



Publisher spotlight: Shopping Links

Shopping Links is an influencer and content marketplace that makes it easier for brands and agencies to reach new audiences, track conversion, and increase revenues through establishing meaningful blogger relationships. Brands can identify and engage the right influencers using the detailed demographic and reach data that their platform provides, then track results to see the real-time ROI by blogger. New to Awin US, Shopping Links has already performed well for a recently-launched campaign with Missguided.

How does an influencer start working with Shopping Links? How many influencers do you work with?

We have 15,000+ influencers in our network, and signing up as an influencer involves heading to our website and clicking on the [‘Influencers’](#) tab. From there, influencers can apply to join our marketplace. After browsing their social media and website to get a feel for their content, we’ll check they post regularly and confirm that they’ve posted sponsored content in the past. In looking at this, we’ll consider the quality of their content and their alignment to the brands we work with, which operate in the fashion, beauty and lifestyle sectors.

We’ll also check to see if an influencer engages with their audience regularly, if the amount of likes they receive on a post is proportionate to their follower count, and if the comments on their posts show signs of genuine engagement. We get our influencers to connect their social media accounts so we have insight into their audience authenticity. This also helps us validate their metrics in a transparent way. If we’ve determined these influencers have an audience that aligns with our brand requirements, can see they post regularly, have no obvious discrepancies in their follower count, and think that they’re the right fit for our community, we’ll approve their application or alternatively send them an invitation to join the Shopping Links platform.

You provide brands with influencer digital media kits to make informed decisions when picking partners. What kind of information is included in your influencer digital media kits and how are they updated?

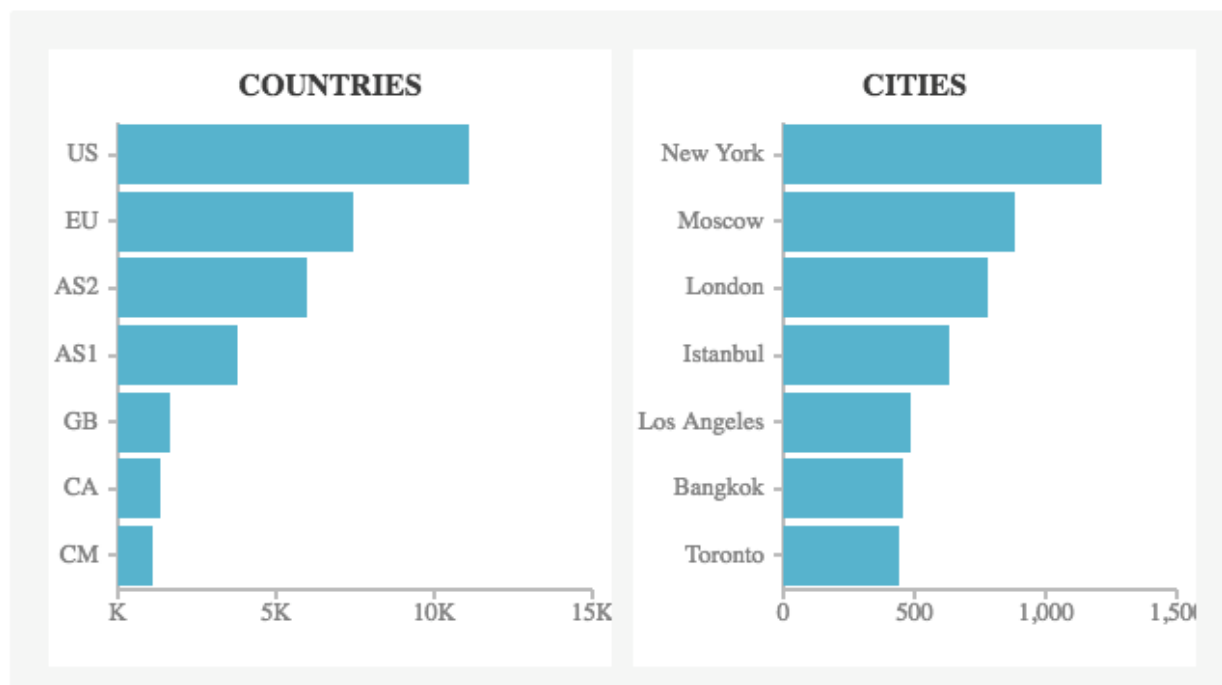
Our influencer digital media kits come in the form of a ‘Blogger Profile,’ which incorporates verified Google Analytics and Instagram Insights data in the one streamlined dashboard. This updates daily and allows brands to see not only the following an influencer has, but also a granular view of their audience demographics, their engagement levels, their domain authority, their site traffic and more.

