

The DMO's Guide to Creator Content:

Unlock the Power of Content Creators





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Finding a Creator

Welcome to your first lesson on how to unlock the power of content creators!

First things first: before you can manage a creator relationship, you need to actually find a creator! This lesson will help you figure out when it's time to look for a creator and how to start your search.

Social media management usually feels like you're building the plane while flying it, so it's never a bad time to call in creative reinforcements. But you have ROI to demonstrate, and content creation comes with a cost. So when is it the right time to call in a content creator?

When you're sacrificing strategy for consistent output

Posting 5X per week on multiple channels AND running a smart strategy? Outsourcing some content creation gets you out of the cockpit and into the control tower where you can keep a pulse on macro-trends, analyze KPIs, and make informed decisions that truly deliver on your marketing objectives. It's the perfect time to reorient your social strategy because social analytics are more sophisticated than ever (learn about that in our [2024 Trends Report](#)).

When there are places in your destination you can't reach

A few quick shots of Main Street might be a walk in the park, but that mountain-top view is going to be a hike. More often than not you need a vast array of destination coverage that might not be so easy to fit into a 40-hour work week. That's where the intrepid content creator comes in. They trek far and wide to get the content you need so you can scale your content without working overtime.



When there's a big event or seasonal campaign to cover

Time travel doesn't exist yet, but even if it did, would you really want to use it for work? For now you're stuck in one place at one time. That could mean missed coverage at big events or coming up short on content for seasonal campaigns. Content creators are the perfect backup—not only do they maximize your content library with clips, but they also offer their unique POV to enrich storytelling.

When your content is feeling stale or homogenous

When you're capturing content by yourself, you tend to focus on what you know and what you like. That means travelers are only getting one side of your destination (fabulous as it might be). Nothing will inject life into your social presence like creator content. They'll showcase fresh perspectives from diverse points of view, tell new stories about your destination, and connect to a broader range of travelers.

Now that you've defined your need for a content creator, the next step is search and discovery. There's two major methods for finding a match.

How to find content creators

Manual search

Hop on Instagram, TikTok, or YouTube, and search for hashtags or keywords relevant to your destination or campaign. Once you've found one or two solid content creators, the platforms will do some work for you by suggesting similar accounts to follow. Go even deeper by looking at post comments and follower lists to find relevant creators in the same network.

Pros: Lo-fi, low cost

Cons: Big-time commitment, potential for doom scrolling



Platform search

Use an influencer marketing platform to find creators. These platforms aggregate influencers and give you helpful controls for filtering by audience size, engagement rate, etc. They also often feature end-to-end influencer campaign management. This is a useful option if you have a big budget to scale your influencer marketing program.

Pros: Quick and targeted search

Cons: Expensive, maybe more than you need

Psst! There's also CrowdRiff Creators—it connects you to content creators from your destination who can create short-form video with their authentic, in-the-know POV. AND at a rate that makes it easy to scale.





Choosing the Right Content Creator

Welcome to lesson number two! Here, we'll cover the criteria for picking the right content creator for your needs and how to build a strong foundation with a flawless first impression.

We've all witnessed creator collabs that leave you with the ick for a brand. That's why it's important to give careful consideration to the content creators on your list to make sure they're a good fit for your destination. The following criteria will help you make that judgment call.



Brand affinity

Scour the creator's content and ask yourself, "Does this person align with my destination's values? Will our locals and travelers click with this creator?" That adventure hiker with the cute dog might seem like a great match for your quiet mountain town... until you find out they're a vocal climate change denier.

Engagement numbers

Analyze engagement metrics such as view count, share count, and likes-to-comments ratio to see how well their content connects with their audience. Remember that an engaged community is a stronger indicator of success than a big follower count.

Visual quality

Look for technical photo and video skills that elevate social media content. Do their videos have a variety of shots and clean and creative transitions? Can they handle tricky shooting situations like low light and fast cuts? How is their voiceover (VO)?

The “authenticity” factor

Demand for authenticity is driving big changes in the business of influencing and content creation (our [2024 Trends Report](#) has the details). When it comes to travel content, look for storytelling with depth and personality that sparks intrigue and keeps audiences engaged—that’s authenticity at its finest.

Have you whittled down your list to the perfect creator? Now it’s time to win them over. You have to be cool. You have to be gracious. You have to never be rude, never show off, never be selfish... Ok, now we’re just quoting America Ferrera’s Barbie monologue. Here are a few tips to strike a balance between professional and effortlessly cool.

Reaching out

Tip 1: Show social media courtesy

Follow them from your DMO’s brand account and interact with some of their newer content. It’s not just your social due diligence, but also a great way to get on their radar.

Tip 2: Email > DM

Depending on their follower count, DMs are not always the best route for reaching a creator. If they aren’t following you back, you’ll hit their request inbox, which can be a black hole of unread messages. Reach out to their email instead. If you can’t find their email, comment on a post and ask them to send their contact details in a DM.

