

# The Value of Influencer Content 2017

A look into how brands and agencies value influencer content in 2017



# 86% of marketers today use influencer marketing to fuel their content marketing strategies, 88.5% of whom find the influencer content to be a valuable part of their marketing plan.

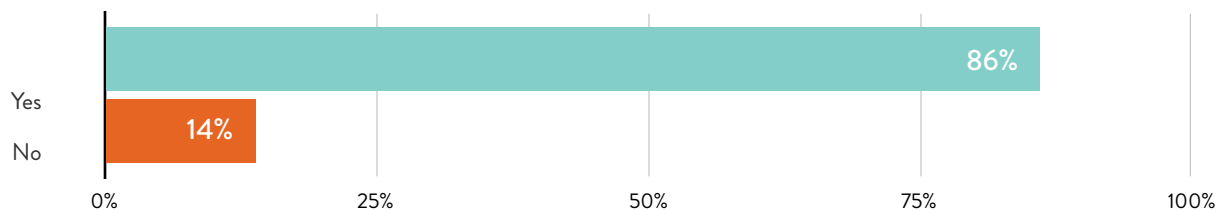
Influencer marketing and content marketing are projected to be the fastest growing brand activation channels through 2020, according to the Association of National Advertisers (ANA).<sup>1</sup> As influencer marketing enters the mainstream, marketers are exploring synergies between the two channels and turning to influencers as a new, cost-effective source for content creation at scale.

*The Value of Influencer Content 2017* was designed to better understand exactly how B2C marketers are using influencer marketing to fuel their content marketing strategies. The findings include responses from 207 marketers across a variety of industries including CPG, Food & Beverage, Media, and Retail, as well as their agencies.

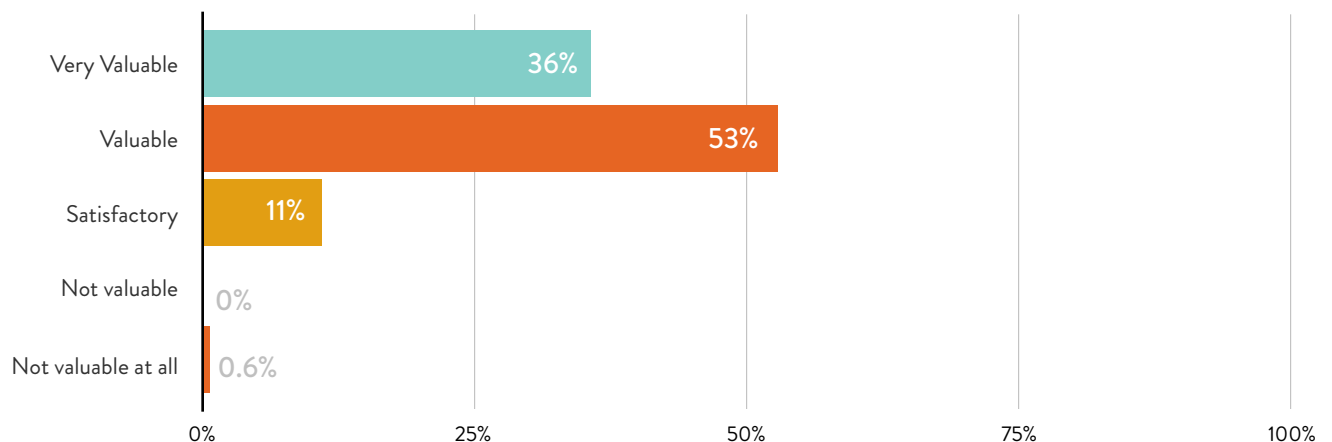


LE ZOE MUSING FOR SAMSUNG NOOK

*Are you using influencer marketing as part of your content strategy?*



*How valuable do you find influencer content?*



<sup>1</sup> The Association of National Advertisers (ANA). "U.S. Brand Activation Marketing Forecast (2016–2020): Key Findings Report." April 2016.