At the forefront of all our blogger profiles is a focus on transparent metrics. Every data element we obtain from an influencer regarding their demographics and performance is available for a brand to see on their profile. For brands to ensure the quality of an influencer, and their ability to convert, we provide integrations with Instagram Insights and Google Analytics in our blogger profiles. This helps brands get an in-depth cross section of an influencer’s actual reach and impressions, by showing not just an influencer’s unique reach, but also their audience demographics, the city-specific locations of this audience, and the times they are most active. This high level of detail allows brands to determine not just which influencer is quality; it also shows which influencer will drive conversion in which markets and at what times.



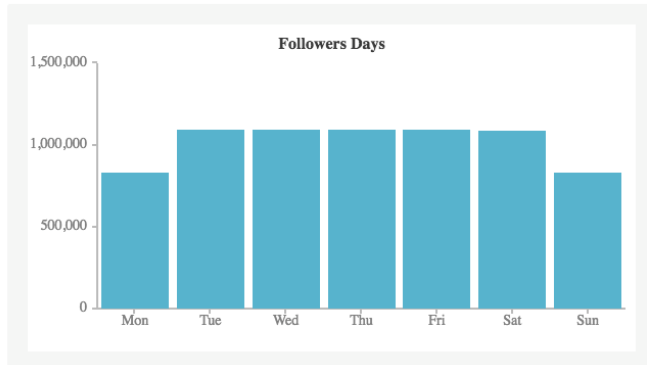
Earlier this year, Shopping links incorporated Instagram Insights into our platform, meaning brands can get an even more granular look at an influencer's social reach. Insights is essentially for social media what Google Analytics is for websites, which makes its insight into an influencer's reach, age demographics, countries, cities and gender so important, especially if a brand is looking to post an Instagram-only collaboration. With Instagram Insights, a brand can now see an influencer's actual unique reach and the breakdown of their demographics, which means we can now better predict which influencers will perform best for the brand before even entering into a collaboration.

Instagram Top Locations



Instagram Insights provide an added level of visibility into an influencer's follower base by showing not just the country, but also the city that an influencer has the strongest following in. That gives brands insight into where their target audience lives, which in turn suggests a lot about their desires, beliefs, attitudes, and consumer habits.

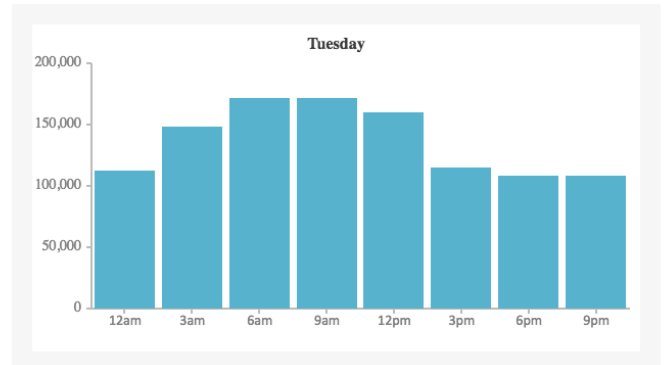
Instagram Followers - Days



The days of the week when followers are most active (Data sourced from Instagram)

Instagram Followers - Hours

< Tuesday >



The average times that followers are on Instagram on a typical day (Data sourced from Instagram)

For brands looking to take a proactive approach to optimizing their upcoming influencer campaigns, our Instagram Insights integration allows them to see which days, and even which hours of the day, an influencer's audience is most active. That's information most marketers could only dream of having in the past, and it's now available in one easy to access dashboard on the Shopping Links platform.

