THE INFLUENCER MARKETING FACTORY X Favikon

2026 CREATOR BENCHMARK REPORT FASHION & BEAUTY

WHAT 3,125 ACTIVE CREATORS ACTUALLY DELIVER ON INSTAGRAM, TIKTOK AND YOUTUBE, AND WHAT BRANDS SHOULD EXPECT BEFORE THEY SIGN ONE.

DATA SUPPLIED BY FAVIKON. ANALYSIS BY
THE INFLUENCER MARKETING FACTORY. AUGUST 2026.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

A NOTE FROM OUR CEO

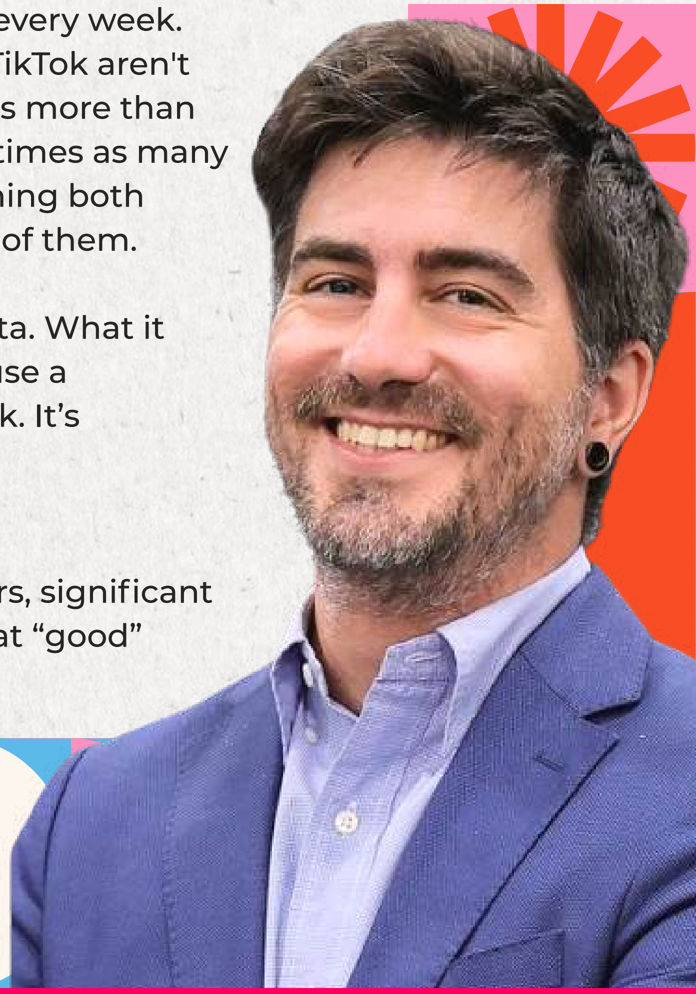
Beauty and fashion brands don't have a creator supply problem. They have an expectation problem. Almost every brand we talk to has a benchmark in mind, often based on a single engagement rate number from a deck two years ago. And a lot of those numbers are costing brands money.

So we looked at the data. Working with Favikon, we analyzed 3,125 active beauty and fashion creators across Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube to answer a few simple questions: What does a typical post actually do? How does performance change from nano to mega creators?

Some findings confirmed what we see in campaigns every week. Others surprised us. The biggest one: Instagram and TikTok aren't competing on the same thing. An Instagram post pulls more than twice the views per follower. A TikTok post gets three times as many of the people it does reach to react or comment. Running both without knowing which job you're buying wastes one of them.

We've also been transparent about the gaps in the data. What it can't tell you is just as important as what it can. Because a benchmark you can't question isn't really a benchmark. It's marketing.

This is the first volume in a series. Beauty and fashion came first because they have the most creators, significant brand spend, and surprisingly little agreement on what "good" actually looks like. More niches are coming.



ALESSANDRO BOGLIARI
CO-FOUNDER & CEO,
THE INFLUENCER MARKETING FACTORY

THE CATEGORY IN 2026

BEAUTY AND FASHION HAVE SPENT A **DECADE** SHIFTING SPEND FROM **BROADCAST** TO **CREATORS**. THE SCALE OF BOTH CATEGORIES, AND THE PACE OF THAT SHIFT, IS WHAT MAKES GETTING THE BENCHMARKS RIGHT **WORTH THE EFFORT**.

THE MARKET

Beauty and personal care is projected to generate around **$698B worldwide** in 2026, with the United States alone at roughly $107B.

