2026 INFLUENCER MARKETING BENCHMARKS

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CHAPTER 1

KEY INFLUENCER MARKETING TAKEAWAYS FROM 2025

Influencer marketing continued to demonstrate strong growth in 2025, as brands increasingly recognized its ability to drive real business outcomes such as sales and new customer acquisition. As investment in influencer marketing grows, so do expectations around how success is measured.

Measurement today requires more than understanding how a campaign performed — it demands clarity on why it performed the way it did. A single, top-line brand lift study is no longer sufficient. Granular breakouts by creative, channel, creator, and audience are essential for diagnosing performance, while deeper creative analysis helps uncover the specific nuances driving results. Layering in sales studies further enables brands to quantify true business impact.

This year's Influencer Marketing Benchmarks Report examines performance trends across 17 key data points, including viewability, sales, brand lift, sentiment, and more. The analysis includes breakouts by vertical, alongside year-over-year trends, to provide a comprehensive view of what's driving influencer performance today.

SOME OF THE MOST NOTABLE TAKEAWAYS FROM 2025 INCLUDE:

1. Longer Term Partnerships Yield Stronger Results

Brands are increasingly prioritizing longer-term creator partnerships over one-off campaigns, and the data shows this approach is delivering stronger results. Brands that work with the same creator for a minimum of six months are seeing higher engagement rates, longer average watch times, and stronger lift in sales. These longer-term partnerships are particularly effective at building authenticity between creators and brands, especially when there is deeper collaboration between both parties rather than a simple handoff of a creative brief.

2. Average Watch Time is Increasing While Standard Engagements are Decreasing

This is a trend that we saw emerge in 2024 and continue to see in 2025. While average engagement rates are decreasing across all channels, viewability metrics such as average watch time and VCR are increasing. People are engaging more with creator content in the form of watching vs liking, commenting, and sharing. This doesn't mean performance is decreasing, however, as stronger viewability metrics are leading to higher brand and sales lift.

3. Separation of Brand and Sales Lift Results Between Organic & Paid

There is a common misconception that paid social is required to measure brand or sales lift in influencer campaigns, particularly when using a natural exposure methodology. This is not the case and represents a missed opportunity for many brands. Organic and paid audiences are fundamentally different. Organic audiences typically have an existing connection with the creator—such as followers or users served content based on relevance—while paid audiences are reached through targeting criteria and are often less familiar, or entirely unfamiliar, with the creator.

Because of these differences, organic and paid audiences behave very differently and generate distinct results across brand lift, consideration, purchase intent, sales, and sales lift metrics. Separating measurement by channel has become a standard approach in how brand and sales lift studies are conducted, and we expect broader adoption of this model moving forward.

4. YouTube Shorts Growth Short-Lived – Users Sticking More with TikTok and Instagram

YouTube Short activations saw a significant increase in 2024 in large part due to the anticipation of the TikTok ban. While 2025 saw continued extensions of the ban and an eventual sale, TikTok users and brands felt more confident that the platform was here to stay. While YouTube Shorts still remained a component of campaigns in 2025, brands opted to invest more back into TikTok. It will be interesting, however, to see how a US takeover of the platform will impact user experience and growth over the next year.

5. 46 – 59 Seconds is the “Sweet Spot” for Video Performance

Despite the perception that attention spans are shrinking and video content needs to be shorter, creator videos between 46 and 59 seconds consistently outperformed all other durations. This was observed across engagement rate, average watch time, VCR, and brand lift metrics. Content within this window was most effective at communicating key brand or product messaging without feeling rushed. There has also been a broader shift in user behavior toward watching content rather than liking, commenting, or sharing, which has contributed to stronger performance for slightly longer videos. Based on creative testing, however, when videos exceeded one minute, there was a significant drop-off due to audiences commonly scrolling past once they recognized the longer duration.

6. Creators are Developing Content for Both Followers and Non-Followers

As algorithms continue to focus on relevancy vs. who you are following, creators are doing a great job adapting to this change. Content creation is no longer just about engaging their followers, but also what might show up more frequently as a suggested post or in the "For You" tab. This also has resulted in stronger performance in paid social.

YOUR 2026 INFLUENCER BENCHMARKS

READ ON TO TAKE THE GUESSWORK OUT OF INFLUENCER MARKETING SO YOU CAN TURN IT INTO A GROWTH ENGINE THIS YEAR.

CHAPTER 2

2026 INFLUENCER MARKETING BENCHMARKS

1. Positive Campaign Sentiment

Benchmark Description:
Sentiment gives you an idea of how consumers are reacting to your influencer campaigns by looking at the percentage of engagements that are positive vs. negative. It's an effective way in gauging the quality of engagements and overall audience perception for a campaign. Despite minor YoY fluctuations, the sentiment is overwhelmingly positive for all verticals.

VERTICAL	2025 BENCHMARK	2024 BENCHMARK	% GROWTH
OVERALL	94.82%	93.38%	1.44%
AUTO	98.84%	99.82%	-0.98%
CPG	96.39%	96.70%	-0.31%
FINANCE	94.34%	90.52%	3.82%
QSR	96.50%	87.97%	8.53%

Key Callouts:

- Influencer content continues to drive a high share of positive sentiment across platforms.
- Average positive sentiment increased year-over-year, driven primarily by continued improvements on TikTok.
- Finance and QSR verticals delivered the strongest year-over-year gains in positive sentiment.

Analysis:

01 While TikTok remains the lowest-performing platform for positive sentiment overall, it showed meaningful year-over-year improvement. This trend likely reflects TikTok's aging user base, which continues to align more closely with advertiser brand expectations.

02 QSR saw the largest year-over-year increase in positive due to campaign themes shifting from creators reviewing menu items by themselves to integrating the brand into more shared experiences (i.e. ordering food for the entire family). Millennials and Gen X audiences especially responded well to content that focused more on shared experiences from a positive sentiment perspective.

