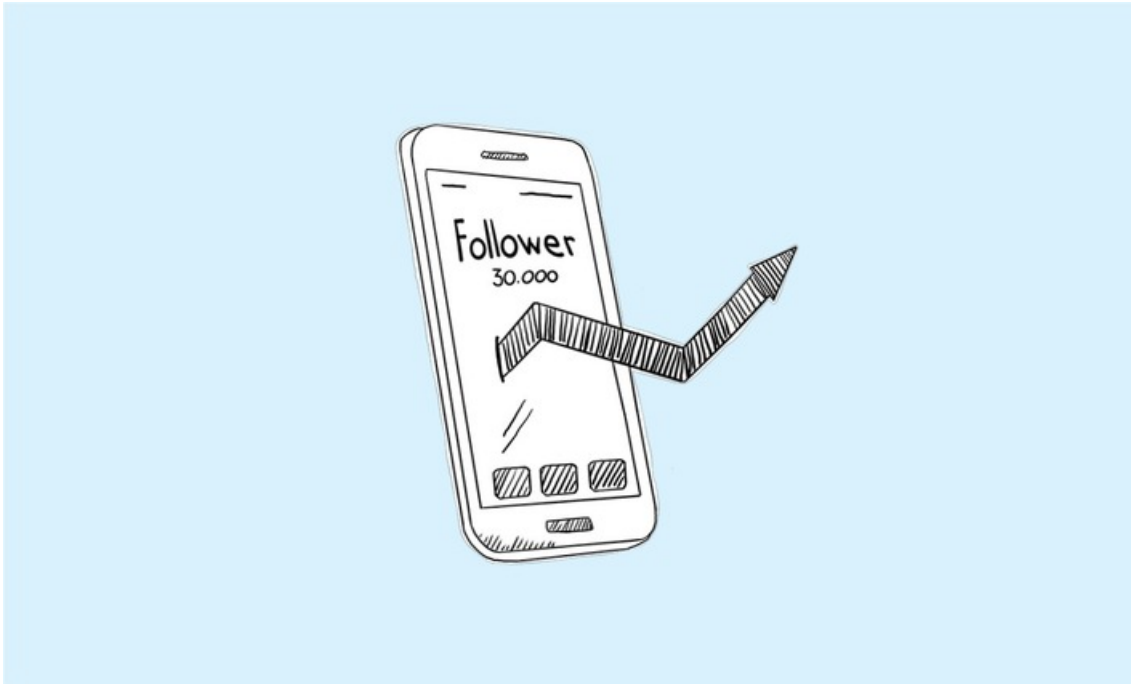


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## The Power of Small: Why Brands Should Embrace Nano- and Micro-Influencers



Does size really matter? Influencers have become an integral part of communications today. However, we want to make it clear that size and follower numbers should no longer be critical factors when choosing who to work with.

Read the blog post below to learn about why, what success nano- and micro-influencers actually have, and what criteria you should use to measure the success of an influencer campaign. We spoke with Karin Lehmann, an expert in influencer relations, and asked her to give us some insights from what she encounters every day.

- [1. How influencer marketing and relations work in today's PR landscape](#)
- [2. Defining nano- and micro-influencers and the distinction between them](#)
- [3. Potential successes, advantages and challenges with nano- and micro-influencers](#)
- [4. Measuring an influencer campaign's success](#)
- [5. AI meets influencer marketing and influencer relations](#)
- [6. How news aktuell can help you identify and contact multipliers](#)

### 1. How influencer marketing and relations work in today's PR landscape

Karin Lehmann tells us that an influencer campaign can be both incredibly creative and a lot of fun. She emphasizes that influencer relations are an integral part of contemporary public relations, with the latest figures showing ever more money spent each year on collaborations with content creators. As the co-owner of Swiss PR agency [WeArePepper](#), Karin has worked in the communications sector for many years. Her specialisation in telling stories with the help of influencers holds great (financial) value not only in Switzerland and Germany, but globally. A recent [study from Statista \(2024\)](#) sees continuous growth in influencer marketing and forecasts that it could reach a global value of 22.2 billion US dollars by 2025.

