

How To Run A Successful Influencer & Celebrity Campaign On A Budget



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With the rise of social media, brands can get their products in front of celebrities and influencers through gifting, producing a great response at little expense. Gifting products in exchange for mentions digitally, whether that be an Instagram post or a mention on Facebook, is a hugely popular way for influencers and brands to collaborate. Take photo printing app Lalalab; they generated 4,500 social posts and reached 70 million people in just one year. How? Because they gifted their products to influencers.

It might seem like a daunting thought to reach out to celebrities and influencers, which is why we've made an easy and comprehensive plan for you to harness the power of social media marketing and use it to your advantage. According to www.bigcommerce.co.uk, the two most important things to businesses who use influencer marketing are brand awareness (metrics tied to audience awareness of your product or service, such as content impressions, likes, comments and traffic) and direct response (metrics tied to specific actions, such as clicks, sales, conversions and subscribers).

There are hundreds of companies who have used influencer and celebrity gifting to maximise their sales. Sarah Shaw's company Sarah Shaw Handbags grew to a multiple eight-figure business thanks to press in magazines like ELLE, INStyle, as well as being worn by celebs like Jennifer Aniston and Oprah. So take notes; before long you might just have the marketing tools you've always wanted.

“There are so many benefits to getting your product photographed in the hands of a celebrity. The media is much more likely to be interested in your brand if you have celebs behind you.” – Sarah Shaw

1. Know your target audience

The reason many companies struggle with influencer marketing is not that the channel doesn't work, it's often because their sponsored content is not thoughtfully planned or authentically aligned with the audience. If you wanted to advertise baby clothes, you probably wouldn't pay for a two-page spread in a car magazine. The same goes for choosing which influencers you would like to gift to. Follow them and see how their followers interact with their content. Get an idea of age

demographic, and what kind of other businesses they endorse or recommend. If you read comments under an Instagram post that have negative feedback, take this on board when approaching the influencers you choose. You want to make your product and brand stand out, and imagine what your audience are looking for.

Emily Weiss, the founder of Glossier, repeatedly asked herself the question “would I wear this beauty brand’s logo on a sweatshirt?”, but kept coming to the same conclusion—no. Weiss knew that she needed to push her niche brand in order to solidify her companies place in the beauty world. At launch in 2014, Glossier made a grey sweatshirt and model Karlie Kloss was photographed wearing one. When the company announced it would sell a second sweatshirt – a pale pink hoodie with the Glossier name across the chest – as part of its new GlossiWEAR merchandise line in 2019, 10,000 people joined a waiting list to buy it.



The shift over the past few years has shown that micro-influencers can be just as powerful as macro-influencers. Many small businesses are choosing to work with smaller influencers, with around 5k+ followers, who have a niche following or more loyal followers and using this to their advantage. With 198,000 followers on Instagram, Spotlight Oral Care grew from a small Irish company into one that is endorsed by celebrities and influencers all around the world. Co-founder Lisa Creaven was extremely aware of the power of influencer marketing, and knew that the value of her products was more important to their customers than price. She notes how important it is to find influencers who are



“aligned with your brand”, and focus on quality over quantity. In doing this she found influencers like [Emma Louise Connolly](#) (477k followers) and [Lydia Millen](#) (1.5M followers) to promote their oral beauty company.

Choosing to promote your brand with micro-influencers is often the sweet spot. Their followers are loyal to them thanks to an interest in their content. So if you are an organic juice company with a brand new drink for sale, sending a few bottles to an influencer who promotes organic healthy lifestyles would be a great bet. You can ensure higher engagement with someone like Clare Every at [The Little London Vegan](#), rather than your bottles being potentially cast aside if you sent them to Innocent Drinks HQ.

2. Research and reach out

Now that you’ve done your homework and decided which influencers would fit best for your brand, it’s time to find them. One way to reach out is through Instagram DMs, but often this can be time consuming and have little to no results. If you are an influencer with thousands of followers, chances are you receive tons of messages every single day. You want to reach the right person but not get drowned out by all the others who are attempting to do the same thing. Use the information you’ve found to understand the exact type of brand your influencer has worked with before, here are some [tips on finding the right influencer for your brand](#), so that you can aim to go against the grain and guarantee your brand [gets noticed and results from influencer marketing](#). Personal emails and direct telephone numbers of influencer representatives can be found [here](#), which will allow you to bypass all of the extra faff when getting your influencer on board.

