

RESEARCH AND INSIGHTS

The Rise of the Workfluencer

Understanding today's B2B content ecosystem and the influencers driving it forward



Across social platforms, B2B influencers are redefining expectations for professional content

Say the word “influencer” and most people picture fashion hauls, fitness tips, or perfectly lit travel vlogs—not product walkthroughs, SaaS memes, or breakdowns of procurement workflows. But that’s changing.

A new generation of professionals and thought leaders is reshaping what it means to influence online. Once a niche phenomenon confined to LinkedIn posts and industry blogs, B2B influencers or “workfluencers” have emerged as a powerful force reshaping how professionals share ideas, build trust, and make critical decisions. They’re building audiences within niche industries, sharing insights grounded in real expertise, and earning trust by showing up as their full, unfiltered selves.

METHODOLOGY

To understand the landscape of B2B content and the needs and priorities of the people behind it, NRG conducted interviews with eight prominent B2B influencers. All of these influencers had an extensive history of producing content across multiple platforms, and their content output covered a broad range of topics and themes, from personal branding and career advice to project management and cybersecurity. Select quotes from these interviews have been incorporated throughout this analysis.

Additionally, this report draws on insights from NRG’s previous work on creator platforms and communities, including our syndicated *Future of Social Video* research, an annual study exploring the landscape of online video content.

To learn more about our work within the creator economy, reach out to trendsandfutures@nrgmr.com.

They may not have the celebrity and mass appeal of the top fashion and lifestyle influencers, but they reach the people who matter; B2B influencers often command hefty credibility within specific professional domains. And increasingly, their approach to content looks less like traditional B2B content and more like what we’ve come to expect from the broader creator economy: punchy videos, personal storytelling, self-effacing humor, and constant experimentation.

In this report, we’ll unpack who these influencers are, what makes them successful, and how brands and platforms can better support their growth. As the boundaries between professional and personal content continue to blur, understanding the new landscape of B2B content will be a strategic imperative for brands looking to develop effective marketing strategies—and for tech companies that want to attract these creators to their platforms.



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Explaining the rise of the workfluencer

HOW IS THE LANDSCAPE OF B2B CONTENT EVOLVING?



The world of B2B content is changing fast, dissolving long-standing boundaries between personal and professional communication. Increasingly, B2B content now takes cues from the wider digital content landscape as brands, marketers, and individual creators embrace short-form video, meme culture, and unscripted personal storytelling.

This shift is being fueled by a generational change in both creators and audiences. Millennial and Gen Z professionals expect content to be authentic, personal, and emotionally resonant, even in a B2B context. At the same time, new platforms and creator tools are making it easier than ever before for young professionals to create and share content and position themselves as aspiring thought leaders within their fields.

As a result, B2B content creators are building cross-platform followings rooted both in their expertise and their personalities. And B2B brands are now recognizing the influence wielded by these creators—and are looking to forge meaningful partnerships that mirror the “influencer marketing” model that has long been a common technique among consumer-facing companies.

This convergence with the mainstream creator economy is not a dilution of B2B content—it’s an evolution. It reflects a new expectation that professional content should feel human, accessible, and genuinely entertaining.

WHAT IS A B2B INFLUENCER?



This convergence within the creator economy manifests even in the terminology of B2B content—as creators within this world become increasingly comfortable using the term “influencer” or recent coinages like “workfluencer” to describe themselves.

The label of “B2B influencer” is one that can be applied to anyone seeking to build a personal following by creating and sharing online content aimed, partially or entirely, at a professional or “prosumer” audience. They are a new kind of professional storyteller: someone who uses text, audio, and video content to build trust, spark conversations, and shape the discourse within a specific business domain. They may be cybersecurity experts making jokes about compliance workflows, brand strategists sharing candid career advice, or sales consultants breaking down pipeline management via punchy TikToks and Instagram Reels.

While some B2B influencers monetize their content through ads, brand partnerships, merchandise, or paywalls, others are content to treat it as a marketing vehicle for themselves and/or the companies they represent. In the eyes of many young professionals, content creation is an important way of fleshing out their CVs, expanding their networks, and opening the door to new opportunities.



WHAT DOES THIS ALL MEAN FOR...



...brands investing in B2B content and influencer partnerships?

Prioritize long-term relationships

Move beyond one-off sponsorships. Build deeper partnerships with creators who align with your brand values and audience needs.

Trust creators with creative control

Ditch the scripts and rigid guidelines. Let creators craft content in their own voice, leveraging their deep knowledge of their audiences.

Embrace authenticity and vulnerability

Avoid producing material that feels overly polished and corporate in favor of B2B content that reassures the audience there’s a human on the other side of the screen.

Reframe success metrics

Look beyond likes and views. Focus on relevance, engagement quality, and content that drives real business conversations or professional actions.

Involve creators early

Invite influencers into campaign planning, product development, or event ideation to co-create more resonant and actionable content.

...platforms looking to attract and support B2B influencers?

Develop tailored analytics

Offer insights that go beyond surface-level engagement—support creators in tracking audience relevance, conversion quality, and long-term impact.

Increase transparency with creators

Help creators understand how their content is evaluated and surfaced, especially when they aren’t chasing virality.

Facilitate real-world connection

Encourage offline events, conferences, and networking opportunities that strengthen influencer communities and deepen engagement.

Streamline notification systems

Give creators more control over what types of alerts they receive so they can better prioritize high-value engagement.

Build AI tools that support, not script

Offer generative AI features that enhance influencers’ workflows without diluting their unique voice or style.

Increasingly, the boundaries between “B2B content” and the wider creator economy are breaking down

As the creator landscape has evolved, one thing has become clear: the line between B2B influencers or workfluencers and the wider creator and influencer economy has never been more blurred.

