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Influencer Marketing Starter Kit

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How to Use This Starter Kit

Influencer marketing has become one of the most powerful tools for brands to connect with their target audience, build trust, and drive engagement. But navigating the influencer space can be challenging without the right guidance. This starter kit is designed to help you cut through the noise and create a successful influencer marketing strategy from the ground up. Whether you're new to influencer marketing or looking to refine your approach, this guide provides the practical steps and insights you need to get started and achieve measurable results.

If you were unable to attend the **Social Media Institute's Webinar #4: Social Media Growth Strategies**, we suggest you check out the [Influencer & Content Creator Marketing section](#) first!



Table of Contents

- **Getting Started**
 - Defining Campaign Objectives
 - Should I Partner With a Content Creator or Influencer?
- **Identifying the Right Influencer**
 - Tools
 - Audience and Performance
 - Brand Safety
 - Content Quality and Relevance
 - Collaboration and Professionalism
 - Costs and Budget
- **Influencer Outreach Examples**

Getting Started



Setting Goals and Choosing the Right Partner

When planning an influencer marketing campaign, the first step is to define your goals and determine what success looks like. Having clear objectives and metrics is crucial whether you want to boost enrollment, promote specific programs, or increase engagement. Equally as important is deciding whether to partner with a content creator or an influencer, as each brings unique strengths to the table. Align your decision with your campaign goals and target audience.

Define Campaign Objectives

Ask Yourself These Questions

1. Who is our target audience?
2. What are you trying to achieve?
3. Is the program aimed at recruitment, retention, event support, campus engagement, or other?
4. What KPIs matter to you?



Business goals

Recruitment

Retention

**Student
engagement**



Audience

Prospective students

All students

Current students



KPIs

Student
applications,
campus tours, etc.

Retention rate,
sentiment, etc.

Likes, comments,
shares, attendance,
etc.

Should I Work with an Influencer or Content Creator?

There are many questions to consider when deciding between collaborating with an influencer or content creator. In addition to the questions below, you'll find more ideas — like creating or utilizing a [Student Ambassador Program](#) for in-house content creators — in Webinar #4 Growth Strategies.

	Influencer	Content Creator
What is the primary goal of the partnership?	To drive awareness, engagement, or sales through personal influence	To create high-quality content for long-term value and brand storytelling
Is the goal immediate action or long-term engagement?	Generate immediate buzz and conversions	Focus on long-term content that can be repurposed for sustained engagement
Who is our target audience?	Prospective students	Existing students or alumni
How will you create authenticity and trust?	Leverage the influencer's trust with their audience for product endorsements	Create content that aligns with brand authenticity and vision
Do we want a short-term or long-term partnership?	Best for short-term, campaign-specific collaborations	Ideal for long-term partnerships for ongoing content creation
How much control do we want over the message?	Usually have creative freedom to adapt the brand message to their style and audience	Brands have more control over messaging, ensuring adherence to guidelines
What is our budget?	Higher fees for top influencers due to their engaged audience	Typically more cost-effective for producing high-quality, reusable content.

Identifying the Right Influencer



Influencer Considerations

If partnering with an influencer aligns with your campaign goals, here are six considerations to help you find the right one.



Audience

Who follows this influencer? Do demographics play a role in the decision process? Does your target audience likely follow them?



Brand

Does the influencer align with your values and mission? Any brand safety concerns?



Performance

What is their engagement rate? How many followers? How do these KPIs compare to other influencers? These answers may help you to determine a budget.



Content Alignment

Should the influencer be a former or current student? Does the influencer's content align with your goals?



Professionalism

Has the influencer worked with other brands? With competitors? How did they conduct themselves?



Budget

What is their average rate? How does this compare to other influencers with a similar following and engagement rate? What is your budget?

INFLUENCER RESEARCH

Influencer Marketing Tools

Depending on your budget, needs, and goals, consider free or subscription-based tools to conduct influencer research.

