



# Influencer Marketing: Myths and Misuse

THE  
**CORNER**



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## You work in Influencer marketing? Oh yes, I saw that Fyre Festival documentary. What a mess...

Every person that I've spoken to in the last month.

“Influencer” has become a bit of a dirty word among our clan, from the aforementioned Netflix doc to the BBC Panorama special, and every article in between that blamed 19-year-old American YouTuber, James Charles, for Birmingham City Council’s lack of parking planning. In many ways this cynical and sometimes comical view of influencers boils

down to two key triggers: the sheer volume of influencers in the market, and brands’ haste to employ them without understanding how or why. With that in mind, here’s your handy guide to debunking common myths surrounding influencer marketing, so that together we can quell this tide of misconception and misuse.

## Myth!

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### Influencer Marketing is a new thing

Technically, no. Influencer marketing is essentially an evolution of celebrity endorsement, a practice which dates back to the 1700s when the Royals were used to promote Wedgwood pottery. Brands have been using individuals in a position of influence for centuries to lure customers in through aspiration, expertise or relatability. In fact, the creative methods have barely changed in the last 70 years. The recent shift in perception is largely due to the domination of social media, and the birth of influential people who have learned to harness that power for their own popularity.

### Influencers are just YouTubers or bloggers, right?

Knowing which influencers are available to you, and which are right for your brand, is essential for running a successful influencer program. To get granular, you can usually categorise influencers into one or more of the below tiers.

#### Who they are

#### What they are good for

#### How to use them

Influencers with traditional & social media status

Traditional & social media reach and impressions

Brand "Face", event press coverage, and social media partnership

Following of over 100K on a single social media platform

Large scale social media reach and impressions

Brand "Face", event social coverage, and social media partnership

Following of 30K - 100K on a single social media platform

High social media engagement

Social media partnerships

Renowned expert in a particular field

Industry approval

Written content, speaking occasions, social promotion

Journalists

Press coverage

Press trips, written content, social promotion

Following of under 30K on a single social media platform

High social media engagement in a specific field

Social media partnerships

Influencer gatekeepers, i.e. agents/managers

Consideration & infiltration amongst influencer circles

Product gifting, event invitation, experiences

Celebrity

Digital

Micro

Authority

Media

Nano

Connectors

## Myth!

### Influencers are only good for digital product placement

Influencers can (and should!) be used in a variety of ways which tap into their strengths as individuals and as assets to your wider marketing mix. Influencer partnerships can usually be placed into one of **four buckets**:

1

**Product Placement**

2

**Reviews**

3

**Ambassadors**

4

**Co-creation**

Within these buckets you can further dissect exactly how to employ them in order to meet your KPIs. Some top tips:



If you're using them for product placement or reviews, then you need to ensure it's a product they'd naturally use in order to avoid the content feeling false.



If they're working with you as an ambassador, they need to be utilized across all of your marketing touch points to create a through-line partnership.



If you're going to co-create, then remember to CO-CREATE. Don't just tell them exactly what to do, give them a role and let them have input.

How you place them depends upon your brand goals, but it's worth remembering why you're using influencers in the first place.

Influencer marketing is generally situated near the top of the purchase funnel, naturally lending itself to consumer awareness and consideration. What it does better than paid advertising, within this space, is build consumer trust and add a human element to your brand messaging. If you find yourself briefing an influencer to create an advert without any of their own content style or unique voice included, then you've lost sight of why you hired them in the first place.

## Myth!

### Myth: It's all about data

This one is true! However, it's what you do with this data that is key.

At The Corner we believe in the blend of data and creativity. We use data to align the brand target audience with the influencer audience, and understand the type of content that performs best and on which channels. From there we build a creative strategy on how to work with them, in innovative and brand-relevant ways, so that we can best engage their audience.

In the past 12 months there has been an influx of data tools and platforms for influencer marketing, promising to streamline the process - and promoting a fairly hands-off approach. Their focus is largely centered on the data, and finding individuals to respond to your brief, rather than building a relationship with influencers in order to include their creative insight and knowledge of their audience. This is born from brands wanting to approach influencer marketing as a media buy. Unfortunately, it's this kind of tool which is demonising the influencer marketing industry, and has given birth to an influencer-by-numbers style execution model.

When done right, the data and creative around influencer marketing should go hand in hand, and evolve your campaign rather than simply rehash and amplify it.

## Myth!

### Myth: It'll all be over soon.

According to a [report from Business Insider](#), Influencer Marketing ad spend is forecast to reach up to \$10 billion in 2022. This suggests that recent attacks in the press may be the result of wishful thinking from those hoping to see the term "influencer" die a death. The truth is that, as a principle, working with those who hold influence will never fade far from the consciousness of advertisers and marketeers. That might feel like a bitter pill to swallow for those on the opposite side of this belief, but contextualise it to your own life and you'll realise we're all susceptible to it in one form or another. Use this beginner's guide as a starting point and start asking what Influencer Marketing can do for you and your brand.

And finally, to address the most important myth of all:

**Fact:** The one thing that the Fyre Festival team actually got right was their influencer marketing... it's just the festival part they forgot about.





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Influencer Marketing**

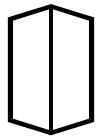
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Craig is a pioneer in influencer strategy, marrying together brands and talent to deliver best-in-class engagement. His work in the talent industry has spanned across a multitude of mediums including TV, film, music, fashion and digital content. Utilising this experience, he oversees the management of The Corner's talent roster, and leads influencer procurement for brand content across the agency.



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