FULL-YEAR 2018

INFLUENCER MARKETING

BENCHMARKS REPORT

May 2019

RHYTHMONE

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About This Report

The RhythmOne Influencer Marketing Benchmarks Report for Full-Year 2018 offers an in-depth analysis of 67 US-based campaigns that ran and were completed with RhythmInfluence by RhythmOne — the RhythmOne influencer marketing solution — between January and December 2018. During this period, 53 unique brands spanning 19 advertiser categories ran campaigns with RhythmInfluence. Spanning 2018, 640 influencers created 4,533 pieces of content, plus 139 videos, in aggregate, across the 67 campaigns.

The sixth in our series of influencer marketing benchmarking, this report is intended to provide advertiser category-level data and key insights in the areas of branded content execution, consumer engagement via social channels, brand sentiment and lift, ROI, earned media value, and more.

RhythmInfluence by **RHYTHM**ONE

RhythmInfluence: Beyond Content Creation to Maximize Reach and Impact

RhythmInfluence drives results with our fully-managed service that uses leading technologies to help ensure performance. With RhythmInfluence, brands are connected with influencers who create and distribute branded content — at scale — to engaged audiences, helping to push consumers through all stages of the sales cycle.

Our team works with advertisers on every aspect of a campaign, which encompasses influencer discovery, influencer onboarding and contracting, workflow, brand safety, FTC compliance, advanced analytics, and reporting. We also go steps further to help drive ROI through distribution tactics that include paid social ads, display, and video.

In addition, RhythmOne's proprietary analytics tools — Sharing Analytics and Smart Links — uniquely capture actionable data that helps uncover which content drives user engagement and which encourages users to share content with their family and friends. Our distribution expertise, coupled with our data management platform, measurement tools, and partners, allow us to leverage these insights in social and programmatic environments to advance prospects from awareness to action.

Visit us at RhythmOne.com > Advertisers > Influencer Marketing for more information.

67
Influencer Marketing Campaigns

53
Unique Brands

19
Advertiser Categories

4,500+
Pieces of Branded Content

Full-Year 2018
Highlights

Influencer marketing continues to evolve from an emerging marketing practice to an established, measurable strategy for consumer engagement.

So much so in fact that an estimated 70.3% of U.S. influencer marketers will increase their influencer marketing budget in 2019 — and that includes 19.8% who plan to increase it up to 49% over the previous year.[1] From the executive view, 30.5% of CMOs are increasing the focus on influencers as part of their overall advertising mix.[2]

RhythmOne's influencer marketing solutions leverage social media and programmatic tactics that not only engage consumers at the micro-level, but scale to help maximize reach and impact. Our strategy aligns with recent studies showing that the majority of marketers believe influencers are most helpful for brand awareness (86%), engagement (79%), and making messages more relatable to consumers (80%).[3]

This report charts benchmarks for our solutions and details how influencer marketing has helped 53 unique brands in 19 advertising categories engage their consumers with branded content programs.

[1] "Double or Nothing: Betting Big on Influencer Marketing." Activate. March 2019.
[2] "The Trade Desk – 2018 Survey." Forbes Insights, in partnership with The Trade Desk. November 12, 2018.
[3] "Influencer Marketing 2020." Influencer Intelligence in association with Econsultancy. November 14, 2018.

Benchmarks Snapshot

Advertisers that implemented an influencer marketing campaign in 2018 received $8.12 in **earned media value (EMV)** for every $1.00 of campaign spend, on average.

One-third (32.8%) of the 67 2018 campaigns utilized **Instagram Stories or Snapchat.**

Engagement rate (ER) across all influencer marketing campaigns averaged 9.66%.

Use of Video in campaigns was up 2x over our 2017 benchmark with a total of 139 videos created. More than one-quarter (28.4%) of campaigns created short-form videos (< 0:60) and 23.9% created long-form videos (≥ 0:60).

Average cost-per-engagement (CPE) was $0.29 across all influencer marketing campaigns.

Advertisers in nearly three-fifths (57.9%) of our categories applied **Social Media Listening** to their campaigns, which averaged 98% positive sentiment across the board.
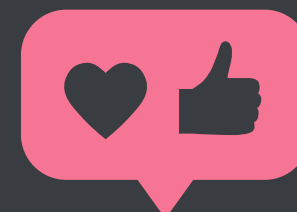
Full-Year 2018
Influencer Marketing Campaigns Overview

The Retail advertiser category tops our list in both total count (17.9% of all campaigns) and total spend (51.9% of all campaigns). By count, Retail was followed by CPG Food (16.4%), Home and Garden (10.4%), Entertainment (9.0%), and Healthcare (7.5%). By spend, Retail was followed by Home & Garden (9.7%), CPG Food (9.5%), Grocery & Supermarkets (8.2%), and Financial (4.5%).
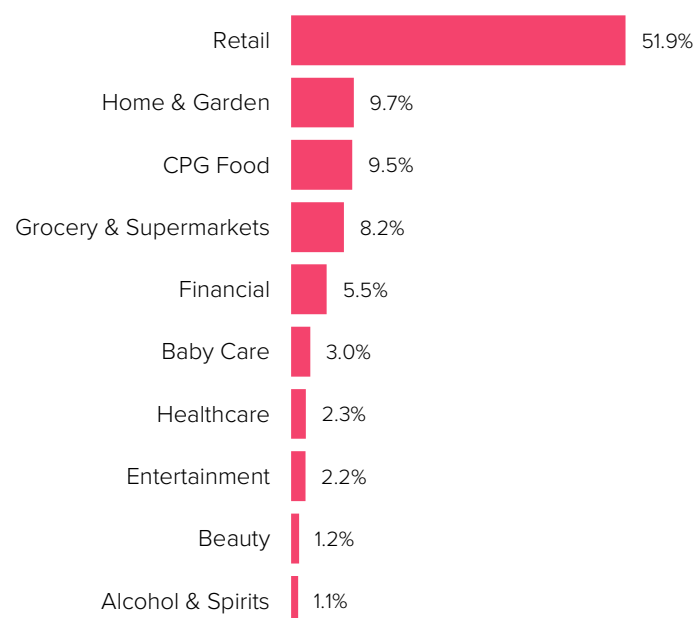
Full-Year 2018 Influencer Marketing Campaigns Overview

According to an August 2018 study by Influencer Intelligence and Econsultancy, more than one-quarter (27%) of digital marketers surveyed reported influencer marketing accounts for up to a 20% share of the entire marketing budget — and another 13% reported it accounts for up to 30% of the total budget.[1] In 2018 at RhythmOne, the average campaign spend on RhythmInfluence offerings **increased 2.9x over our full-year 2017 average —** serving as an indicator of the continued growth of influencer marketing as part of total advertising and marketing spend.
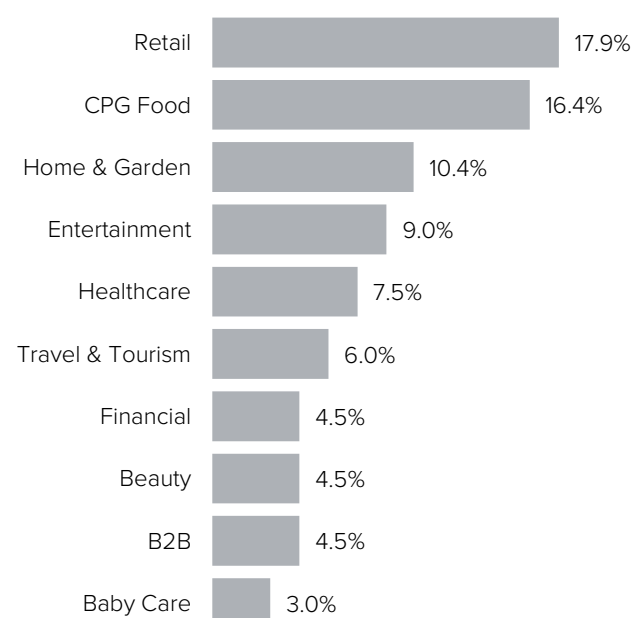
Top 10 Advertiser Categories by Spend
by % of All 2018 Programs

Category	%
Retail	51.9%
Home & Garden	9.7%
CPG Food	9.5%
Grocery & Supermarkets	8.2%
Financial	5.5%
Baby Care	3.0%
Healthcare	2.3%
Entertainment	2.2%
Beauty	1.2%
Alcohol & Spirits	1.1%

Top 10 Advertiser Categories by Count
by % of All 2018 Programs

Category	%
Retail	17.9%
CPG Food	16.4%
Home & Garden	10.4%
Entertainment	9.0%
Healthcare	7.5%
Travel & Tourism	6.0%
Financial	4.5%
Beauty	4.5%
B2B	4.5%
Baby Care	3.0%

[1] "Influencer Marketing 2020." Influencer Intelligence in association with Econsultancy. November 14, 2018.

