

CANINE CORNER

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Canine Influencers

Have you heard of the term 'influencer?' In social media this is typically a person, and sometimes a celebrity, who will encourage buying decisions by promoting or recommending a product or service to their followers.

But, I wonder, is there such a thing as a canine influencer in New Zealand?

I asked this question on social media to find an answer. Here's what I discovered:

- There are lots of people who have social media pages for their dogs to share photos and adventures. A handful are documenting their journeys with dog training or dealing with especially reactive dogs. These people are not influencers as such, but are happy to have a number of followers.
- The vast majority of respondents felt that Instagram was the best platform for influencers. Photos, and lots of them, are critical.
- There is no such thing as the Kim Kardashian of dogs. Influencing in New Zealand tends to be more about having a page with lots of activity and where the person controlling the pages engages with followers by responding to their comments, questions and likes.
- Page followers in NZ expect to be followed in return, building connections.
- A solid influencer page in NZ would expect to have approximately 5,000 or more followers.
- A lucky few pages may have posted content which has 'gone viral' for one reason or another. If they do, they are more likely to have followers living abroad but the chances of becoming an influencer on the world stage are very minimal.
- Influencers tend to develop relationships with suppliers who will sponsor their posts when their products are featured and, on Instagram, this relationship is also promoted in the about section of the page.
- Brands and businesses may seek out a popular page to develop a sponsorship arrangement, thus buying the recommendation of the influencer.

Pascaléné Houseman is the author of Nadira's Instagram page ([nadira_the_kiwi_collie](https://www.instagram.com/nadira_the_kiwi_collie)). She says, "I first joined Instagram because Nadira just seemed to be a natural at posing for photos and very quickly her page overtook my personal page.

"I would never have thought our account would grow into what it is today. I created a dog account for the simple reason of sharing her antics growing up without spamming Facebook and also to meet



Nadira at agility.

like-minded people and friends. I think kindness and engaging posts are a good thing for taking a step into the influencing world. Also honesty!"

At time of writing Nadira has 5,400 followers with links to show four different sponsorship arrangements. 🐾



A sponsored post on Nadira's page featuring Nadira with bags of the sponsor's dog food.