

How Micro-Influencers Can Drive Local Sales

There are plenty of creative ways to work with micro-influencers to bolster local store awareness and drive sales, as well as loyalty



Influencers have taken the social media world by storm in recent years, commanding that brands and their agencies grab hold of the opportunity to work closely with them. In fact, [Business Insider](#) reports that influencer marketing advertising spend is expected to reach up to \$10 billion by 2022.

Small but mighty, ‘micro-influencers’ are shaping up to be an integral player in franchising, specifically when it comes to local store marketing in cities and towns around the globe. Typically boasting 10,000 to 50,000 followers, micro-influencers post within specific content niches such as fashion, food or travel.

Participating in every corner of the world on networking sites like Instagram, Facebook and their own blog platforms, the key advantage to micro-influencer marketing is the sincere and more transparent relationship they have built with their local and regional audiences. Because they are perceived as more relatable than celebrities and high-profile influencers, micro-influencers tend to have an established trust with their followers and meaningful connections to their local communities. The biggest appeal of micro-influencers to brands is that they have local relevance, generating a more targeted following.

So, how can one better navigate this new marketing landscape? Here are a few helpful tips to keep in mind to build strong brand awareness and drive local sales.

Finding the right micro-influencers for your brand

Seeking out micro-influencers to generate buzz for your local stores may seem like a monumental task, but it really boils down to starting in your own backyard. Consider your own following – if each of your stores has their own social media pages set up,

then you can conduct a more thorough search by combing through the accounts' followers, likes and comments. There's a good chance you'll find someone who is nearby and has previously engaged with your content. Because authenticity is a huge component of a micro-influencer's appeal, it's important to identify those who have naturally expressed a connection with your brand.

There are also more calculated tools available at your fingertips, such as paid influencer search engines that can match you with top influencers for your concept based on your company descriptors and location. Or, you can choose to skip the fees and search for influencers organically. On Instagram, for example, you can explore geotags, which are gathered from the physical location of a user's mobile device, down to the latitude and longitude. By exploring a store location's geotag, there's the potential to discover content that was posted by people – possibly micro-influencers – who have already visited your locations. Clicking on hashtags surrounding your concept, such as the name or location of your brand, is another solid way to conduct an organic search. If you're looking for micro-influencers in your general area, search hashtags such as #influencersof[CITY/STATE/LOCATION] to discover your perfect match.

Once you've spent some time exploring local micro-influencers, it's important to confirm that there's a good fit on both sides. Ensure that their content doesn't contradict your business – you wouldn't want to reach out to a vegan blogger to come in and try your restaurant's new meat lover's pizza. At the same time, take a moment to explore the quality of their content, such as any photos, captions, videos or blog copy, to make sure that this is a person you want to associate your brand with.

Connecting with potential micro-influencers

So, you've found a few local influencers who you'd like to connect with. What's next? Not unlike courting, it's important to capture their attention and properly engage them. Follow them, "like" and leave a comment on a few of their posts. If they've posted content about your brand or have visited one of your stores before, thank them for being a fan.

Once you've become acquainted, reach out via direct message or email. Before you hit send, consider what you can do to stand out in a flooded inbox. "Many micro-influencers are being contacted by brands on a day-to-day basis for promotional opportunities, so it's important that your message stands out," says Alex Hopkins, PR associate and influencer outreach maven at All Points Public Relations. "Take the time to look through the influencer's profile and offer them an experience that fits their lifestyle, aesthetic and social media feed. Micro-influencers are often more attracted to personalized and exclusive opportunities, so it's important to offer them just that."

Be polite and don't immediately begin the dialogue with a hard sell – if they've posted about your brand before, start by acknowledging their connection to your business. Be honest about your intentions and what you're looking for in this partnership – don't forget to talk about your compensation ideas. While there are micro-influencers out there who will accept a free product, meal or class, many will ask for compensation.

Working with micro-influencers

There are plenty of creative ways to work with micro-influencers to bolster local store awareness and drive sales, as well as loyalty. Popular approaches to micro-influencer marketing include offering a free product, service, class or visit to your store. This could be done in conjunction with the launch of a campaign, deal or event, such as a grand opening, in exchange for posts promoting said campaign, deal or event.

Another great way to extend your reach is to host a giveaway. Many brands partner with micro-influencers who can share the chance to win free products, services, and meal coupons from your store on their channels. It would be done in exchange of their followers tagging their friends to the post and following your accounts. The key here again is that many micro-influencers have the advantage of a local audience, and these contests can pique the interest of those who are more capable of visiting your stores.

Lastly, another way to pique the interest of micro-influencers is to invite them to exclusive events – they like to travel in packs. Wining and dining micro-influencers is a great way to create an Instagram-worthy, one-of-a-kind opportunity that in turn will generate buzz that can drive more foot traffic to your local stores.

Identifying, pitching and working with the right micro-influencers takes careful consideration to create the most effective partnerships and return on investment. But, when done right, these partnerships can provide a great boost to the foot traffic and overall awareness of your stores, wherever they may be. Micro-influencers possess powerful engagement capabilities, and there are many ideal candidates available around the globe. With these pointers in mind, you can better navigate this rising marketing format with ease and generate local business for your franchise overall.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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