

The State of Creator Marketing

Trends and Trajectory
2024–2025



Introduction

Over the last decade, the ways that brands connect with consumers have fundamentally evolved.

For the first time, consumers could reach other consumers at a massive scale. Some of these consumers got very good at it.

Enter [creators](#).

To capture the forces behind this evolution, CreatorIQ partnered with Sapio Research to survey our biggest respondent pool yet: **1,138 brands, agencies, and creators**.

We studied responses from over 17 industries for a comprehensive look at how the creator economy has transformed and where it's going next. We've combined these timely insights with original research, as well as **five years of data** from surveys dating back to 2020.

Respondent Breakdown

1,138
Respondents

457
Brands

445
Agencies

231
Creators

Titles

35%
Executive

20%
VP/Director

34%
Manager

11%
Individual Contributor

Industries Represented

Media & Entertainment

Fashion & Apparel

Consumer Electronics

Automotive

Software, Technology, & Computing

Health & Wellness

Education

Travel & Hospitality

Retail

Beauty

Gaming

Sports

Business

Financial Services

Home & Garden

Food & Beverage

Telecommunications



For Standout Fortune 100 Brands, Creator Content Powered 12x Impressions, 17x Engagements, and 32x Post Count Versus Owned Content

One way to assess the impact of creator marketing is to see how it's changed the playing field for the world's biggest brands.

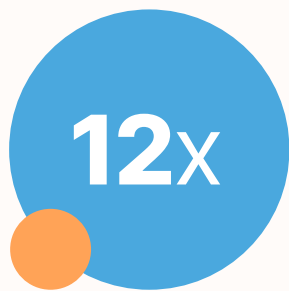
To identify just how potent creator content has become, and what a force creator marketing has been for connecting brands and consumers, CreatorIQ took a look at the engagements, impressions, and EMV* of the enterprise brands from the Top 100 of the Fortune 500 Companies

with the largest social media followings as tracked in our database. We compared TikTok and Instagram metrics from these brands' owned social channels to the impact of creators who posted about the same brands.

What we found underscored the power of creator marketing to disrupt traditional media, communication, and the flow of information.

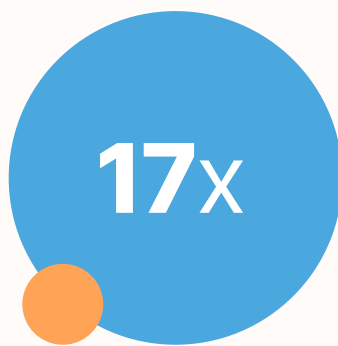
Fortune 100 Brands Vs. Creator Content

TikTok and Instagram | Jan–Aug 2024 | Global



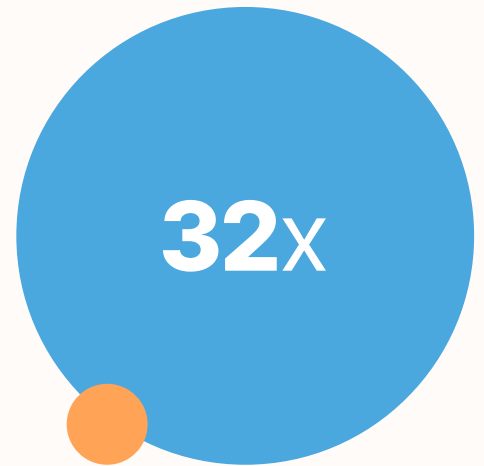
Impressions

15.7B Owned Content vs. **192.2B** Creator Content



Engagements

515.9M Owned Content vs. **8.8B** Creator Content



Post Count

2.0k Owned Content vs. **63.7k** Creator Content

*Earned Media Value (EMV) is a proprietary metric that measures engagement with branded social media content created and posted by a third party.

Leading Fortune 100 Brands We Tracked

Amazon	AT&T	Bank of America
Disney Parks	American Airlines Group	JPMorgan Chase
Disney Plus	Costco	Wells Fargo
Apple	Best Buy	General Motors
Nike	American Express	Walgreens
Walmart	Microsoft	State Farm Insurance
Target	Coca-Cola	Kroger
Google	Intel	Publix Super Markets
United Airlines Holdings	FedEx	Cisco Systems
Tesla	Home Depot	Albertsons
Ford Motor	HP	Pfizer
Nvidia	Lowe's	Johnson & Johnson
Delta Air Lines	IBM	CVS Health

For Standout Fortune 100 Brands, Creator Content Powered 20x the EMV as Owned Content

We had a feeling that creator content would outweigh the impact driven by Fortune 100 brands' owned social channels.

But we weren't prepared for multiples like this.

Creator Content Powered:

12x
Impressions

17x
Engagements

20x
Earned Media Value
(EMV)

Compared to Owned Content
from 39 of the top Fortune 100 brands

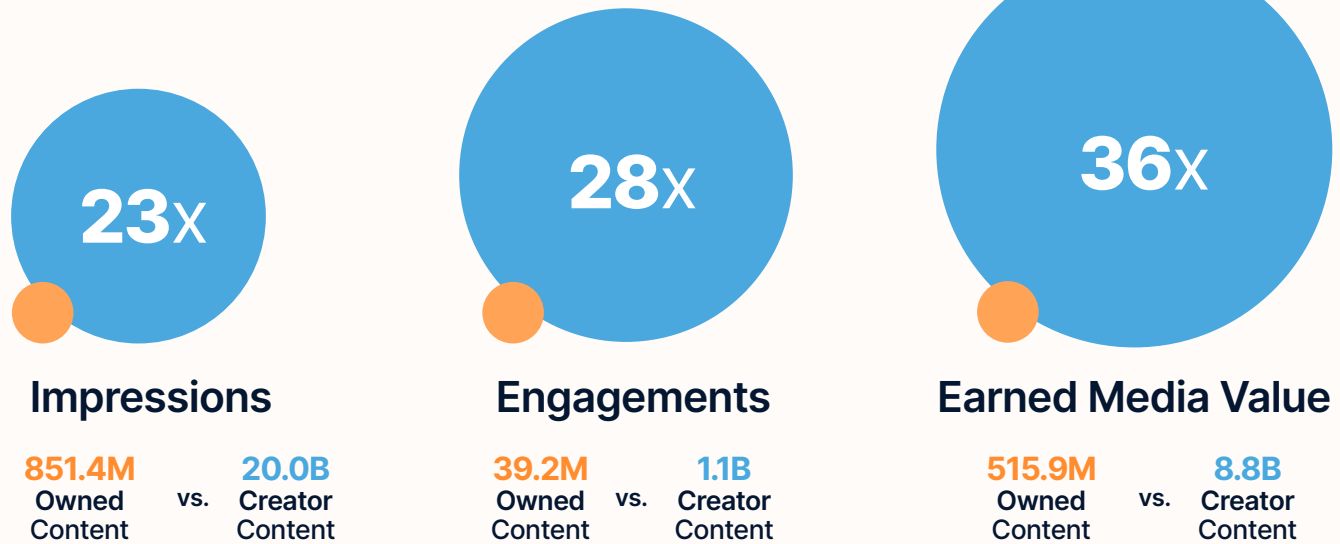
It might be hard to wrap your mind around these results.

Let's take a look at how this pattern unfolds for **Apple—the #3 company** on the Fortune 500 list, and #2 by EMV for the brands we tracked.

Apple

Owned Vs. Creator Content on TikTok and Instagram

Jan-Aug 2024 | Global



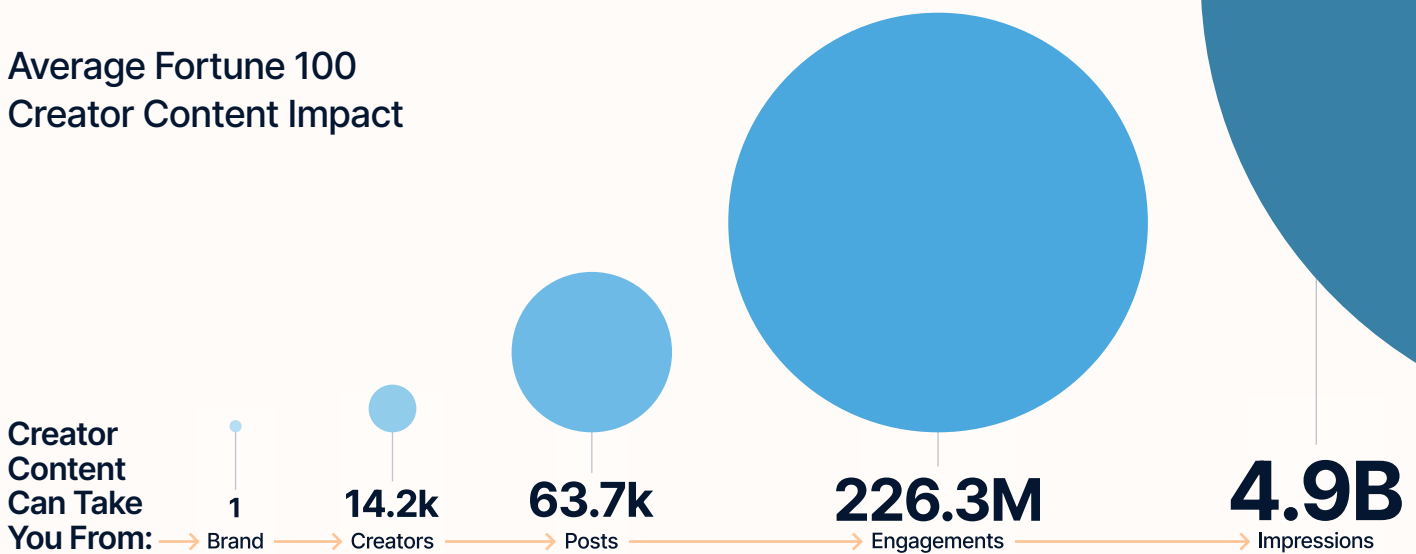
Creators generated 683x more posts than Apple's owned channels during the time period monitored—and that's the point. Creators help your brand be everywhere at once, amplifying mentions of your brand while keeping this content interesting and resonant with consumers.

Apologies to all the stellar social media managers out there—you're absolutely essential, but when it comes to viral reach, creator content beats brands' owned channels every time. After all, the message likeliest to reach your target consumers is the message created by the people who sit closest to them. In an evolving marketing ecosystem, those people are creators. And if your brand isn't taking that into account, it's time for a new strategy.



One Brand, 4.9B Impressions: The Future of Creator Marketing is **Content-First** and **Creator-Led**

Average Fortune 100
Creator Content Impact



If creator content can drive more impressions and engagements for the world's biggest brands than these brands can do on their own, then the way we think about creator marketing has to change. That's why for this year's report, we changed our approach.

We're at an inflection point: the creator economy is growing up. Traditional advertising might have placed organizations in the driver's seat, but a one-to-many approach to getting the word out and influencing consumer purchases isn't suited for the future.

Creators offer a new dynamic: many-to-many. This framework places greater emphasis on the sheer volume of content that creators produce, and the myriad ways this content can be leveraged. Through creator content, consumers are accessing branded communications that feel one-to-one while still operating at scale. With the power of information dissemination now in the hands of the creator, creator content will prove the key to ROI as the industry evolves.

94%

of organizations believe that creator content **drives more ROI than traditional digital advertising**

↑ 20% since 2023

The Future of Creator Marketing Is Content-First. **We've got the data to prove it.**

Executive Summary

Content Is King

For Leading Fortune 100 Brands, Creator Content Powered 17x the Engagements, 12x the Impressions as Owned Content

94% of Organizations Believe Creator Content Drives More ROI than Traditional Digital Advertising, Compared to 74% Last Year

Creator Marketing Contributed to the Highest-ROI Campaign for 70% of Brands At Large and 74% of Enterprise Brands

The creator economy is growing faster than ever before, with 74% of organizations increasing their creator marketing investment YoY. That means organizations need to think about risk mitigation in new ways.

With organizations securing greater investment in creator marketing programs, the challenge has become tracking creator marketing performance. For Enterprise Organizations, the top solution for tracking creator marketing performance is a creator marketing software platform. Meanwhile, the best approach to measurement for organizations at large is focusing on a combination of desirability metrics, like EMV and web traffic.

The shift toward social media platforms that prioritize engagement, as opposed to who you follow, means that creators' content is more impactful than ever before. The future of the creator economy is content-first and creator-led.

TikTok is the platform for experimentation. Still, dominant players like Instagram continue to show their value, while other social media platforms like YouTube also provide value for creators and brands. In all, 67% of creators use more video content than last year.

While each creator tier offers advantages, brands are strategically leveraging mid-tier creators (100-300k followers), who offer the highest ROI via authentic connections with followers, as well as established creators (300k-1M followers), who prove to be the most impactful recurring partners.

It's more important than ever to sweeten the deal with creator partners by investing in growth opportunities—the No. 1 factor for creators' satisfaction with brand partnerships.

Creator Marketing Is *Booming*

Creator Marketing Investment Has Increased 143% Over the Last Four Years

According to CreatorIQ's 2021 Influencer Marketing Trends survey, organizations' average annual investment in creator marketing was \$360.8k.

By 2024, this figure had surged 143% among organizations as a whole, and even more dramatically among enterprise* organizations, which reported an average \$1.7M spend on creator marketing.

This massive spike in just four years underscores how quickly the space is moving.

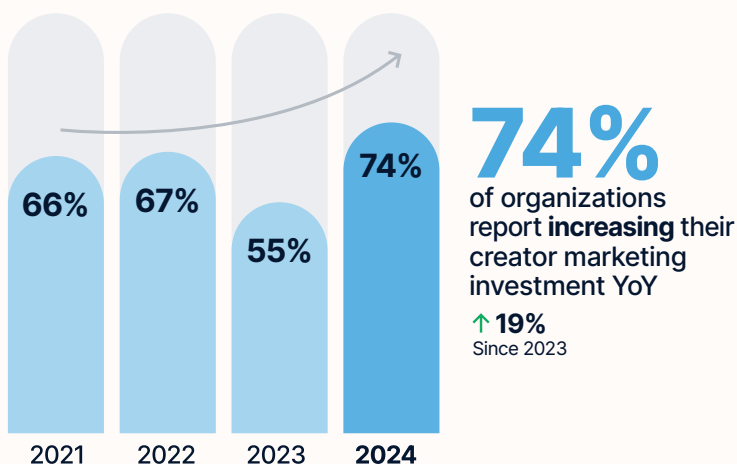
143%

Expansion in Creator Marketing Investment Since 2021

\$1.7M

Average Annual Spend for Enterprise Organizations in 2024

Since 2021, the Majority of Brands Have Reported YoY Increases in Annual Creator Marketing Investment



Organizations have reported creator marketing increases every year since 2020, but this year marks the largest spike yet—proof that despite its expansion, the industry still has even more room to grow.

74% of organizations reported increasing their creator marketing investment YoY, a rise of 19% from last year. This boost in creator marketing investment indicates that brands are climbing less of an uphill battle in securing budget, a point confirmed elsewhere in our survey.

*In this report, enterprise refers to organizations with more than 1000 employees.



78% of Organizations Expect to Invest More in Creator Marketing Over the Next Two Years

Like we said, creator marketing isn't slowing down anytime soon. When asked about their future plans, 78% of organizations expected to invest more in creator marketing over the next two years.

This trend is even more pronounced among respondents from enterprise brands. 78% of enterprise organizations reported already increasing their investment in creator marketing YoY, with the average enterprise respondent allocating 52% of its marketing budget to creator marketing.

Enterprise organizations expect to increase their investment in creator marketing to an even greater degree than organizations at large: 81% of enterprise respondents anticipated heightened creator marketing investment over the next two years, with 48% predicting that this investment would "increase significantly."

78% Organizations Overall

vs.

81% Enterprise Organizations

78% of organizations at large expect to **invest more in creator marketing** over the next two years, versus 81% of enterprise organizations.



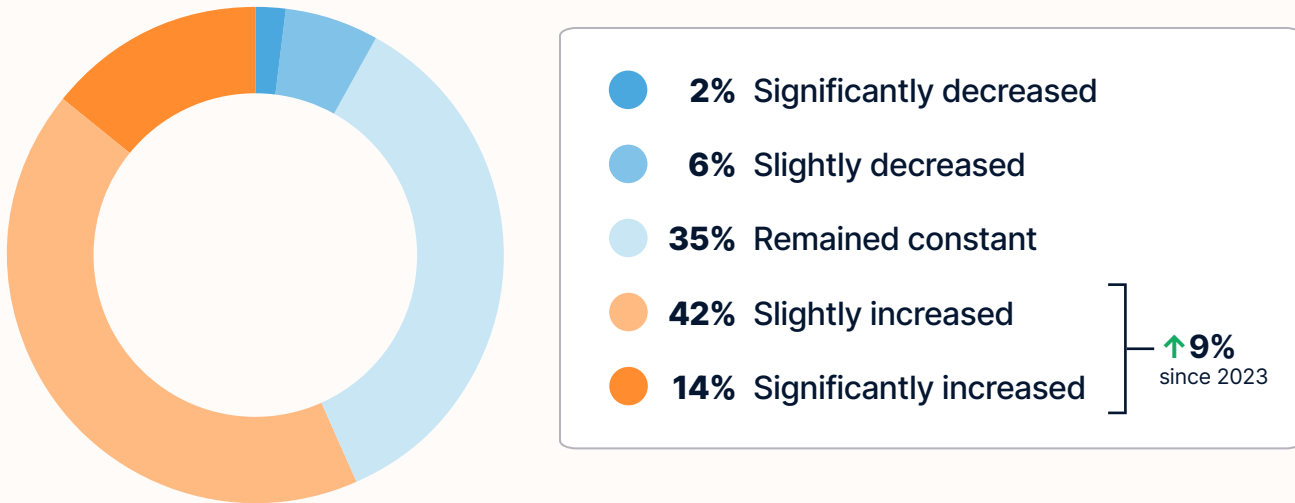
More proof that the industry is growing faster than ever?