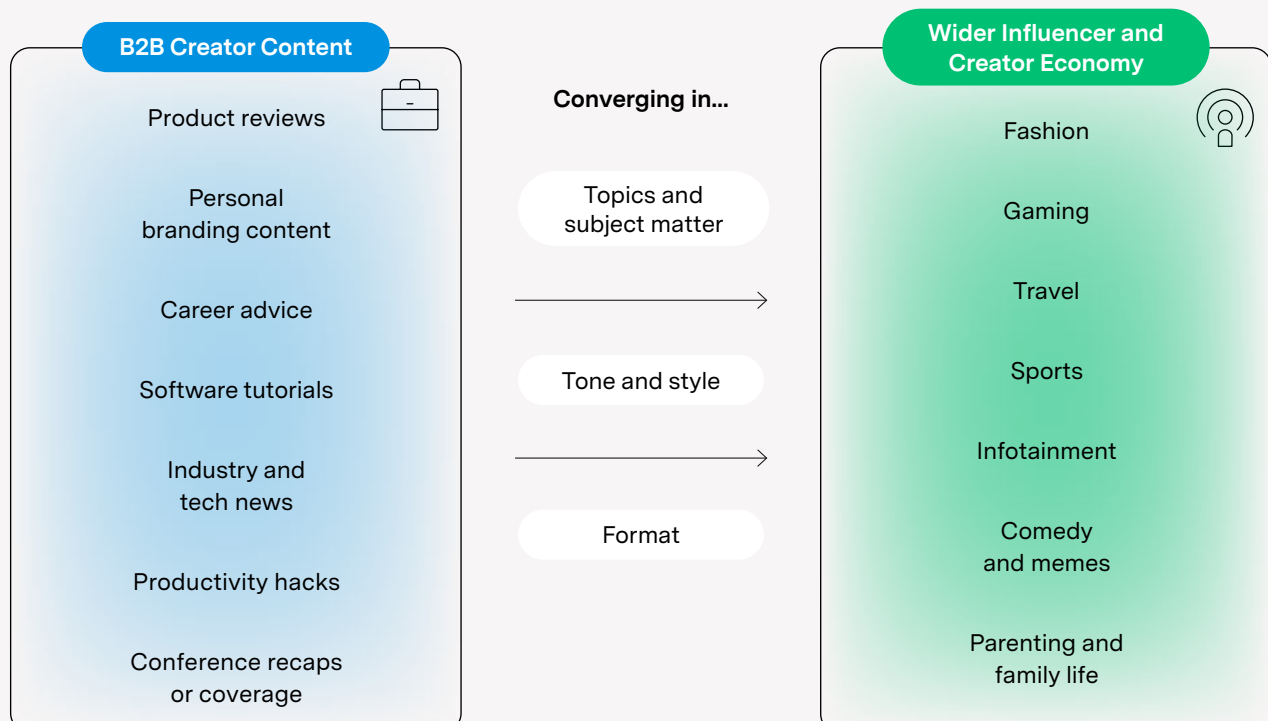
Indeed, many of the people interviewed for this research did not see themselves as B2B influencers, despite producing content mostly or exclusively aimed at professionals within specific industries. Rather, they understood themselves to be part of a shared universe of online content, occupying the same digital spaces and competing for eyeballs against both other B2B-oriented creators as well as celebrity influencers like MrBeast, Kai Cenat, and Alex Cooper.

Partly, this mindset shift has been driven by platform diversification. Historically, B2B influencers may have prioritized posting their content to dedicated professional networking platforms like LinkedIn, blogging platforms like Substack, or industry-specific subreddits and forums. While many of today’s B2B influencers maintain a presence on these platforms, they’re also keenly aware of the risks of putting all their eggs in one basket. In recent years, many of them have invested time and effort toward developing a presence across a wider range of platforms—posting their content to places like TikTok, Instagram, and YouTube while also putting out platform-independent content in the form of newsletters and podcasts.

As B2B influencers spread their content across a wider range of platforms, and as they seek to take advantage of newer content formats like short-form video, they’re looking across the entire spectrum of the creator economy for guidance and inspiration. **Today’s B2B influencers aren’t modeling their content output solely on other experts within their industries: they’re taking lessons from fashion influencers, travel vloggers, meme pages, video game streamers, and a myriad of other sources.** And their output often straddles many of these different content types, resisting easy categorization.

THE CONVERGENCE OF THE CREATOR ECONOMY

Illustrative examples of creator content



At a deeper level, this shift reflects a generational changing of the guard among both creators themselves and their audiences. Increasingly, Millennials—and even some more ambitious members of Gen Z—are moving into leadership and decision-making roles within their industries. And these younger leaders are bringing with them a whole new set of content expectations.

These are people who've come up in an era of side hustles, work-from-home policies, and social media networking. They want to bring their authentic selves to work, and many of them reject the idea that you need to have entirely separate personal and professional personas.¹ For them, there's nothing at all unusual about the idea of seeing B2B content sandwiched between memes and get-ready-with-me videos while scrolling through their social feeds.

1. Nitya Ayyagari, "Gen Z at Work: How We're Actually Changing Corporate Culture," *Teen Vogue*, May 12th, 2025
2. Rebecca Stewart, "With Workers TikTok'ing on the Clock, Brands Rethink Employee Advocacy," *AdWeek*, June 12th, 2023

And of course, many of them are content creators and aspiring influencers themselves. They've grown up documenting their lives and sharing their passions through social media. Now, they're looking to use the communication skills they've developed by doing so to further their careers and position themselves as thought leaders within their respective industries. As a result, companies are having to rethink their social media policies to accommodate the realities of a world in which a significant number of their employees see themselves as B2B influencers of one kind or another.²

These demographic shifts are further blurring the lines between B2B content and other forms of online media. All told, the B2B influencers of today see themselves as creating content for real humans on the other side of the screen—people whose professional and personal interests cannot, and should not, be fully disentangled.