THE SHIFT ONLINE

Online is projected to account for about 30.6% of beauty and personal care revenue in 2026, according to data from Statista. Fashion e-commerce is heading toward roughly **$957B** this year, growing close to twice as fast as the apparel market overall.

THE CREATOR CHANNEL

US influencer marketing spend crossed **$10.52B** in 2025, a year earlier than forecast. The IAB's measure of deliberate brand ad spend on creators put 2025 at **$37B**, up 26% year-on-year and growing close to four times faster than the media industry as a whole.

BEAUTY & FASHION DOMINATE CREATOR ATTENTION

Traackr's **Creator Advantage 2026** analysis, built on more than 760,000 US creators and over ten million pieces of branded content, found beauty and fashion effectively tied at the top of creator marketing attention in 2025. Both categories draw more creator activity than any other vertical.

The report also found that beauty's brand vitality rose 22% year on year while the average audience reached per post fell 30%. With more creator activity, smaller audiences are reached per post. In other words, reach is fragmenting even as attention grows, which is precisely why per-creator benchmarks matter more than they used to.

Commission structures reflect the category difference too. TikTok Shop affiliate bands in 2026 run meaningfully higher for beauty, at 15-30%, than for fashion at 10-15%.

THE INFLUENCE FACTOR

INSIDE THE CONVERSATIONS SHAPING BEAUTY & FASHION

HOW SHEIN USES CREATORS TO DRIVE TRENDS (NOT FOLLOW THEM)

Lisa Zlotnick, Head of Brand PR, US Marketing at SHEIN — explores why brands need to move beyond transactional creator partnerships and build authentic collaborations rooted in cultural relevance and community. She also shares how brands can better connect with Gen Z and why creators are evolving from amplifiers into true collaborators in product development.

Listen to this episode

NAVIGATING THE EVOLVING LANDSCAPE OF BEAUTY MARKETING

Navigating the Evolving Landscape of Beauty Marketing w/ Kelly Kovack, April 2023. Kovack is Founder and CEO of BeautyMatter, and the conversation covers viral beauty moments and beauty industry marketing trends. Older, but it's an industry-analyst POV rather than a single brand, which ages better.

Listen to this episode

EVOLUTION OF BEAUTY MARKETING

Shannon Otto, Associate Vice President of Consumer Engagement + Integrated Marketing at amika — shares how the brand approaches inclusive beauty, creator partnerships, and innovative marketing strategies, from community-driven pop-ups to its Amikaverse on Roblox. She also explores how brands can build deeper emotional connections with consumers through creativity, community, and culture.

Listen to this episode

HOW FP MOVEMENT BUILDS IMPACT

Courtney Weis, Managing Director of Brand Marketing at FP Movement — shares how the brand leverages community, storytelling, and creator and athlete partnerships to empower women through activewear. She also discusses the evolving influencer marketing landscape and how brands can create meaningful connections through campaigns and activations.

Listen to this episode

METHODOLOGY

This sample includes 3,125 active creators that Favikon classifies under Fashion & Beauty, spanning 4,411 social accounts across Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube. All metrics reflect a rolling twelve-month window ending August 18, 2026. Inactive and brand-owned accounts were excluded before the sample was drawn.

WHAT IS IN THE SAMPLE

Follower band	Creators	Median followers
Nano (1K–10K)	654	4,540
Micro (10K–100K)	942	31,480
Mid (100K–500K)	748	202,487
Macro (500K–1M)	331	667,932
Mega (1M+)	450	2,163,901

PLATFORM COVERAGE

Platform	Creators	Share of sample
TikTok	2,106	67.4%
Instagram	1,848	59.1%
YouTube	457	14.6%
On two or more	957	30.6%

Please note that this is *not* a census: 14.4% of the sample has over a million followers, far above the real-world distribution, so every figure reflects a professionalized sample rather than beauty and fashion creators generally. All figures are medians rather than means, since means are badly skewed by small accounts with viral reach (Instagram's mean engagement rate is 4.79% against a median of 1.46%). YouTube engagement rate isn't directly comparable to the other platforms, since it's measured against subscribers rather than followers, and 125 of 457 YouTube accounts recorded zero engagement in the window. "Sponsored" means a post carrying a brand mention in the trailing 12 months, not a confirmed paid partnership, which overstates true collaboration rates in a category this product-mention-dense; sponsored data doesn't exist for YouTube at all, leaving 26 creators (0.8%) without a sponsored rate. Creator topics are reported as supplied, with spelling, case, and singular/plural variants merged for readability, so every topic share should be read as directional.