The job title "Influencer Marketing Manager" landed a spot on [LinkedIn's Jobs on the Rise 2024](#) list, which uses data to capture "the 25 fastest-growing roles in the U.S."

Creator Marketing Is *Booming*

This aligns with CreatorIQ's own findings, which indicate that team sizes have expanded YoY for dedicated creator marketing staff.

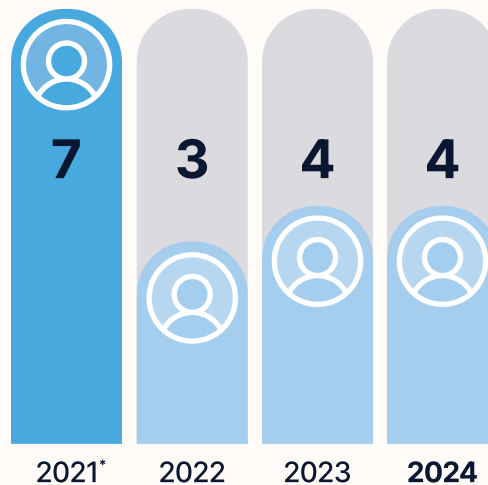
56% of Organizations Reported YoY Team Expansion in 2024



Average Number of Dedicated Influencer Marketers in 2024



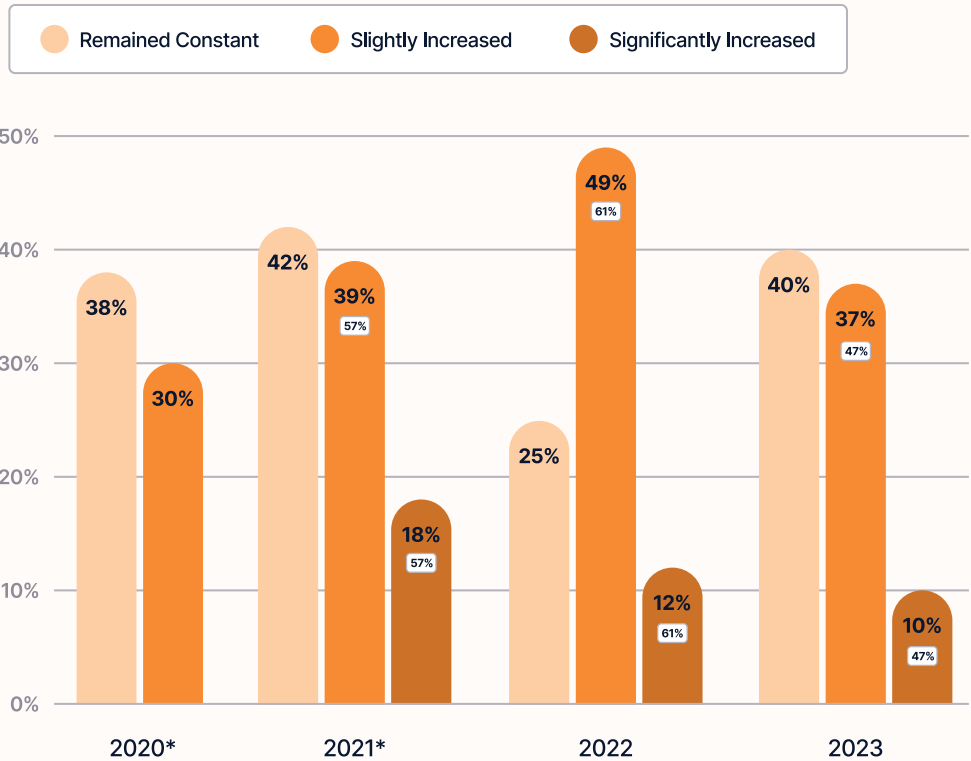
Historical Average Influencer Marketers at Companies



*In 2021, respondents were asked to give the # of people who work in influencer marketing at their brand.

In 2022-2024, respondents were asked about the # of dedicated influencer marketing personnel at their brand.

Reported Historical YoY Change in Influencer Marketers at Companies



*Respondents were asked to give the YoY change of the # of people who work in influencer marketing at their brand (later asked about dedicated influencer marketers at their brand).

More than ever, organizations recognize the importance of dedicating staff members to creator marketing. And now, creator marketing also commands a greater share of marketing budgets than it did this time last year. Not only are marketers investing more in creator marketing, they're placing it at the center of their overall marketing mix.

44%

Average Total Marketing Spend Allocated to Creator Marketing

↑13% YoY

Creator Marketing *Fuels ROI*

98% of Industry Leaders Believe that Creator Content Drives More ROI than Traditional Digital Advertising

Where should we place our bets in this rapidly growing industry? Let's look to our Industry Leaders for guidance.

Industry Leaders are our survey respondents who spent \$1M or more on creator marketing annually, and achieved their highest ROI via creator marketing. In fact, these leaders allocated a majority of their marketing budget (57%) to creator marketing, spending an average of \$3.5M annually—**299% more** than the average organization.

Industry Leaders

Brands who report:

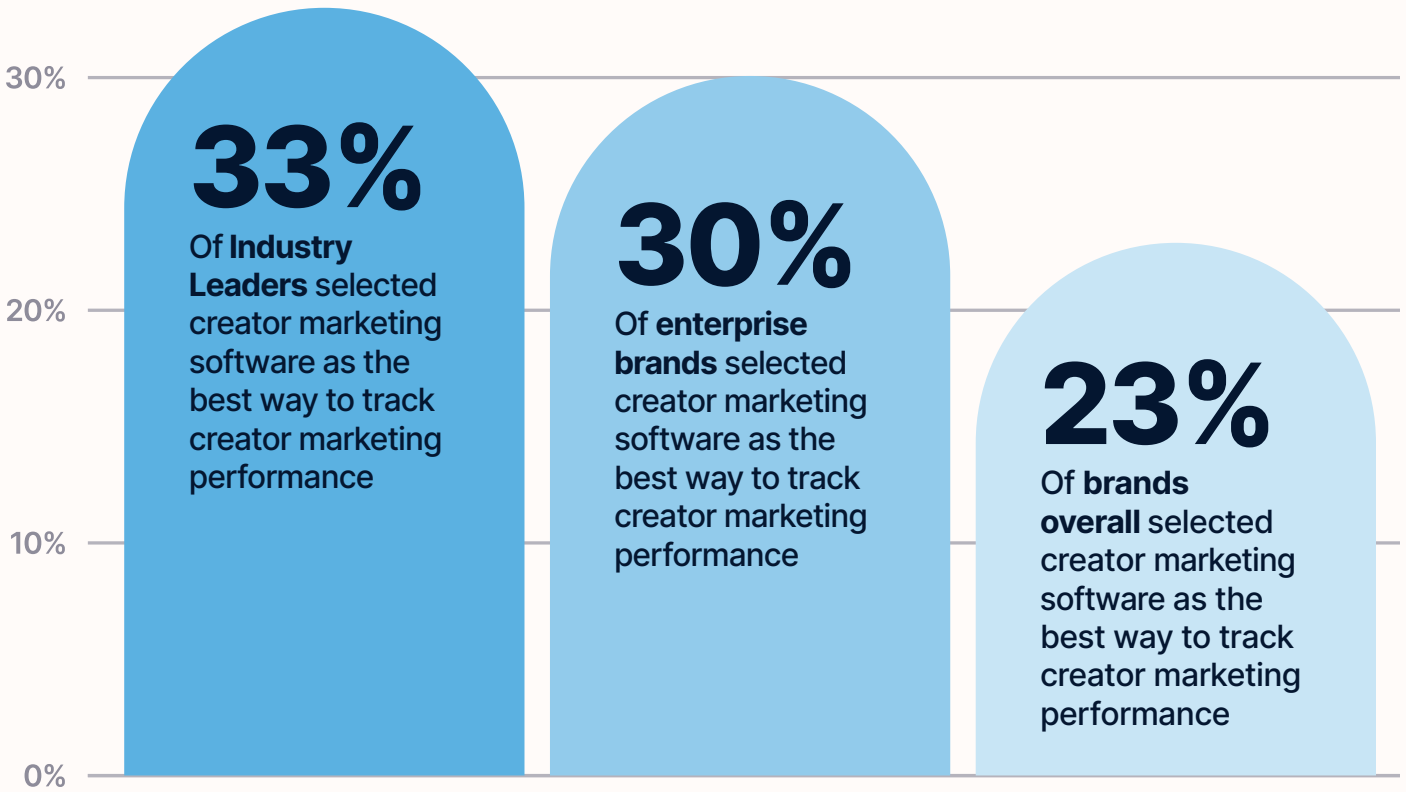
- **\$1M+ annual investment in creator marketing**
- **Highest-ROI campaign was due to creator marketing**

Not only have 90% of Industry Leaders increased their creator marketing spend over the past year, but 93% expect to increase their investments over the next two years. With nearly all those at the forefront of the industry forecasting continued investment in this space, the future promises big things for creator marketing.

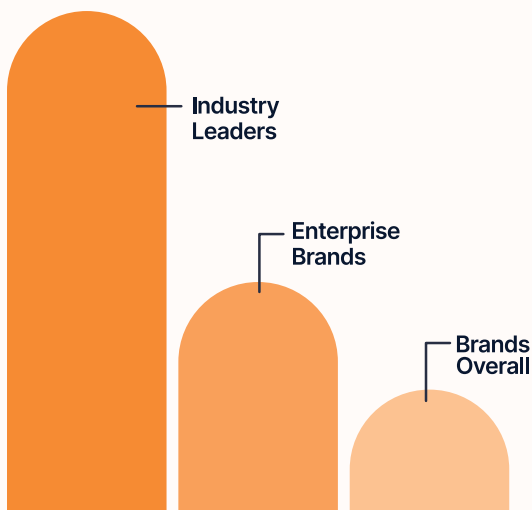
Unlike the average organization, which selected website analytics as the best way to track creator marketing performance, for Industry Leaders and enterprise organizations, the #1 solution proved to be creator marketing software.

Though enterprise organizations were generally aligned with organizations, this departure makes perfect sense: creator marketing software platforms are better equipped to handle enterprise organizations' needs for global team management, at-scale campaign operations, and more.

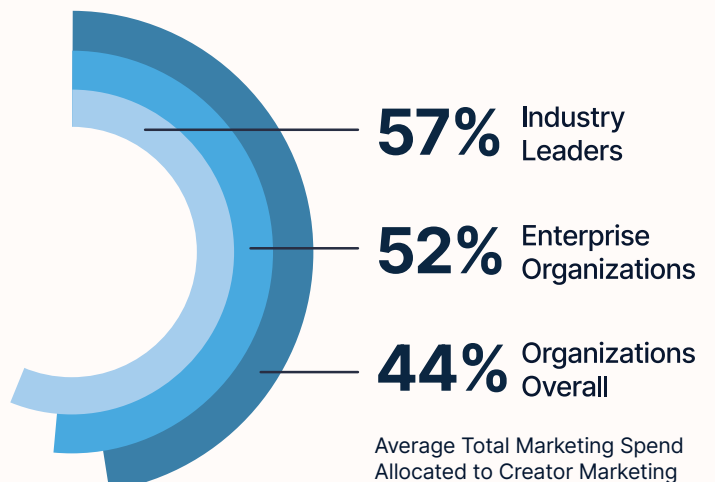
One Third of Industry Leaders Believe Creator Marketing Software Is the Best Way to Track Creator Marketing Performance



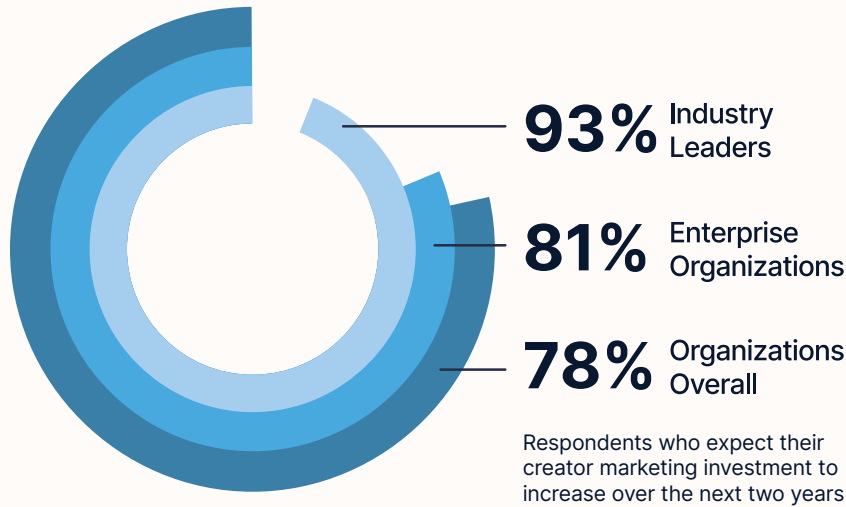
On Average, Industry Leaders Spend 299% More on Influencer Marketing Annually



Industry Leaders Allocate Majority of Budget to Creator Marketing



93% of Industry Leaders Expect to Invest More in Creator Marketing Over the Next Two Years



98%

of Industry Leaders Believe that Creator Content Drives More ROI than Traditional Digital Advertising

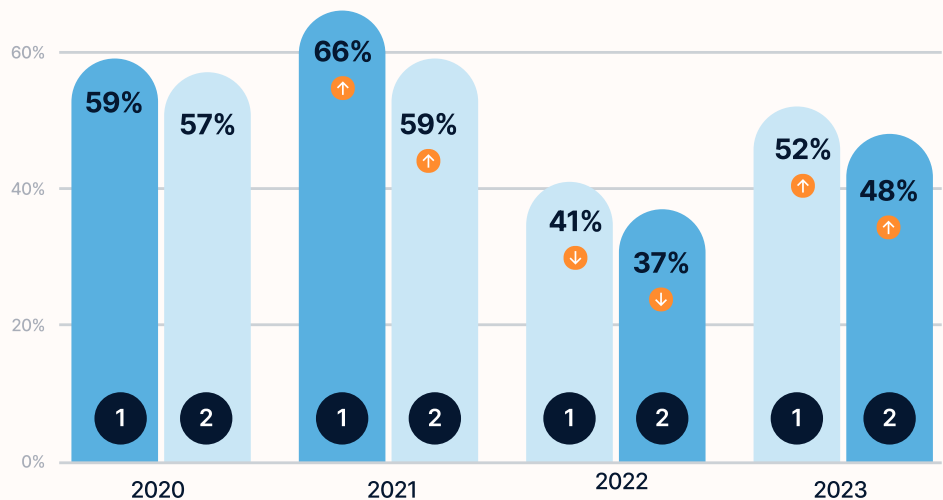
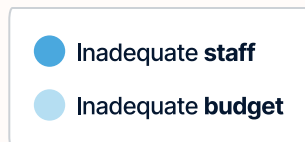
90%

of Industry Leaders increased annual creator marketing investment

For the First Time, Inadequate Budget Is No Longer a Top Roadblock for Brands. Now, They Need to Measure Creator Performance

Since 2020, CreatorIQ has asked brands what roadblocks stand in the way of their programs' success. Between 2020-2024, the #1 and #2 roadblocks have bounced between inadequate budget and inadequate creator marketing staff.

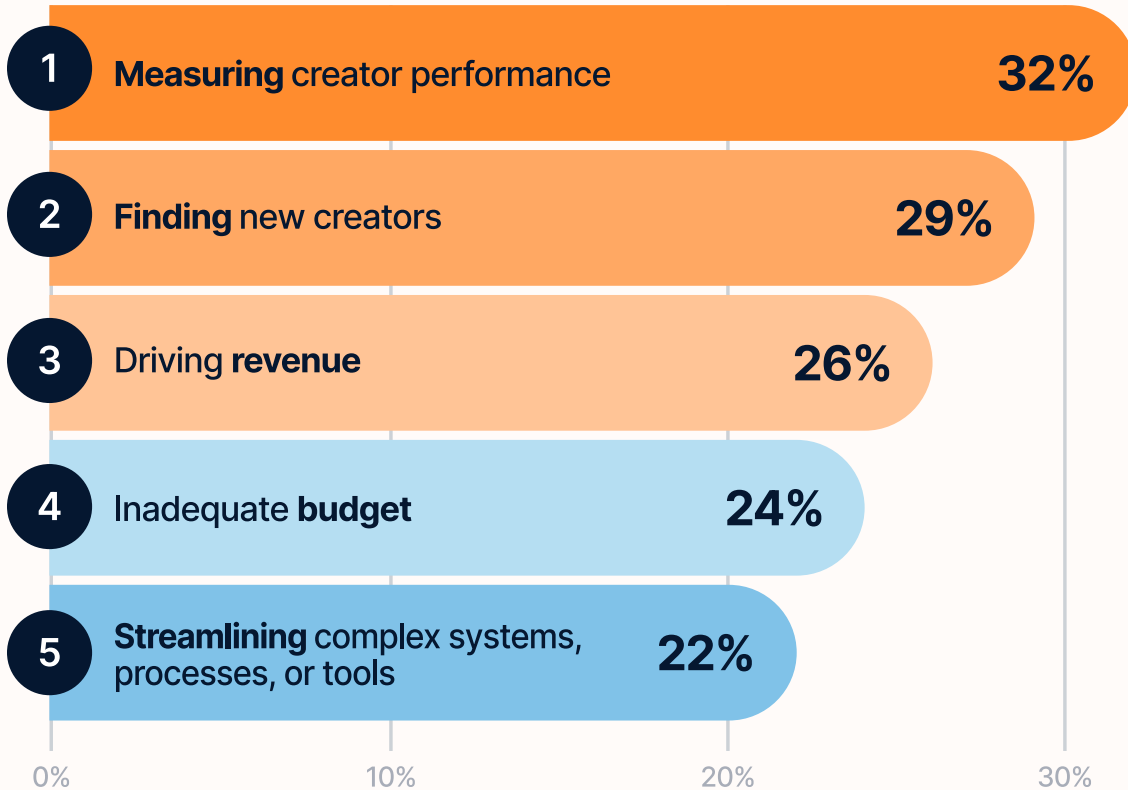
Historical Roadblocks to Program Success



For the first time in our five years of conducting this survey, neither inadequate budget nor creator marketing staff surfaced among brands' top three roadblocks. In fact, inadequate staff was the least significant roadblock to executing creator marketing programs in 2024, chosen by only 16% of brands.

