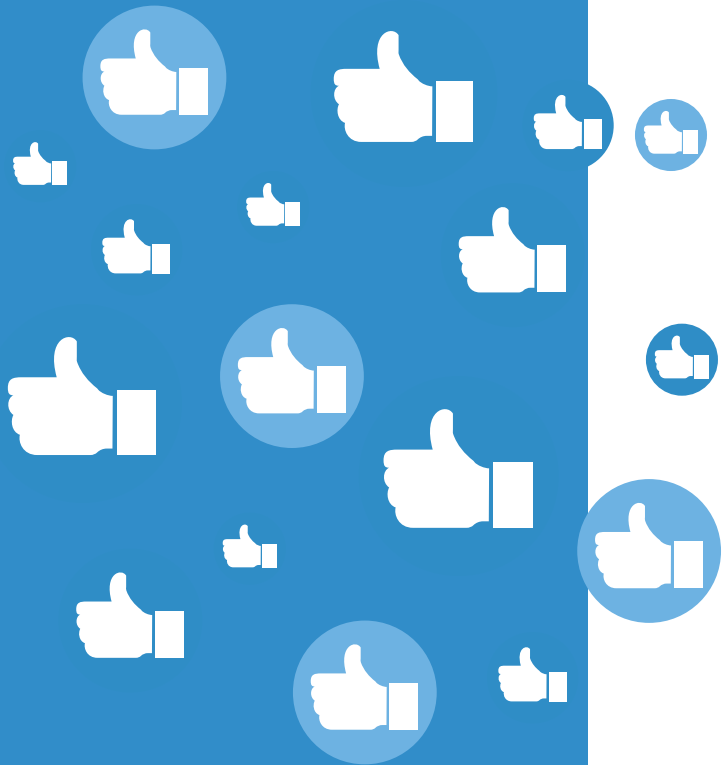
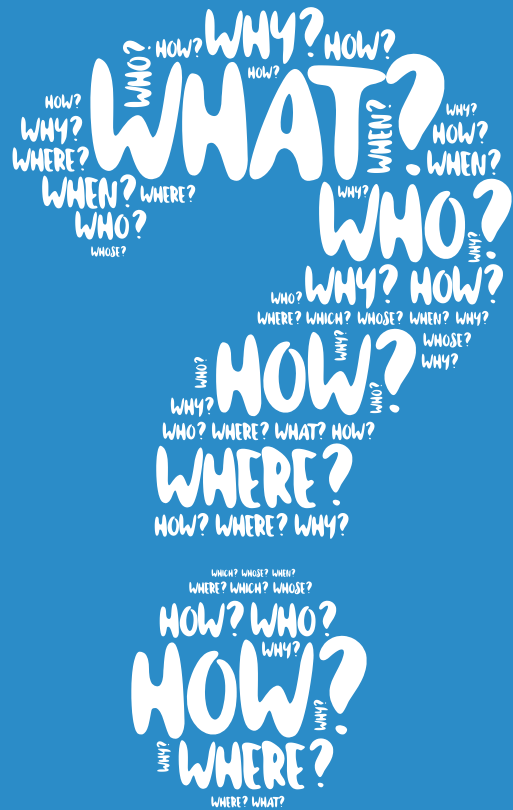




Influencer marketing best practice: Seven lessons learned



The how, what, why and when of influencer marketing



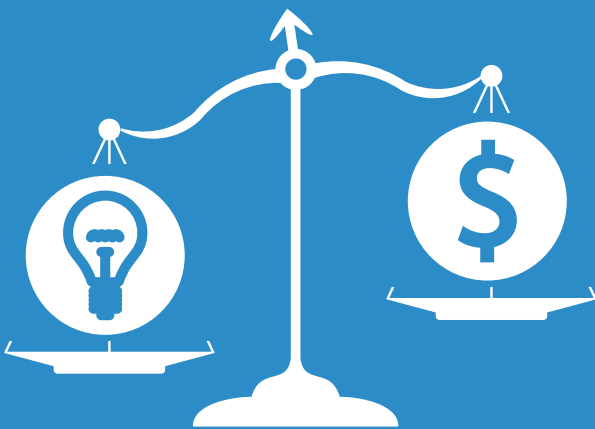
Paying celebrities to recommend products has been around since the 18th century, when British company Wedgwood used royal endorsements to help market its china. Fast-forward to today, and “influencers” are marketing’s hot currency, the stars of social media, paid to promote products to fans and followers. They’re often used to appeal to younger, harder to reach consumers.

