BRAND AMBASSADOR PROGRAMS

How to Create a Successful Brand Ambassador Program

7 Steps to creating ambassador programs for consumer brands

A Mavrck Ebook

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WHAT BRANDS NEED TO KNOW:

Creating a Successful Brand Ambassador Program

Read this guide to learn how you can **incorporate brand ambassadors into your influencer marketing strategy**. In this resource, we cover what brand ambassador programs are and why you should create one, key benefits to running one, 7 steps to building a successful ambassador program, as well as brand examples.

WHAT IS A BRAND AMBASSADOR PROGRAM?

A brand ambassador program involves reactivating **top-performing influencers over a longer term period of time** and on a regular basis. Ambassador programs allow marketers to **establish stronger, long-term partnerships with content creators** who truly believe in the brand and thus build consistent trust with their audiences.

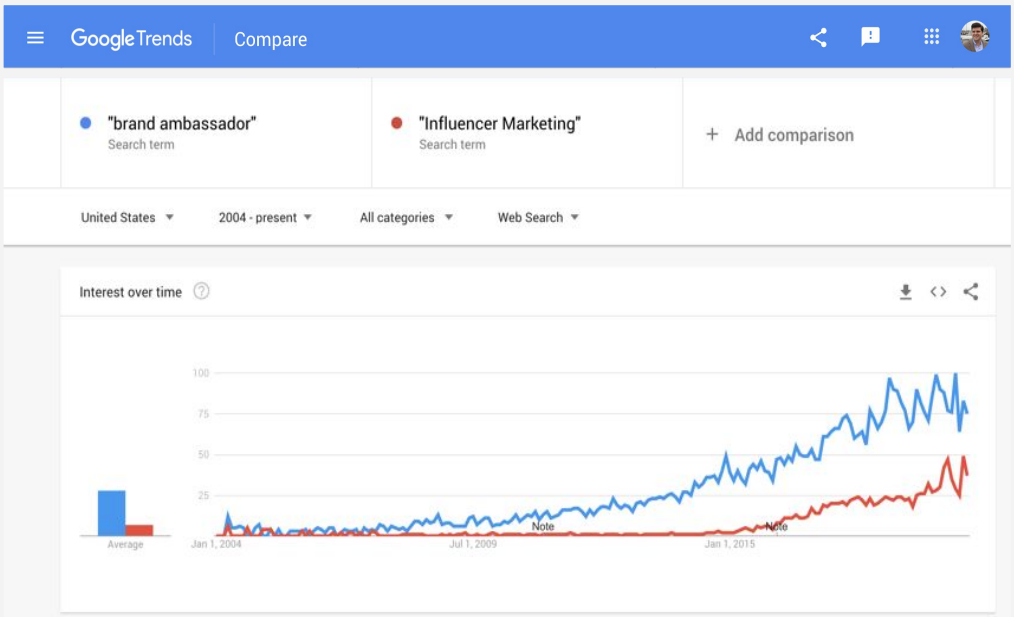
WHY CREATE A BRAND AMBASSADOR PROGRAM?

One-off influencer marketing campaigns may accomplish short-term brand objectives, but do little to **build long-term consumer trust.** Top social brands are engaging influencer, customer, and employee ambassadors to **speak about the brand in the voice of the consumer and strengthen relationships** with them and their followers.

Through personal experiences with the brand, brand ambassadors lend their credibility and unique perspectives to **influence brand perception and purchase intent over time.** In return, marketers' investments in ambassador communities online and in real life help can **benefit every aspect of a marketing organization.**

Use the trusted voice of brand ambassadors to build significant, long-term consumer trust.

Google Trends - Search Volume: Brand Ambassador *vs*. Influencer Marketing



According to Google Trends data, in the last four years, interest in influencer marketing has only been eclipsed by one other marketing strategy: ***brand ambassadors.***

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Key Benefits to Running Ambassador Programs

"The biggest benefit of a long term collaboration is the **relationship building**. When a brand has already established a relationship with an influencer, you don't need to reteach the brand to a new person and you have already vetted the influencer to make sure they **provide quality work** to meet the criteria for a successful campaign. **Why would you start that process all over again with someone new?**"

- **Mai Lyn, @mailynngo**



INCREASE SCALE OF YOUR INFLUENCER ACTIVATIONS

Ambassador programs focus on building relationships, which allows marketers to **streamline the sourcing and review process** involved in all campaigns due to already having a group of trusted content creators to work with on an ongoing basis.

LONG-TERM INFLUENCER & CONSUMER RELATIONSHIPS

These long-term relationships allow marketers to **reactivate top performers that create high-quality content on a consistent basis**, while driving authentic brand awareness and engagement.

