The Ultimate Guide to User-Generated Content Campaign ROI

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User-generated content is, in a lot of ways, the holy grail of influencer marketing. These campaigns can lead to valuable ROI for your brand, such as increased reach and brand trust, and boosts in sales and social media growth, to name a few. Consumers love to see their peers endorsing something before purchasing themselves, so showcasing authentic customer experiences at every possible opportunity seems like a no-brainer.

There can be a lot to consider when working with UGC, however — for starters, the variety of ways to go about gathering it in the first place. Then once you have it, you have to carefully consider how to best use it for the most ROI possible. And how do you effectively measure UGC campaign ROI, anyway?

We know diving into UGC can be overwhelming, and we want you to get the most out of every campaign. By the time you're done reading this guide you'll know:

- How to get quality UGC
- The multiple forms of UGC campaign ROI
- How to measure the ROI of your campaign
- Tips to maximize your returns
- And more!

Why User-Generated Content?

User-generated content can prove massively helpful for your brand in a multitude of ways. But you don't have to just take our word for it! Here are a few key stats about UGC every marketer should know:

- [92%](#) of consumers trust recommendations from other people — even people they don't know! — over brand messaging
- [79%](#) of people said UGC highly impacts their purchasing decisions
- Sites containing user-generated content receive [20%](#) more return visitors
- Ads featuring UGC saw a [5 times higher](#) click-through rate
- Consumers spend [5.4 hours](#) a day with user-generated content
- Only [15%](#) of consumers say they want to see brand-created visuals from brands

How to Get User-Generated Content

Now you know the power of user-generated content, but where does it come from? There are multiple [ways you can gather user-generated content](#) as a brand (some easier than others). We'll go over a few below. You can focus your efforts on one for a while, or diversify your streams to get as wide a variety as possible. The choice is yours!

Just remember that no matter which option you choose, you need to have the original creator's permission before repurposing content in any way. Learn more about how to do that and avoid potential snafus in this blog.

1. Hashtag Campaign

Creating a hashtag for your brand is always a good idea, and can live in your profile long after the campaign has ended. But it might be smart to introduce a new participation hashtag with a concentrated marketing effort, as well as possibly an incentive for posting.
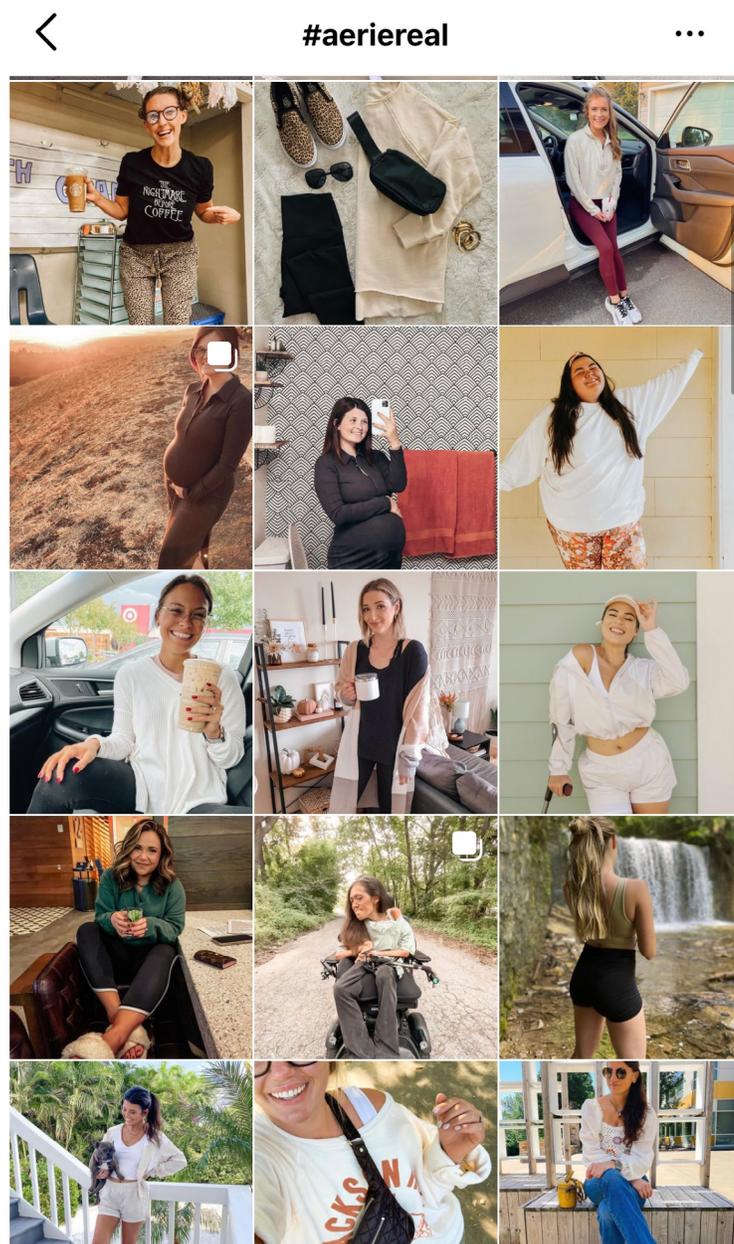