FINDING ONE

ENGAGEMENT DOESN'T DECLINE SMOOTHLY WITH SIZE. IT FALLS OFF A CLIFF, THEN FLATTENS.

The nano premium is real and large. After that, engagement bottoms out between 100K and 500K followers, then recovers slightly. That trough is where a lot of brand budget sits.

ENGAGEMENT & SPONSORSHIPS BY FOLLOWER SIZE*

	Nano	Micro	Mid	Macro	Mega
MEDIAN FOLLOWERS	5K	31K	202K	668K	2.16M
MEDIAN SPONSORED SHARE	14.3%	29.4%	30.7%	33%	34.7%

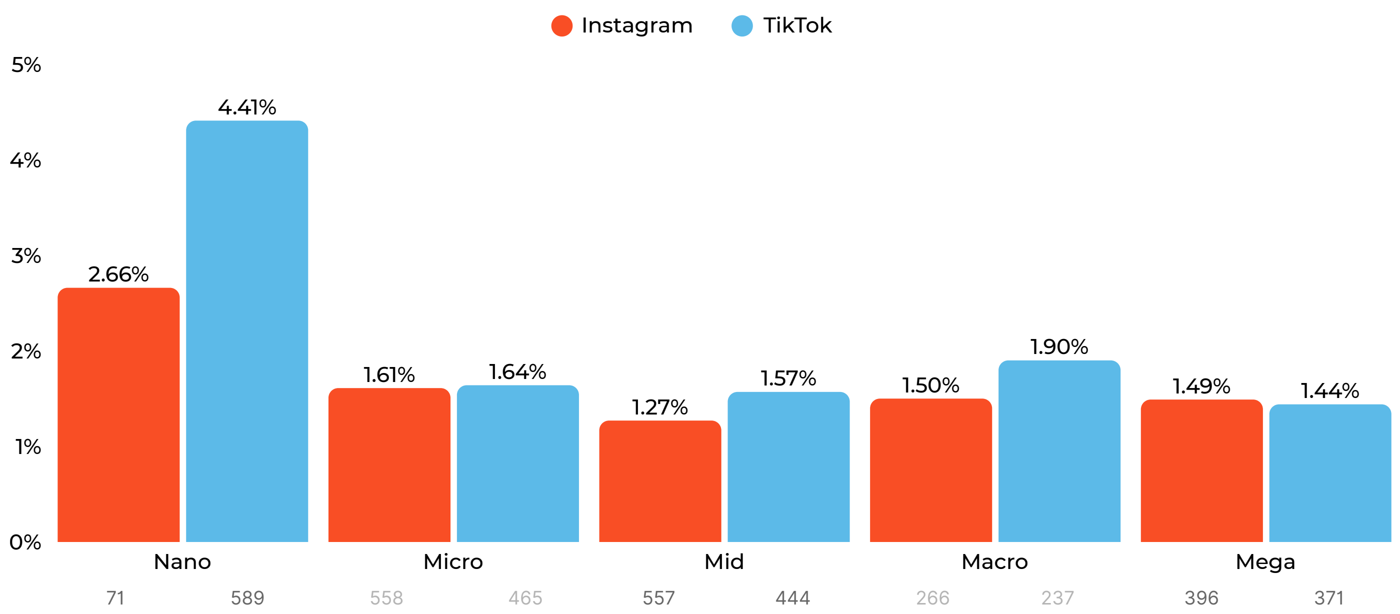
**Sample: 654 nano, 942 micro, 748 mid, 331 macro, 450 mega creators. "Sponsored share" means any post with a brand mention in the trailing 12 months, not a confirmed paid deal, so it overstates true paid-collaboration rates.*

Sponsored share climbs steadily with size, from 14.3% at nano to 34.7% at mega, more than double, even though the panel's overall engagement pattern shown below doesn't move in a straight line.

INSTAGRAM & TIKTOK ENGAGEMENT

ENGAGEMENT RATE BY FOLLOWER SIZE†

Median rate per follower size and network. Numbers under each bar are creator counts.



