



INFLUENCER



INFLUENCER MARKETING REPORT



2023

Short-Form Videos & Authenticity Drive
Influencer Marketing in 2023





SUMMARY

Our 2023 Influencer Marketing Survey presents a thorough analysis, revealing the now established relationship between short-form videos and authenticity. It offers actionable insights for brands intending to include influencer marketing in their marketing mix.

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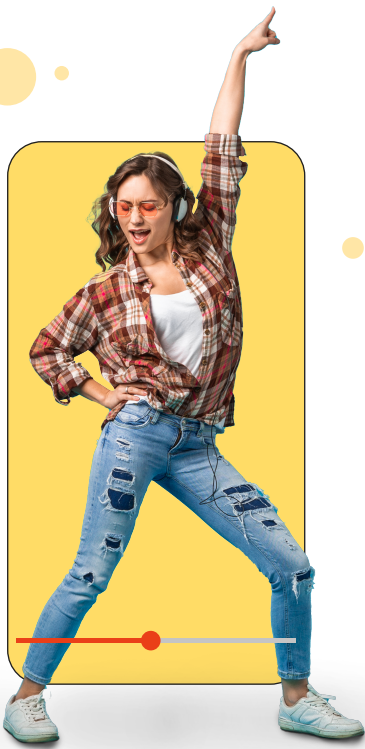
Insights from the Survey





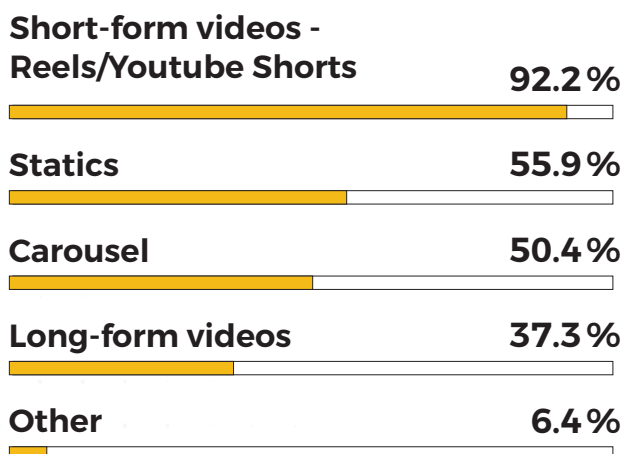
CHAPTER 1

THE RISE OF SHORT-FORM VIDEOS:



- The survey reveals 92% of influencers preferred content using short-form videos, a notable shift in influencer activations.
- Short-form video content emerged as the preferred form of content for influencers with shorter user attention spans, and the growing viewership of YouTube Shorts and Reels on Instagram and Facebook by users.
- YouTube Shorts emerged as a preferred platform with 51% of influencers creating content on it.
- 35.6% of influencers created Instagram Reels.
- Most use both formats.

What are the different types of content you create?

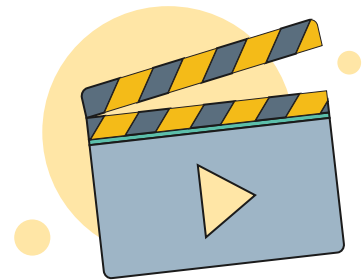
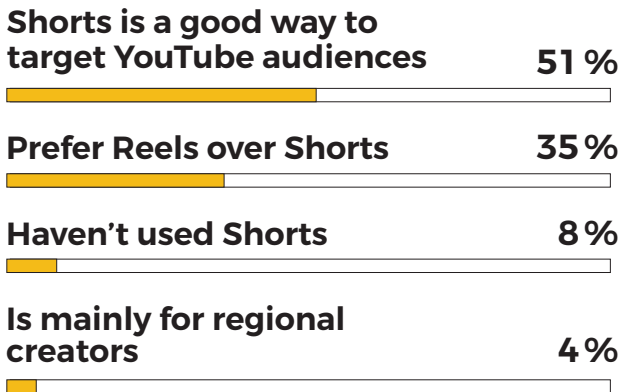


Short-form video content like Reels and YouTube Shorts is by far the most popular format among influencers. Nearly every influencer surveyed creates this type of content. (92% of the creator said they create content in the form of reels /short videos) of which only 37% said they created long form content.



Short-form video is the undisputed favourite content format for influencers today, especially newer influencers (Those who are active for Less than 5.) They may dabble in long-form video and static images as well, but bite-sized video reigns supreme. This reflects broader social media trends toward quick, visually engaging content.