"I've worked across a lot of different areas of the creator economy—from lifestyle influencers to more B2B-oriented spaces. And right now, all of it's merging together; creators are looking across that whole landscape, seeing what works, and taking best practices from all of it."



GRACE ANDREWS
Brand Director, FlightStory

"Whether we're talking about content aimed at professionals or content aimed at general consumers, what really matters is having a point of view. Especially with AI-generated content becoming more common, it's crucial that you have a tone of voice and a point of view that lets you stand out from a sea of content that could have been written by anyone."



SHAMA HYDER
Founder and CEO, Zen Media

"Across industries, more and more young people are figuring out how to use content to advance their careers. And companies are going to have to figure out how to turn that into an asset rather than a liability—how to embrace the idea of individual employees becoming influencers."



JACK APPLEBY
Founder, Future Social



As audience expectations evolve, brands will need to re-evaluate how to build trust in their content

This convergence between the different spheres of the creator and influencer economy has had a profound effect on audience expectations for what B2B content ought to look like—and, by extension, the rules of the game for brands when it comes to building trust online.

Previously, brands and high-profile thought leaders established credibility through the production values of their content—investing in polished, refined, and carefully worded content that sent a message of respectability, authority, and thoughtfulness. But that sort of content feels increasingly misaligned with the expectations of today's young professionals.

Nowadays, the most powerful people on the planet—the Elon Musks and the Donald Trumps of the world—regularly communicate with their followers through off-the-cuff Tweets and unscripted video and podcast content.³ And platforms like TikTok have established a new visual language for public relations; we're all

now used to seeing titans of industry and important political leaders speak to us directly through relatively unvarnished, lo-fi content filmed on their phones.

3. Cristina Vanbergehn, "The Power of Social Media in Elections: Lessons from Romania's TikTok Case Study," *Modern Diplomacy*, November 30th, 2024



EARNING TRUST THROUGH B2B CONTENT

Old Model



Content with high production values

Credibility built on brands

Polished, professional tone

Focus on the end product

New Model



Authentically messy and unvarnished content

Credibility built on individual human expertise

Informal tone that embraces humor, memes, and community language

Focus on process and learning from mistakes



"The most powerful content is the stuff that sends a message of, 'I had this thought, and I just wanted to share it with you.' That kind of immediate human connection is often much more effective than videos where someone's reading off a teleprompter, and you can tell that someone in marketing scripted it, someone in PR booked the shoot, someone in legal reviewed and cleared it."



CHRISTINE GRIFTON
Personal Branding Coach



KATIE MURPHY
Social Media Manager, noticed.

If anything, content that feels overly produced can now undermine a brand's ability to build trust with certain demographics. For many younger professionals, glossy, scripted videos feel impersonal and inauthentic. This type of content makes them hyper-aware of the fact that they're being marketed to, whereas content that feels messier and more authentic helps to reframe the relationship dynamic.⁴

Today's consumers of B2B content want to connect with influencers and brands on a human level—warts and all. And with AI-generated content becoming more and more prevalent on social platforms, true

authenticity looks set to become an even more valuable commodity.⁵

By extension, many of today's top B2B influencers earn the trust of their followers by focusing on failure as much as success. Whether they're sharing embarrassing interview stories or talking about projects that failed and what they learned from the experience, the best influencers understand the power of vulnerability—and how to build deep and enduring relationships with their followers through emotional honesty.

4. Matheus Lock, "The rise of lo-fi strategy: Unleashing a new era in advertising authenticity," PR Week, April 26th, 2023

5. Kate Knibbs, "Yes, That Viral LinkedIn Post You Read Was Probably AI-Generated," Wired, November 26th, 2024

CASE STUDY

During recent debates over whether to ban TikTok in the US, CEO **Shou Zi Chew** leaned into the strengths of his company's own platform by engaging directly with users through short, unscripted videos—explaining TikTok's position and the stakes of the debate while cutting through the pomp and circumstance of congressional hearings.⁶



Similarly, since taking over as Head of Instagram in 2018, **Adam Mosseri** has become well known on the platform for his regular video content rolling out new features and answering questions from the creator community.⁷ Many of the influencers interviewed for this research cited Mosseri's highly personal content as evidence of the platform's commitment to positive engagement with its creators.



6. Dexter Thomas, "'Over Time the Trust Will Come': An Exclusive Interview With TikTok's CEO," Wired, February 1st, 2024

7. Felix Young, "In Conversation with the Head of Instagram, Adam Mosseri," Hypebeast, June 21st, 2024



"True success as a creator is about creating and owning your own style. The best creators—the people I really respect and trust—all have a very distinct visual style that they've built and evolved over time. That style then helps to reinforce the trust that they've built up—because if you see those specific colors and those specific visuals, you know what to expect, you know it's a creator you're familiar with who's earned your trust over time."



GRACE ANDREWS
Brand Director, FlightStory

"Video can be a very vulnerable medium, but that's what great about it. When you're on camera, people can see your emotions—they can tell if you're real or fake. And it's that vulnerability that creates a sense that you're connecting with someone on the other side of the screen."



MORGAN J INGRAM
Founder and CEO, AMP Social





As attention spans continue to shorten, B2B influencers are keenly aware of the power of a good hook



While lo-fi, unscripted content may appear spontaneous, it's often meticulously crafted. B2B influencers increasingly adopt strategies from top-tier creators like MrBeast, deliberately structuring and fine-tuning their content to align with platform algorithms and enhance shareability.

Virtually all of the influencers interviewed for this research emphasized that a significant portion of their content creation time is devoted to perfecting the opening lines of text posts or the initial three to five seconds of videos. **In an era of diminishing attention spans, B2B creators recognize that the foremost objective of any content is to "stop the scroll"**—to immediately capture the viewer's attention and encourage continued engagement.