Campaign
Elements

RhythmOne works with advertisers to turn branded content into brand impact to drive outcome for brands. Tactics may include the branded content itself (which include social posts, videos, stories, and experiential events, as well as sponsored blog posts and social amplification), distribution mechanisms that leverage programmatic channels and unique data, and advanced campaign measurement.

Branded Content

SOCIAL POSTS

More than four-in-five (85%) of our 2018 influencer marketing campaigns featured social content.

Social posts remain the foundation for most influencer marketing campaigns, including content on Instagram, Facebook, LinkedIn, Pinterest, Snapchat, and YouTube. In many ways, the medium carries the message, whether eye-catching static images, compelling Instagram or Facebook Stories, long-form videos on YouTube, or short form videos on mobile video apps like TikTok.

STORIES

Campaigns launched in 2018 saw an uptick in the use of Instagram Stories and Snapchat; nearly one-third (32.8%) of the 67 2018 campaigns utilized the tactic — which is up from 19.2% of all campaigns in 2017. This increase is in line with industry trends that show nearly four out of five U.S. marketers find Instagram to be an effective influencer marketing tool.[1]

Stories provide an additional avenue for influencers to connect with audiences in a real-time and authentic fashion. They also allow for outbound links.

" **We follow influencers** because we are genuinely interested in their lives ... while influencers curate their stories, it's much more raw, and an unfiltered, behind-the-scenes look at what people are up to. That's where each influencers' true personality shine. When I'm assessing whether an influencers' ethos aligns with our brand's ethos, I'm looking at stories to help me decide." [2]

— *Christine Ngo Isaac*
Brand Director and Head of U.S. Consumer Engagement, Moët & Chandon

[1] "Influencer Marketing 2019." Mediakix. February 14, 2019.
[2] "Influencers and Instagram Stories: A Perfect Marriage?" eMarketer. March 2019.

Campaign Elements
Branded Content

EXPERIENTIAL EVENTS

In 2018, we saw influencer marketing campaigns embrace more live, experiential events with Influencers onsite and sharing exciting, highly visual content shared live from the events to engage with audiences and followers in real time. Event activities included immersive days in a client's test kitchens, behind the scenes tour of one brand's corporate headquarters and flagship locations, store grand openings, and brand-specific pop-up shops including custom backdrops and other Instagram-ready touches.

The RhythmOne team worked directly with clients offering support that ranged from contracting talent and coordinating event space to organizing travel logistics, design, collateral, presentations, and overall branded items/swag.

VIDEOS

In 2018, with 139 unique videos created, our influencer marketing campaigns featured a two-fold increase in the use of video when compared to 2017. More than one-quarter (28.4%) of campaigns created short-form videos running less than 60 seconds (the majority of which ran on our influencers' Instagram handles), and 23.9% created long-form videos running more than 60 seconds (the majority of which ran on YouTube).

SPONSORED BLOG POSTS AND SOCIAL AMPLIFICATION

Nearly half (45%) of our 2018 influencer marketing campaigns included a sponsored blog posts component with all (100%) blog posts amplified socially.

Emerging: TikTok

The growing popularity of short videos as offered by mobile apps such as TikTok offers another way for RhythmOne to work with influencers to expand their reach, in particular to high school and college audiences. With TikTok, influencers can stream short-form video content (often just 15 seconds in length) and share it with their network or publicly via hashtags and sounds.

Sponsored Blog Posts — avenues for long-form content — pair advertisers with influencers who develop and distribute brand-approved content that promotes products, services, or other initiatives. The content is produced and placed on influencers' blogs and reflects the "look and feel" of the influencer's aesthetic. Ideal long-form content includes topics such as recipe creation, home décor updates, and other activities that feature creation steps and outcomes.

Influencers promote blog post(s) and other content across their social media accounts, including Instagram, Pinterest, Facebook, and Twitter. Called Social Amplification, influencers use the features of the specific social platforms to creatively feature images or campaign hashtags that tie back to the original Sponsored Blog Posts.

Campaign Elements
Distribution Tactics

INFLUENCER SOCIAL ADS

All (100%) of our 2018 influencer marketing campaigns featured Influencer Social Ads.

The campaign should never end when the influencers post content. RhythmOne's influencer social ads run paid promotion of content via the influencers' social channels. Formats include static, Instagram Stories, video, canvas, and carousels. In this way, advertisers can align their branded content with very specific audiences by leveraging the respective platform's targeting capabilities, as well as our Smart Links and Social Sharing analytic tools for modeling. Paid social ads are optimized by platform, influencer, and content to help drive customers through the buyer's journey to the lower funnel, where they may be persuaded to convert (e.g., take an action and/or make a purchase). All of this is handled by RhythmOne's managed service offering.

DATA-DRIVEN PROGRAMMATIC DISTRIBUTION AND CONNECTED TV

In 2018, RhythmOne worked with select clients to facilitate programmatic distribution of branded content created by influencers to a wider audience using top-performing imagery and text. Channels include display and video, as a way to distribute custom content. Influencer content is converted to display or video ads which then are seeded programmatically through the RhythmOne Programmatic Platform. We can also leverage advertisers' first-party data, RhythmOne proprietary data, including Sharing Analytics and Smart Links, and paid data (such as impression data and behavioral data) to help expand exposure via the branded content and/or drive to the advertiser's destination (e.g., a landing page) for direct response.

An emerging tactic is the use of branded video in the Connected TV (CTV) environment. This gives advertisers another avenue for video distribution opportunities that help drive meaningful engagement between influencers and consumers, in a fast-growing environment. Our CTV ad environments span ad-supported video on demand, apps, and in the "home" hubs of smart TVs. We can run CTV ads with branded video content created by influencers — helping to keep the brand top of mind and enforce its association with the influencer. For those advertisers looking to reach audiences on CTVs, but without the necessary video assets, Influencers may provide a cost effective and creative way to get there.

Advanced Campaign Measurement
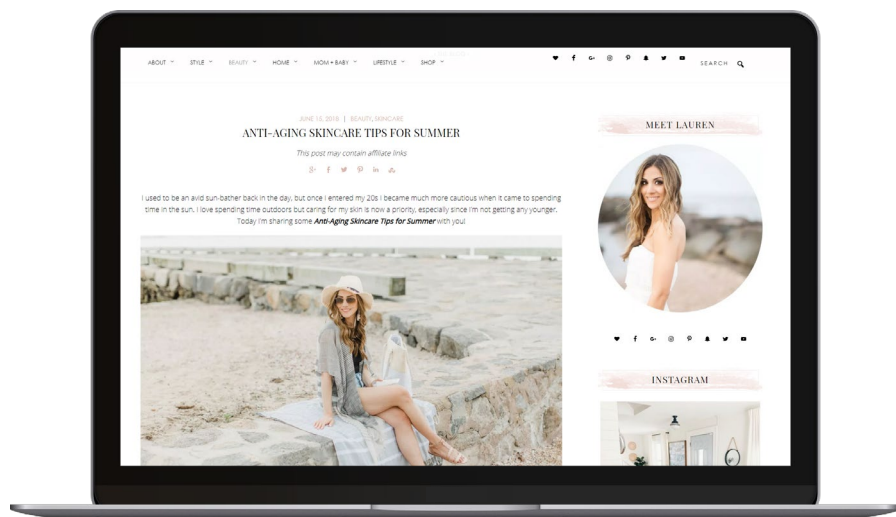
SOCIAL MEDIA LISTENING

More than half (57%) of our 2018 influencer marketing campaigns included Social Media Listening.

In 2018, we produced 25 social media listening reports for 25 unique campaigns spanning 11 advertiser categories. Specifically, we tracked fluctuations in campaign positive sentiment and brand mention lift. For these campaigns, positive sentiment — which measures through algorithms whether or not the words included in posts are "positive" in nature — **averaged 98.8%.** During the campaign periods (i.e., flight dates), brand mention lift **averaged 42.4%.** Brand mention lift **increased to an average of 69.0%,** year-over-year, for the advertisers.