The No. 1 roadblock for brands in 2024? **Difficulty measuring creator performance.**

Roadblocks to Program Success for Brands in 2024



70% vs. 74%

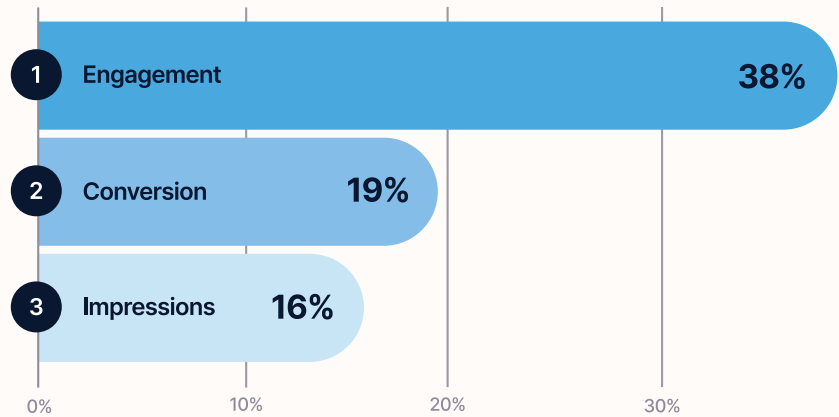
70% of brands at large reported that creator marketing contributed to their highest-ROI campaign, versus 74% of enterprise brands

While difficulty measuring creator performance is surfacing as a new roadblock, 70% of brands reported that creator marketing contributed to their highest-ROI campaign. As creator marketing has matured, brands have moved beyond basic concerns like staffing, and now face more complex issues tied to the evolving nature of social media.

Once again, the trendline is even more pronounced for enterprise brands, with 74% of respondents from this segment reporting that creator marketing contributed to their highest-ROI campaign. Meanwhile, difficulty measuring creator performance emerged as the No. 1 challenge for enterprise brands, selected by 29% of respondents.

Algorithms have shifted, and performance is now less dependent on a creator’s audience size or following, and more dependent on engagement metrics and content quality. This change, along with the proven effectiveness of creator marketing, has pushed marketers to focus on more sophisticated concerns, like accurately measuring ROI and performance, rather than operational constraints.

Top Three Marketing Metrics to Justify Influencer Marketing Program to Decision-Makers for Brands



We asked Doug Jensen, a Data & Analytics Expert with 35+ years of experience at organizations like Nielsen, IRI (now part of Circana), Avon, and The Estée Lauder Companies, to weigh in.

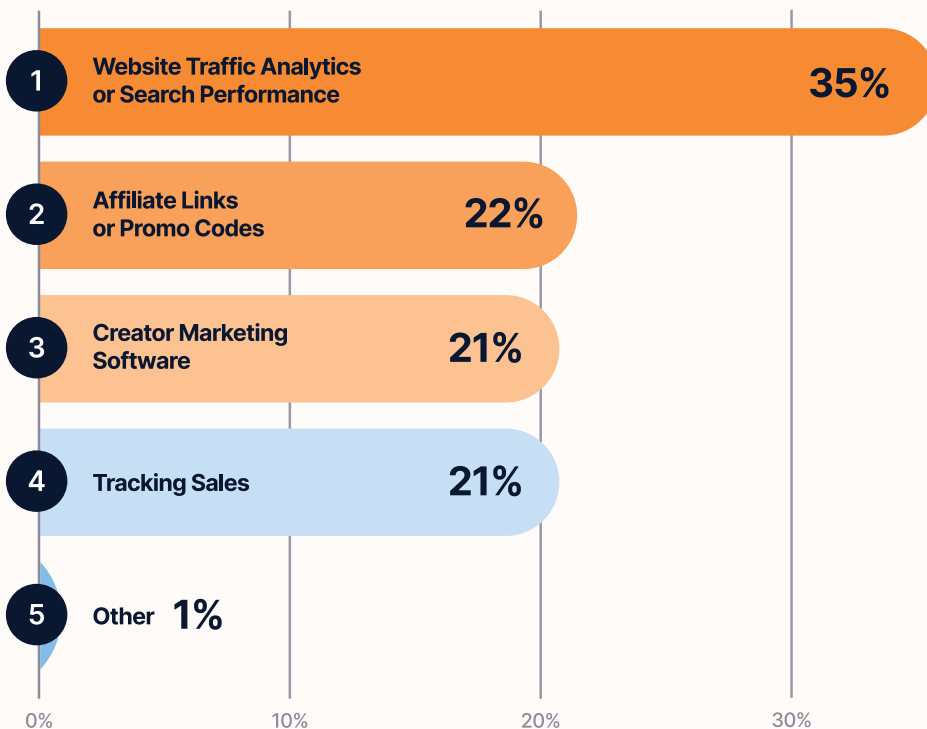
“I’m not surprised that measurement is an obstacle. It goes back to ensuring that brands properly measure the business outcome of engagement with creators. If you’re only measuring sales, and the creator content is about fun and entertainment, then it won’t work. Be clear about your KPIs. Are you leveraging creator content to drive awareness, desirability, traffic, or sales?”

“ If you’re only measuring sales, and the creator content is about fun and entertainment, then it won’t work. Be clear about your KPIs. Are you leveraging creator content to drive awareness, desirability, traffic, or sales?

Doug Jensen
SVP GTM Analytics & Activation and Learning CoE
The Estee Lauder Companies



Brands' Most Effective Method for Measuring Creator Marketing Performance



According to Doug, brands are approaching the measurement question incorrectly. That's why difficulty measuring creator performance can be a top roadblock at the same time that nearly all organizations believe creator content drives more ROI than traditional digital advertising.

94%

of organizations believe that creator content drives more ROI than traditional digital advertising

↑ 20% YoY

To gauge the impact of their creator marketing programs, brands should focus less on trying to prove a direct correlation between sales and creator marketing activity. Instead, they can use marketing mix modeling to measure how creator marketing impacts different parts of the funnel, including desirability, consideration, and conversion.

“Over the last ten years, investment in creator marketing has steadily increased. Its profitability is still growing. You might need an MMM strategy to gain a complete understanding of that profitability, but the ROI is there.”



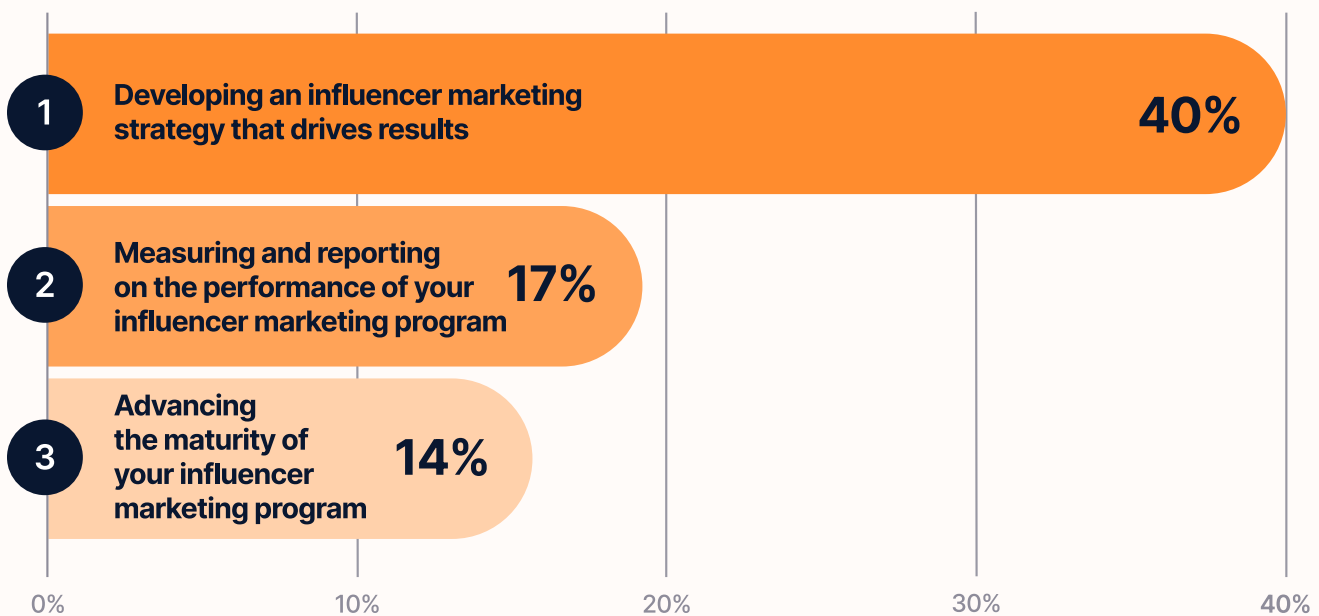
Doug Jensen

SVP GTM Analytics & Activation and Learning CoE,
The Estee Lauder Companies

Brand Awareness and Loyalty Are Biggest Challenges For Brands, Despite Ranking Low in 2023

How are brands currently thinking through their programs' priorities and challenges?

Top Program Priorities for Brands



The fact that four out of 10 brands focused on developing a strategy that drives tangible results only underscores the expectation that creator marketing delivers measurable ROI.

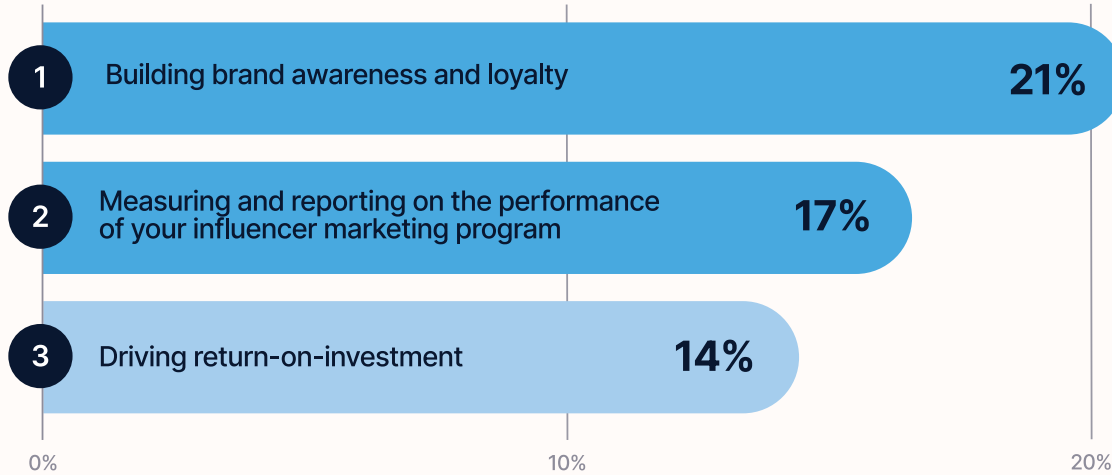
However, 40% actually represents a drop from the 51% of brands who chose developing an impactful strategy as their No.1 program priority last year.

Notably, last year's brand respondents also viewed driving ROI as the most challenging aspect of creator marketing programs, which is no longer the case this year.

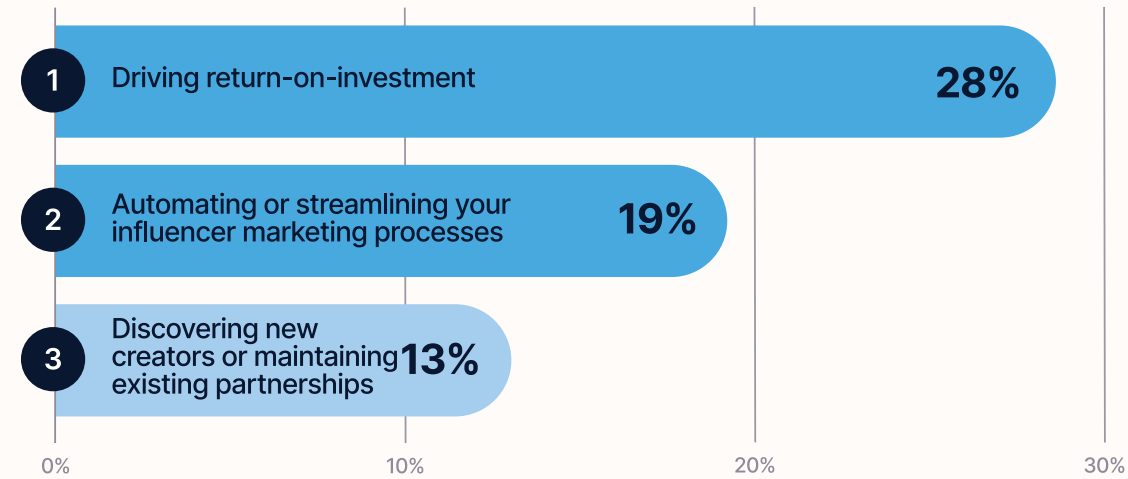
It's easier for brands to communicate their results, but it's increasingly important to turn creator marketing into a well-oiled, data-backed machine.

Most Challenging Aspects of Creator Marketing Program for Brands

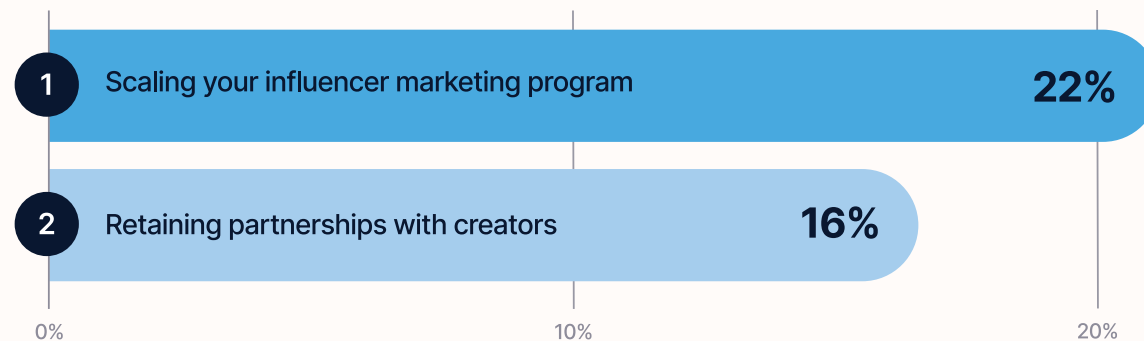
2024



2023



2022



For the first time, brand awareness and loyalty have surfaced as brands' biggest challenges, despite ranking as the least challenging aspect according to last year's respondents.

The past year has marked a shift toward content-first algorithms on social platforms, feeding consumers the types of content they're likeliest to engage with, regardless of who they're following.

As a result, breaking through the noise has become increasingly difficult for brands looking to differentiate themselves in a crowded market.

Creator content offers a critical advantage in this effort. Creators produce content that resonates more deeply with audiences, helping brands stand out. Loyalty isn't about exclusivity, but rather about fostering meaningful, ongoing relationships with creators who can consistently bridge the gap between brands and consumers—even if they're also talking about other brands.

Mid-tier Creators Offer the Most ROI, but Established Creators Are Best for Recurring Partnerships

Speaking of loyalty, our survey found some clear best practices for brands looking to maximize creator retention, and therefore overall program impact.

“Taking the time to get to know the creators who love your brand will make them feel like they’re part of something bigger. This cultivates loyalty and allows creators to grow with the brands they love, which could lead to bigger opportunities in the future.”