Instagram Metrics ⓘ

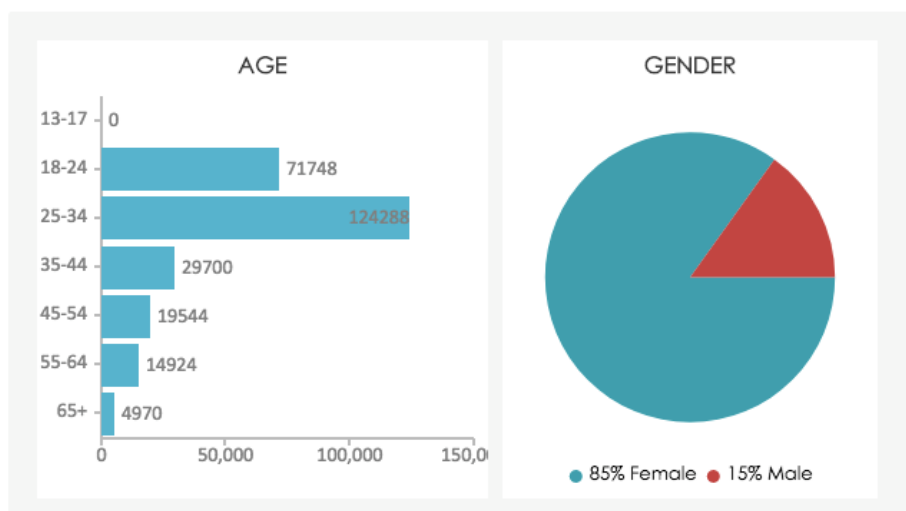
44,897 FOLLOWERS	24 POSTS*	45,284 REACH*	377,940 IMPRESSIONS*	8,940 PROFILE VIEWS*	283 WEBSITE CLICKS*
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*Data sourced from Instagram for last 28 days

Conversion metrics are also at the forefront of our blogger profile data, with Instagram Insights providing social conversion metrics over the last 28 days. This data has the power to change the way we market. Previously unavailable to brands, being able to access this data fundamentally changes how we measure and track the success and return on investment of social campaigns. This show us just how likely an influencer will be to convert for their brand based on the number of impressions gained on their posts, and the number of click-throughs proportionate to the amount of followers an influencer has.

