



Authenticity Over Ads

The Power of Letting Creators Be Creators



Why Authenticity Drives Success in Influencer Marketing

When creators sound scripted or restricted, audiences can sense the shift immediately. The result? A disconnect that undermines trust and causes the message to feel like just another ad. **Alanah Joseph**, Head of Creator Partnerships at HubSpot, and **Phill Agnew**, host of the Nudge Podcast and HubSpot partner, stress that campaigns only succeed when creators can bring their genuine voices to the table. By empowering influencers to share their personal experiences and adapt messages in natural ways, brands can cultivate deeper trust, stronger engagement, and a more authentic connection with audiences.

Businesses are finding the most success with smaller, more niche influencers — **47% of marketers** report successful micro-influencer partnerships.

Key Reasons to Prioritize Creator Authenticity



✓ Trust-Based Relationships

Audiences follow influencers because they trust them and view them as relatable and genuine. When brands allow creators to speak naturally, audiences are more likely to perceive the message as authentic, boosting trust and loyalty.

✓ Avoiding the “Ad” Pitfall

Overly scripted content disrupts the organic flow of a creator’s usual posts, making the ad feel out of place. This change in tone can break the audience’s connection with the creator, reducing the ad’s impact. Phill Agnew referred to this phenomenon as a break in **narrative transportation**, where scripted ads prevent audiences from fully engaging with the story.

✓ Enhanced Engagement Through Storytelling

Authenticity allows creators to integrate products into personal stories that feel natural and relatable. When creators share their real experiences and thoughts about a product, audiences are more engaged and likely to remember the brand in a positive light.



Quick Takeaways for Marketers

- ✓ Authenticity is the foundation of trust; audiences engage more with creators who speak naturally.
- ✓ Avoid rigid scripts that disrupt the flow of content and break the audience’s connection with the creator.
- ✓ Long-term relationships allow creators to integrate brand messaging more authentically, resulting in genuine and impactful campaigns.

By prioritizing authenticity and giving creators the freedom to be themselves, brands can foster deeper connections, amplify trust, and drive meaningful results in their influencer marketing efforts.

Tips for Fostering Authenticity in Influencer Campaigns



✓ Give Creators Flexibility

Provide a brief outline of key points to cover but allow influencers to incorporate their experiences and adapt the message naturally.

✓ Focus on Long-Term Partnerships

Build sustained relationships to deepen audience trust. Alanah Joseph shares that long-term partnerships enable creators to integrate brand messaging more seamlessly over time, making endorsements feel genuine.

✓ Encourage Personal Storytelling

Let creators share personal stories about your product rather than reading from a script. This approach fosters narrative immersion, increasing the campaign’s impact.

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What you’re really buying when a brand approaches a creator...is the trust they’ve built with their audience. To have a successful influencer marketing campaign, you need to take a step back, provide the creator with a framework...but allow them to do what they do best, which is to create content that seamlessly fits into their channels.

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Alanah Joseph,
Head of Creator
Partnerships, HubSpot