Social media listening is offered to our clients on a campaign-by-campaign basis for programs that run for a minimum of two weeks.

FACEBOOK AND INSTAGRAM BRAND LIFT STUDIES

RhythmOne has the ability to help measure the impact of influencer campaigns on sales and brand lift through a Facebook and Instagram brand lift study. In 2018, the team saw an **average 3.7% lift in purchase intent** and an **average 4.3% lift in brand awareness** among campaigns that invested in this option.

ECOMMERCE MEASUREMENT

For ecommerce brands, RhythmOne has the ability to drive online sales through targeted Influencer social ads. As part of this offering, we amplify influencer content via influencer social handles and optimize them for online conversions through Facebook and Instagram's pixel. In 2018, an advertiser in the Retail category saw a return on advertising spend (ROAS) of $6.06 — and a **conversion rate that was 2.42% higher than the advertiser's average** on social — across the Influencer social ads that were optimized for conversions.

Benchmarks Summary
by Measure
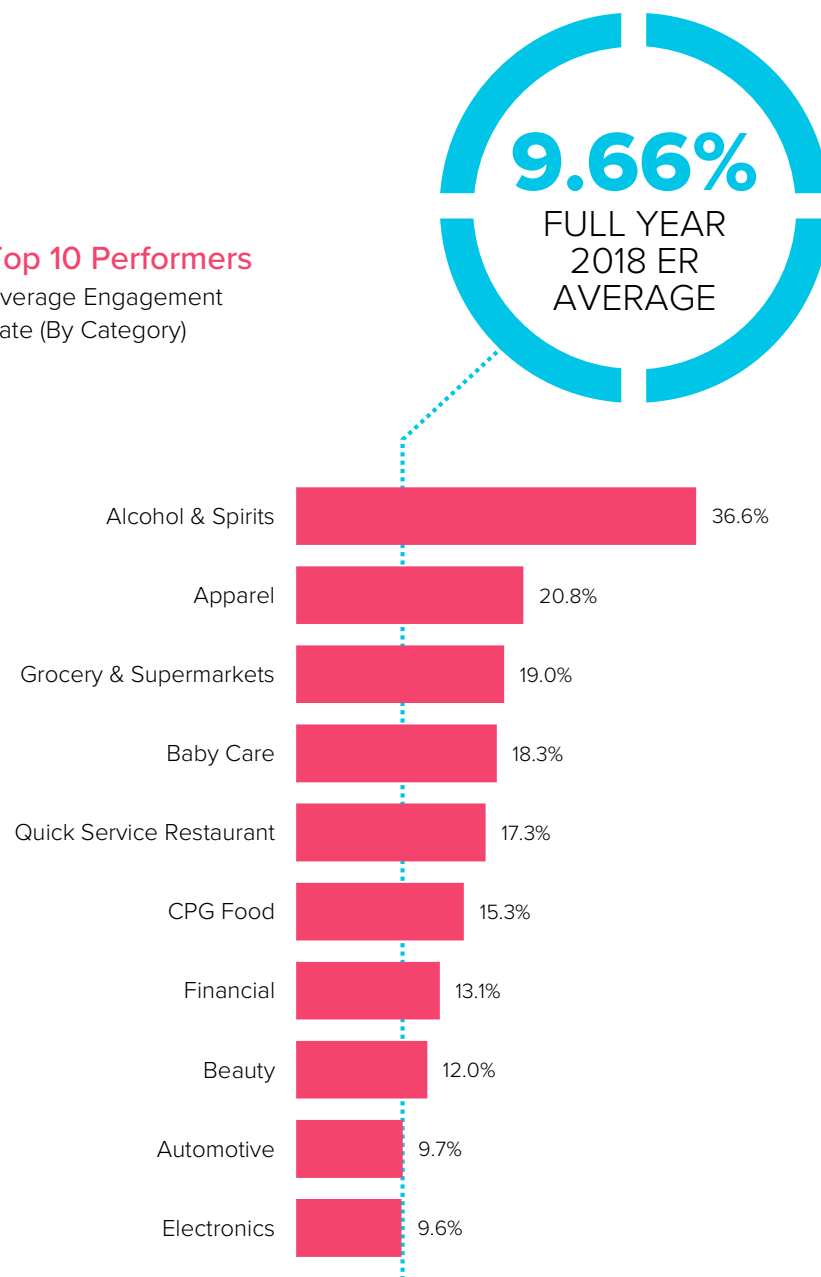
Engagement Rate

9.66%
FULL YEAR 2018 ER AVERAGE

In 2018, our influencer marketing campaigns delivered a 9.66% engagement rate (ER) for advertisers. Note that engagement rate goals vary with every campaign, depending on the brand and the influencers involved.

Engagement rate is calculated by dividing total engagements by total reach. Specifically, engagements are measurable actions taken by consumers, including but not limited to comments, clicks, video views, and social media measures including likes, reactions, shares, views, etc. Reach is the maximum potential audience reached by influencers' sponsored content.
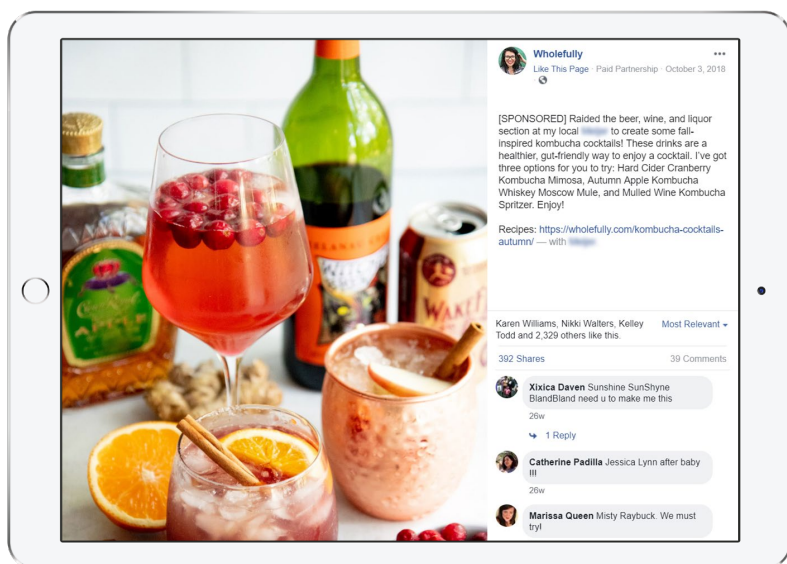
Top 10 Performers
Average Engagement Rate (By Category)

Category	Rate
Alcohol & Spirits	36.6%
Apparel	20.8%
Grocery & Supermarkets	19.0%
Baby Care	18.3%
Quick Service Restaurant	17.3%
CPG Food	15.3%
Financial	13.1%
Beauty	12.0%
Automotive	9.7%
Electronics	9.6%

Cost-Per-Engagement

In 2018, our clients saw an average of $0.29 cost per engagement (CPE) on their influencer marketing campaigns.