MON PETIT FOUR FOR HELLOFRESH



BIRDIE SHOOTS FOR UNIQLQ

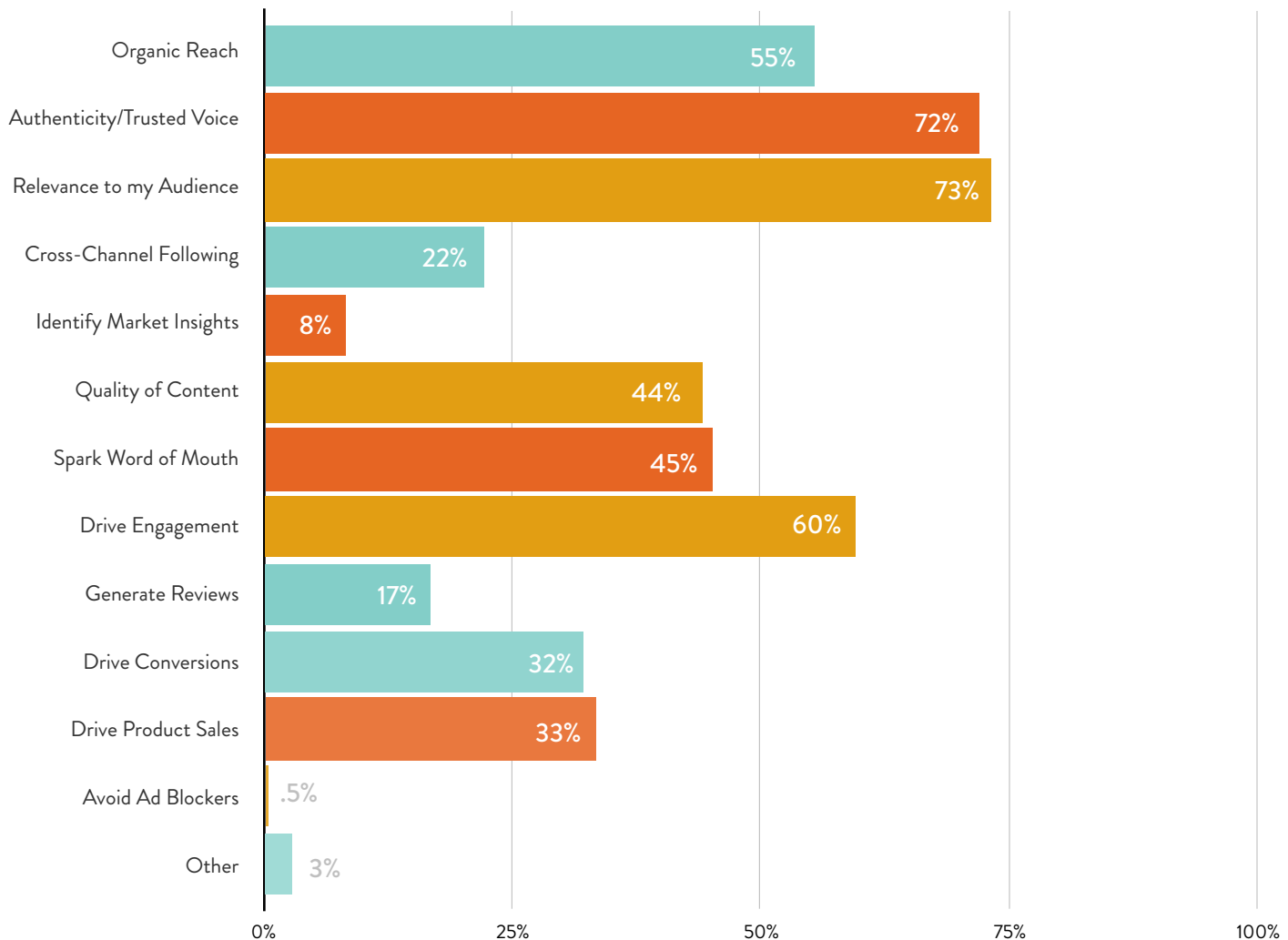


AFTERNOON ESPRESSO FOR MCDONALD'S

According to the survey, 86% of marketers are using influencer marketing as part of their content marketing strategies, 88.5% of whom find the influencer content to be a valuable part of their marketing plan.

When asked why they chose to work with influencers for content creation, 73% of respondents said it is because of relevance to their target audience; 72% use the tactic for the influencers' authenticity and trusted voice; and 60% use influencer marketing to spark audience engagement.

*Why did you choose to work with influencers for content creation?*



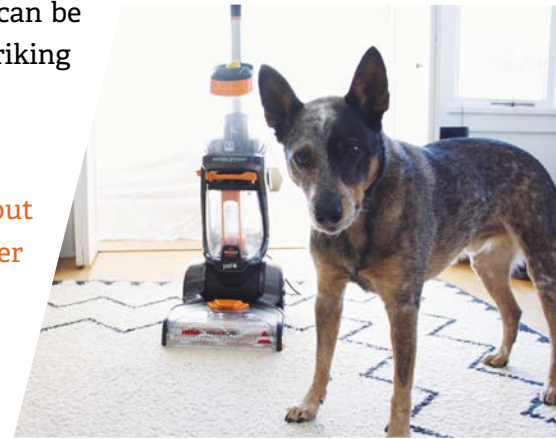
# Influencers are Changing the Content Marketing Game

According to McKinsey & Company,<sup>2</sup> 15 to 20 percent of marketing spend can be released through better marketing return on investment (MROI) efforts, striking a more efficient balance between working spend and non-working spend.

These terms are defined as follows:

>"**Working spend**" is a term used to describe investments that put content in front of a consumer. This takes the form of consumer media, advertising, PR, shopper marketing, and event marketing.

>"**Non-working spend**" is any cost attributed to creating, planning, or managing the working marketing programs, which can include content creation.



WILDLANDIA FOR BISSELL

Typically, marketers aim to maximize their working marketing dollars because it creates a more efficient return on investment (ROI). Marketers are able to drive significantly greater ROI any time the cost of producing content is included as part of the working spend.

## INFLUENCER GENERATED CONTENT VS. PROFESSIONALLY PRODUCED ASSETS

Traditionally, brands pay professional content creators (photographers, videographers, writers, and food scientists) to produce usage-based content, whether it be a blog post, photo, video, how-to article, or recipe. However, this can be expensive and time consuming, as marketers have to negotiate terms and compensation with each individual creator.

As a result, brands are turning to influencer marketing for content creation. According to the survey, 50% of marketers pay influencers a flat rate to produce each piece of content, in the same way that they would engage a professional content producer. On average, this investment typically costs 2.6X less than working with a professional for a similar output. Additionally, it enables the marketer to categorize the production as a "working spend" because the influencers are sharing the content with their audiences.