DRIVE BRAND AFFINITY & TRUST

Due to the nature of a brand ambassador program, **consumers will be repeatedly exposed to positive branded messaging over a long period of time** by brand advocates who have 'online' credibility.

INCREASED COMMUNITY GROWTH

Content creators have **loyal, engaged communities**. The repeated exposure from an ambassador program can positively impact consumer sales. Marketers can trust their work, they trust the brand, and **their followers trust them and thus, your brand**.

CONSUMER RESEARCH & INSIGHTS

Ambassador programs can be used to **gather consumer research**. Collaborating with ambassadors on a product launch or campaign concept can **add an invaluable perspective**, while increasing the commitment the influencer has to the brand.

TIP: Keep in mind, brand ambassadors are excellent content creators but can also be used across the consumer journey: Drive ratings & reviews; Drive Referrals; Give creative / campaign feedback; Participate in consumer panels.

The more integrated your brand ambassador program is within your company, the more successful it will be. Work with other teams in your organization to discuss how brand ambassadors can bring value to their function, such as: R&D, Product Innovation; Consumer Research; Retail or Channel teams; Corporate or Employee Communications

7 STEPS

To Building a Successful Brand Ambassador Program

Now that we've covered the benefits of running ambassador programs , you can follow the below steps to help you successfully build your brand's program..

1) DEFINE OBJECTIVES:

First, **determine what brand or business objective(s)** you need your brand ambassador program to contribute to, and then define the KPI goals for how you will get there. A few outcomes to consider:

1. **Drive Loyalty** (KPI Goal: X% lift in repeat purchase)
2. **Drive Brand Lift** (KPI Goal: X% lift in brand favorability/affinity)
3. **Drive Brand Awareness** (KPI Goal: X% lift in unaided awareness among target consumer)

2) DETERMINE INCENTIVE STRATEGY:

1. **Incentive Timing:** Give incentives before content creation, after or both
2. **Incentive Mechanic:** Activity-Based (e.g. creation of a post), performance-based (e.g. engagements, click, conversions) or both
3. **Incentive Type:** Products, gift cards, loyalty points, VIP experiences, cash, affiliate commission or a combination of several types

3) IDENTIFY AMBASSADOR PERSONAS:

1. **Top-Performing Influencers:** Run multiple campaigns and evaluate top-performers to invite
2. **Customer Base:** Recruit from brand-owned touchpoints to tap into loyal customers' organic brand passion
3. **Brand Employees/Associates:** Send invitations to employees and promote the program on the brand's internal site.

4) INVITE AMBASSADORS TO APPLY:

Invite and vet potential ambassadors. Identify what each ambassador would bring to the table. The ambassador pool should be diverse.

Once ambassadors have been selected, provide them with the onboarding documents. This can be done with a kick-off meeting in person or virtually.

5) CONSISTENT PROGRAM CADENCE:

1. Brief ambassadors each month (or on a regular cadence) to request content by certain deadlines.
2. Evaluate ambassador performance throughout the program.
3. If certain influencers do not post, consider removing them and inviting a different content creator to join.

6) CLEARLY COMMUNICATE:

The more communication with ambassadors, the better relationships you build. Make sure to send:

- Welcome email
- Brief/instructions email (make sure the brief maps to your objectives)
- Photography/posting tips
- Reminder emails with brief attached
- "Thank you" email after, including a survey link to collect feedback

7) MEASURE SUCCESS:

1. **Evaluate KPIs:** How is your ambassador program performing relative to the goals you set?
2. **Deepen Analysis of Success:** Use any current tools or modeling your brand already has in place to deepen your analysis of success
3. **Post-Campaign Survey:** After the campaign is complete, send a survey to gain feedback from your ambassadors to optimize the program

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CASE STUDY:

How Express Ambassadors Drove 168% ROI in Online & In-Store Sales

THE CHALLENGE:

Express' objectives were designed to address the business challenges it experienced with its male influencer program: scale, sales, and efficiency. Express aimed to expand its micro-influencer network 10x and diversify its influencer marketing mix to include **influential employees and consumer advocates** plus provide unique promo codes to be redeemed online and in-store.



11x
Express Ambassador Program Growth

46M
Impressions on Influencer Posts

2.3M
Engagemens on Influencer Posts

5.5 - 7%
Avg. Engagement Rates on Influencer Posts

168%
ROI from Purchases Made (Mens: 72% in-store, 24% online)

THE IDEA:

With the realization that their customers live in an influence-augmented reality, where influence is the path-to-purchase, Express re-defined influence in the context of their customer: identifying and activating relevant influencer, employee, and consumer ambassadors to bring the "New Definition-of-Work" message and styling to market.