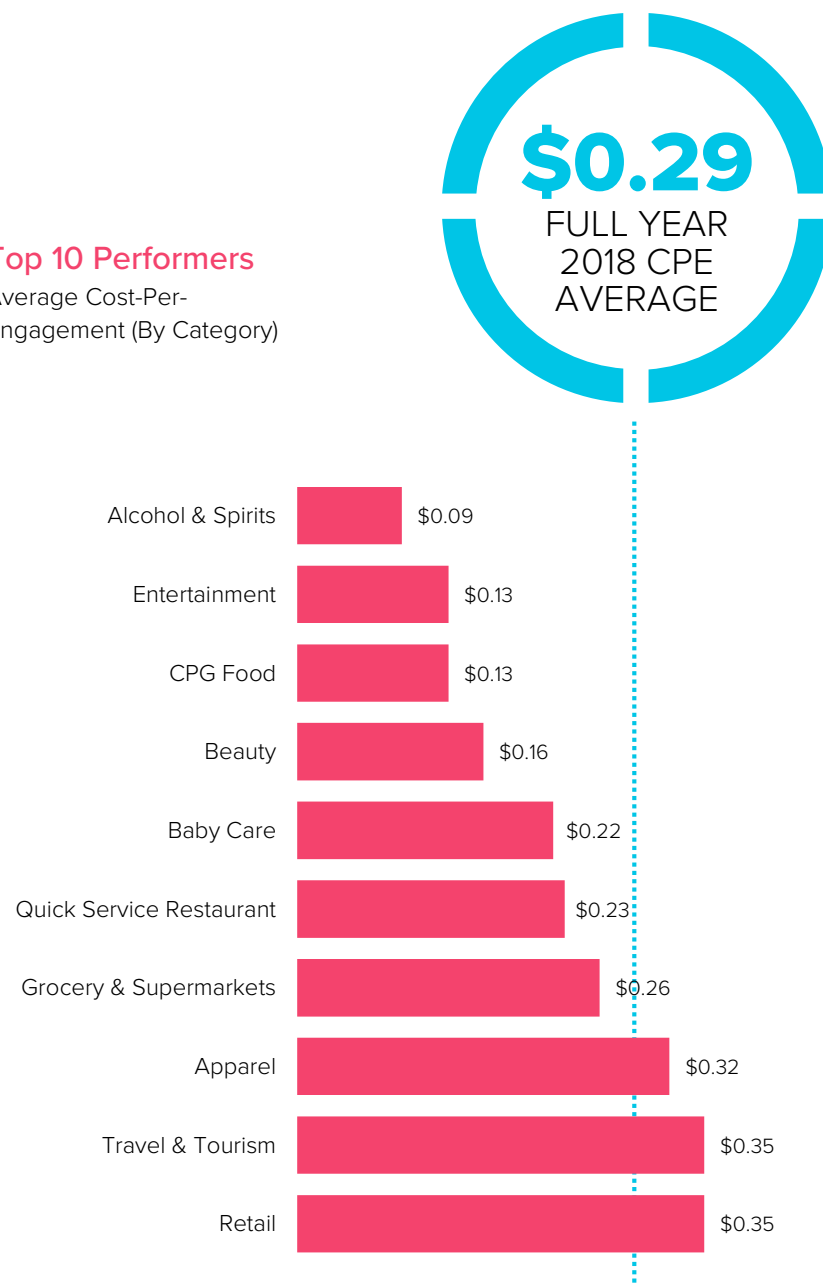## DEFINING COST-PER-ENGAGEMENT (CPE)

CPE is generated by dividing a campaign's total spend (i.e., creative, content development, media spend, etc.) by the total number of engagements. CPE seeks to quantify the value of an engaged consumer across all social media channels. Like cost-per-click, CPE can help provide a view into efficiency and competition for that users' attention.

Several factors can drive up CPE costs. We are seeing a trend where brand advertisers appear to be shifting KPIs away from standard engagements to brand and sales-lift activities. Another factor to consider is that as influencer marketing matures, campaigns are also likely to become more complex with associated larger fees tied to content usage, events, and exclusivity. The increased use of video content also may drive up filming and production costs, and campaign-specific factors including niche branded content and geo-targeting contribute to the CPE mix.

$0.29
FULL YEAR 2018 CPE AVERAGE

Top 10 Performers

Average Cost-Per-Engagement (By Category)

Category	CPE
Alcohol & Spirits	$0.09
Entertainment	$0.13
CPG Food	$0.13
Beauty	$0.16
Baby Care	$0.22
Quick Service Restaurant	$0.23
Grocery & Supermarkets	$0.26
Apparel	$0.32
Travel & Tourism	$0.35
Retail	$0.35

Post

2,369 likes
dabito We turned our master bathroom into a geometric sanctuary! Hop on the blog for all the details (link in profile).
#DayofDesign
#DeltaDesign #Ad
View all 58 comments

Benchmarks Summary by Measure
Earned Media Value

In 2018, advertisers that implemented an influencer marketing campaign with RhythmOne received $8.12 in earned media value (EMV) for every $1.00 of campaign spend, on average.

Earned Media Value (EMV) refers to the value that can be attributed to publicity, social sharing, and other organic, unpaid digital media exposure. EMV helps to provide a means of measuring the ROI of influencer programs by assigning a value to the reach of and engagement and interaction with branded content, and it is a good measure to help understand the "amplification-effect" of influencer marketing. In calculating EMV, dollar values are assigned for every engagement on every channel/social media platform used by influencer marketing programs. These values are determined based on industry standards, independent research commissioned by partners of RhythmOne, and data released by social platforms.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF CAMPAIGN-SPECIFIC FACTORS

We consider a wide variety of measurements to calculate EMV. The more clout an influencer has — and the more relevant to a brand an influencer is — generally means more followers will engage with and share their content. Keep in mind that campaign-specific factors and tactics can and often do significantly impact EMV, as well as engagement rates and even cost-per-engagement metrics.

RhythmOne Earned Media Value (EMV) Measurements

B **Blog** Comments/Replies

Giveaways/Contest/Sweepstakes Widget or Hub Entries

f **Facebook** Shares, Comments, Reactions, Shares from Posts, Estimated Impressions, Video Views, Live Video Views (While Live), Live Video Views (Non-Live)

Twitter Mentions, Likes, Shares from Posts, Re-Tweets, Video Views, Estimated Impressions

Pinterest Comments, Saves, Tried It, Shares from Posts, Estimated Impressions

Instagram Likes, Comments, Video Views, Shares (Paid Only), Instagram Story Live Video Views, Instagram Story Direct Messages, Estimated Impressions

YouTube Comments, Likes, Shares, Impressions

g+ **Google+** Shares, Comments, Likes, Shares from Posts, Estimated Impressions

Snapchat Screen Shots, Geo-Filter Uses, Geo-Filter Views, Impressions

in **LinkedIn** Likes, Comments, Shares, Shares from Post, Estimated Impressions

Sharing Analytics Dark Social Shares

Smart Links Po.st URL Clicks

Note: Google+ was discontinued for consumer use on April 2, 2019; this discontinuation does not affect EMV values for calendar year 2018.

Benchmarks Summary by Measure
Earned Media Value

In 2018, Entertainment led the RhythmOne categories in EMV with an average of $41.13. This success is likely due in part to the increased use by advertisers of experiential events such as festivals and plays where the Influencers in attendance shared real-time updates and compelling, eye-catching visuals.

$8.12
FULL YEAR 2018 EMV AVERAGE

Top 10 Performers
Average Return on Earned Media Value (By Category)

Category	EMV
Entertainment	$41.12
Beauty	$20.69
Quick Service Restaurant	$16.27
CPG Food	$14.88
Travel & Tourism	$11.47
Alcohol & Spirits	$11.42
Grocery & Supermarkets	$11.31
Baby Care	$10.21
Education	$10.16
Financial	$10.02

Instagram

dabito • Follow
Paid partnership with
Cooper Hewitt Smithsonian Design Museum

Liked by **rhythminfluence** and **57,468 others**
NOVEMBER 27, 2018
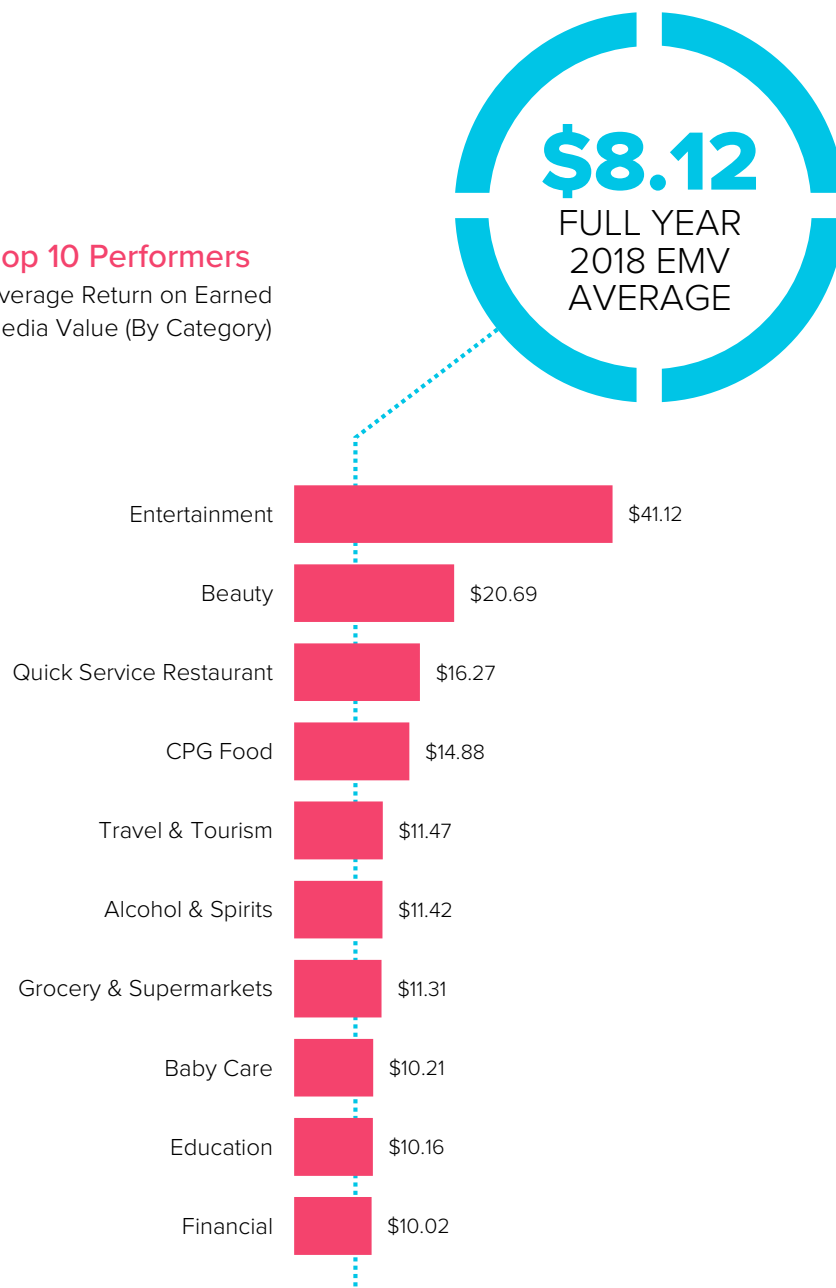
Benchmarks Summary by Measure
Social Media Listening