Done right, and the integration of the brand is seamless, with the influencer having editorial control of what they post on Instagram, YouTube, Snapchat or other social channels, always including a label to show that it’s a paid-for promotion. If an influencer is a fan of your brand already that can only help in the credibility stakes, and they’ll be more open to understanding what you as a marketer want from the relationship.



An influencer doesn't have to have a following of millions – working with several 'micro' influencers can be more effective for targeting. For marketers, finding the right kinds of influencers to represent their brands is the important first step. We can help with both finding influencers and [measuring the impact of influencer marketing](#).

Here is a variety of examples showing how brands have worked with influencers, followed by key learnings on how best to collaborate with them. And if we've piqued your interest, we'd be delighted to help you find influencers to work with as well as evaluating your campaign's effectiveness. Find out more at www.metrixlab.com

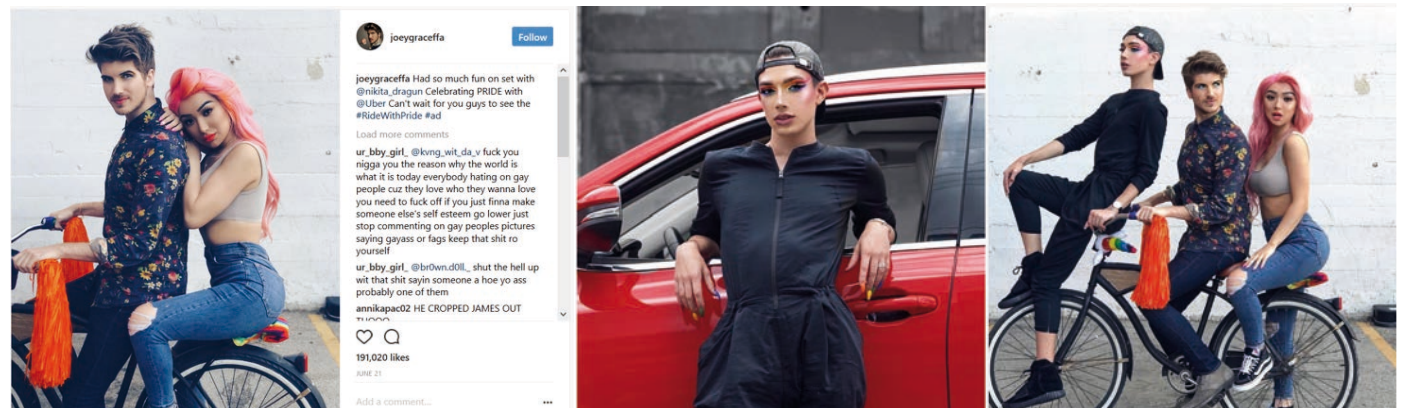


#1

Uber #RideWithPride



Instagram is all about image, and is a blend of glossy pictures on its main screen and amateur snaps posted on Instagram Stories. [Uber worked with influencers on its #RideWithPride](#) campaign to celebrate LGBTQ Pride events around the world, including makeup artist James Charles, who was appointed CoverGirl's first CoverBoy in 2016. His [Instagram post about the initiative](#) got more than 170,000 likes, from a following of 2.3m. #RideWithPride is also being promoted by transgender model Nikita Dragun and YouTube star Joey Graceffa.