Free Tools



Freemium



HypeAuditor



Heepsy



FeedSpot

Usually offers limited features for:

- Influencer search
- Engagement rate
- Estimated costs

Subscription-Based

tagger
by Sprout Social

Brandwatch



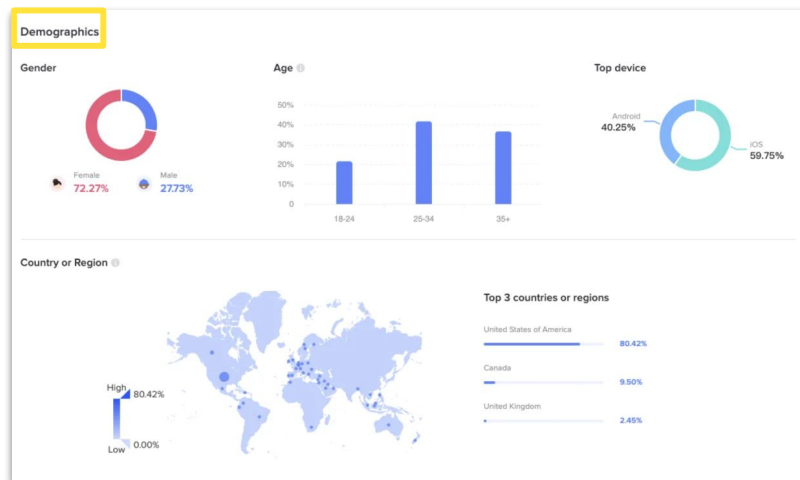
CreatorIQ

May include:

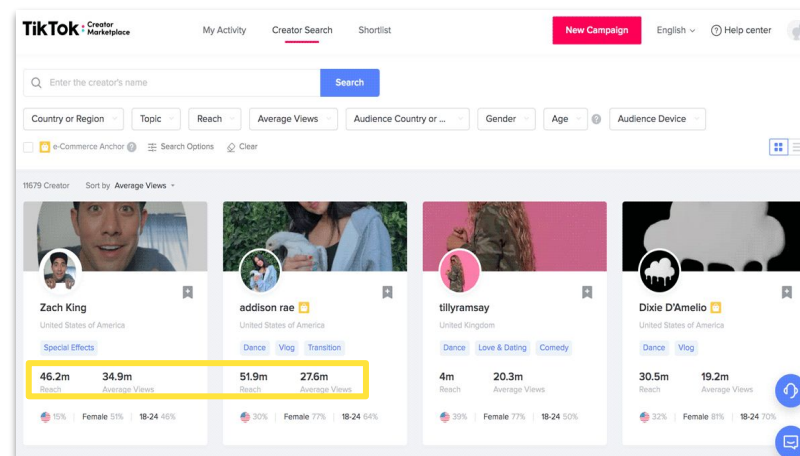
- Access to a large influencer database
- Follower demographics
- Campaign management tools
- Performance metrics
- Influencer CRM
- Competitive insights and benchmarks

INFLUENCER RESEARCH

Audience and Performance



Check audience demographics to make sure their followers align with your target audience. TikTok and Meta usually provide age, gender, and country for the followers of micro, macro, and mega influencers.



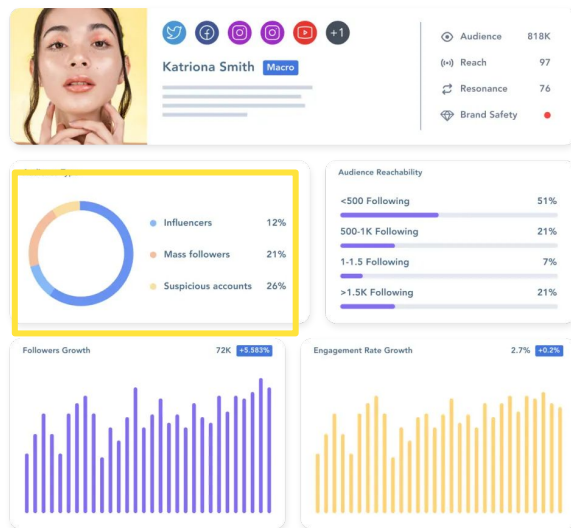
Compare influencers' reach, engagement rate, and more to find someone who can meet or exceed your goals.