You should strive to identify the correct talent for your company, and that’s super simple with the [platform](#) we offer. Highly advanced search categories allowing you to customise and refine your search and gain more in depth analysis. Combine this with the research you have done through following your interested influencers and you’re onto a winner!

[The Handbook](#) has over 600,000 global celebrity and influencer contact details, which are constantly updated. For full data on engagement and reach, as well as full audience breakdown by category for celebrities and influencers, have a look [here](#). It is so important to choose the exact right influencer that resonates with your brand, so you can reach all of your potential new customers.

3. Choose what to send

Choosing the correct product to send to your selected influencer is just as important as fine tuning your business model. Will they use it? Is it something they won’t have seen before? You want to make sure that when your product shows up at their door it isn’t getting thrown in with a pile of hundreds of other PR gifts.

Personalising your gift is a sure fire way of allowing your product to stand out from the crowd. The popularity of personalised gifts over the last few years has been immense, from monogrammed handbags to engraved water bottles, to initial key rings. An easy way to grab attention is to send your gift around the time of an influencers birthday. We list all the celebrity’s and influencer’s

birthdays on The Handbook, so try timing in gifts around this. Send a nice personalised card with the gift, and follow up too, to see if they liked it.



Companies like In The Style have taken Instagram and used it to get the advertising for their products they didn't have the budget for. Starting with only £960 in his account and 6 dresses, Adam Frisby used TOWIE star Lauren Pope to promote his company. In The Style is now worth over £30 million and it has collaborated with many UK celebrities including Billie Faiers, Jacqueline Jossa and Emily Attack. By sending influencers the right dress or outfit for their occasion, like a night out, Frisby solidified In The Style as the perfect one-stop-shop for all kinds of events. Since then, In The Style has created unique collections with TV personalities including Charlotte Crosby and Billie Faiers as well as introducing the OGs of Instagram into the mix, with collections by Sarah Ashcroft, Lorna Luxe, Laila Loves and Steph Sa.

Additionally, get your product into goody bags for an event, such as The CFDA Fashion Awards. More often than not, if you provide products, you get invitations to attend the event (an added bonus for you!). You can view all high profile events in our diary, in case you need any inspiration.

Express delivery is another good way to attract positive attention. It makes it look like you really want to get your product to them, which you do! Be direct and brief in your approach, and even consider using a courier service. That way you can track the journey of your package and smooth out any potential mishaps before they happen.

It's important to keep in touch and show the influencers that they're valued, which will make them want to continue working with your brand past a one-off campaign. Keep in mind that as your brand grows, so will your micro-influencers, and having a good relationship with them can be more valuable than any paid marketing campaign. You can work towards paid partnerships, all from you sending an initial free gift that made them feel special.

4. Give the right first impression

We've all been on the receiving end of a poorly composed email, and it usually leaves behind a pretty negative feeling. That's why it's crucial to send a well-worded email once your product is on the way to your chosen influencer. Consider the main points you want to get across- Do you want them to know about the history of your brand? Perhaps you think they would resonate more

with your specialised research? Whatever your USP is, make sure you emphasise this and why they absolutely need to collaborate with you.

Get started with a strong opener. You want to grab their attention from the get go, so be direct and concise. Try something like this:

“Hi Sarah, I am Elly Stancliffe, founder of The Handbook and I want to officially welcome you to my world. About 10 years ago, I started my first online business and this hobby became my obsession and business.”

You can go on to give a brief overview of you and your brand; maybe mention why you started your company and where you fit in the market. Once you’ve established a good idea of your overall business, you can go on to discuss why you believe they would be a perfect match for your brand, and what you can offer them. Ease into the sales pitch, you don’t want to scare them off. Try something along the lines of the following:

“I read your recent interview in Vogue magazine where you mentioned that you have dry skin, and don’t like to wear heavy make-up as a result. If you’re struggling with dry skin then I would love you to try this as I think it will really help, especially under foundation”.

Keep in mind that you want to come across as adding value to their life, not pushing for something in return. Instead of screaming for attention, you attract attention by giving value before there is a hint of asking for anything in return. It’s better to lay out the ground work and show how professional and helpful you are, than to go in with all guns blazing.

