

Influencers and Instagram Stories: A Perfect Marriage?

Influencer experts discuss the unique appeal of Instagram Stories

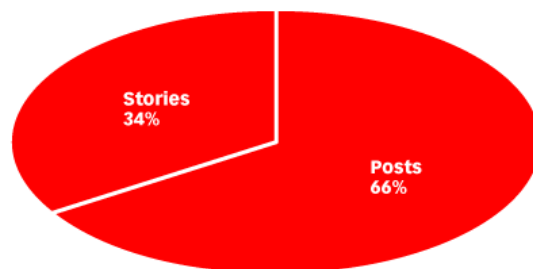
ARTICLE | **FEBRUARY 08, 2019**

Blake Drosch

Instagram Stories is increasingly popular with social media marketers. Last year, one in three Instagram posts containing "#ad" was a story, according to a study by [Klear](#).

When Facebook reported [its Q4 earnings](#) last month, CEO Mark Zuckerberg announced that 2 million advertisers were active on stories across Facebook, Instagram and Messenger last year.

Instagram Sponsored* Content Worldwide, Stories vs. Posts, 2018
% of total



*Note: represents activity tracked by Klear, broader industry metrics may vary; *content containing the hashtag #ad*
Source: Klear, "The State of Influencer Marketing 2019," Jan 14, 2019

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And the ad growth makes sense, because users are increasingly viewing stories. The feature has 500 million daily users—roughly half of Instagram's one-billion DAU count.

The gravitation towards Instagram Stories is particularly exciting for influencer marketers, who find that its behind-the-scenes ethos helps influencers establish an authentic connection with their followers.

As part of our upcoming report, “Influencer Marketing 2019,” we reached out to several industry experts to explain why Instagram Stories has become so popular in this space.

Christine Ngo Isaac, Brand Director and Head of U.S.

Consumer Engagement, Moët & Chandon: We follow influencers because we are genuinely interested in their lives. While I love Instagram grids, it's become a curation of the influencers' highlight reel. It's not real, and doesn't tap into the voyeurism that consumers crave. While influencers curate their stories, it's much more raw, and an unfiltered, behind-the-scenes look at what people are up to. That's where each influencers' true personality shine. When I'm assessing whether an influencers' ethos aligns with our brand's ethos, I'm looking at stories to help me decide.

Ethan Frame, Senior Manager of Influencer Marketing and Business Development, MVMT:

We have specifics for follower account. We have specifics for engagement rate. Just because you meet those criteria doesn't mean you're going to have influence. What I like to look for is someone who is constantly engaging with their audience. The most obvious way to do that on Instagram is through stories. Someone could have a beautifully curated profile that has 100,000 followers and each post gets engagement rates way above the norm, but that might be the end of it. The people that are getting on the story, talking to their fans and responding to the comments—really interacting and developing that bond—do best.

Brandon Perlman, CEO and Founder, Gramlist: If somebody looks at your Instagram, they're going to get a window into your life. If they look at your stories, whatever you posted today is gone tomorrow. Influencers love them because that content doesn't have to live as part of the tapestry of their life. You can have a lot more fun with a story. It's

more natural. It's less branded and sponsory. It aligns more with one's lifestyle. Every single one of our campaigns in the last six months has had a story component, where maybe one in five did a year before.

Toto Haba, Senior Vice President of Global Digital, Benefit

Cosmetics: As beauty influencers start to make their feeds more curated and a lifestyle expression of themselves, they can work more directly with brands on their stories to showcase products. We've had a huge investment in stories because that's where people are talking about brands and customers are learning from these influencers about brands as well. We've also found that stories are pretty good at driving click referrals — traffic.

Gil Eyal, CEO and Founder, HYPR: [Stories] is the first time we can get closer to other advertising channels because you can actually put an outgoing link and see if people ended up on your website. It sounds like influencer marketing has been around forever, but it's so new that up until a few months ago, you could only do it if you had more than a million followers, now it's up to if you have over 10,000 followers. We don't really have data to show that stories are performing better than traditional videos and posts yet.