Analyze engagement metrics like comments, shares, and likes to gauge the influencer's interaction with their audience.

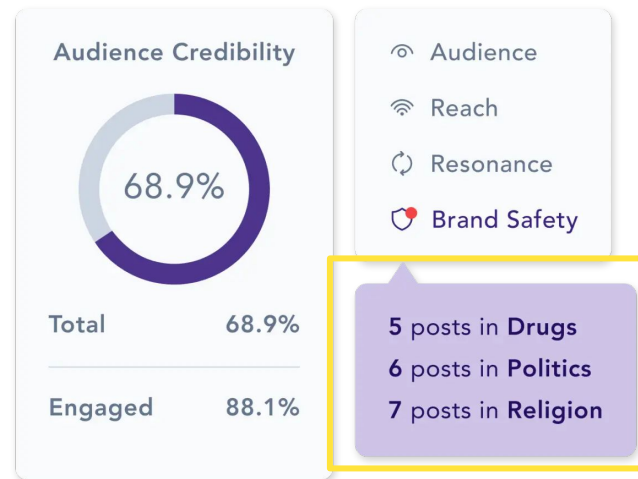
Examples are from TikTok Creator Marketplace

INFLUENCER RESEARCH

Brand Safety



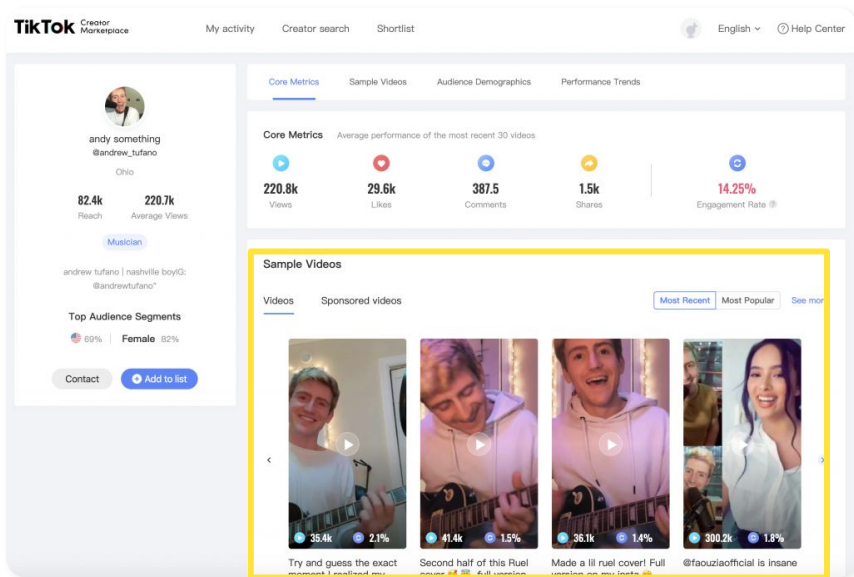
If you have a subscription-based account, check for suspicious and mass followers. This is a good indicator of authentic following and engagement vs. purchased.



With premium subscriptions, you can check brand safety labels for risky content. If you don't have a premium account, manually check the influencer's posts from the past 6-12 months for brand safety.