03 Despite some year-over-year variation by vertical, overall sentiment remained strong, with all verticals performing well from a positive sentiment standpoint.

04 Providing clear messaging points and guidelines while allowing the creator to develop content in their own voice has continued to be a pivotal part in driving positive sentiment. Campaigns that fell well below benchmarks were related to controlling too much of the narrative around how and what was being posted.

2. Brand Lift

Benchmark Description:
Brand lift is the impact an influencer campaign had on raising the overall awareness of your brand or specific products.

VERTICAL	2025 BENCHMARK	2024 BENCHMARK	% GROWTH
OVERALL	20.3%	16.2%	4.1%
AUTO	34.1%	25.0%	9.1%
CPG	22.2%	15.6%	6.6%
QSR	14.0%	9.1%	4.9%

Key Callouts:

- Influencer-driven brand lift increased meaningfully year-over-year, with average lift reaching **20.3% in 2025**.
- All verticals saw year-over-year growth in influencer-attributed brand lift, with finance remaining flat versus last year.
- While the analyzed brand lift reflects performance across both paid and organic content, organic content drove stronger brand lift results overall.

Analysis:

01 Higher average watch times are a key driver of year-over-year gains in brand lift and brand awareness. While many creators feature brand packaging or logos within the first three seconds of a video, brand lift is significantly stronger when audiences watch at least **50%** of the content.

02 Structuring brand lift studies to outline lift by specific creative helped provide stronger insights on the nuances within posts driving performance. These learnings guided creative direction and drove stronger results in subsequent campaigns.

03 Longer-term creator partnerships consistently drove higher brand lift compared to one-off campaigns. Campaigns with at least **four posts from the same creator over six months or more generated 2x+ brand awareness lift** versus shorter campaigns (under three months) with only one or two posts.

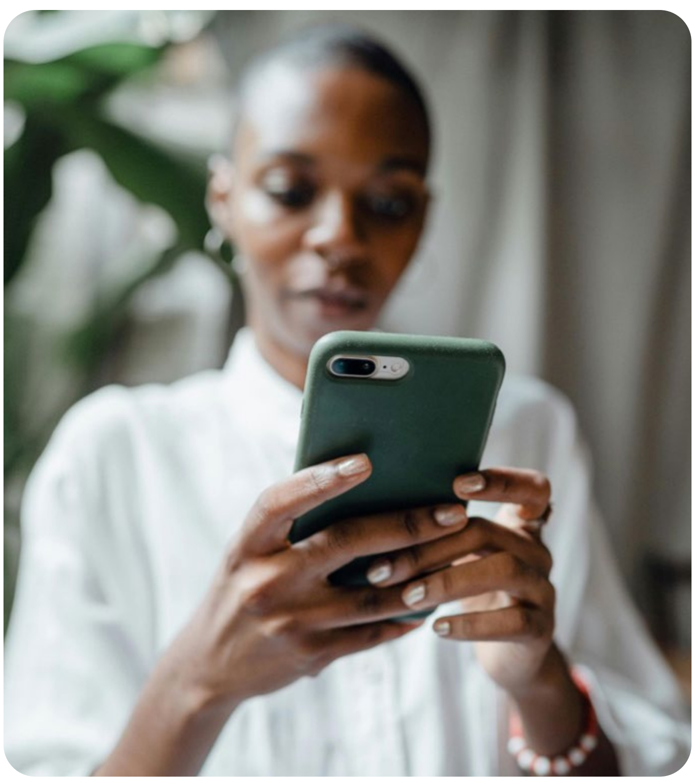
3. Ad Recall

Benchmark Description:
Ad recall is the ability for audiences to remember (or recall) your influencer campaign.

VERTICAL	2025 BENCHMARK	2024 BENCHMARK	% GROWTH
OVERALL	18.3%	12.3%	6%
AUTO	37.0%	36.6%	0.4%
CPG	15.7%	12.1%	3.6%
FINANCE	3.7%	13.6%	-9.9%
QSR	20.6%	13.1%	7.5%

Key Callouts:

- Ad and creative recall for influencer content remained strong, increasing **6.0% year-over-year**.
- Results reflect a combined impact of both organic and paid social ad/creative recall lift.
- QSR delivered the strongest year-over-year growth, with ad recall increasing **7.5%**.



Analysis:

01 Influencer content continues to drive strong ad recall lift across both organic posts and paid social campaigns.

02 Increased use of creative analysis studies to inform and optimize creator briefs contributed to the year-over-year gains in ad recall. These studies helped identify the creative nuances that drive performance, enabling campaigns to better maximize active attention and effective brand and product placement.

03 The year-over-year decline in ad recall within the finance vertical was driven by reduced on-screen branding compared to 2024. In 2025, many financial campaigns prioritized sponsorships of major events, which featured more subtle branding than content focused on direct product promotion (e.g., credit cards or checking and savings accounts).

04 TikTok generated the highest ad recall lift in 2025, supported by stronger active attention on the platform. Meta, YouTube, and LinkedIn also performed well, each averaging 10%+ ad recall lift.

4. Purchase Intent Lift

Benchmark Description:
Purchase intent is the extent to which audiences are likely to purchase your product/service over a period of time.

VERTICAL	2025 BENCHMARK	2024 BENCHMARK	% GROWTH
OVERALL	7.3%	6.3%	1.0%
AUTO	9.2%	8.0%	1.2%
CPG	3.0%	5.6%	-2.6%
QSR	14.8%	5.5%	9.3%

Key Callouts:

- Influencer content remains a highly effective driver of purchase intent, delivering an average lift of **7.3% in 2025**, up **1.0 percentage point** year-over-year.
- QSR delivered the strongest year-over-year growth in purchase intent, increasing **9.3%**.
- TikTok outperformed Meta across the majority of campaigns that activated influencers on both platforms.