Katryna Ton
Content Creator, @callherclassy

40%

Average number of one-off creator partnerships for brands

62%

Increase in number of recurring partnerships for brands

Creator Tiers

Micro-influencer
(1k-100k followers)

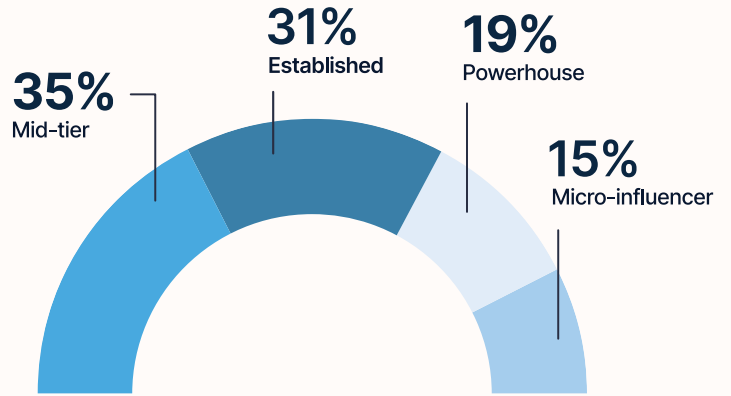
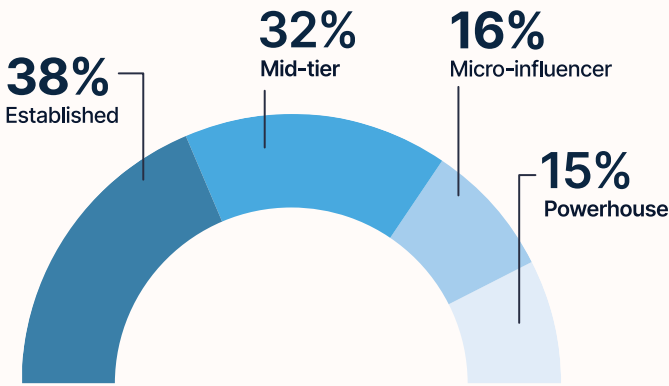
Mid-tier
(100k-300k followers)

Established
(300k-1M followers)

Powerhouse
(1M+ followers)

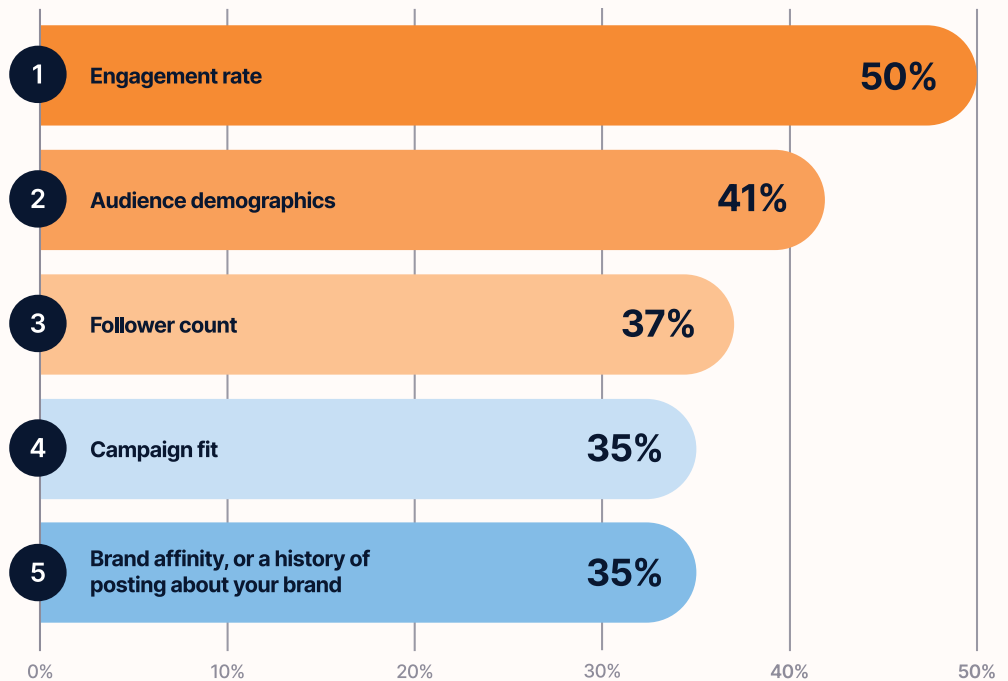
38% of Brands Consider the **Established Tier** (300K - 1M Followers) Most Critical for Business in Ongoing Partnerships

35% of Brands Consider the **Mid-Tier** (100k - 300K Followers) Highest ROI in Ongoing Partnerships



Brands achieve greater impact and engagement by collaborating with creators who boast high engagement yet moderately sized audiences, as these creators often provide a more cost-effective, authentic connection with their followers.

Top Five Factors When Brands Select A Creator



Creator Marketing Has Room to *Grow*

For Hundreds of Organizations, Brand Safety Is More Important than Last Year

Brands place a lot of resources into making sure they're partnering with the *right* creators.



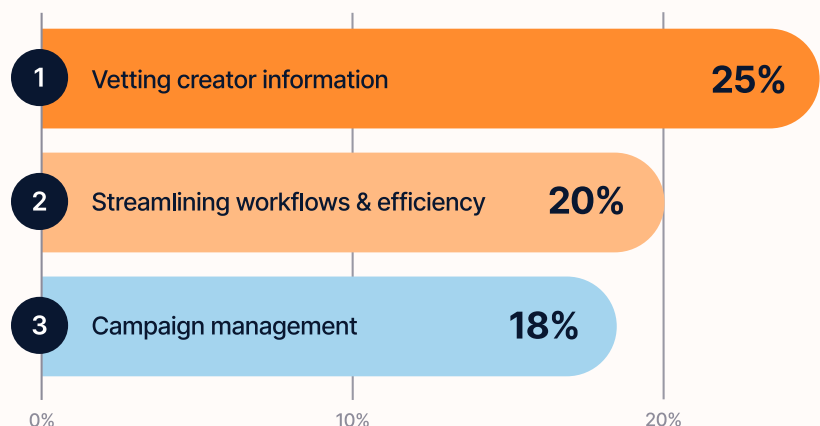
1 out of 5

brands consider brand safety one of the most important factors when selecting new creator partners

As creators continue to cement themselves as publishing powerhouses and brand messengers, this number is bound to increase. If creators are acting as brand representatives, what they say carries additional weight—and so does the context in which their content appears.

For agencies, who are intent on minimizing potentially risky partnerships for their brand clients, vetting creator information was the No. 1 problem that creator marketing software solves.

For 1 out of 4 Marketers at Agencies, Vetting Creator Information Is the Value Prop of Creator Marketing Software



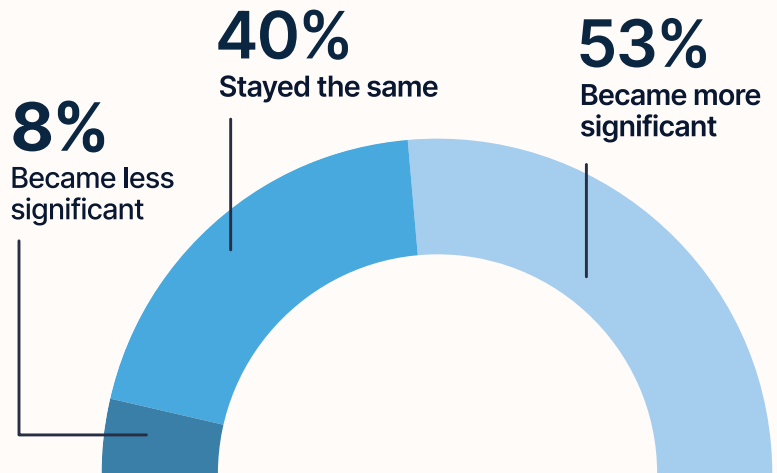
Interestingly, agencies also ranked this vetting process as the least challenging aspect of creator marketing to execute, based on nine total options.



What a creator says beyond their partnership also matters, and quality assurance is harder to navigate at scale. All the vetting in the world won't prevent a scenario where a creator goes on to say or do something misaligned with your brand.

At CreatorIQ, we believe that brand safety is one of the greatest challenges that will define the industry in coming years. Per our survey, it's already top of mind.

**The Majority of Agencies (53%)
Reported Brand Safety Was a
More Significant Concern YoY**



The solution to risk isn't rigid scoring assigned during the creator vetting process, or using AI without any human verification. Nor is the solution writing briefs that turn creator content deliverables into thinly veiled brand messaging.

99% of creators care about creative control when working with brands

We're not going to play it down: the creator economy is not an industry without risk. But the best way to navigate this risk is by using solutions—like creator marketing software platforms—that empower marketers to make informed decisions about which creators would be the most appropriate partners to their brand.

One reason CreatorIQ is placing a bet on improving safety for organizations?

Because creator marketing, despite all its growth, can still be adopted so much more widely.

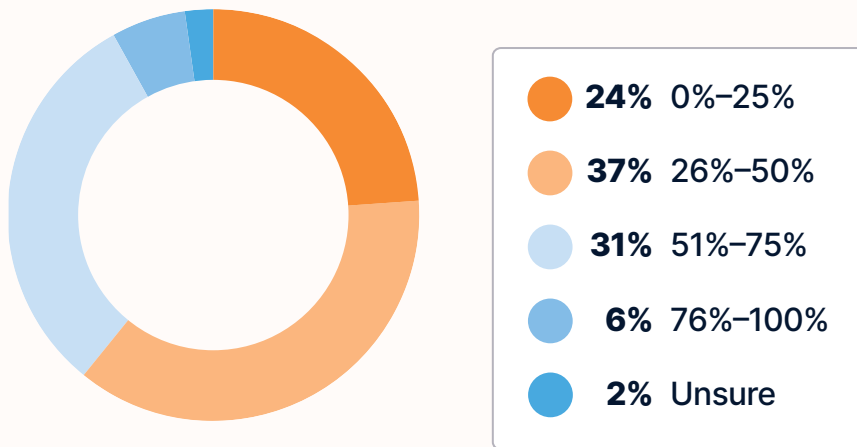
The Average Brand Incorporates Creator Content into Only 42% of Digital Ads

42%

The Average Amount of Digital Ads That Incorporate Creator Content

↑17% YoY
for Brands

Percentage of Digital Ads that Contain Creator Content



There's so much more room for creator content to expand.

Here are the marketing strategies moving the needle for brands.

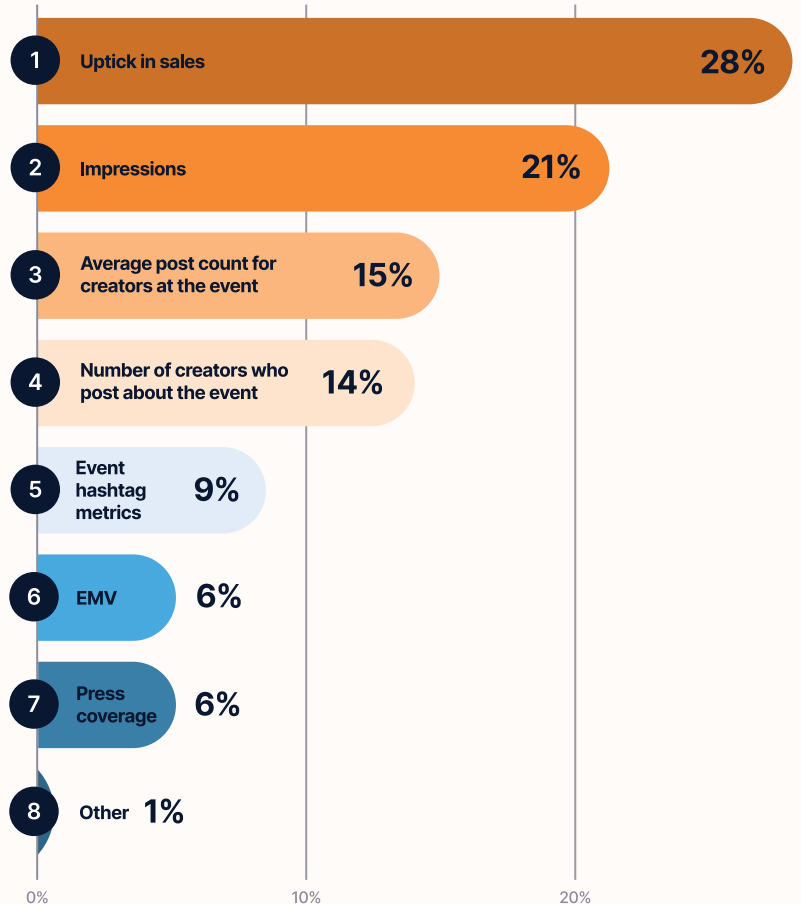
Most Impactful Strategies for Brands



2024
64%
YoY increase in UGC

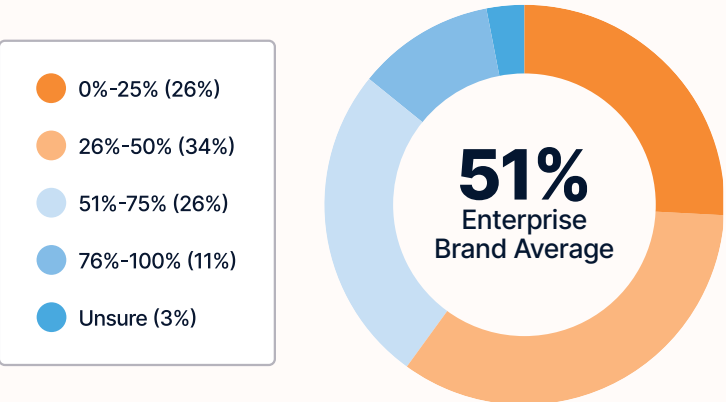
2023
62%
YoY increase in UGC

Measuring ROI of Events With Creator Marketing



On Average, 43% of Creator Marketing Budgets Goes Toward Paying Creators

Percentage of Creator Marketing Budget That Goes Toward Paying Creators



For more than one third of brands, a majority of creator marketing budget goes toward paying creators. Creator pay can be complex to navigate, with creators and brands sometimes expecting different compensation levels. According to our survey, on average creators with between 1-25k followers expect \$5.5k for a single Instagram post, while brands expect to pay \$3.9k for creators with fewer than 100k followers.

We asked brands to report on how much they would compensate creators with various follower counts for a single Instagram post. **Here's what we found:**

Follower Count	Brands Overall	Enterprise Brands
Fewer than 100k followers	Average \$3.9k 39% pay less than \$500	Average \$7.3k 45% will pay between \$500-\$2,500
Between 100k and 300k followers	Average \$8.8k 36% pay between \$500-\$2500	Average \$16.6k 39% will pay between \$2,501-\$10,000
Between 300k and 1M followers	Average \$18.4k 31% pay between \$2,501-\$10,000	Average \$25.6k 44% will pay between \$10,001-\$50,000
More than 1M followers	Average \$40.0k 30% pay between \$10,001-\$50,000	Average \$51.6k 42% will pay between \$10,001-\$50,000

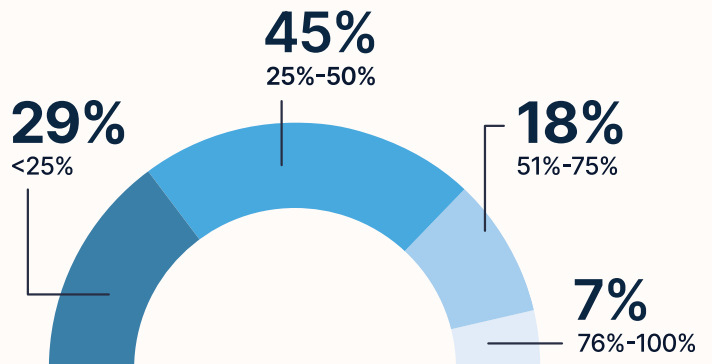
These rates indicate that brands do pay more as follower count increases. Established brands often provide higher rates—though the compensation rate creators expect is higher than brands often give. Follower size is far from the only consideration brands have when paying their creators, especially as brands are de-emphasizing follower count in search of other indicators of how a piece of content will succeed, such as engagement rates.

On Average, Creators Earn \$2.1k Monthly From Content Creation

Creators paint a slightly different picture around payment. On average, they only received financial compensation for 39% of the content they created.

While on average creators reported receiving \$9.1k per Instagram post, over one third (38%) of respondents earned less than \$500. While there are high earners in the creator economy, many practitioners struggle to monetize their content effectively.