For example, Aerie encourages customers to use #AerieREAL. This tag, has now taken on a life of its own and tends to encompass anyone wearing any Aerie outfit, but when it began, it was for people to post their genuine, unretouched swimsuit photos. For every photo posted under the tag, Aerie donated $1 to the National Eating Disorder Association. As such, consumers had an incentive to post and, as a bonus, were reaffirmed that Aerie, as a brand, holds charitable values that are similar to their own.

Now, #AerieREAL is a widespread enough hashtag that the brand doesn't need to drive concentrated campaigns around it, but any brand looking to launch their own should consider taking a page out of Aerie's book to get the ball rolling.

2. Influencer Marketing Campaign

You can use these campaigns to gather user-generated content that's evergreen or use the campaign to promote an upcoming product launch or major sale. This will help your brand create hype, as well as provide a foundational content bank for a product you may not have much photography or video for yet.

Depending on your internal resources, you can either DIY your influencer campaign or outsource your influencer campaign to a third-party.
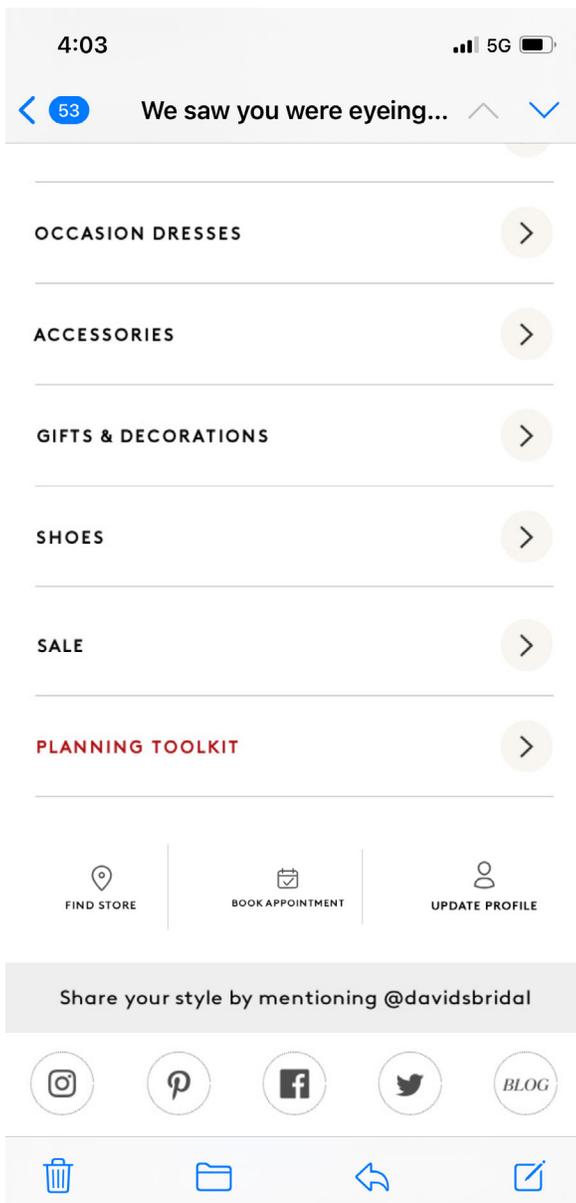
3. Ask Post-Purchase

Another way to get authentic UGC is by reaching out to previous customers. Usually, this happens in a post-purchase email — you might automate an email asking the consumer to rate and review the product and include a button for them to upload a photo showing it off.

