

Carnival Cruise Lines discovers the power of 'granfluencers' and TikTok

Article

The campaign: Carnival Cruise Lines teamed up with the retiree-focused TikTok group, Retirement House, to engage a multi-generational audience in an innovative manner.

Enter the granfluencer: Instead of the stereotypical young influencers, Retirement House's channel boasts retirees diving headfirst into Gen Z TikTok trends, offering a delightful 'fish out

of water' narrative.

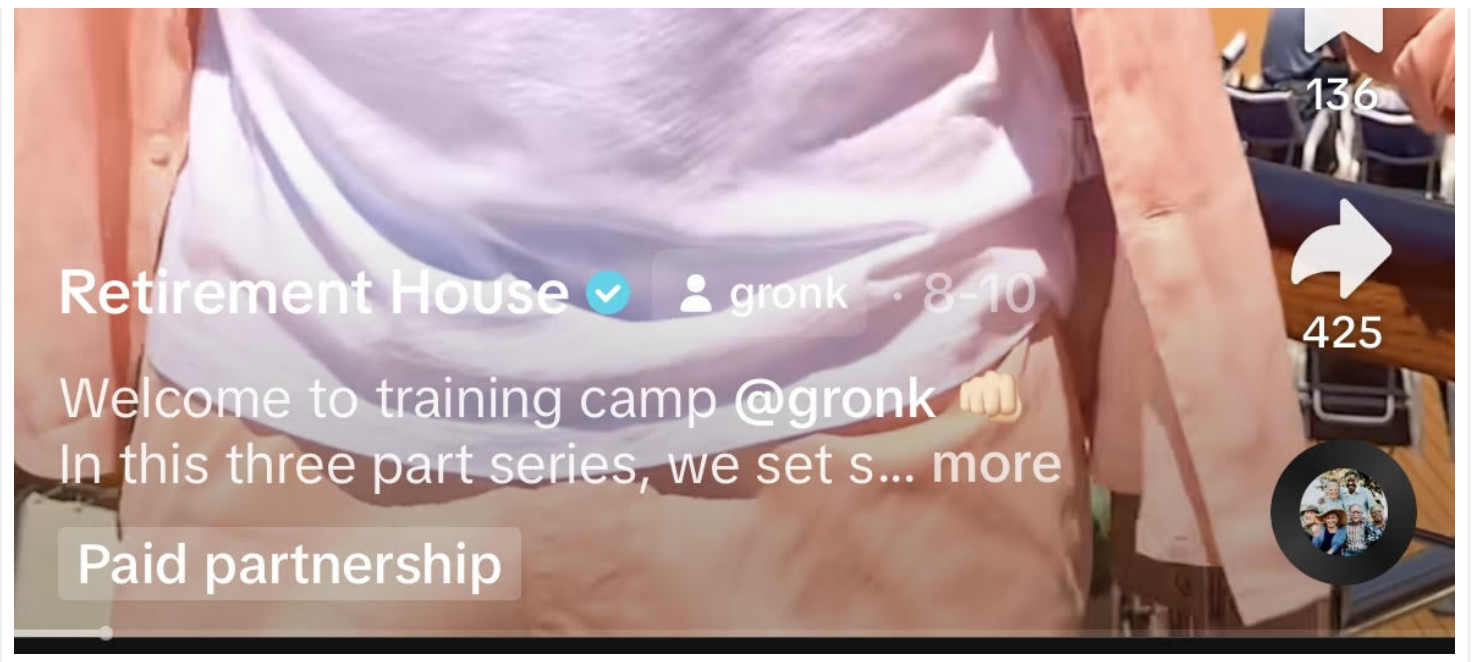
- The account has 5.3 million followers and has generated 120.4 million likes; in the process, it has garnered coverage from major media like “Good Morning America” to The New York Times, and placed them at the zenith of the “granfluencers” movement.
- While its strength remains with younger users, it's worth noting TikTok has 33.6 million US users ages 35 and older, per our forecast.

How it happened: The collaboration came to life with the aid of Gen Z media company **IF7** and ad agency **Initiative**.

The result was a TikTok series in which retired NFL star **Rob Gronkowski**, recruited by Carnival, gets lessons in leisure from the Retirement House crew on a cruise.

- The challenge was twofold: create engaging content that seamlessly integrated Carnival's brand and appealed to all age groups while preserving TikTok's authenticity and upholding brand values.
- Shot in 4 hours with two iPhones, the campaign produced a three-part series with Gronkowski and Retirement House, alongside other promotional clips.
- Initial data reveals **views exceeding targets, with 8.6 million on TikTok and 321,000 on Instagram Reels. Gronkowski's share in an Instagram story further boosted engagement, nearly doubling the metrics.**



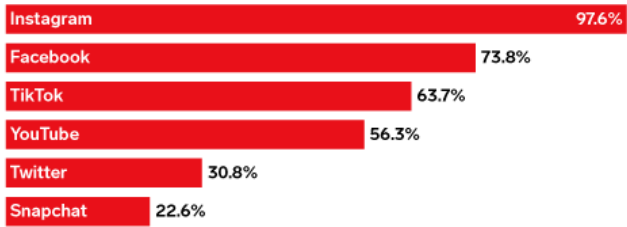


Wrapping up: Gronkowski's notoriety broadened the campaign's appeal, connecting with both sports fans and leisure seekers.

- For Carnival, TikTok's wide reach and authenticity made it an ideal platform choice. The tieup allowed for a natural brand integration into popular culture, showing the power of genuine engagement in the digital landscape while highlighting TikTok's influence on cultural conversations.
- "This was one of those initiatives that clicked for us immediately," said **Harley Block**, CEO of IF7. "The concept made everyone smile the second we started brainstorming it. Entering the cultural conversation in fun, non-traditional and organic ways with the right partners is what resonates with today's audiences."

Platforms Used by US Marketers for Influencer Marketing, 2023

% of marketers who use influencer marketing



Note: proprietary use of the mentioned platform for influencer marketing purposes by companies with 100+ employees; includes brand-influencer partnerships that are both paid and unpaid (i.e., noncash compensation such as free products or trips)
Source: Insider Intelligence | eMarketer, July 2023

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