



Hermes Awards 2022
The Hoffman Agency
Client: Nautilus, Inc. (Bowflex)
Category: 140 (Social Influencer)

From Water Jugs to Dumbbells — Bowflex Influencers Bring Fitness Home

Amid the COVID-19 pandemic, people's lives were upended as quarantine and stay-at-home mandates rippled across the world. As gyms and fitness boutiques began to close their doors, the demand for home fitness products soared.

Along with toilet paper and Clorox Wipes, snagging a pair of dumbbells became the equivalent of scoring Taylor Swift concert tickets — nearly impossible. In an effort to stay fit, people turned to water jugs as weights, laundry detergent as kettlebells and the staircase as a stair stepper.

The Hoffman Agency saw a natural opportunity to insert Nautilus, Inc.'s Bowflex products into the social media conversation around staying active and healthy during the pandemic — not only for one's physical but one's mental health as well. Further, the opportunity served as a way to help consumers in need attain workout products that may have been out of stock or unaffordable.

We proposed a collaboration with select social media influencers to implement the "Bowflex At Home" social campaign by giving away high-value fitness equipment, such as the Bowflex SelectTech dumbbells, on influencers' channels.

The 30-day campaign aimed to establish Bowflex as a trusted fitness brand, while helping influencers and their followers continue their fitness journey from their homes, despite the quarantine.

Bringing Bowflex Home

With limited product inventory and no budget for paid partnerships, we vetted our influencer relationships to determine who had a following that would warrant a giveaway.

First, we calculated the influencer's potential cost per post and compared it to the price for the product. For example, lifestyle influencer Maddie Perry had 239,000 Instagram followers, so her cost per post was around \$716.25 - \$1,193.75. If we were to send her two Bowflex SelectTech 552 dumbbells priced at \$349 (one for herself and one for the giveaway winner), that equaled around \$698 plus shipping. With this in mind, we would move forward since it was likely that she would agree to the trade opportunity given the cost of product and demand, along with her rate.

Second, we vetted influencers based on current brand relationships. While actor and fitness influencer Jay Hector had only 38,000 followers on Instagram, he had a long-standing relationship with Bowflex. While his cost per post didn't equal the value of two sets of dumbbells, we knew he would over-deliver based on our history, relationship and his above-average engagement rate.

Based on the product cost, current relationship, and influencer following and engagement, we targeted fitness and lifestyle influencers who had between 30,000 – 300,000 Instagram followers. We also targeted influencers with an average to above-average engagement rate utilizing the influencer platform Phlanx.

Given this was a non-paid collaboration, we enticed the influencers by offering a product for themselves. Our outreach communication touched on this while highlighting how this giveaway could help their followers in a time of need:

Subject: Bowflex Giveaway Opportunity






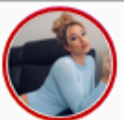


Hi, Maddie – Hope you are staying safe and healthy!

I wanted to reach out to see if you would be interested in hosting a Bowflex giveaway for your Instagram followers with either the [Bowflex SelectTech 554 dumbbells](#) or [840 Kettlebell](#). Right now, it is vital to keep a sense of normalcy and stay active for our mental and physical health in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. This can give your followers the opportunity to work out from their home given the recent social-distancing measures.

If interested, I'd be happy to outline the details!

Best,
Mikaela

Of the 25 influencers we targeted, 23 jumped on board immediately to host giveaways — an impressive 92% response rate, thanks to our long history and relationship with them (below is a sample of who we partnered with):

 Michelle Woolfolk Fitness Influencer 643,000 followers	 Chris Gorham Actor 329,000 followers	 Ebenezer Samuel Men's Health Fitness Director 296,000 followers	 Rachel Graham, Fitness influencer 272,000 followers
 Maddie Perry Lifestyle Influencer 232,000 followers	 Nikki Blades Lifestyle Influencer 189,000 followers	 Charlee Atkins Personal Trainer 78,000 followers	 Sam Turnbull Wellness Influencer 89,100 followers

Based on product cost, relationship, and the influencer's following/engagement rate, we outlined specific deliverables in exchange for product(s). We left the giveaway guidelines up to the influencer's discretion, trusting their approach based on our previous relationships and being respectful of the fact that this was an unpaid collaboration. However, we asked that one of the entry terms was for followers to tag and follow @Bowflex and use the #BowflexAtHome hashtag. Additionally, making it clear that the giveaway was associated with Bowflex per FTC regulations.