Conclude your email on a grateful and positive note. Express how much it means to you that they took time to read your email and try out your product. You want to encourage them to reply to you, so maybe offer to schedule a phone call or video call to catch up.

“Thank you so much for taking the time to read through my proposal. If you have any questions at all, I would love to schedule a call with you. I really hope that my moisturiser for dry skin will be a great new part of your daily skin care routine!”

Don’t forget to include any contact details so they can reach you, and follow up after a week or two if you haven’t heard back. Juicy Couture believes their exponential growth is all down to celebrity gifting, so making use of influencer gifting really does pay off! Juicy Couture knew Cameron Diaz loved the colour blue so they sent her all of their new pieces in blue which she was frequently spotted out and about in. By giving a great first impression you are more likely to persuade them to work with you again in the future. Whilst you’re waiting for one celebrity or influencer to get back to you, contact others. The more celebrities and influencers you write to, the better your chance of an outcome.

5. Consider an event

If you have the budget to host an influencer event or campaign, this can be a great way of getting exposure for your brand across lots of different channels. Take Bonobos for example- When they launched the #BetterThanAC campaign with Foster Huntington, all of the posts included clothes

from Bonobos' Summer Collection. All of the photos and videos were taken in natural outdoor surroundings to show the summer environment. Thanks to these tailored posts, they generated over 5.1 million impressions combined. They also got over 68,000 engagements, which increased their engagement rate by almost 3 times.

Let's say you have a new skincare range that targets rosacea. Once you have done your research and found a few beauty influencers that you think would be perfect for your brand's image, you could decide to get them all in the same room (socially distant, of course!). If you need some help, have a look at our list of [venue openings](#). Imagine the influencers have an average of 7k followers and usually charge £500 for two Instagram story frames. By creating opportunities for influencers to create organic content, you can increase your ROI. Not only does this mean the content that their followers



look for will be authentic, it will also convey your brand in an authentic way.

Influencers won't want to market your products to their audience if they're really expensive either, and they will also want your audience to feel that they've got a great deal through following them, so maybe offer a discount to their members when they mention the product. If you host an event, you should have your own hashtag for the event. The influencers can use this every time they post about the products and events, and can generate more viewers by getting the hashtag trending. Not only will the influencer get a better response from the post or story but you'll generate a lot more potential customers.

If you can't afford to host your own event, why not attend one? Consider something like SocialDay, which is set to occur in from May 20



to 22 at Phantom Peak. This three-day festival offers immersive opportunities on social media and influencer marketing, networking events with industry leaders, in-depth sessions and more.



6. Measure your success

It may take some time to reap the rewards of your influencer gifting or event, but trust me when I say it is so worth it! It's important to remember to set goals, and use elements that you can track so you can measure your success. Things like website traffic, social media mentions and social media following increases all help you to visibly track just how well your gifting has been. This is a fantastic way to encourage influencers to keep in contact with you and work with you again in the future. As we said previously about statistics, show them just how beneficial it has been for both of you thanks to their influence.

Do ensure your influencers are sending you the reach and engagement rate for each sponsored post, and perhaps put together a follow up proposal to highlight the success for both parties. Pie charts

and graphs are a great way to visually engage the reader with your figures; and try to thank them for doing business with you in your follow up too.

If you're providing any type of website link for your influencer to promote, make sure to add UTM tags to the link. That way, you can track page visits and conversions on Google Analytics or similar software. According to www.medium.com, "Onalytica grew their website traffic by 400% using just influencer marketing". They made effective use of discount codes, UTM tags and landing pages. If a certain tracking type doesn't work for you so well the first time, maybe try another. It's helpful to have a specific conversion goal in mind, and work towards this throughout your different influencer engagements.

Another thing to consider is your chosen influencer may not work for you. Don't be disheartened- there are plenty more out there! Influencers are constantly evolving their platforms and image, so what worked once before may not be relevant later. As long as you keep coming back to the first point, doing your research, you should be able to target the right people for the right audience.