This marketing email from David's Bridal, for example, serves as both a retargeting email and UGC collection: "We saw you were eyeing this" as the subject line, with a note towards the end to "share your style" by tagging the brand on social media. This gives David's Bridal a large bank of content to parse through just by checking their tagged photos and videos!

What Does UGC ROI Look Like?

Before you start measuring and maximizing your UGC ROI, you need to be aware of what it looks like. Benefits of UGC campaigns can take a number of forms, such as, but certainly not limited to:

## Create Social Proof

As we mentioned above, 92% of people trust recommendations of other people over brands, even if they're strangers. This staggering statistic showcases the absolute necessity of social proofing your product/brand. If you haven't heard of social proof before, it's a phenomenon in which people decide what action to take (or in the case of marketing - which product to purchase) by looking at the actions of others.

When consumers see their own peers — whether its real-life friends and family or content creators they connect with — enjoying a product, they gain crucial purchasing confidence. Social proof can even shorten the buyer's journey, diminishing doubts and encouraging consumers to make a purchase sooner than they might have otherwise. And in the online world, one of the best ways to create social proof is with UGC.

withlovenlace
Orange County, California
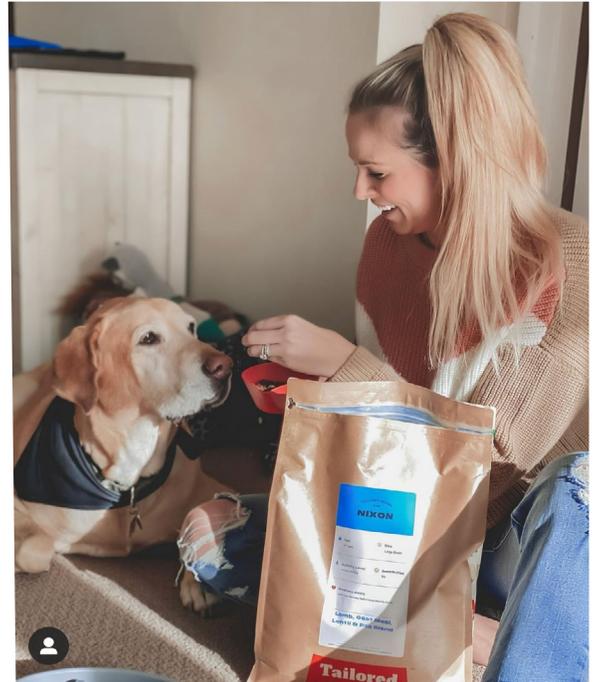
582 likes

withlovenlace Lots of changes going on right now in the Chaska family household. One of those changes includes Nixon getting a new blend of dog food from @mytailoredpet #gifted just in time for his birthday! I love how the company allows you to take a personalized quiz so they can determine what nutrients your pet specifically needs. For example

Improved Brand Trust

In a similar vein, adding into your marketing mix UGC can up your brand trust significantly. Shockingly, just 34% of people say they trust the brands they purchase from. That poses a stark contrast to the fact that 70% of consumers say that trusting a brand is more important now than ever.

Brand trust being at an all-time low, however, does allow an interesting opportunity for brands looking to increase that factor. By incorporating user-generated content into your marketing strategy, you're upping your own brand trust at a time when many other brands are not, and roping in consumers who are looking for a company to put their confidence in.

Getting social media users to create (and share!) content surrounding your brand and product(s) can be a powerful cue to potential new customers. If someone stumbles upon your page and sees tons of UGC proving that people use, love and recommend your products — as well as seeing that your brand interacts with and appreciates its customers — that consumer might learn to trust your brand, too, therefore earning you more new customers!

Increased Reach

User-generated content can help you boost your reach by introducing new audiences to your brand, especially if you opt to work with creators who are a good brand fit and are interested in your products. By tapping into their pre-existing communities, you could drive those creators' followers to your page.