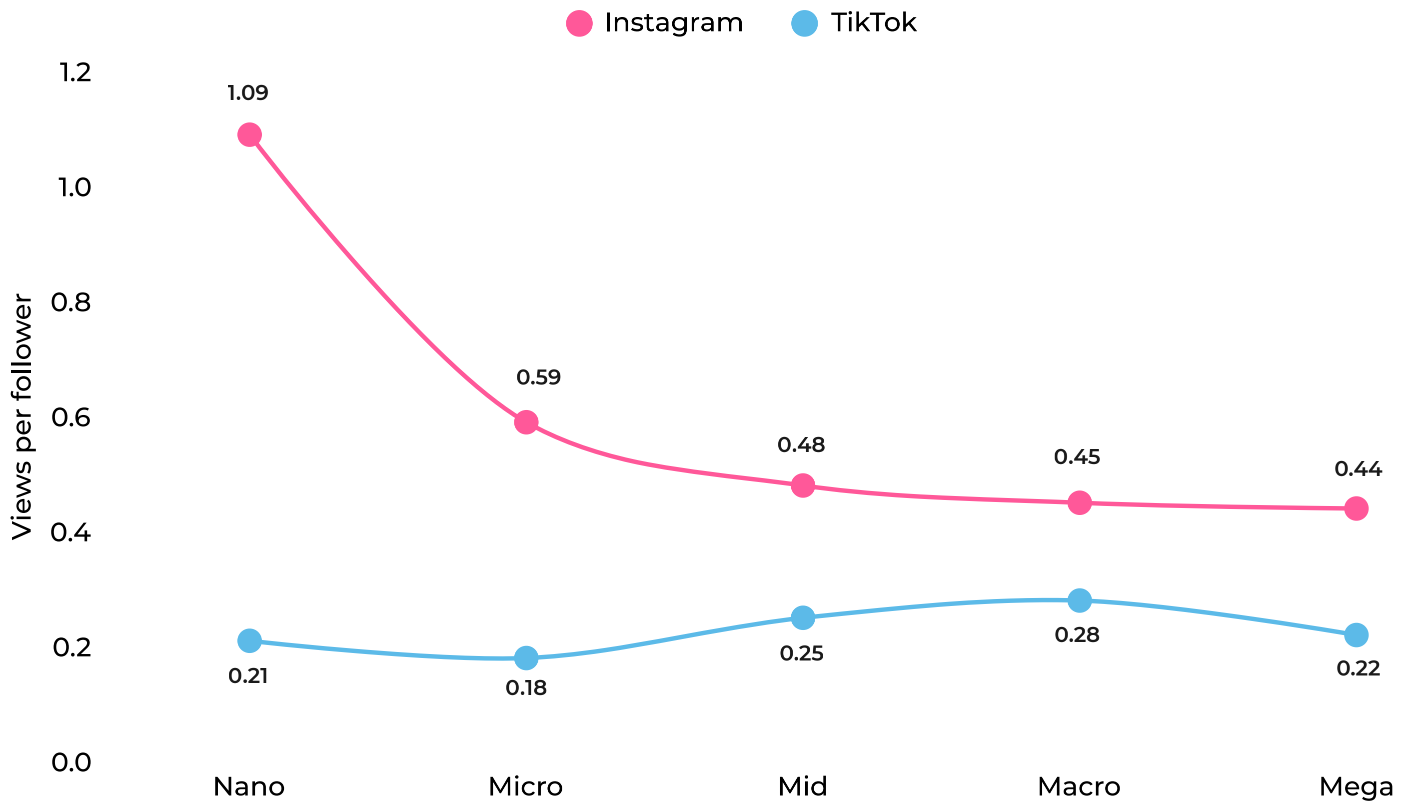
†Counts under each bar are network accounts, not unique creators, so they won't sum to the follower-band totals (most creators run more than one network).

TikTok out-engages Instagram at every band except mega, where the two are close enough to call a tie (1.49% vs. 1.44%). For brands sizing creators by tier, TikTok is the stronger engagement bet up to roughly a million followers; past that, the individual creator matters more than the platform.

ANALYZING REACH EFFICIENCY ON INSTAGRAM & TIKTOK

WHAT YOU ARE ACTUALLY BUYING: VIEWS PER FOLLOWER BY PLATFORM*

Median views per follower, by platform and follower band. Comparable across Instagram and TikTok only.



**Sample per band: Nano (71 Instagram, 589 TikTok), Micro (558, 465), Mid (557, 444), Macro (266, 237), Mega (396, 371). The Nano Instagram point rests on only 71 accounts, well below its TikTok counterpart, so it's less stable than the rest of the line.*

Reach per follower measures how many views a typical post generates relative to a creator's follower count (views divided by followers), showing how far content travels beyond the people already following. Instagram's reach per follower drops 60% from nano to mega, going from 1.09 to 0.44, while TikTok's holds flat around 0.2 to 0.3 regardless of size.

BIGGER CREATORS POST MORE, NOT LESS†

Posting frequency follows a dip-then-climb pattern, not a steady rise: down at micro, flat at mid, then up sharply from macro through mega, where it peaks at 5.80 posts a month.