On Average, Creators Were Compensated for 39% of Their Content



52% of creators reported receiving compensation for a greater portion of the content they created than in the previous year

Compensation varied widely by industry, with the following industries reporting the **highest compensation per post**:

Travel and Hospitality
\$16.3k

Business or Personal Finance
\$15.0k

Lifestyle
\$15.0k

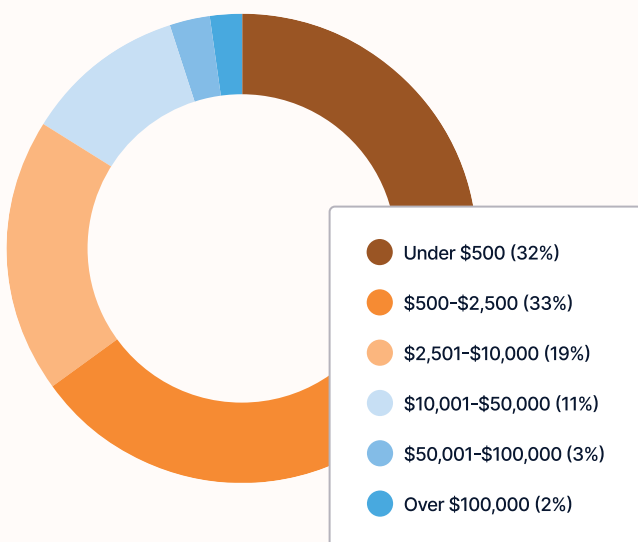
Meanwhile, the following industries averaged the **lowest amount per post**:

Art, Media & Entertainment
\$10.5k

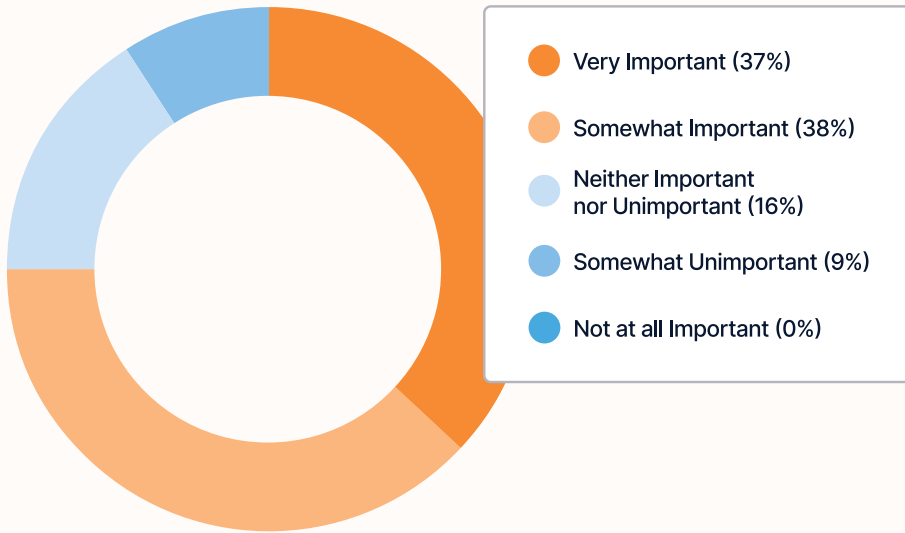
Retail
\$10.1k

Home & Garden
\$8.6k

On Average, the Greatest Amount Creators Reported Receiving for a Single Post Was \$9.9k



37% of Creators Consider Financial Compensation for Their Content Very Important



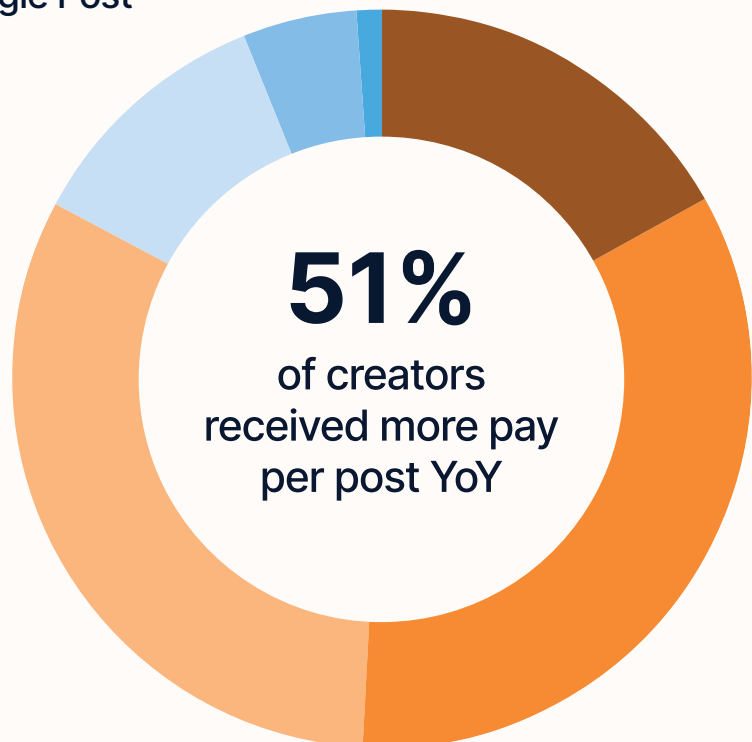
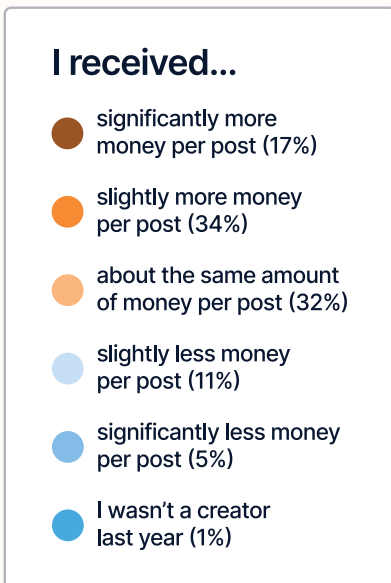
75%

of creators reported that receiving financial compensation for their content is **important**

52%

of creators reported receiving compensation for a greater portion of the content they created than in the previous year

The Majority of Creators Report Receiving More Compensation YoY for a Single Post



Discovering New Creators Is Top Priority for Agencies

While agencies and brands share a lot of overlap in their creator marketing practices, there are also some key differences. Agencies report higher investment and team sizes. The majority of agencies have at least three people specifically dedicated to creator marketing, a number that's on the rise. On the whole, agencies are focused on developing long-term program sustainability and effectiveness, like building enough creator partnerships to take part in their campaigns.

Discovering New Creators and Measuring Performance Are Top Priorities for Agencies

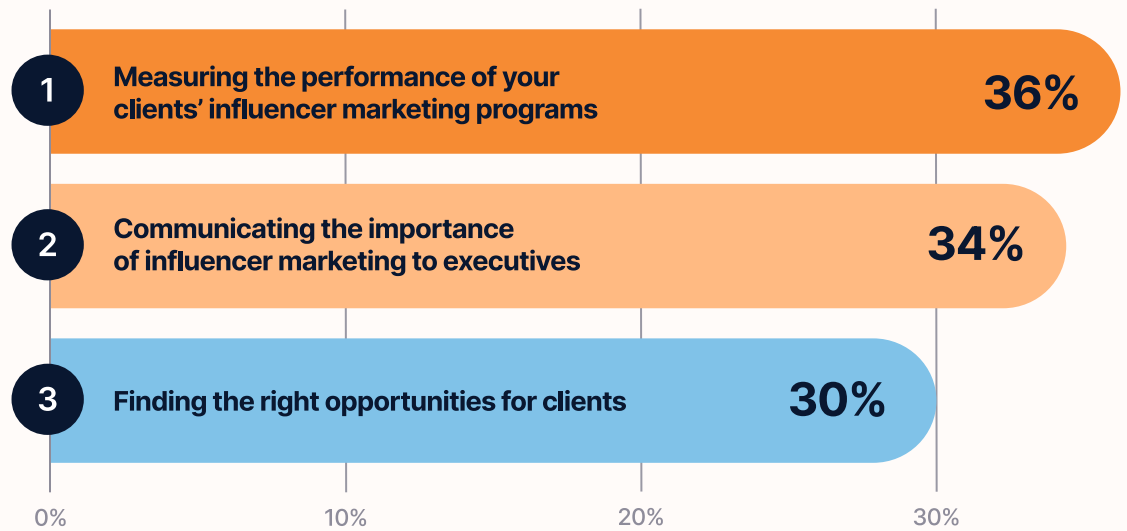


Like brands, the top roadblock for agencies is measuring campaign performance, which rated higher than inadequate budgets, a shift from previous years.

Measuring Campaign Performance, A Top Roadblock for Agencies

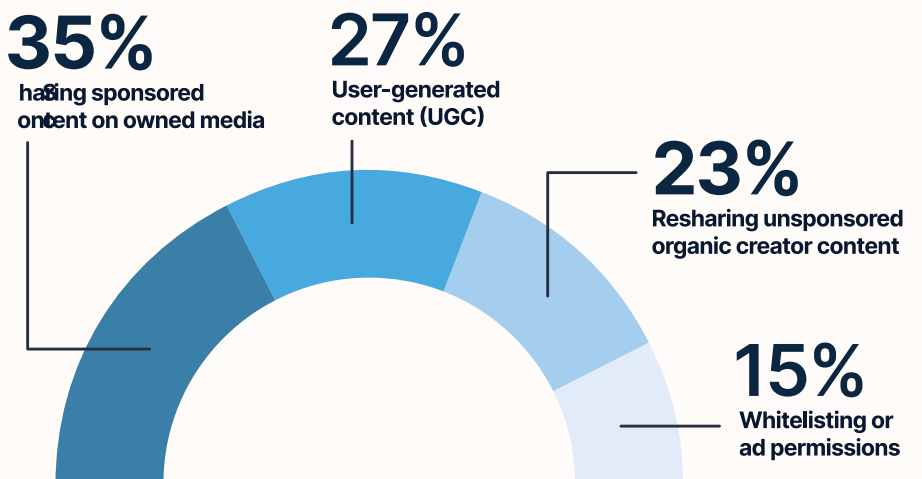


Top Three Challenging Aspects of Program



51% of client ads incorporate creator content on average

When it Comes to Leveraging Creator Content, Sharing Sponsored Content on Owned Media and UGC are the Most Impactful Strategies for Agencies:



Creator Marketing Is On *Every Platform*

For Five Years, Instagram Has Been the Dominant Platform for Creator Marketing—But TikTok and YouTube Are Climbing the Ranks

Social media and creator marketing have always gone hand-in-hand. It's no wonder that social media has been the site of the creator economy's biggest transformations since 2020.

One thing that hasn't changed is Instagram's status as an integral social media platform. Since 2020, Instagram has held its spot as the most integral platform for creator marketing, as well as the

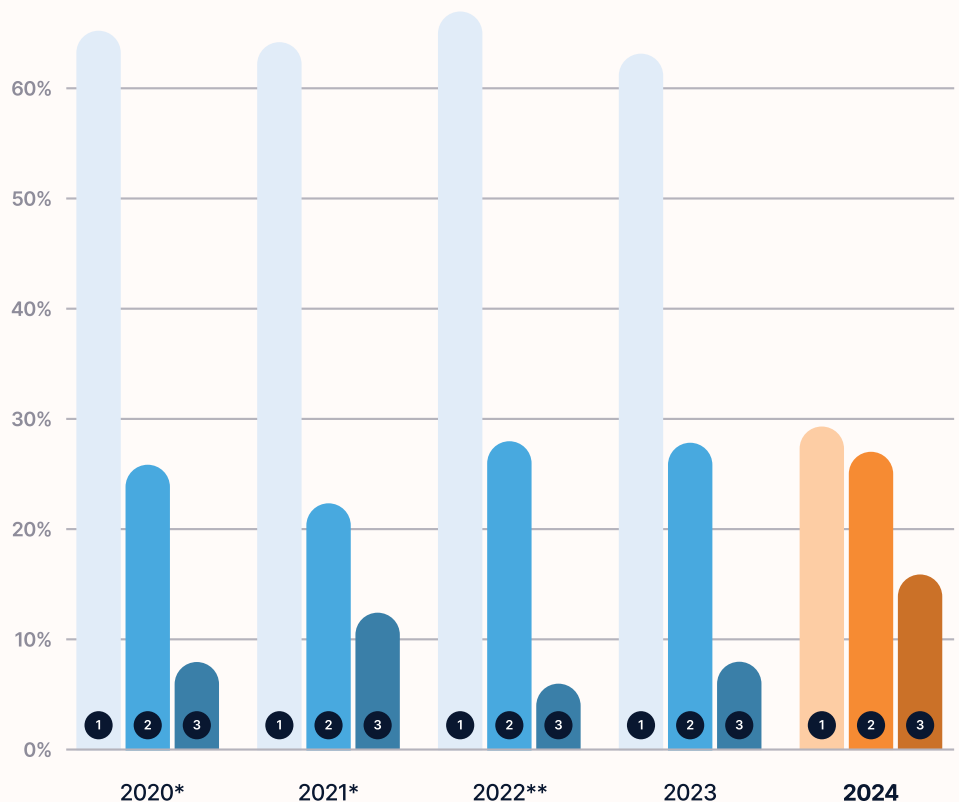
channel offering organizations the most ROI. In 2024, 29% of organizations chose Instagram as their most integral platform.

Dynamics for social platforms, including Instagram's No. 1 status and the rise of TikTok and YouTube, were broadly similar across enterprise brands, Industry Leaders, and brands at large.

Most Integral Social Media Platform

***Note:** In the first two Influencer Marketing Trends surveys, Instagram Stories and Instagram were treated as separate platforms.

****Note:** Instagram and Instagram Stories are collapsed for the first time in CreatorIQ's Influencer Marketing Trends survey



Even though Instagram was still the most integral platform for marketers in 2024, 29% represents less than half of the 62% of respondents who said the same last year. Marketers are still using Instagram for business, but they're relying on other platforms more heavily than before.

In 2020, 0% of respondents chose TikTok as their most integral platform for creator marketing. By 2024, 27% of organizations chose TikTok as their most integral platform for creator marketing, second only to Instagram. Additionally, in 2023 only 8% of respondents selected YouTube as their most integral platform, a rate that doubled to 16% in 2024.

TikTok Offers the Greatest ROI for Agencies

While Instagram is the most used platform for brands, Instagram is actually tied with TikTok as the most common platform for creator marketing for agencies. This slight departure from brands makes sense, as agencies often work for multiple clients at once, and can experiment with different social media channels more nimbly than brands can.

Most Integral Social Media Platforms for Creator Marketing in 2024

	Brands	Agencies
Instagram	30%	28%
TikTok	27%	27%
Youtube	18%	15%
Facebook	14%	17%
X	6%	5%
Twitch	2%	2%
Snapchat	1%	3%
Pinterest	1%	1%
Reddit	1%	2%
Threads	1%	0%

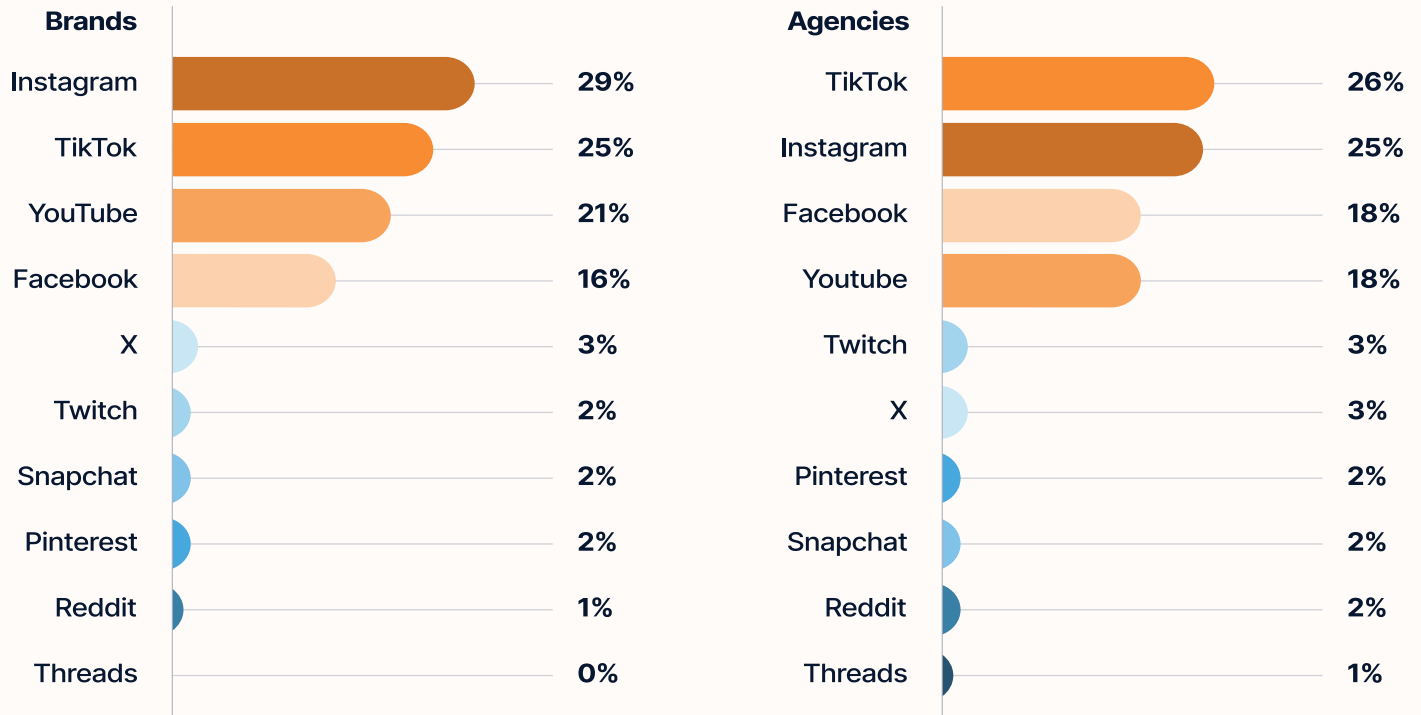
Most Commonly Used Social Platforms for Creator Marketing

Brands		Agencies	
Instagram	84%	Instagram	76%
YouTube	73%	TikTok	76%
TikTok	71%	YouTube	75%
Facebook	65%	Facebook	64%
X	42%	X	42%
Snapchat	34%	Snapchat	35%
Pinterest	23%	Pinterest	29%
Twitch	21%	Twitch	24%
Threads	18%	Reddit	20%
Reddit	17%	Threads	20%



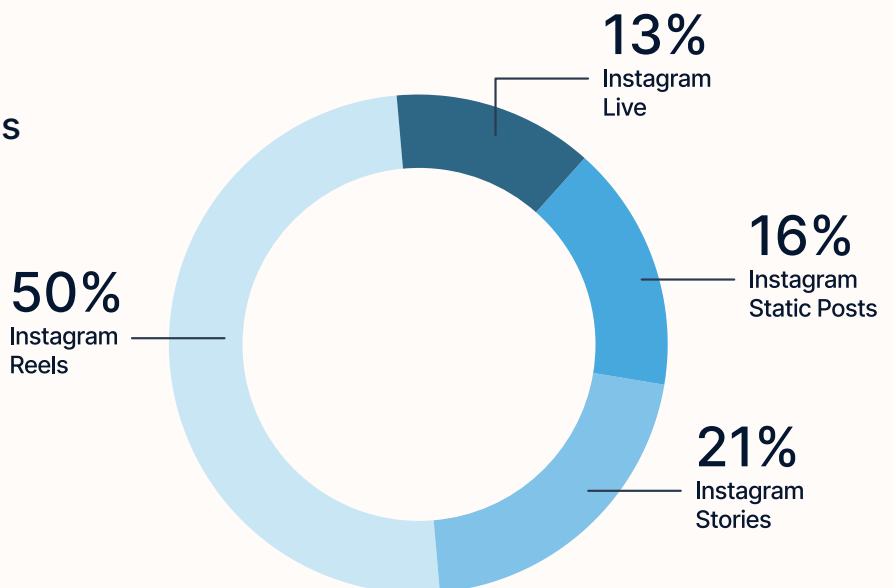
When it comes to selecting their most integral social media platforms, brands and agencies are more closely aligned. YouTube takes the No. 3 spot for brands, while Facebook snatches it for agencies.