<sup>2</sup> McKinsey & Company. "Marketing Return on Investment." 2017.

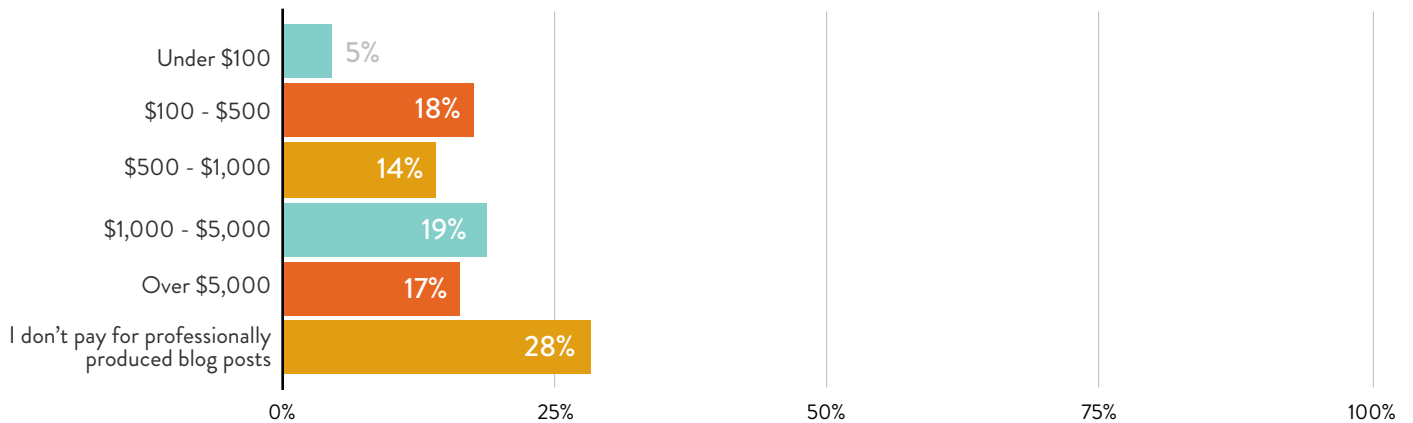
*"Something as simple as a recipe ends up being an excruciatingly long and expensive process when professionally produced. First, we have to pick a product to feature, then hire a food scientist that charges a per recipe fee. Next, we bring in photographers and videographers to shoot the visuals. Working with influencers is far more efficient - they each have their own style and voice and can quickly churn out authentic recipes, photos, and videos at scale."*

*- Lacey Meece, Senior Strategist, Havas for RAGU*

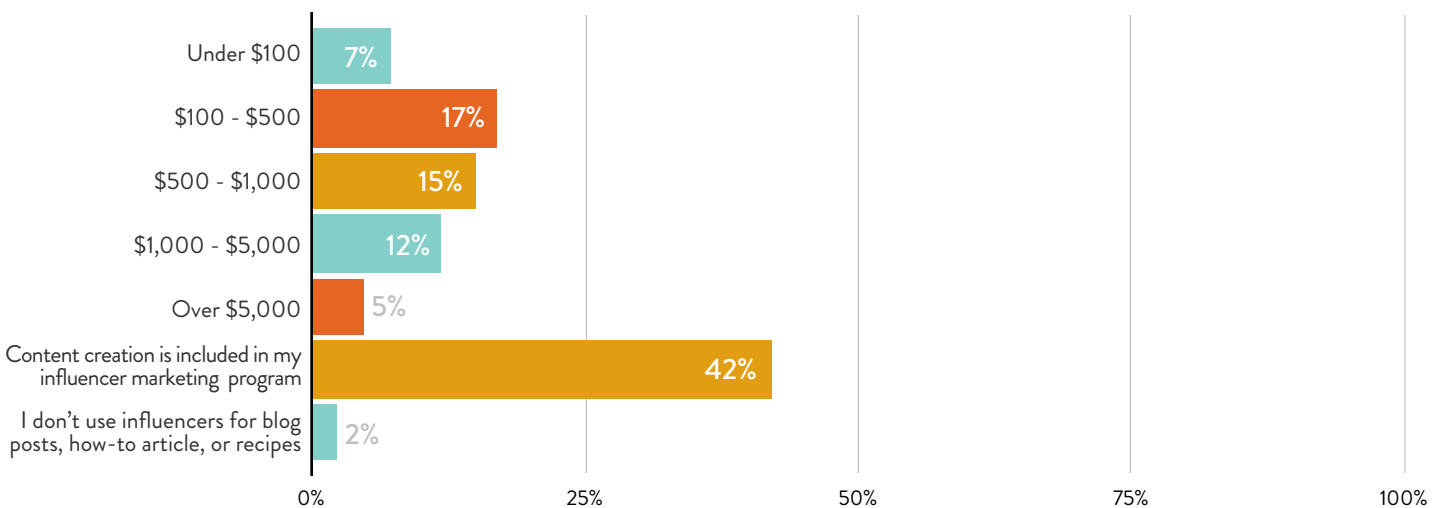
Working with influencers provides marketers with a cost-efficient alternative to creating content at scale. Linqia's survey found that by the time a project is complete, 49% of marketers who pay to professionally produce usage-based content spend an average of between \$1,000–\$5,000 per individual blog post, how-to article, or recipe, 2.9X more than what they spend working with flat-rate influencers. Similarly, 26% spend between \$1,000–\$5,000 per professionally produced photo, 2.2X more than if they work with influencers using a flat-rate, while 45% of marketers spend over \$5,000 per video, 2.7X more than they would if working directly with an influencer using flat-rate pricing.