SIZE	POSTS/MO.	SPONSORED
Nano	2.92	14.3%
Micro	2.67	29.4%
Mid	2.92	30.7%
Macro	3.75	33.0%
Mega	5.80	34.7%

†Sample: 654 nano, 942 micro, 748 mid, 331 macro, 450 mega creators. A small number of creators per band (roughly 1%) have no recorded sponsored rate, so that column runs on a slightly smaller n than posts/month.

FINDING TWO

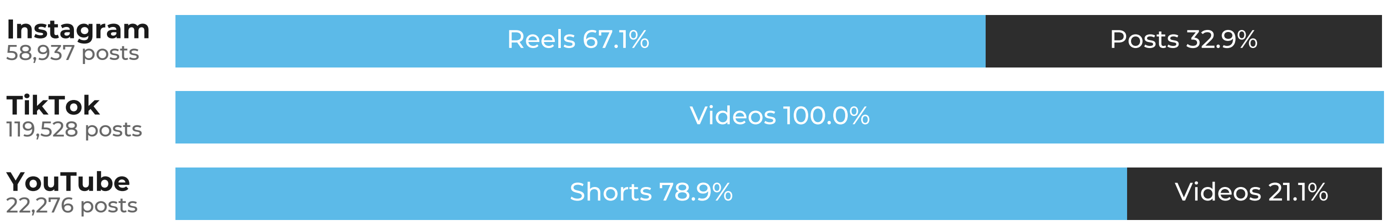
SHORT FORM BUYS VIEWS. LONG FORM BUYS ENGAGEMENT. ONLY ONE PLATFORM MAKES YOU PICK.

Instagram Reels get about double the views of a static post at nearly the same engagement rate. YouTube Shorts get about 70% more views than long-form but engage far less. Same trade, different answer on each platform.

CONTENT FORMAT BREAKDOWN

SHARE OF PLATFORM POSTS*

Share of posts published, by format.



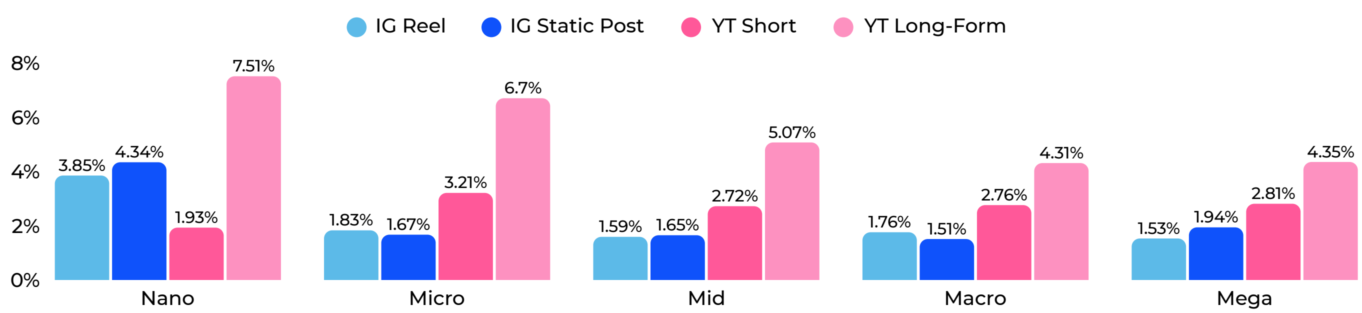
Based on all posts published in the trailing 12 months: 58,937 Instagram, 119,528 TikTok, 22,276 YouTube.

Short-form already accounts for two-thirds or more of posting volume on every platform here, including 78.9% of YouTube uploads. "Short-form vs. long-form" is a real volume question on Instagram and YouTube, and barely a question at all on TikTok.

ANALYZING CONTENT FORMATS & ENGAGEMENT BY PLATFORM

FORMAT ENGAGEMENT RATE BY FOLLOWER BAND*

Median engagement rate by format and follower band on Instagram and YouTube.



**Instagram bars rest on 53-508 accounts per cell. YouTube bars are much thinner, especially Nano and Micro (5-13 accounts each), so treat those two bands as indicative rather than reliable. TikTok is excluded since it's single-format and runs far higher (22% at nano down to 7% at mega), which would flatten the rest of the chart.*

YouTube long-form beats Shorts at all five follower bands, by as much as 3.9x at nano, while Instagram has no consistent winner between Reels and static posts at any size. Format choice is a clear signal on YouTube and a coin flip on Instagram.

