CASE STUDY: DARN GOOD YARN

How GRIN Helps a Socially-Conscious Business Change Women's Lives

WHO IS DARN GOOD YARN?

Entrepreneur Nicole Snow wanted to start a socially-conscious brand that could make a global impact. In 2008, she started Darn Good Yarn to fulfill that mission. The company was the perfect way to combine her passion for crafting with her deep desire to create sustainable crafting materials that helps struggling women find economic security.

Darn Good Yarn is a Shopify store that sells sustainably produced yarn handspun by women in India. Through developing relationships with Indian suppliers, the company is able to provide work for women who are living under the oppression and poverty caused by the caste system. That's where Nicole and her vision for Darn Good Yarn came in. After learning that there were women in need who were also very talented with yarn and textiles, she and her suppliers were able to provide regular work creating beautifully colored, eco-friendly products.

16X
INFLUENCER GROWTH

+20%
SUBSCRIPTION SALES GROWTH

100
HOURS SAVED PER WEEK

2,000+
INFLUENCER CONTENT CREATED

ABOUT DARN GOOD YARN'S INFLUENCER MARKETING PROGRAM

As the brand grew, Darn Good Yarn decided it needed to expand its marketing plan. Their yarn is visually appealing, so they wanted content showing off the colors and textures. And because the product appeals to crafters, it was also important to come up with content that displayed finished projects using the yarn.

Unfortunately, a small staff made using employee time to create finished projects and do formal product photoshoots difficult. That's why the company was pleased to discover that their fans were already creating the content they needed. Knitters regularly posted on social media featuring the yarn--which was the exact kind of content the company was looking for.

DIY influencers have a small but passionate followers--even micro and nano influencers have a fiercely devoted group of fans who regularly look to them for recommendations, patterns and creative inspiration. These influencers were already great at producing visually-stunning photos that resonate with their highly-targeted audience. So, for Darn Good Yarn, using influencer marketing to get their content was a no-brainer.

THE CHALLENGE

> *I think in the beginning we really struggled with getting the right content out of our influencers, especially when you have a product that can be interpreted in so many different ways.*
>
> - Keri, *Marketing Director*

When Darn Good Yarn began working with influencers, they did not have a systematic approach in place. Influencer outreach was conducted over email. Without a way for each team member to have visibility of the communications, there was a risk of redundancy, overlap or inconsistent messaging. This confusion could frustrate influencers, weakening the relationship.

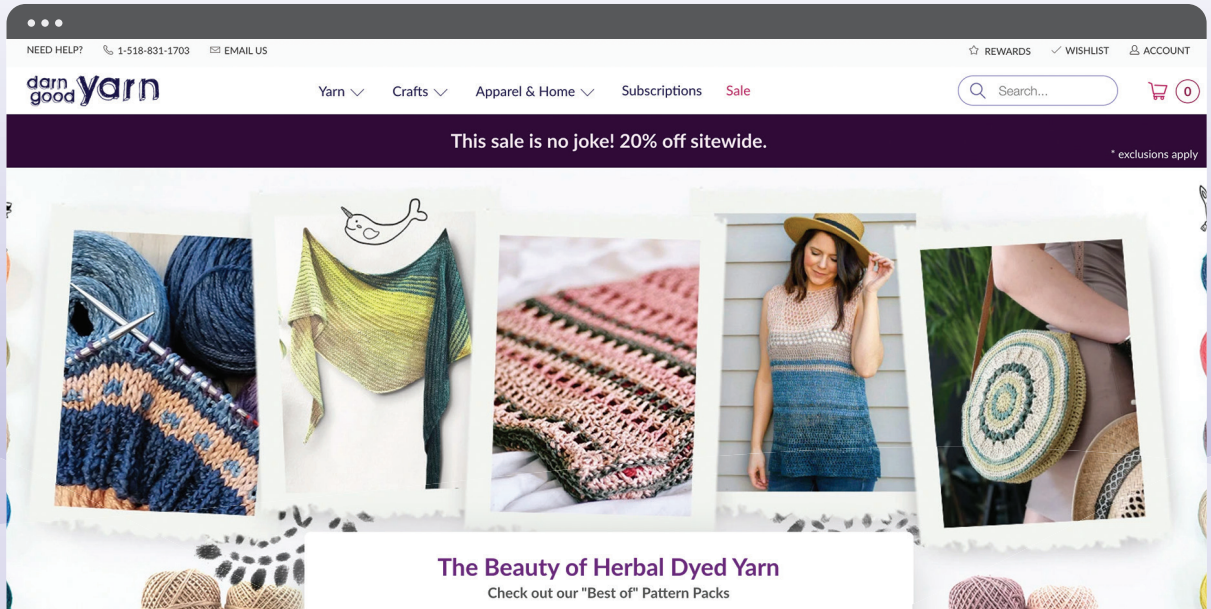
Another problem was that their influencers didn't always create the content they wanted. Because they were new at influencing, they were not always experienced with creating content with a brand in mind.