Social media listening is the process of identifying and assessing what is being said about a company, individual, product, or brand by mining text for specific keywords on social media, blogs, and across media publications.

We offer social media listening programs to advertisers on a campaign-by-campaign basis. In 2018, 11 out of our 19 advertiser categories applied social media listening for a total of 25 campaigns (37.3% of all campaigns). Positive sentiment averages 98% for participating advertisers. The average brand mention lift was 42.4% during the campaigns and 69.0% year over year.

The opportunity for increased social media listening may offer greater insight into the branding value of influencer marketing. Social media listening also may offer a more rounded view of campaign KPIs than engagement metrics alone.

The average percent positive sentiment and lift in brand mentions per advertiser categories that ran social media listening programs with RhythmOne is as follows:

Financial Category

The Financial category earned the highest percentage of brand mention lifts with RhythmOne, delivering a 136% lift during the campaign period and a 208% brand mention lift year over year. A uniquely creative campaign in this space featured mural artists who created four murals in four different cities to spread a positive message across the communities. The success of the campaign was evident in the high lift in brand mention for the financial institution advertiser.

Category	% of Social Listening Programs by Category	Average % of Positive Sentiment	Average % of Brand Lift During Campaign Period	Average % of Brand Lift YoY
Alcohol & Spirits	1	100%	Not Analyzed	5%
Baby Care	2	98%	27%	15%
Beauty	1	99%	20%	Not Analyzed
CPG Food	4	100%	75%	30%
Entertainment	1	98%	2%	Not Analyzed
Financial	3	98%	136%	9%
Grocery & Supermarkets	1	100%	6%	208%
Home & Garden	2	98%	10%	Not Analyzed
Quick Service Restaurant	1	98%	Not Analyzed	Not Analyzed
Retail	8	99%	Not Analyzed	2%
Travel & Tourism	1	96%	16%	Not Analyzed

Market Movers in 2018

Market Movers in 2018

Evolving the Brand and Influencer Partnership
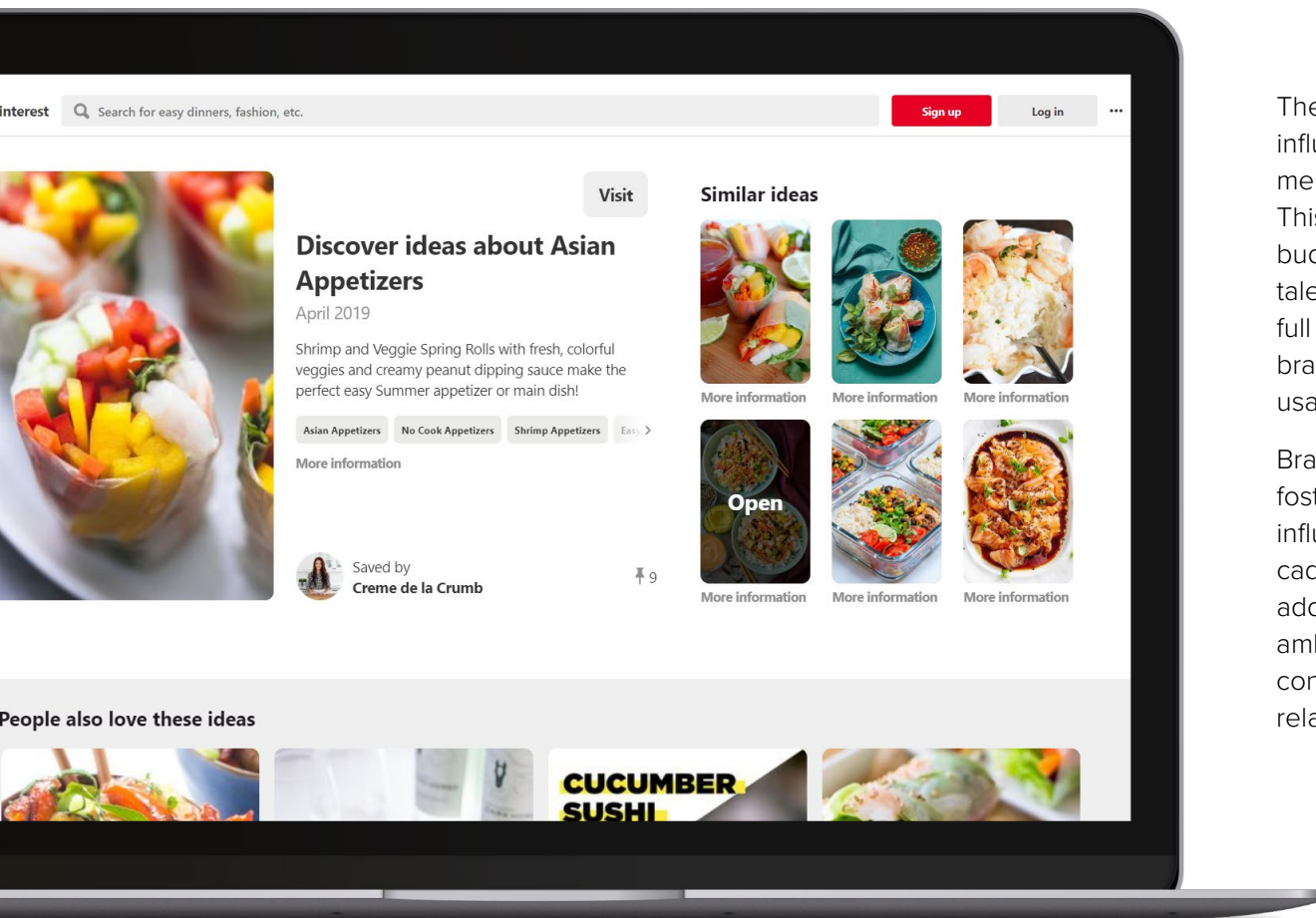
The relationship between the brand advertiser and influencers is evolving from a "one campaign and done" mentality to the establishment of ongoing partnerships. This trend is reflected in the 2018 increase in campaign budgets as marketers look to partner with influencer talent for campaigns that last multiple months or even a full year. This longer commitment in turn provides brands with greater opportunity for extended content usage and influencer exclusivity.

Brands reap the benefits of this continued partnership, fostering a deeper, more nuanced relationship with influencers that helps to drive increased posting cadence and greater success. Influencers reap additional benefits too as they become longer-term ambassadors for brands, enabling them to continue conversations with their audiences, establish authentic relationships, and build trust.

Evolving Amplification and Programmatic Distribution

The programmatic distribution of influencer content combined with paid social distribution continued to expand in 2018. Campaigns are designed to deliver content through ad platforms across native, display, and video. Via Influencer-infused audience segments, advertisers can help expand their audience and drive real ROI from Influencer campaigns by connecting first-, second-, and third-party data to programmatic distribution.

