State of Instagram Influencer Marketing in 2020

Level-up your influencer marketing strategy and grow your brand on Instagram in 2020!
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Influencer marketing is big business.

And if you’re a brand looking to grow, you need to be on the pulse of what’s new.

On Instagram, and beyond.

That’s why we’re here.

As we enter a new decade, we’ve put together the most comprehensive and definitive guide for influencer marketing.

By analyzing Later & Fohr user data, behavior trends, and thousands of Instagram posts, we’re sharing the evolution of the influencer marketing industry, and forecasting what’s to come.

Get ready to level-up your Influencer marketing strategy and grow your brand on Instagram in 2020!
Fohr is a world-class influencer marketing agency, running campaigns for top brands all over the globe. Their platform offers tools available for brands to run campaigns in-house and leads the influencer industry through education, opportunities, technology, and events.

Later is the world’s #1 Instagram marketing platform. We help you plan and publish your posts, and give you super simple software to create a beautiful feed. And best of all — our plans are really affordable (starting at $0.00).
How Quality Outperforms Quantity on the Instagram Grid
It’s been a big year for Instagram.

From likes disappearing from posts, to IGTV becoming the go-to platform for video series, the rules to posting to your grid have changed in 2019.

As always, Instagram influencers were the first to sit up and take notice of these changes.

By analyzing Fohr’s international influencer database, we’ve discovered some key trends to keep in mind for 2020!
Influencers Are Posting to the Grid Less Frequently

Posting content to your grid takes time and effort — influencers know that every post has an impact on their engagement rate, and their overall grid aesthetic.

After analyzing the data, we identified that influencers’ posting schedules are shifting, with their post frequency becoming less and less.

**NUMBER OF INSTAGRAM FEED POSTS PER WEEK**

By 2020, Fohr predicts that influencers will be posting to their grid around twice a week!

And that’s not just Instagram influencers with a large following who
are posting less. Almost all influencers, regardless of their follower count, are predicted to share less content to their grid each week.

The exception to the trend is influencers with 250-500k followers.

**These mid-tier influencers are the only ones projected to increase their posting frequency for 2020!**

And it’s the influencers who post to their feed almost every day, like Victoria from [In The Frow](https://www.inthefrow.com), who are creating a strong advantage over their Instagram competitors — as their posts appear in their followers’ feeds more often.
For brands, this can make a real difference when it comes to deciding who to work with on a campaign or project.

While not every brand needs to work with a high-posting influencer to make an impact, knowing how often they plan to post to their grid can help you better negotiate a campaign package.

**INFLUENCER MARKETING TIPS FOR 2020**

📅 As posting frequency decreases, make sure to have a clear goal with what you want to achieve with a sponsored influencer post. With less on the grid, every post has greater importance in achieving your campaign goal.

📸 Influencers will become more selective in what they post to their grid so pay attention to their aesthetic, content topics, and style before pitching to work with them.

🤳 Balance out your campaign include more Instagram Stories, videos, or IGTV content to make sure you’re reaching audiences on a variety of Instagram channels.
Influencers are Crafting Longer Captions

It used to be all about the visuals, but now Instagram captions are taking center stage for influencers on the platform.

You might have spotted influencers like Jenna Kutcher and Elise Darma sharing lengthy captions on their posts to give greater insight into their world or to share their knowledge.

Take for example @officiallyquigley — the content creator is known for sharing in-depth posts with her 240K followers, and that trend doesn’t change when it comes to her sponsored posts.

But just how long, is a long caption?
Well, according to the research by Fohr, the average caption length has more than doubled since 2016.

And by 2020, our feeds will be filled with an average caption length of 405 characters — which averages out to be 65-70 words!

**The number of characters doesn’t include hashtags.**
Canadian-based influencer Sarah Nicole Landry from @thebirdspapaya writes captions for her sponsored posts that are an optimum length to draw in users, while sharing plenty of product information:

For 2020, we expect to see the long-form Instagram captions trend grow, with influencers turning to their feed posts to create mini-blog entries for their audience.

As in-depth captions are successfully competing with the bite-size snippets of Instagram Stories, influencers are using the space to tell captivating, personal and more emotive stories.

For brands, this can be a really opportunity for storytelling that goes beyond product information, and builds a much stronger brand affinity with your influencer’s audience.
Engagement Rates are Higher on Posts with Longer Captions

The good news is that longer influencer captions result in higher engagement rates, which means a greater return for brands investing in an influencer marketing strategy.