FINDING THREE

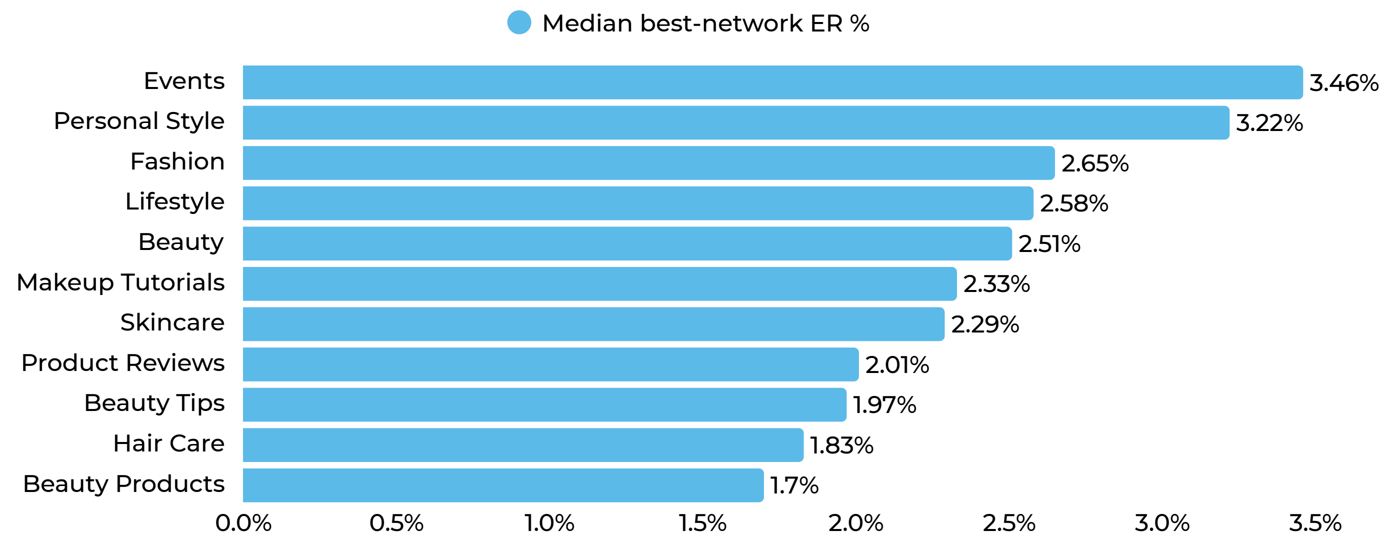
BEAUTY AND FASHION CREATORS MOSTLY POST ABOUT THEIR LIVES

44.6% of creators in this panel list Fashion among their topics and 27.3% list Lifestyle, much more more than the 19.7% who list Travel and the 15.6% who list Beauty. These creators are not making category content most of the time, and that should change how brands brief them.

COMPARING BEAUTY & FASHION SUB-NICHES

ENGAGEMENT BY TOPIC, BEST NETWORK*

Median of each creator's best-network engagement rate, for every creator who lists that topic anywhere in their profile. Sample sizes range from over 1,000 (Fashion, Lifestyle) to under 100 for several topics near the bottom.



**Each bar is the median, on each creator's single best-performing network, across all creators who mention that topic anywhere in their profile (not just their top three). Sample sizes range from over a thousand (Fashion, Lifestyle) down to under 100 for several topics near the bottom — the lower end should be read as directional. Chart is limited to the panel's ten most common topics by creator count; higher-scoring niche topics (e.g., Self-expression, Friendship) exist at smaller sample sizes and aren't shown here.*

Content that reads as personal, like Events (3.46%) and Personal Style (3.22%), consistently clears 3% engagement, proof that audiences show up for their favorite creators. Content creators who bring their full personality to a partnership consistently outperform, and that authenticity is exactly what influencer marketing is built to capture.