As marketers look to become even more efficient with their media spend, many are opting for programs that include the ability to repurpose content as part of the influencer media buy. This is particularly effective because brands can market test a large quantity of influencer content as part of the original media buy, determine which pieces of content perform best, and then put paid media behind proven assets to scale the success of the program. According to the survey, between 38%–40% of marketers are now choosing this route.

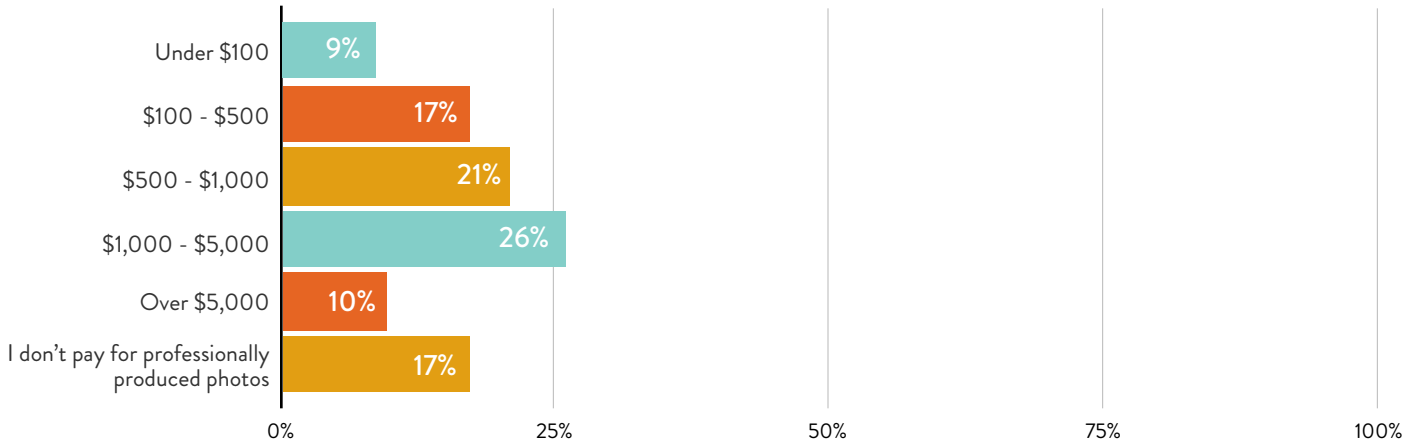
*On average how much do you spend per professionally produced blog post, how-to article, or recipe?*



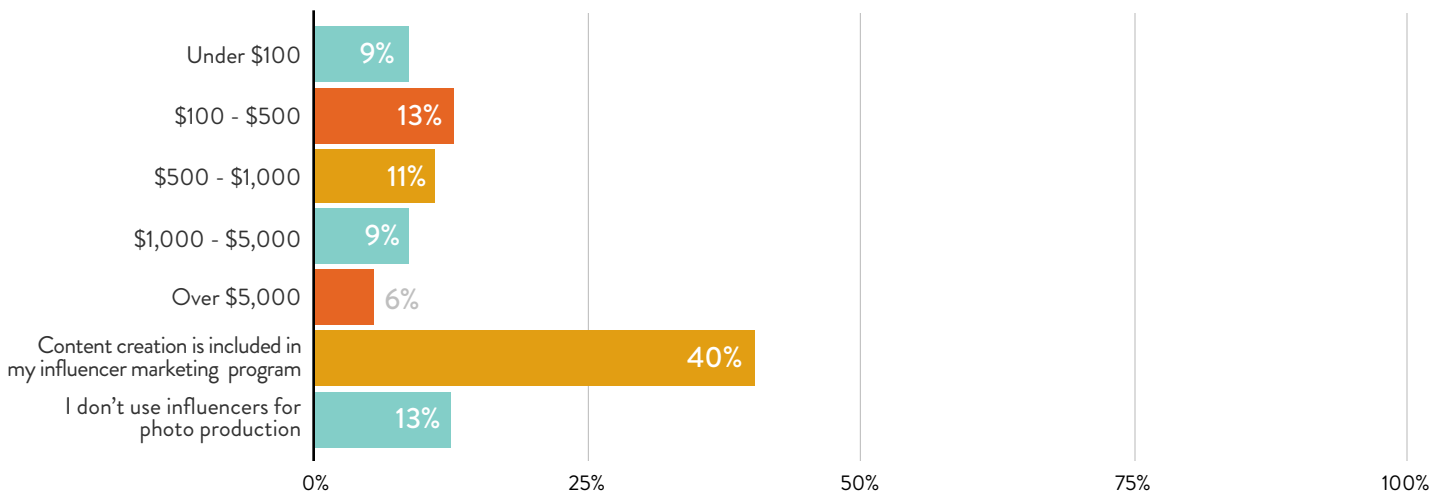
*On average how much do you spend per influencer-generated blog post, how-to article, or recipe?*



