



Top 9

Successful

Brand

Ambassador

Programs



Is it becoming increasingly difficult to **get your products in front of the right people these days?**

If you've fallen behind with your influencer marketing strategy, it can be even harder as ad-blockers are starting to deeply impact one's paid media budget.

What if we told you that old school is still cool?

According to Global Web Index: “[Millennials are] 23% more likely to discover a brand through a vlog, 23% more likely via a celebrity endorsement, and 19% more likely through an expert blogger post”.

Word-of-mouth marketing powered by a data-driven solution will take your brand to places it has never been before. We're talking about **brand ambassador programs**, what makes them successful and how you can create one for

Brand ambassador programs that simply work

Red Bull's Student Marketers

This is a brand that is not afraid to experiment. They've been greatly rewarded for their approach to authentic content creation through the use of **college brand ambassador programs** around the world.

Red Bull student ambassadors are armed with free tools and resources. Students are supported by a community dedicated to their success as ambassadors – all while making the entire experience fun and in the spirit of the brand.

The result:

a highly sought-after student marketing program that reaches all corners of the globe. Authentic and localised content that reaches the right target market through the use of young opinion leaders who are genuinely passionate about the brand.

Mercedes-Benz and Friends Club



From students to luxury car brands, **ambassador programs** are a great fit for almost any loyal customer segment. Mercedes-Benz took what could've been a standard loyalty program and turned it into **a true brand ambassador campaign**. Members receive an exclusive card loaded with individual discounts and offers, as well as access to some of the most exclusive events in the world.

The result:

The club currently manages 80 clubs worldwide with a membership of over 90,000 people.

Brita's Best Roommate Ever Campaign

Ever opened the fridge to find that someone hasn't refilled the water...again? Brita took this highly relatable situation and turned it into a **brilliant campaign**. They used an interesting and unlikely pairing up of NBA star Steph Curry and YouTube influencer King Bach to create a surprisingly entertaining campaign.

What was even more interesting is that the brand used an **ambassador** who usually featured in their traditional advertising campaigns and paired him up a **social creator** who had a different, but very large online audience. This campaign gained an incredibly broad reach and gave a fresh voice to the brand.

The result:

According to a Think with Google case study, this brand **ambassador x influencer** mashup generated “over 2 million views and led to a 2,000% mobile search lift.”

Coca-Cola's Company Brand Ambassador Program

How do you harness the existing brand loyalty and customer base that your own employees make up? Well Coca-Cola did just that and activated their 700,000 global employees through a **company brand ambassador program**. Their approach was simple: to inspire and appreciate their associates around the world.

“Coke's 700,000 associates have the power to positively influence 210 million consumers by leveraging their personal social media network connections.” – Christy Amador, via the American Marketing Association.

The program not only provides recognition and benefits to employees, but also has very strong outward-facing job of changing perceptions as Coke is continuously fighting against sugar-related activism and anti-brand campaigns. Employees are supported with apps and other material to use as they channel positive influence through their own social networks and are rewarded for their activity.

The result:

According to an article from the American Marketing Association, an employee engagement program like this **can save billions in marketing costs, generates higher productivity, grows business at faster rates, and increases employee retention rates** at nearly 90% more than companies without brand ambassador programs.

Glenfiddich's Whisky Brand Ambassadors



Liquor **brand ambassador** programs are hugely successful in creating awareness, educating new generations of enthusiasts, and retaining long-term partnerships. The Glenfiddich brand ambassador role is one of the most coveted in the industry.

Brand ambassadors in the Glenfiddich program come from all walks of life and are usually already in the drinks industry in some form or members of the general public who are genuinely passionate about whisky. Successful ambassadors are trained once a year at the distillery and according to their website: "it's also a great way to emotionally reconnect them with everything 'Glenfiddich'."

The administrative part of the role includes compiling marketing reports, organising events and travelling amongst others. The role is mostly about spreading the word and educating people about how to enjoy the product in the best possible way.

The result:

The program has a team of 100 enthusiastic ambassadors and is represented in 25 countries. The Glenfiddich brand alone accounts of 22 ambassadors. Their **ambassadors** ensure that while there's a consistency in the brand values, their content and engagement with the general whisky-loving public is authentic and localised for each market.

Pura Vida Bracelets

This fashion brand has taken advantage of the power of **micro-influencers** on Instagram and Facebook, and allows anyone to apply for a yearly intake of reps. **Ambassadors** are given personalised discount codes which are to be included in their social content, allowing the brand to track sales and pay a certain a % of those sales back to the ambassador.

Pura Vida sends their reps free products, early access to new products, and other supporting marketing material to create content that is aligned to their overall look and feel. The program allows young individuals to make an income while supporting local artists who make their products.

The success of the program is actually due to the 3-tiered system which motivates their **brand ambassadors** to sell more products by increasing the incentives at each level. Pura Vida also allocates a dedicated rep manager to ensure that everyone is taken care of and motivated to do more.

The result:

According to a recent article on Shopify, Co-Founder of Pura Vida Bracelets Griffin Thall states that: “to date, we’ve amassed an army of

Lululemon’s Ambassador Empire

This Canadian yoga fashion **brand ambassador program** is one of the most famous in the world. Lululemon successfully created an entire “athleisure” movement while growing **a global community of ambassadors**.

