigate legal risks as they ensure proper practice and legal compliance to build consumer trust.

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Target Audience/Public and Rationale

Princess Polly has proved that they know exactly who their target audience is, and that audience is young women from 15-25, teens to mid-twenties. This specific audience knows their way around social media platforms and, more often than not, is influenced by their favored social media influencers. This audience keeps up to date with trends and is quick to jump on the bandwagon (Target Market & Collaborators, 2016). They are often found scrolling through Instagram and TikTok and sometimes recreate similar content they see influencers creating. This particular audience, being extremely active on social media and regularly influenced by trends, makes building their trust crucial for continued success at Princess Polly (Geyser, 2024). This target audience is so present on social media, and various issues and trends have led them to value authentic and transparent brands that know how to reach them where they are. They honor brands that partner with honorable influencers and disclose their partnerships and sponsored content.

Meet Makenna, a twenty-year-old college junior studying marketing and fashion merchandising at the University of California San Diego who is regularly active on Instagram and TikTok and watches videos on YouTube. Makenna spends between 3-4 hours on social media daily. She

follows popular influencers like Alix Earle, Ana Stowell, and Emma Chamberlain for inspiration in makeup, routine, wellness, and fashion trends. Makenna often engages with these influencers in the comments and likes. Makenna has become very cautious of her behavior as a consumer and pays close attention to the content her favorite influencers post and the advertisements she is being fed. While she can be easily influenced, she still values honesty and transparency and honors companies that respect ethical advertising practices.

Message Strategy:

Through this campaign, Princess Polly will be able to position themselves amongst competitors as not only a widely popular fashion retailer that understands their target and works with various influencers but as a fashion retailer that also paves the way for competitors, setting the standard for ethical and transparent influencer partnerships. Princess Polly focuses on legally compliant partnerships, clear disclosure, and following regulatory guidelines to build trust among consumers and regulatory bodies. In recent years, the company has seen quick success, and now it is time to solidify that success and consumer loyalty for years to come. Through key messaging points of transparency, ethical marketing, and legal compliance prove to consumers that Princess Polly not only understands their target audience but cares about the relationship they have fostered. The positioning and key message points set the tone that Princess Polly is reassuring and empowering. They aim to educate their consumers and show the brand's commitment to transparent marketing practices and their consumers in general. This message strategy is paramount for Princess Polly's continued success. If consumers begin to view Princess Polly as responsible and trustworthy, the brand will be able to continue to grow and expand with their target audience. The age demographic, being relatively younger females, acts almost as a revolving door for new consumers. However, this message strategy gives Princess Polly opportunities to enter new age demographics if they choose to and stay a leading competitor within fashion retail of their current age demographic. The message strategy will be encompassed through the hashtag #HonestPrincess to start a conversation and encourage consumers to learn more about the campaign.

Media/Communication Channels and Rationale

Princess Polly has already set itself apart from competitors through its success in advertising channels. The brand has worked with various popular influencers by giving them a discount code to share with their audience, creating lines with influencers, or partnering with them for sponsored content (Gallantway, 2021). This has proved to be a great success. Along with influencer marketing, Princess Polly has proven to have remarkable calls to action in their SMS and email marketing. They utilize their heavy website traffic to encourage consumers to sign up for email and SMS marketing with the incentive of receiving a mystery discount. However, they are not only getting their consumers to sign up, but they are also getting them to interact with the advertisements through carefully curating messages and calls to action that proves their relevance and trendiness. With knowledge of Princess Polly's current success, we want to continue to utilize these communication channels due to their known success and opportunity to prove Princess Polly's commitment.

Along with sending out advertisements via email, SMS, and influencer partnerships, this campaign aims to utilize Princess Polly's direct website and social media accounts due to the high traffic and large followings. Princess Polly has 875k followers on TikTok and 2.2 million on Instagram. A case study in 2020 shows that 43.98% of Princess Polly's website traffic is direct, and 39.61% is through search (Gallantway, 2021). This shows Princess Polly successfully gets their consumers to visit their websites without paid search or paid social advertisements. The February 2024 Traffic Stats from SEMrush show that the website receives 1.4 million visits in the United States daily (Organic Research | Semrush, n.d.). Through these channels, Princess Polly can create an informative section on their website that educates consumers on transparent and legally compliant marketing practices and disclosure and creates guidelines and checklists for potential influencer partnerships. There is a section on Princess Polly's website that allows individuals to apply to work with Princess Polly; these guidelines would be found in this section, laying a foundation for Princess Polly's honesty standards. Through these communication channels, Princess Polly will be able to educate their consumers on legally compliant practices and how to pick out dishonest practices from their competitors, ultimately putting Princess Polly at the top.

Scheduling/Content Calendar

While the practices and message of the campaign are meant to last far into the future, this transparency campaign will be implemented over three months. Princess Polly releases their season "edits" throughout the year. This campaign will aim to take place halfway through the Spring Edit and the beginning of the Summer Edit, as this is a time in the fashion industry for new season trends to take place. With that being said, the campaign will aim to launch on April 1, 2025, and end on June 30, 2025. All messaging will be consistent throughout Instagram, TikTok, Email and SMS marketing, and the website and can be adjusted as needed.

The first two weeks of the campaign will be centered around introducing the #HonestPrincess campaign by announcing new influencer partnerships and disclosure statements along with posts on their social media and email and SMS marketing utilizing language revolving around #HonestPrincess and transparency. These emails and messages will go out weekly on Thursday afternoons as consumers begin to switch out of the workweek mindset into one of more leisure, continuing to catch consumers' attention.