Speaking of influencer marketing, Karin Lehmann and her team focus on their agency and influencer relations. Even when the sector uses the terms interchangeably, and it often does, there are nonetheless significant differences between the terms and, to start things off, these points ought to be briefly highlighted.

#### Influencer relations vs. influencer marketing

Overall, the two areas take different approaches and pursue slightly different objectives.

Professionals specialising in influencer relations work with content creators in a manner similar to working with media representatives. They are individually selected depending on the topic, customer and campaign. So, there is no fixed pool of influencers and no ongoing agreements. The focus is instead on all-round cooperation and long-term relationships between them and the brand. Here, product or brand attachment is particularly important, which brings about an authentic representation of the brand and aims at a long-term partnership lasting beyond each campaign. Influencers are likewise involved in strategic planning and the development of content.

On the other hand, the stress in influencer marketing is frequently on the campaign itself, with more concentration given to individual projects. Content creators become the means for meeting specific marketing goals and they are evaluated more on

measurable KPIs. Long-term collaboration does not necessarily have to be encouraged.

### **Advantages vs. influencer bias**

Even in 2023, many companies and brands were still ignoring the power of influencers despite steady growth in market volume from them and the obvious influence content creators have. The same prejudices and misunderstandings were always being heard: "They don't sell the image or make much impact, and what they do contribute is not directly measurable."

Karin Lehmann paints a completely different picture of the sector and underscores once more why she enjoys her work so much: "Influencers have mastered the art of storytelling and are recognised as experts in their niches. People see their recommendations as more credible and trustworthy than conventional advertising. They have a loyal and engaged fan base that identifies strongly with their content." Pointing out again the added value they give to companies, which no one should underestimate, she adds that exactly those advantages are enabling brands to target the specific groups they want to reach.

The advantages are reflected in the above figures and make clear once more the decisive role content creators are now playing in the communications and marketing mix of brands and companies. In her role as a communications expert, Karin reinforces how it definitely makes sense today to view influencer relations as complementing traditional PR strategies in a major way and to incorporate them effectively into PR. "In our increasingly digital and socially networked world, influencers are *the* mouthpieces that can help a brand position itself."

## **2. Defining nano- and micro-influencers and the distinction between them**

Before delving into the definition, distinction, and the benefits of collaborating with nano- and micro-influencers, let's take a closer look at what has generally been happening. Looking back, blogs have rapidly evolved from being heavy on text to containing more images, not in the least due to the emergence of platforms like Pinterest and Instagram. They are driving change, producing more content creators and swiftly transforming these people into professionals. Who hasn't heard of content creator management and management agencies? Even influencer marketing has in recent years become increasingly professional in nature. Seeing 2024's trends, the handwriting on the wall is clear. Content creators are turning themselves into brands of their own and, with the advent of AI, virtual influencers are playing an ever-greater role.

### **Definition and distinction**

The world of content creators still strongly distinguishes them, in particular, according to the number of followers they have, although the definitions and figures found on the internet might vary somewhat.

We want to define the following guidelines for us:

- Nano-Influencer: more than 1,000 followers
- Micro-Influencer: more than 10,000 followers
- Macro-Influencer: more than 100,000 followers
- Mega-Influencer: more than one million followers

The section below takes a more in-depth look at the advantages and also the challenges of working with nano- and micro-influencers. Karin, our PR expert, will give us specific tips on how to collaborate with this exciting group of influencers.

## **3. Potential successes, advantages and challenges with nano- and micro-influencers**

Nano- and micro-influencers are particularly intriguing for brand collaboration due to the manageable number of followers they have. Why is that? Since they are closer connected to their community, their recommendations carry more weight and their followers are often more specialised. This is also reflected in the engagement rate, which is frequently greater than for content creators with a higher number of followers. A factor often seen as especially decisive is that the costs of cooperation are usually easier to manage.

