

Joseph Lawlor in Mobile Marketing Magazine: Running a Micro-Influencer Campaign

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PRACTICES Intellectual Property

Joseph Lawlor, a New York-based intellectual property and advertising litigator at corporate law firm Haynes Boone, authored an article in Mobile Marketing Magazine about how brands should be wary of embracing a Bloomberg 2020-style micro-influencer strategy.

Below is an excerpt:

The Michael Bloomberg 2020 presidential campaign has hired hundreds of individuals in California to post social media content supportive of the New York billionaire, as first reported by the [*Wall Street Journal*](#). This strategy is an unorthodox method for distributing sponsored content at a scale previously unheard of.

Bloomberg's strategy has already hit several roadblocks. Its quality control team has failed to prevent paid micro-influencers from making false postings on social media postings. 70 Bloomberg micro-influencers have been [banned by Twitter outright](#). Brands will be wise to consider the significant compliance and PR costs before engaging in a micro-influencer campaign of this scale.

Brands are increasing their influencer marketing budgets at a swift pace, but they should be wary of engaging in a Bloomberg campaign-style social media campaign that relies on hundreds of micro-influencers. A lengthy brand activation utilizing micro-influencers may promise sales and engagement KPIs that excite a brand's marketing team. However, running a months-long campaign that requires managing hundreds of micro-influencers posting both pre-written and unique content daily across several platforms requires a massive and expensive compliance program. A Bloomberg-style activation will rarely be a cost-effective use of a brand's marketing dollars.

Brand guidelines

The prototypical influencer marketing campaign involves a brand that engages one, or a handful, of well-known influencers who typically each have more than 100,000 followers. Either the brand team or an outside agency ensures that the influencer's posts meet brand guidelines and comply with relevant law. Brands also regularly engage micro-influencers, who typically have between 1,000 and 100,000 followers. Micro-influencers are generally engaged for brand activations that are aimed at niche markets where the influencer has a reputation that outpaces their follower count.

According to a 2019 Rakuten Marketing report, micro-influencers make up 36% of global brand partnerships, compared to 30% for high-tier celebrity influencers. Importantly, recent studies have shown that the engagement rate for micro-influencers can be 1.5-4x the rate for celebrity influencers.

The higher engagement rate of micro-influencers comes with the trade-off of significantly smaller follower counts. While a celebrity with 1m Instagram followers may only generate a 2% engagement rate compared to a micro-influencer at 4%, the celebrity influencer is generating much

greater numbers of raw comments, likes, and shares.

The Bloomberg 2020 micro-influencer strategy represents a very public rollout of a new frontier in micro-influencer marketing. The Bloomberg team is hiring hundreds of micro-influencers in California, who tend to have no notable public reputation. Instead, the Bloomberg campaign is seeking out individuals with pedestrian online presences.

Excerpted from *MobileMarketing Magazine*. To read the full article, click [here](#).