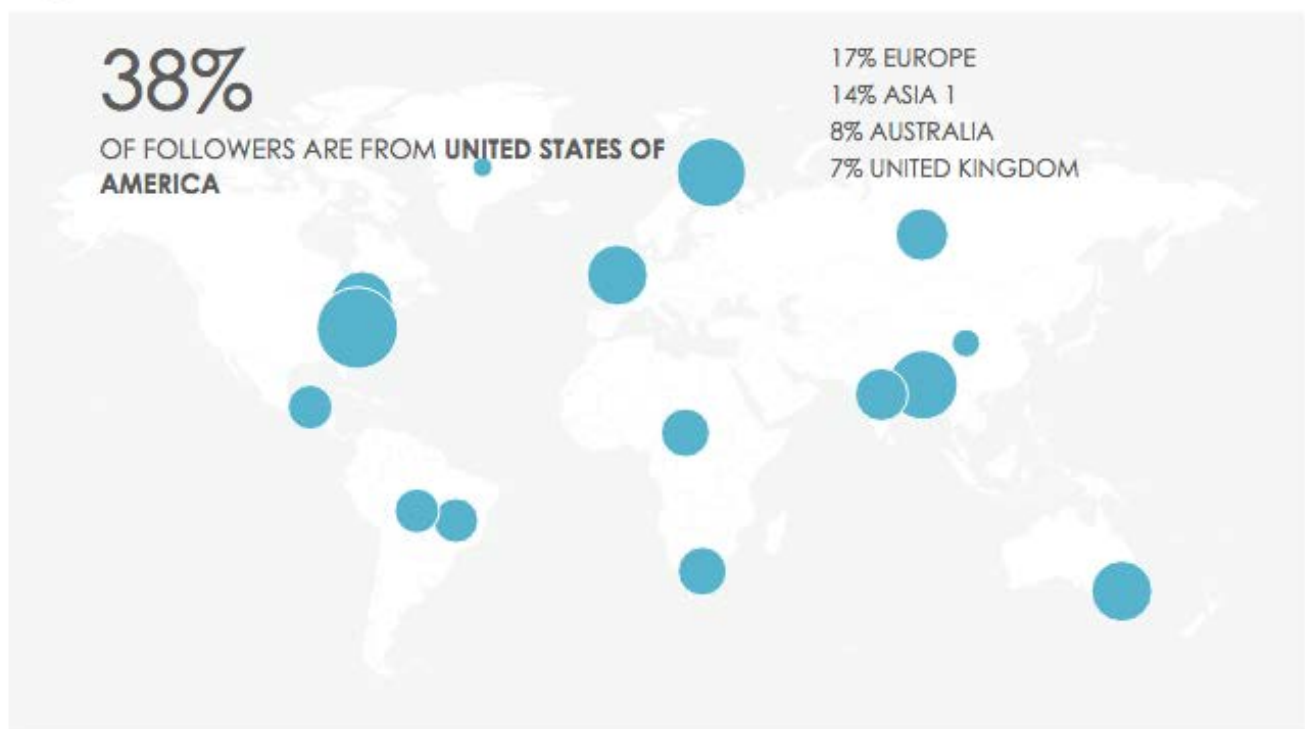


Website Demographics*



Our Blogger Profiles incorporate Google Analytics data, which show the demographics of an influencer's website visitors. Seeing the primary gender of an influencer's followers, and the age brackets that their blog appeals to, helps brands find the perfect influencer and target audience alignment for their campaign goals.

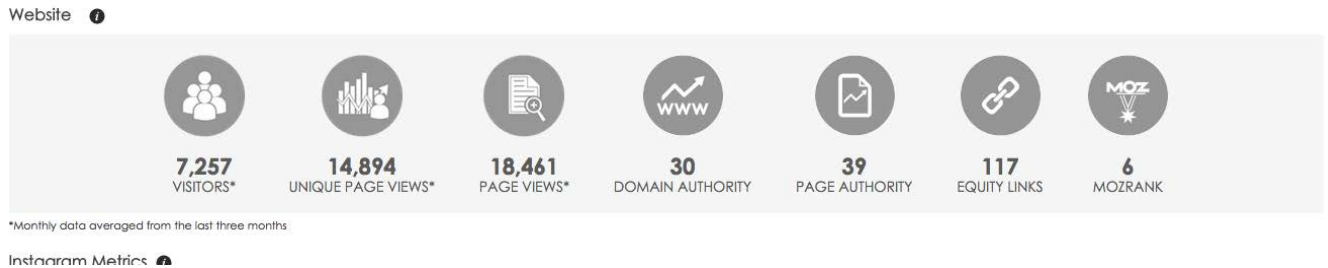
Regions



Likewise, a blogger's demographic regions tell an important story about their potential to convert for a brand. Getting access to these metrics is crucial for a brand to plan a successful collaboration. In the past, looking at a blogger's follower count, the types of images they post, and their engagement level might have been enough to proceed with a campaign; these are all 'vanity' metrics you can see on the surface. Having this location-specific data now paints a more complete picture. For example, some US bloggers may actually have a majority following in the UK, which means a US-based campaign from a US brand would not see high levels of conversion in their target market. Where once brands would have to take a test and see approach before making this discovered,



having access to these insights now shows which bloggers will not yield any immediate conversions for a brand, long before they enter into a collaboration.