Advantages at a glance:

- Authenticity
- Engagement and stronger interaction
- Specialised niche markets
- Cost-effective
- Opportunities for local influence
- Flexibility
- Long-term partnerships

Karin Lehmann's many years of experience have confirmed this and she accordingly knows exactly why she prefers working with small content creators: "Nano- und micro-influencers have well-structured communities that allow them to interact more personally with their followers, answer questions, and provide feedback. As a rule, their posts are perceived as more credible and they appear less commercial. Nano- and micro-influencers are seen as valuable for brands looking to target particular audiences because they often focus on a specific topic." Working with different-sized clients, she also knows a lot about budgets and is always keeping an eye on costs. Even here, nano- and micro-influencers are more accommodating: "Collaboration with nano- and micro-influencers is generally less expensive than working with the macro segments and celebrities. In Switzerland, there can be a reciprocal arrangement made to exchange services, something no longer feasible with large creators. Even little companies with limited marketing budgets can profit here from influencer relations."

In other words, working with nano- and micro-influencers offers more than just an excellent opportunity to target specific groups and strengthen your authenticity and engagement; it's also easier on your budget and leaves you less exposed to risk.

### Disadvantages and challenges of nano- and micro-influencers

Even though nano- and micro-influencers bring many advantages and have successfully transitioned from a niche to success in recent years, challenges may arise in collaboration – perhaps even issues that you may not encounter when working with more widely followed content creators.

Disadvantages in brief:

- Limited reach and little influence
- Professionalism and coordination depend quite a bit on the content creator
- Significant disparities in quality
- Much more time spent searching for them and keeping a long-term professional relationship

Asking our expert Karin Lehmann about her own collaborations and what recommendations she could make from her practical experience, she replied: "When you compare them to larger content creators, micro-influencers' tinier follower base limits their potential reach and the visibility of their postings. With that in mind, I would recommend working with several small influencers to achieve the desired reach. This involves additional effort, like identifying and selecting exactly the right people for the brand, which can be time-consuming. Larger content creators usually have professional teams managing them and clear contracts. Smaller influencers tend to be less experienced and their approach might therefore be not quite as professional, yet they are also more flexible and highly committed."

While working with nano- and micro-influencers offers your brand many advantages, you should nonetheless weigh the potential disadvantages before taking the next step toward collaboration. What we suggest is that you think carefully about how long-term it is going to be and what specific objectives you are pursuing with one or more campaigns. It is crucial in any case to have a balanced communication strategy that includes both content creators and classic communication channels to maximise reach for your messages.

### Nano- and micro-influencers: Pay attention when collaborating

Once you have decided to work with content creators from the nano or micro segment, it will be particularly important to make the effort worthwhile for both you and them. Only if you do so will you be sure of the power the little influences can provide.

Karin Lehmann and her team especially pay attention to the following:

**"Authenticity** remains of critical importance and you should be asking yourself these questions when choosing an influencer: Do they fit with my brand? Do they share the same values? Is the content relevant to the community and my target group?

I further recommend **clear agreements and written briefings**. These do not have to be page-long contracts. On the contrary, they ought to be transparent, concise and contain detailed expectations, reciprocal services, remuneration, schedules, and how content is going to be used.

Another high priority for us is **relationship building**. Influencer campaigns enjoy the most success when everybody works together, sharing with each other their ideas and how to implement them. This is the best way to utilise each creator's creativity without simply booking and receiving a paid advertising post."

