

MARKETING

Influencer brand tribes hold promise post-COVID-19

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With a brand tribe, influencers can be quickly activated who have proven trustworthy and loyal to their message and direction over multiple prior campaigns. Image credit: Influencer Central

By [Stacy DeBroff](#)

As marketers re-evaluate post-pandemic marketing, forming an influencer "brand tribe" has proven to deliver dramatic results in driving shopper marketing, passionate advocacy and increased organic reach.

We ran a yearlong brand tribe program for a national brand that offered an amalgam of grocery staples. In respect to our client's privacy, without going into details, we want share with you the results.

How the brand tribe functioned

We engaged a curated, thoughtfully selected group of influential content creators over the course of a calendar year in an influencer marketing program on behalf of a national grocery brand.

This tribe consisted of influencers in the target demographic for the brand, with traits and audiences who map closely to the brand's targeted consumer persona and who would be organically interested in the diverse array of grocery products offered.

The influencers selected mapped to the brand's targeted consumer persona and naturally provide access an audience of like-minded consumers.

Each influencer joined agreeing to complete multiple posts and social shares for this brands' portfolio of grocery products, each with its own focus, deliverables, and deadlines throughout the year.

The yearlong engagement gives them the time to establish themselves with their audiences as loyalists for brand.

Brand tribe members loved the experience

Post-modern studies about consumer psychology have revealed the importance of brands building relationships with consumers.

By building goodwill with loyal customers, brands tacitly ingratiate themselves as an integral part of that buyer's lifestyle.

We recently surveyed the 50 influencers that participated in the yearlong tribe to get their retrospective on how being a part of a brand tribe impacted them, and findings corroborate this marketing strategy:

- 100 percent of the tribe members surveyed reported that the stability of a yearlong commitment proved the most valuable part of their tribe experience, in direct contrast to the one-off campaigns they usually get asked by brands to do.
- 96 percent of brand tribe influencers shared that their personal investment in creating a cascade of original content for the brand across its portfolio of products significantly deepened as the yearlong program moved forward. They felt more attached to the brand overall, which ultimately resulted in better, more authentic content to present to their followers.
- 96 percent said they continued to share information and recommend the brand products, both online and offline, to their friends, families and social communities even after the tribe program concluded.
- 90 percent of influencers shared that having exclusive access to opportunities with these brands for an entire year was a key determinant in prioritizing their Tribe work above other projects.
- 89 percent found themselves now buying more of the brand products on a regular basis.
- 70 percent created more content than their contracts required, showing how brand loyalty pays dividends over time.

The influencers shared with us how this campaign impacted them as tribe members as well as their audiences:

It builds more trust with my audience when they see that I am sharing a specific brand's products regularly because they can see that I genuinely trust and use the brand.

By creating multiple posts promoting the various brand's products, my content resonated very well with my audience and they engaged with these posts at above-average levels.

I found myself really enjoying being part of a group. It felt much more personal than the usual one-off apply-and-finish-it campaigns. It felt like the brand cared more about us, as content creators, by sticking with us over the long-term.

As seen by these results, along with key performance indicators (KPIs) exceeding expectations, long-term relationships dramatically amplify the successes of influencer engagement.

Participating influencers strengthen and sustain a brand loyalty, which in turn inspires purchasing confidence in their consumers audience. A tribe delivers for brands passionate authenticity, building up organically over time.

Why this matters during and post-COVID-19

Based on the results of our tribe survey, brands that have this base influencer tribe will in the best position to quickly and smartly execute redirected marketing efforts during times of crisis.

When we compiled, activated and surveyed this tribe across the course of pre-coronavirus, the every-day landscape of consumerism and shopper behavior proved predictable and in a state of relative normalcy.

We had no indication of a pending pandemic wreaking havoc across brands, manufacturers, consumers and retailers alike.

Marketing plans got created with optimism and secured budgets, with the increasing value of exceptional content creators to drive retail sales catching on with more and more companies.

Fast forward to 2020 where our entire landscape has changed, yet tribe results become more needed by brands than ever before.

As consumers adapt to new methods of shopping, scarcities of products and story after story of brands doing things right or, in turn, wrong consumers lean on authentic, trusted voices for direction and accurate product or shopping information.

Moreover, pre-vetted and at the standby, tribes allow brands to quickly execute an unplanned campaign during times of market disruption through its trusted tribe.

Tribes are known for sticking together and working as a unit to reach common goals. Marketing tribes can do the same thing for brands if they are curated, informed and empowered.

In this new, stay-home economy we are facing, brands fear having their positive, proactive message or campaign turned into a crisis of its own with misinformation or negative perception.

With a brand tribe, influencers can be quickly activated who have proven trustworthy and loyal to their message and direction over multiple prior campaigns.

NOW MORE THAN ever, we find ourselves seeking stability.

Consumers look for the brands they love to toe the fine line between sensitivity and normalcy.

Brands look for effective and proven avenues to continue operations during a time of overwhelming uncertainty.

As consumers adapt to new methods of shopping and scarcities of products, brand tribes deliver authentic, trusted voices for shoppers.

Long-term relationships take the successes of the influencer marketing model a leap further and create a sustained brand loyalty that inspires purchasing confidence in the consumers.



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