



Rules of the Road When Working with Influencers

By Wendy Lewis

Influencer marketing has evolved into a well-established strategy for consumer engagement. An estimated 86% of marketers used Influencer Marketing in 2017 and an estimated 67% think it helps them reach a more targeted audience.

Instagram Stories and Snapchat are the platforms of choice for influencer campaigns to drive engagement, but these are not the only avenues to consider. Collaborating with the influencers is a good way to get in front of a new audience and extend your brand awareness. This strategy can work nicely, but there are some caveats.

I have talked to many plastic surgeons who have been disappointed with their experience with influencers. Some have been ripped off by paid influencers who don't deliver on time or live up to their contractual obligations. They can also mess up surgeons' schedules in the process by not showing up when expected and planned for. Regrettably, this is not an uncommon occurrence. Most of the 'influencers' you may work with are not professionals and will not have managers, agents, or even much experience in business. In fact, some of them may be stay-at-home moms, bloggers, makeup artists, aspiring models or musicians, or socially savvy millennials looking to make a quick buck. Therefore, entering into any engagement where services or products or fees and exchanged for agreed upon deliverables in the form of posting or photos or videos, should be handled professionally, in writing with the specifics laid out and signed and countersigned so it will be legally binding in your place of business.

Influencer Strategies

Harnessing the power of influencers can generate big payoffs. Historically, influencers have been celebrities, Kardashians, models, reality show stars and sports figures. For a plastic surgery practice, an influencer could be other businesses in your community, social media users with high follower counts or customers who are very active across social media platforms. It's about choosing someone who has enough reach among an audience that matters to your practice. In most cases,



for aesthetic surgery practices at least, this means a local or regional individual who has fans and followers who seek them out for beauty advice and recommendations. One of the keys to success is relatability.

The best influencers are referred to in marketing speak as 'micro-influencers' and they can be ordinary people who have similar lifestyles, interests and goals. The advantages are that they are easier to engage with, more open to potentially working with you, and every practice has some already. Tapping into the right micro-influencers who can authentically weave stories and experiences into desirable content on social platforms that consumers trust can produce powerful results. But the end result you may see online is not always a seamless process. For big consumer product brands and global beauty brands, a single post may involve multiple agency teams, photographers, designers, account coordinators, and a slew of brand managers to get it just right. Of course, plastic surgeons do not typically have unlimited resources, so you have to think a lot smaller.

Whether it's a treatment conveyed through a blog post, an impactful video of the

influencer's experience, a noteworthy image, or any combination of these, individual practices can work with micro-influencers to bring their brands, services and products to life. The secret sauce is to develop engaging customized content that gets delivered to the right audience in the right platform at the right time, and then amplify it across as many potential platforms as possible to have the greatest bang for the buck.

One of the most common ways to use influencers is to ask for original content in the form of a sponsored post with a minimum of about 500 words. For example, sponsored blog posts can be created by influencers who will be tasked with developing and distributing the content. This content can be used to promote products, services, and/or the practice and doctors. It should be created in the voice and tone of the influencer to be authentic, and may be produced in the form of text, images, video or a combination.

Another popular strategy is to facilitate an Instagram or Facebook takeover that allows influencers to share their own content and tap into a new audience. The goal is to then

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convert their followers to become followers of the brand too.

Yet, unless this is all outlined in writing in a legally-binding agreement signed by both parties, you may be unhappy with what you actually get for the investment.

The Agreement

Not all influencer relationships are the same, so you should adapt your contract or agreement to fit each campaign you enter into.

These are some of the common sections you should include in the contract, or preferably, seek the advice of an attorney.

- **Scope of Work**—Use standard agreement terms stating that you are entering into a contract between the company (your practice) and the influencer. Include the basics, such as the names of the parties involved, and the date of the agreement and a simple description of what the contract covers.
- **Timelines of the campaign**—How long it will last, beginning and end of the contractual engagement.
- **Deliverables**—In specific terms, what is the influencer expected to do as part of this contract? What are the penalties for posting late or not at all or inadequately? You can add a separate Schedule of Services to customize each agreement.
- **Cancellation clause**—To protect yourself, give yourself the choice to opt out if the relationship is not working and make the terms as specific as possible.
- **Approval process**—State up front that you must approve all content that mentions

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your practice, brand and name before it goes live to control key messages and ensure that the influencer stays on brand.

- **FTC requirements**—It is important to insist that all influencers you work with agree to abide by relevant FTC regulations. They must disclose that their posts are paid or that products/services were gifted. Many influencers will use #Client #Paid #Sponsored #Partner in their content. Note that #Ad and #Spon are usually deemed insufficient for this purpose.
- **Confidentiality**—A standard confidentiality clause is a good idea to include to keep the exact terms of the agreement between the parties exclusively.
- **Consideration**—State what you agree to give to the influencer in exchange for posting and social media activities, in terms of fees, services, products, in accordance with the ASAPS Code of Ethics. Payment terms should be detailed, such as payment up front and at the end of the campaign. I would advise against paying the entire fee upfront, because it leaves you with little leverage if the relationship goes south.