The data shows that influencers’ posts with longer captions generally had a higher engagement rate than those with a shorter caption — showing that the longer the caption, the better the engagement!

For influencers, a higher engagement rate on their posts not only means that their content is hitting the mark with their audience, but it also helps with their overall discoverability.
The more engagement a post gets, the more likely it will appear on the Explore page or higher up in their followers’ feeds.

For brands, a higher engagement rate is a good indicator of a great partnership that will yield good returns!
It’s Not Just About an Influencer’s Aesthetic Anymore

We all know how important having a strong Instagram aesthetic is for an influencer.

And whether you’re a brand or influencer, having a curated Instagram aesthetic is one of the best ways to grow your account, build a following, and show off your brand’s unique style and tone.
But the fact is, a great aesthetic doesn’t always mean higher performance on a post per post basis. Often, it’s the actual content of a post that will drive the best results.

So what types of content get the most reach, engagement, and saves on the Instagram grid?

Let’s find out:

**IMAGE CONTENT PERFORMANCE ON INSTAGRAM**

What we’ve learned is that parenting, plants, and selfie posts achieve the highest engagement, while sun, ocean, bags, and shoes shots tend to get the lowest.

When it comes to reach and saves, we see a similar pattern. Parenting, beauty, selfies, and text (including meme posts!) deliver the best results.
So if you're ready to brief in an influencer campaign in 2020, it could be worth keeping these trends in mind to boost your campaign's performance!

**INFLUENCER MARKETING TIPS FOR 2020**

✍️ When choosing influencers to work with for your campaign, try to find influencers who naturally tend to write longer captions. If our predictions are right (and we think they are!) longer captions will really pay off for brands in 2020!

💭 Provide writing prompts to your influencers and brand ambassadors. If you can give them some inspiration on what to write about in their caption, you're guaranteed to get your brand message across.

📈 Not sure where to find an influencer’s engagement rates? Fohr’s platform showcases an influencer’s top-performing Instagram posts (even sponsored posts)!
CHAPTER TWO

The Impact of Hashtags for Engagement
The Impact of Hashtags for Engagement

Instagram has gone through a lot of changes in the past year, including new features, tools, and a whole new video platform.

But one thing that has stayed the same is the importance of hashtags on Instagram.

Using relevant, targeted hashtags on your posts is still one of the best ways to get discovered by new audiences on Instagram.

And for brands working with influencers, this can translate into more engagement, more followers, and more customers for your business.

We’ve crunched the numbers on influencers’ feed posts to see how they use hashtags in their captions, and we’ve noticed a few trends that will be big news for 2020!
Influencers are Using More Hashtags

Hashtags aren’t going anywhere in 2020 — in fact, we’re going to see more of them.

We’ve tracked the numbers over the last 4 years, and the average number of hashtags in an influencer’s post has almost quadrupled!

With this in mind, it’s a great time to start planning your influencer campaigns for 2020 and having a branded hashtag to go with it!

A branded hashtag is a hashtag that’s unique to your company — it can be as simple as your company name, tagline, or the name of one of your products or campaigns.
Or it can be a hashtag that has nothing to do with your brand name, but has everything to do with your brand identity!

One successful way to optimize your hashtags for influencers marketing is to create a specific campaign name with your influencer or brand ambassador.

Take for example hair accessories brand Scunci, and their collaboration with fashion influencer @SincerelyJules.

With the branded hashtag of #SincerelyScunci appearing on every sponsored post, Julie’s followers were quickly and easily able to see all images and videos of their collaborated products in action!
Not only is this a great way to categorize an influencer’s branded content, but it encourages Instagram followers to use your branded hashtag in their posts and stories which is key to getting discovered on Instagram by new audiences.

If people love your product or service and want others to know about it too, a branded hashtag is a real asset to growing your following!
Influencer Posts with Hashtags Get More Engagement

Just in case we haven’t convinced you of the importance of hashtags, here’s one more key finding that will definitely change your mind:

Instagram posts that include hashtags get more engagement.

And that’s not all. After analyzing influencer posts that contain hashtags, the data shows a greater number of hashtags actually equals a higher engagement rate!

Note: Other Instagram changes and updates — like a new algorithm and Explore page — could also contribute to increasing engagement rates over time.
When we look at how engagement rate has grown since 2016 in correlation with the number of hashtags being used, it’s clear that hashtags will continue to be a huge asset for brands on Instagram in 2020.

In 2019, posts with the same number of hashtags (10+), are now reaping the benefits of almost 6% engagement rate — a great sign that your hashtags are working and your post is landing in the right audiences’ feeds!