Darn Good Yarn also needed a collection of evergreen content that could be used on their website to attract and delight customers--usually in the form of knitting or crochet patterns. Paying someone to create patterns for the site would be expensive, so the company needed a way to use influencers to source this type of valuable evergreen resource.

The company finally realized that there were too many aspects of their influencer program that were tracked in different programs:

- ★ Outreach was done via email and communications were hard to track
- ★ Influencer information and statistics was tracked with a spreadsheet
- ★ Payments to influencers were made via PayPal
- ★ Promo codes and affiliate links worked through the Shopify store

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THE SOLUTION

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- ★ Carefully track influencer communications and relationship building
- ★ Organize their existing influencer content
- ★ Have a birds-eye view of the content each partner posted
- ★ Keep track of evergreen content
- ★ Streamline the team's workflow by centralizing everything in one place

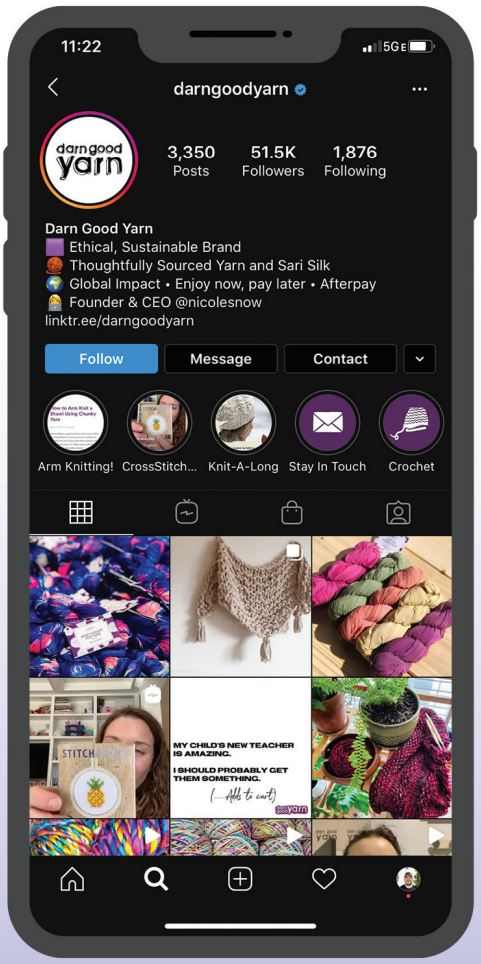
GRIN's comprehensive software allowed the company to streamline everything they were doing into one platform. Each of the tasks being handled with separate platforms now could come together in one central, transparent and easy to use system.

GRIN MAKES ORGANIZING CONTENT EASIER

Remembering that content creation was the company's initial priority, GRIN's content storage features allow the Darn Good Yarn team to easily audit and evaluate their content.

"When we switched to GRIN and it was really awesome because the deliverables are right there built within GRIN," said Keri. The fact that content can be filtered by the colors in the picture was especially helpful in designing colorful and appealing campaigns.

GRIN also helped the company solve its influencer management problems. Managing campaigns became easier because GRIN automatically pulls in the content influencers are posting, making it easy to organize. By having all of the content in a centralized location, it was easier for the team to see what each content producer was doing with their campaigns and stepping in to offer guidance when necessary. The GRIN software also made it easier to manage content from more than one social media platform.



THE SOLUTION

SHOPIFY INTEGRATION YIELDS BIG BENEFITS

GRIN's Shopify integration was indispensable. The software helped with the heavy lifting in the more technical aspects of running a campaign. They were able to make product orders directly in GRIN while tracking influencer performance with discount codes and affiliate links. When a customer clicks an influencer's link, that information is automatically pushed into the Shopify store dashboard. Paying influencers is made simple because of the GRIN software. GRIN tracks commissions and allows you the ability to issue the payments to influencers from the software.

