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WHAT IS INFLUENCER MARKETING?

INFLUENCER marketing is a fast-growing industry. Brands are increasingly looking to team up with social media influencers (you might call them YouTubers or vloggers) to advertise their products, instead of, or as well as, using more traditional marketing campaigns.

TELL ME MORE

Many influencers have a huge reach among young people, so our friends at Media Smart think it is important that you know when the content you are viewing is advertising. Media Smart provide free educational resources about the advertising industry for teachers and parents. They have worked with youth influencers such as Hannah Witton to create some short films, with supporting classroom or assembly materials for your teachers or parents, to help you understand more about how influencers market to you.

Which influencers or YouTubers can you think of?



Hannah Witton is a very popular influencer

WHAT ARE 'SOCIAL MEDIA INFLUENCERS'?

Influencers are people with a social media following on things like YouTube or Instagram. Their following might be very large – as with some celebrities – or smaller, including so-called micro influencers who often focus on particular areas or hobbies.

Due to their lifestyle, expertise, fashion sense, celebrity status and beliefs, they are generally respected and thought to be credible, but importantly they are often seen as trustworthy.

WHY DO COMPANIES USE INFLUENCER MARKETING?

Many companies or brands are now partnering with influencers and promoting their products or services to the influencer's followers. This method of advertising can feel more personal and real than traditional marketing. Micro influencers may not have as many followers, but they will often have more regular communication with their audience and their fees will be more affordable. This makes them very attractive to brands.

HOW DO BRANDS WORK WITH INFLUENCERS TO MARKET THEIR PRODUCTS OR SERVICES?

1. Giveaways and competitions
2. Paying for social media posts, vlogs and blogs
3. Giving them free products, services or experiences
4. Affiliate marketing: followers are sent directly to the brand's website, often using a code. The influencer is paid according to how many followers click the link or use their code.

WHAT ARE THE RULES AND REGULATIONS OF INFLUENCER MARKETING?

- If influencers work with brands to create content for their own social media accounts, it qualifies as an ad if the brand pays them using money or freebies, and has some form of control or say over the content.
- If influencers are gifted or loaned a free product or experience, they should disclose it, even if it isn't an ad and they are not being paid to promote it.
- You need to be able to recognise that something is an ad, without having to click or interact with it. It needs to be 'obvious' and clear.
- There are potentially lots of ways influencers can make advertising content 'stick out' as being an 'advert', but by far the easiest is to include a prominent label that makes this clear, such as Ad/Advert/Advertising/Advertisement.
- There are strict rules that cover promotional content, e.g. making claims (they need to be backed up); advertising age-restricted products (like gambling or alcohol) or running 'giveaways' and prize draws.



Instagram/Ryan ToysReview

YouTuber Ryan ToysReview has 21.6 million subscribers and is just seven years old!

HOW CAN YOU WATCH OUR INFLUENCER FILMS?

If you are interested in watching our influencer films at school or at home, ask your teacher or parents to go to www.mediasmart.uk.com for FREE access to our Influencer Marketing educational resource.