

ultra influential



Your Guide to Working with Influencers
in the Design and Remodeling Industry



ultra
violet

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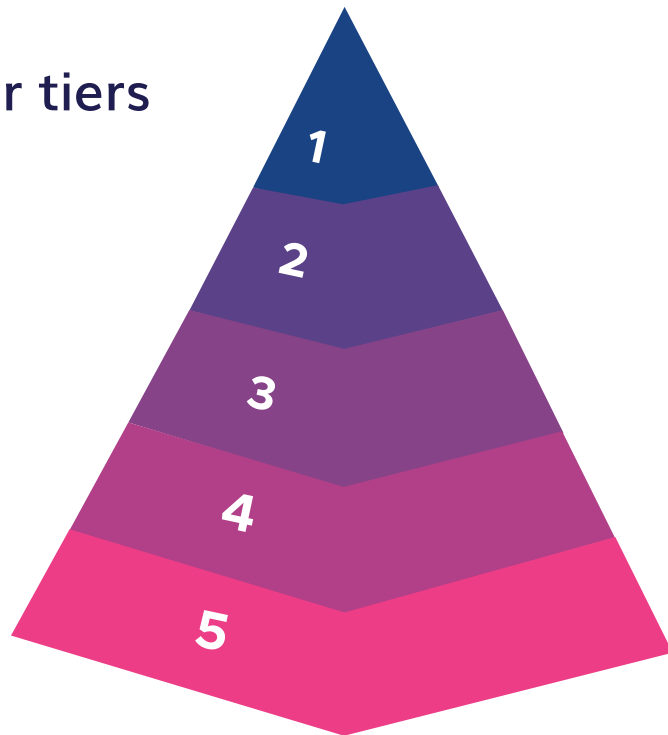
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Brand and influencer partnerships may seem magical, but the picture-perfect sponsored posts you see on Instagram are the result of careful planning, creativity, hard work, and analytics. And they begin with pairing the right influencer with the right brand.

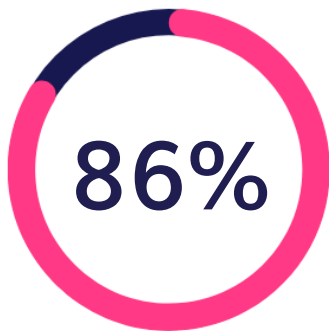
Brands need influencers of all kinds. The design trade and consumers don't want to hear what brands and designers have to say about themselves anymore. They want to hear opinions from trusted relationships inside circles they already deem credible. That also means that design professionals are leaning toward strategies that deploy authentic messaging from people that follow, trust, and align with them.

instagram influencer tiers

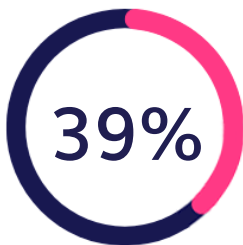
- **mega**
1m+ followers
- **macro**
500k - 1m followers
- **mid-tier**
50k - 500k followers
- **micro**
10k - 50k followers
- **nano**
1k - 10k followers



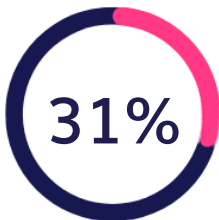
When we talk about ourselves, it is never as powerful as when somebody else shares the message first. Brands and media are losing the influencer battle, while fellow industry trade and consumers now hold the cards as outlined in this Snap Inc. commissioned study.



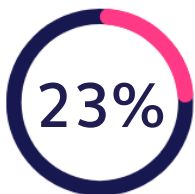
of people say **close friends** are influential over purchase decisions



of people say **distant friends** are influential over purchase decisions



of people say **influencers and celebrities** are influential over purchase decisions



of people say **non-friends (brands, media)** are influential over purchase decisions

Why work with an influencer?

Friends are listening to friends and the influencers they follow when styling and remodeling their homes. Often, they look to them first for recommendations and guidance. Getting the word out about your company via a story on an influencer's blog and social media is the most authentic way to reach your potential customers.