Analysis:

01 The continued growth of TikTok shop and the launch of targeted search ads on the platform contributed to the strong growth in purchase intent on the channel in 2025.

02 QSR brands that focused on “shared experiences” rather than “solo dining” saw the strongest year-over-year gains in purchase intent, particularly among Millennial and Gen X audiences.

03 On TikTok, campaigns that combined search ads with display cards delivered the strongest purchase intent lift and were most effective at driving direct sales.

04 Organic influencer content drove year-over-year increases in purchase intent on both TikTok and Instagram. This growth was largely fueled by algorithmic advancements that prioritize serving creator content based on current user interests rather than followers.

5. Consideration Lift

Benchmark Description:
Consideration lift analyzes how likely audiences would consider your brand or product in the future.

VERTICAL	2025 BENCHMARK	2024 BENCHMARK	% GROWTH
OVERALL	9.1%	7.4%	1.7%
AUTO	14.6%	16.6%	-2.0%
CPG	8.8%	6.3%	2.5%
FINANCE	6.8%	10.7%	-3.9%
QSR	13.6%	6.1%	7.5%

Key Callouts:

- Consideration lift remained strong, with the average influencer campaign generating a **9.1% lift**.
- QSR delivered the largest year-over-year increase in consideration lift, consistent with other brand lift metrics.
- TikTok outperformed Meta across the majority of influencer campaigns that ran on both platforms.

Analysis:

01 Campaigns with higher average video watch times drove significantly stronger lifts in consideration. Watch time proved to be a more influential driver of consideration than traditional engagement metrics such as likes, comments, or link clicks.

02 Organic creator posts generated stronger consideration lift than content syndicated through paid social. In 2025, organic content averaged a **12.13% lift** in consideration compared to **6.51%** for paid social ads. While both play an important role in driving consideration and downstream sales, organic content delivers a more immediate impact on consideration.

6. Brand Favorability Lift

Benchmark Description:

Brand favorability lift analyzes how favorable users perceive a brand after being exposed to influencer creative.

VERTICAL	2025 BENCHMARK	2024 BENCHMARK	% GROWTH
OVERALL	7.1%	7.1%	0.0%
AUTO	20.4%	10.8%	9.6%
CPG	4.2%	5.9%	-1.7%
FINANCE	7.1%	8.2%	-0.5%
QSR	12.4%	2.2%	10.2%

Key Callouts:

- Brand favorability lift remained stable year-over-year, with average lift holding strong at **7.1%**.
- Meta delivered the highest average brand favorability lift, aligning with trends observed in positive sentiment performance.
- The auto vertical generated the highest average brand favorability lift.

Analysis:

01 For the QSR and auto verticals, focusing more on cultural moments or shared experiences vs. just product promotion had a positive impact on brand favorability.

02 Paid social creative that reached an average frequency of **3–5 exposures** delivered the highest lifts in brand favorability, suggesting a balanced level of repetition is most effective for shaping brand perception.

03 Remarketing through paid social played a meaningful role in driving favorability lift. Reaching users who had previously engaged with influencer content using refreshed creative or messaging helped reinforce brand perception and contributed to overall lift.

7. Sales Lift

Benchmark Description:
Sales lift analyzes influencer-attributed online and offline sales, inclusive of sales lift specific to new customers.

METRIC	2025 BENCHMARK	2024 BENCHMARK	% GROWTH
SALES LIFT - OVERALL	8.0%	5.0%	3.0%
SALES LIFT - NEW CUSTOMERS	23.6%	3.8%	19.8%

Key Callouts:

- Influencer campaigns drove strong year-over-year growth in both online and offline sales lift, with especially strong performance among **new customers**.
- Sales lift was meaningfully higher among individuals who had not previously purchased from the brand, highlighting influencer effectiveness in customer acquisition.
- Online sales generated higher average lift than offline sales, though both channels delivered positive results.

Analysis:

01 New product launches / menu items and seasonality (i.e. incorporating products into summer grilling recipes, for example) had the biggest impact on sales lift — especially among new customers.

02 Paid social ads had the biggest impact on sales, but both organic and paid averaged strong sales lifts in 2025.

03 Campaigns that ran for at least two average sales cycles showed stronger sales lift compared to shorter-duration efforts.

8. In-Store Visit Lift

Benchmark Description:
Measures the lift in in-store visits attributed to influencer campaigns, comparing exposed versus control groups.

METRIC	2025 BENCHMARK	2024 BENCHMARK	% GROWTH
IN-STORE VISIT LIFT - OVERALL	5.6%	6.9%	-1.4%

Key Callouts:

- Influencer campaigns continued to drive meaningful in-store visit lift, averaging **5.6%**, despite a slight year-over-year decline.
- QSR brands generated the highest in-store visitation lift among all verticals.
- Shifts toward online ordering and delivery caused a slight decrease in-store visit lift, particularly within QSR.

Analysis:

01 While in-store visit lift remained strong overall, increased adoption of online purchasing and delivery, particularly among QSR brands, contributed to the year-over-year decline.

02 Despite the overall YoY decrease, the holiday season delivered strong in-store visitation lift, with more consumers opting to shop in-store compared to the prior year.

03 Seasonality played a meaningful role in performance. Winter months drove lower lift in colder climates, while summer and fall months saw stronger in-store visitation (likely reflecting reduced reliance on delivery services during warmer weather).

9. Organic vs. Paid Lift

Benchmark Description:
A comparison of how brand and sales lift metrics compared across creator's organic content and that same content being syndicated across paid social.