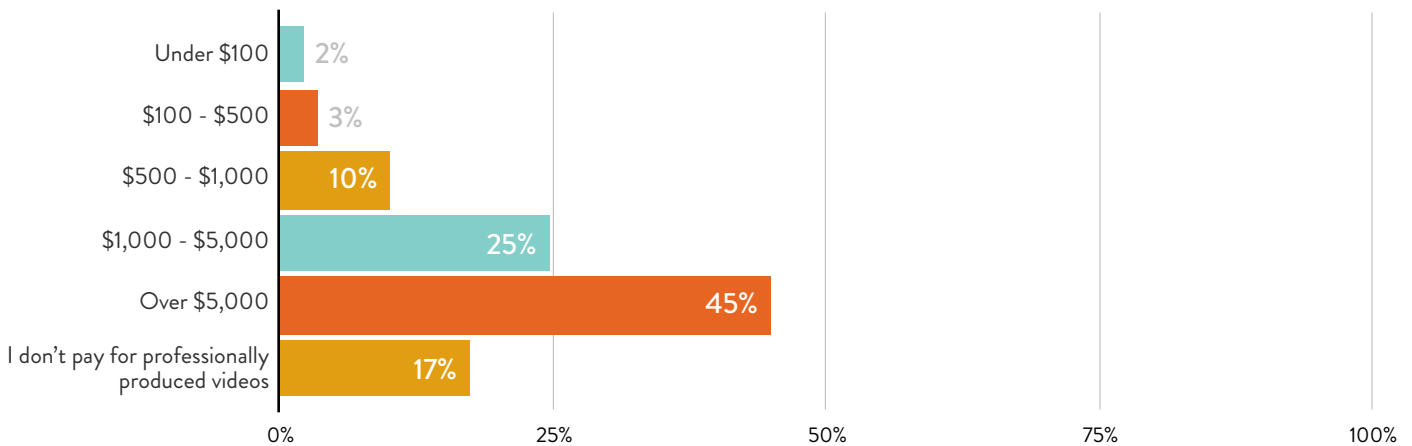
*On average, how much do you spend per professionally produced photo?*



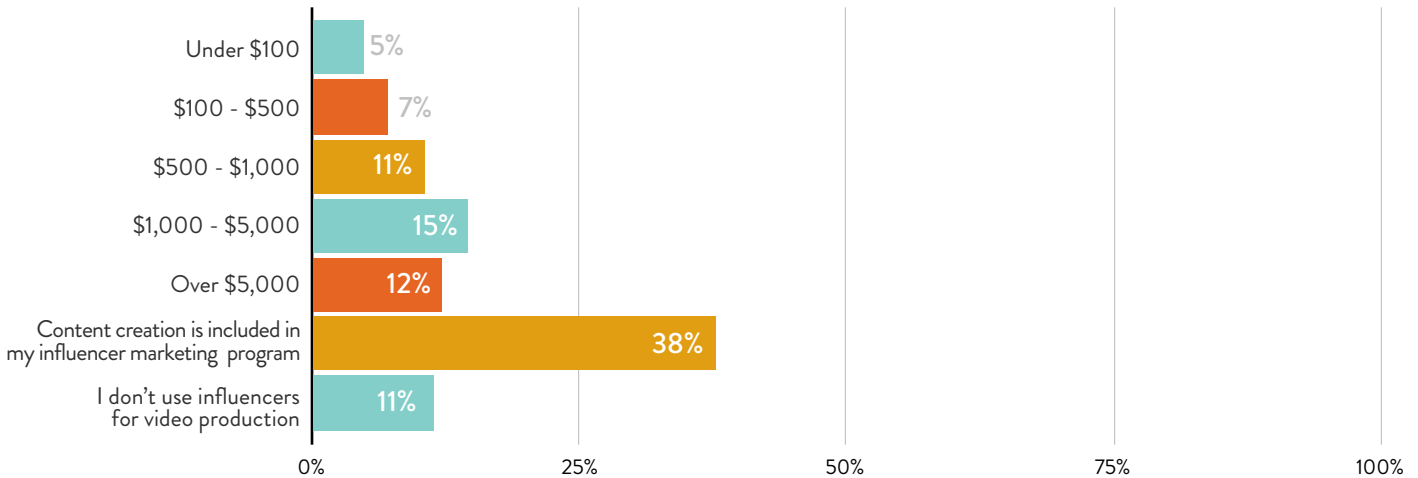
*On average how much do you spend per influencer-generated photo?*



*On average, how much do you spend per professionally produced video?*



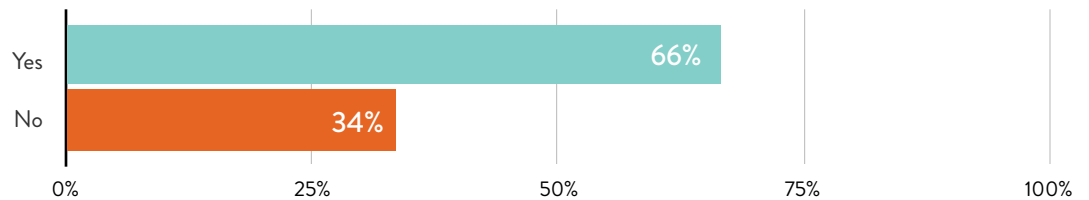
On average, how much do you spend per influencer-generated video?



