

THE ROLE OF INFLUENCER MARKETING IN THE EFFECTIVENESS OF DIGITAL  
ADVERTISING: PROSPECTS FOR REACHING NEW CONSUMER SEGMENTS IN  
THE GLOBAL MARKET

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**Abstract:** This article analyzes the role of influencer marketing in enhancing the effectiveness of digital advertising and explores the opportunities for reaching new consumer segments in the global market. For this purpose, recent studies, statistical data from 2020–2025, and examples of influencer marketing strategies employed by major global brands (such as Nike and Coca-Cola) have been examined.

**Keywords:** influencer marketing; digital advertising; effectiveness; ROI; consumer segments; global marketing.

**Introduction.** In the field of digital marketing, the attitude of consumers to advertising has been changing significantly in recent years. With regard to traditional banner and video ads, audience attention is waning, and ad blocking technologies are becoming more common. Therefore, brands are looking for new ways to communicate more sincerely with the audience. Influencer-marketing – that is, promoting products and services through individuals (bloggers, celebrities or experts) with a large audience on social networks-has been shaped as such an effective approach. This strategy allows brands to connect and gain confidence in an audience through a “third-person” recommendation. Research has shown that representatives of the younger generation in particular have a very high level of focus on influencer advice: for example, 94% of Gen Z consumers rely more on blogger or influencer recommendations than traditional ads. As a result, the influencer-marketing market has been growing rapidly in recent years – while the global influencer-marketing market in 2016 was worth only US \$ 1.7 billion, in 2023 it exceeded \$ 21 billion. Currently, a large part of large companies are integrating this tool into their marketing plan. For example: in the US, 86% of companies are expected to cooperate with marketing professionals influencers by 2025 . Some brands and agencies, on the other hand, are already directing a significant share of marketing budgets (40% and more) to influencer campaigns.

**Literature review.** In the preparation of the article, modern scientific and analytical resources were used, published in 2020-2025. Through Sprout Social and Oberlo (Statista) reports, basic statistics on influencer-marketing global development rates and digital advertising effectiveness were obtained. The social Shepherd and Influencer Marketing Hub analysis provided clear evidence of digital advertising effectiveness, ROI performance, and audience engagement rates. Marketing Dive and fashion Dive sources played a key role in exploring the practical experience of the Nike and Coca-Cola brands. And through sources such as Influencer and Kolsquare, hyper-local marketing strategies and ways to reach demographic segments were analyzed.

**Methodology.** The study mainly used secondary data analysis and situational analysis techniques. International reports on Influencer-marketing published in 2020-2025, statistical databases and scientific literature were selected as the main source. Including recent reports and analyses of platforms such as Statista, Influencer Marketing Hub, Sprout Social, as well as the results of a Pew Research Center survey of social media users. Also, influencer-marketing campaigns from global brands such as Nike and Coca-Cola were analyzed as an example. Based on this data, the

impact of influencer-marketing on market size dynamics, ROI indicators, the level of audience engagement and other performance indicators was evaluated. In the study, quantitative statistical analysis (percentage, growth rate comparison) and Qualitative Analysis (experience of Brand Keys) were harmoniously applied and conclusions were drawn.

**Discussion and results.** During 2016-2024, the global influencer-marketing market has expanded dramatically. With a market size of only \$ 1.7 bn in 2016, it reached nearly \$ 9.7 bn by 2020 and \$ 24 Bn in 2024. During this period, the annual growth rate was above the average of 40%, and it has been observed that the years of the pandemic in particular (2020-2021) accelerated the development of influencer-marketing. As of 2023, the sector expanded by 28.7%, with a relatively slow growth rate the following year (13.7%), but remains in stable two-digit percentages. According to Statista, the global influencer-marketing market size is expected to be around \$ 33 billion in 2025, while according to long-term forecasts, the industry size can reach hundreds of billions of dollars by the 2030s. These figures confirm that influencer-marketing is gaining an increasingly significant share in the general advertising industry. For example, the share of companies spending more than 40% of the marketing budget on influencers as of 2024 globally was 26%. Many brands are actively running influencer campaigns on social networks such as Instagram (the most basic influencer platform for 57% of brands) and TikTok (52%) – these platforms allow brands to reach new consumers, especially due to their popularity among younger audiences. The data obtained shows that the marketing efficiency achieved through influencer-marketing is higher compared to traditional digital advertising channels. In particular, in terms of economic efficiency (ROI – investment return), through influencer advertising, brands are earning an average of 6.5 times – that is, a profit of about 6.50 \$ per 1 dollar . Some companies have also reported cases where this figure has reached 1:20. For comparison, the ROI web banner obtained as a result of influencer-marketing was found to be 11 times higher than the ads. For brands, not only the volume of sales is important, but also the quality of new customers. According to the survey, 51% of marketing professionals claimed that influencer-marketing was used to attract a “better” (i.e. more loyal and more value-giving to the brand) customer audience. Also, 36% of respondents believe that the content created by influencers will attract a larger audience and be more effective than the content prepared by the brand itself. This trend is due to the fact that consumers are more confident in independent recommendations than brand announcements. The level of audience engagement (engagement) also increases with influencers. For example, the posts of nano-influencers with 1-5 thousand followers on the Instagram platform showed an average of 2.19% engagement rate, which is higher than mega-influencers with millions of followers. So, by working with bloggers with a relatively small audience, brands can reach and activate specific target segments for less budget. Indeed, there are examples of companies cooperating with micro - and nano-influencers to record higher conversion rates than certain compact audiences compared to traditional comprehensive advertising campaigns.