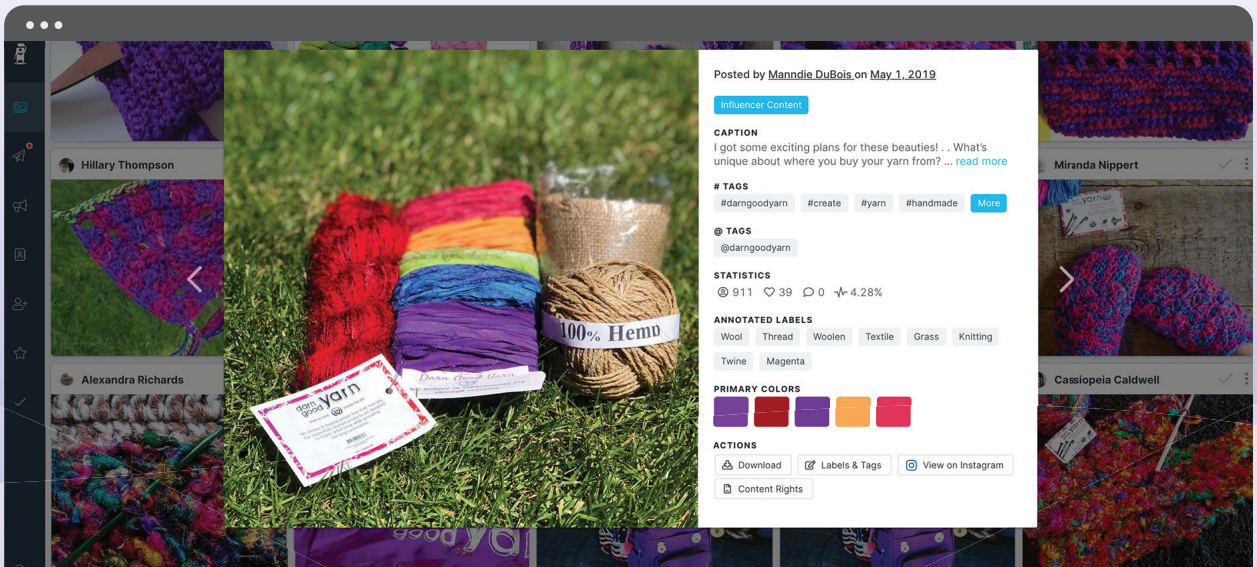
GRIN OFFERS FUNCTIONALITY WITHOUT LIMITATIONS

When the founder was searching for influencer marketing SaaS, she felt that the other options were limited in some way. They either limited the number of influencers or campaigns they could track. GRIN has no restrictions on the number of campaigns. This made it much easier to scale the influencer program.

SOCIAL LISTENING WITH GRIN STRENGTHENS INFLUENCER RELATIONSHIPS

> *"I think one of the awesome ways for us to stay on top of conversations happening in social media is for us to use the social listening tool within GRIN. It really gives us an opportunity to find someone, especially as we're working with micro and nano influencers who've maybe already been introduced to the brand, but we can kind of build that next step in the relationship with us."*
>
> - Keri, *Marketing Director*

GRIN's social listening capabilities allow software users to stay on top of what's trending on social media. The brand can keep track of its influence around the internet by tracking. It also helps the brand identify niche nano and micro-influencers during social networking.





THE RESULTS

As a result of GRIN's robust array of features, Darn Good Yarn is able to fully leverage their influencer marketing program to its greatest potential. By taking advantage of GRIN's analytics and reports, the company can identify which influencers are most effective and strengthen those relationships.

Some influencers have become like friends. In reference to one influencer, Zelda, Keri said:

> *"She's so cool. And we found her because she was actually a customer and had gotten a product of ours and did this video...she was just so real and authentic that we reached out to her and she's turned into one of our most successful influencers to date. I always love getting emails from her."*

Another positive result of GRIN's reporting capabilities was that the team got a clearer picture of what types of creatives are successful and on which platforms. "We find different aesthetics work with different interest groups...I think that's strong for us because as a team we know, okay, we need more of this, so let's go get our influencers on it."

The Darn Good Yarn team was especially impressed with the ease of the GRIN customer onboarding process. Because the team found the software to be intuitive, it was easy for them to import their existing influencers and start to use the program for communication. As they learned to use all of GRIN's features, Nicole's team caught on quickly. "Oh my gosh, with GRIN, everything is really clearly laid out. So it's kind of intuitive and how you operate and use it."

GRIN's ease of use is what allowed the company's influencer marketing program to scale rapidly. The number of influencers grew a whopping 700 percent after introducing GRIN to their workflow.

WHY CHOOSE GRIN?

With the help of GRIN, Darn Good Yarn was able to realize the goal of helping the world in more ways than one. Not only has they grown a retail business with eco-friendly products, but they provided vital, steady income for women in India.

The company also made a financial impact on the lives of Darn Good Yarn's influencers as well. Nicole often evangelizes the power of GRIN to her friends and other business owners:

> *"I describe it to a friend or maybe someone that's new to influencer marketing as a way to monetize what you're doing. You know, a lot of people have their side hustles going on and I have so many friends that say, "I'm doing this and I have my full-time job but I don't know how to make this bigger." And it's always like, all right, you need to go check out GRIN and because you're going to find that you can connect with so many brands or even other influencers to really grow your reach and your following. And maybe, you know, hopefully, one day you can actually turn that into your full-time job."*

If you want to see how GRIN can help you make an impact on the world, contact us today to set up a demo.