

# The role of influencers for ecommerce brands

Issued by [TDMC](#)

11 Oct 2022

For South African consumers, the shift from bricks-and-mortar shopping to online retail has traditionally been slow. Although half the population has access to the internet and mobile services, online sales have accounted for less than 2% of retail purchases. Until 2020. Nicola Ashe, from TDMC, takes a closer look at [the role of influencers in the ecommerce space](#).

55% of South African internet users aged 16-64 now say they expect to shop online more frequently even after the pandemic ends<sup>1</sup>. As new purchasing behaviours replace traditional retail methods and the amount of advertising money being redirected from offline to online continues to grow, the ecommerce environment is quickly becoming an engaging alternative to physical retailers. The ability to use social networks and interactions to assist with online sales means that influencer marketing is no longer a brash approach to marketing; brands are able to build integrated, data-driven influencer campaigns that combine customer experience and digital transformation. Just how marketers work with influencers, though, is key.



According to a *Business Insider Intelligence* report, brands will spend up to \$15 billion on influencer marketing by 2022. Many international brands have tried their hand at influencer marketing in recent years, but in South Africa it's a fledgling environment. Local brands need to take note, as when done correctly, influencers are not just amplifiers but

communicators, who can create authentic content that resonates with their audience and keeps their followers engaged without looking like a traditional advert or sponsored post. Influencer marketing can be one of the most powerful techniques that you use, if you partner with the right ones.

Today's customers are savvy, easily differentiating between paid and real reviews and brands need to do their research before deciding on which influencer to work with. The days of influencer marketing as a one-off strategy are numbered and brands should view influencer partnerships as part of their bigger strategy, to ensure they generate results. Ecommerce brands should be partnering with influencers on an ongoing basis to boost brand loyalty and sales, rather than switching them on and off for different campaigns.

Consumers engage well with influencers, especially when they are experts in a specific niche. The influencer is able to provide reviews of specific products, revealing how the products work, as well as offer discounts or alert their followers to promotions, in turn driving followers to a brand's online store. Discounts for high value products provided via influencers are a big advantage for their followers and it's much more interesting to watch an influencer's video than a branded video ad. 93% of consumers are interested in seeing discounts codes from creators<sup>2</sup>. Influencers who create their own content and manage their accounts directly, have a distinctly personal tone that resonates with their followers and brands can tap into this to easily connect with them.

Quality not quantity is key - it's not good enough to simply have a large follower count. In the ecommerce environment, an influencer needs to be able to deliver clicks and sales. Marketing teams will need to consider performance-based deals that deliver sales, which in turn means integrating an influencer strategy into their marketing plans. The right influencer with high credibility and an engaged audience is able to work with brands to build their reputation because of their authenticity and ability to build trusting relationships with their followers long term.

For any ecommerce brand embarking on a journey into the influencer marketing space, special attention should be paid to exclusivity, usage rights and content ownership on how and where content can be used, as well as for how long. Working with the right influencer who is an expert in a specific niche, is an exceptionally effective tool for growing an online business.

## References:

1. We are social / Hootsuite July 2020 Report
2. Influencer.com

" **8 key Meltwater take outs and how they should shape digital strategy** 9 May 2024

" **Retailer insights: Why Shopify makes sense** 16 Apr 2024

" **Prioritise client and team relationships, and other valuable lessons from a media director** 26 Mar 2024

" **TDMC named Google Premier Partner for 3rd consecutive year** 29 Feb 2024

" **How to maintain a startup culture when your business grows** 20 Feb 2024

## TDMC



We are a close-knit team of digital marketing and Shopify experts based in South Africa and the United Kingdom. As one of 4 accredited Shopify experts in South Africa, we work with over 130+ online retailers to deliver a holistic e-commerce and digital marketing solution, gearing their brands for success in a competitive online space.

[Profile](#) | [News](#) | [Contact](#) | [Twitter](#) | [Facebook](#) | [RSS Feed](#)