Even if your UGC isn't coming from a mega-celebrity, your ROI will add up: getting 20 or more everyday consumers to post about your brand can still deliver reach and results — and without the A-list price tag. Plus, working with everyday consumers who are genuinely interested in your brand and want to keep their word with their followers can help ensure the UGC they create for you is authentic, which translates into better results. These days, no one likes overly polished or scripted content, and that can hurt your chances at increased reach.

The UGC Itself

Building an accessible library of creative, fresh UGC can be a massive return in itself. Your marketing team can now post these images and videos — without going through the time, cost and labor required to create them — anywhere in your marketing funnel. This practice doesn't just save you time and money in the long run — it can also mean a more effective sales funnel. Data from Nielsen shows that 66% of people trust consumer opinions posted online, as opposed to the only

[46%](#) who trust ads on social networks. Just by amassing a reliable cache of user-generated content, you're already seeing actionable ROI.

How to Measure the ROI of Your UGC Campaign

A key thing to remember when creating a user-generated content campaign is to record the values of all your numeric metrics beforehand. Your brand might be experiencing increased social mentions, engagement or sales, but if you don't have pre-campaign data to reference, you'll never know. Track any metric you think could be affected, so you'll be able to pinpoint any interesting trends and capitalize on them!

Make a note of the following, before and after the campaign, so you can compare them against each other:

- Total audience reach (to calculate, add up the number of followers for each person who posted UGC for your campaign)
- Likes, comments, shares and saves

- Number of unique posts or videos created

- Total video loops

- Total hashtag views

- Website traffic

- Your brand's follower count

- Number of monthly social mentions

Also, keep an eye out for which demographic created the most content during your campaign, any stand-out content, and comments that provided valuable product or audience insights. All of this information can be used to inform your next campaign, make product improvements and improve your interactions and relationships with your target audience in general.

However, not every form of ROI is numeric, which can make tracking it tricky. However, if you know what you're looking for, there are a few key campaign metrics you can jot down in your next report.
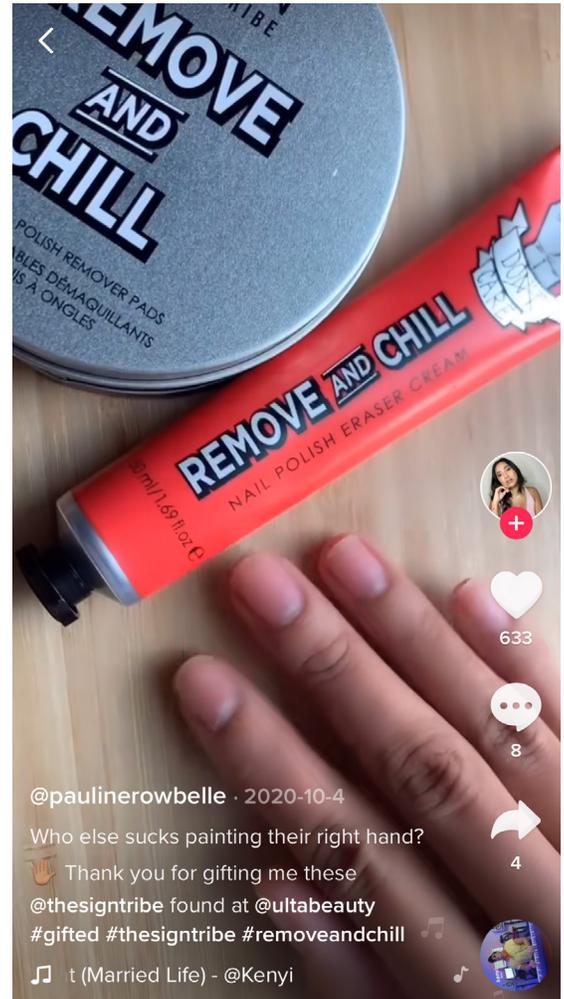
Sales Placed

It's no secret this is one of the most sought-after forms of ROI for many brands, and it is possible that your user-generated content could rope in more customers. However, as is the case with any other marketing effort, you may not see an increase in sales or revenue from your campaign right away. This is because your sales can be influenced by a variety of outside factors like your industry, your competitors, your product and pricing, and the consumer's readiness to buy.

