

TikTok influencers far outperform Instagram for affiliate engagement

Article

The news: TikTok is still the king of short-form video when it comes to affiliate link engagement.

- Influencers on TikTok had a 5.2% engagement rate on affiliate links in 2023, per our [Industry KPIs](#) data from Captiv8. That's more than twice as much as influencers on Instagram (2.0%)

and **20 times more than YouTube** (0.2%).

TikTok on top: Instagram Reels and YouTube Shorts have both emerged to grasp at the short-form pioneer's throne, but both platforms have a lot of catching up to do when it comes to influencer marketing.

- Engagement rates for TikTok influencers far outpaced those for Instagram influencers with comparable audiences. TikTok influencers with zero to 50,000 followers had an engagement rate of **30.1%**, compared with just 1.8% for Instagram influencers.
- The gap between the platforms begins to close as follower counts rise. Affiliate links from influencers with 50,000 to 100,000 followers performed better on TikTok (14.5%) than **Instagram (2.5%)**, shrinking to 7% on TikTok and 2.3% on Instagram for influencers in the 100,000 to 200,000 range.

Bigger isn't better: Influencers with large followings don't always drive the highest engagement.

- Across both TikTok and Instagram, **influencers with 50,000 to 100,000 followers had the highest engagement**, with affiliate view rates of **157.1%** and **66.9%**, respectively.
- The findings suggest that the larger a creator's audience, the lower the level of engagement per viewer. It may be counterintuitive, but advertisers are already seeing the benefits of working with smaller creators; partnerships with so-called "**micro-influencers**" have **increased over the last several years**.

Why it matters: More advertisers are using Instagram Reels for influencer marketing, **per our July forecast**, even though TikTok appears to drive higher engagement for affiliates. Advertisers looking to get the most out of their spending may want to spend on TikTok instead, unless they see specific strategic benefits on Instagram.

- Takeaways about engagement relative to viewer count also suggest that smaller brands need not feel crowded out by the largest and most expensive influencers. Taking the time to find the *right* influencer is far more important than finding a non-specific partner with a large audience.

Industry KPIs: Social Affiliate Engagement Rate Worldwide, by Platform, Oct 2023



Note: percentage of an affiliate influencer's audience that interacts with an affiliate influencer's campaign or post on each platform; Includes likes, comments, and shares
Source: Captiv8, "Affiliate Influencer Marketing Benchmark Report," Oct 14, 2023

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