

The value of micro-influencers in marketing campaigns

 By [Danilo Acquisto](#)

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The concept of influencer marketing isn't anything new: brands have been using influencers for years to promote their offerings. But as a video content agency acting as a middleman between brands and content creators, and who work with brands within the digital video space, we're noticing a distinct trend.



Danilo Acquisto CEO of Special Effects Media SA.

As we move into 2019, it's becoming clear that using micro-influencers is becoming very valuable – perhaps more than using macro-influencers who have a very large audience reach. Here's why:

Use the right influencers

When it comes to working with influencers, one of the main things that brands often get wrong, in South Africa particularly, is not working out a clear return on investment (ROI) metric before they begin a campaign.



Leigh Andrews 27 Nov 2018



In most cases, brands think that influencer marketing is only about a large reach, so they only want to use very 'popular' influencers with huge audiences to execute their campaigns. They also tend to treat these campaigns more as "broadcasts", which isn't really where micro-influencers add the most value.

But what's better – to reach lots of people with limited engagement (and sales-related action), or to achieve a limited reach with lots of engagement?

If brands want to use influencers as a way to simply get eyes on their brand, then they can do this more cheaply by buying Facebook and Google Ads. But if you want influence *and* action, it's more important to use the *right* influencers to do this.



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Influencers must have engagement metrics

Numbers shouldn't mean as much anymore – Instagram, particularly, struggles with people meddling with the algorithm using pods to cheat it or simply buying followers. Because of this, there are other, far more effective ways to get reach. A true test of an influencer is their engagement and relationship with their community.

So, in most cases, brands need to select influencers who have great engagement metrics, and not just reach, by asking themselves:

1. Do they want to sell something?
2. Do they want to receive qualitative feedback from consumers by hearing what they think of a particular offering?
3. Do they want their target market to start talking about a particular brand offering?
4. Do they want to run a campaign to increase brand awareness to large numbers of people?

These are all very different goals, so understanding what you want as your result is vital before you start engaging with the influencer you want to work with.

Authenticity leads to good engagement

The success of using micro-influencers also illustrates one of the main ingredients of getting good engagement: authenticity. Content is still king – but consumers are also getting smarter about whether they engage with advertising at all, so authentic content is more important than ever. In the case of the gaming influencer, people trusted her opinion.

For this reason, brands need to be discerning about choosing people who can create clever content and really tell a story with what they put out there.

Authentic micro-influencers with engaged audiences will be a lot more willing to collaborate and come up with innovative ideas because they're in it for the community and not just the money. In short, as a brand, you'll get more bang for your buck.



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Also, when it comes to using influencers, brands should be able to measure the results they get. In Europe and the US, influencers are typically given promo codes which allow brands to track sales/website traffic from their audiences. If influencers are afraid to take on campaigns of this type, it may be a sign of their lack of confidence in their ability to convert eyeballs to action.

Working through a third-party video agency like ours is valuable, as we have access to this data, so we can tell you which content creators can get you the returns you're looking for BEFORE you begin negotiating rates and getting stuck with an influencer you may not want to continue with.

Longer-term influencer relationships

Content creators and influencers need to stop seeing themselves simply as billboards for brands to work with. Rather, they need to see themselves as producing more original content for brands on their platform. Going into 2019, I think we're going to see brands start to build longer-term influencer relationships which are more organic.



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Broadcasting brand messaging on influencer platforms won't drive the same action as longer-term brand alignment. It took the influencer years to build their audience, so brands need to be willing to take their time building trust with the influencer's community. That trust is vital and takes time.

If they can do this successfully, it's a win-win for all: consumers get more useful information because the content creator gets to know the brand better, content creators are excited by regular income, and brands get the added value of having these engaged audiences over a longer period of time – who are responding better to more authentic messaging.

ABOUT DANILO ACQUISTO

Danilo Acquisto is the CEO of Special Effects Media South Africa, a YouTube Multi-Channel Network (MCN) backed by international partners, which launched in 2017. Special Effects Media is the first commercial Multichannel Network in South Africa, and brings creators, brands, content and audiences together. Danilo is also a radio presenter on Good Hope FM

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