Influencer firms look within to boost brand performance

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In-house analytics platforms can help improve control and reduce the turnaround time

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Talent management agencies such as Pocket Aces and Collective Artists Network that once depended on software companies for tracking and analysing influencer marketing campaigns are aggressively moving to bring those capabilities in-house.

Pocket Aces recently switched to its own analytics tool, gaining control over its influencer data. Collective Artists Network acquired software-as-a-service (SaaS) analytics startup Galleri5 last year, and Only Much Louder (OML) is developing a proprietary tool for better insights. Talent management agencies have traditionally depended on data-driven insights from SaaS platforms to pitch influencer marketing campaigns to brands. But an in-house analytics platform can help improve control, reduce the turnaround time, and manage costs better, said Viraj Sheth, chief executive and co-founder of Monk Entertainment, a talent management and influencer marketing company.

"About 80% of our tracking is internal. External platforms are good for macro benchmarking, but day-to-day decisions need tighter, first-party control," Sheth said. Pocket Aces's chief business officer Vinay Pillai said it previously used multiple SaaS platforms to analyse data on its creators, create data-backed presentations to pitch ideas to brands, and measure how well a marketing campaign fared. "To subscribe to such SaaS platforms, we would pay around ₹7 lakh every year. Besides, there was a limit to how the data was presented according to their model, not as per our needs," said Pillai. "Since we were remoulding a publicly available dataset into our template anyway, six months ago, we decided to build our own platform that catered to our needs and give

In-house software allows talent management agencies to enforce their own encryption standards.   ISTOCKPHOTO

us more autonomy on the data and information we need," he added.

OML already uses in-house programmes for automated data collection and analysis even as it builds proprietary software, allowing it to measure how creators influence a customer's purchase decision. "We're seeing increased recognition of assisted conversions, where a creator might not drive the final click but deeply influences purchase intent," said Devarshi Shah, OML's chief growth officer.

"For talent management agencies, since they have to use data more resourcefully on a long-term basis, it makes more sense for them to make such software in-house rather than continuously rent it out," said Amiya Swarup, partner, marketing advisory, EY.

Besides, relying on third-party analytics vendors often introduces risks like data leakage or unclear storage practices, said Munish Vaid, vice president, Primus Partners Pvt. Ltd, a management consultancy. In-house software allows talent management agencies to enforce their own encryption standards and internal controls, which are crucial given the growing regulatory pressure

on data sovereignty, he added.

Also, "when a company controls its analytics infrastructure end-to-end, it can adapt faster without depending on external vendors to update their systems", said Vaid. "It also ensures continuity of historical data, which is often a blind spot when platforms impose restrictions." Rahul Regulapati, founder of Galleri5, highlighted the importance of data as brands allocate higher budgets for influencer-led marketing strategies. "If I'm working with 1,000 creators, no brand is in any position to go through them manually. Data becomes the single biggest way to measure if something is working," he said. "Analytics is becoming central to budget reallocation—it's how brands prove RoI (return on investment) and justify increased spend."

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ENHANCED CONTROL			
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