What are your thoughts on YouTube Shorts?



Most influencers (nearly 51 %) believe Shorts provide a worthwhile way to reach YouTube audiences. But a significant portion (around 35.6) prefer using Instagram Reels over YouTube Shorts. They find the Instagram format more appealing. But many are utilising both platforms.

Only a few respondents (under 5%) said they have not used Shorts yet. This indicates most influencers are at least experimenting with the format.





CHAPTER 2

WHAT INFLUENCERS WANT FROM BRANDS

80% of influencers prefer long-term brand relationships rather than one-offs.

57% say budget misalignment is a key challenge with brands.

51% 51% of male influencers feel brands focus too much on short-term metrics.

40% cite tight timelines from brands as an issue.



Relationship with Brands:

Influencers prefer ongoing brand relationships but feel brands are too focused on immediate results. They also desire more creative leeway.

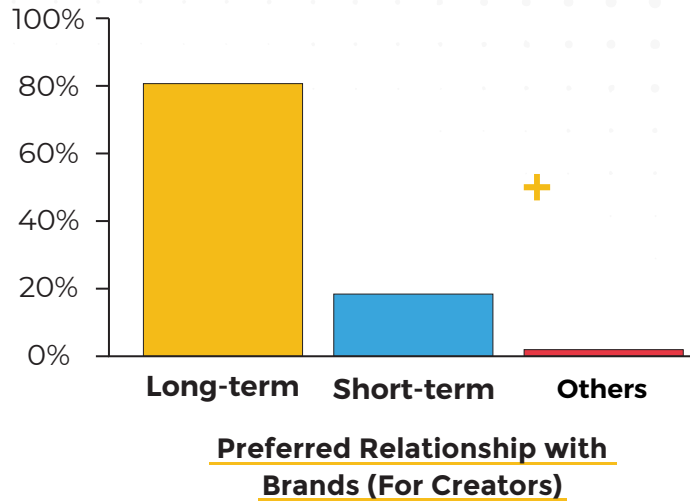
Most influencers (around 80%) prefer ongoing, long-term relationships with brands that result in multiple campaigns rather than one-off partnerships. This allows them to build rapport and familiarity with a brand over time.

This also indicates that most influencers seek to build lasting connections with brands and become ambassadors rather than just doing individual sponsored posts.





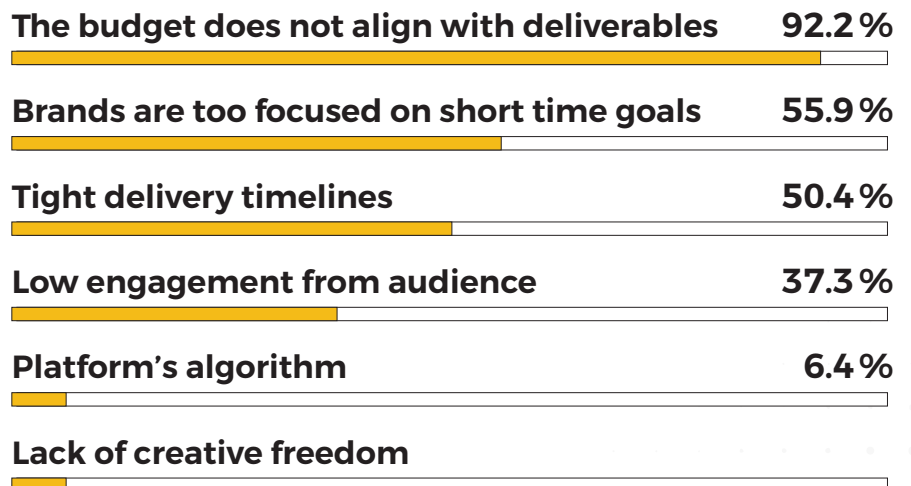
Long-term relationships allow influencers to better understand the brand and create higher quality, on-brand content. Brands benefit from continuity.



Challenges:

- The most commonly cited challenge is that the budgets are not aligning with demands or expectations. Nearly 57.8% of the respondents feel this way.
- The other challenge that most male influencers (nearly 51% of all male respondents) voiced was that brands were too focused on short-term goals and metrics rather than thinking long-term.
- Many (40%) also mentioned tight delivery timelines imposed by brands as an issue. This can constrain creativity.
- Platform algorithm changes that impact reach and discovery are a challenge outside their control.
- Some also noted lack of creative freedom, low audience engagement, and proving ROI as issues.