Lululemon put in the work to get to know their target audience extremely well and this allowed them to identify who the influential leaders in those niche groups were. They then created an **ambassador program** using local yoga instructors who became part of a long-running partnership with the brand. There are three categories of ambassadors comprising of yoga ambassadors, elite ambassadors, and store ambassadors. According to Tyrone Beverly, a store ambassador, in an article on Fashionista.com: “Their agenda is to support your agenda”.

The result:

The program recruited over 1,600 ambassadors comprising of over 75 professional athletes, over 1,500 local “fitfluencers”, and 8 yoga instructors around the world, reaching engaged shoppers both in the traditional an online space.

The Heineken Experience

The Heineken Experience in Amsterdam used the power of **internal brand ambassadors** to affect their repeat visitor rates to create even more brand ambassadors!

A big part of Heineken's liquor **ambassador program** is directed towards their 160 students who work at the attraction. Dirk Lubbers, the MD of the Heineken Experience owes much of the success of the program to their efforts in picking the right people for the team. Employees are encouraged to outperform each other and are given extremely generous incentives such as attending football matches, Formula One Grand Prix, and even attend the Olympics.

The result:

According to an article on Marketing Week, The Heineken Experience has "allowed it to produce lifelong brand ambassadors, leading to a visitor repeat rate of 17%".

Xbox Ambassadors

With a dedicated community and tiered program, the folks at Microsoft have created an extremely sought-after gaming **ambassador program** aimed at Xbox superusers and their biggest fans. The aim of the program is to reward passionate fans and to create an inclusive community-led environment.

Members are kept active with seasonal, monthly and daily missions or challenges which unlock special rewards and there are a range of ways to communicate with each other through social media, streaming services or old-school chatrooms.

The result:

Over the years, Xbox Ambassadors have created an almost self-regulated and incentivised community that services millions of gamers around the world – saving the brand team millions of dollars in additional support staff.

Easy Steps to create a brand ambassador program for your company

What exactly is the definition of a **brand ambassador**? Ambassadors are customers or “**superusers**” of your product or brand who create content or share positive brand experiences. They are often invited to join clubs or communities and receive exclusive offers in exchange for their support in the form of influential content or other activities. Sometimes these partnerships are more formal with specific job functions, while others are loosely governed by a core set of brand values. Here are a few simple steps to get you started.

Step 1

Define your objectives and budget

Outline what you want **your ambassador program** to do for your company. Is it to sell more products, upsell current members or generate more brand awareness? Once you've decided on your objectives, assign a budget to get it done, and make sure to include a budget for incentives.

Step 2

Identify your superusers

Look through your existing customer base and find users who are loyal and passionate about your brand. Profile them and have a look at how they've engaged with your brand in the past. Are they **brand advocates**? Have they taken upon themselves to become community leaders on your social platforms?

Step 3

Create an incentives or rewards structure

Take a lesson from Pura Vida Bracelets and their 3-tiered system which motivates their **brand ambassadors** to sell more products by increasing the incentives at each level. Think about how you would recognise top users, the Xbox ambassador program does this really well by publishing leaderboards and issuing daily challenges.

Step 4

Reach out

Craft your messages carefully. This can be via an email or phone call, but first impressions matter. A beautifully written email letting the user know that they've been selected to form part of an exclusive group of **brand ambassadors** will add to the excitement.

Reach in!

Don't forget that your own employees can make great brand ambassadors, look at the examples of Coca-Cola and Heineken above for inspiration on how to turn your internal team into advocates.

Step 5

Start small, then grow

Start with a small **pilot program** so that you can refine the model before opening it up to a larger group. This will keep the amount of support you need to provide down to a small group and also allows you to connect directly with individuals and build a strong foundational community.

Step 6

Provide resources and material

Arm your **brand ambassadors** with marketing material and products to help them create content that reflects your brand. Look at how Red Bull created an online resource portal for their student marketers, while allowing ambassadors the kind of creative freedom that has propelled their brand.

Step 7

Monitor but don't dictate

Keep a close eye on your **ambassadors** but don't interfere in their content creation process. Create a style guide if you need to. Monitor their progress and sales through your analytics or referral tools. Assign personalised tracking numbers or codes to your ambassadors that they can use in social content, so if their followers make a purchase using those codes, you can track it back to the ambassador.

Step 8

Fulfil your promises

Honour your agreement with **successful ambassadors** within the agreed upon time frame. Delivering on your end of the bargain too late will have a serious impact (word-of-mouth travels, remember!).

Step 9

Review the numbers

Review your sales figures and the performance of your **first ambassadors** and apply any actionable insights or learnings to your

Step 10

Rinse and repeat

Do it all again with a bigger group because you're ready to scale up!

Key Takeaways

Creating a **brand ambassador program** for your company is a time-consuming but very rewarding effort. Choosing a centralised referral solution for your brand ambassador program can take the load off your shoulders so that you can focus on what matters the most for your online store and brand.

Remember to keep these points in mind:

- Choose your brand ambassadors wisely, they must be passionate about your products!
- Start with a small group
- Provide resources and tools
- Give your ambassadors enough freedom to create
- Provide a support channel and / or a help community
- Track and measure the performance
- Use actionable insights to optimise your strategy

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www.inbassador.io