It is therefore advisable as you proceed to go through the checklist below:

- Matching profiles: Because they can make or break a campaign, most of your time should be invested in selecting the people best suited for the brand. Authenticity plays a crucial role here.
- More is more: Learn all you can about the micro-influencer and look at any available content.
- Be direct, but open-minded: Clearly formulate a briefing so all the details are laid out, yet give the content creator a certain amount of leeway and freedom in implementing them, so the campaign is authentic and fits optimally into the respective channel.
- Feedback helps: If your ears are open to the content creator's ideas and feedback, you will get the best out of a long-term collaboration and can continue to optimise your goals. Feedback is also a big advantage of working with smaller influencers.

### 4. Measuring an influencer campaign's success

Success is more than just a useful metric for measuring the value of an influencer campaign, it lets you better understand how influencer relations work and derive appropriate strategies for continuous improvement. As data is now becoming increasingly important, it is crucial to check regularly on whether your investments are having the desired impact on your target group. Note that a wide range of KPIs, which are weighed differently depending on the objective and target group, can measure the success of an influencer campaign. Karin sees the fixed components below in any review of success:

- Reach
- Engagement
- Conversions

There are other determining factors and soft facts to consider, too:

- Keep in mind: Behind every platform is an algorithm that constantly evolves, which we may not always fully understand.
- Even if collaboration with a micro-influencer doesn't necessarily work out right away, never use it as a criterion for not continuing to work with him or her. Perhaps look at other brands. Micro-influencers let you take a more flexible approach and make better adjustments.
- Success can also come from the quality of the post, good content and a suitable caption .
- Are you willing and able to recycle or repurpose posts from an influencer?
- In your collaboration, how well did you work together and is there room for improvement? Be sure to get feedback from the content creator, ask how it went for him or her, and find out how it can be done better?

There are also differences in how Karin's customers measure their success and what they value from working with influencers. What makes little difference for some is quite important to others: "For example, one of our customers stresses appealing, high-quality content that attracts attention and can be reused on their own social channels. On the other side of the coin, the quality of the comments gets more attention from us. Are they just coming from bots, or are there interested people and potential customers out there interacting?"

## 5. AI meets influencer marketing and influencer relations

Although artificial intelligence is still in its infancy in many areas, it is already getting some use when working with influencers.

Karin, as well as experts at numerous other agencies, leverages AI-based tools for identifying and selecting suitable content creators for specific campaigns. Considerations include content type, demographic information, follower behaviour, social media interactions, and alignment with the target audience.

In the next step of the creative process, many players in the market also employ generative AI – for example, in creating and visualising a campaign idea or generating briefings for selected influencers. AI even makes social listening more efficient. In the final step, reporting, AI tools are equally well-suited for analysing large volumes of data and presenting them in an insightful way. In other words, AI enables a better distribution of resources into relevant divisions, especially in collaboration with this group of multipliers.

Looking ahead to 2024, it is crucial for those working with influencers to explore the possibilities offered by AI and those emerging in the coming year to stay ahead. Even though there are many uncertainties in the use of AI technologies for the current year, Karin Lehmann emphasises the importance of "using AI carefully and ethically and ensuring that its deployment is well-documented."

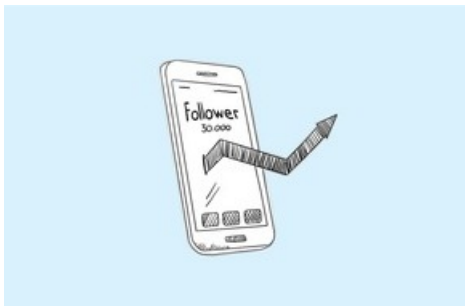
## 6. How news aktuell can help you identify and contact multipliers

Reach out to all applicable multipliers, editors and influencers in a customised and targeted way with [zimpel](#), our media directory and PR tool. It lets you precisely pinpoint your key creators and contact them with a targeted approach. As a single source solution, dpa subsidiary news aktuell gives you the opportunity through its distribution network [ots](#) not just to approach influencers, but also to connect with editorial systems at all relevant media houses. For even more visibility, consider publication on the most extensive PR portal, [www.presseportal.de](http://www.presseportal.de).

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