By converting influencer content into programmatic ads, advertisers can better deliver content that is more relevant to these larger audiences and see higher engagement. Programmatic media also provides another layer of measurement to help brands assess the performance of content and the ultimate value of influencers. Branded content created by Influencers can be turned into programmatic display and video ads that run on mobile devices and desktop.

As audience consumption habits change and larger shares of viewers focus on CTVs including smart TVs and over-the-top (OTT) media services, we see this as an emerging opportunity for further distribution of influencer content. As noted previously, branded video content created by influencers can run on CTVs in ad-supported video on demand, apps, and "home" hubs of smart TVs.

Strategic placement of ads and paid social help convert leads to customers ready to take the next step and make a purchase. An influencer marketing campaign without the added paid social targeting and optimization components would be a miss.
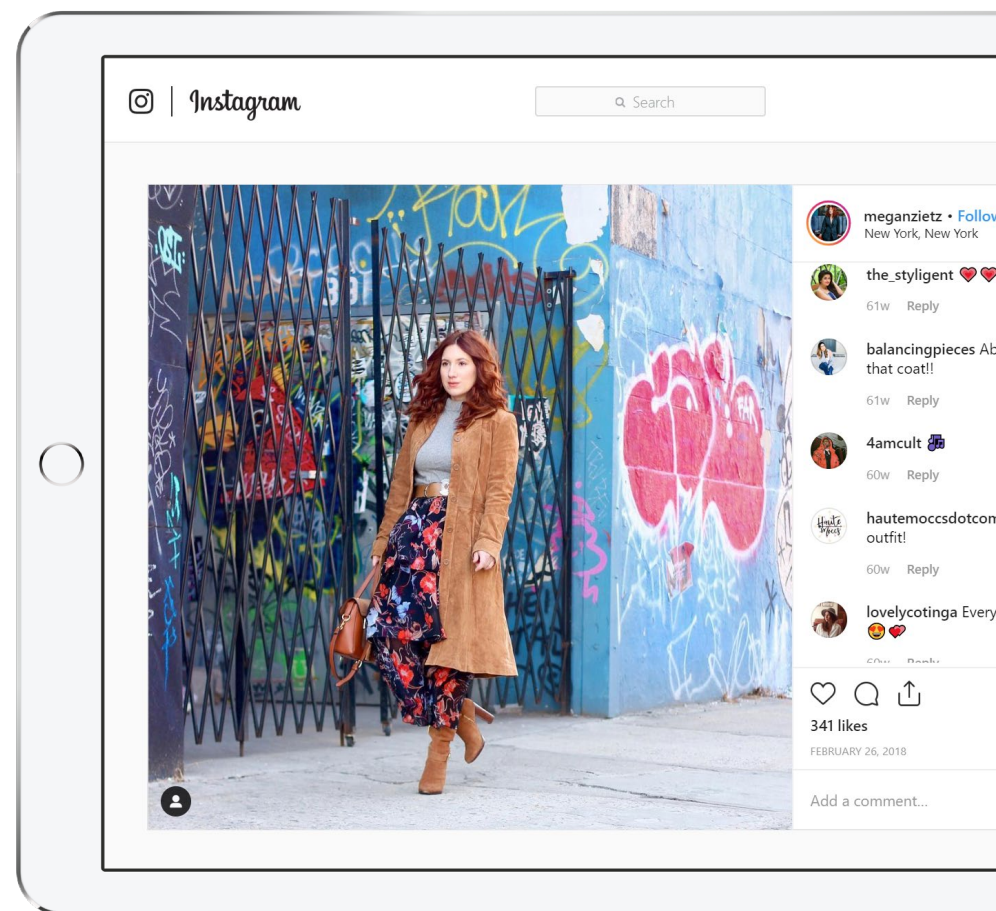
Brand Safety and Fraud Prevention

The value of influencer marketing relies on authenticity, and that authenticity must be preserved through transparency and measurability if influencer marketing is going to realize its full potential. To that end, brands, agencies, publishers, and platforms all need to work together to advocate for transparency and honesty in influencer marketing. Brand safety is of paramount importance in the development of influencer marketing products and campaign activation on behalf of advertisers. Our influencer marketing campaigns combine powerful features of social platforms with managed service and internal audit processes to help ensure authentic influencer engagements.

At RhythmOne, we have developed a 35-point audit that verifies campaigns that we execute abide by high levels of protection against suspicious traffic to help ensure that we produce real engagement and results for our clients. Our influencer audit tracks telltale signs of suspicious activity such as sudden bursts of follower growth or suspicious letter replacements in profile names, such as the use of "1" to replace the letter "l." We also track more complex factors, such as percentage of engagements coming from suspicious accounts and the ratio of engagement rates to CPEs to help ensure our campaigns meet the standards (and KPIs) for our advertisers.

> **The key to improving the [Influencer fraud] situation** is threefold: cleaning up the influencer ecosystem by removing misleading engagement; making brands and influencers more aware of the use of dishonest practices; and improving transparency from social platforms to help brands measure impact. We need to take urgent action now to rebuild trust before it's gone forever."[1]
>
> — *Christine Ngo Isaac*
> *Brand Director and Head of U.S. Consumer Engagement, Moët & Chandon*

[1] "What to Know About Spending, Stories, Fraud, and Microinfluencers" eMarketer. March 2019

Conclusions and Key Takeaways

With our Full-Year 2018 Influencer Marketing Benchmarks Report, we have collected data and insights that can help advertisers make more informed decisions about how and where to implement influencer marketing programs.

Conclusions and Key Takeaways

Use video more — a lot more.

As noted in this report, the use of video as an influencer marketing tactic rose by a factor of 2x over the year prior. And for good reason: videos go above and beyond text and imagery and can effectively immerse viewers with branded content. Whether short- or long-form, the video content that influencers produce on behalf of brands is inherently social — and videos enable influencers to promote brands in a unique voice. This unique voice helps to promote authenticity and drive engagement among consumers.

Incorporate events for more experiential engagement.

Experiential events — e.g., live, in-person events hosted by an advertiser that leverages influencers — connect the dots between branded digital content and "real life" application. Whether an immersive day in a food brand's test kitchens, a behind the scenes tour of a home goods manufacturer's corporate headquarters, or a kickoff of a retail store's grand opening, experiential events can help drive interest and enhanced awareness.

Share more with Instagram Stories.

Nearly four out of five U.S. marketers find Instagram to be an effective influencer marketing tool. Instagram Stories are a driver of this adulation. In 2018, nearly one out of every three (32.8%) influencer marketing campaigns used Instagram Stories or Snapchat to drive engagement with branded content — an uptick of almost 2x over the year prior. Stories go beyond the standard post and allow the influencer to authentically promote branded content in ways that resonate with engaged audiences.

Build long-term relationships with influencers.

Advertisers and influencers alike are seeing the benefits of moving beyond one-time engagements to building longer-term ambassador-style relationships. This strategy helps cement trust and can lead to enhanced brand awareness, higher conversion rates, and true brand advocacy.

Make the most of social media listening.

Social media listening helps brands gauge the effectiveness of branded content and if it is resonating with consumers. Social media listening also offers a more rounded view of campaign KPIs than engagement metrics alone.

Prevent influencer fraud.

The value of influencer marketing relies on authenticity — and that authenticity must be preserved through transparency and measurability if influencer marketing is going to realize its full potential. Brands, agencies, publishers, and partners all need to work together to advocate for transparency and honesty in influencer marketing.

Team with a partner who goes beyond content.

Influencer marketing — perhaps the most "human" of marketing channels — is generally most effective when customization and creative thinking are leveraged to produce and distribute branded content that is truly authentic in the eyes of consumers. Work with partners who thrive on the power of creativity and custom offerings, and who embrace the importance of managed services to drive success — and work with those who embrace enhanced distribution options including paid social, programmatic, and CTV.

Category-Specific
Benchmarks

Derived from RhythmInfluence by RhythmOne 2018 Campaigns

Alcohol & Spirits

1.1%
of total spend

1.5%
of all programs in 2018

2
Influencers

18
combined pieces
of content created

4
videos created
in total

CATEGORY-SPECIFIC BENCHMARKS

EMV	$11.42
ER	36.55%
CPE	$0.09
% of Campaigns with Video	100%
% of Campaigns with Instagram Story Views and/or Snapchat	100%
% of Positive Sentiment with 1 Social Listening Study	100%

CATEGORY-SPECIFIC TAKEAWAYS

- The single advertiser in this category featured regionally-known influencers in a local pride campaign, working in partnership with a nationally recognized locally brewed alcoholic beverage. Influencers shared what they loved about their state through static content, video, and social stories.

