

FRAGRANCE AND PERSONAL CARE

Curation of varied voices creates influencer impact for beauty brands

October 30, 2019



While celebrity influencers including Chiara Ferragni can drive impact, brands need to activate a diverse group of personalities. Image credit: Lancme

By SARAH JONES

To create impact through influencer marketing, beauty labels need to look beyond celebrity-level personalities.

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A new report from Traackr notes that some brands' over-reliance on VIP influencers has led them to have inconsistent or plummeting social media visibility. While it is important for marketers to grow the roster of personalities they are working with, the report cautions that brands should be mindful about choosing partners, whether related to gifting or paid content partnerships.

"High performing influencer marketing starts with strong influencer selection" said Evy Wilkins, vice president of marketing at **Traackr**.

"Brands needs to consider content, audience and values," she said. "For content, how well does the influencer's content perform, specifically when they publish about your brand or category? For audience, how well does their audience align with your buyer personas and do they have a high quality audience made up of real people?"

"The size of their following isn't the only KPI to look at. For values, does the influencer share the same values as your brand? Do they use language or have viewpoints that support or contrast with what you believe in?"

"Consumers are holding brands accountable for the actions of the influencers with whom they partner, so brands need to do their due diligence in making sure values are aligned."

Traackr's **report** looks at 122 makeup, skincare and hair care brands, ranking them by their Brand Vitality Score (VIT), a measurement of their trust, visibility and impact on social media. The report focuses on the United States, United Kingdom and France.

Beauty talk

In the U.S., celebrity-level influencers drive the most brand vitality for makeup brands, representing 51 percent of all VIT for beauty labels. Comparatively, cosmetic brands see more impact from smaller personalities in the U.K. and France.

Skincare relies more on niche influencers to drive impact. About three-quarters of VIT in the U.S. is driven almost evenly by influencers in three tiers, with between 500,000 and more than 5 million followers.

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So excited to be working with La Mer !! Growing up by the ocean has made me cherish its powerful healing properties.. for the soul & of course for the skin.. @LaMer harnesses its magic, as well as working tirelessly for ocean conservation! The Regenerating Serum is one of my faves.. I double it up with The Concentrate @LaMer #TheRegeneratingSerum #sponsored

A post shared by Natasha Liu Bordizzo (@natashaliubordizzo) on Sep 5, 2019 at 9:12pm PDT

Instagram post from @natashaliubordizzo for La Mer

Similarly to makeup, marketers drive more impact in the U.K. and France from more mid-tier influencers, rather than celebrities.

Perhaps due to their abundance, mid-level influencers with between 50,000 and 500,000 followers are most frequently tapped for beauty campaigns, representing about 40 percent of activated influencers.

In France and the U.S., makeup brands see the strongest engagement rate from nano influencers with between 1,000 and 10,000 followers. For the U.K., influencers with an audience of about 1 million to 5 million see the strongest engagement, with nano influencers close behind.

Skincare sees even more of a lean towards nano influencers, with these individuals driving the most engagement across all regions.

Traackr argues that the mid-tier influencer is in a sweet spot, since they still have lots of followers but they are typically more reachable than bigger names.

In a report from 2018, Traackr found that skincare brand La Mer saw the most engagement of any other mass or luxury skincare brand thanks to its partnerships with numerous social influencers ([see story](#)). However, the brand's VIT has fallen since then, which the report attributes to the brand's reliance on a smaller number of VIP influencers who may not be consistently posting about La Mer.

Personality-driven labels including Kylie Cosmetics and Jeffree Star also see fluctuations in their VIT depending on how much they and their close network are talking about their own brands.

In contrast, Rihanna's Fenty Beauty and Huda Beauty tap a wider range of influencers, helping to drive engagement.

[View this post on Instagram](#)

Happy Diwali Everyone, yesterday I had the opportunity to take over FENTY beauty INSTAGRAM (IG STORY) and I created this Diwali look for you all and I received so much of love from everyone around the world and Especially my Malaysians, you guys have been commenting and sharing the pic and i am so overwhelmed. Love you guys, seriously so touched! Enjoy your diwali with your loved ones and happy holidays. Below are the details of the products used: FENTY Pro Filt'r Hydrating Primer : Soft Silk FENTY Pro Filt'r Hydrating Longwear Foundation: Shade 360 FENTY Pro Filt'r Instant Retouch Concealer: Shade 360 FENTY Beauty Moroccan Spice Eyeshadow Palette: Saffron, Evil Genie and Souq it 2Me FENTY Killawatt Foil Highlighter Duo: Pool Side FENTY Instant Warm Bronzer: Island Ting FENTY Killawatt Foil Freestyle Highlighter : Penny4UThots FENTY Mattemoiselle: Freckle Fiesta FENTY Glow: Shimmering rose nude @fentybeauty

A post shared by s (@rubinirubi) on Oct 27, 2019 at 2:10am PDT

Instagram post from @RubinRubi for Fenty Beauty

"What we learned analyzing over 12 months of influencer content is that macro and VIP influencers drive VIT, but there are much fewer of them and they post less frequently," Ms. Wilkins said. "If just one of them stops mentioning your brand, the impact can be drastic, as we saw with La Mer.

"The other dynamic at play is that to succeed today, you need both quality and quantity of content which can be very expensive to maintain," she said. "The coveted mid-tier and micros can fulfill part of that need, producing highly engaging, reusable and frequent content.

"The moral of the story is a diversified tiering strategy is required to sustain a strong influencer program."

Gifting guide

Influencer marketing continues to grow in the fashion, beauty and luxury businesses, as brands seek to reach the valuable millennial audience.

According to data from marketing platform and data analytics company Launchmetrics, 80 percent of brands in these industries say they have used influencer campaigns in the past year, up from 78 percent last year. Among the brands leveraging influencer marketing, 78 percent say that their prime target is millennials ([see story](#)).

Less than a third of brands and agencies have an official influencer program in place, despite the field's rapid growth in recent years.

According to a new report from social media analytics platform Talkwalker, authenticity and long-lasting influencer relationships are among the priorities for marketers. There is also a need for improved measurement frameworks to better gauge the effectiveness of influencer campaigns ([see story](#)).

Marketers should be using data to determine which influencers to work with, and this extends to gifting.

Typically, complimentary products are sent with more of a wide distribution tactic, which does not take into account whether a gift is right for a particular influencer.

Social media personalities have also been calling out the beauty business for waste, particularly in relation to the sometimes over-the-top packaging that samples are sent in.

"It's essential for brands to be data-driven in their gifting strategies," Ms. Wilkins said. "It makes no sense to waste time, product and potentially even your reputation, by sending product to influencers who will never use it.

"Cutting-edge brands are using data to determine which influencers are most likely to use their products and most likely to speak about their products based on past content performance," she said. "This is where science and art of influencer marketing come together.

"Technology helps you find the diamonds in the rough - the people who actually want to use your products or product category and have audiences who truly engage with that specific content, freeing up your team's time to build strong relationships with those people."