Challenges you've faced:





CHAPTER 3

HOW BRANDS USED INFLUENCER MARKETING IN 2023

Overview:

- 77.8% of respondents said that influencer marketing is a "must-have" component of their digital marketing strategy.
- Instagram is the most popular platform for influencer marketing, with 88.9% of brands using it. YouTube is the second most popular platform, with 61.1% of brands using it. stands at 44.4%
- When asked which platform yields the most results, brands responded: Instagram (47.2% of the votes) and YouTube came second with 27.89%, followed by LinkedIn with 11.1%. Facebook and Twitter had the lowest scores, with 8.3% and 2.8% respectively.
- Brands typically spend 5-10% of their marketing budgets on influencer marketing. (61% said they spend between 5-10%) and (20 % said they spend 10% - 20%).
- The top three objectives of brands using influencer marketing are product/brand awareness (58%), drive incremental revenue via conversions (52%), and drive product/brand engagement (52%) and to educate customers 44.4 %.





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**Arjun Bhatia**Chief Marketing
Officer & SVP

Influencer marketing is poised to play a significant role in the future of our brand's marketing mix. Its ability to connect authentically with our audience, facilitate niche targeting, and diversify our content offerings makes it a compelling channel. I am confident in our decision to continue investing in influencer marketing, adapting our approach as the landscape evolves and leveraging its potential to drive sustained growth and customer acquisition.

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Other Insights:

- Brands measure the value of Influencer marketing by tracking :
 - ▶ Increase in followers and website visitors (brand awareness) 58.3%
 - ▶ Increase in conversions like leads, downloads, sign-ups etc 58.3%
 - ▶ Also tracking sales lift 58.3%
 - ▶ Engagement on social media 50%
 - ▶ A few of them also track increase in positive sentiments towards the brand
- Most brands have noticed that influencer marketing helps them in Brand awareness lift (63.9%), Increased Brand engagement (50%)
- Brands use a mix of influencer types. The most popular types of influencers are micro-influencers (with 10K to 50K followers) and mid-tier influencers (with 50K to 500K followers).
- The vast majority of respondents (80%) reported utilising regional influencers as part of their strategy to boost brand awareness and expand reach.
- 64% of brands expressed positive sentiment about incorporating Threads into their brand strategy.



Driving awareness and engagement

Driving awareness and engagement seems like primary reasons why brands are reaching out to influencers, which makes sense as influencer content can help expose brands to new audiences and get consumers actively interacting with the brand. Besides, Influencers have already built their very-engaged audience.

Educating consumers: Influencers can create informative, authentic content to teach audiences about the brand's products or mission and explain information like How to, or how the product is better.

Niche influencers

About 39% of brands said influencer campaigns allow them to target a niche audience:

Niche influencers are individuals who have a smaller, yet highly engaged following within a specific industry or interest group. While they may not have the massive follower counts of macro-influencers or celebrities, niche influencers have built a community of dedicated followers who share a common interest or passion.

These influencers are considered experts or authorities within their niche, and their content resonates deeply with their audience. By partnering with niche influencers, brands can effectively reach a specific audience that aligns with their target market. This targeted reach can significantly increase the chances of reaching the right customers and driving conversions.

Micro Influencers preferred over Celebrities

The survey also shows that brands use a mix of influencer types. The most popular types (voted by 61% of the respondents) of influencers are micro-influencers (with 10K to 50K followers) and mid-tier influencers (with 50K to 500K followers). These types of influencers are often seen as being more authentic and relatable to their followers, which can make them more effective at driving engagement and sales. And also affordable.





Macro-influencers (with 500K to 1 million followers) and mega-influencers (with more than 1 million followers) are also popular, but they tend to be more expensive to work with. They can be a good option for brands that want to reach a large audience quickly, but they may not be as effective at driving engagement as micro- and mid-tier influencers.

Working with Celebrity Influencers

Based on the survey responses, some key takeaways on brands' experiences working with celebrities:

- Mixed results in terms of ROI and sales impact: Some brands saw good results like increased followers, views and registrations. But many noted limited sales impact, stagnant growth after a while, and lack of ROI.
- Brand visibility and awareness seems to be the primary benefit according to many responses. Celebrities helped create buzz and get brand exposure. But this didn't always translate into concrete business results.
- Lack of trust and authenticity was a concern for some brands, especially in certain categories like wellness and nutrition where credibility is important. Direct celebrity endorsements can sometimes feel inauthentic.
- Execution challenges were budget constraints, time investment to coordinate, and needing agencies to help manage the process smoothly.
- Overall the responses indicate celebrities can be useful for brand awareness in some cases, but have limitations for driving true business impact. They require big budgets and may not feel authentic to consumers in all categories.