- The highest volume of engagement came from one influencer with 1.6 million total (paid and organic) video views, reactions, comments, and shares.

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Apparel

0.7%
of total spend

1.5%
of all programs in 2018

4
Influencers

8
combined pieces
of content created

CATEGORY-SPECIFIC BENCHMARKS

EMV	$8.11
ER	20.76%
CPE	$0.32
% of Campaigns with Instagram Story Views and/or Snapchat	100%

CATEGORY-SPECIFIC TAKEAWAYS

- For the single advertiser in this category, influencers created Instagram Stories to share their experiences and styling choices around the featured product to engage males with specific interests in key markets.

- Ads that ran on both mobile and desktop devices used embedded influencer content to drive product purchase.

Category-Specific Benchmarks
Automotive

0.5%
of total spend

1.5%
of all programs in 2018

7
Influencers

36
combined pieces
of content created

1
videos created
in total

CATEGORY-SPECIFIC BENCHMARKS

EMV	$8.24
ER	9.73%
CPE	$0.39
% of Campaigns with Video	100%
% of Campaigns with Instagram Story Views and/or Snapchat	100%

CATEGORY-SPECIFIC TAKEAWAYS

- The single advertiser in this category launched a campaign where both automotive experts and male lifestyle influencers created blogs, video, and social content reviewing tires. The campaign positioned one particular brand top of mind among the targeted audience when considering future tire purposes.

Business-to-Business (B2B)

0.7%
of total spend

4.5%
of all programs in 2018

14
Influencers

78
combined pieces
of content created

CATEGORY-SPECIFIC BENCHMARKS

EMV	$3.72
ER	7.37%
CPE	$0.39

CATEGORY-SPECIFIC TAKEAWAYS

- For one campaign, six small business influencers created content across blogs, LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter, and Pinterest to educate audiences. Content was amplified through Influencer's Social Ads targeting small business C-level executives.

- Another campaign brought national and local industry experts together as influencers to share advice to their followers on human resources, utilities, and small business ownership. The campaign included blog content as well as social posts.

Category-Specific Benchmarks
Baby Care

3.0%
of total spend

3.0%
of all programs in 2018

4
Influencers

64
combined pieces
of content created

4
videos created
in total

CATEGORY-SPECIFIC BENCHMARKS

EMV	$10.21
ER	18.33%
CPE	$0.22
% of Campaigns with Video	100%
% of Campaigns with Instagram Story Views and/or Snapchat	100%
% of Positive Sentiment with 2 Social Listening Studies	98%

CATEGORY-SPECIFIC TAKEAWAYS

- One influencer's social post was the best performing piece of content with 1.6+ million impressions, 174,000 likes, and 5,400 clicks to a blog post.

- One influencer's video had the most views of any piece of content with 148,000+ views.

- Females aged 25-to-34 drove the most engagements at 50.32% of all.

- In one campaign in this category, soon-to-be moms and new moms already established as premium influencers created authentic, emotional content about their journey and their babies' achievements. Via blog content, video and social posts, they drove awareness and engagement of the product to help connect the dots to research that touts product advantages.

Category-Specific Benchmarks
Beauty

1.2%
of total spend

4.5%
of all programs in 2018

34
Influencers

99
combined pieces
of content created

CATEGORY-SPECIFIC BENCHMARKS

EMV	$20.69
ER	11.99%
CPE	$0.16
% of Campaigns with Instagram Story Views and/or Snapchat	33%
% of Positive Sentiment with 1 Social Listening Study	99%

CATEGORY-SPECIFIC TAKEAWAYS

- In one beauty company campaign associated with a national big box retailer, lifestyle influencers who focused on beauty and natural products showcased in social posts and stories how they passed make-up traditions along to their daughters.

CPG Beverage

Non-alcoholic beverages including soft drinks and bottled water

0.6%
of total spend

3.0%
of all programs in 2018

13
Influencers

44
combined pieces
of content created

CATEGORY-SPECIFIC BENCHMARKS

EMV	$9.25
ER	8.58%
CPE	$0.38

CATEGORY-SPECIFIC TAKEAWAYS

- One program delivered $13.01 in EMV; outpacing both the category benchmark and the overall benchmark for all 2018 programs.

- In another campaign for a beverage advertiser, influencers created fun content to build on the brand's playful tagline while introducing a new product to their audiences via social posts and stories.

Category-Specific Benchmarks
CPG Food

9.5%
of total spend

16.4%
of all programs in 2018

111
Influencers

765
combined pieces
of content created

40
videos created
in total

CATEGORY-SPECIFIC BENCHMARKS

EMV	$14.88
ER	15.32%
CPE	$0.13
% of Campaigns with Video	54.6%
% of Campaigns with Instagram Story Views and/or Snapchat	9.1%
% of Positive Sentiment with 4 Social Listening Studies	100%

CATEGORY-SPECIFIC TAKEAWAYS

• Overall, CPG food advertisers on average enjoyed EMV, ER, and CPE measures that outperformed the overall 2018 benchmarks.

• In another campaign, food and lifestyle influencers introduced both new products and pantry staples to their audiences. Influencers visited stores or had products provided to them so that they could use those products to create and share original recipes through social posts, blog posts, and stories. A few influencers were invited to visit a working farm for a behind-the-scenes look at branded products.

Category-Specific Benchmarks
Education

0.4%
of total spend

1.5%
of all programs in 2018

5
Influencers

91
combined pieces
of content created

CATEGORY-SPECIFIC BENCHMARKS

EMV	$10.16
ER	3.85%
CPE	$0.86
% of Campaigns with Instagram Story Views and/or Snapchat	100%

CATEGORY-SPECIFIC TAKEAWAYS

- For the single advertiser in this category, we commissioned local influencers who were students at the college to showcase the campus and college resources. The influencers experienced a college tour and shared their experience with their followers via social posts, blogs, and stories.

Electronics

0.4%
of total spend

1.5%
of all programs in 2018

3
Influencers

14
combined pieces
of content created

4
videos created
in total

CATEGORY-SPECIFIC BENCHMARKS

EMV	$4.80
ER	9.63%
CPE	$0.36
% of Campaigns with Video	100%

CATEGORY-SPECIFIC TAKEAWAYS

- For the single advertiser in this category, the influencers were musicians who showcased a new-to-market speaker that allowed them to perform at any time with high sound quality.

Entertainment

2.2%
of total spend

9.0%
of all programs in 2018

40
Influencers

160
combined pieces
of content created

10
videos created
in total

CATEGORY-SPECIFIC BENCHMARKS

EMV	$41.12
ER	5.59%
CPE	$0.13
% of Campaigns with Video	33.3%
% of Campaigns with Instagram Story Views and/or Snapchat	16.7%
% of Positive Sentiment with 1 Social Listening Study	98%

CATEGORY-SPECIFIC TAKEAWAYS

- One campaign in this category was all about an event, with influencers attending a three-day musical festival in Las Vegas and creating social content that let their audiences follow along in real time.

Category-Specific Benchmarks
Financial

5.5%
of total spend

4.5%
of all programs in 2018

23
Influencers

112
combined pieces
of content created

4
videos created
in total

CATEGORY-SPECIFIC BENCHMARKS

EMV	$10.02
ER	13.12%
CPE	$0.59
% of Campaigns with Video	33%
% of Campaigns with Instagram Story Views and/or Snapchat	66.7%
% of Positive Sentiment with 3 Social Listening Studies	98%

CATEGORY-SPECIFIC TAKEAWAYS

- For one financial institution's campaign, local artists designed and created four murals in four major cities where the bank had its largest footprint in an effort to continue to spread a positive message. Each artist posted a minimum of three social posts about their mural, following the work from ideation to final product. The mural program earned an 18% engagement rate.

- In an event-focused campaign, football and reality TV influencers showcased a new app that distributed the halftime show for the "Big Game." Followers using the app were invited to enter a contest where the grand prize winner received a cash prize.

- For another financial institution's campaign, seven content creators created 20 pieces of content showcasing the bank's app. RhythmOne's proprietary Smart Links and Sharing Analytics were implemented across influencer content to track consumer signals in the form of engagement and shares. Unique data segments were created for use across social and programmatic distribution tactics. Social distribution included paid social promotion via influencer handles, optimized across all their social platform accounts.