That being said, if you want a way to attribute sales to your UGC campaign, you can use a coupon code or affiliate link. This method can help you connect sales to your campaign, but it's not foolproof. It takes an average of 7 touches with a brand for a stranger to become a customer, and this attribution strategy leaves out any conversions that happen over time. A consumer might see your product in May but not make a purchase until October, or

remembers it several days later and goes to your website themselves to purchase rather than clicking the affiliate link at the moment they saw it.

A more generalized way to keep track of any sales increases is to simply monitor your numbers over time. Knowing your general sales patterns, especially for certain times of year, can help you notice any increases both during and in the months following the campaign. There are still other factors at play that could skew your data interpretation this way, but if you understand your sales trends before the campaign, you might feel more confident attributing increasing revenue to your user-generated content.

Internal Time Saved

This one might be harder to track, but it can help put your efforts into perspective. Every little bit of UGC you incorporate into your social media strategy (or your website, or your marketing emails, etc.) takes the pressure off of someone else on your team who would've otherwise had to create content to fill that space. Even just a little pre-existing content sprinkled in your Instagram grid, for example, frees up your social media team to focus on other posts, or bigger projects, or engaging more with your audience.

Like we said, you probably won't be able to track the exact amount of hours saved in this process. But what you can note is the stress level of your marketing team, the amount of progress being made on other ongoing projects and the increased quality of your other social posts.

Brand Account Engagement

Increased reach can also lead to increased social media engagement as more folks begin to see your content. Take notes on what your general engagement looked like prior to incorporating UGC into your social strategy, and then again once you do. (You may also wish to compare analytics on brand-created content versus analytics on user-generated content.)

aleksic_twins

2,731 likes

aleksic_twins Little sparkly cuties ✨ 🌝

So in love with these Diamante Three Link Pave earrings from @johnmedeirosjewelry. Their jewelry is made in the USA and designed to last a lifetime. They offer a unique Quality Assurance program meaning that any piece that loses it's original appearance can

This of course entails likes, comments, shares and mentions, but can also manifest in unrequested UGC from enthusiastic customers, comment quality/authenticity improving and even improved quality of your audience – in other words, an audience more closely aligned to your target demographic. All of these things are pivotal parts of engagement and help your brand in the long run.

Maximizing UGC Campaign ROI

Speaking of reposting content, let's talk about how to maximize the ROI of the user-generated content you've collected. Here are a few ideas to get the most mileage out of your UGC:

Reposting

Repurposing UGC is half the beauty of it. This is an especially attractive option for brands who may be struggling to make their social media content look and sound less sales-y. Authentic content from real people can break up your profile, call more attention to any user-generated posts that are going viral already, and may very well perform better than your other content! Just make sure to get permission from the creators before reposting.

Paid Ads

Why stop at your profile page? If a piece of UGC is performing well and captures your brand in a light you're happy with, pay to turn it into a sponsored post. You might actually drive more brand interaction that way: a 2016 Facebook report discovered that ads featuring UGC saw 6.9x higher engagement than ads without! Anyone who already knows of your brand gets the increased social proof of seeing a genuine person enjoying your products, and anyone who hasn't gets that valuable social proof as their very first exposure to your brand.

sambucol

Liked by ___tcboutique___ and others
sambucol Plot twist 💡 : the gummy you are eating is actually full of antioxidants and real elderberries.
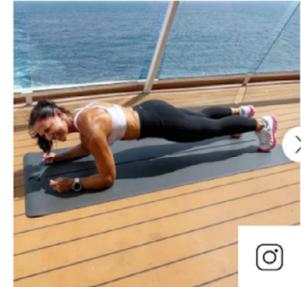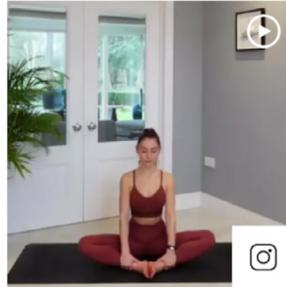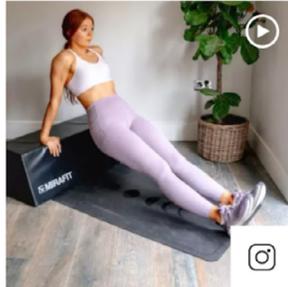
Learn more about them (link in bio) 🔝

Use It In Your Whole Funnel

As was touched on earlier, one of the more overlooked benefits of UGC campaign ROI is the time saved. But UGC isn't just for social media pages — you can really maximize the effect by using it in your whole funnel!