Getting found on the web is becoming even harder, which means brands have to establish a solid SEO strategy more than ever before. That's why Google Analytics data incorporated into our platform also shows how helpful a blogger will be for a brand's SEO. This information includes a blogger's domain authority, their blog page authority and equity links. Brands can also head here to see the number of visitors to an influencer's site over a three-month period, a metric which includes unique page views.

Our profile also shows a selection of an influencer's images so that brands can get a feel for their aesthetic, and we also include the categories of content an influencer produces along with their collaboration rates. This allows brands to hone in on the influencers most closely aligned with their collaboration goals. For brands looking to take a goal-focused, conversion-optimized approach to their influencer marketing efforts, the high level of audience insight data we provide ensures a brand can tailor their content to be seen by their target demographics at peak traffic times.

For brands who don't have the time or experience to optimize their influencer campaigns, Shopping Links also offers managed services. These services make it much easier for brands and agencies to find and work with the right influencers: the ones who are the most likely to convert into traffic and sales via gifting CPA, and flat fee payments. Building on four years of managing influencer campaigns and developing relationships, we've developed intimate knowledge of our influencer network, which has grown to 15,000+ individually approved influencers from 117 countries. This insider knowledge puts us in the ideal position to make recommendations that lead to real results and a strong ROI.

Can you walk us through how setting up a campaign with Shopping Links would work?

Brands set up a campaign by applying to sign up to the Shopping Links platform and they can post a collaboration brief, which the influencers in our network can then apply to. Brands can compare and select the influencers they would like to work with in their campaigns, managing communication and payment seamlessly through our dashboard.

When searching for influencers, brands have access to the blogger profile and its conversion metrics, meaning they can select an influencer with confidence. They then work through the collaboration process with our in-platform workflow, get bloggers to generate and pick up affiliate links, and pay influencers all without having to leave the platform.

We can provide guidance for the team managing a brand's campaign by viewing the bloggers who have applied to their collaborations, negotiating the rate with bloggers and releasing payment from within the platform, viewing their results and marking a blogger's work as completed. Once a collaboration is completed, the results page can be viewed after a blogger posts, with Instagram and Facebook API integrations that automatically fetch the results data daily.

We've even come up with a way to make gifting at scale easier: When brands gift at scale, we give the brand a downloadable excel file containing all the blogger details: this cuts down on time and administration.

What kind of metrics and results do you record for each campaign?

On our results page we record:

- The number of times an influencer has posted across a range of social channels including Instagram, Instagram Stories, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and Pinterest
- We capture the media posted. Whether that's a shot of the Instagram post, or a video of their Instagram Story, we allow the brand to play back a story or view an image even after it has disappeared from an influencer's feed
- Conversion metrics: These include sales, traffic including unique website visits and social traffic, and average order value
- Cost Per Engagement metrics
- Views
- Comments
- Likes
- Potential audience
- Actual Reach for Instagram posts and stories
- Actual Impressions for Instagram posts and stories
- Page views from Google Analytics