METRIC	ORGANIC LIFT	PAID LIFT
AD RECALL	9.28%	22.03%
BRAND LIFT	19.2%	21.77%
PURCHASE INTENT	10.33%	4.33%
CONSIDERATION	12.13%	6.51%
BRAND FAVOURABILITY	7.85%	6.96%
SALES LIFT	5.75%	9.45%
NEW CUSTOMER SALES LIFT	23.68%	23.56%

Key Callouts:

- Breaks out brand and sales lift metrics by creator organic content versus paid social amplification.
- Paid social drives stronger performance at both the upper and lower funnel. Organic content, however, delivers substantially stronger results across mid-funnel metrics such as purchase intent and consideration.
- To maximize performance across KPIs, creator campaigns should include a paid component. Equally important, brands should avoid relying solely on "dark posting" and ensure that creator organic content plays a central role in driving awareness, mid-funnel lift, and conversions.

Analysis:

01 Paid social's impact on lower-funnel performance is driven by the ability to serve audiences multiple creator posts within the same campaign. Increased frequency and exposure to varied messaging points contributed to stronger sales lift.

02 This higher frequency also supported stronger ad recall lift for paid social compared to organic distribution alone.

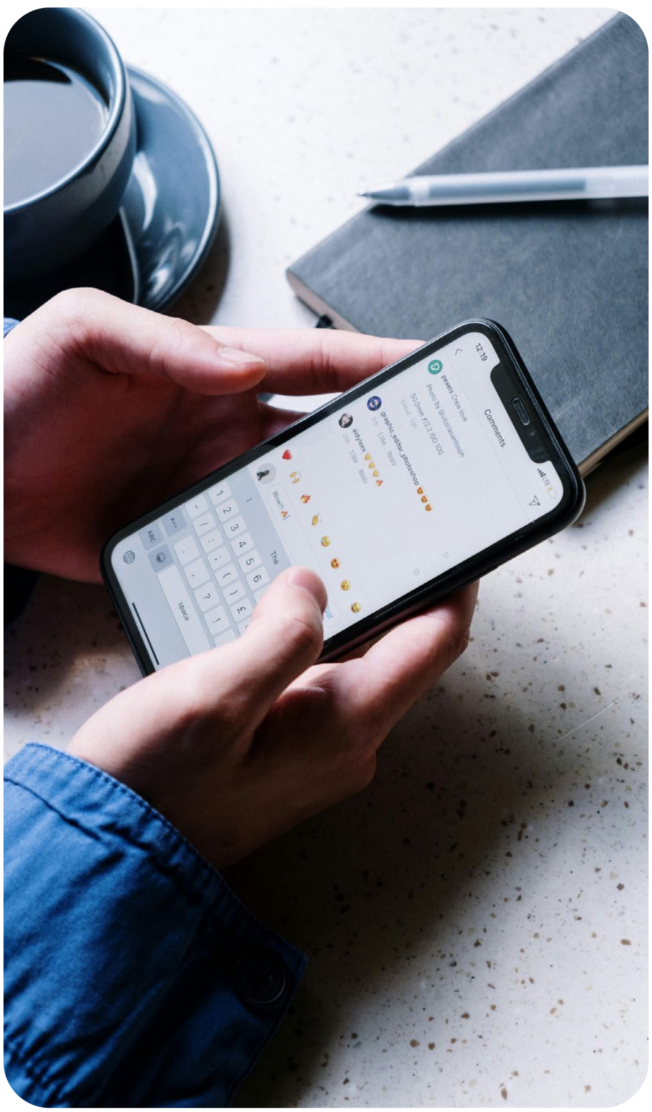
03 Organic creator content drove immediate impact on purchase intent and consideration due to the personal connection audiences have with creators. However, without paid amplification, this impact often diminished before converting to a purchase. Paid media extended the shelf life of creator content and helped sustain momentum through the lower funnel.

10. Organic vs. Paid Sentiment

METRIC	ORGANIC	PAID
POSITIVE SENTIMENT	96.50%	93.16%

Key Callouts:

- Both paid and organic influencer content drove high levels of positive sentiment in 2025.
- Organic content slightly outperformed paid content in positive sentiment, a trend that was consistent across all verticals analyzed.
- TikTok generated the lowest positive sentiment levels across both paid and organic placements; however, positive sentiment still averaged **90%+** for each.



Analysis:

01 Organic content had a stronger performance in positive sentiment due to audiences having a more personal connection with the Influencer (i.e. follower or regular engager of their content). Paid audiences aren't as familiar, or familiar at all, with the creator resulting in a higher probability of negative comments being left.

02 Positive comments were primarily focused on the brand or product being promoted, while negative comments tended to center on executional elements of the content itself (e.g., music selection, clarity of messaging, or delivery).

03 Campaigns that leveraged creative testing to refine creator briefs consistently generated stronger positive sentiment and minimal negative feedback.

11. Engagement Rate Organic Tier

Benchmark Description:
Measures the average engagement rate (likes/reactions, comments, shares, and link clicks) of organic content by influencer tier.

	2025 BENCHMARK	2024 BENCHMARK	% GROWTH
OVERALL	2.76%	3.02%	-0.26%
ALL-STAR	2.35%	2.20%	0.15%
MEGA	1.49%	1.56%	-0.07%
PREMIUM	1.71%	2.12%	-0.41%
MID-TIER	2.68%	3.22%	-0.54%
MICRO	7.02%	8.04%	-1.02%
NANO	15.47%	15.60%	-0.13%

Key Callouts:

- Organic engagement rates continue to see a slight overall decline, driven by increased content saturation, algorithm changes, and shifts in user behavior.
- Audiences are increasingly consuming content through longer watch times rather than traditional engagement actions (likes, comments, shares).
- Lower follower tiers generally delivered higher engagement rates (excluding all-star talent), though total engagement volume remained lower.