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**Sanjay Adesara**Head of Marketing
Fortune (Adani)

In the ever-changing realm of marketing, influencer marketing is set to remain a cornerstone of brand strategies. Its enduring appeal is grounded in its unmatched ability to engage audiences on a personal level. With platforms diversifying and regulations tightening, influencer marketing's adaptability and authenticity make it a vital component of any brand's marketing mix. As data-driven precision and seamless integration with other channels become the norm, investing in influencer marketing is not just an option but a strategic imperative for brands aiming to excel in the digital age.

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CHAPTER 4

INFLUENCER TRENDS IN 2023

Growing competition with new creators entering every day

When asked how they stay ahead of rising competition, the most common responses were: creating captivating and unique content, engaging with followers on social media, collaborating with other influencers, analysing audience feedback/data, and implementing targeted ads.

Long-term partnerships, authenticity, high-quality and trend-focused content, audience engagement, and continuous learning/improvement emerge as key priorities for influencers looking to grow their personal brands and stay atop rising competition.

- Consistency was a key theme - regularly posting content and staying relevant to their niche. Many aim to create trends rather than just follow them.
- Authenticity is valued. Influencers want to remain true to their personal brand and style.
- Many focus on quality over quantity of content. They aim for high production value that will connect with their audience.
- Trend awareness is critical. Keeping up with the latest trends, audios, platforms etc allows them to stay relevant.
- Influencers recognize the need to constantly experiment, learn and improve - whether crafting content, using new features or trying various platforms.
- Competition is seen in a positive light overall. In the open ended questions some said that competition encourages creators to enhance their skills and provide better value.





Threads:

When asked specifically about Threads, the responses were more mixed:

25% said they prefer Threads over Twitter.

23% said they don't like Threads at all.

50% said they downloaded Threads just to check out the interface and hype.



When asked specifically about Threads, the responses were more mixed:

- Around 61% think there will be a shift and creators can monetize Threads like Instagram.
- 37% don't think there will be a major shift from Twitter.
- The rest were unsure.

Influencers experience of Threads varied:

- Most who downloaded Threads were neutral about it - they neither loved nor hated it. They are still evaluating its features and utility.
- Those who prefer Threads find it more modern, visual, and creator-friendly. But some think the hype is temporary.
- Those who don't like Threads found the interface confusing or limiting. Some feel Threads is trying to be too similar to Twitter.
- In summary, influencer opinions on Threads vary widely and it is still early days. Many are taking a wait-and-watch approach. Monetization potential and retaining creators will be key factors affecting future adoption.

Brand response on using Threads

- 64% of brands surveyed expressed positive sentiment about incorporating Threads into their brand strategy.



CHAPTER 5

THE USE OF AI IN INFLUENCER MARKETING

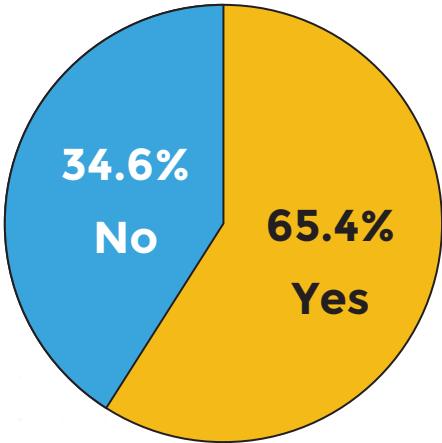
Creators and AI

- 64%** worry about competition from AI influencers.
- 50%** use AI for content ideation.
- 33%** for engagement and writing.
- 34%** don't use AI tools currently.



Are you concerned about competing with Metaverse and AI Influencers?