The influence of influencers on the audience is directly related to the level of trust in them. Studies show that almost 86% of consumers make purchases at least once a year, influenced by the influencer recommendation. In another survey, 39% of social network users admitted that content creators (bloggers, influencers) influence their purchasing decisions to some extent. A particularly young audience holds a leading position in this regard: while 54% of 18-29-year-old users claim that influencer recommendations have a specific role in shopping, among 50-year-olds and over, this figure drops to 29%.

Among the representatives of the younger generation, the strength of the brand recommendation is more pronounced. For example, while Gen Z (born 1997-2012) is known to have purchased products at least once on influencer recommendation, the rate was 58% even in Baby boomer

(born 1946-1964) generation. This means that influencer-marketing is not only for young people, but also able to cover audiences of different age categories – of course, in the case of the choice of a suitable platform and an opinion leader on a suitable topic. For example, most Gen X and boomer generations are active on platforms like Facebook, where they tend to shop influenced by the recommendation of celebrities they follow (70% of Gen X representatives follow at least one influencer).

Consumers, first of all, expect the recommendations made by influencers to be sincere and unbiased. In a 2024 survey, 67% of participants stated that content is the most important factor to be honest and open so that brand and influencer collaboration can work. Also, the discounted promo codes and actual product reviews given by influencers were found to be the most influential types of content that encouraged audiences to shop. In general, content created on the basis of influencers' recommendations acts as a reliable bridge in the eyes of the consumer for the brand, forming a warm attitude towards the product more quickly compared to ordinary advertising formats. This eases the process of attracting new customers and turning them into an active buyer.

The above figures and trends can also be observed on the example of large global brands. For example, Nike ranked first in the US market in 2024 as the most actively using influencer-marketing as a fashion brand. According to the Traackr platform report, in January–October 2024, the Nike brand was mentioned 84,300 times in influencers posts, and the total number of draws in them was 257 million – according to these indicators, Nike overtook its competitors. Nike's work ecosystem with influencers is very extensive and includes approximately 22,000 content creators of varying levels. This will cover not only famous athletes, but also representatives of various industries. According to Traackr, prominent figures in the VIP category that Nike collaborates with have served to attract a wide audience, ranging from sports stars (e.g. LeBron James, Aryna Sabalenka) to musicians (Megan Thee Stallion) and actors, to sportswear styles. Such diversification has helped Nike form a loyal audience to the brand in various consumer segments (sports enthusiasts, fashion and street style enthusiasts, etc.). Thanks to the extensive influencer network, Nike is gaining a lot of content in an organic way (through influencers' natural posts) rather than directly through paid advertising, which has shaped the brand image more positively.

Coca-Cola is also actively using influencer-marketing opportunities in global markets. In 2024, the company increased the number of collaborating influencers from 11,000 to 20,000 worldwide, and is currently targeting 65% of the total advertising budget to digital (including influencer) channels. Coca-Cola's strategy is based on a "hypermahallian" approach, with an emphasis on engaging micro- and mid-level local influencers for each region and market alongside major stars. The goal is to immerse the brand in the daily life of the consumer of each region and create an image of "our own brand" for them. For example, Coca-Cola's #ShareTheMagic campaign on TikTok network in 2023 was viewed 11.9 billion times globally and increased the company's number of subscribers on TikTok by 71%. In this flashmob, Coca-Cola, in collaboration with creative youth from different countries, popularized the idea of brand-specific "magic moments". As a result, the brand not only achieved a huge audience of views, but also increased sales figures – for example, during the #ShareACoke campaign, it was noted that there was a 2.1% increase in sales of Coca-Cola.