INFLUENCER RESEARCH

Content Quality and Relevance



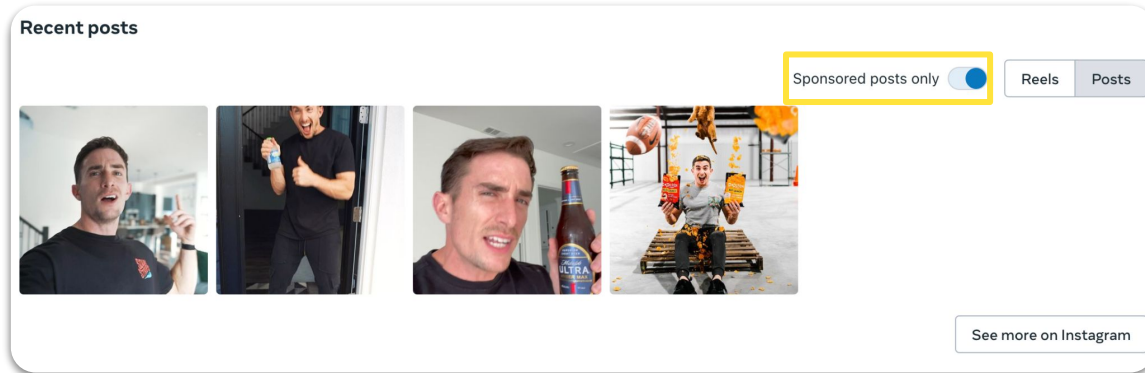
Review the influencer's past posts, photos, and videos to assess content quality.

Determine whether their content style matches what you envision for your campaign (e.g., visually engaging Instagram posts, informative YouTube videos, etc.).

Ensure the influencer can create content that appeals to prospective students, such as campus life, academic success, or career-focused messaging.

INFLUENCER RESEARCH

Assess Collaboration and Professionalism



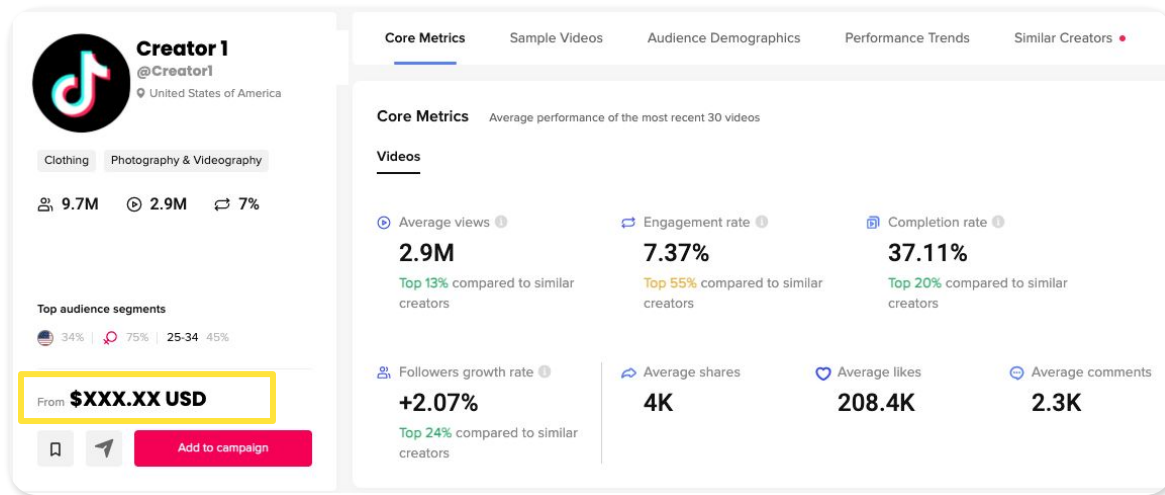
Meta Creator Marketplace

Research the influencer's previous collaborations to assess their professionalism and ability to deliver on promises.

Look for influencers who are easy to work with, flexible, and open to collaboration.

Review testimonials or feedback from other brands or educational institutions who have worked with the influencer.

Evaluate Costs and Budget Fit



Request pricing details or fee structures, including whether they offer sponsored posts, content creation, or event participation.