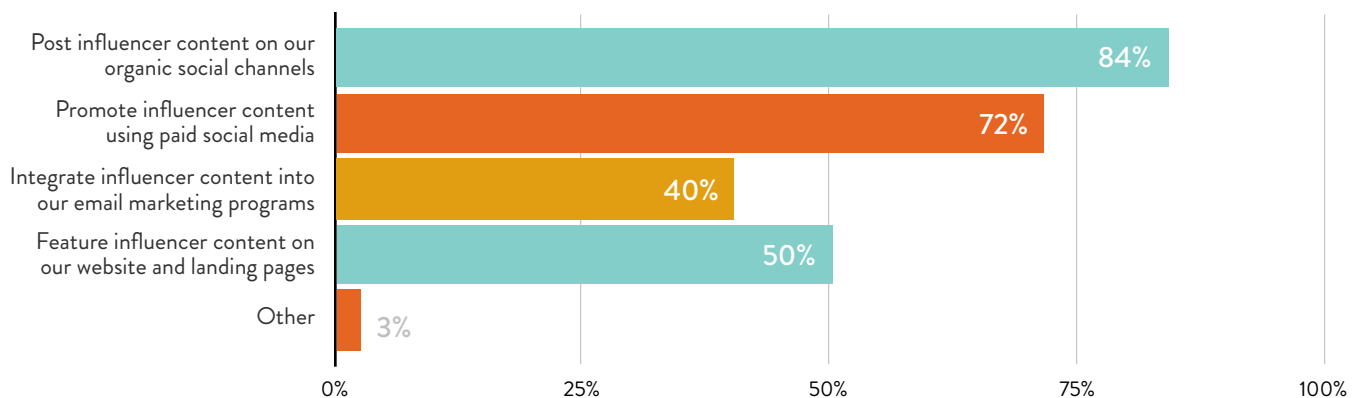
## How Brands Leverage Influencer Content

Marketers are using influencers to fuel their content marketing programs in a variety of ways. Two-thirds of survey respondents are repurposing influencer-generated content on other digital channels, with the most common being organic social media (84%), paid social media (72%), website and product pages (50%), and email marketing (40%).

Do you repurpose influencer-generated content in other programs?



How do you repurpose influencer-generated content?



## DRIVING ACCOUNTABILITY WITH INFLUENCER MARKETING

Traditionally, pay-per-post or flat-rate pricing has been the most common form of influencer marketing compensation. However, with this model, there is no guarantee that the influencers' audiences will engage with, or even see, the content.

Linqia's *The State of Influencer Marketing 2017* survey from November 2016 found that only 17% of marketers found the flat rate model to be effective. In comparison, nearly 50% cited performance-based models like cost-per-click (CPC) or cost-per-engagement (CPE) to be the most effective for driving results. When marketers align the influencers' compensation goals with the goals of the brand, they enter a performance contract that drives greater accountability from the influencer, incentivizing them to produce content that will deliver business results.



IN THE KNOW MOM

FAITH FOOD FAMILY FUN

SELF PROCLAIMED FOODIE

## CASE STUDY: MEZZETTA

### THE CHALLENGE:

Mezzetta wanted to raise brand awareness and grow its email database as part of a broader initiative to increase U.S. market share.

### THE SOLUTION:

Mezzetta partnered with Linqia to create a multi-flight influencer marketing program designed to achieve those goals, while building a content library of tantalizing recipe ideas, cooking videos, and food photography using Mezzetta products.

### THE RESULTS:

- Content from Linqia's influencer marketing programs have helped Mezzetta grow its email database from zero to over 70,000 U.S. consumers.
- Consumers driven through Linqia influencers open and engage with Mezzetta's emails at rates above 50%.
- Linqia's influencer-generated videos outperform videos from a contracted video-only influencer agency by 4X.

148.6M

TOTAL REACH

529K+

ONLINE ENGAGEMENTS

16K+

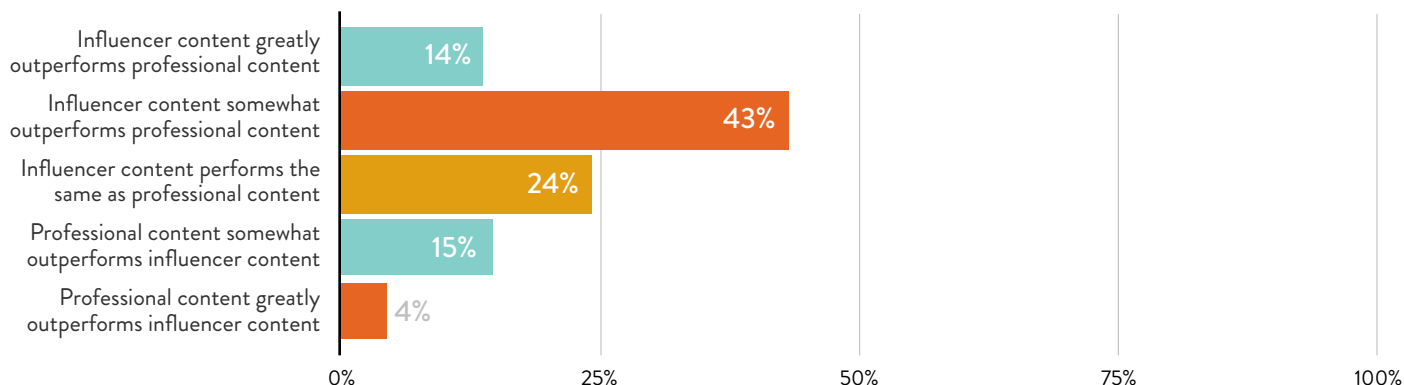
PIECES OF CONTENT



# Influencer Generated Content Outperforms Professionally Produced Content

Influencer content is not only more cost-efficient than professionally produced content, but it is also more effective at driving results. 57% of survey respondents indicated that influencer content either somewhat or greatly outperforms brand created content.