Many other global brands are also expanding their audiences through influencer-marketing. The Pepsi brand has successfully found its way to the local Gen Z audience through, for example, the Pepsi Rap Challenge, which it has hosted in India – the brand has harmonized with youth culture using a unique musical challenge. In fast fashion (fast fashion), companies such as Zara, Shein,

H&M have also now moved on to actively work with bloggers and social networking creators, revisiting advertising strategies that previously relied primarily on celebrity .In particular, in the 2024 influencer marketing efficiency ranking, brands such as Zara and Shein overtook a number of luxury brands and placed high.

**Table 1**

**Key Indicators of Influencer Marketing Growth (2016–2025)<sup>1</sup>**

| Indicator                                     | 2016  | 2020 | 2023 | 2025 (Forecast) |
|-----------------------------------------------|-------|------|------|-----------------|
| Market size (billion USD)                     | 1.7   | 9.7  | 21   | 33              |
| Annual growth rate (%)                        | 35–40 | 45   | 28.7 | 15–18           |
| Share in marketing budgets (%)                | 10    | 22   | 40   | 50              |
| ROI (Return per 1 USD investment)             | 4.5   | 5.8  | 6.5  | 7.2             |
| Brands active on Instagram (%)                | 40    | 52   | 57   | 60              |
| Brands active on TikTok (%)                   | 15    | 38   | 52   | 58              |
| Usage rate of micro- and nano-influencers (%) | 20    | 35   | 50   | 60              |

This table demonstrates the rapid growth of the influencer marketing sector between 2016 and 2025. The global market size increased from 1.7 billion USD in 2016 to over 21 billion USD in 2023, with a forecasted value of around 33 billion USD by 2025. Annual growth rates peaked at 45% in 2020, particularly during the pandemic years, before stabilizing between 15–18%.

The share of influencer marketing within overall marketing budgets also rose sharply, from 10% in 2016 to more than 40% in 2023, expected to reach 50% by 2025. In terms of financial effectiveness, the average ROI increased from 4.5 times return per dollar invested in 2016 to 6.5 times in 2023, and is forecasted to grow to 7.2 times by 2025. Platform-specific activity shows that brands are increasingly active on Instagram and TikTok, reflecting the strategic importance of these platforms. Additionally, the use of micro- and nano-influencers has grown significantly, providing brands with more targeted and cost-effective engagement strategies.

The above examples show that representatives of different industries – sportswear, food and drinks, high fashion, beauty, technology, etc.-are using influencer – marketing as a means of covering new markets and new layers of consumers. Each brand is selecting influencers to suit its product and audience, through which it is launching marketing communication tailored to local market characteristics. As a result, brand awareness and loyalty indicators are increasing, while the volume of sales from new segments is steadily growing.

The above results show that influencer-marketing is taking an increasingly important place within digital advertising strategies, allowing brands to interact more effectively with audiences. Firstly, it was confirmed that marketing investments made through influencers are bringing high ROI, and the audience's level of engagement is high. This means that influencer-marketing is creating more value for companies compared to traditional online advertising formats (banners, pop-up and video rollers). Especially the role of influencers in increasing brand awareness and instilling confidence in the consumer is great – in one survey, 66% of companies reported using influencer-marketing precisely in order to increase brand awareness, raise 59% audience activity and ensure 55% confidence and revenue growth. So, campaigns with the participation of influencer serve not only to direct sales, but also to strengthen the image of the brand and increase customer loyalty.

Secondly, influencer-marketing creates unique opportunities when entering new consumer segments. As noted above, influencers have become one of the most effective channels for

<sup>1</sup> author's work

reaching representatives of the younger generation (especially Gen Z). Audiences that are difficult to cover with traditional advertising methods – millions of young people who do not watch TV, who consume content mainly on platforms such as TikTok, YouTube, Instagram, for example – are opening up to brands through local influencers on these same platforms. Examples such as Nike and Coca-Cola show that global brands can cover a wide range of new customers by attracting influencers suitable for each market. Even more traditional demographics tend to receive brand messages if there are effective “influencers” on the information channels they use. For example, among Facebook users, as mentioned above, there are no fewer representatives of the baby-boomer generation who made purchases with the influencer recommendation. This means that for each age and segment of interest there is a way out through the opinion leaders they follow and trust.