Grocery & Supermarkets

8.2%
of total spend

1.5%
of all programs in 2018

24
Influencers

1,261
combined pieces
of content created

11
videos created
in total

CATEGORY-SPECIFIC BENCHMARKS

EMV	$11.31
ER	19.00%
CPE	$0.26
% of Campaigns with Video	100%
% of Campaigns with Instagram Story Views and/or Snapchat	100%
% of Positive Sentiment with 1 Social Listening Study	100%

CATEGORY-SPECIFIC TAKEAWAYS

- Six influencers attended a kickoff event at one grocer's headquarters to learn the ins and outs of the company and prepare for a year-long partnership as brand ambassadors. The influencers created social posts, blog posts, and Instagram Stories throughout the day to show their behind-the-scenes tours at the headquarters and through a flagship store. Influencers then recapped the day through static social posts and continued to refer back to their experiences in subsequent content.

Healthcare

2.3%
of total spend

7.5%
of all programs in 2018

29
Influencers

98
combined pieces
of content created

3
videos created
in total

CATEGORY-SPECIFIC BENCHMARKS

EMV	$6.24
ER	3.43%
CPE	$0.50
% of Campaigns with Video	20%

CATEGORY-SPECIFIC TAKEAWAYS

- For one advertiser in this category, a hospital, local influencers created social posts and blog posts to share the importance of being an organ donor and how it had affected them and their loved ones.

Home & Garden

9.7%
of total spend

10.4%
of all programs in 2018

42
Influencers

285
combined pieces
of content created

16
videos created
in total

CATEGORY-SPECIFIC BENCHMARKS

EMV	$5.68
ER	7.49%
CPE	$0.56
% of Campaigns with Video	28.6%
% of Campaigns with Instagram Story Views and/or Snapchat	42.9%
% of Positive Sentiment with 2 Social Listening Studies	98%

CATEGORY-SPECIFIC TAKEAWAYS

- For one advertiser in this category, social listening reporting indicated that a high volume of positive sentiment was mostly due to users positively reacting to Influencers' shared redesigns and renovations and users expressing how much they loved the advertiser's products. Positive product reviews alongside engagements and reactions around Influencer content generated a large portion of positive brand mentions.

- In another campaign, one advertiser worked with mid-tier and premium influencers in the home décor field to update their own homes. Influencers shared before and after posts of their projects. Key design influencers also attended an event in New York City to celebrate the forward-thinking the brand has demonstrated for more than 65 years. Content included social posts, blog posts, and stories.

Quick Service Restaurant (QSR)

0.8%
of total spend

3.0%
of all programs in 2018

8
Influencers

40
combined pieces
of content created

2
videos created
in total

CATEGORY-SPECIFIC BENCHMARKS

EMV	$16.27
ER	17.32%
CPE	$0.23
% of Campaigns with Video	50%
% of Campaigns with Instagram Story Views and/or Snapchat	100%
% of Positive Sentiment with 1 Social Listening Study	98%

CATEGORY-SPECIFIC TAKEAWAYS

- For one QSR advertiser, we activated five DIY millennial mom influencers with children between the ages of four and 14 to promote and attend a summer menu celebration with a brand super fan and well-known designer. Influencers created and shared real-time updates to drive national awareness of new ice cream flavors.

- For another advertiser in this category, we commissioned three female lifestyle influencers to share content with family and friends enjoying an at-home holiday party featuring food from the advertiser. Influencers showcased content via static, carousel, Facebook, and Instagram Stories. Paid promotion behind the content via Influencer Social Ads further helped to boost awareness and engagement with the target audience.

Retail

51.9%
of total spend

17.9%
of all programs in 2018

259
Influencers

1,120
combined pieces
of content created

38
videos created
in total

CATEGORY-SPECIFIC BENCHMARKS

EMV	$20.92
ER	8.87%
CPE	$0.09
% of Campaigns with Video	83.4%
% of Campaigns with Instagram Story Views and/or Snapchat	33.3%
% of Positive Sentiment with 8 Social Listening Studies	99%

CATEGORY-SPECIFIC TAKEAWAYS

- This advertiser category included the highest percentage of campaigns and campaign spend, as well as the largest number of Social Listening Studies of any category.

- One campaign featured influencers showcasing their love of shopping in store and online with a national brand retailer. Content appears in social posts, blogs, and stories, often with video. Partnerships in this campaign included apparel, home décor, and footwear.

- For another retailer, influencer content improved various product quality and value perceptions while driving strong engagement and brand sentiment. Nearly 100% of campaign mentions and engagements were positive, as well as social mentions and engagement on Influencer posts. Most positive sentiments were related to users stating how much they loved the products being promoted.

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Software & Services

0.4%
of total spend

1.5%
of all programs in 2018

3
Influencers

26
combined pieces
of content created

CATEGORY-SPECIFIC BENCHMARKS

EMV	$1.87
ER	2.54%
CPE	$2.34

CATEGORY-SPECIFIC TAKEAWAYS

- For the single software and services advertiser, influencers who ran their own businesses created content demonstrating the importance of using the brand's software to save work at an important time. The influencers delivered 7x on post volume.

- Facebook was the top channel for engagement and outperformed LinkedIn due to the more personal nature of message content.

Category-Specific Benchmarks
Travel & Tourism

1.0%
of total spend

6.0%
of all programs in 2018

15
Influencers

214
combined pieces
of content created

2
videos created
in total

CATEGORY-SPECIFIC BENCHMARKS

EMV	$11.47
ER	5.16%
CPE	$0.35
% of Campaigns with Video	100%
% of Campaigns with Instagram Story Views and/or Snapchat	50%
% of Positive Sentiment with 1 Social Listening Study	96%

CATEGORY-SPECIFIC TAKEAWAYS

- For one advertiser in the Travel & Tourism category, we commissioned five influencers to visit various key markets in the area. The travel bloggers promoted unique tourism facts via blog posts and live on-location social posts. Influencer content was further distributed using paid social and display banners to drive traffic to Influencer-created content.

- In another campaign, influencers combined their love of travel with tips for successful travel, including the importance of being safe on the road and the benefits of a TSA pre-check when flying. Content was shared on social posts, blog posts, and stories, with static images and video.

Case Studies

CPG Beverage

Splashing onto the Sparkling Water Scene

OBJECTIVE

Generate awareness for a new line of sparkling water by a leading provider of carbonated soft drinks.

SOLUTION

RhythmOne developed a program that highlighted the brand attributes of the sparkling water line and promoted the drink's colorful, positive, optimistic, bright, and fun brand themes. We activated nine millennial influencers who captured the look and feel of drink via two Instagram posts each as well as sharing on Facebook. In addition, RhythmOne ran influencer social ads on Facebook and Instagram.

RESULTS

- An earned media value that beat the category average by a factor of **1.4x**

- An engagement rate (ER) that was **108%** of the category average for 2018

- A delivery of raw engagements that beat the projected campaign goal by **268%**

Apparel

A Star Player at a National Sportswear Retailer

OBJECTIVES

A leading shoe brand wanted to drive awareness and inspire the purchase of a specific line of sneaker at a national retailer of sportswear.

SOLUTION

RhythmOne activated four content creators who each created Instagram posts and Instagram Stories. Influencers visited the national retailer's local store to pick up the sneakers and included content within their Instagram Stories about the experience, including styling the sneaker multiple ways.

Influencer social ads, with targeting and optimization, expanded qualified reach among males with specific interests within key markets. RhythmOne also utilized influencer content within programmatic ad units, which ran on both mobile and desktop, driving users to purchase the sneakers at the retailer.

RESULTS

- An engagement rate (ER) beat the overall RhythmOne 2018 benchmark by **107%+**

- More than **315,000** engagements for just eight pieces of branded content — nearly **40,000** engagements, on average, per Instagram post or story

About RhythmOne

RhythmOne is a market leader in multiscreen digital advertising solutions. Led by advanced TV and powered by the most efficient and effective programmatic platform, we provide innovative solutions for brands to connect with consumers — including YuMe by RhythmOne and RhythmInfluence — and drive real business outcomes for advertisers and publishers.

Our full-stack, end-to-end unified RhythmOne Programmatic Platform — inclusive of RhythmGuard, our proprietary brand safety technology — is focused on delivering scale, efficiency, performance, quality, and actionable data for demand and supply-focused clients and partners. Founded in 2004 in the United Kingdom, RhythmOne was acquired by Taptica International (AIM: TAP) in 2019 and maintains offices throughout the US and Canada, Asia-Pacific, Europe, India, and Latin America.

For more information, please visit www.RhythmOne.com.