#2

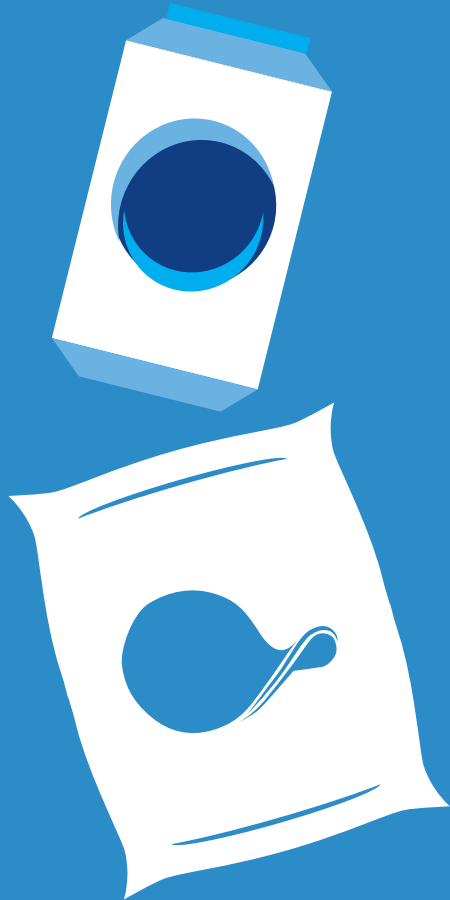
Josh Peck and Axe

Working with influencers can be a great way to communicate with harder-to-reach audiences. Male grooming brand Axe realized that men were unsure about hair products. So in March 2017, it appointed 30 "[Axe Hair Creators](#)" to make "Instagroom" tutorial videos. One of them was actor [Josh Peck, who posted a funny video on Instagram](#) sending up the idea of him as a style icon, and incorporating an Axe product in a way that felt natural.



#3

IndaHash and PepsiCo



You don't need a world-famous social media star to promote your campaign. Anyone can be an influencer, and there are now tools like IndaHash, NeoReach and HYPR that brands can use to automatically find people with the right kind of followers.

[Lays and Pepsi worked with IndaHash](#) to find influencers to promote chips and drinks during European Champions League soccer matches. They were tasked with posting celebratory pictures when someone scored, snacks included, resulting in an engagement rate of eight percent – around double the average.



#4

Grace Helbig and St Ives

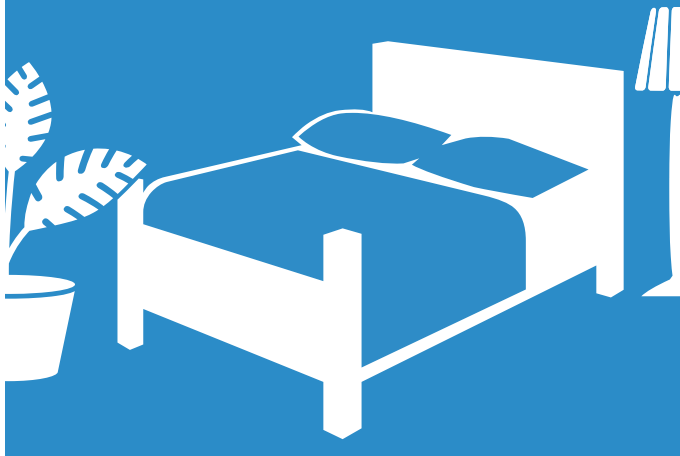
Letting the influencer do their own thing with your brand can be a scary prospect, but risks often pay off. TV personality Grace Helbig has more than three million subscribers on her YouTube channel and posts videos such as "[How to: Hot dog burgers](#)" and "HUGE bathing suit try on haul" where she put costumes on over her clothes. One of her first brand partnerships was with [St Ives to promote a spray lotion](#), which had a "great" reaction, she told an audience at Cannes Lions 2017. Why? Because the company let her have creative license: she made a funny video in which she ends up visiting a paradise called St Ives.



#5

Gaten Matarazzo and Holiday Inn

Running an event with your chosen influencer can amplify the impact of a campaign. 14 year-old actor Gaten Matarazzo is star of Netflix series Stranger Things, and with 1.8m Instagram followers and more than 300,000 Twitter followers, he has a growing social media presence. In May, [Holiday Inn announced a “Summer of Smiles” partnership with Matarazzo](#) to promote educational events for those on vacation. The teen star posted about it on his social media pages, as well as hosting an event for the hotel chain. His post generated more than [70,000 likes on Instagram](#), which is comparable with the response he gets for Stranger Things posts.