This principle is particularly pertinent to short-form video content. Creators in this medium often employ multi-layered hooks, integrating audio cues, on-screen text,

and visual elements to spark curiosity. A common tactic involves leveraging established templates that have been proven effective across various content genres, typically by posing an explicit or implicit question at the video's outset. Crucially, the remainder of the video must then deliver a satisfying answer to that question, providing genuine value to viewers who invest their time in watching.

Ultimately, it's this delivery of value that distinguishes an effective hook from mere clickbait. Certainly, the influencers consulted for this study were deeply committed to ensuring their content prompts meaningful action and delivers tangible benefits to their audience, whether by aiding their organization in making informed decisions or by empowering individuals to advance their own success within that organization.

"If you look at the most effective short-form creators, they all understand how to create a great hook; they apply a physical hook, a text hook, and an audio hook to their videos. And, crucially, they know the difference between a hook and clickbait."



GRACE ANDREWS
Brand Director, FlightStory

"The one thing that's been proven to matter over and over again—no matter how platforms and formats change and evolve—is a compelling hook. That, to me, is one of the biggest problems in B2B marketing: people just do not spend enough time trying to make whatever they're selling interesting in a way that's going to hook people and encourage shareability."



JACK APPLEBY
Social Media
Brand and Creator Consultant

EXAMPLES OF EFFECTIVE CONTENT HOOKS

Audio and Text Hooks

"Here are three things I didn't know about [X]."

"You don't need [X] to [Y]."

"I'm going to show you how to do [X] in 60 seconds."

"This product changed the way I do [X]."

"I finally figured out [X]."

"One of these [X] costs [Y]. Can you spot the difference?"

"Why is nobody talking about [X]?"

"A lot of people ask me about [X]."



Visual Hooks

A unique background or location

Use of props and visual aides

Exaggerated or unique facial expressions

Unconventional camera angles

Jump cuts and abrupt editing

References to existing meme formats



"With text content, I think a lot of people have overengineered their hooks. They think that, to be effective, you have to tick all these boxes: you have to use all caps, you have to bold the text, you have to have an emoji in there. But I think the most effective way to hold someone's attention is just to write like you're speaking to someone. You need to realize that you're not trying to write an English paper in high school and get an A on it; you're trying to convey the pacing and the rhythms of real, person-to-person communication."



AIDAN BRANNIGAN
Founder, No Boring Brands

A sense of humor—and the ability to laugh at yourself and your brand—is increasingly important for building trust in B2B content



Another key lesson that B2B influencers have absorbed from more mainstream creators is the value of incorporating humor into their content strategies. Casting aside the stereotype of B2B content as dense, technical, and jargon-laden, today's creators are adopting the language of sketch comedy, infusing a sense of fun into their articles and videos. This shift isn't merely about entertaining audiences; it's a strategic move to enhance engagement and build more meaningful connections.

Research supports this approach; one study by Oracle found that businesses with a sense of humor benefit from higher levels of brand recall and customer loyalty.⁸ In a world where even the TSA has embraced meme culture and self-referential metahumor, it's no wonder that influencers and thought leaders within ostensibly serious fields are adopting a more light-hearted communication style.⁹

In the realm of B2B content, humor has a vital role to play in establishing trust and credibility. Online professional communities often develop their own shared languages, built around core sets of memes, references, and in-jokes. **By participating in these subcultures and demonstrating fluency in their languages, influencers can establish authenticity and insider status**—distinguishing themselves

from outsiders merely attempting to advertise their brands.

At the same time, humor can help brands inject a degree of personality and humanity into their online content, providing solid foundations on which to build trusted relationships with potential customers. This is one of the reasons why more and more B2B brands are recognizing the value of influencer partnerships; for companies whose own brand identities don't leave much room for levity, these kinds of partnerships can be an effective way to stretch into new emotional territories and challenge consumers' preconceived brand associations.

Of course, there are limits to this approach—certain occasions where even the most whimsical B2B brands and influencers will need to adopt a more sombre tone. And brands certainly need to be aware of the dangers of playing into jokes or adopting meme templates they don't fully understand.¹⁰ But for the most part, creators of B2B content are gravitating toward a tone and a style that doesn't take itself too seriously; they're learning the value of being able to laugh at themselves and their industries, mining the everyday experiences of their careers for moments of levity.

"To use humor effectively, you have to do a lot of research. You have to spend a lot of time in Reddit communities or on Facebook groups, really listening to how your audience speaks. You want to know what it is they actually care about—what are they thinking in their heads that they're afraid to say out loud? Because those are often the funniest things to pull from."



AIDAN BRANNIGAN
Founder, No Boring Brands

"People outside the cybersecurity community probably think of it as a very dry, very technical space. But there's a shared sense of humor within the community. And incorporating memes and jokes into your content helps to prove that you understand that humor—that you're a true part of the community."



FLORIAN HANSEMANN
Managing Director, HanseSecure

"One of the main ways I've been able to build an audience is by offering something positive—using my content to create a fun space to be in. Even in serious professions, people are looking for that sense of light-heartedness that cuts through everything else."

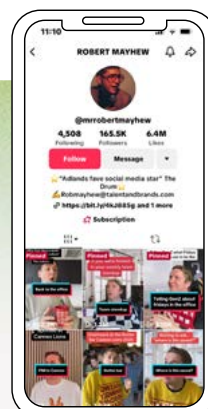


KATIE MURPHY
Social Media Manager, noticed.

CASE STUDY

Through his short sketches parodying the day-to-day mundanities of ad agency life, **Robert Mayhew** has built up an audience of over 300,000 followers across TikTok and LinkedIn and has produced content with a wide range of

brand partners. Relatability is a central part of the appeal of his content: Mayhew maximizes the resonance of his videos by allowing viewers to see their own experiences reflected back to them and comedically skewered.