The following six weeks of the campaign, ranging from April 15, 2025, through May 31, 2025, will include rolling out educational content series along with their new summer edit on the Princess Polly website. The educational content will include posts on Instagram and TikTok highlighting FTC guidelines and disclosure practices. Partnered influencers will be challenged to prove how genuine, authentic content can come from brand partnerships even when all disclosure regulations are followed. Along with educational content, interactive posts, and quizzes will be implemented on Instagram Stories to test consumers' knowledge of how well they can choose proper disclosure. All the educational content rolled out during this period will be promoted through email and SMS marketing, which will go out once a week.

The last month, June 1, 2025, through June 30, 2025, will include implementing new messaging across the Princess Polly platforms. This month will be focused more on shifting language for the long term and letting consumers know that Princess Polly is committed to ethical marketing practices.

Measurement:

Consistent with the objectives above, this campaign will be measured in various ways. Measurement towards increasing knowledge of accurate FTC guidelines will include measuring engagement rates on Instagram and TikTok. Keeping track of Instagram analytics such as likes, comments, shares, sticker taps on stories, and engagement with story content will all be considered. Since Princess Polly does not necessarily have a baseline number, this percentage aims to reach 35%. Consumer trust and positive brand reputation will be measured by sending out feedback surveys and engaging content regarding how consumers view Princess Polly at the beginning and end of the campaign. This objective's success will be measured in qualitative and quantitative data formats to develop a well-rounded perception of where consumers stand. Fostering positive brand perception will be measured through click-through rates and website engagement, keeping track of the percentage of people who sign up for email and SMS marketing, and analyzing website traffic. The influencer impact will also be measured, and the engagement with influencer posts will be considered. With that, measuring how legal risks are mitigated will be done through compliance checks and utilizing compliance monitoring tools and audits to ensure adherence and legal compliance.

Creative Samples:**Instagram Story Teaser Inspiration:**

Below are rough samples of what #HonestPrincess campaign teasers could look like throughout the first and second week of the campaign rollout.

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**LET'S
 BE
 TRANSPARENT**

#HONESTPRINCESS

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PRINCESS POLLY

**LET'S
 BE
 HONEST**



WE WANT TO BE TRANSPARENT WITH YOU AND TEACH YOU HOW TO PICK OUT ETHICAL MARKETING DISCLOSURES.

WE WANT WHAT'S BEST FOR YOU BECAUSE WE CARE

LEARN MORE ABOUT OUR #HONESTPRINCESS CAMPAIGN

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PRINCESS POLLY PRINCESS POLLY
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Below are rough templates of what Influencer's can use to post their sponsored content:



Below is a checklist that can be found on the website and used as guidance when influencers are creating their sponsored content with wording suggestions to follow:

Disclosure CHECKLIST

PRINCESS POLLY

NO	REQUIREMENTS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
1	Appropriate disclosure language sharing brand partnership and #ad?	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	Is the disclosure language in an easy to find place and not hidden?	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	Is the disclosure language legible and not lost in the background?	<input type="checkbox"/>
4	If the content is video, is there disclosure in audio format?	<input type="checkbox"/>
5	Is the disclosure language clear and concise and not ambiguous?	<input type="checkbox"/>
6	Is there any contract language requirements that need to be met?	<input type="checkbox"/>
7	Is the disclosure language consistent through all required content?	<input type="checkbox"/>
8	Are the claims being made genuine and not deceptive of the brand?	<input type="checkbox"/>
9	Are all material connections or relationships with the brands disclosed?	<input type="checkbox"/>
10	Are there any third-party endorsements, and are they truthful and compliant?	<input type="checkbox"/>

Disclosure Caption

PRINCESS POLLY Wording Guide

Instagram Caption Ideas:

- Check out this outfit from @PrincessPollyBoutique latest Spring Edit! #AD I have a secret, and I want to be honest #HonestPrincess... This post is sponsored by Princess Polly and adheres to all proper guidelines. And if we are really being honest, my love for Princess Polly and their Spring Edit is genuine, trust me!
- @PrincessPollyBoutique's newest Spring Edit has me feel like a Princess! I am honored to partner with Princess Polly to show you new ways to rock the new edit. #Sponsoredpost I'm all about helping you all out, and being as transparent as possible! #HonestPrincess
- @PrincessPollyBoutique's newest Spring Edit has me feeling my best and honored to be partnered up with Princess Polly! #AdDisclosure I love sharing my favorite looks with you all, and I must be transparent about my partnerships. I truly adore Princess Polly and partnering with them has been the best! #HonestPrincess

TikTok Caption Ideas:

- Obsessed with @princesspolly's newest edit, and these are some of my favorite pieces! #ad Just want to be as honest as possible with you all, and let you know that this post is sponsored by Princess Polly! #HonestPrincess However, it's important to me to always keep it real with you all and my love for Princess Polly is genuine!
- @princesspolly's newest edit has me feeling confident and excited for summer! #sponsoredcontent This post is sponsored by Princess Polly, and I am honored to be able to honestly share my opinion with you all! #HonestPrincess
- Stepping into the season in style with @princesspolly's newest edit! This video is in collaboration with Princess Polly, but my excitement is real! #ad I love working with

Princess Polly because they value genuine partnerships! Check out the new edit.
#HonestPrincess

SMS and Email Subject Call to Action Ideas:

- We need to be honest... check out our website so we can have a heart to heart. We want to be transparent in our advertising! #HonestPrincess
- Transparency is Key, and you can unlock the power to seek out genuine partnerships. Head to our website to learn more about disclosure regulations! #HonestPrincess
- No more secrets please! We care about you, so we want to be honest. We are giving you the tools to find the genuine partnerships and advertisements! #HonestPrincess

Resources:

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