

Abstract

Social media influencers have become a popular brand marketing tool that many businesses are investing in, especially within the health and fitness industry. The interactivity and personalization of social media platforms have created niche communities of followers that share common interests and goals, many of which follow social media celebrities known as influencers, who embody these communities' values. Recognizing the benefits that influencers can provide, the health and fitness industry has seized this opportunity to select individuals who have built their own community of followers and sense of credibility in their allotted field. While significant industry research has been done from the brand's perspective, very few have taken the influencers' point of view into consideration. Most existing research in this area is quantitative in nature and focuses on the usefulness of influencers to marketing professionals and what influencers provide consumers. This study will analyze the relationship between brands and influencers from the influencer's perspective. Using semi-structured interviews with health and fitness influencers, this study will explore what makes a successful partnership between these two parties and what types of agreements allow influencers to build an effective engagement strategy, according to influencers themselves.