THE BEAUTY OPPORTUNITY FOR BRANDS

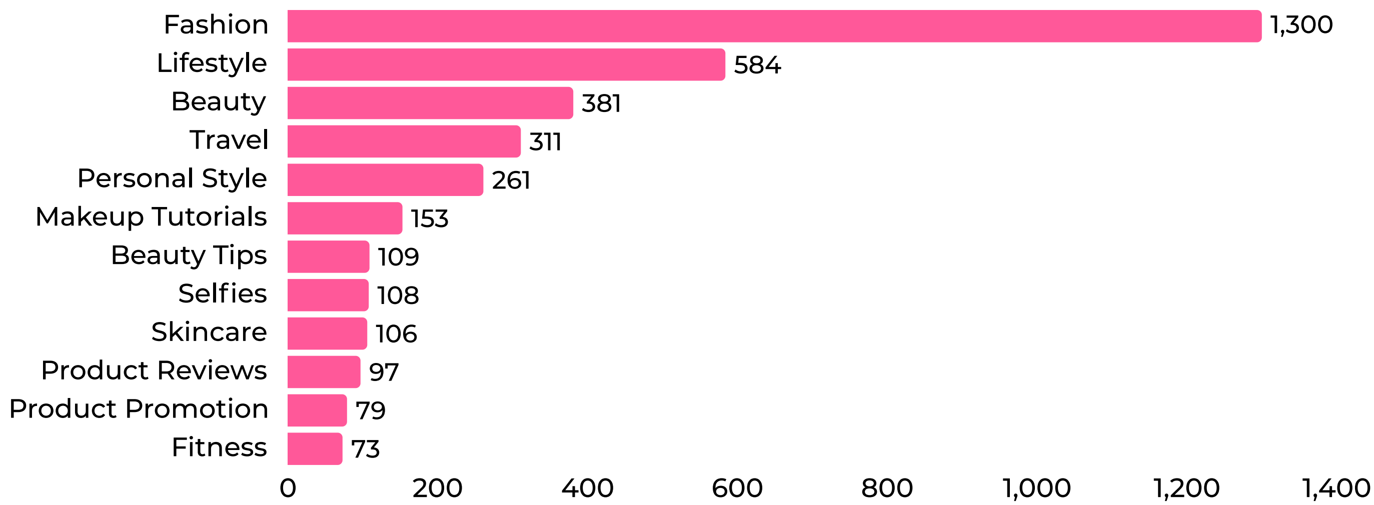
Skincare (42.4%) and Product Reviews (43.1%) carry nearly double the sponsored load of Personal Style (23%), even though Personal Style content out-engages both categories by a wide margin.

That gap is an opportunity: brands willing to shift budget toward personality-led placements, rather than defaulting to product-first content, stand to see meaningfully stronger returns on the same spend.

LEADING BEAUTY-RELATED TOPICS

TOP CREATOR TOPICS*

Number of creators, by how many list each topic among their top three.



**Counts each creator's three largest topics by content share, with spelling, case, and singular/plural variants merged (e.g., 'Personal Style,' 'personal style,' 'Selfie,' and 'Selfies' each combined into one bar). This shows what creators are known for, not everything they post about.*

Fashion is the primary identity for 1,300 creators, more than three times Beauty's 381, even though every creator in this panel is tagged Fashion & Beauty.

WHAT A CREATOR IS KNOWN FOR, NOT WHAT THEY MENTION

This counts only each creator's three biggest topics. It describes what a creator is known for, rather than everything they happen to mention.

Fashion is primary for 1,300 creators, 41.6% of the panel. Beauty is primary for only 381, or 12.2%, while 487 mention it at all. Plenty of creators here touch beauty without being beauty creators.

WHAT THIS MEANS FOR A BRIEF

A creator who is 30% fashion and 20% lifestyle is not a fashion channel with personal content attached. They are a personal channel that covers fashion. For most of this panel, the lifestyle and travel posts are the majority of the feed.

That is why creator content built to look like a brand asset underperforms. The audience did not follow for product content, and the data says product content is where this category is weakest.