Fitness brand Under Armour likes to showcase user-generated content on their website's product pages. This way, consumers can see the item in action before buying, and they don't just have to take the brand's word for it.

Brands might also consider using UGC in marketing emails. Providing some form of educational or entertainment value to the receiver can really increase your chances of catching their eye, too. For example, a makeup brand might insert user-generated content of a look created with their products, and also write out a short tutorial on how to achieve it. Or, maybe you want to embed a funny TikTok of someone dancing with your product as a gif. Get creative!

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REGISTER FOR FREE
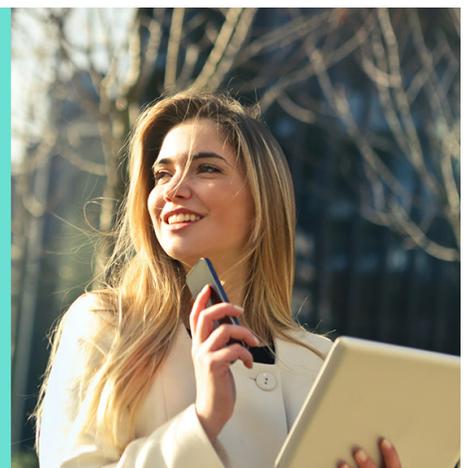
Real User-Generated Content Campaign Examples

Take a look at these large-scale UGC campaigns in action to see how you can apply the same principles to your own branding:

Warby Parker

Back in 2012, eyewear brand Warby Parker introduced its now-iconic at-home try-on option for its fashionable glasses. The concept allows customers to choose up to 5 frames to test out over 5 days. They can then choose which frames to purchase and which to return, but before they do, they're encouraged to post some pics to social media using the #warbyhometryon hashtag.
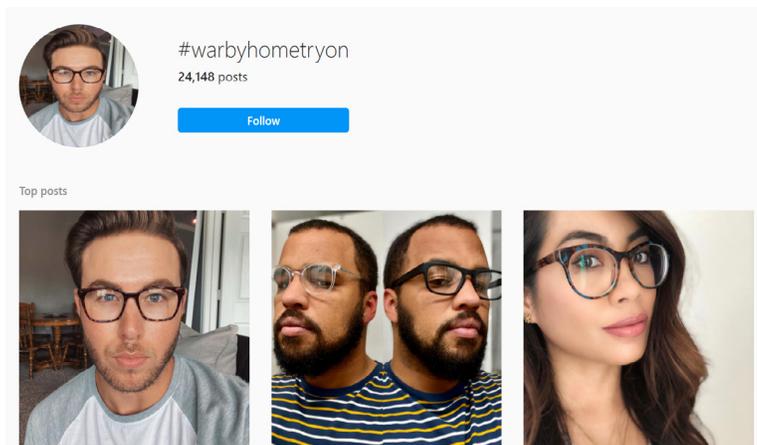
This campaign is mutually beneficial: the brand gets increased exposure, both for general brand awareness and the specific cute, trendy frames they have available. Meanwhile, the customer gets some valuable opinions from friends and family on which glasses suit them best! Warby Parker is a pretty well-known eyewear retailer these days — particularly for their at-home try-on service — but they didn't get there overnight, and this UGC campaign certainly contributed to their path to notoriety.

Starbucks

Back in 2016, Starbucks launched a large UGC campaign centering on its now-infamous red holiday cups. The #RedCupContest campaign encouraged customers to snap some pretty pics of their iconic red cups with different themes: "Cozy," "Red Cup Adventures" and "Light Up Red Cups."

Participants were then asked to share their creations using the hashtag, either on Instagram or Twitter, for an opportunity to win one of nine $500 grand prizes. The cash incentive plus the status symbol of red cups made this a widespread campaign that provided tons of UGC that Starbucks was able to repurpose over the course of the winter holidays.