Tier Definitions:

- **All-Star:** 5M+ Followers
- **Mega:** 1.5M-5M Followers
- **Premium:** 400K-1.49M Followers
- **Mid-Tier:** 50K-399K Followers
- **Micro:** 10K-49K Followers
- **Nano:** 1K-9K Followers

Analysis:

01 All-Star / Celebrity Influencers have been the only tier benefiting from algorithm shifts in terms of ER. With content being increasingly shown to non-followers, this tier being more universally recognized has contributed to YoY ER increases.

02 While organic engagement rates declined across most creator tiers, viewability metrics such as average watch time became increasingly important indicators of performance. As user behavior shifts toward passive consumption, engagement and viewability metrics should be evaluated together to more accurately assess organic impact.

03 Although micro and nano creators delivered significantly higher engagement rates than larger tiers, their total engagement volume remained materially lower due to smaller audience sizes.

04 Static content generated higher engagement rates than video, largely because these posts were more frequently served to non-followers. However, increased distribution of static posts as “suggested content” also contributed to the year-over-year decline in engagement rates overall.

12. Engagement Rate Organic Channel

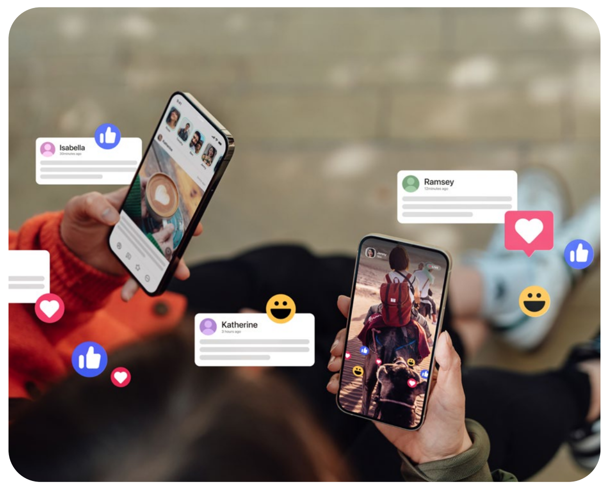
Benchmark Description:

Captures average engagement rate across major social media platforms for organic influencer content.

CHANNEL	2025 BENCHMARK	2024 BENCHMARK	% GROWTH
OVERALL	2.76%	3.02%	-0.26%
INSTAGRAM	2.69%	4.45%	-1.76%
TIKTOK	1.96%	2.15%	-0.19%
SNAP	1.61%	1.56%	0.05%
YOUTUBE	4.76%	3.10%	1.66%
LINKEDIN	10.98%	7.60%	3.38%
FACEBOOK	0.81%	0.66%	0.15%

Key Callouts:

- Instagram experienced the largest year-over-year decline in average engagement rate, driven primarily by a significant drop in static post performance. Static content is increasingly served to non-followers as "suggested posts," which has contributed to lower engagement rates.
- Standard engagements (like, comments, shares) are still primarily being implemented by users who follow or have a personal connection with the creator. This is the primary reason why LinkedIn continues to drive extremely high ERs.
- Facebook continues to generate the lowest overall ER.



Analysis:

01 Algorithm changes combined with shifts in how users consume content (favoring watching over actively engaging) have driven year-over-year declines in organic engagement rates across most social platforms.

02 On Instagram, a sharp decrease in static content engagement contributed significantly to the overall ER decline. This was largely driven by increased distribution of static posts to non-followers as "suggested content."

03 LinkedIn continues to deliver the strongest overall engagement rates; however, total engagement volume remains lower relative to other platforms.

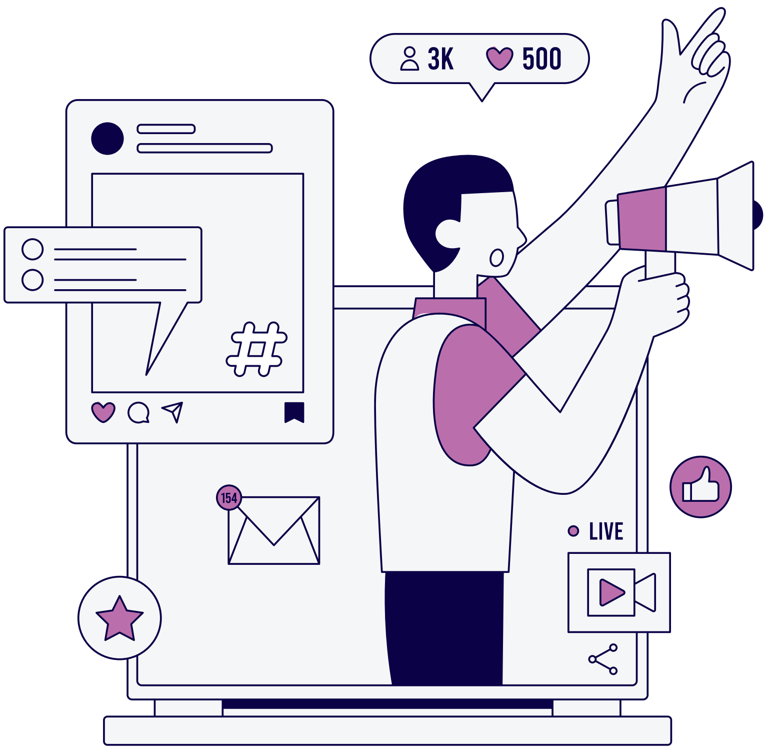
04 As user behavior evolves, engagement rate should be viewed as only one component of organic performance. With audiences increasingly choosing to watch rather than like, comment, or share, metrics such as average watch time and video completion rate (VCR) are equally important for evaluating impact.

05 Given that the majority of video views now come from non-followers, engagement rate benchmarks should increasingly be evaluated at the creator level rather than purely at the channel level.

13. Engagement Rate Organic Format

Benchmark Description:
Analyzes engagement rate by content format, including video, static (single image/carousel), and stories.