Tip 3: Write a personalized and detailed first message

Tell them how you found them, what you like about their content, and what you’d like to achieve with them. Share the key details of the campaign, plus info like:

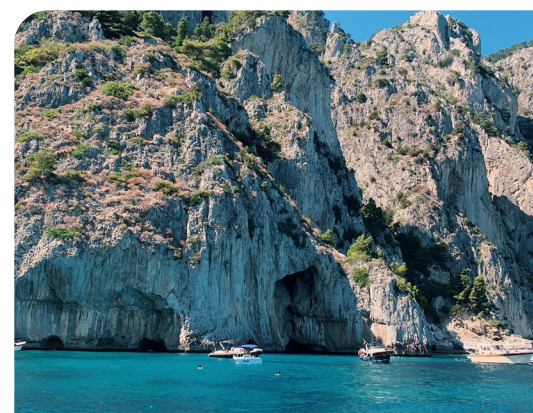
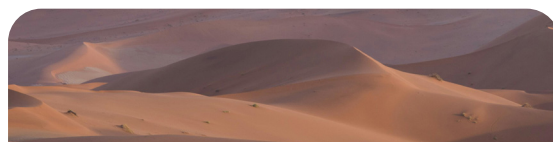
- **Type of content** - Which platforms do you want content for? Do you want licensed UGC, a sponsored post, or something else?
- **Deliverables** - How many videos do you need? Do you need image content, too? What exactly are you asking for?
- **Timeline** - When are you aiming to publish the final content?
- **Payment** - You don’t have to share hard numbers, but do give them a sense of how they’ll be compensated and ask for their rates/trades policy.



Tip 4: Don't forget to be human

Be friendly, be enthusiastic, be real. Leave them with a great first impression of your destination.

You're probably thinking to yourself, "I wish there was a way to skip the creator search and still end up with the perfect match!" You just described CrowdRiff Creators. We help you find and lock down your destination's top local creators to make short-form video that actually connects with your target audience.



Briefing Creators

Your third lesson is all about the life force of any creator relationship: the creative brief. You've already reached out and clued your dream creator in to your campaign. So why do we suggest waiting for the second email to send the brief? Because the best briefs are personalized to the creator. That. Takes. Time. Don't waste yours unless they've expressed genuine interest in collaborating with your brand.

We asked one of our top CrowdRiff Creators the one thing she wants clients to know about briefs: "The clearer and more detailed the brief is, the better it is for effective content creation." Straight from the creator's mouth!

The building blocks of the creative brief

Logistics

Restate everything you included in the first email, including platform, type of content, concrete deliverables, and your ideal deadline or timeline.

Destination background

Introduce the creator to your destination with a quick, descriptive profile. Even if you're a well-known area, this description will help them understand how your organization wants to frame your destination. If you have brand guides or other brand documentation, include what's relevant, but don't overload them with documents right at the start.

TIP: *Save your description! With some minor tailoring, you can use it for future creative briefs.*





Campaign summary

Tell the creator what you're promoting. Maybe it's an event, a specific attraction, or your local community partners. You don't have to share all the campaign details that appear in your internal strategy decks, but do give them enough specifics to understand how they'll be contributing to the campaign. Not clear on your campaign yet? Check out our [2024 Trends Report](#) to see what other DMOs are prioritizing this year.

Objectives

Creators aren't always responsible for measuring the performance of their collab content, but it's still helpful for them to know how you plan to measure success. This will help them craft their story and include the appropriate call to action for your target audience. Sharing a clear and specific objective like, "We want to encourage more family visits to our downtown area this summer" is so much more useful than "We want to drive social engagement."

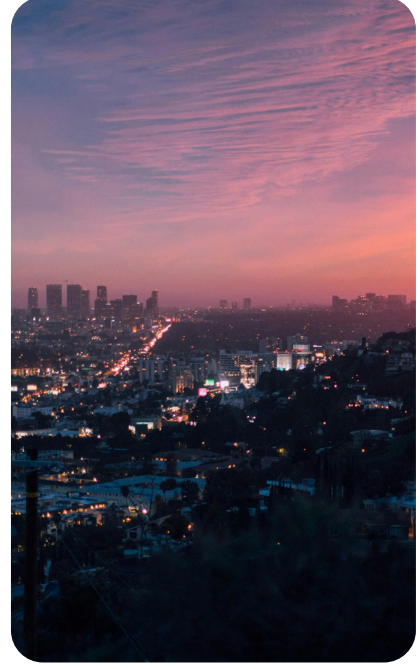
Messaging

No mystery here—messaging is simply what you want the creator to say about your destination. Never push for exact phrasing or a precise script. You don't want them to abruptly switch into their sponsored-ad-read voice. Instead, share talking points the creator can touch on in their own style.