#6

Camila Coutinho and Net-a-Porter

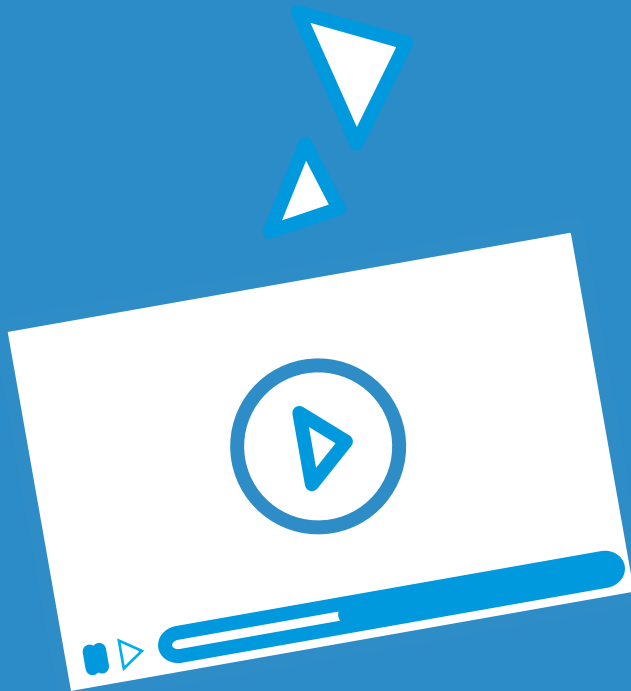


One way for brands to work with influencers is to let them take over their social media accounts. Retailer Net-a-Porter worked with Brazilian beauty blogger [Camila Coutinho during the 2016 Olympic Games in Rio](#), where Coutinho modelled fashion items and chose her favorite locations in the city. This can be a more authentic way to work with social media stars than simply paying them to promote a product.



#7

Jack Douglass and Lynda.com



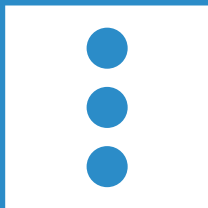
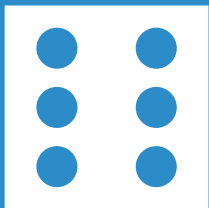
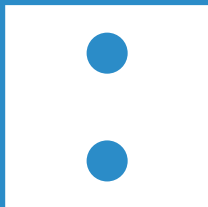
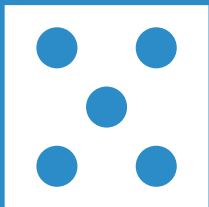
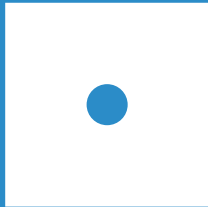
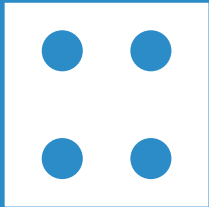
Ad blocking is a huge issue for marketers: by December 2016, there were more than 600 million devices blocking ads globally, [according to PageFair](#). So, businesses must get more creative in getting their message across. Skills website Lynda.com (now owned by LinkedIn) worked with YouTuber Jack Douglass in creating short sponsored films with Douglass challenging viewers to use tools from Lynda.com to “make something awesome”. [One video got more than 1.7m views](#) in a blend of advertising and fun content.



#8

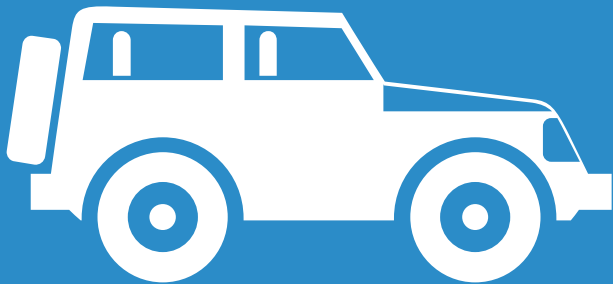
Las Vegas Snapchat launch with DJ Khaled

When the Las Vegas Convention and Visitors Authority launched its Snapchat account, it knew it needed to work with someone intrinsically linked to the destination. So it hired producer and Las Vegas [entertainer DJ Khaled to take over the account](#), giving him a 'key' to the strip so he could post pictures of his experiences including a massage at The Palazzo spa, a gondola ride at The Venetian and a night in a suite at The Cosmopolitan. [Las Vegas also used its Twitter account to show what was going on.](#)



#9

Subaru – Meet an Owner



Car manufacturer Subaru realised that people look for personal recommendations and advice when considering a new car. It created the [Meet an Owner website](#), starting with sponsored posts from influencers who own Subaru's vehicles, working with Instagram stars such as magician Zach King (who has nearly 20 million followers) and encouraging real people to get involved. [One of King's video posts had more than 4.5 million views.](#)



#10

Keeping up with the ultimate influencers



No list of influencer marketing campaigns would be complete without a mention of the Kardashian-Jenner dynasty. Brands clamour to work with Kylie, Kim, Kendall, Khloe, Kourtney and mom Kris, who collectively have more than 400 million followers on Instagram alone. Model Kendall Jenner, for example, worked with Estee Lauder to appeal to younger consumers to promote its Pure Color Love lipstick range using the hashtag #LoveLipRemix and a [video](#) which appeared on the brand's website. [An Instagram post from Jenner in March](#) has been seen almost nine million times.