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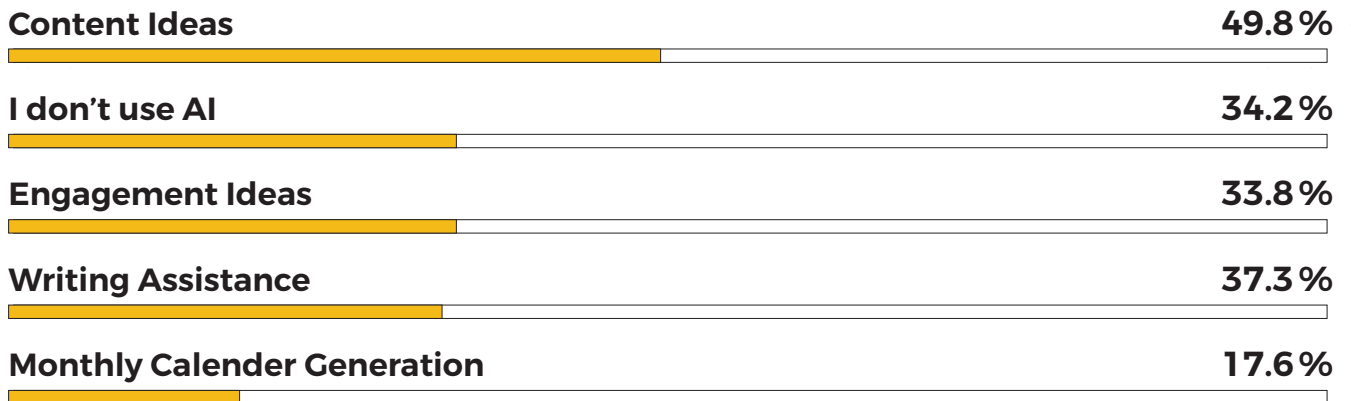


According to the survey, the most commonly used AI tools among 50% of influencers are for generating content ideas. Engagement ideas and writing assistance are also popular, with 33% of respondents using AI for these tasks.

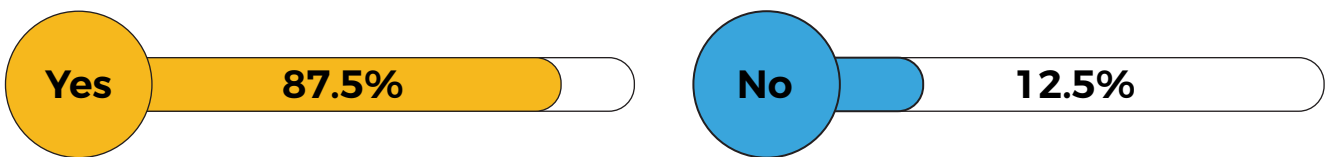
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In what ways have you used AI, to make your journey easy?



Are influencers excited about AI tools?



Eshita Anil

Performance
Marketing Head



With the rise in short-video platforms and influencers leveraging social media, influencer marketing has played a critical factor in shaping consumer behavior, and our investments in it will continue to increase. Micro-influencers will play a pivotal role, as consumers seek genuine experiences and trust; this provides an authentic voice. With AI coming into the picture, the process of brand-influencer matchmaking is made drastically more efficient, using AI to conduct exceptionally solid influencer profiling as well as brand profiling, saving time and improving accuracy. The digital landscape is ever-evolving; hence, leveraging the data-driven insights and automation to optimize collaborations with influencers, enhance the effectiveness of their campaigns through performance marketing, and build stronger connections with their target audience.