Social Media Platforms that Provide Greatest ROI for Creator Marketing



In a big upset, TikTok outpaced Instagram in terms of offering agencies the greatest ROI. It's no coincidence that this happened in a year when Instagram adjusted toward an internet graph like TikTok, rather than a follower feed. The more that social platforms focus on surfacing the most engaging content, the more that differences among the platforms might narrow.

Instagram Reels Drives Most Engagement for Organizations



Both agencies and brands agree that video is the most impactful social media strategy, but the similarities end there.

Video Content Most Effective Social Media Strategy for Creator Marketing

Brands

- #1 Video content 49%**
- #2 Creators sharing branded sponsored content 32%**
- #3 Affiliate marketing 27%**

Collab posting 25%

Creating in-house content for owned social media channels 25%

Reposting creator content or UGC on owned social media channels 23%

A dedicated influencer marketing manager or team 21%

Amplifying organic creator content 21%

Using trending sounds 18%

Gifting/seeding 15%

Live shopping 12%

Outsourcing to an agency or creative freelancer 9%

Agencies

- #1 Video content 40%**
- #2 Affiliate marketing 27%**
- #3 Creating in-house content for owned social media channels 27%**

A dedicated influencer marketing manager or team 27%

Creators sharing branded sponsored content 24%

Reposting creator content or UGC on owned social media channels 24%

Amplifying organic creator content 24%

Collab posting 22%

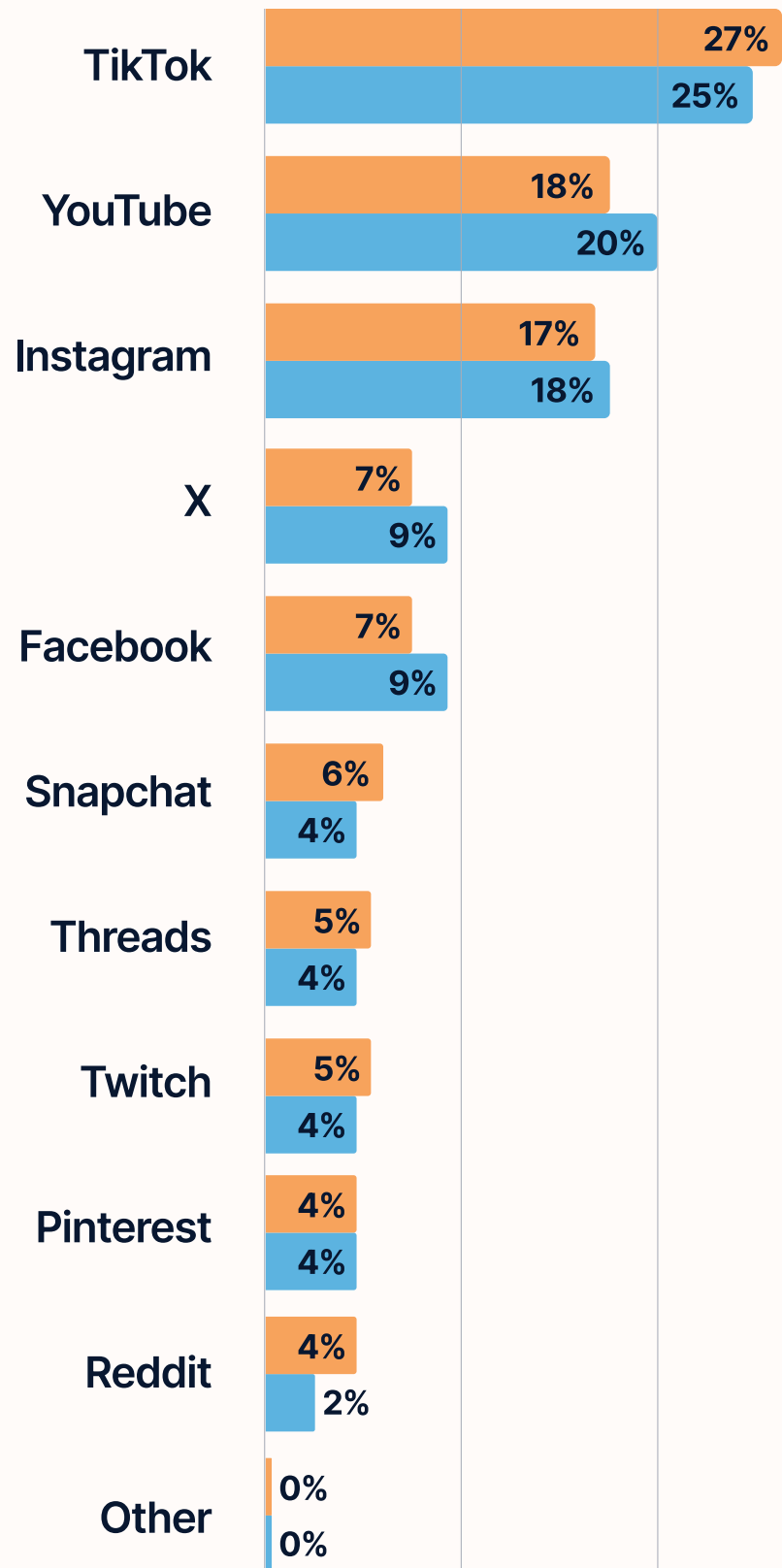
Gifting/seeding 18%

Using trending sounds 18%

Outsourcing to an agency or creative freelancer 14%

Live shopping 12%

Organizations Plan to Experiment More on TikTok Next Year



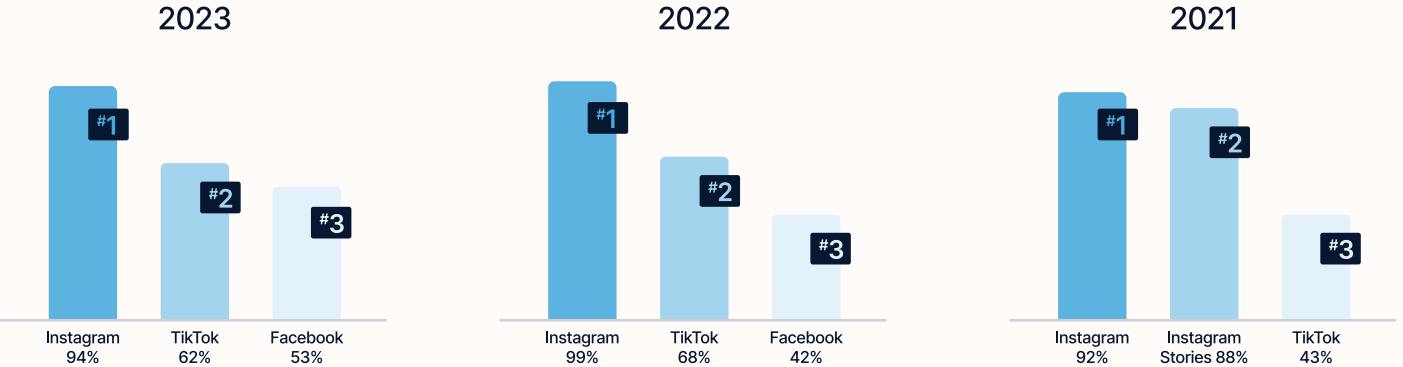
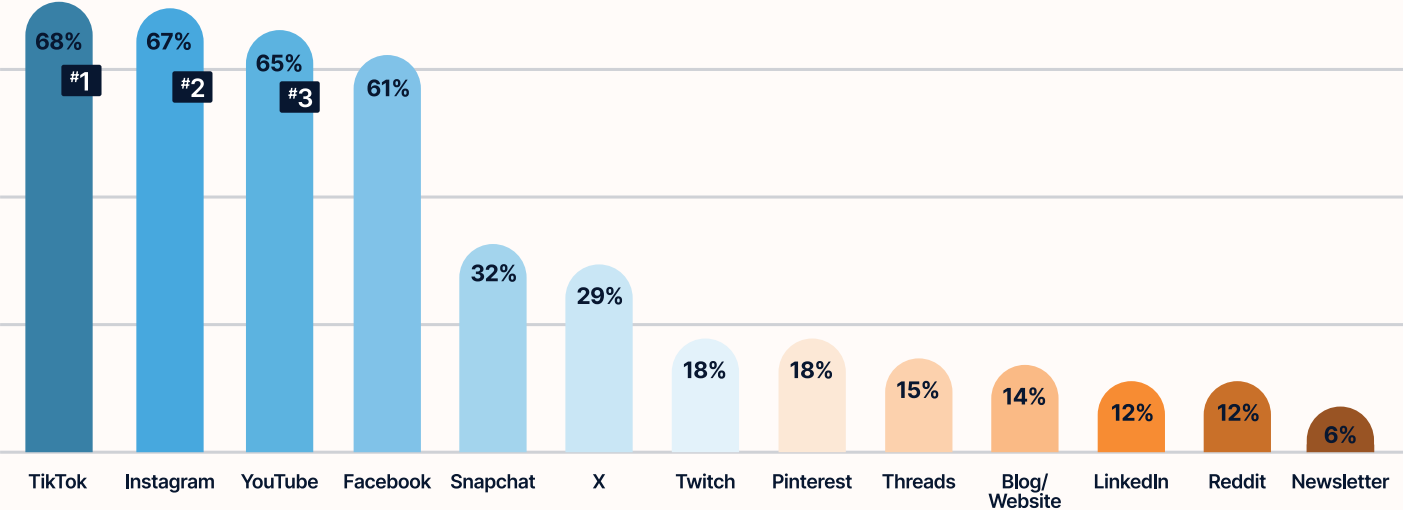
Instagram—which dominates in usage, importance, and ROI—was ranked third by both agencies and brands on the list of platforms they expected to experiment with or expand upon next year.



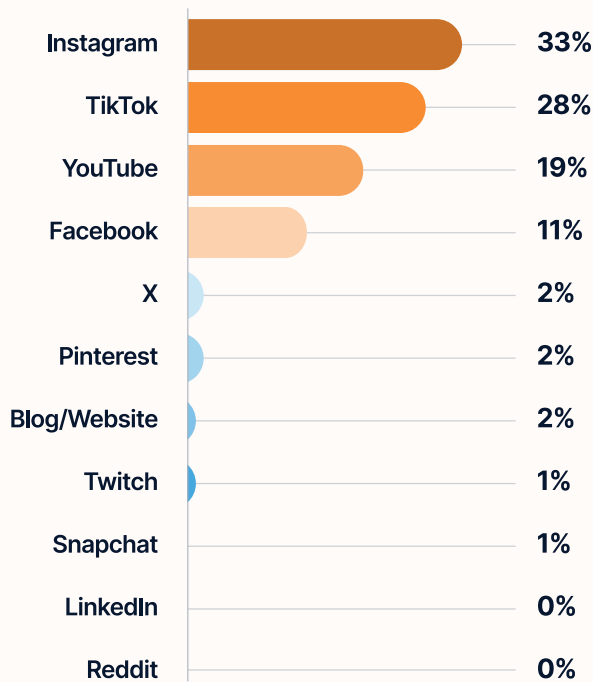
TikTok Is the Most Creator-Friendly Platform, But Instagram Is the Most Lucrative

It's called the creator economy for a reason, and we asked creators how they're using social media platforms. For the first time in five years, TikTok surpassed Instagram as the platform that creators use most frequently. In 2024, 68% of creators regularly made content on TikTok, while 67% of creators regularly made content on Instagram.

TikTok Is The Platform Creators Most Regularly Create Content On



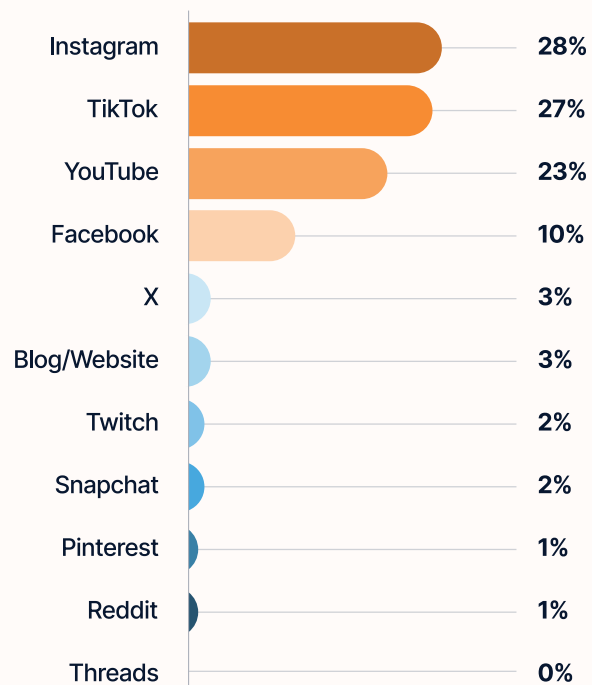
According to Creators, Instagram Is the Primary Platform for Branded Content



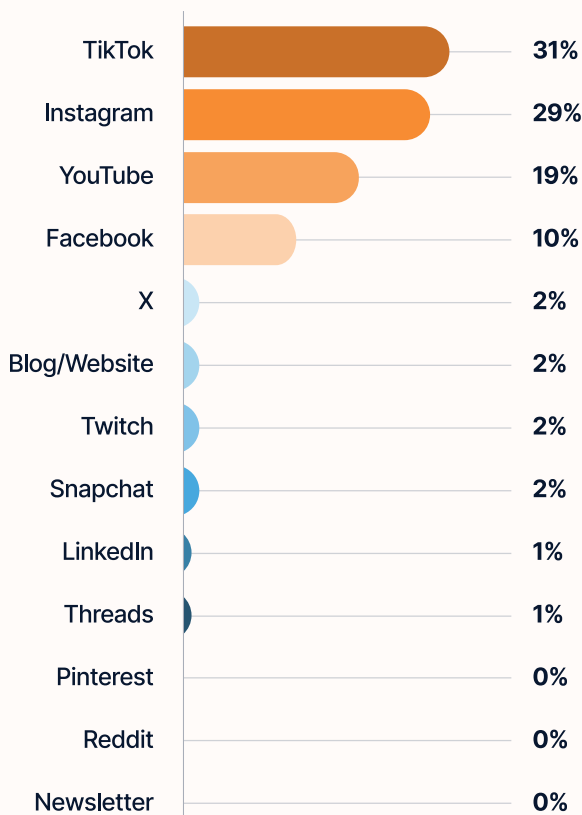
31% of creators selected TikTok as the most creator-friendly platform, followed by 29% for Instagram and 19% for YouTube. However, for creators, different platforms have their specific uses.

For example, 28% of creators chose Instagram as their most lucrative platform, making it the No. 1 platform for this metric, followed by 27% for TikTok and 23% for YouTube.

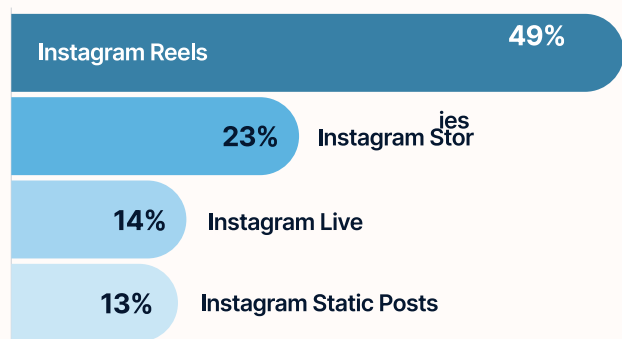
Instagram Is Most Lucrative Platform for Creators



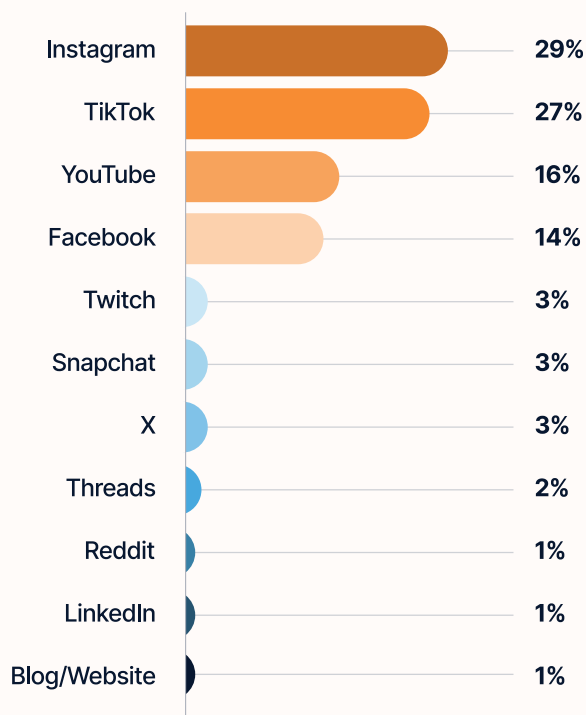
TikTok Is the Most Creator-Friendly Platform



Nearly Half of Creators Consider Reels the Most Effective Instagram Content Type



Instagram Provides the Most Engagement From Followers



How Content Creation Has Changed YoY on Various Platforms

Instagram Static Posts	48% ↑	YouTube	49% ↑
	13% ↓		15% ↓
Instagram Reels	55% ↑	YouTube Shorts	47% ↑
	10% ↓		12% ↓
Instagram Stories	56% ↑	LinkedIn	19% ↑
	15% ↓		23% ↓
TikTok	66% ↑	Snapchat	31% ↑
	8% ↓		19% ↓

65%

of Creators Consider YouTube Shorts More Effective than Long-Form

Categories Creators Are Investing More In

Lifestyle

59%

More Posting YoY

Health & Wellness

54%

More Posting YoY

Food & Drink

53%

More Posting YoY

TikTok represented the platform with the highest increase in usage YoY. Its increase was higher among creators who identified with categories such as Business or Personal Finance (85%), Lifestyle (85%), and Fashion & Apparel (75%), Art, Media & Entertainment (75%), and Retail (75%).

