

Instagram Stories make up one-third of sponsored posts

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Instagram Stories have become a popular way for brands to promote authenticity

By MICKEY ALAM KHAN

Instagram Stories is proving to be a prominent source of sponsored communication from brands, as influencer marketing becomes an integral force in advertising and those involved seek out additional tools for engagement.

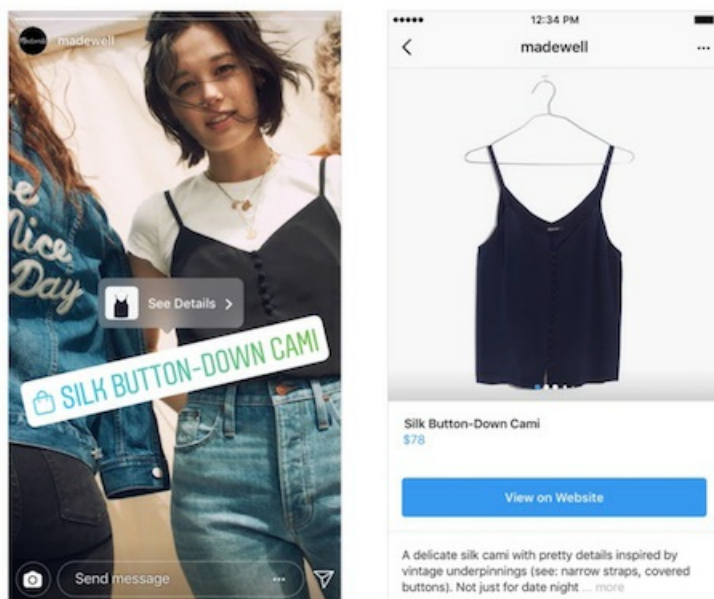
The growth of Instagram Stories usage from brands on influencer accounts can be attributed to the feature's ability to create a personal and close connection with followers, despite its temporary nature. A new report from Klear shows that micro-influencers, women and millennials are the dominant groups within this sector, but influencer campaigns as a whole have seen a growth of 39 percent last year.

"One of the biggest findings from our analysis is that influencer marketing is becoming an integral part of marketing campaigns, demonstrating over 39 percent growth since last year," said Guy Avigdor, chief operating officer of Klear. "We're also seeing that both influencers and brands are turning to new content formats, specifically Instagram Stories, to create more authentic, personal and measurable experiences."

For Klear's State of Instagram Influencer Marketing Report 2019, the researcher analyzed more than 2 million Instagram posts that included the hashtag #ad from Jan. 1 to Dec. 31 in 2018.

Marketers on Instagram

Instagram Stories have grown to be so prominent in influencer marketing that Klear found the feature made up one-third of all sponsored posts on Instagram.



Instagram has turned on Product Tags for Stories. Image credit: Instagram

Influencers posted more than 2.1 million sponsored posts in 2018, which is a 39 percent increase from the prior year.

Women dominate as the leading demographic of influencers, making 84.6 percent of sponsored posts, a 0.7 percent

growth from last year. In addition, 84 percent of sponsored posts came from micro-influencers.

With these findings, it is no surprise that the leading segments of sponsored Instagram moments were lifestyle and fashion.

The holiday season was the most popular time for influencer campaigns throughout the year in both 2018 and 2017 compared to the rest of the year, with November and December seeing the highest numbers of the hashtag #ad.

In November 2018, the hashtag #ad was posted 234 times and it was used 226 times in December. In 2017, that number was only 162 for both months.

While this form of marketing may seem like a fad to some, it is actually a significant source of engagement for brands. Eighty-four percent of sponsored posts last year saw at least 1,000 likes per post.



Mr Bags instagram post sponsored by Grazia. Image credit: Mr Bags

Brazil's influencer market in 2018 was the region with the fastest year-over-year growth, with a 332 percent increase.

However, the United States saw the greatest number of sponsored posts, with almost half of the world's sponsored posts coming from the country.

Additional insight

More brands are turning to influencers to authentically connect them to new audiences as influencer engagement increases, with more room to grow.

When it comes to influencer marketing, brands face concerns dealing with selecting trustworthy influencers and measuring ROI. According to a webinar presented by Shareablee, influencers drive an overwhelming 72 percent of social media actions ([see story](#)).

Social influencer marketing has grown in popularity and this year has become an established tactic, but now brands need to fine-tune their practices.

According to a survey and report from Influencer Intelligence, social media influencers have impacted 61 percent of those aged 18 to 34 in regards to purchasing decisions. These marketers believe that relevance is the most important aspect of influencer marketing, with 100 percent agreeing ([see story](#)).

"The most surprising findings were that Instagram Stories make up one-third of all sponsored Instagram posts, demonstrating the increasing popularity of this format among both influencers and brands and the other is that Brazil, Canada and Japan have the highest influencer marketing adoption rates," Mr. Avigdor said.

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