Express then took an omni-channel approach to customer engagement, knowing that its target audience would be looking for pruchase validation outside the feed. IGC was amplified across high-impact channels to drive consideration.

THE ACTIVATION:

The first step was to increase Express' influencer footrint by expanding the Ambassdaor program. Express migrated to an influencer marketing platform that could create and manage a private, brand-owned network which employees and customers could safely join.

Ambassador applicants were then divided into two groups of micro-influencers, determiend by location, Instagram reach, quality of Instagram content and aesthetic, Instagram post frequency, and quality of Instagram profile.

Ambassadors (macro-influencers, micro-influencers, employees and consumers) were selected to participate by email in monthly campaigns to support key "New Definition-of-Work" messaging (#ExpressYourRules) featuring new Wear-To-Work styles and expanded sizing options on their own Instagram feeds via posts and stories.

Ambassadors were offered cash rewards and points as incentives to create looks using new products, with instructions to dress on their own terms: "Express Your Rules: When it comes to personal style, "rules" don't apply. This spring, ditch the style book and go bold with bright patterns, colors and fresh styles. Express yourself on your terms."

All influencers were also provided with unique promo codes to share with their audiences in Instagram captions and stories to drive and track sales lift. The codes were redeemable in-store and online.

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Meet Mavrck:

Mavrck Helps Marketers Create Social Proof at Scale

- **DISCOVER** and recruit the right influencers to create high-quality content for your brand.
- **ACTIVATE** influencers to create content, star ratings, reviews, referrals and insights at scale.
- **MANAGE** influencers and advocates with our easy-to-use automated workflow.
- **INCENTIVIZE** influencers in a variety of ways, and track it all within the platform to save time and budget.
- **SYNDICATE** quality influencer-generated content to your ecommerce site or retail partners.
- **MEASURE** the ROI of your campaigns and programs with our measurement suite.

INFLUENCERS ARE MOST-TRUSTED SOURCE OF INFORMATION

A recent study shows that 50% of millennials and 52% of Gen Z trust content from influencers, with 1 in 4 Gen Z females citing influencers as the most common medium for learning about new products to buy. Contrast this with only 26% of both generations trusting ads in their social feeds. Marketers need to factor this delta in trust when benchmarking and budgeting, which can be done by including a Trust Coefficient in the equation, as shown here.

Channel Types	Example CPM ÷	Trust Coefficient	= Trusted CPM
Sponsored Post from Influencers	$15.00	84% Trust this Channel	$17.86
Paid Social Media Ad	$10.00	26% Trust this Channel	$20.83
Programmatic Display Ad	$7.50	32% Trust this Channel	$23.44
Television Commercial	$25.00	62% Trust this Channel	$40.32

The percentage of consumers who trust a given marketing channel can be sourced from third party studies or via first party customer surveys.

Leverage ambassador programs to take your influencer marketing strategy to the next level and keep in mind the following key takeaways when it comes to building your ambassador program while creating social proof at scale:

1) **Ambassador programs are becoming increasingly popular.** They have many key benefits that help brands build long-term trust with consumers.
2) **Content creators value long-term partnerships.** They become true brand loyalists in the process.
3) **Brands are seeing success in activating different ambassador types.** They are able to achieve a variety of goals.

Get started building your ambassador program with by booking time to speak with one of our expert strategists here.

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Ambassador Program Resources & Links

Check out the content below to help you make the most of your brand ambassador programs.

Learn More

Influencer Marketing Resources:

How Rosefield's Influencer Marketing Strategy Drove 167% ROAS Across 7 Global Markets

Defining ROI for Brand Ambassador Programs

Webinar: Creating Successful Brand Ambassador Programs

How Express Drove 168% ROI Online & In-Store Sales

The Ultimate Influencer Marketing Platform Buyer's Guide

Schedule a Free Consultation

Stay in the Know

Subscribe to Subject-to-Change, our weekly influencer marketing newsletter that keeps you up-to-date on all the social media and influencer marketing news and trends worth knowing (and sharing).

Check out our most recent posts:

Quibi Announces Plans to Shut Down

Instagram Cracks Down on Ads

Ocean Spray, Fleetwood Mac & TikTok

Join 35K+ Subscribers

Mavrck is the leading all-in-one influencer marketing platform enabling companies such as P&G, Kraft Heinz, and Express to harness the power of social proof that consumers trust today.

Marketers use Mavrck to identify and activate influencers and consumer ambassadors to create authentic insights and content for customer experience touchpoints at scale.

FORRESTER®
NEW WAVE LEADER 2020
Influencer Marketing Solutions

"Is an ideal choice for brands who work with all tiers of influencers."

— The Forrester New Wave™: Influencer Marketing Solutions, Q2 2020, Forrester Research