While LinkedIn was the only platform to have a greater decrease in usage than increase, increased LinkedIn usage was higher among particular categories, such as Business or Personal Finance (32%), Retail (33%), and Travel & Hospitality (39%). LinkedIn usage was lowest among Food & Drink (16%) and Gaming (16%).

Creators Care About Your Brand— *And Theirs*

Every year since 2020, product quality has been the biggest determinant of whether a creator would work with a brand.

1 out of 3 Creators Use Product Quality to Determine Whether to Work With a Brand

#1 Product quality 33%

#2 Brand values 23%

#3 Compensation 16%

Positive interactions with brand employees 12%

Brand name recognition or prestige 10%

Brand aesthetic 6%

A large majority of creators care so much about their reputation that they wouldn't risk recommending a bad product.

Additionally, creators who work full-time are more likely to only work with brands they genuinely love than part-time creators.

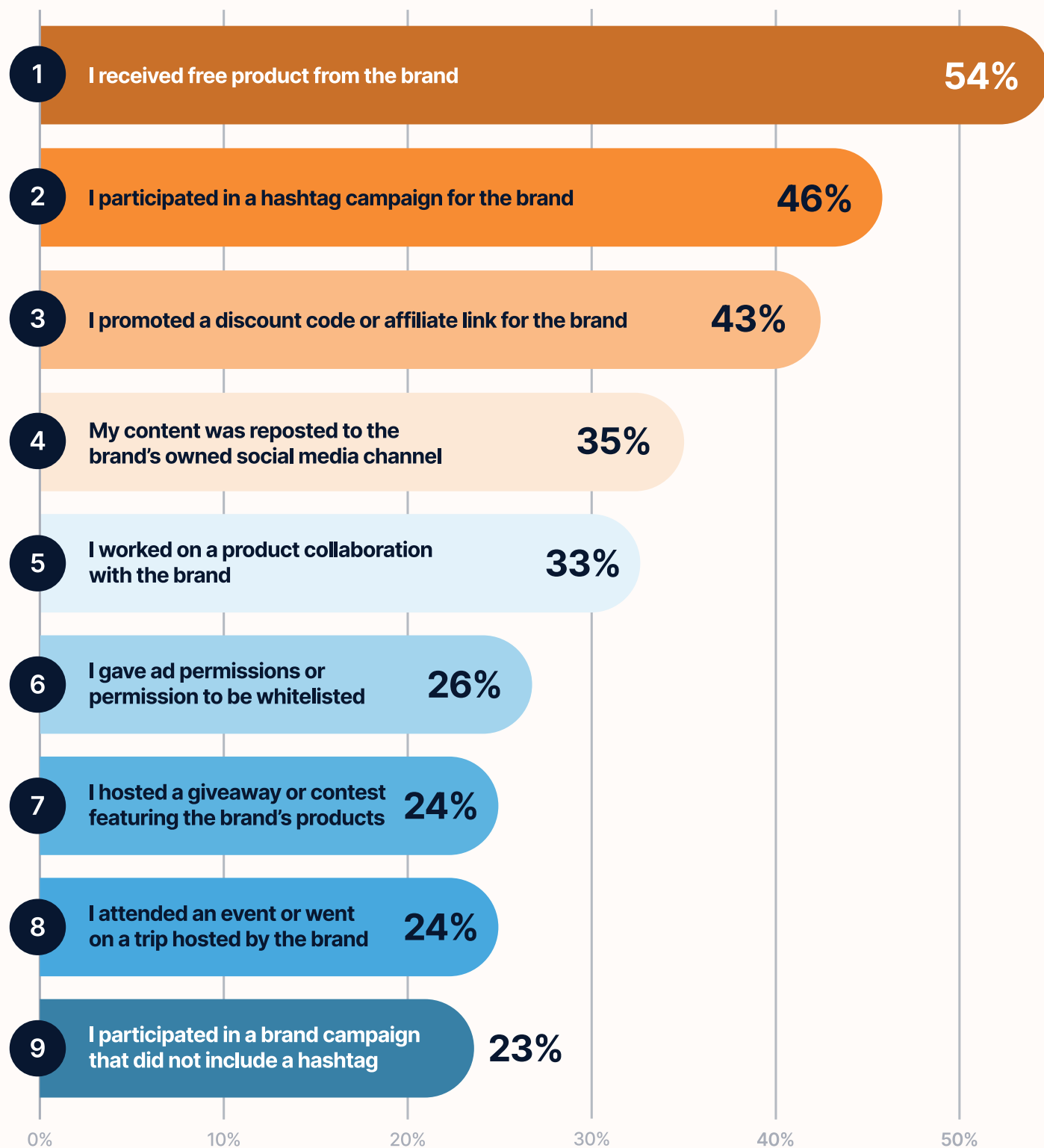
84%

of creators would not work with a brand with poor quality offerings, even if the compensation was high

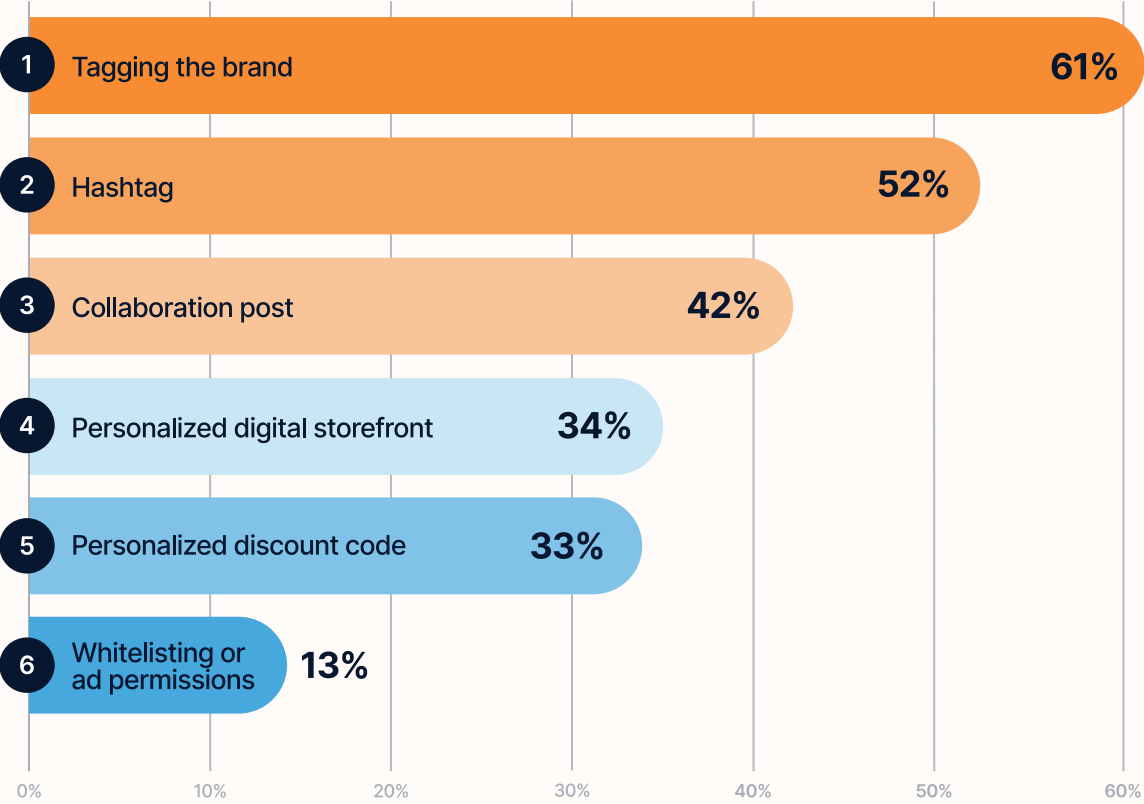
99%

of creators care about creative control when working with brands. In Europe, all creators care about creative control.

Top Ways That Brands and Creators Work Together



61% of Creators Consider Tagging Brand the No. 1 Method for Creator Attribution



84% of Creators Reported Inclusivity Factors into Whether They Want to Work With a Brand—More than Ever Before

39%

of Creators felt **overlooked or excluded** from a brand activation because of their race or ethnicity

46%

of creators felt **supported or celebrated** by a brand partner because of their race or ethnicity

43%

of creators felt **inadequately compensated** for content creation because of their race or ethnicity

36%

of creators felt inadequately compensated for content creation because of their gender identity

28%

of creators felt uncomfortable while working with brands due to their gender identity, pronouns, or expression.

84%

of creators report that inclusivity factors into whether they **want to work with a brand**

This figure jumped to **46%** amongst **EMEA respondents**.

Half of Brands Focused Inclusivity Efforts on Creators

#1 Included creators from diverse backgrounds in brand activations (50%)

#2 Made a dedicated effort to launch more inclusive products or services (42%)

#2 Made a dedicated effort to hire more professionals from diverse backgrounds for internal marketing teams (42%)

Nearly Half of Agencies Search for Inclusive Partners

#1 Worked with more inclusive agencies or partners (48%)

#2 Included creators from diverse backgrounds in brand activations (47%)

#3 Made a dedicated effort to hire more professionals from diverse backgrounds for your internal marketing team (46%)

#3 Made a dedicated effort to launch more inclusive products or services (46%)



Creator Marketing is *Still Evolving*

Trends to Expect in 2025 and Beyond

Respondents overwhelmingly suggested the following trends to watch out for in 2025:

AI

Video Content

Rise of Sustainability and
Ethics

Here's where CreatorIQ is placing our bets in the coming years:

Brand Safety Is Increasingly Top-of-Mind

Creator marketing is inherently complex, especially when scaling requires partnering with creators who aren't part of your organization. We can build accountability into the fabric of the industry by providing tools for marketers to make smart, safe decisions when choosing their creator partners.

Accurate, Full-Funnel Program **Measurement** Catches On

Creator marketing is no longer a nice-to-have. Organizations are asking for more data to accurately measure their programs and clarify where they should put their investment. Our plan is to continue providing resources for organizations to measure their creator programs at all stages of the marketing funnel.

The Future Is **Content-First** and Creator-Led

Follower counts are less important than before. The creator economy is moving toward a creator-led future that prioritizes the content that creators can produce for brands at scale.



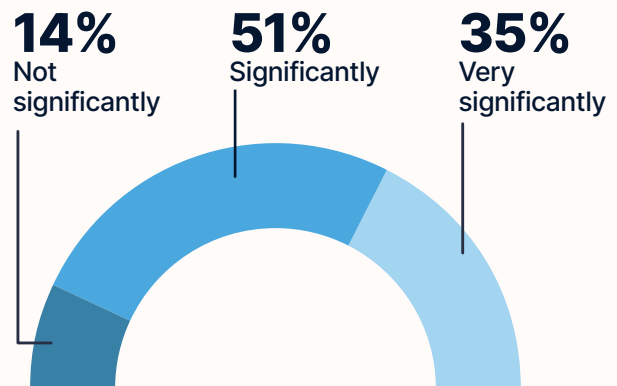
91% of Brands Have Used AI for Creator Marketing

Artificial Intelligence was one of the top trends respondents put forth last year, and it remains a top trend this year: it was mentioned in 16% of open-ended responses from marketers at organizations.

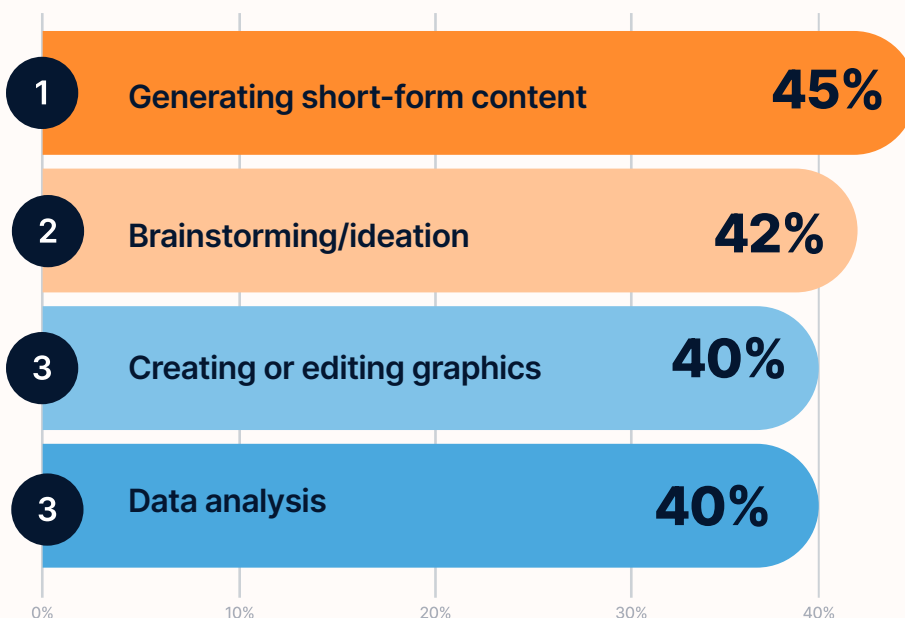
Respondents believe that artificial intelligence will become more integrated into creator marketing, with 91% of brands having already used AI for creator marketing.

AI is also transforming creator marketing strategies for agencies, with 86% reporting that these changes have already been significant.

86% of Agencies Report Significant Changes to Their Creator Marketing Strategy Due to AI



In 2024, Here's How AI Was Used By Marketers at Brands



Last year, 42% of respondents used AI for social media captions, aligning with this year's option of "generating short-form content."

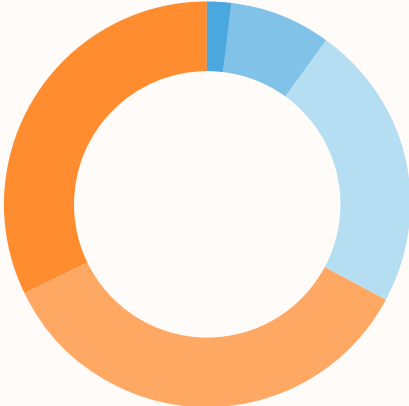
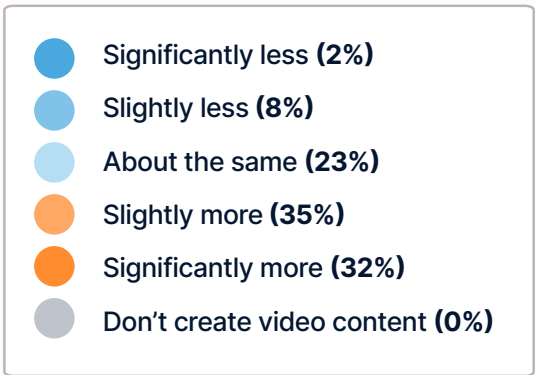
The second-most common AI use case for savvy marketers was brainstorming.



Nearly Half of Brands Consider Video the Most Effective Social Media Marketing Strategy

Video content was the defining trend two years ago, when it was first disrupting the social media climate. Last year, 'TikTok' was one of the most common responses to trends for the upcoming year. While video is seeming more like a fixture of the creator economy than a trend, it lands here again as a sure-fire way to grow in 2025.

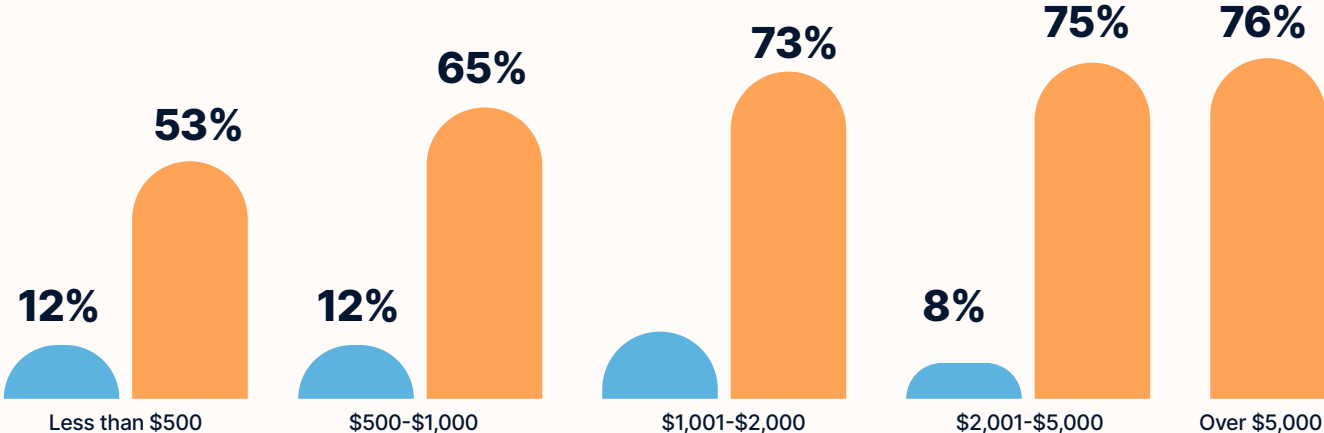
67% of Creators Use Video Content More Than Last Year



77%
of creators with >25k Followers Used Video Content More YoY

76%
of Business or Personal Finance creators Used Video Content More YoY

Video Content Usage Increase Correlated With Monthly Income for Creators



73%

YoY Increase Video Content Reported Among 25–34 Age Group

Among creators, a preference for short-form video showed up in the platforms they most commonly used, like TikTok (68%), Instagram (67%), and YouTube (65%).