Tone (aka the vibe)

Don't think of tone as how the creator should act—think of it as how they make the audience feel. Tone can be hard to nail down, so we like to think of it as "the vibe" instead. Think of a few adjectives or "feeling words" that describe how you want the audience to feel. Awestruck? Nostalgic? Like they're talking to a good friend? These give more detail than the usual "friendly," "knowledgeable," and "trustworthy."





Visuals

Nothing kills a creativity like a two-page shot list. There's no problem in sharing some of the key visuals you want to hit—just leave room for their creative interpretation. Try open-ended language, like "I'd love a dramatic shot of the skyline" instead of "We need a slow, sweeping pano of the skyline." See how one gives the creator room to play, while the other gives them directives?

All that for one brief?! Let's be real: writing a custom brief for every creative partnership could be a full-time job. That's why we streamlined the process with CrowdRiff Creators. You still get to share all your creative input, but we'll help you package it for your local creator, then help them stay on brief. It's systems like this that help you truly scale content creation.

Creator Management

The party is almost over! Are you ready for lesson four? Because we saved the best for last.

Ok, so timelines, payment, and usage rights aren't the most exciting part of working with creators. But getting ahead of these details in your contract will save you from a world of pain down the line. Here are a few tips to set you and the creator up for success.

Timelines

Be realistic: We've all gone to start a "quick Reel" only to discover it'll take way longer than expected *cough* a full 8-hour workday*cough*. Every creator works differently—so, when setting a timeframe, give them an ideal deadline but plan to negotiate a delivery date based on their other commitments and creative process.

Be clear and definitive: Once you've agreed on a deadline, make sure it's communicated clearly in your messages to the creator as well as in the contract.

But also be flexible: Life happens. Creativity is a journey. You can't rush art. Et cetera, et cetera. There will always be a few bumps in the creation process, so build in a buffer on your end to account for unexpected delays.

TIP: *Don't forget about content review and revisions! If revisions are part of your agreement, work these milestones into the timeline and give the creator enough time to work with your feedback.*





Payment

How to calculate rate: Based on our [2024 Trends Report](#) survey of North American DMOs, we found that 38% of respondents spend \$1,000 or less on creator content. According to [Shopify](#), the average Instagram sponsored post costs around \$1,300. That spikes to \$2,700 for TikTok.

What do all these costs mean for you? There's simply no golden number when it comes to creator content pricing, and each contract will be different. [According to some industry standards](#), calculations could include:

- Engagement rate per post + extras for type of post (x # of posts) + extra factors = total rate.
- The unspoken industry standard is *\$100 per 10k followers + extras for type of post (x # of posts) + additional factors = total rate.

...Confused? Us too. If you don't want to relive high school algebra class, it may be best to set a standard that works for your destination, or simply ask creators if they have a media sheet with set pricing.

Payment method, terms, and schedules: Clearly outline how and when you'll pay and provide your creator with guidelines for invoice submission. Too many solid creator relationships have gone sour over payment problems. Don't make them chase down your AP department—stay on top of their compensation to stay on good terms.

TIP: *If you're in the US, get their W9 upfront so there's no payment delay.*

*All prices in USD



Usage rights

Posting platforms: Specify where the content will be posted (e.g., company website, social media channels) to clarify the intended reach and visibility of the created content.

Exclusivity: Consider exclusivity terms, which might state that the content can only be used by your destination for a specific period and purpose. This would mean you get full control of the content but the creator cannot repost the content on their own socials, limiting the potential for expanded reach. You'll have to weigh your options on this one!

Reuse permissions: Clearly outline whether your destination and/or the creator have permission to reuse the content, on what platforms, and for what period of time.

TIP: *If the creator is making a video for your destination, they might send you the raw footage along with the finished video. Make sure your contract clarifies how and when these clips can be used (because you might want to use them next time you're toiling away on a TikTok).*

And with that, you've successfully searched for, discovered, reached out to, briefed, and contracted an amazing creator.

If the contracting process sounds like a lot, get this: CrowdRiff Creators handles the entire thing for you, plus all the licensing, payments, and production. Now you can focus on the stuff that really matters: an amazing short-form video strategy. Ready to get started with your destination's top creators? We're ready when you are.





Put it to Work!

You're now ready to unlock the power of content creators! You learned how to find, pick, contact, and contract the perfect creators for your destination. Now it's time to gallop into the sunset flanked by your solid roster of content creators.

Before you go, make sure you [download this Unlocking the Power of Content Creators PDF checklist](#). This checklist covers all the steps we shared throughout the course. Keep it handy to reference next time you're looking to form a new creator relationship!

And if you don't want to go on the video content journey alone, we've got your back. Reach out to our team below to see how we can help your brand create authentic video content for a fraction of the work.

Get in touch