Ensure the influencer's costs fit within your marketing budget, and explore other options like product exchanges (e.g., college swag or experiences).

Platforms like TikTok Creator Marketplace give a starting point for what a deal might cost.

Average Influencer Costs in 2024

Influencer marketing costs by platform in 2024

Average costs for sponsored influencer posts:

- 1 Instagram - \$10 per post per 1,000 followers
- 2 TikTok - \$10 per post per 1,000 followers
- 3 Facebook - \$20 per post per 1,000 followers
- 4 YouTube - \$20 per 1,000 subscribers
- 5 X (formerly Twitter) - \$2 per post per 1,000 followers
- 6 Snapchat - \$10 per post per 1,000 followers

sproutsocial.com/insights

sproutsocial



How Much Do Influencers Earn Per Post?

Instagram

Nano-influencers: \$10-\$100 per post

Micro-influencers: \$100-\$500 per post

Mid-tier influencers: \$500-\$5,000 per post

Macro-influencers: \$5,000-\$10,000 per post

Mega-influencers: \$10,000+ per post

Celebrities: Varies, but \$1+ million isn't unheard of

Influencer
MarketingHub

The typical price varies across all influencers, but in general you can follow Sprout Social's guidelines based on number of followers and platform.

Influencer Marketing Hub also created a set of guidelines based on the size of influencer, ranging from nano-influencers to celebrities.

Influencer Outreach Examples



Influencer Outreach

With completed campaign goals and research plus a narrowed-down list of ideal, realistic candidates, the next step is to reach out and start the vetting process.

Reaching out to an influencer can be intimidating for those who don't have any experience in influencer marketing. To help you get started, we created an email template and a direct message (DM) template to help you make a great first impression.

Email Template (page 1)

Subject: Let's create something amazing together, [Influencer's Name]!

Hi, [Influencer's Name]. I'm [Name] from [Community College Name], and I've got to say – your [TikTok] content is absolute fire! The way you connect with your audience is truly inspiring.

We've been brainstorming ways to make education more exciting and accessible, and your name kept coming up because we think you've got what it takes to make people sit up and listen.

Here's the scoop:

- We want to partner with you to show your followers how [Community College Name] can level up their college game.
- This isn't just another ad campaign – we're talking about creating content that's as engaging and authentic as what you already do.
- We're open to your ideas! Whether it's behind-the-scenes campus tours, day-in-the-life vlogs, or myth-busting videos about community college life – we want your creative input.

Email Template (page 2)

What's in it for you?

- Expand your influence in the education space
- Access to our campus facilities for content creation
- Potential long-term partnership opportunities
- Compensation package tailored to your brand (we're flexible!)

I've attached a sneak peek of what we're all about. If you've got a media kit, we'd love to check it out, too!

Ready to make some waves in the education world? Let's jump on a quick call this week to brainstorm. How does that sound? Can't wait to hear your thoughts!

Best,

[Name], [Community College Name]

[Your Contact Info]

Direct Message Template

Hey [Influencer's Name]! 🙋 [Name] from [Community College Name] here. Your content is 🔥 and we've got an exciting collab idea that's right up your alley!

Think: [brief teaser of the collaboration idea, e.g., "Campus takeover" or "Debunking college myths"]

I slid into your inbox (name@communitycollegename.edu) with all the juicy details. Curious? Let's chat and create something your followers will love! This could be your chance to impact [relevant cause, e.g., "affordable education" or "career prep"] 💪

Next Steps

- After you've started your initial outreach, meet with prospective partners to get a better understanding of their budget requirements and professionalism before making an offer.
- Consult with your legal and finance teams to establish a budget and contract.
- Provide a creative brief with key messaging points, calls to action, and other requests you wish to gain from the partnership.
- Don't forget to monitor your campaign and analyze reporting to measure the success of your efforts.

THANK YOU

FOR QUESTIONS, PLEASE CONTACT:

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