INSTAGRAM SWEET SPOT: 10+ HASHTAGS PER POST!
Influencers with Less Than 25K Followers Benefit the Most from Hashtags

So we know hashtags are valuable, but when do they have the most impact?

According to Fohr data, profiles with less than 25K followers reaped the most benefit by adding hashtags to their posts, with more engagement and more followers as a result.

<25K followers + 10+ Hashtags = More Engagement + More Followers!

So if you’re a micro-influencer looking for new ways to grow your following, having a strong Instagram hashtag strategy could be a fast-pass to a boosted follower count!
And for brands, this little tidbit could help you hone in and find the perfect influencers to work with for your campaign.

If your influencer marketing budget is tight, working with micro-influencers isn’t just cost efficient, but it could lead to great results in your engagement and potential follower count too!

Especially if you choose to run a long-term campaign with an influencer — as their followers grow, so will yours!

**INFLUENCER MARKETING TIPS FOR 2020**

📚 Now’s the time to get your hashtag strategy ready for 2020! Don’t know where to start? Check out our FREE Instagram Hashtag Strategy Guide!

➕ Never miss an opportunity to boost your engagement — start adding more targeted and strategic hashtags to your influencer marketing posts to see results.

👑 Create a branded hashtag for your next influencer marketing campaign — it’s a great way to raise awareness, boost brand recognition, and drive sales.
Understanding Worldwide Best Times to Post on Instagram
It’s a fiercely competitive world on Instagram, but knowing when to post can really set you apart from the crowd.

Knowing when your audience is most active is essential if you want to get the best pay-off for your influencer marketing efforts — as a more active audience will lead to more engagement on your sponsored posts.

From LA to Sydney, Later and Fohr have reviewed millions of Instagram posts to understand when the best time to post is for brands, businesses, and influencers alike.
Post Between 9am–11am for EST Time Zones

To find the best time to post on Instagram to get the most engagement in 2020, Later analyzed 12 million Instagram posts, posted in multiple time zones around the world from accounts ranging from 100 to 1 million+ followers.

And what we found was that the best time to post on Instagram is between 9am-11am for accounts in EST.

Here are the top 3 global best times to post on Instagram for each day of the week, represented in Eastern Standard Time:

**BEST TIME TO POST TO INSTAGRAM: EST TIME ZONE**

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<th>Monday</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6AM</td>
<td>2AM</td>
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Here’s a breakdown of our findings for quick reference:

- **Monday:** 6am, 10am, and 10pm EST
- **Tuesday:** 2am, 4am, and 9am EST
- **Wednesday:** 7am, 8am and 11pm EST
- **Thursday:** 9am, 12pm, and 7pm EST
- **Friday:** 5am, 1pm, and 3pm EST
- **Saturday:** 11am, 7pm, and 8pm EST
- **Sunday:** 7am, 8am, and 4pm EST
Let’s Take it Worldwide

But what can you do if you’re not based on the EST time zone? Or if the influencers you’re working with are based all over the world?

The team at Fohr have the answer!

WORLDWIDE BEST TIMES TO POST TO INSTAGRAM

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City</th>
<th>UTC Time</th>
<th>Local Time</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Los Angeles</td>
<td>16:00 UTC</td>
<td>8:00am PST</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York</td>
<td>16:00 UTC</td>
<td>11:00am ET</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>London</td>
<td>19:00 UTC</td>
<td>7:00pm GMT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sydney</td>
<td>21:00 UTC</td>
<td>8:00am AEDT</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Los Angeles: 16:00 UTC | 8:00am PST
New York: 16:00 UTC | 11:00am ET
London: 19:00 UTC | 7:00pm GMT
Sydney: 21:00 UTC | 8:00am AEDT
Let’s Make Your Best Time to Post Personal

While this global best time to post data is a great starting point, it’s important to find out what your personalized best times to post are based on your unique audience if you want to improve your engagement.

Since Instagram dropped the chronological feed and started prioritizing “new” content on people’s feeds, your best shot at getting your content in front of your followers is by posting when most of them are actively scrolling the app.

So if you want to beat the Instagram algorithm in 2020, you need to optimize your posting time for when the majority of your followers are online.

That’s why it’s so important to find your own personalized best time to post on Instagram: you can hack the algorithm to increase your reach and get more likes and followers!

If you want to skip the experiments and get right to the good data, an Instagram marketing platform like Later can do the work for you!

