

Over the past few years, contouring has been a staple tool in most beauty blogger's, Instagram influencer's, and Youtuber's kit of "must-haves". It has been used as a means of bringing out the structure and reshaping the face into a heightened form of beauty that hadn't been seen in the industry for quite some time. However, a 2018 Preen.Me survey has unveiled that while contouring is still essential in most beauty influencer's lives, blush is making a run for the most talked-about tool in the makeup world, and the numbers don't lie.

### **Key Takeaways**

- Contouring conversations, while still high, stagnated between 2016 and 2017
- Blush conversations rose and surpassed contouring between 2016 and 2017
- Beauty influencers have moved on to blush as the newest "trend" now that contouring has become a common practice in the mainstream
- Consumers are for once at the forefront of the conversation about blush and are driving influencers, instead of the other way around, to jump on the bandwagon

### **The Hard Numbers**

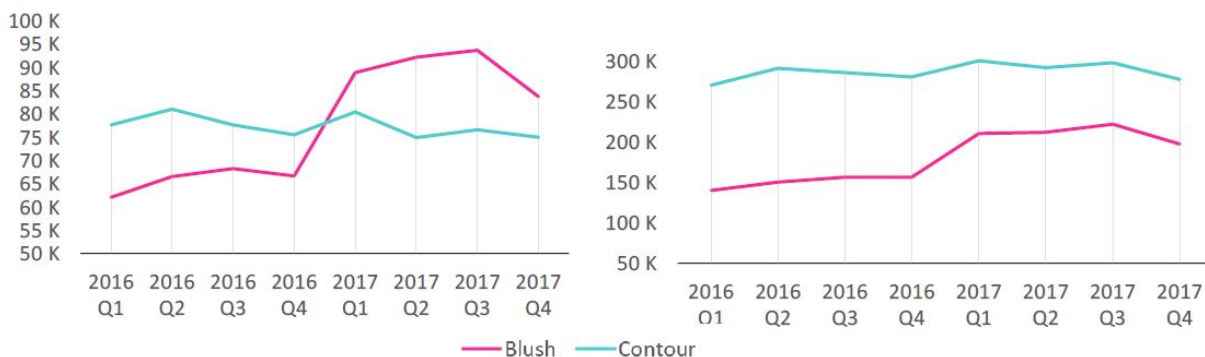
Preen.Me's surveyed 3.73 million posts on Instagram that arose from a series of different influencers in the beauty and makeup realms (each categorized by the number of followers). These posts were selected as they had mentioned either contouring, blush, or both in their text (whether through hashtags or directly). While contouring was still a highly talked about topic; consisting of more influencers posting consistently and almost systematically on the technique (2.29 million of the 3.73 million posts), the interactions between influencers and followers seem

to have fallen on a plateau. This plateau, while still impressive in its expanse and reach, still stagnated and seemed to not cause more followers to engage in recreating the technique themselves (as seen in years prior during the rise of contouring through social media).

	Posts mentioning the topic	People posting about the topic	Social Interactions around the topic
<b>Blush</b>	1.44M	435,766	218M
<b>Contouring</b>	2.29M	390,489	386M

Blush, while not having as many unique posters (1.44 million), had a rapid increase in a short amount of time when compared to contouring. During the final months of 2016 and the beginning of 2017 Preen.Me saw influencers shift their interest to blush. The reasoning behind this could be varied, however, the result caused a ripple effect within the influencer community. While the posts themselves were not as numerous, the fact that influencers were mentioning something new (amidst the sea of contouring posts) caused followers to perk up. This new subject caused a 17% decrease in interaction around posts mentioning contouring. Interactions such as this caused more posts to become apparent very quickly, and by the third quarter of 2017, blush had surpassed contouring in terms of unique posters.

Change in Number of Posters by Quarter      Change in Number of Posts by Quarter



## **Professionals vs. the Public**

It was noted that while professional makeup artists that had been included in the Preen.Me survey were still consistently talking about contouring (and also less about blush), the interactions and posting of the followers of these and other influencers were shifting in a direction where this new trend was garnering enough interest to possibly dethrone one of the world's most trending makeup techniques. These results are not only surprising for the future of makeup in terms of what the general public wants and has an interest for, but also for the direction in which influencers may have to begin to cater to their followers to remain relevant. Blush driving the makeup world is one point that can be inferred as interesting and a topic to watch. However, a second and just as crucial discussion has appeared as well: have the follower begun to influence the influencers?