CONTENT TYPE	2025 BENCHMARK	2024 BENCHMARK	% GROWTH
OVERALL	2.76%	3.02%	-0.26%
VIDEO	2.88%	2.81%	0.07%
STATIC	4.01%	4.95%	-0.94%
STORIES	1.51%	1.50%	0.01%



Key Callouts:

- Video and story formats remained relatively stable year-over-year in terms of engagement rate, with slight increases.
- Static content experienced a significant year-over-year decline in engagement rate, driven largely by increased distribution to non-followers (e.g., Instagram "suggested posts").
- Despite this decline, static content continued to deliver the highest overall engagement rates, as the majority of impressions still came from followers.

Analysis:

01 Across all content formats, followers consistently engaged at higher rates than non-followers who encountered content via "suggested posts" or TikTok's *For You* feed.

02 Stories continued to generate lower engagement rates, in part because they offer fewer interaction points and are often used to reshare in-feed content rather than drive direct engagement.

03 While broader platform trends show users watching more content rather than actively engaging, creators have adapted to algorithm changes by optimizing content to resonate with both followers and non-followers.

04 Capturing audience attention within the first **two seconds** and maintaining a consistent communication style were key contributors to higher engagement rates across formats.

14. Video Completion Rate - Instagram

Benchmark Description:

VCR (video completion rate) is calculated as the number of times a video was watched to 100%, divided by total video views.

PAID BIDDING STRATEGY	2025 BENCHMARK	2024 BENCHMARK	% GROWTH
CPM	5.35%	5.03%	0.32%
CPV	13.59%	13.57%	0.02%

Key Callouts:

- Instagram counts a view as 3 seconds or more of a video being watched.
- CPV bidding strategies continued to drive significantly stronger VCR performance compared to CPM.

Analysis:

01 When the primary objective is maximizing video completion, CPV bidding strategies consistently outperform CPM and should be prioritized.

02 Campaigns optimized using CPV also delivered significantly higher average watch times, reinforcing their effectiveness in driving deeper video consumption.

03 On Meta platforms, optimizing toward **Thruplays** generated higher VCRs compared to other view-based optimization approaches.

04 These performance trends held consistently across channels, creator tiers, and video lengths.

05 While auto-optimization across Meta, TikTok, and YouTube continues to improve, ongoing daily manual optimization remains critical to maximizing both VCR and average watch time.

15. Video Completion Rate - TikTok

PAID BIDDING STRATEGY	2025 BENCHMARK	2024 BENCHMARK	% GROWTH
CPM -6 SECOND VCR	15.24%	8.09%	7.15%
CPV - 6 SECOND VCR	23.72%	9.81%	13.91%
CPM - VCR	0.62%	0.24%	0.38%
CPV - VCR	2.79%	0.19%	1.60%

Key Callouts:

- TikTok's **6-second VCR** is calculated as total video completions divided by total 6-second views.
- 6-second VCR is a more reliable performance metric than standard VCR, as TikTok counts a view the moment a video starts and many users scroll away within the first one to two seconds.
- 6-second VCR gives a better read on performance among users who don't immediately scroll past a video once they realize it's an ad.
- 6-second VCR increased significantly year-over-year across both CPM and CPV bidding strategies, indicating users are watching more of creator videos despite lower engagement rates.

Analysis:

01 TikTok delivered larger year-over-year gains in both average watch time and VCR compared to other platforms. While standard engagement metrics (likes, comments, shares) continued to decline, viewability metrics showed substantial improvement.

02 Rising VCR and longer average watch times contributed to increased sales attributed to TikTok. Deeper video consumption proved to be a stronger driver of direct sales than traditional engagement actions or even link clicks.

03 Although CPM bidding strategies showed meaningful improvements in VCR year-over-year, **CPV bidding—particularly optimizations focused on 15-second views—remains the recommended approach** for maximizing completion rates and overall performance on TikTok.

16. 2-Second Video View Rate

CHANNEL	2025 BENCHMARK	2024 BENCHMARK	% GROWTH
META	68.37%	35.93%	32.44%
TIKTOK	35.49%	28.09%	7.40%

Key Callouts:

- 2-second VVR is calculated as 2-second views divided by Impressions.
- It's a helpful indicator for how many users drop off immediately after the video starts—often because they realize it's an ad, don't find it relevant, or see a sponsored label.
- 2-second VVR is preferred over standard VVR since TikTok, Meta, and other platforms have difference definitions of a view (i.e. IG is 3 seconds while TikTok is immediately after a video starts playing).
- Both channels showcased strong increases in 2 second VVR YoY, especially on Meta.

Analysis:

01 Creators have adapted their content strategy to adhere to both paid and organic audiences. This has caused significant increases in 2 second VVR YoY for both Meta and TikTok.

02 Users notice when a TikTok post is a paid ad more often than Meta within the first 2 seconds, contributing to an increase in more immediate drop-offs for TikTok.

03 The first 2-3 seconds of a video is most important in capturing user attention for Meta. For TikTok, the first 1-2 seconds of a video is most important. The timeframe to hook paid audiences in has decreased, especially for TikTok, and should be part of the strategy around how creator's develop video content.

17. Partnership Length

PARTNERSHIP LENGTH	ORGANIC ER
1 MONTH OR LESS	2.70%
2 MONTHS	2.48%
3-5 MONTHS	3.33%
6 MONTHS OR MORE	3.92%

Key Callouts:

- Longer term partnerships drive stronger organic engagement rate.
- ERs for the same creator generally increase as they continue to post for the same brand through a 6 month+ campaign.
- Same trends were seen across TikTok and Instagram.

Analysis:

01 Partnerships lasting **at least 3 months** consistently outperformed one-off campaigns in terms of engagement and overall performance.