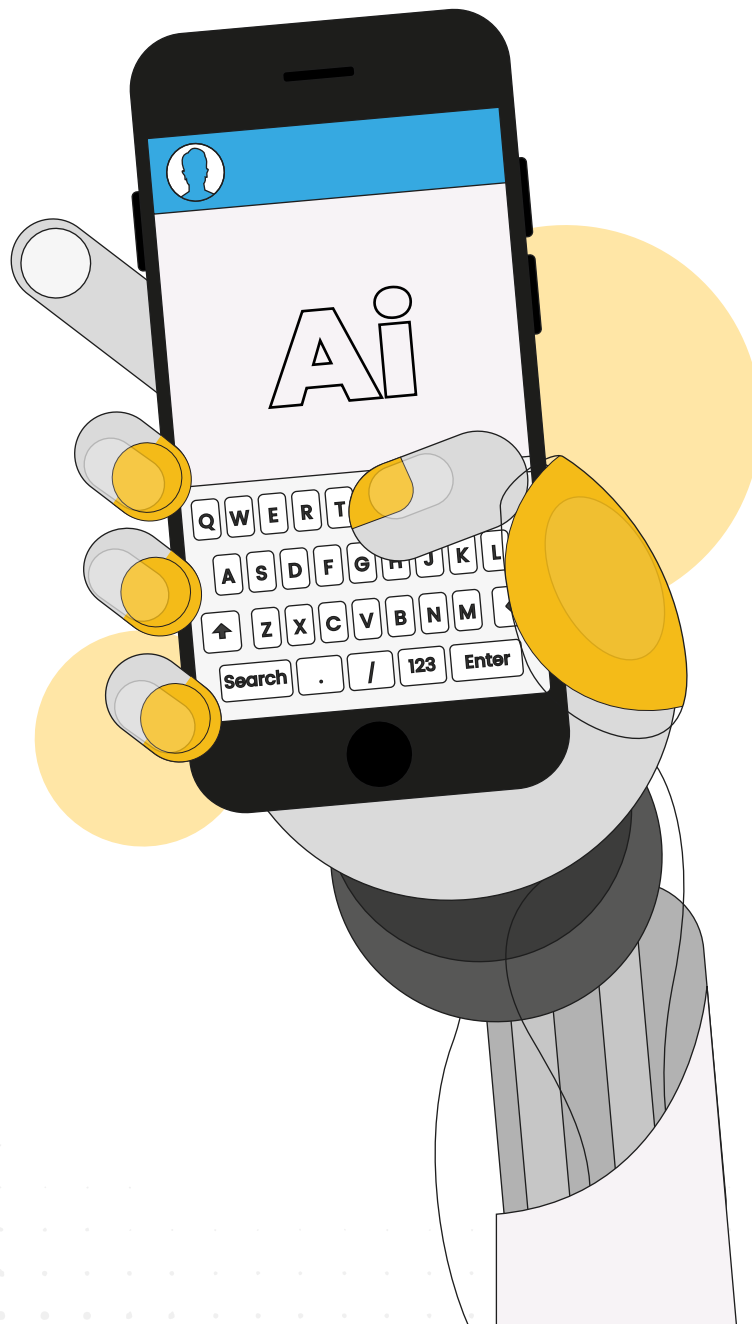


Interestingly, 34% of respondents indicated that they do not currently use any AI tools. Of those who do use AI, most are leveraging it for just 1-2 use cases, such as ideation or writing assistance. Very few use it comprehensively across multiple capabilities.

Qualitative feedback from the survey indicates that many influencers find AI useful for brainstorming content topics and ideas, supplementing their own ideation process. AI is also assisting with writing tasks such as grammar checks, paraphrasing, and drafting social media captions or blog posts. For engagement, AI seems to be helpful in suggesting interactive polls, questions, quizzes, etc., that creators can share with their audience

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CHAPTER 6

THE WAY AHEAD

Influencers are actively seeking tools, including ideas and content creation using AI, to enhance their performance. Nearly half, at 48%, are in search of workflow optimization dashboards, while a substantial 46% are actively seeking tools to keep them well-informed about emerging trends.

According to Meta half of all brands find that **influencer content is more effective than advertising on digital, and influencers are now looking for long term relationships as brand advocates**. This also means they will gain experience and insight over time as to a brand's values and ethos, and the kind of content that resonates with their followers to be even more effective.

Brands, on the other hand, can start looking at select influencers as long term brand partners, and brief them on the brand, its journey, objectives and vision so that influencers can develop content that is aligned to these goals with their followers.

Brands now have the opportunity of addressing specific audiences using niche influencers to reach them more effectively and in a cost-efficient manner.





CHAPTER 7

INSIGHTS FROM THE SURVEY

As the base of influencers in the country expands with more creators aspiring to become influencers, the need for professionalism in all aspects of their work is becoming more and more necessary.

Views on Meta verification

- Majority (60-65%) said they would not buy the paid verification. Main reasons were - they want to earn it genuinely, don't find value in paid verification, believe it should reflect hard work and not be bought.
- Authenticity was a common theme - most felt paid verification seems inauthentic, fake, just for show off. They want the prestige of an earned verification.
- A segment (25-30%) said they would buy it or have bought it. Main drivers were account safety/security, avoiding impersonation, and gaining some credibility.
- A few were unsure or open to buying it in the future if beneficial. But most who said no felt strongly about it.
- Many pointed out how paid verification reduces the badge's authenticity and exclusivity since anyone can buy it now.
- Some felt it simply wasn't worth the cost and would not impact their growth or earnings potential in a meaningful way.





Insights for brands

- Short form videos are what consumers are watching increasingly on social media.
- Long form videos work on YouTube as consumers watch them intentionally after searching for information.
- Consumers trust influencers they follow are and are more open to brands influencers use or recommend.
- It would benefit brands to have long terms associations with select influencers who are effective so that they become brand advocates.
- Brands can educate influencers on their brand and what they stand for so that they can be more effective brand advocates.
- Brands can fine tune their influencer engagement strategy based on their marketing objectives and which stage of the marketing funnel they are targeting.

