

In 2024, eMarketer expects that advertisers will spend nearly \$83B on social media. At OMG, we have seen influencer marketing investment gain percentage share within the category. Even as influencer marketing grows, it is still young and evolving, which warrants continuous research and reexamination of stats and behaviors.

To that endeavor, OMG Research and Creo embarked on a new research initiative to assess influencer impact on the consumer purchase journey and investigate the relationship between influencers and consumer sentiment. Findings from the first research wave (Nov 2023) will provide OMG teams with marketplace insights into how, when, where, and with whom creators are having the greatest impact on consumer decisioning.

Almost half of all social media users (49%) have relied on influencers along their purchase journey, and historically influencer impact has been concentrated in the upper funnel (Inspiration/Discover) of the journey. Our recent research revealed growing parity between the reliance on influencers during the upper and lower funnel. Gen Z exemplifies this trend best, and influencer marketing carries more weight and impact than traditionally strong TV/streaming video ads.

The natural link between influencer marketing and social commerce makes it well suited to generate “net new demand”. We found that 42% of influencer-attributed purchases were spontaneous. Our research also supported the notion that consumers trust influencers with their wallets. More than half (52%) are comfortable spending more than \$50 on a purchase based on an influencer’s post and nearly one-in-five (16%) are comfortable spending up to \$500. However, Gen Z is less likely to act on influencer recommendations when the price tag is over \$50—likely due to lower buying power. This trust is not exclusive to influencers with high follower counts. Even micro-influencers (<10,000 followers) can garner the same degree of trust as influencers with over a million followers.

In conjunction with influencers, social platforms have been building social commerce shops (e.g., TikTok Shop) or creating new social shopping platforms (Amazon Live/Storefronts) to compress the consumer purchase journey. Younger consumers (18-26) have noticed; awareness of these new shopping platforms is high (>60%), and over half of this age group intends to use these new ways of social shopping.

CREO, OMG’s Influencer Marketing Practice, is hyper-focused on strategies to capitalize on these trends. When it comes to the planning, activation and measurement of influencer marketing, the ability to augment traditional social metrics with media standards moves influencers into being a standalone media channel. Creo has paired 1P data with Omni to translate media audiences to social platform-specific audience information and predict performance, generating superior business outcomes and limiting buying waste. The ability to identify an influencer based on who they reach, not solely who they are, and determining the sphere of influence on purchase and consideration, not solely the buzz and awareness is a key step in the execution of influencer marketing.

Creo serves as an end-to-end influencer marketing practice and is available for free consultation here. For questions about this research, please go to www.omgcreo.com for more info.

METHODOLOGY:

Survey of 1,062 social media users in the always-on OMG Signal consumer panel supported by the Omni open operating system; generational cohorts based on US Census data.