

Celebrity endorsements carry less sway with US consumers

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Consumers Trust Non-Celeb Influencers More

Influencer **marketing** is on the rise but some approaches are more effective than others, according to a new survey of 14,000 U.S. adults conducted by Collective Bias earlier this month, which found that a sizeable segment of respondents were more likely to heed recommendations from non-celebrity influencers than celebrities.

Overall 30% of U.S. adults were more likely to purchase a product endorsed by a non-celebrity blogger than a celebrity influencer, and the proportion increases significantly among younger adults: 70% of adults ages 18-34 said their highest preference was for an endorsement from a “peer” or non-celeb blogger.

On that note around 60% of respondents said they have consulted blogs or **social** media to find out about products before retail shopping, with men about twice as likely as women to consult blog reviews or **social** media. Thus 34.4% of men have purchased consumer electronics at retail after reading a blog review of **social** media post, compared to 15.4% of women.

Conversely, just 3% of consumers would consider buying a product at retail if it was endorsed by a celebrity influencer. At the same time, other traditional forms of **advertising** didn't rank much higher, with just 4.5% of respondents citing **digital** display ads, 4.7% citing print ads, and 7.4% citing TV ads as the most influential channels for **marketing** messages when it comes to buying products in store.

As noted, there's been a flurry of activity in the influencer **marketing** arena. Earlier this month

The New York Times Co. announced the acquisition of HelloSociety, a **digital marketing** agency focused on **social** media influencers and mobile channels, from Science Inc. Also this month, **Time Inc.** and **YouTube** fashion network **StyleHaul**, which maintains a network of influencers in the beauty and fashion category, announced a multiyear partnership to create **advertising** programs targeting Millennials.

In January WPP's GroupM and Fullscreen, which operates a digital platform for content creators on **YouTube**, announced the creation of an influencer marketing partnership called Playa. And in December Hearst Corp. joined forces with video **advertising** technology platform Reelio to create new, highly targeted networks of online influencers.

In another study by Zefr published in September, 60% of marketers said they will increase spend on influencer marketing in 2016, and 22% said it is a top-ranked customer acquisition tool.

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