*How does influencer-generated content perform compared to professionally produced content?*



TWO CITY VEGANS

LIFE CURRANTS

PUMPKINS AND PEANUT BUTTER

## CASE STUDY: GOODFOODS

### THE CHALLENGE:

GOODFOODS wanted to build brand awareness and drive sales of its guacamole and dips.

### THE SOLUTION:

GOODFOODS teamed up with FRWD and Linqia to launch a three-flight influencer marketing program featuring helpful tips for party planning and healthy snacking. FRWD leveraged the influencer content in three ways to maximize their ROI: 1) as sponsored social content as part of the original program; 2) by promoting the best performing content through paid social to reach a broader audience; 3) through re-publishing select recipes via in-feed native ad units on respected sites such as *Newsweek*, *Women's Health*, and *Food Beast*.

### THE RESULTS:

- Linqia influencer content republished through Nativo returned a 44.5% conversion rate while content from the original program returned a 34.2% conversion rate (compared to the 2% average for brand-created display or video content).
- The engagement rate for paid Instagram ads using Linqia influencer content was 22.8% compared to 11% for brand-created content, and FRWD lowered their Facebook paid social CPE by 3X when using Linqia influencer content instead of brand created content.

20.2M

TOTAL REACH

70.5K

ONLINE ENGAGEMENTS

2K+

PIECES OF CONTENT

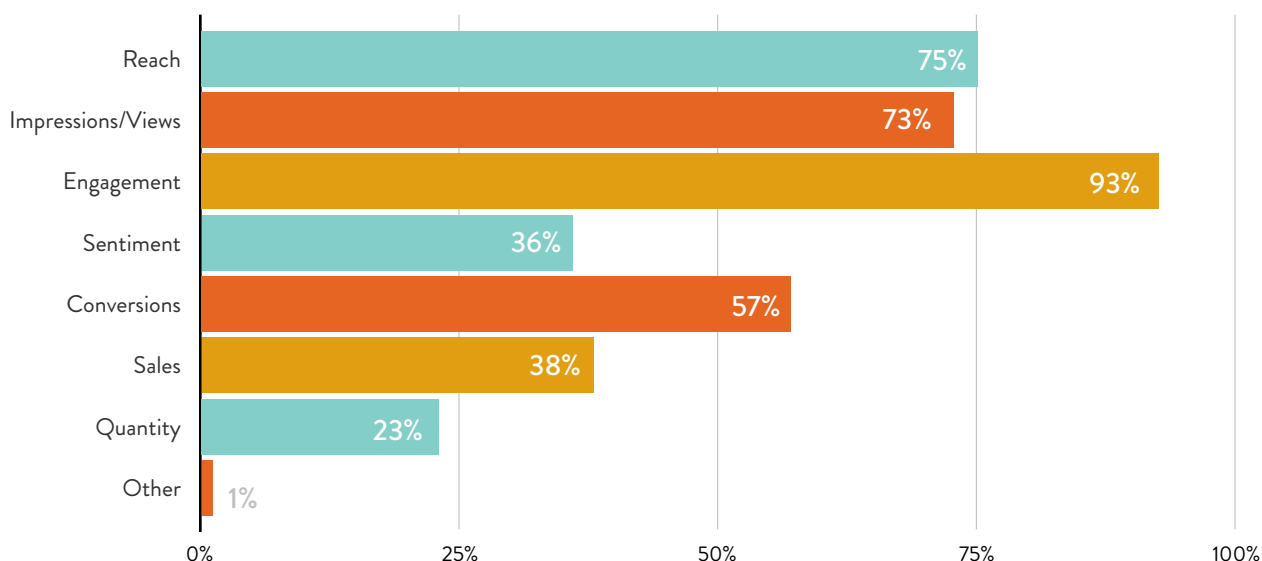
## MOVING CONSUMERS DOWN THE PATH TO PURCHASE

Influencer marketing has typically been used as a top of the funnel tactic to drive awareness and engagement around a brand or product. When asked what metrics are used to measure the performance of influencer-generated content, only 38% of the survey respondents said that they measure the impact based on sales lift. The stat is surprising, given that 54% of marketers use sales to measure the performance of professionally created content.



NESSA'S WORLD FOR BOX TOPS

What metrics do you use to measure the performance of influencer-generated content?