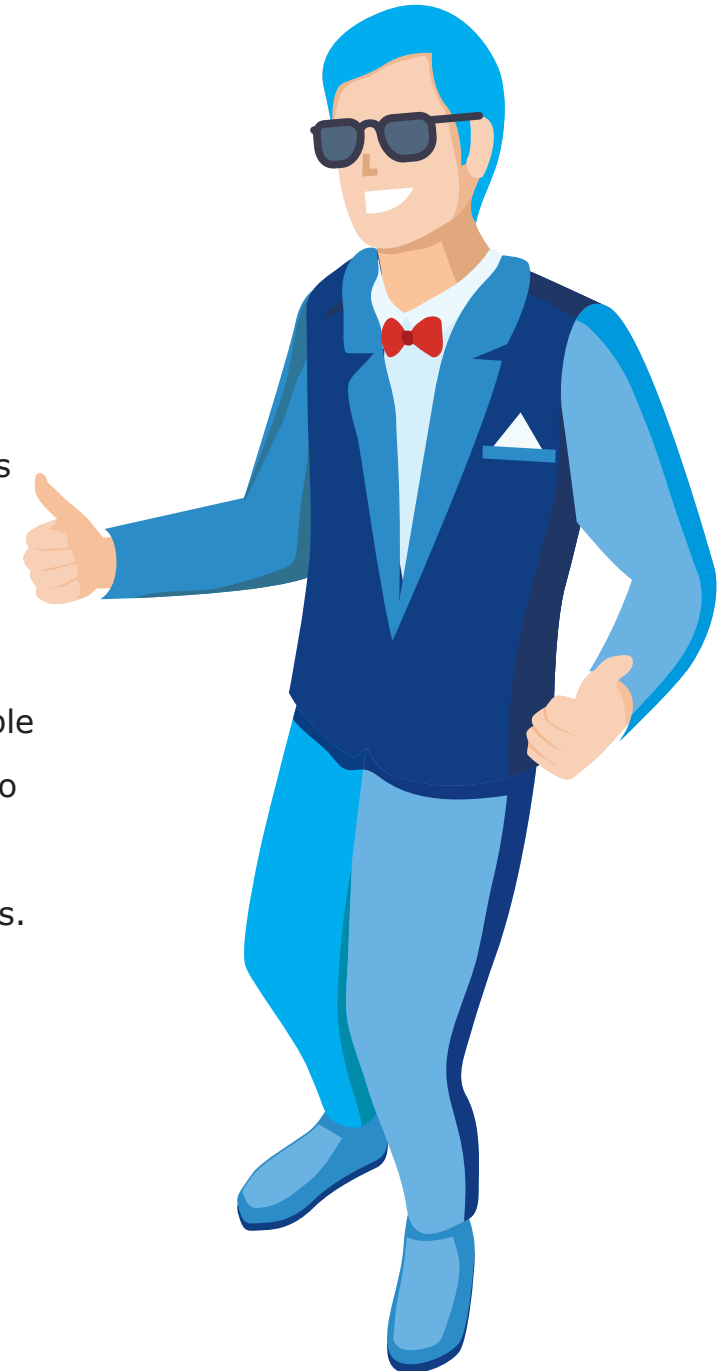
Key learnings

1. Don't try to force your brand in

It is obvious to social media followers when a product or post is trying to sell something in an overt way. If it doesn't look natural, people will be turned off. Sponsored posts should look and feel like part of the environment (also known as 'native' posts), rather than being the social media equivalent of an advertorial.

2. Bigger isn't always better

Influencers with a moderate number of followers are perceived to be more credible and authentic, as [MetrixLab found when it worked with a Fortune 500 company](#) to identify influencers to promote its brand. While a Kardashian endorsement might seem the dream, it makes sense to work with people who have smaller audiences. Think about the role of a TV ad versus more personal marketing – one is mass-market but the other might be much more effective.



3. Don't try to pass advertising off as editorial

There is a fine line these days between advertising and pure editorial content, especially in a world where ad blocking is prolific. Generating “earned” media, where a celebrity or influencer naturally likes your brand (without having to pay them to say they do) is the ultimate in what might be called holistic marketing.