STORY INSIGHTS

11,495
IMPRESSIONS

10,461
REACH

1
AVG IMPRESSIONS

6%
REACH RATE

331
TAPS BACK

7,443
TAPS FORWARD

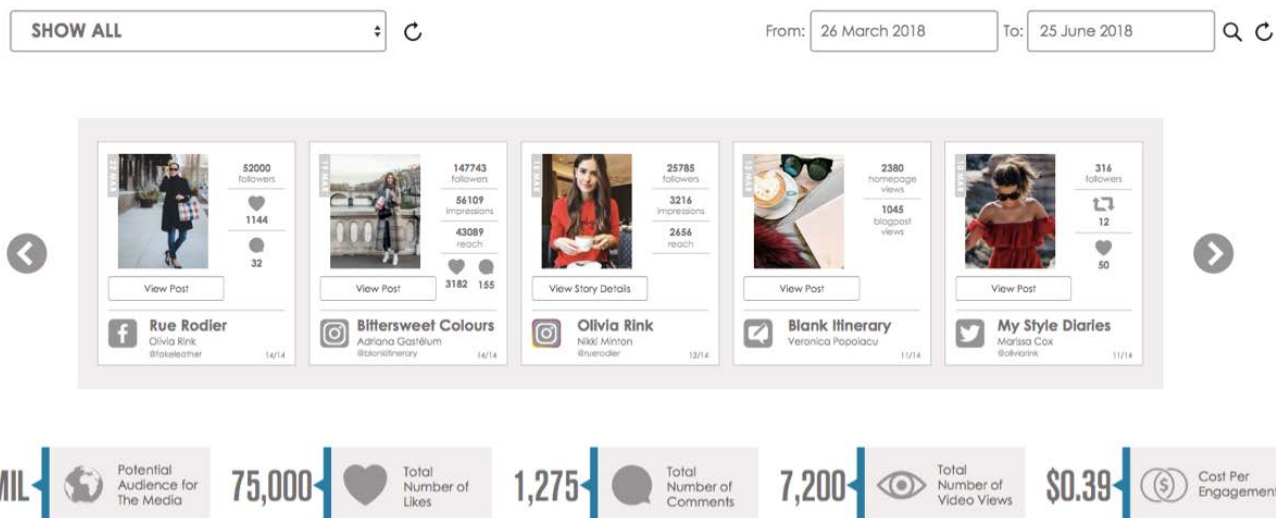
309
EXITS

1
REPLIES

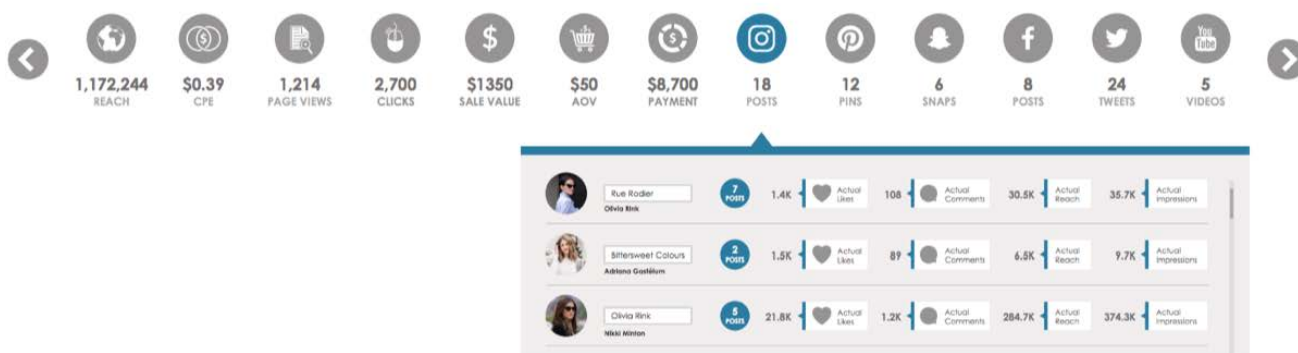
COMPLETION RATE



Impact on Social Media



Performance and Engagement



This results page is available to brands for three months, and brands can filter by date range to get targeted analytics and results.

What are benefits for advertisers working with Shopping Links?

At Shopping Links, our commitment to helping brands run conversion-focused collaborations means transparency of data and quality influencers are always at the forefront of our mind. From incorporating affiliate link generation into our platform, to introducing Instagram Insights and allowing for gifting at scale with commission, we are always trying to make the process of running an influencer campaign more effective, more honest and transparent, and more results-driven.