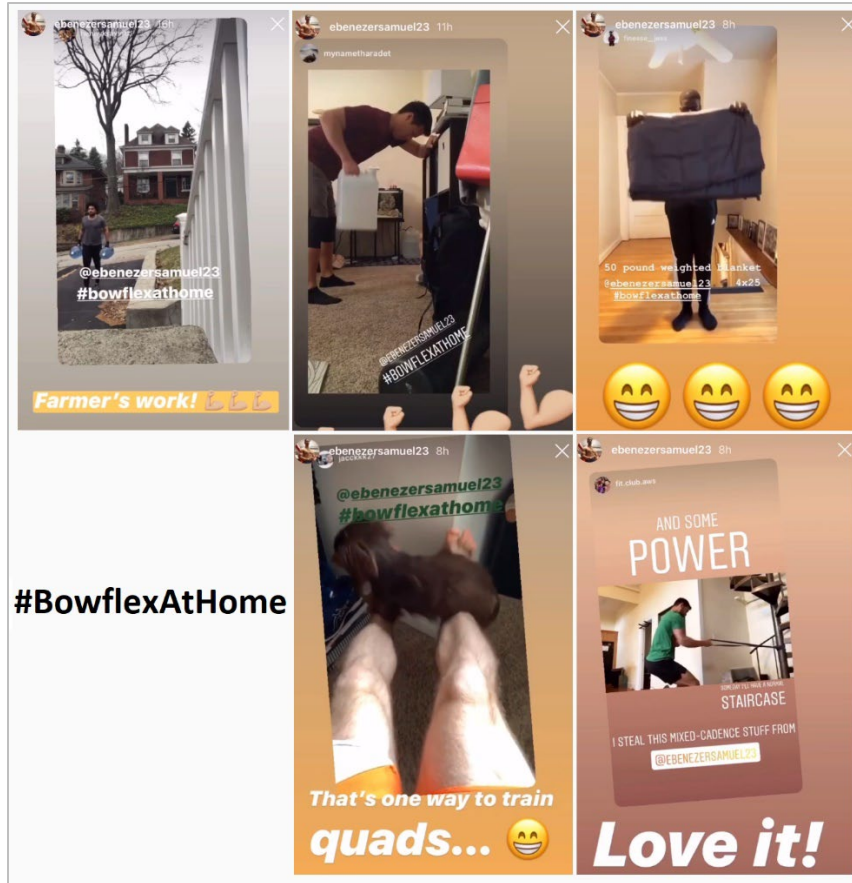
Give a Little, Get a Lot

Our campaign was off and running, and the first round of influencer outreach was gaining traction. Most chose to post above and beyond what we outlined, grateful to offer their followers a solution for staying active and healthy while sheltering in place.



One post that stood out was from fitness influencer and Men's Health fitness director [Ebenezer Samuel](#) who shared the Bowflex SelectTech 560 dumbbells giveaway on his Instagram and encouraged followers to use the #BowflexAtHome hashtag, while explaining why they needed the dumbbells. Further, he asked followers to post an Instagram story video of how they were training despite having limited fitness equipment.

The results were *swole*. The #BowflexAtHome hashtag was featured across Instagram stories and timelines with followers sharing how they were staying fit during quarantine, including lifting weighted blankets, water jugs and their pets. **This post alone garnered an estimated 1,400 entries.**



#BowflexAtHome









Following the giveaways, we soon found ourselves sifting through daily emails with requests from high-profile influencers, NFL, NBA and MLB athletes, celebrities, and reality TV stars. Suddenly, things were looking really different — singer Kesha, Olympic gold medalist Ryan Murphy, Netflix’s “Love is Blind” cast members and many others were knocking on our door.

For the first time, working with top-tier influencers was attainable without payment; however, we didn’t want to pursue just any influencers. These influencers needed to showcase the following:

- Bowflex’s brand values and mission
- Relevant fitness content with consistent authenticity
- High engagement and post frequency (based on Phlanx engagement calculator)
- Professionalism and responsiveness

Based on these factors, we moved ahead with another select group of top-tier influencers.

While we had initially begun the campaign with 23 influencers, we later expanded the #BowflexAtHome campaign beyond product giveaways and welcomed 20 new top-tier influencers into our program within the 30 days:

 <p>Keegan Allen Actor 6.6 million followers</p>	 <p>Gregg Sulkin Actor 4.7 million followers</p>	 <p>Mike "The Situation" Sorrentino MTV's "Jersey Shore" 3 million followers</p>	 <p>Kesha Celebrity singer 2.9 million followers</p>
 <p>Lauren Hamilton Netflix's "Love is Blind" cast member 2.2 million followers</p>	 <p>Lauren Luyendyk ABC's "The Bachelor" Contestant 977,000 followers</p>	 <p>Karen Fukuhara Actress 320,000 followers</p>	 <p>Captain Lee Rosbach Bravo's "Below Deck" Cast Member 650,000 followers</p>

By the close of the month-long giveaway campaign, the numbers proved just how far we moved the needle. **Our 23 influencer collaborations ultimately shared 106 Instagram timeline and story posts — generating a total of 45,348 giveaway entries and reaching 7.9 million followers.** It's safe to say we ended the 30-day campaign on a high note.

Our 30-day campaign transcended into an ongoing top-tier campaign the following months. We had collectively worked with **43 influencers, reached 39.3 million followers across 150 Instagram timeline posts and stories.**

Our campaign not only netted a reach of 40 million consumers, but it also helped influence sales and validated purchase decisions. These results were front and center in the deck presented to the Nautilus board of directors.

Nautilus, Inc.'s Bowflex products were a part of an ongoing social media conversation around staying active and healthy during the pandemic. While it initially aimed to establish Bowflex as a trusted fitness brand, it is safe to say the campaign did that and then some.

Lastly, it served as the springboard for us to make the case for an expanded influencer program including paid and unpaid partnerships that has kept the brand in the conversation and in people's homes, as we move out of the pandemic.