02 Performance continued to improve as partnership duration increased. 6 month partnerships typically outperformed 3 month engagements, while year-long partnerships delivered the strongest results overall.

03 Longer-term partnerships were perceived as more authentic by audiences, who viewed creators as true brand advocates once campaigns reached a minimum of **3 posts per creator** and a **3 month duration**.

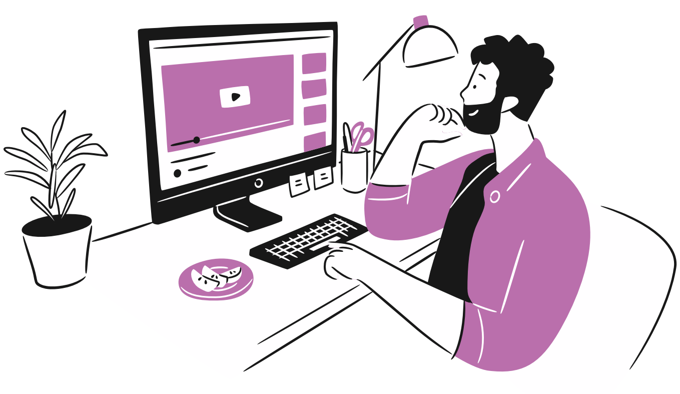
04 Higher-volume, longer-running campaigns also enabled creators to showcase multiple use cases and touchpoints for a brand or product. This increased perceived relevance and contributed to higher lift across consideration, purchase intent, and direct sales.

18. Video Duration

VIDEO LENGTH	ORGANIC ER	PAID ER	AVG WATCH TIME (PAID)	50% OR MORE WATCHED (PAID)	AVG PERCENTAGE WATCHED (PAID)
0:15 OR LESS	2.00%	0.17%	0:02	5.94%	14.85%
0:16-0:30	3.50%	0.25%	0:04	12.45%	20.98%
0:31-0:45	2.11%	0.23%	0:06	13.96%	18.84%
0:46-0:59	4.52%	0.43%	0:06	14.00%	15.19%
1:00+	1.59%	0.30%	0:04	2.93%	5.85%

Key Callouts:

- 0:45 -0:59 second videos seem to be the sweet spot for maximizing engagements and higher watch times.
- Videos 0:15 or less or over 1 minute have been least effective in driving performance.
- Trend is consistent across both TikTok and Meta.



Analysis:

01 Overall video lengths were shorter in 2025 compared to 2024; however, videos in the **0:46–0:59** range consistently ranked as top performers.

02 Videos within the **0:46–0:59** window were most effective at communicating key brand and product messages without feeling rushed, while also avoiding audience fatigue associated with longer content.

03 Content in this duration range also drove the highest lift across brand awareness, consideration, and purchase intent.

04 Videos **15 seconds or shorter** were among the lowest-performing formats. User feedback indicated these videos often felt more “like an ad” and struggled to clearly communicate multiple messaging points without feeling rushed or disjointed.

05 Videos that exceeded **one minute** experienced significantly higher audience drop-off. Users were more likely to scroll away upon recognizing a video exceeded one minute in length.

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YOUR 2026 INFLUENCER TRENDS

READ ON TO TAKE THE GUESSWORK OUT OF INFLUENCER MARKETING SO YOU CAN TURN IT INTO A GROWTH ENGINE THIS YEAR.

CHAPTER 3

8 EMERGING INFLUENCER MARKETING TRENDS FOR 2026

1. Brand Ambassador Programs Over One-Off Campaigns

There's going to be an increased shift in brands tapping into creators for longer term partnerships vs. one off campaigns. Those that have already tested this are seeing strong results - higher engagement rates, higher average watch times, stronger lift in sales. The ones that will likely drive the most success are programs that have a mix of planned concepts and quick hit activations based on tapping into relevant trends.

2. Increased Adoption of Advanced Audience Data

Campaigns are increasingly getting more niche from a targeting perspective. Paid social has always been the key in reaching very specific audiences with organic having the expectation that it "can't get too granular with who you can reach". That no longer will be sufficient. There will be an increased expectation that creators selected for a program have audiences that meet increasingly stringent criteria. Not just demographics, which has been readily available for a while, but specific attributes such as consumers of a brand / competitor, specific buying behaviors, life events, and more.

3. Greater Use of Creative Analysis Studies to Inform Creator Briefs

In a world of more complex social algorithms, following a list of general creative best practices doesn't cut it anymore. Each person has varying interests and TikTok, Instagram, etc. do an excellent job serving content to users based on what they're interested in at that very moment. Creator programs will lean more into extensive creative analysis (facial coding technology + targeting online surveys) to understand the creative nuances driving performance against specific audiences. This information will be used to optimize creator briefs, including everything from ideal video duration, when exactly a brand should be appear, communication style, and more to help maximize performance.

4. Better Sales Attribution for Organic Content

Measuring sales and sales lifts significantly improved for organic content in 2025. What's still missing is the ability to directly correlate metrics such as video views and engagements to direct sales and full funnel attribution. Even without the ability to add links to most organic placements, expect direct sales to be a key component of organic measurement in 2026.

5. Further Integration of AI

It'll be exciting to see how the advancements of AI will be used to structure Influencer campaigns in a smarter way. I expect it to be used in a few ways, inclusive of:

- Vetting of creator posts. Using AI to detect product images and audio for competitive vetting or assessing if a creator is a brand advocate.
- Editing assets to avoid reshoots. Might be a controversial take, but can see AI being used in place of reshoots where existing video editing tools fall short.
- Predicting ideal post day and time. Using a combination of data points – creator data + channel data – to determine when a post should go live. Instead of just focusing on when the creator normally sees posts perform best, AI will take into account the context of a video and the audience most likely going to be served that content.