5

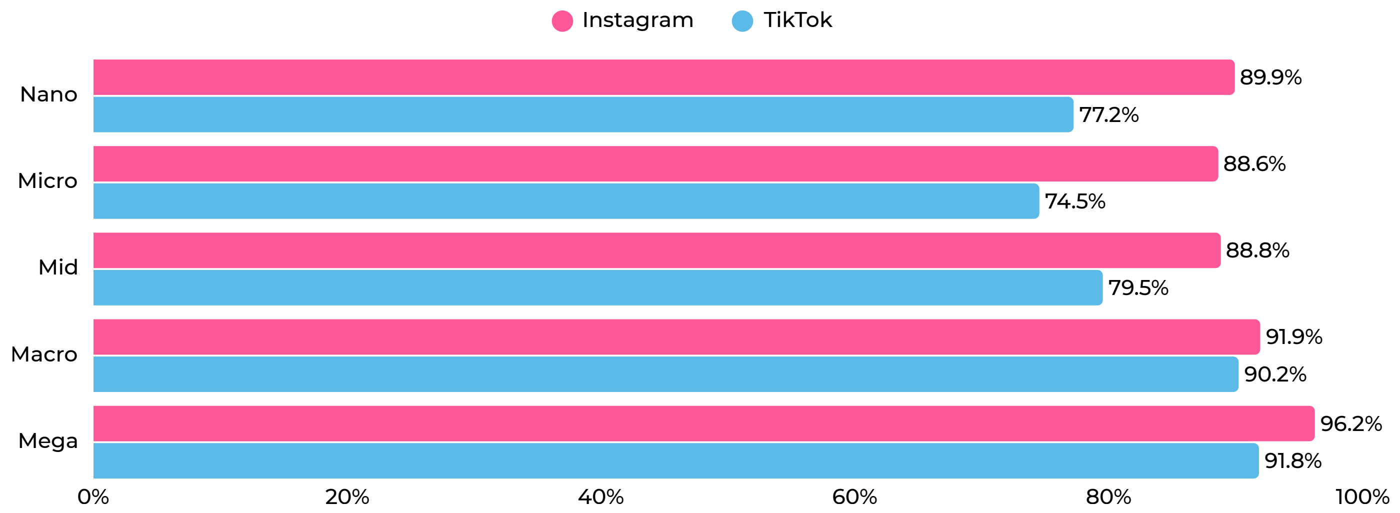
MEDIAN NUMBER OF DISTINCT TOPICS PER CREATOR. VERY FEW OF THESE ACCOUNTS ARE SINGLE-SUBJECT CHANNELS.

FINDING FOUR

MEGA CREATORS TOP BRAND DEAL PARTICIPATION

BRAND DEAL PARTICIPATION BY FOLLOWER TIER*

*Share of accounts that published at least one post carrying a brand mention in the trailing 12 months.



**Share of accounts that published at least one post carrying a brand mention in the trailing 12 months. A brand mention is not a confirmed paid partnership, so these rates overstate true paid collaboration in a category this product-dense. The Nano Instagram bar rests on only 69 accounts. YouTube is excluded because mention data isn't indexed for that platform.*

Instagram brand participation is high and flat across every tier, from 88.6% at micro to 96.2% at mega. On TikTok, participation ranges from 74.5% at micro to 91.8% at mega — not a clean climb, since nano (77.2%) is actually higher than micro. Brands still treat TikTok as a bigger-creator platform even though the engagement data elsewhere in this report says the opposite.

WHAT BRANDS SHOULD DO DIFFERENTLY IN BEAUTY & FASHION

1

STOP BENCHMARKING AGAINST A SINGLE ENGAGEMENT RATE

A quarter of Instagram creators in this category deliver under 0.43%, and a tenth deliver over 10.80%. Set a tier, not a target, and negotiate rate against where a specific creator actually sits inside it.

2

PICK THE PLATFORM BY THE JOB, NOT THE REPUTATION

If the campaign needs to reach an existing audience, Instagram delivers more than double the views per follower. If it needs visible reaction and comment volume, TikTok converts three times as much of what it reaches. Running both without distinguishing the roles wastes one of them.

3

ASK WHAT SHARE OF A CREATOR'S FEED IS ALREADY SPONSORED

Engagement is weakest among creators with almost no sponsored content, peaks when 30-40% of a creator's feed carries a brand mention, and falls off above 70%. This is a single question that predicts campaign outcomes better than follower count, and most brands never ask it.

4

EXPECT TO PAY A SIZE PREMIUM FOR A SHRINKING RETURN

Going from mid to mega multiplies followers roughly tenfold. Engagement rate actually recovers slightly rather than falling further, but reach per follower on Instagram keeps declining, and the sponsored-content penalty roughly doubles. Size buys credibility and volume, not efficiency.

5

BRIEF FOR THE FEED, NOT FOR THE CAMPAIGN

The median creator here covers five topics, and lifestyle and travel outrank beauty. Content that reads like a brand asset lands in a feed that is mostly personal. The creators who convert are the ones allowed to put the product inside their own format.

6

CHOOSE FORMAT BY FUNNEL STAGE, AND KNOW THE TRADE

Instagram Reels get about double the views of a static post at nearly the same engagement rate, so they're close to free reach. YouTube Shorts get about 70% more views than long-form but engage far less, so for a considered purchase, the long-form trade may be the right one.

7

USE NANO CREATORS WHERE SPONSORED CONTENT IS THE POINT

Nano is the only band where sponsored posts perform at the same level as organic. If the campaign depends on the branded post itself performing rather than on total reach, that difference matters more than the follower count you are giving up.

ARE YOU A

FASHION/ BEAUTY BRAND

LOOKING TO ACTIVATE INFLUENCERS?

LET'S CREATE IMPACT TOGETHER

GET IN TOUCH