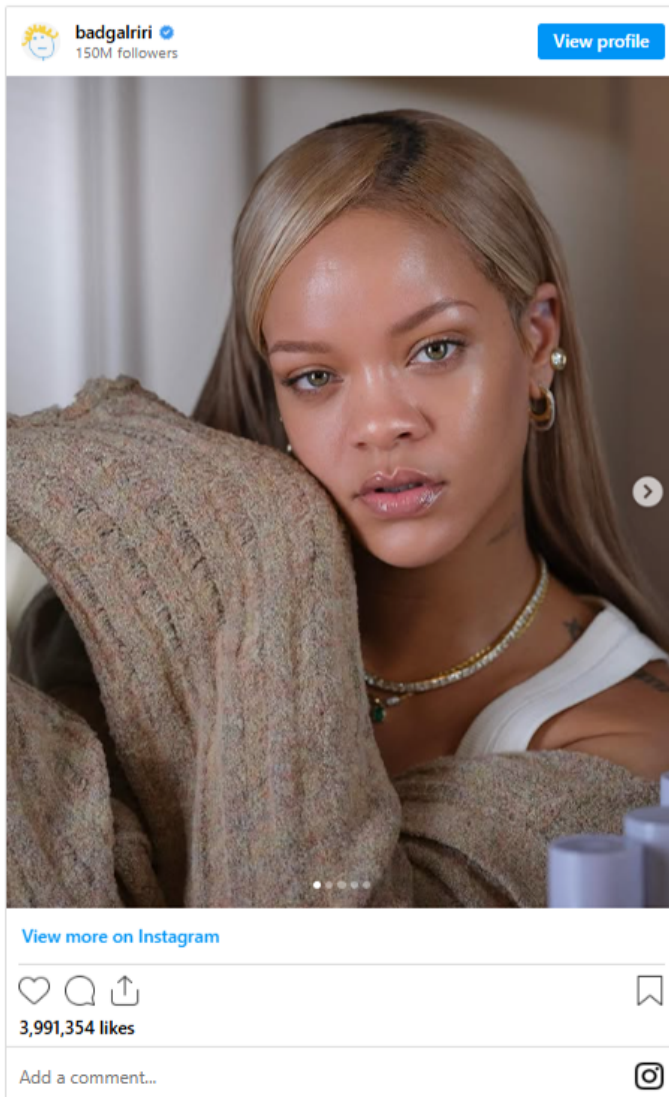
7. Think long term

What are your long-term goals beyond this influencer gifting campaign? Do you want to keep your brand within the same market, or maybe you are hoping to delve into other areas and expand? Whatever your goals are, be sure to keep them at the foreground of every interaction you have with influencers and get your passion across.

Another great tip is to think outside the box. During the pandemic so many companies had to get creative in their marketing strategies and entice people in without seeing the products in real life. A example of this is Function Of Beauty, a specialised hair brand who focus on customised hair products for each individual consumer. With their personalised products as their USP, they turned the negative side of lockdown into a positive with their in-depth online consultation (or quiz). The fun element of the quiz meant that people were intrigued, and usually left the website having purchased a product. Zoe Sugg is an influencer who also advertised Function Of Beauty during this time, and offered a 20% discount through her promo code for all of her Instagram followers (9.2M followers).

Get together a portfolio of any previous campaigns you have done, or if this is your first then show off your friends and family using your product. The more people using your brand the better! Influencers love to see the enthusiasm behind a company and know that they would be working with





a brand that truly cares about what it is selling. Consumers listen more to influencers than ad campaigns these days, something that Rihanna has taken into account when putting on her Savage X Fenty shows.

She uses mostly celebrities and influencers in her campaigns and runway shows, and promotes inclusivity, which resonates very well with her customers. Savage X Fenty also dedicates a significant proportion of its marketing budget to social media and influencers on these platforms to create viral advertising content. Ruth Griffin, retail director at Gowling WLG, comments on why retailers are using non-traditional channels to market themselves over traditional ones. “The confidence with which Fenty and others dedicate so much resource to this channel is a reflection of how effective non-traditional methods are at reaching a certain audience,” she said.

Tempted to grow your brand quickly via influencer marketing? Check out The Handbook’s influencer marketing platform, and reach any global celebrity or influencer in seconds.

It can’t be denied that influencer gifting is one of the most effective ways of marketing, and

following the above steps will ensure you get the most out of social media and make the platforms available work to your advantage. From small free gifts, right up to paid partnerships and beyond, a successful influencer campaign starts right here.

Reach out to celebrities and influencers here.