6. Less Focus on Emerging Channels

2024 saw an increase in testing platforms like BlueSky and Lemon8 in anticipation of a TikTok ban in the US. With TikTok users and brands feeling more confident about TikTok staying active in the US for the long-term, brands will focus less on emerging channels and more on proven platforms like TikTok and Instagram.

7. Rise of Creator-Led Media Companies

Leading creators will operate as full-fledged media companies, with disciplined content operations, platform-specific programming, audience segmentation, and diversified monetization tied to owned IP. Success will be driven less by viral moments and more by repeatable systems, editorial planning, distribution strategy, and scalable revenue models that extend well beyond brand deals.

8. Further Integration of Commerce into Creator Content

Commerce will be fully embedded into creator content, eliminating the distinction between entertainment and shopping. Creators will function as trusted curators and operators of conversion, with purchasing integrated directly into videos, livestreams, and social interactions, turning content into a primary point of sale rather than a top-of-funnel touchpoint.

CHAPTER 4

POWERING INFLUENCER MARKETING WITH RHYTHMINFLUENCE

Influencer marketing is no longer an emerging tactic—it's a proven growth channel that consistently drives awareness, engagement, and measurable business outcomes. As a result, it now sits squarely at the center of modern marketing strategies. Yet despite its maturity, many influencer programs continue to underperform.

The gap isn't belief—it's execution.

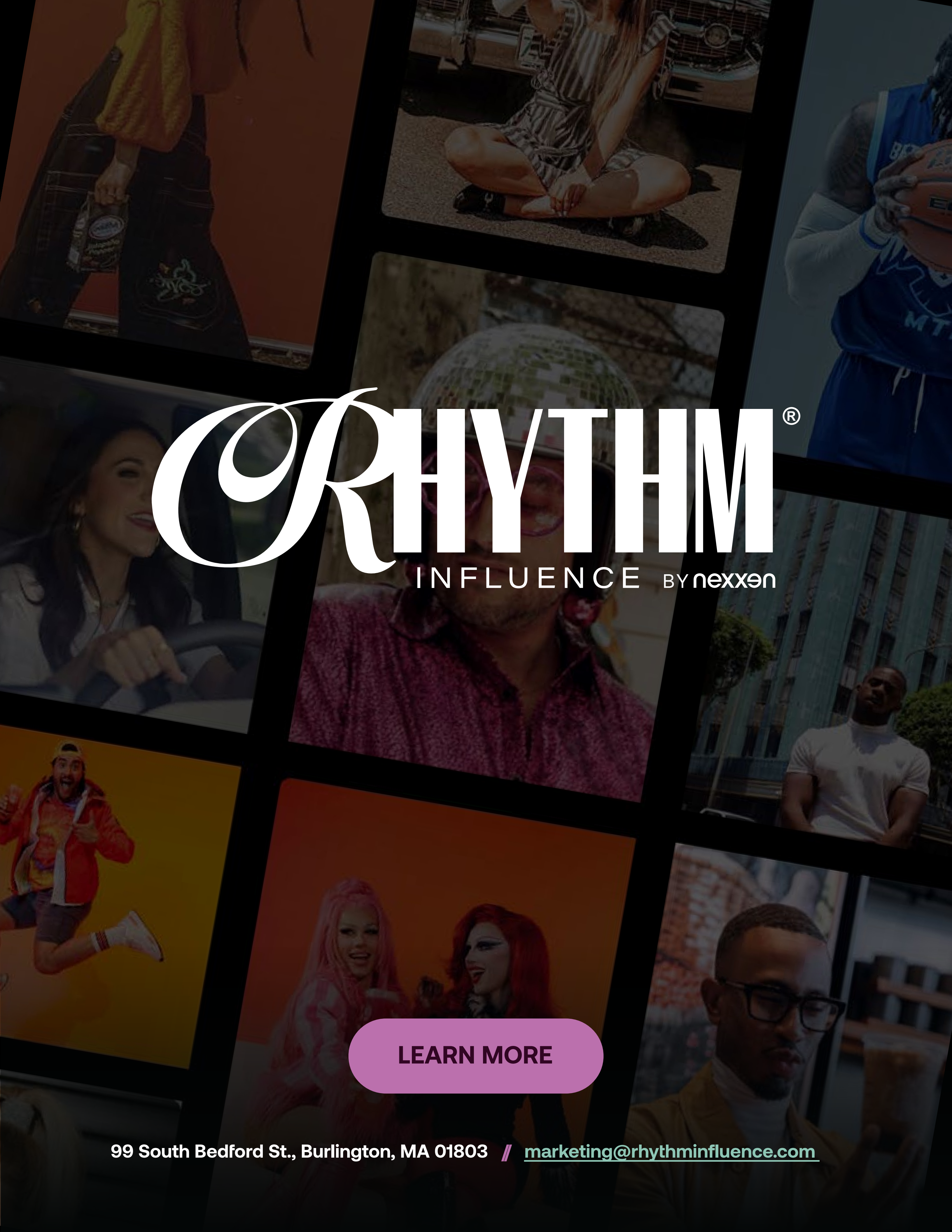
Too often, brands underestimate the operational rigor, data infrastructure, and optimization required to run influencer marketing effectively at scale. Without the right tools, systems, and expertise, even well-funded programs struggle to deliver sustained impact.

At RhythmInfluence, we remove that friction. Our team delivers an end-to-end, enterprise-grade approach to influencer marketing, designed to turn influence into a repeatable performance engine—covering everything from:

- Strategic influencer discovery, vetting, and selection
- Long-term creator relationship management and activation
- Integrated campaign development, paid social, and media amplification
- Advanced measurement, analytics, and performance insights

If you're ready to move beyond experimentation and drive real revenue through influencer marketing—without getting buried in the complexity—that's where we come in.

SEE HOW WE INFLUENCE THE BEST INFLUENCER MARKETING CAMPAIGNS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