

Rhode brand's social media communication strategy in the American market (2025)

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Over the past decade, the American beauty market has been reshaped by social media platforms that now function not only as ad channels, but as primary spaces for trend formation and brand building. Instagram, TikTok and YouTube have become crucial touchpoints where consumers encounter new brands, compare opinions and make purchase decisions instantly. Influencer-founded beauty brands have emerged as some of the most dynamic players in the American market. These brands are often built around a highly visible founder whose personal image becomes inseparable from the brand identity. Rhode, the minimalist skincare brand created by model and influencer Hailey Bieber, is a striking example of this phenomenon.

The aim of this paper is to analyse Rhode's social media communication strategy in the American market in 2025, when the brand underwent major changes in ownership and distribution while continuing to rely on social-first marketing. The empirical part relies on qualitative analysis of Rhode's official social media content published in 2025, with special attention to campaigns that targeted American audiences.

In 2025 Rhode reached an important turning point. On the one hand, the brand was acquired by e.l.f. Beauty in a deal valued at about one billion dollars [1]. On the other hand, Rhode prepared to move from a purely direct-to-consumer model into Sephora stores across the US, which meant that its online communication now had to support a large retail launch. Still, the brand continued to rely heavily on social media to reach its core audience.

Industry analyses published in 2025 describe Rhode as a «community-first» and «social-first» brand. According to an Influencity report, the brand reached about 212 million dollars in earned media value (EMV), with year-on-year growth of more than 300%, and positioned itself as one of the top performers in its category [2]. Commentators directly link this result to Rhode's communication strategy, which is based on relatability, strong founder presence and active work with its creator community.

A key feature of Rhode's social media communication in 2025 is the central role of Hailey Bieber herself. Analyses note that Hailey basically «is» Rhode. Her own TikTok account with more than 15 million followers remains the main driver of attention for the brand. All the content is usually filmed in a casual style. This aesthetic supports the «clean girl» message that has been associated with Hailey for several years.

On Instagram, Rhode's communication in 2025 focuses on building a coherent brand world. The official @rhode account combines several types of content: close-up product shots in soft neutral colours, short Reels with application tips, reposted creator content and mood images that reflect the brand's lifestyle. The grid is kept visually consistent. Products are often photographed on bathroom shelves or simply in hands which makes the pictures easy to replicate. This visual strategy directly encourages user-generated content: if followers can recreate the same kind of

photo at home, they are more likely to post about their Rhode routines.

On TikTok Rhode follows a slightly different logic. Hailey's GRWM videos are described as raw, unfiltered and non-salesy, with the focus on the founder's face and texture of the products rather than on slogans. This creates the effect of watching a friend's routine rather than a traditional advertisement. Rhode's own TikTok account then builds on this foundation: it reposts fragments from Hailey's content, publishes tips from other creators and adds short educational clips about ingredients or new launches.

Influencer-generated content remains one of the main tools of Rhode's social media communication in 2025. A Lefty case study shows that product seeding and affiliate programmes played an important role in the success of Rhode's key launches in the last 2 years [3]. Another important part of Rhode's communication strategy is active community management: Rhode frequently comments on posts from both big and small creators, responds to DMs to ask permission for reposts and thanks users for featuring its products.

Narratives around ethics and philanthropy also appear in Rhode's social media communication in 2025, although they do not dominate the feed. Posts about the Rhode Futures Foundation appear periodically on Instagram and in Stories and are usually tied to awareness days [4]. In these posts the brand reminds followers that at least 1% of sales is donated to partner organisations and briefly highlights who benefits from the programmes.

Overall, Rhode's social media communication strategy in the US in 2025 can be summarised as a combination of several elements: personality-centered; community-oriented; highly aesthetic, but still relatively unpolished; and it integrates value-based messages without making them the only focus. At the same time, this strategy has certain risks: Rhode heavily depends on the personal reputation of Hailey Bieber, as well as on the algorithms of a few key platforms. However, in 2025 the available data suggest that Rhode's approach remains effective. These observations allow us to see Rhode as a clear example of how a beauty brand can use social media communication to move from a niche DTC label to a major player in the American market.

Источники и литература

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