The best examples of influencer marketing are when paid-for endorsements appear natural, and do not seem like advertising (see number one), but they must be labelled correctly, as #spon or #ad. [The Federal Trade Commission in the US recently wrote to influential Instagrammers](#) reminding them that they must disclose paid-for endorsements. MetrixLab's own Keith Sutherland questioned the ethics of services such as Social Chain, which uses its own social media accounts to advertise, [in a blog post earlier this year](#).



4. Think carefully about hashtags

Make sure you keep the language of your campaign consistent. If you are using influencer marketing to drive people to your website, enter a competition (so you can collect their data) or change perceptions of your brand, think carefully about what you call it. Hashtags on Instagram or Twitter should be short, simple and easy to remember. You might want to use keywords that will search well organically, or include them as part of a paid search campaign.

5. Include calls to action

Some brands like to build up excitement about their involvement with an influencer, and agree a “teaser” post (whether that’s a short video for YouTube or an image for Instagram). It’s usual for an influencer to announce a partnership, as James Charles did with Uber’s #RideWithPride campaign. But calls to action are also a must – think about what you want people to do as a result of seeing it. Apart from liking a post, are you trying to drive people to a website, enter a competition or post their own pictures as part of your campaign?

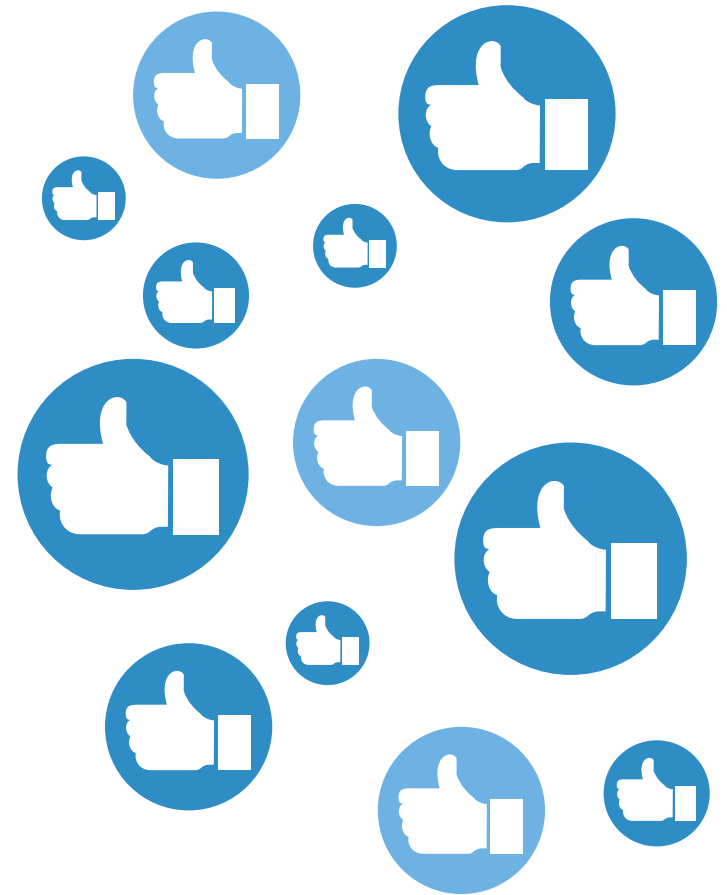


6. Amplify in other media

Just as Las Vegas tweeted pictures of its Snapchat launch with DJ Khaled enjoying his key to the strip, consider how best to use other social media. If it's a launch, agree what time your influencers will post content, and you can then amplify that across all your other channels. If your campaign includes TV or other mass media spend, it's likely the two will complement each other – see this case story on MetrixLab's with a global confectionary brand [here](#).

7. Experiment and think creatively

Some brands lend themselves more obviously to working with influencers, as in the Net-a-Porter and blogger Camila Coutinho example above. Instagram is a visual medium and it's obvious that fashion and beauty work well on the channel. But a car manufacturer, for example, might find it harder to think of ways to create content beyond showing features of the vehicle. Subaru's 'Meet an Owner' campaign is an inventive way of working with influencers.



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Learn more

To understand more about our range of solutions, including social media listening, measurement of influencer activity and influencer optimization, visit www.metrixlab.com or contact us at info@metrixlab.com.

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