Later’s Best Time to Post feature automatically calculates your 7 top posting times based on your best performing posts from the recent month.

Since every Instagram account is different, we wanted to create a feature that would give you your personalized best posting times — and that’s exactly what Best Time to Post does!
If you’re on one of Later’s business plans, which start at just $19/month, your best times to post will automatically be highlighted in your weekly content calendar, making it super easy to schedule your Instagram posts for when your audience is most active!

Optimize your scheduled Instagram posts and increase engagement by finding out when most of your followers are online. [Upgrade now](#) to get access to [Best Time to Post by Later](#)!
INFLUENCER MARKETING TIPS FOR 2020:

🎯 Before you start your next influencer marketing campaign, take a moment to review who your target audience is, and pay close attention to where in the world they’re based. It will help you choose which influencers to work with and inform your content calendar.

🌍 Review where your influencers’ audiences are based to plan your posting schedule. **Pro Tip:** Learn all about an influencer’s audience with Fohr. Discover where they’re based, their age, gender and much more!

⏰ Ready to go? Use Later’s Best Time to Post feature to schedule your posts for maximum impact!
Nano, Micro or Macro? How to Choose an Instagram Influencer
When it comes to growing your business on Instagram, influencer marketing has proven to be a huge growth asset.

And it’s not just for the mega brands — influencer marketing for small businesses can seriously level-up a campaign, build brand awareness and reach new audiences, without blowing the budget.

But working with influencers on Instagram can seem daunting — with the first step being finding the right influencers for your brand and budget, it can easily start to feel overwhelming.

So to help you work out who is the best fit for your business and project, we’ve taken a look at which influencers are delivering the best return for your time, effort, and budget!
From Micro to Macro — How Much Should You Spend on Influencers?

Influencer marketing is on pace to become an $8 billion dollar industry in 2020!

Plus, Instagram influencer partnerships are by far the best performing platform for brands to reach new audiences quickly, with an average 3.21% engagement rate compared to 1.5% across all social networks.

So more than ever before, we’re seeing brands and businesses investing a high portion of their budgets to influencer marketing — simply because, when done right, it works!

While there are many micro-influencers still willing to exchange free product for promotion, today’s biggest Instagram influencers are charging major bucks to create posts for brands as their accounts have become their main source of income.

There’s no question that social media influencers (of all sizes!) have become indispensable for brand campaigns, especially on Instagram.

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Influencer Type</th>
<th>Followers Range</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nano-influencers</td>
<td>&lt;10K followers</td>
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<tr>
<td>Micro-influencers</td>
<td>10 - 50K followers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid-tier influencers</td>
<td>50 - 300K followers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Macro-influencers</td>
<td>300K - 1.5M+ followers</td>
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While there is no one-size-fits-all pricing guide, many digital marketers adhere to the one cent per follower (or $100 per 10K followers) rule as a starting point for their calculation.

From there, you can adjust and take other factors into consideration — such as engagement rate, client budget, campaign length, and other partnership specifics.

Want to learn more about how your business can benefit from Instagram influencers? Download our [free Instagram Influencer Marketing Guide here](#).
Micro-influencers Deliver Higher Engagement Results

Whether you’re working with influencers on a sponsored post or a full on capsule collection, you want to see a business return from it.

But instead of measuring success in likes (as they may disappear completely from our feeds soon!) it’s better to look at engagement rates.

And after analyzing influencers’ posts, it’s micro-influencers who have the highest engagement rates (averaging at 7%) on their feed posts!

In fact, influencers with 0-25K followers had higher engagement rates regardless of their genre, target audience, or topics.
But let’s dig into the details!

Fohr was able to extract an influencer’s niche or topic genre of their Instagram profile, and measure how each compared in terms of engagement rates.

For example, micro-influencers who specialize in parenting get an 8% engagement rate on their posts on average — which is a huge benefit for any businesses looking to partner with them!

Check out how fashion and parenting influencer Sarah Ferguson works with children’s brands on her feed:

With almost 900 likes and 122 comments, Sarah’s sponsored post received tons of engagement from her loyal 20K followers!
REMEMBER:

**Engagement rate = (Likes + Comments) / Followers x 100**

But it doesn’t stop there — from fashion and beauty, to travel and sustainability, micro-influencers nearly always trump macro-influencers when it comes to engagement rates!