Try to formalize the arrangement before you work with an influencer. Hopefully, nothing will go wrong. But having a fully executed contract helps to clarify all terms upfront and gives both parties something to fall back on if misunderstandings develop. Even if you have a signed contract, you may not have much recourse, but it can serve as a deterrent for influencers who are not experienced in business matters.

What is Social Amplification?

Social sharing is essential to track because it is a strong signal of engagement. Knowing how consumers are behaving across your own social channels is paramount because accountability and attribution are keys to success.

Tagging influencers or other brands lends credibility to your posts, as well as notifying those tagged that you are talking about them which makes it more compelling to share with their own audience. Followers of your social channels may see you as being well connected and trusted by recognizable names which can encourage higher trust levels. You can create

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multiple, unique posts and tag influencers individually or produce a roundup and tag all of them in one shot.

The social amplification of sponsored blog posts occurs when micro-influencers promote the blog post across their own social media accounts, including Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, and LinkedIn. They can tap into the features of each platform to utilize images, video, and campaign hashtags that tie back to the original sponsored blog post. Posting content like this allows influencers to share key messages, tag your social handles and use dedicated hashtags for best engagement.

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Measuring Success

The specific asks, design, timing, and tactics can have a huge impact on the success of your influencer campaign. Determine in advance what success looks like in terms of engagement and social media listening

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measures. If you don't get the kind of traction you were expecting, re-evaluate the relationship and look for areas that need improvement. See what worked well and what didn't drive sufficient engagement and tweak it for the next time. In some cases, you may just repeat the same campaign on a different day or time or with a fresh audience. In some cases, you may have selected the wrong influencer. Even a slight shift in any campaign component can make a big difference in the final outcome.

Key Metrics:

- **Sponsored Blog Post:** Comments, questions, replies
- **Facebook:** Shares, comments, reactions, video views, shares from posts
- **Twitter:** Re-Tweets, mentions, favorites
- **Pinterest:** Re-Pins, comments, likes, shares from posts
- **Instagram:** Comments, video views, likes
- **YouTube:** Views, comments, shares
- **Snapchat:** Views, screenshots
- **Contests:** Completed entries
- **Other measurements:** Clicks to practice website or blog, Posts with specific campaign hashtags

Social media listening involves identifying and assessing what is being said about you online by hunting for specific keywords on social media, blogs and media. A good metric to gauge how influencer marketing campaigns are performing organically is through social listening. Consumers appreciate branded content that speaks to them authentically, so they are more inclined to comment, share, retweet, repin, regram and react favorably to it.

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5 Key Takeaways of Influencer Marketing

- Determine clearly defined and realistic goals at the outset—the operative word being 'realistic.'
- Focus on engagement over growth in fans and followers as the main KPI (key performance indicator) for your campaigns.
- Figure out the social media preferences of your key target audience and match those with the influencers you choose to work with and the channels they are most active on.
- Influencer Marketing is all about customization. The more customized a campaign is, the more authentic it will ring to consumers.
- Micro-influencers do not have the same reach as celebrities. When a celebrity posts on Instagram about a brand or product, its notoriety may spike immediately. A micro-influencer's reach is far subtler.

AI and Influencers

The next stage in influencer marketing will be driven by AI. Analytics platforms will allow you to look at articles and blogs written by influencers to find who writes often about relevant beauty, health, aesthetics and wellness trends. You will then have the ability to curate a list of specific influencers that offer the most relevant match to what you are looking for, thereby increasing the likelihood that the influencer will be interested in working with your practice and participating in a campaign. Over time, AI may also be able to uncover which influencers will have higher response rates to your specified key messages and goals to keep them top of mind for future campaigns.

Wendy Lewis is Founder/President of Wendy Lewis & Co Ltd, Global Aesthetics Consultancy, a marketing communications boutique in New York City since 1997. She is also Founder/Editor in Chief of Beautyinthebag.com, and the author of 12 books, including Aesthetic Clinic Marketing in The Digital Age (CRC Press) published in January 2018. She is a prolific contributor to many publications, websites and trade journals in the US and Europe, and a frequent presenter at national and international conferences.



Is It Time to Give that Useless 510K Device the SAC?

Ah, 510K devices. "No downtime." "Cash Cows." "No adverse events." "The one thing that will have patients lining up at the door." All wonderful claims.

Of course, many of these devices do live up to their promotion and hold an important place in your armamentarium. Patients love noninvasive options. And often these procedures can turn a one-time visit into a regular and loyal patient.

But, let's face it, many of these pieces of equipment don't live up to their promises. For years members have searched for guidance, before leasing or purchasing equipment. Now, thanks to the Surgeon as Consumer product (SAC), you have it.

Based on a simple star rating system, SAC was created by members, for members. It lets you review your 501K device in a password protected, safe environment. You can even submit a review anonymously.

You can access SAC by logging onto www.asaps.org and entering your user name and password. There you will find reviews from other members and be able to submit your own. **Remember, SAC is a service exclusively for use by Aesthetic Society members.**

Help yourself and help others by reading and writing device reviews today!