We have incorporated affiliate links into our platform to make it easier for bloggers to include affiliate links into their blog and social posts, enabling affiliate link generation and tracking within one seamless workflow. We also offer managed campaign services where we help curate and select the best influencers for a range of campaign briefs and marketing requirements. Our transparency of data when it comes to conversion metrics also allow brands to optimize their future campaigns with a granular insight into which influencers, channels and locations will work best for their upcoming campaign.



Advertisers working with Shopping Links also have access to an influencer's Instagram Insights, which is data they would not have access to outside of our platform – unless they asked an influencer directly to provide a screenshot of their Insights page. Having this data available at scale and at a glance takes the guesswork out of selecting an influencer. It also looks beyond vanity metrics and provides in-depth insights into a blogger's audience demographics to help brands make the most informed campaign decisions.

From a collaboration standpoint, our commissioned gifting at scale options provide a continual incentive for influencers to drive conversions and return for the brand. This stands out from the usual approach PR agencies take when gifting product. PR agencies charge brands a flat-fee payment up front without needing to prove an influencer will generate return, while our commissioned gifting options actively encourage influencers to drive sales and achieve optimal return during the collaboration.

Why did you join the Awin network and what features do you enjoy?

We love being part of the Awin network because it lets us explore the intersections between affiliate and influencer marketing. Awin has great brands and a global footprint, both of which are propelled by a really strong team. What makes the Awin team so great is their progressiveness. They understand influencers, they understand social media, they understand the role it plays in the affiliate ecosystem and the importance of tapping into social shopping conversion, particularly for fashion, beauty and lifestyle brands.

The Awin team is especially progressive in terms of incorporating influencers into their affiliate channel, and their relationship-first focus is ideally aligned with what we hold most important in our business. When our founder Kim Westwood met with the team, she found she didn't have to explain influencer marketing or how important it is to the affiliate channel.

Do you have any upcoming promotions, new launches, or exciting news you would like to share?

Shopping Links is currently running a promotion where we offer brands \$100 off our influencer gifting options. We believe gifting at scale is the perfect way for brands to dip their toe into the world of influencer marketing. Influencer gifting is a highly-scalable influencer marketing strategy that lets brands connect with multiple bloggers and audiences without having to pay to post, making it perfect for brands looking to experiment with limited budget.

One of the best examples of the effectiveness of our gifting at scale collaborations came after a major international department store gifted its branded Peppa Pig pajamas to high-profile influencer [Arielle Noa Charnas](#) of the blog [Something Navy](#). Arielle posted a story of her daughter in the pajamas, and the very next day the retailer reported a 1,400% increase in average sales for their Peppa Pig products.

After managing more than 1,000 influencer collaborations since launching in 2014, what we have found is that gifting at scale consistently delivers a strong ROI. Brands get widespread exposure to multiple influencers and their audiences without having to pay to post: a win-win for any marketing team. Gifting at scale is also perfect for brands testing out influencer and affiliate strategies, because it gives them the chance to test the waters with several influencers at once, before investing in longer-term paid collaborations with the ones that deliver the best return.

Our gifting at scale options help brands quickly connect with qualified, authentic influencers who want to work with them. Brands can select 10 or 50 influencers: all of whom have a minimum of 10k followers on Instagram. Within 30 days of receiving their product or experience, influencers are required to post on Instagram, tagging the brand. These campaigns can be run all at once, or staggered over a six-month period, and each campaign includes three months of detailed results tracking via our 'Results' page. This allows brands to track their results



with magnified accuracy, getting a close look at the reach, impressions, social media engagement, traffic and sales data that each individual influencer drives.

Aside from refining our gifting offerings, we have also recently launched our own [Skillshare](#) course focusing on measuring the ROI of an influencer marketing campaign. It's a master class in measuring return with actionable insights, and we learned so much putting the course together! It's an intermediate course – in other words, the course you watch after learning the basics to influencer marketing – but we think it's vital for those marketers who may have run campaigns in the past and want to see how to optimize them in future.

Interested in partnering with Shopping Links? Please contact [Kim Westwood](#) at Shopping Links or our [publisher management team](#).