8. Jon Cook, "Humor in advertising can cue more than laughter," Fast Company, September 27th, 2024
9. Jess Zafarris, "The TSA's social team is free to post without approvals. Here's why," PR Daily, July 2nd, 2024
10. Amelia Hansford, "Disney TV TikTok account hilariously misunderstands the queer 'they were roommates' trend," Pink News, March 18th, 2025

To find success in today's B2B content ecosystem, brands need to build holistic relationships with influencers rooted in mutual respect

The rise of the B2B influencer has brought with it new opportunities for B2B-oriented companies. Just as these influencers have begun adopting the techniques of mainstream content creators, so too are B2B brands now imitating the influencer marketing strategies that have long been commonplace within consumer-facing sectors like fashion, retail, and the entertainment industry—commissioning sponsored content and turning influencers into de facto spokespeople to promote new products and services.

Currently, however, many B2B brands are still in the early stages of their journeys into influencer marketing; they're still figuring out how to maximize the value of their influencer partnerships and where these influencers ought to sit within their marketing funnels.

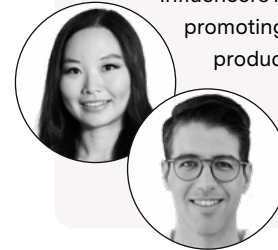
Among the B2B influencers interviewed for this report, many were of the view that **both brands and influencers would benefit from focusing on longer-term partnerships rather than ad hoc**

commercial arrangements. The stakes are high in B2B sectors; buyers are often asked to put their professional reputations on the line when choosing vendors for their businesses. B2B influencers understand the value of the credibility they've earned with their audiences—and so they tend to be wary about putting that credibility at risk for a one-off payday, however lucrative it might be.

Consequently, many of the creators who contributed to this research expressed a desire to explore ways of partnering with brands beyond simply taking their money to produce sponsored content. Many influencers, for example, would be keen to play a role as true creative partners for B2B brands—using their unique knowledge of those brands' target audiences to help inform product development priorities and shape marketing messages. Similarly, many influencers appreciate opportunities to extend their brand partnerships beyond social platforms and into the real world, appearing alongside those brands at relevant events and conferences.

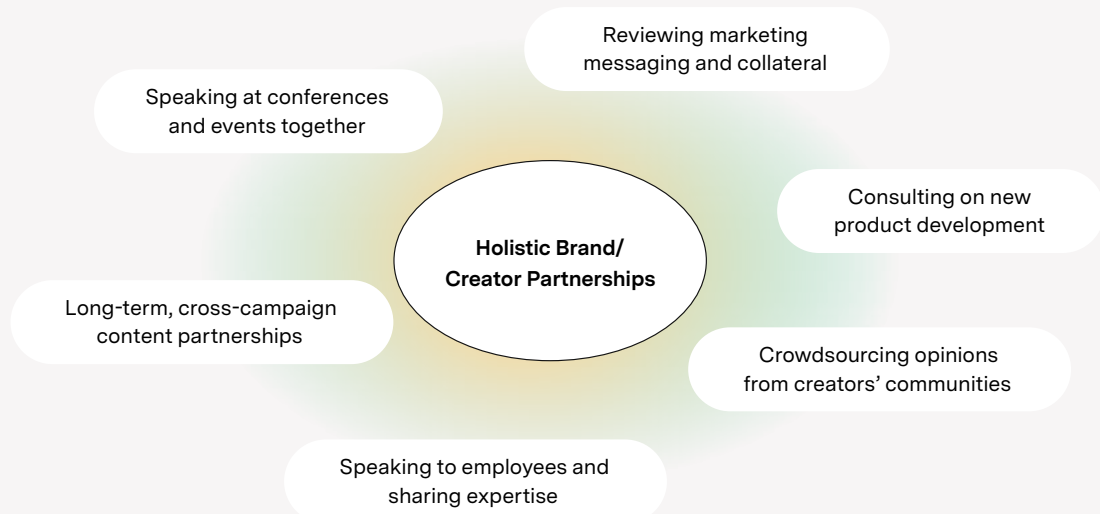
CASE STUDY

To enhance its credibility within the product management community, Miro partnered with leading thought leaders—such as **Shyvee Shi** and **David Pereira**—to develop custom project templates as part of its “Miroverse” community-driven template library. By giving these influencers something tangible to share, rooted in the unique needs of their followers, Miro was able to drive more meaningful engagement than they would have achieved by having influencers read out a script promoting a pre-existing product or service.¹¹



11. Ioana Cozma, “Influencer Marketing Strategy for B2B Brands: The Complete Guide,” inBeat, March 25th, 2024

THE FUTURE OF B2B INFLUENCER MARKETING



Crucially, these long-term partnerships need to be built on top of a deep and enduring sense of mutual trust between brands and influencers. Indeed, a lack of trust was at the root of many of the most common frustrations reported by influencers about their brand partnerships. Most often, this manifests in the form of brands that want to micromanage influencers' content—either by giving them a script that leaves little room for deviation or by requesting endless rounds of revisions before signing off on sponsored posts. This not only leaves the influencers feeling undervalued and creatively stifled but can also render the content stilted and inauthentic.

To avoid these scenarios, B2B brands need to understand that, when it comes to influencer marketing, the majority of the work has to happen upfront, before even engaging with individual influencers. Brands need to spend more time searching for influencers and carefully selecting people to work with who can reach the audiences they care about, who have expertise and credibility in the relevant domains, and who share their core values—and less time micromanaging the content those influencers are producing for them.

Ultimately, the reason that influencer marketing works at all is the unique nature of the relationship that influencers have with their followers. Brands, therefore, need to trust that influencers are generally going to understand what will and what won't resonate with these audiences better than they will.