Thirdly, while influencer-marketing is expanding globally, brands are also effectively absorbing new geographic markets. In terms of population, large markets – for example, in Latin American or South Asian countries – have formed an active network of micro-influencers on social networks. Statistics show that in 2024, nearly 22.7% of worldwide sponsored influencer posts fell to the United States, but Brazil (14.5%) and India (6.7%) also ranked in the top three. These indicators show that influencer-marketing is not only specific to us or European markets, but also covers an audience of emerging markets. This means that it is possible for brands to collaborate with their local influencers when entering new regions to convey the brand message in a way that suits the culture and tastes of that region. As we saw on the example of Coca-Cola, with the help of local micro-influencers, the brand can raise a sense of global unity at the local level, “enter every household” – which gives the brand an important impetus in conquering the new market. Looking at future prospects, the influencer-marketing trend is expected to increase further in the coming years. Experts believe that through the use of artificial intelligence and data analysis technologies, influencer campaigns can be targeted more accurately and improved efficiency. AI tools, for example, provide an in-depth analysis of influencer audiences with opportunities such as choosing the most suitable “ambassadors” for the brand, adapting content to audience tastes, and optimizing the campaign in real time. This will further improve the influencer-marketing ROI performance in the future and serve to justify the growth of budgets. On the other hand, some experts warn that the number of influencers increases excessively and “advertising fatigue” may appear in the audience. Indeed, as competition in the market increases, brands are forced to adopt more creative and specific approaches to maintain efficiency. However, risk management issues such as accurate measurement of ROI and false followers or misinformation also become relevant.

Still, the overall trend is on the positive side: many analyses advocate for increased influencer-marketing share in marketing budgets. This is clear evidence that 59% of marketing managers surveyed in 2025 plan to further expand their partnership with influencers. Brands that want to be competitive are now incorporating influencer-marketing as a key element in their communication strategies. While the social media environment is changing rapidly (for example, new platforms are emerging), influencers have the ability to follow the audience. Research confirms that users will follow in their footsteps if their trusted favorite bloggers move to a new platform. So even when mastering new channels for brands, influencers can act as bridges.

In general, the analysis carried out shows that influencer-marketing has become one of the most effective areas of digital marketing today, and its importance will further increase in the future. Brands are not only increasing the productivity of current advertising campaigns by establishing long-term, trust-based partnerships with influencers, but also laying the groundwork for coverage of future generations of consumers. The most important factors in this process – content honesty,

audience interest suitability, and continuous analysis of outcome – will also be the focus in the future. And companies that have established the Influencer-marketing strategy correctly will undoubtedly be one step ahead of competitors in the global market with an innovative approach and strong ties with the consumer.

**Conclusions.** Based on the above analyzes, it can be concluded that influencer-marketing has become a powerful and effective tool in modern digital marketing strategies to attract an audience and increase the effectiveness of advertising. Campaigns through influencers allow brands to gain audience confidence, actively engage them, and improve final sales results. This leads to progress that is difficult to achieve through traditional advertising channels. The pace of rapid development in recent years, in particular, the tenfold increase in the volume of the influencer-marketing market from 2016 to 2023, and significant investments in this area by large companies, indicate that the role of influencer-marketing in marketing Communications is increasingly strengthening. Global practical experiments, on the other hand, confirm that with the help of correctly selected and effectively managed influencer strategies, brands are able to expand their audience not only geographically, but also demographically, especially when attracting a new generation of consumers, significant results are observed.

In the future, influencer-marketing is expected to further develop, become an integral part of digital marketing, using approaches based on technological innovation, artificial intelligence and accurate data analysis. Therefore, it is necessary for companies to form long-term and trust-based collaborative relationships with influencers as a strategic priority. The role of influencer-marketing remains an important factor, especially when entering new market segments and establishing a stable connection with young audiences. To achieve this, companies are given the following suggestions: firstly, an in-depth analysis of their audience profile and reliability when choosing an influencer; secondly, the adaptation of their content strategy to the needs and cultural characteristics of the audience; thirdly, constant monitoring and evaluation of marketing effectiveness; fourth, strict preservation of digital ethics and principles of honesty. These approaches serve to make the most of influencer-marketing opportunities and provide a competitive advantage in the digital market.

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