Coca-Cola

One of the most well-known UGC campaigns in recent history is the Coca-Cola "Share a Coke" campaign. The company produced bottles with names on them, inspiring people to "Share a Coke with…" the person listed. As a result, consumers built a lot of hype around finding your own name or a loved one's name while out and about.
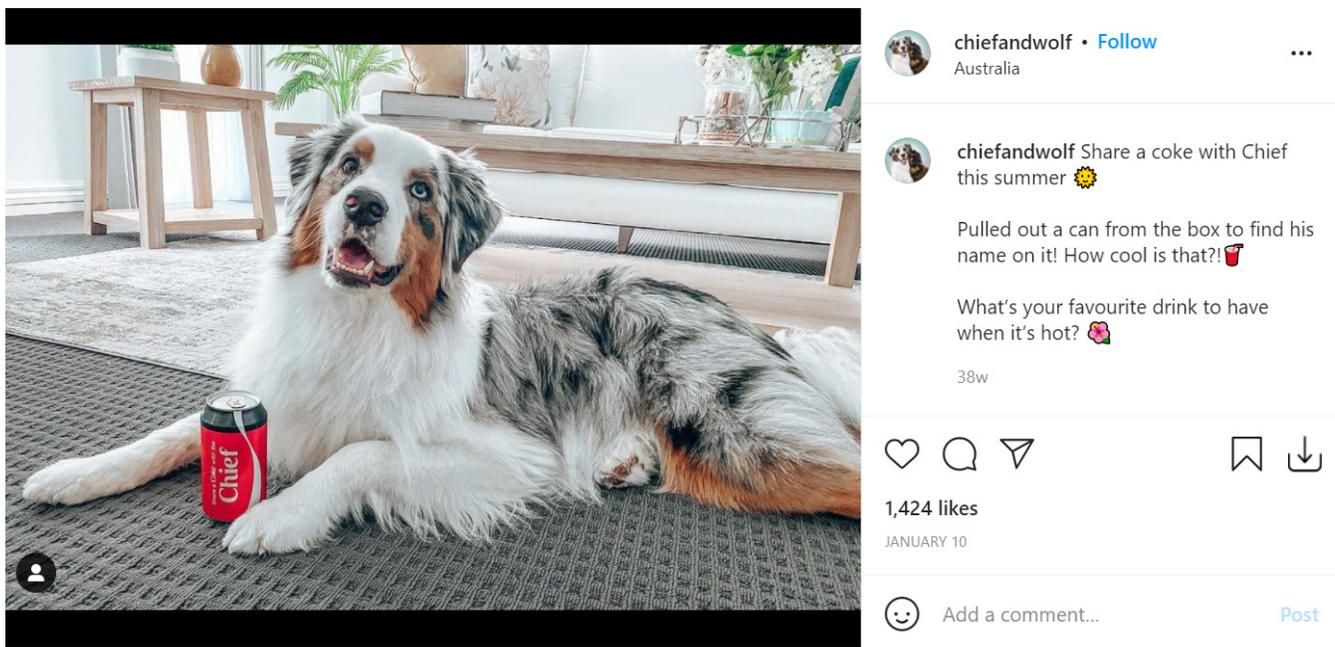
After finding these special bottles, customers posted pictures of their personalized bottle on social media using the #ShareACoke hashtag. That hashtag garnered over 1 billion impressions on Instagram alone, making it a hugely successful campaign.

Ready to launch your own user-generated content campaign, but unsure where to start? Maybe you know exactly where to start, but are hesitant to commit so many precious resources to the effort. We at Statusphere totally understand, which is why we exist — we help your marketing team by taking over your influencer campaigns, leaving you with more free time to focus on literally anything else. If you're ready to see how our influencer marketing experts can help scale your UGC campaigns, drop us a line today. We can't wait to get UGC coming your way!

About Statusphere

Statusphere helps brands scale their influencer marketing efforts. We ship monthly curated boxes of high-end products to social influencers in exchange for sharing photos of the products with their followers. We can activate hundreds of people posting about your brand with the click of a button. Contact us to see how we can help your brand reach new audiences!

THE GUIDE TO
Getting 30 Influencers
Posting About your Brand
in 30 Days

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