Once they've found the right influencers to work with for a given campaign, brands need to provide clear directions and goals, including letting those influencers know how the success of their content will be evaluated. But after that, a less-is-more approach is often needed, giving influencers the creative freedom to produce content that feels true to their personal brand and speaks to the unique needs and priorities of their followers.

INFLUENCERS IN THEIR OWN WORDS

Q: How can brands drive greater value from their partnerships with B2B influencers?

"If you're just looking for brand awareness then, sure, go and run a campaign with 50 influencers and get them all to post the same thing. But if you're trying to drive conversions—if you really want to impact the bottom of the funnel—then you have to be more deliberate. You have to pick a small subset of influencers who perfectly align with your brand, and sign long-term agreements with them: have them all make three videos a month with consistent messaging, and make sure that there's somewhere you're driving customers to."



AIDAN BRANNIGAN
Founder, No Boring Brands

"Brands need to understand that a big audience and a responsive audience doesn't necessarily mean that's the right audience for your product. If you're going to work with a creator, work with them on something they actually have authority on. Audiences trust creators for a reason; if you step outside of the area where you have credibility, you can end up damaging trust in both the creator and the brand."



CHRISTINE GRITMON
Personal Branding Coach

"The real opportunity for brands is to treat creators as true ambassadors—not just levers for a campaign. And to do that, you need to bring us into the process. Literally, bring me into your brick and mortar offices and let's figure out your campaign together—let's figure out how you can leverage me and my audience in the best way possible."



GRACE ANDREWS
Brand Director, FlightStory

"The best brands I've worked with are the ones that don't send me any scripts. I hate when brands send me scripts, because they're never good. They don't sound like how people speak; a lot of the time, they've literally been written by AI. So my advice to brands is always just tell me what you need and let me do my thing, let me put it in my own words in a way that's going to feel truthful to my content and to my audience."



MORGAN J INGRAM
Founder and CEO, AMP Social



Sustaining effective influencer partnerships will require brands to rethink how they measure success

In order to justify investing in long-term partnerships with influencers, B2B brands will need to be able to accurately measure the success of sponsored content and quantify the impact of their influencer campaigns. And this question of measurement is another area where there are still some fundamental divergences between B2B content and the wider creator economy.

Among the creators interviewed for this report, there was little consensus about the metrics—such as views, follower growth, shares, likes, and comments—that matter most when evaluating content performance. All of them agreed, however, that measuring the success of their content is a more complex—and often, more subjective—exercise than it would be were they producing content for a more mainstream audience.



“I think a lot of B2B marketers need to reframe their success criteria for influencer marketing. If you’re a niche B2B software vendor and you only have 10,000 potential buyers on the planet, you could put out a video that only gets 600 views but still reach 6% of your total addressable market. Too many marketers are chasing virality when they should be thinking more about the quality of the audience they’re reaching through their influencer partnerships.”



AIDAN BRANNIGAN
Founder, No Boring Brands

B2B influencers are aware of the fact that their content is limited by the size of the professional communities they’re targeting; they know that there’s little point in chasing the view counts of a Charli D’Amelio or a Keith Lee. Because of this, they also know that there’s a limit to how effectively they can monetize their content through in-app channels such as YouTube’s advertising program or TikTok’s Creator Fund.

Instead, many successful B2B influencers choose to primarily monetize their content through alternative means—including deals with brands as well as selling merchandise or courses, offering consulting services to brands and other creators, and paywalling content on platforms like Patreon, Ko-fi, and Substack. Many don’t even think in terms of direct monetization. They’re creating content because they see it as an extension of their careers; the real value to them is the role it plays in positioning them as a subject matter expert and opening up new professional opportunities.

“Content is not sales; it can be marketing; it’s always branding. So you have to take that into consideration when measuring success. Big numbers aren’t everything; a huge audience can be very unengaged. But equally, an audience that seems outwardly unengaged could be very responsive—just not in ways that show up on that specific platform.”



CHRISTINE GRIMON
Personal Branding Coach

More anecdotal evidence of their content’s impact, therefore, matters more to many B2B creators than quantifiable platform engagement metrics. Did a piece of content lead to an important professional connection? Did someone at a conference seek them out to tell them how their content helped them make a difficult decision at work?

Brands working with B2B influencers need to recognize these nuances; they should ensure that their own approach to measuring the success of content produced through influencer partnerships captures the value this content generates for its target audience and the lasting impact on brand perceptions, not just short-term reach. By aligning measurement strategies with the unique dynamics of B2B influencer marketing, brands can more accurately assess the long-term impact of their collaborations.





INFLUENCERS IN THEIR OWN WORDS

Q: How do you measure the success of your content?

“For me, view duration is the most important metric for video content. I’m fascinated by the drop-off rates and when people are scrolling away from content, because I think it tells you so much about where you should be investing your time and energy. If you’re making 30-second Reels, but most of your viewers are only watching the first five seconds, you need to think about how you’re allocating your resources: should you be putting the majority of your creative energy and your time and your money into those first five seconds?”



GRACE ANDREWS
Brand Director, FlightStory

“I have a folder called “Good Vibes Feedback.” I’ve been doing this for over 10 years, so there are over 10,000 messages in there. Whenever I feel like I’m not in the zone or like nothing’s hitting, I always go back in there and remind myself why I make content, and why people follow me in the first place.”



MORGAN J INGRAM
Founder and CEO, AMP Social

“For me, the most important success criteria for a piece of content is whether it generated value for the community I’m engaging with.”



FLORIAN HANSEMANN
Managing Director, HanseSecure

“For social posts on Instagram, TikTok, LinkedIn, or Twitter, I mostly focus on the basic metrics: did it generate likes, did it generate shares? I’m someone who doesn’t care as much about comments as other creators. I’m more interested in how many people it reached—because I think that silent majority of readers who aren’t going to actively comment on or respond to your content is generally underrated among creators.”



