

Boosting Homeownership Marketing with Influencer Strategies

Iowa Finance Authority

Communications: Integrated Campaign

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With the rapid growth of influencer marketing shaping digital platforms and the consumer buying journey, the **Welcome Home, Iowa** influencer campaign was created to build on our existing, and successful, Homeownership Marketing Campaign. The influencer program addresses the growing impact of everchanging consumer behavior on digital platforms, **increase brand awareness**, and align with our overall strategic goal to increase the number of homebuyers purchasing a home using an IFA mortgage program.

Through our Homeownership Marketing Campaign, we are optimizing homebuyer marketing strategies – including leveraging the power of predictive data to hone in on precise targeting. This innovative approach ranks Iowans based on various factors and those most likely to relocate within the next six months. A monumental component to our overall targeting and marketing strategy led by Emigrait, an Iowa-based Tech-Star accelerator start-up. **Our goal for closed loans through our marketing strategy, set through June 2025, is already surpassing expectations - remarkably, 47% closed loans match rate from predictive data.**

The Homeownership Marketing Campaign is a multi-channel campaign across an integrated marketing campaign, incorporating tactics such as:

- Display Ads with retargeting strategy, and Social Media Ads and Google Ads
- Marketing Funnel featuring financial literacy information
- Videos showcasing individuals in our target market
- **ENHANCED: Preferred Lender Network and marketing opportunities**
- Eligibility Quick Check, High-Value Homebuyer Lead Generation System linking directly to Preferred Lenders
- **NEW: Influencer Marketing using past homeowners and partner network**

With the addition of influencer strategies into our homeownership marketing, we can leverage an untapped channel of communication through Iowa homeowners and our partner network to **build awareness**, trust and credibility of our brand to further drive potential leads into closing a loan.

INNOVATION: Welcome Home, Iowa Influencer Strategies

Goal: Harness the powers of effective influencer marketing strategies to amplify our Homeownership Marketing Campaign using two objectives:

1. Transform Iowa homeowners who are past participants of our programs into IFA homeownership influencers.
2. Activate our network of partners as IFA advocates to generate authentic, influencer-style content.

Objective 1: Homeowners

For a stronger and more personal connection to our audience, we leaned into the power of storytelling to feature homebuyers who purchased within the last 3 years using an IFA program. Out of 35 interested individuals, we selected one to collaborate with on multiple Facebook posts and Instagram stories through June in exchange for a \$500 gift card, provided through our marketing agency.

Our quantitative goal was to maintain or exceed benchmark for engagement rate (ER), a metric that reflects user engagement and behavior on social media posts. The average nano-influencer, those who have between 1,000-10,000 followers, generally holds an average ER benchmark between 1-3%.

Influencer Results:

Our pilot IFA influencer generated an **average engagement rate per reach of 4.49%**. One Facebook post **reached 3,019 accounts** (52% of viewers were followers; 48% were non-followers) with an incredible **4.90% engagement rate** and **68 post link clicks** to our webpage that specifically funnels potential leads into our homeownership marketing campaign.

One Instagram story generated **432 views in 24 hours**. **28%** of those viewers further engaged in a "sticker tap," directing them to the IFA profile page to learn more about homeownership opportunities through our social media content.

"Several friends and family members reach out to me directly via text and in person to ask about these programs since seeing my post, which shows the content is sparking genuine interest beyond just social media engagement." - Feedback provided directly from influencer.

Objective 2: Partner Network

We have cultivated a strong network of lenders, ambassadors and realtors who are natural advocates for IFA. To enhance our marketing efforts, creating a mutually beneficial opportunity for our partners was a top priority for this initiative.

The Homeownership Marketing Campaign gives our partners access to high-quality leads and meaningful connections with potential homeowners through our Eligibility Quick Check. Meanwhile, IFA is able to strengthen the reach and effectiveness of our marketing efforts, reinforcing our collective ability to make homeownership more accessible across Iowa.

Results of High-Value Homebuyer Lead Generation System (previous 9 months)

- **4,948** leads sent to lenders through Eligibility Quick Check, around a **20% increase** compared to previous 9 months.
- **92** leads sent to lenders through Eligibility Quick Check resulted in closed loans.
- **Over 30% of loans closed were secured with a preferred lender.**

We reimagined our influencer strategy as a marketing opportunity for partners, allowing them to create and share influencer-style content on Facebook and Instagram. Selected posts were then integrated into

our social media strategy and amplified through boosted Facebook ads to maximize reach, engagement, and attract potential homebuyers to our marketing funnel.