Your company may also have more specific goals for the relationship. These can include:

- building brand awareness
- showcasing projects featuring your products
- promoting new products
- securing professional photography and video
- implementing market-specific advertising
- growing engaged followers
- securing a representative at tradeshow, markets and CEU events

Why would an influencer work with you?

Influencers often associate with a brand for the prestige or credibility, to establish a long-term partnership, and to receive product or payment. And, for many, the start is simply their love for the product.

“I approach brand partnerships a few ways: either I’ve used the product before, in my own time, and want to make an official partnership to promote the product, or I have heard great things from consumers or fellow bloggers about a product,” says **Ariel Garneau, PMQ for Two**. “Aesthetic fit and corporate culture also play into my decisions of who to work with, and beyond that, willingness to meet my sponsored content rate and product requirements are also quite important.”

How do I vet an influencer?

Pursuing someone with a large amount of followers isn't always the best match for your company. The best match is an influencer who speaks to your target audience and:

- posts consistently
- writes well
- professionally shoots projects
- engages with his or her audience
- is responsive to you

Whether you're pitching an influencer with 2,000 or 200,000 followers, look for those conversations and consistency that result in a successful investment of time, product and money.

Do I pay an influencer? How much?

Some influencers work with an agency (like we do for brands) that serve as the facilitator for negotiations and provide you with their fixed menu of pricing. Many influencers will work directly with brands. Similar to ad rates, influencer pricing varies.

We find it best to approach the influencer with direction on the product's story and a list of deliverables that you would like in return for their time and talent. See email examples on pages 10 and 11.

Rates vary from \$150 per post to \$1,500+, plus product. When working with a celebrity designer, an annual collaboration could cost upwards of \$50,000. There are others who will work for product only. It's really about understanding one another's needs and then coming to an agreement that you're both comfortable with.

How do I contact an influencer?

Some will have instructions for contacting them on their website or social accounts. Email and DMs on Instagram also work well. Influencers are busy people; keep your first communication short and sweet, request a call but also state exactly what you want in initial outreach. And always include upfront why you're a fan of their content and see a match for your brand.

On your call, take notes and drop them in a doc to get to know the influencer, their interests, and needs. This will be a helpful doc to begin to craft a storyline for your partnership, educate anyone from your team who will work with this person, and win over stakeholders in your own company. The process can take time, weeks or months, and your notes will guide you along the way. See page 10 for examples of some note specifics.

Notes may include:

- Feedback on your products, site, social media (after all they are the experts so why not get their recommendations to make things better, more creative, more engaging). Don't take advantage of this relationship. Keep the requests for feedback limited and non-formal.
- Examples of campaigns with other companies they worked with.
- Background on their story, family, business and how they built their network.
- Their style. Brand favs.
- Projects in the works and to come. Personal or clients renovations, room reveals, including One Room Challenges, blog hops, house tours, and showrooms. These are great opportunities for your brand to expand its reach.

What do initial communications look like?

After a quick direct message on social, your first communication should be an email. Keep it clear, organized, and to the point.

Use this format as your framework:

Hi Jane,

Thanks for your response on Instagram. Would love to hear if you have any projects in the works for Jan-March. Once we have a sense of your project, we can narrow down a theme, launch date and the products you would like us to send you.

A collaboration would entail:

- Interview with you for a blog on our company site
- You host an Instagram takeover (3 days of your choice during a week to coincide with the blog publishing)
- You blog about the products via your project on your site
- You share exclusive posts on your social channels
- We offer your audience a giveaway and promo code
- Any One Room Challenge, blog hop, house tour, showrooms, gift guides associated with the collaboration

These are also some blogs we recently wrote for brand partnerships, to give you a sense of our collaborations:

Some background to get you ready:

Instagram takeovers have included multiple pics on a post or just a single image, stories, and an announcement of the takeover both on your account and (company) on the first day (introducing your work and company). Subject matter may include inspiration for the designs, single or multiple projects featuring (your company product), the mention of other brands (excluding our competitors), people behind the project(s), and other ideas you may have.