JACK APPLEBY
Founder, Future Social

“For me, the most important thing about a piece of content isn’t the eyeballs or the engagement. It’s whether it led to an opportunity. Did someone read that post and send me a thoughtful message that led to a connection and an interesting conversation? Did someone ask me to come and talk to their organization about an important topic? I’ve done big posts that got hundreds of thousands of views, and I’ve done smaller posts that got maybe 1,000 views but led to more of those conversations—because they solved a specific problem for someone.”



SHAMA HYDER
Founder and CEO, Zen Media



Moving forward, the continued growth of generative AI will create both challenges and opportunities for B2B influencers

The B2B influencer landscape has changed a great deal, and no doubt will continue to evolve over the next few years. In particular, many creators have identified the growing power and popularity of generative AI tools as a major trend that could reshape the dynamics of B2B content.

Almost all of the influencers interviewed for this research had at least experimented with generative AI. Many of them had reshaped their entire content workflows around the technology, using it as a research tool, a way of speeding up burdensome administrative tasks, and as a creative partner. Arguably, B2B influencers have an even greater incentive to experiment with AI than other types of content creators, given that many of them need to develop expertise in the topic in order to be able to talk authoritatively about its potential impact on the industries they produce content about.



"I'll often use AI to help in the initial brainstorming phase of creating content. I'll say, 'Hey, I've got this new client in this particular industry and I'm trying to make memes that are going to feel relatable to their customers. Give me 10 different ideas for pain points their customers might be dealing with.' It's a helpful springboard—it just means you don't have to start from a blank slate all the time."



AIDAN BRANNIGAN
Founder, No Boring Brands

"I'm leaning into AI wherever possible, because it gives me the most valuable asset of all: time. The more time I have, the more space I have for creativity. I treat AI as a true creative partner. Often, I'll give an AI a brain dump of all my thoughts, and use it to get me 80% of the way there with a script—and then I'll dive in and tweak it to get that last 20% perfect. And that takes so much of the friction out of the content creation process, it really frees me up to be my most creative."



GRACE ANDREWS
Brand Director, FlightStory

EXAMPLE B2B CREATOR USE CASES FOR GENERATIVE AI

Ideation

- Brainstorming content ideas
- Researching potential topics
- Analyzing existing content to identify new opportunities



Content Creation

- Drafting scripts and organizing ideas
- Editing scripts and text posts
- Generating imagery and audio assets



Post-Production

- Adding content tags
- Producing transcripts and captions for videos and podcasts
- Drafting posts to accompany content releases
- Supporting community engagement and interaction



That said, there are certainly challenges on the horizon for B2B influencers as well. Previous NRG research has found that many creative workers are concerned about the potential for an “AI arms race,” in which the efficiency gains enabled by generative AI force them to continually increase the pace of their creative output to keep up with the competition.¹² This is certainly a concern for B2B influencers, who find themselves facing the unsettling prospect of having to compete for attention on social platforms with an ever-increasing volume of low-effort, AI-generated content.¹³

Ultimately, the boom in AI-generated content may make it more important than ever for influencers and brands to ensure that the content they put out has a unique

point of view and feels authentically human. Small mistakes and imperfections could become useful ways of signaling to readers and viewers that the content they’re consuming was produced—at least primarily—by a living, breathing creator.

This is a dynamic that B2B influencers are keenly aware of. Even those who are enthusiastically incorporating generative AI tools into their workflows are being careful to do so in a way that doesn’t undermine the integrity of their content or compromise their authorial voice. They want to use AI as an accelerant for creativity; they don’t want it to be making decisions for them or drowning out the elements of their personal style that make their content recognizable to their followers.

12. “What the rise of generative AI means for America’s creative class,” NRG, March 22nd, 2024

13. Shannon Bond, “AI-generated spam is starting to fill social media. Here’s why,” NPR, May 14th, 2024

CASE STUDY

Chris Duffey, Head of Global Partnerships for GenAI at Adobe, has carved out a niche for himself as a leading voice on the topic of human interaction with artificial intelligence. In 2019, he put theory into practice through his book *Superhuman Innovation: Transforming Business with Artificial Intelligence*—one of the first books to be officially co-authored by an AI.¹⁴



14. Kate MacArthur, “How AI will help people be more creative,” Ipsos, July 31st, 2023



“I use AI, but just to brainstorm ideas; I wouldn’t use it to write an actual piece of content. I don’t think AI is going to take our jobs as creators, but I do think there’s a pressure to learn how to use it effectively.”



KATIE MURPHY
Social Media Manager,
noticed.

“I use Perplexity for research, and I use Claude to help me create content—because I feel that Claude is very human-like in its output. And I recently built a custom GPT based on my own content: I put in my interviews, my blog posts, my text conversations, everything. It’s been a very effective tool for helping me analyze and understand my output—letting me figure out how to optimize and build on it.”



MORGAN J INGRAM
Founder and CEO, AMP Social

“A lot of what I use AI for is creating outlines: I’ll feed it a bunch of information and ask it for advice on the best way of organizing it. Or I’ll give it something I’ve already drafted and ask it to tell me where it could be improved—or how I could adapt content for different contexts or different industries.”



SHAMA HYDER
Founder and CEO, Zen Media



As the B2B content landscape continues to evolve, platforms will need to find new ways of serving the unique needs of these creators

A secondary impact of the growth of AI tools will be a lowering of the barrier to entry for creating and sharing B2B content. As a result, it's likely that more and more young professionals will begin to dip their toes into this space over the next few years, carving out niches for themselves as micro-influencers in order to strengthen their CVs and unlock new professional opportunities.