49%

of brands considered video the most effective social media strategy

One nuance with video content is that enterprise brands tend to consider video content less effective, with only 35% of respondents from this segment considering video most effective. This might be because enterprises tend to rely on a broader range of strategies, or it's possible that video content from larger brands may be less well-received by audiences, who could consider content from smaller-sized brands more authentic and engaging.

87% of Creators Factor in Sustainability When Deciding Whether to Work With a Brand

One addition to future trends is the rise of value-based decision making from creators. Still, this year the No. 1 contributor to creator satisfaction in brand partnerships was career growth opportunities.

26% of creators reported that these growth opportunities, which include brand-led workshops and trainings in addition to exposure to wider audiences, were the factor that most correlated to their satisfaction in brand partnerships, outweighing significant factors like compensation and creative control.

"Working with a brand goes beyond just liking the product. The most meaningful partnerships I've had are with brands that stand for something I believe in and resonate with my own values. A strong brand identity is also key, because it helps exude a feeling or emotion when wearing or using the products.

As a creator, these factors act as a guiding light for me to create content that is sincere to me and my community. When a brand truly knows who they are, it allows for more impactful partnerships, where creators can align visually and emotionally while creating content that resonates on a deeper level with their audience."

– **Katryna Ton**, Content Creator

The most meaningful partnerships I've had are with brands that stand for something I believe in and resonate with my own values. As a creator...when a brand truly knows who they are, it allows for more impactful partnerships, where creators can align visually and emotionally while creating content that resonates on a deeper level with their audience.

Katryna Ton

Content Creator via @callherclassy



87% of Creators Factor in Sustainability When Deciding Whether to Work With a Brand

Yes 61%
Somewhat 26%
No 13%

82% of Creators Factor in Social Justice When Deciding Whether to Work With a Brand

Yes 61%
Somewhat 21%
No 18%

Numerous creators specified that sustainability and ethical practices will always be a trend. What's more, a renewed focus on brand values isn't just creator-specific.

We asked creator economy expert Ashton Wall about what it takes to build winning creator relationships, and we can't put it any better than she did:

"It really comes down to doing the hard work up front and ensuring you're building long-term relationships with creators who organically align with your company's mission and vision well before any sort of paid relationship enters the equation. It's equally important that you establish touch points in the relationship, building connections independent of the product you are selling. Both the brand and the creator need to consistently support each other's channel growth by providing engaging content opportunities and mutual audience exposure. Play the long game."

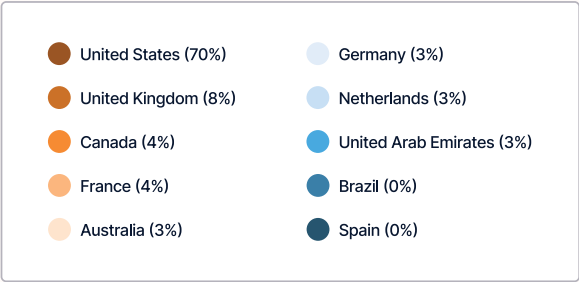
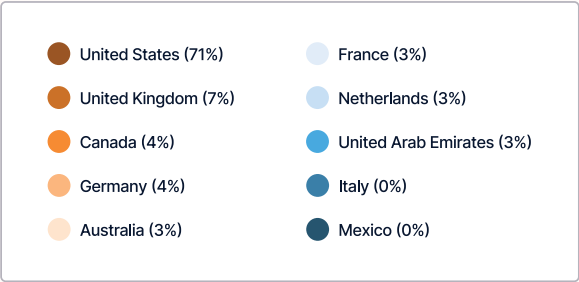
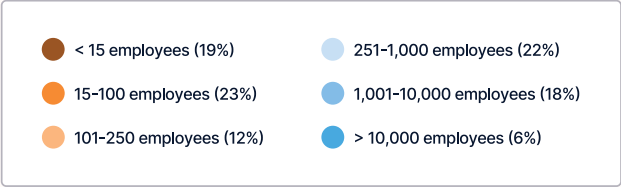
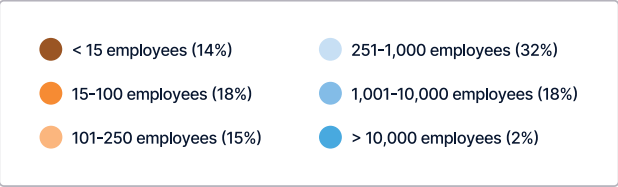
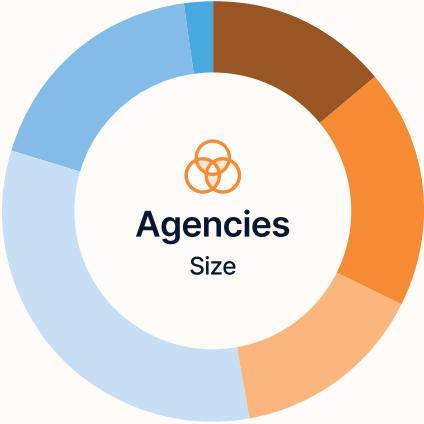
“ It's equally important that you establish touch points in the relationship, building connections independent of the product you are selling. Both the brand and the creator need to consistently support each other's channel growth by providing engaging content opportunities and mutual audience exposure.

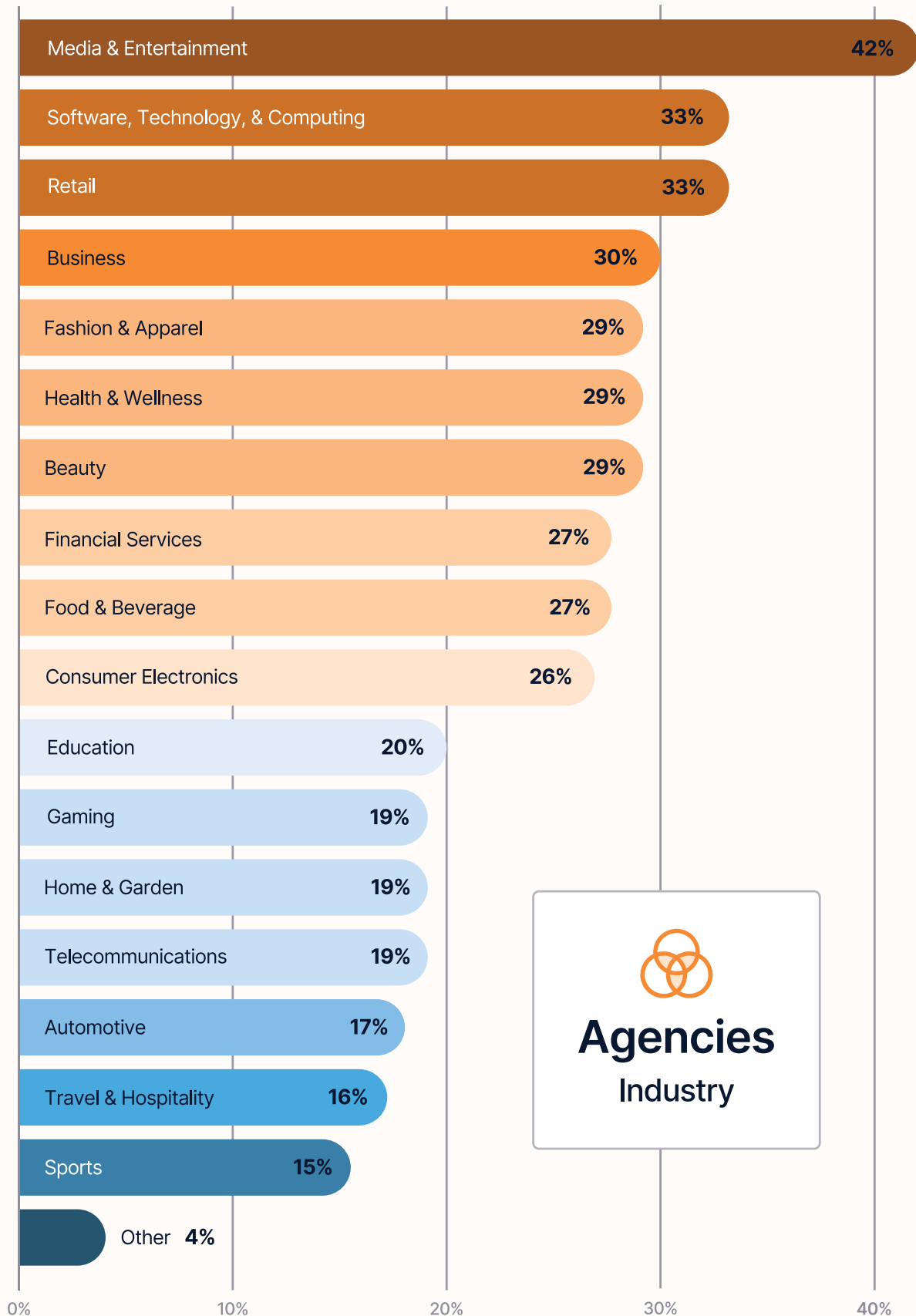
Ashton Wall
Founder of GateMaker Community

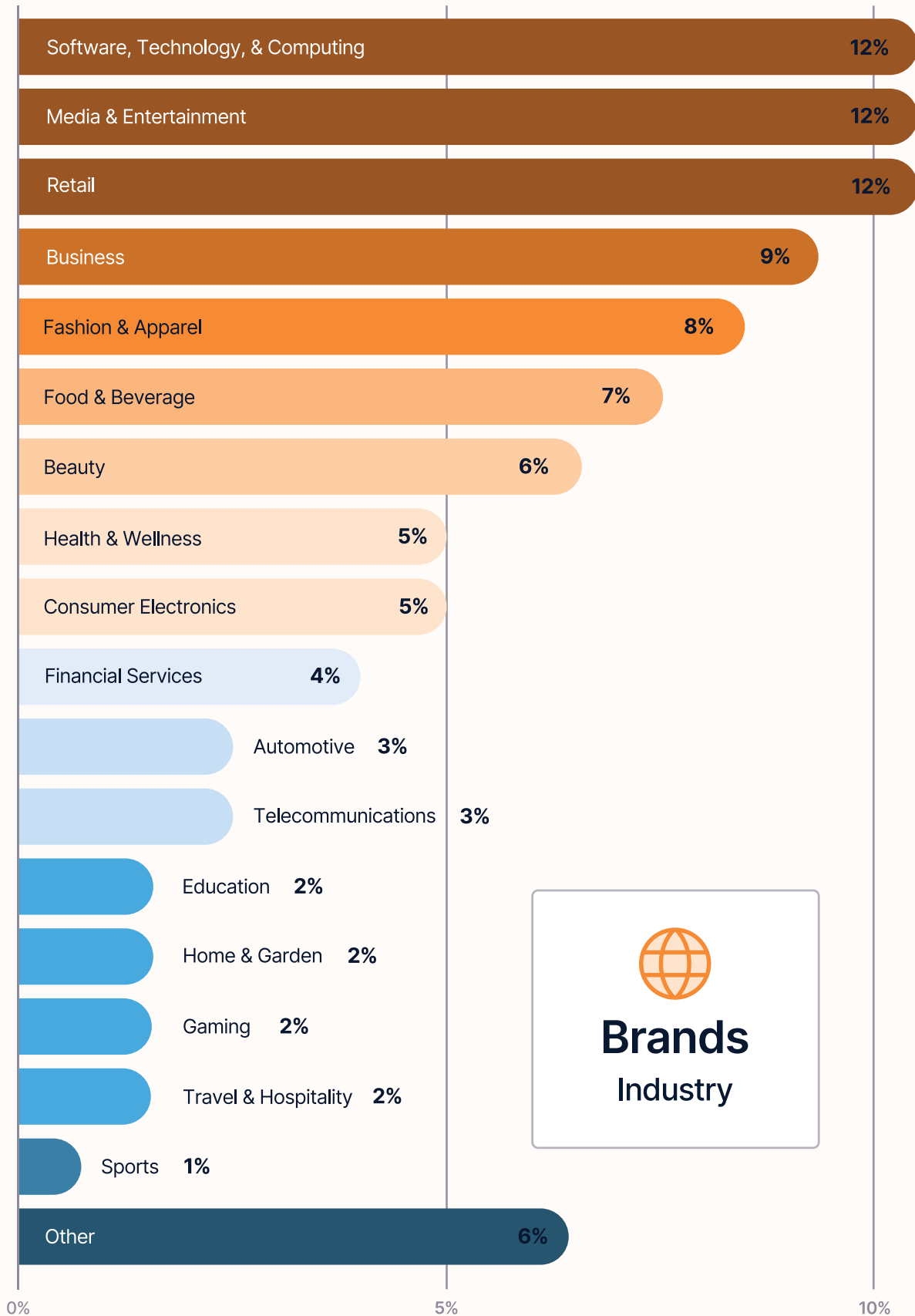


About This Survey

Organization Demographics

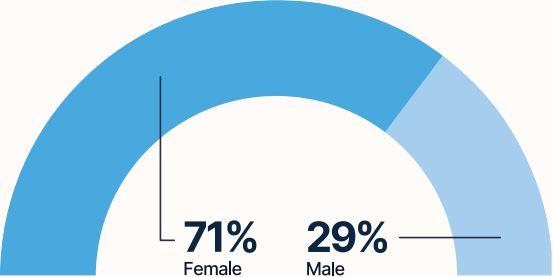




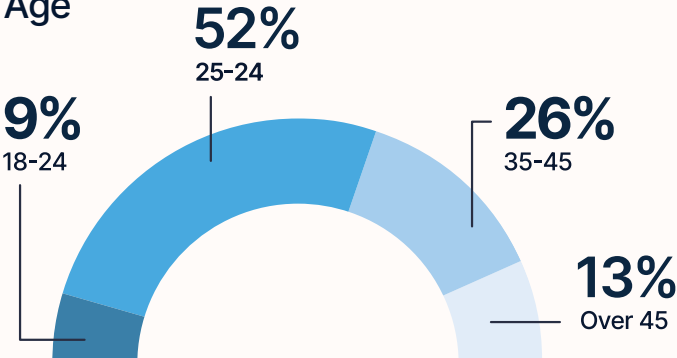


Creator Demographics

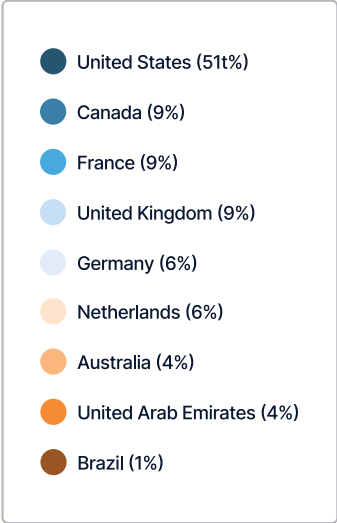
Gender



Age



Region



Creator Industries Represented

Lifestyle	45%
Fashion & Apparel	43%
Art, Entertainment, & Media	37%
Food & Drink	36%
Health, & Wellness	35%
Cosmetics	32%
Gaming	30%
Skincare	28%
Haircare	26%
Sports	21%
Travel & Hospitality	21%
Home & Garden	16%
Retail	16%
Business or Personal Finance	15%
Other	3%



Preferred Title

Influencer	28%
Creator	46%
I use influencer and creator interchangeably	26%

The Majority of Creators Worked Solo

Solo	58%
Solo, outsourcing specific tasks like video editing or copywriting	28%
With a team of 1 or more part-time freelancers	12%
With a team of 1 or more full-time employees	3%

Methodology

The survey was conducted by CreatorIQ and Sapio Research amongst 902 organization respondents and 231 creator respondents. Organization respondents were split into 457 decision makers within marketing teams in brands and 445 decision makers within creative agencies who use influencer marketing across the U.S., UK, France, Netherlands, Canada, Germany, Australia, UAE, and Brazil. Results of any sample are subject to sampling variation. The magnitude of the variation is measurable and is affected by the number of interviews and the level of the percentages expressing the results. In this particular study, the chances are 95 in 100 that a survey result does not vary, plus or minus, by more than 3.3 percentage

points from the result that would be obtained if interviews had been conducted with all persons in the universe represented by the sample. Sample was selected from online partner panels.

The creator survey invited 231 creator respondents with more than 1,000 followers in their primary social media channel across the U.S., UK, France, Netherlands, Canada, Germany, Australia, UAE, and Brazil. In this particular study, the chances are 95 in 100 that a survey result does not vary, plus or minus, by more than 6.4 percentage points from the result that would be obtained if interviews had been conducted with all persons in the universe represented by the sample.



About CreatorIQ

CreatorIQ is the leading creator marketing platform brands and agencies rely on to maximize creator marketing programs. Its enterprise-grade workflows and industry-leading intelligence deliver AI-powered creator discovery, unified program management, and standardized measurement that is safe, seamless, smart, and built for scale. Thousands of global organizations use CreatorIQ, including Logitech, Movers+Shakers, Nestlé, RQ, Sephora, Unilever, and more.