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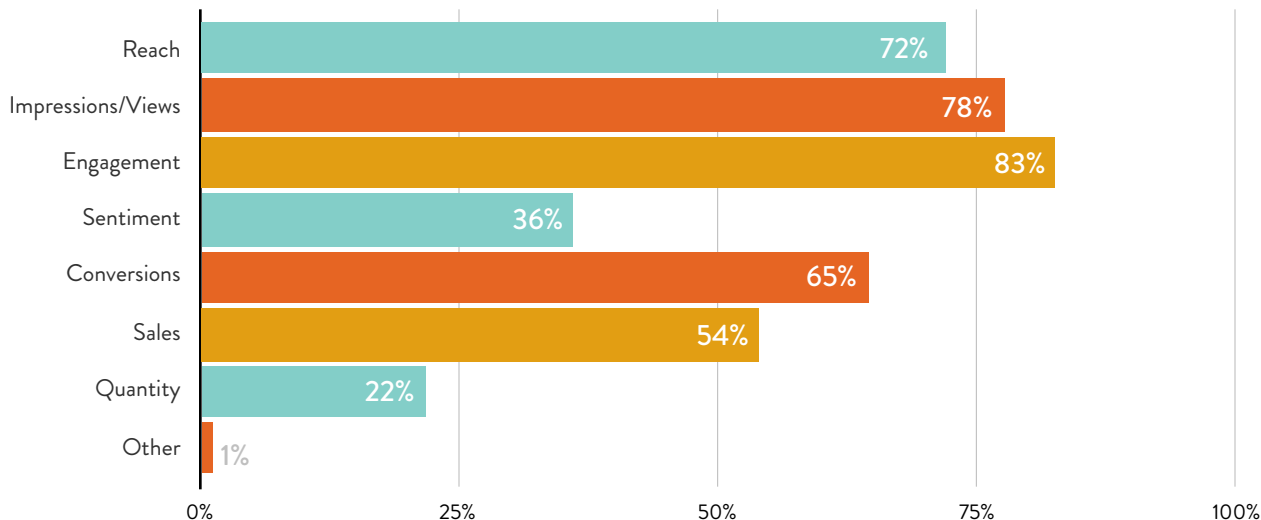
LAURA TREVEY

# Fab.

*“As a small ecommerce site competing with giants like Amazon, we believe that influencer marketing is important for creating beautiful and authentic content about our products. We were extremely impressed with the volume and quality of the content the influencers produced.”*

*- Afshan Dasani, Marketing Manager, Fab.com*

What metrics do you use to measure the performance of professionally produced content?



As influencer marketing evolves, so must the metrics marketers use to measure its effectiveness. Attribution tactics are being built into influencer programs that will enable brands to track consumer behavior and action all the way through the path to purchase. As a result, more marketers are starting to use influencer content to drive mid to bottom of the funnel conversions like sales and signups.



BUSY CREATING MEMORIES

BEHIND THE STUDIO

SEQUINS AND TULLE

## CASE STUDY: GERBER LIL' BEANIES

### THE CHALLENGE:

Gerber® was launching its Lil' Beans™ product and wanted to drive awareness and sales in key markets through Publix, Target, Walmart, and Kroger.

### THE SOLUTION:

The brand teamed up with Catapult and Linqia to launch a two-flight influencer marketing program designed to reach parents with authentic content that positioned Lil' Beans as a great nutritional snack for toddlers

56.7M

TOTAL REACH

5%

NATIONAL SALES LIFT

260K+

ONLINE ENGAGEMENTS

9.4K+

PIECES OF CONTENT

*"I was most impressed by the influencer content – it's better than the kind of stuff we would put together in-house or with an agency or on our own. You can't replicate influencer marketing's ability to get real consumers with a good following to talk about products in their own voice."*

- David Greci, Brand Manager, Gerber



EAZY PEAZY MEALS

COOKING LSL

LIFE CURRANTS

## CASE STUDY: DOROT

### THE CHALLENGE:

Dorot wanted to raise awareness around its unique product offering and drive audiences to its newly designed website.

### THE SOLUTION:

Dorot partnered with Linqia to launch an influencer marketing program that educated consumers about the unique benefits of Dorot products and encouraged them to buy the products at select retailers.

### THE RESULTS:

- Linqia influencers created over 2,100 pieces of original content including blog stories, recipes, photographs, videos, and social media posts.
- The program drove a 15% increase in sales lift in measured channels.
- An influencer recipe video for cream cheese and garlic dip using Dorot's crushed garlic cubes has been organically viewed over 5.1 million times on Facebook (as of three weeks from the program launch).

17.4M

TOTAL REACH

66K+

ONLINE ENGAGEMENTS

2,100+

PIECES OF CONTENT

*“Influencer content is better than anything we can create in-house or with an ad agency where the authenticity can get lost. We give the influencers free reign to create content because their message is much more authentic, powerful, and effective.”*

- Andy Reichgut, EVP of Marketing, Dorot

IMAGE BY JAR OF LEMONS

## Conclusion

The majority of marketers today are using influencer marketing as a key component of their content marketing strategies, a trend that will continue as both tactics maintain rapid growth through 2020. Influencer marketing will remain a valuable part of the overall media mix as marketers realize that the cost efficiency and proven performance of influencer content enables them to decrease their spend on non-working media and increase their investment in working media that's proven to drive results.

# About Linqia

Linqia is a leader in performance content marketing technology, delivering turnkey influencer marketing programs that are guaranteed to deliver concrete business results. Linqia is the easiest way to inspire action with your target audience, reaching today's consumers through authentic, influencer-generated content. Our performance pricing model means you only pay for consumers who have developed an emotional connection with your brand and have taken an action as a result. As programs continue to run over time, the Linqia platform identifies the best performing content and enables you to amplify it through social and native advertising, reaching "look-alike" consumers with content that has been proven to deliver results.

Founded in 2012, Linqia works with over 250 leading national brands including Black & Decker, Epson, Gerber, Herdez, JP Morgan Chase, Kimberly-Clark, Mezzetta, NBC, Nestle, Purina, Samsung, Unilever, Viacom and Walmart. Linqia is headquartered in San Francisco, CA, with offices in Chicago and New York.

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