Platforms, therefore, will need to prepare for this potential influx of aspiring B2B influencers by identifying ways to cater to their unique needs and priorities. Certainly, the influencers who contributed to this research believed the B2B community to be relatively poorly served by most platforms' existing options; many felt that there were few, if any, options that were truly designed with their needs in mind. LinkedIn, in their view, was primarily a job board and only secondarily a content platform, whereas apps like YouTube, TikTok, and Instagram tended to prioritize the needs of larger, mainstream content creators.

Analytics, in particular, was an area where many B2B influencers felt underserved by platforms' existing offerings. If platforms wish to become more attractive destinations for B2B content, they should consider offering analytics tools tailored for the needs of creators who care more about the depth of their relationship with their followers than the total reach of their content—people who want to understand the lasting value that their creative output has generated for its intended audience.

Many B2B influencers would also like to see platforms adopt more transparency in their approach to communicating with creators. These influencers are often navigating algorithms and content moderation policies that weren't designed with them in mind, and they are deeply appreciative when platforms make life easier for them through clear and proactive communication around feature and policy changes.

INFLUENCERS IN THEIR OWN WORDS

Q: How could content platforms do a better job of serving your needs as a creator?

"One of the issues I've had with some platforms is that they send you too many notifications—they flood your inbox with so much random stuff that you miss the really important things, like when an industry expert tags you in a post and wants to start a conversation. For B2B creators, it's important that platforms give them a way of filtering for the stuff that really matters."



AIDAN BRANNIGAN
Founder, No Boring Brands

"Within the field of cybersecurity, real-world events are very important for building relationships and creating a sense of community. So I'd like to see content platforms do more to support conferences and other types of offline events and experiences."



FLORIAN HANSEMANN
Managing Director, HanseSecure

"One of the challenges as a B2B creator is that so many platforms push you toward high-frequency, clickbaity, salacious content. But that won't work for the type of content I'm trying to produce: if I lean into clickbait, I'm going to lose the trust of my audience. I think there needs to be more support for the creators making more thoughtful, less sexy content—the kind of people who aren't chasing the audience of a MrBeast."



SHAMA HYDER
Founder and CEO, Zen Media

"Good platform analytics is a crucial feature for B2B creators. Right now, I think a lack of good analytics on the more B2B-oriented content platforms is one of the primary things holding back the growth of B2B creators. If brands can't accurately measure the success of their content, they're not going to invest in this space and build meaningful partnerships with creators."



GRACE ANDREWS
Brand Director, FlightStory



The B2B creator economy has arrived—now it's time to build for it

The line between B2B and mainstream content is no longer clear—and that's a good thing.

Today's B2B influencers aren't just selling products or building personal brands; they're reshaping what professional communication looks like across platforms. They bring human voices, emotional nuance, humor, and authenticity into conversations long dominated by jargon and polish. And in the process, they're broadening the definition of what it means to be an influencer or a content creator.

For brands and platforms alike, this is a moment of opportunity: to rethink partnerships, recalibrate expectations, and start building content ecosystems that serve the evolving needs of B2B creators and their audiences. Those who embrace this shift early will be best positioned to build trust, drive value, and lead the next chapter of business communication.



LOOKING AHEAD:

Five trends that could define the future of B2B content

01 More B2B influencers will find mainstream success and celebrity

Already, there are examples of B2B influencers who have successfully capitalized on their professional expertise to achieve a degree of mainstream celebrity: people like Steven Bartlett, Lex Fridman, and Brené Brown have developed followings that stretch well beyond the niche world of B2B content. As this space continues to expand and professionalize, there will likely be more opportunities for the most successful influencers to make that leap.

02 In-house influencer programs will replace or augment traditional spokespeople

Forward-thinking companies will begin cultivating internal workfluencer talent—not just executives, but subject-matter experts, rising stars, and frontline employees. These creators will be given time, tools, and training to build their own followings, effectively turning employee advocacy into a high-trust, decentralized marketing strategy. Just as social teams once shifted from corporate accounts to brand personas, the next shift may be toward individual creator brands operating with institutional backing.

03 AI-augmented creators will raise the bar for B2B content

Generative AI is already streamlining content workflows for many creators, but many B2B influencers will continue

to push further—building personalized AI tools trained on their own voice, content history, and audience expectations. Those who master the balance—using AI to amplify their human voice, not replace it—will be best positioned to lead in an increasingly saturated content landscape.

04 Platforms will compete more aggressively to attract B2B influencers

As the B2B influencer economy matures, social platforms will need to develop new creator tools tailored to the use cases that matter to these creators. Expect deeper analytics focused on relationship quality (not just reach), more granular controls over content distribution and audience management, and deeper integration with key conferences and other offline events.

05 B2B brands will seek out deeper relationships with influencers

Right now, many B2B brands are still in the early stages of experimenting with influencer marketing—and are still learning to see influencers as more than simply contractors. As brands set out to unlock the value of their creator partnerships, we should expect to see a new model of B2B influencer marketing emerge: one that embraces the lessons already learnt by B2C businesses while also being uniquely tailored around the expectations of workfluencers and their audiences.

NRG would like to thank all of the influencers and creators who contributed to this research and shared their perspectives on the past, present, and future of B2B content.



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PREVIOUS REPORTS...

For more on trends impacting tech companies and creator platforms, visit our website at nrgmr.com to download our previous studies:



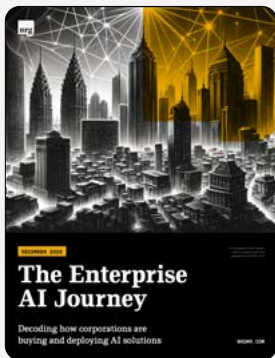
The Tech Policy Tightrope

The impact of Trump's first 100 days on the American technology sector



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National Research Group is a leading global insights and strategy firm at the intersection of content, culture, and technology. The world's most innovative brands turn to us for insights into growth and strategy for any content, anywhere, on any device.

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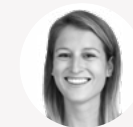


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