

The Value of Working with Microinfluencers

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Jasmine Enberg



An interview with:
Laura Brinker

Vice President, Beauty Brand Partnerships
Influencer

When it comes to influencers, bigger isn't always better. eMarketer's Jasmine Enberg spoke with Laura Brinker, vice president of beauty brand partnerships at product discovery and review platform Influenster, about the rise of microinfluencers, why influencer marketing is here to stay and how it might look different in the future. [Editor's Note: We define a microinfluencer as an influencer with 1,000 to 10,000 followers.] Brinker was interviewed as part of eMarketer's July report, "**Global Influencer Marketing: What Platforms to Use, Policies to Follow and the Paths to Purchase Around the World.**"

eMarketer:

What kinds of influencers does Influenster work with?

Laura Brinker:

We primarily play in the field of microinfluencers, or consumer advocates. Most companies ascribe to a three-tier model of influencers: microinfluencers, up-and-comers, and megainfluencers or social superstars. Influenster also has relationships with with some of those larger influencers, but we're really focused on consumer advocates because that's where the marketplace is headed.

45.8%

of cosmetic, fashion and luxury marketers consider microinfluencers* the most effective influencers for their brand

Launchmetrics, Jan 2018; in Europe and the US; *10k-100k followers

eMarketer:

Why do you think the marketplace is heading that way?

Laura Brinker:

It's a continued evolution. People initially started turning to influencers because they felt they could get the voice of a person instead of a brand, and because—unlike celebrities—they weren't getting paid. Today, brand partnerships are how many larger influencers make a living, so the very reason people started looking to them doesn't necessarily exist anymore.

But consumer advocates still maintain a high degree of authenticity. People connect with them because they feel as if they're a person just like them. And because authenticity is at the core of what brands desire, they've started looking more toward smaller influencers with high engagement rates.

That's not to say that larger influencers aren't important. An influencer with 4 million followers has the ability to generate more awareness than someone with 1,000 followers.

eMarketer:

How does Influenster work with consumer advocates?

Laura Brinker:

Influenster started as a sampling box seven years ago, and it quickly became clear that when people receive a product, they want to talk about it. Now, Influenster is a digital platform where people go to research and review products, and where brands can connect with their audiences.

Today, 98% of the 25 million reviews on the platform are not incentivized. Those people do not receive a sample; they're just very eager to share what they know about products and brands. So, it's become a platform where people can connect with one another and share what they love about a product. In turn, brands can connect with those people.

“Because authenticity is at the core of what brands desire, they've started looking more toward smaller influencers with high engagement rates.”

eMarketer:

Some people in the industry believe that the influencer bubble is bound to burst. Do you agree?

Laura Brinker:

I don't think the model brands have for working with influencers will remain exactly the same as it is today. Those that operate in a purely paid capacity, for example, may need to think differently about what they offer.

But, the principle that people trust other people more than brands is not going to change. There is great power in word of mouth and community building. It's human nature to relate to your particular tribe of people. That's why the role of consumer advocates will continue to be extremely relevant.

eMarketer:

What are some other changes you foresee for influencer marketing in 2018?

Laura Brinker:

Influencers will continue to be integrated into every element of the marketing mix. All of the different parts—paid, owned and earned—will need to speak to one another, so influencer marketing will become something that everyone in an organization will have a role in.

Interview conducted on May 17, 2018