Looking forward to reconnecting.

Here is a product specific example:

Hi Sara,

Great talking with you today! So many exciting plans ahead and we're honored you're considering our company products in those.

Below are some ideas I'm thinking about for the partnership. Once you choose a theme and launch date, we can narrow down the products you would like us to send you.

Shine and Shimmer This New Year with our fabrics

A Room Refresh Fit for a Queen – starting with the wallpaper
Would love to tell the story of our new wallpaper, which was inspired by the raven, protector of the Royal Family.

Entertaining For the Holidays: tablescapes with all the love, pattern and color, starting with the runner.

Your ideas are also greatly appreciated!

To coincide with the above themes we would ask that:

- We interview you for a blog on our company site
- You host an Instagram takeover (3 days of your choice during a week to coincide with the blog publishing)
- We offer your audience a giveaway and promo code
- You blog about the products via your project on your site
- You share exclusive “company name” posts on your social channels

These are also some blogs we recently wrote featuring brand partnerships:

Looking forward to reconnecting.

What should be included in an agreement/contract?

Whether a formal contract or email, your agreement should clearly state what you and the influencer are doing for one another.

In all the excitement, some things will be overlooked, but if you sit down and think the process through you will come up with additional questions for your team and influencer before getting started.

Some things to note:

- Is this a paid and/or product partnership? Agree on the amount and how much product.
- Align your publishing timeline and event deadlines with the influencer.
- Know your product availability (Is the product in stock?) Note any sales that may result from the partnership. Is your product accessible if a distributor is involved? Shipping time must be disclosed.
- Will you recommend additional professionals (eg. installers for product) in the process or will you advise the influencer to use their own experts? You may need to also sell your network on donating their time in order to execute on the project. If not, you may underwrite these costs or explicitly say in the agreement that this cost is the responsibility of the influencer.
- Who's running the show? Make one point of contact for the influencer. This may be two people if you need a technical adviser from your company involved. Both should always keep one another in the loop in communications.
- Are you documenting the process or just the finished installation?
- What pieces of the partnership are you willing to underwrite if needed to support other company assets? i.e. You may consider shooting the installation process for a separate campaign. Will the partner provide you raw images and b roll video to repurpose for other assets at another time?

Here is an agreement example:

Hi Jane,

We're delighted to confirm our partnership. Welcome to the (company name) family! Thanks so much for partnering with us for your guest room refresh.

The team is excited to see your (guest room refresh) the finished product! In the meantime, we've put together a simple agreement of our work together so we continue to work smoothly and stay on the same page. Please review and digitally sign at the bottom.

If you have any questions and/or additional ideas for how we can best showcase our partnership, please let us know.

(See agreement on page 16.)

Agreement:

Jane will...

- Provide high-res images of space to be used by (company name) on social media, blog, emails, website and promotional materials. Send to (company name) in Dropbox no later than (date).
- Participate in blog interview with our writer.
- Take over (company name) Instagram feed and stories on (dates).
- Share (2) exclusive (company name) posts on Facebook and Instagram.
- Pin and tag room reveal on Pinterest.
- Create how-to layer with (company name) products video for YouTube channel.
- Disclose endorsements in accordance with the [FTC guidelines for social media influencers](#).

(company name) will...

- Provide Jane with chosen products:
 - X rolls of peel and stick wallpaper
 - X yards of fabric by the yard
 - Velvet pillow
 - Issue collaboration payment of \$X by X.
 - Interview Jane for a blog to be posted on (company name) site (date TBD). Interview date TBD.

I, (insert name), agree to the partnership discussed above.

Name _____ Date _____

Looking forward to our continued collaboration.



Learn more about influencer marketing

Have specific questions about influencer marketing? Contact Jennifer Smiga: jen@ultravioletagency.com.

Learn more during our talk on influencer marketing and meet the country's top influencers in person at the Design Influencers Conference, March 1-3, 2020

[get the details](#)

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