Partner Boosted Content Results

Over four months, our boosted posts—featuring partner-generated short-form videos designed for awareness—garnered over **72,305 views** and **2,097 post link clicks** to our webpage that drives potential leads into our marketing funnel. With an incredible return on investment:

- **CPC** (cost per click) at \$0.43, **46.51% above benchmark**.
- **CPM** (ROI based on brand awareness) at \$8.65, **27.17% above benchmark**.
- Maintained a **2.02%** average click through rate.

Target Audience

By analyzing predictive insights and past closed loan data, we can refine our targeting with precision to better tailor our marketing strategies and tactics to effectively reach our target audience's demographic, as data shows that the average first-time homebuyer is 32 years old. According to [Pew Research](#), **78% of U.S. adults age 30-49 use Facebook**, strengthening our use of influencer strategies. Utilizing this trending data further drives our strategy to enhance our target audience's engagement through influencer collaborations, particularly on Facebook.

Our approach to engaging our target audience for this specific campaign unfolds in two phases: (1) activating past homebuyers and partners as IFA influencers to gain interest in advocating for IFA beyond closing the loan and, (2) leveraging their reach to connect with potential homebuyers. By nurturing our homebuyers and partner network, we are able to deliver significant value across the board.

Benefits Outweigh the Costs

Through smaller influencers, with a highly engaged audience, we can effectively maximize reach to our target audience while minimizing our resource allocation. The program has already demonstrated significant impact, delivering extraordinary results and presenting new opportunities to expand our marketing efforts through relationship building and content generation.

What We've Learned and How to Replicate

Our learnings support the growing trend that consumers want to be influenced by a person, not a brand. With our homebuyers and partner network, we can generate meaningful content, that can also be repurposed in future homeownership marketing - and maximize our resources to ensure a high return on investment - all while empowering Iowans to achieve their homeownership dreams.



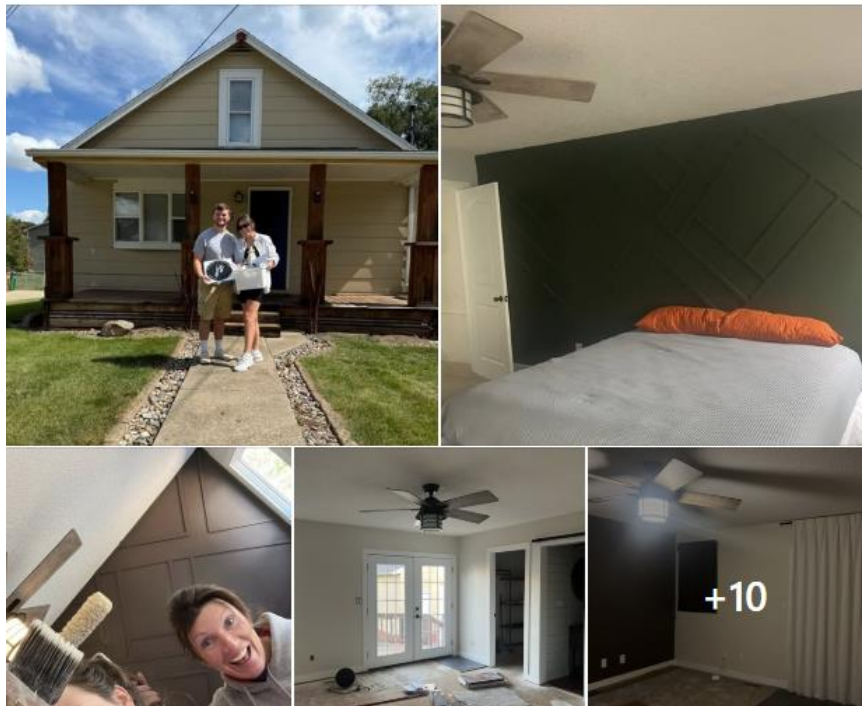
I grew up on a farm in small town Iowa and was worried about being able to afford the city lifestyle and a home when I moved to Des Moines. But thanks to the Iowa Finance Authority's programs, I qualified for a program that made homeownership possible sooner than I expected.

Now, I get to live in a space I love, invest in it, and build equity—all while settling into a city that feels like home.

I'm proud to share my story and show that owning a home in Iowa could be more achievable than you think.

Visit <https://www.iowafinance.com/welcomehome/> to learn more.

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