Here’s Fohr’s data broken down into category and their average engagement level for micro-influencers:

*Fohr analyzed influencers’ Instagram posts spanning 17 different genres. This is an extract of their findings.*

**Note:** The only category or niche that performed better with macro-influencers was music & entertainment. Influencers in this field saw a higher engagement rate than micro-influencers on their feed posts.
There's no denying that influencer marketing is only going to become more popular in 2020, as both brands and influencers see the benefits.

But for brands, that means paying close attention to how often your influencer partners are posting sponsored posts to their feed. While not inherently “bad,” the risk of having too much sponsored content on their feed could lead to advertising fatigue.

If their audience is seeing too much sponsored content, it could mean that they become immune to it — and the partnership may feel less genuine to an influencer’s audience.
After analyzing how much of an influencers’ feed was made up of sponsored posts or brand collaborations, Fohr found that **influencers with higher followings are posting more sponsored content.**

From a logical perspective, as an influencer gains popularity they are more likely to be discovered by partner brands and approached about campaign opportunities.

However, we discovered two big exceptions to this trend:

1. Influencers between 50-75K followers on Instagram are posting the most sponsored content out of any other tier.

2. The sponsored content percentage begins to drop once an influencer’s following exceeds 200K.

So when searching for the perfect influencer to work with, it’s worth looking at how much sponsored post is already on their feed and their follower count.

If you’re only seeing occasional posts, you’re probably in good shape to keep working with them, especially if they fall into the micro-influencer tier.

But if you’re seeing tons of #ads on their feed, you might want to diversify how you present your campaign.

Think about including Instagram Stories takeovers, hosting IGTV videos, or working on a longer-term project which establishes better brand recognition with your influencers’ followers.
Micro-influencers tend to have better engagement rates on their posts, so consider working with up-and-coming influencers who are excelling in your niche.

Micro-influencers are also a more cost-effective option. If you’re looking to test the waters with influencer marketing in 2020, try working with smaller influencers first.

If you have a long-standing working partnership with an influencer, but are noticing there’s a lot of sponsored content on their feed, think about diversifying your sponsored posts into other categories like IGTV, Stories, or even Instagram Lives!
The Globalization of Influencer Marketing
Are you ready to go global?

One of the real benefits of influencer marketing is that you can tap into a brand new audience that might otherwise not know your brand even existed.

And there’s no city boundaries when it comes to influencer marketing -- as long as you find the right influencer for your campaign, the opportunities are endless!

But where are the influencer hotspots in the world? And where are the most engaged audiences?

Let’s start with where influencers are posting from:
Unsurprisingly, North America and Europe is lit up with Instagram activity.

But if you dig deeper, cities like Sydney, Singapore, and Buenos Aires are all on the rise!

As a brand, you can use this data to pinpoint influencers in the region you want to target to make sure you’re delivering your branded content to the right people.

For example, if you’re an LA-based beauty brand about to break into the Asia-Pacific market, you might want to think about collaborating with Singapore-based influencers.

Being able to tap into their followers and their location will really help you reach new audiences and further market your brand.

Take for example beauty brand Glossier — with only two physical
stores in NYC and LA, the brand relies on their international shipping and pop-ups to reach new clients.

But with clever Instagram partnerships in Europe, the brand is able to establish a strong cult following overseas.

INFLUENCER MARKETING TIPS FOR 2020:

📍 It’s time to pinpoint exactly who you want to reach with your influencer marketing, whether that’s right in your hometown, or on a new continent!

🌍 There’s no border limits in the Instagram world, so if you’re thinking about going international with your influencer marketing, now’s the time.

 francais  Looking for the perfect influencer match for your campaign goals? Use Fohr to discover influencers around the world who fit the bill!
Conclusion
Conclusion

Influencer marketing is showing no sign of slowing down in 2020.

Incorporating influencer marketing into your Instagram strategy can provide incredible opportunities for businesses that want to leverage visual content and reach new and engaged audiences.

And armed with these trends and predictions for a brand new decade to come, you’re all set to see success from your efforts!
Fohr

Search Thousands of Influencers to Find the Perfect Fit

Filter for lifestyle influencers in Dallas with 25k+ followers

- Beauty
- Food
- Lifestyle
- Menswear
- New York
- Paris
- Brazil
- <25k
- 25k–50k
- 50k–100k
- 100k–250k

Join Fohr today and you can start your search for the best influencers that match your campaign goal!

SIGN UP FOR A 7-DAY FREE TRIAL
Put Your Influencer Marketing Plan into Action!

Join Later today and start planning and scheduling your Instagram posts, collecting user-generated content, and more!

SIGN UP — IT’S FREE
Later × Fohr