

The Rise of the Influencer



Matt Bourn

Director of Communications,
Advertising Association and Ad Net Zero

 Matt Bourn



**Let's talk about trust in the
age of the influencer...**



“You can’t cede your customers’ trust to others, but once you’re confident in your offering, you can talk with authority through them”

Murray Bisschop, UK Marketing Director, Tesco



\$35bn

\$56bn

47%

57%

88%



**“There are two things I will drive like hell:
desirability at scale and marketing systems with
what others say about our brands at scale.”**

Fernando Fernandez, Unilever CEO



We are some way off full disclosure of ads by influencers...

...but clear, prominent and timely disclosure is essential to maintain trust.

The influencer's cheat sheet to declaring ads on social media

You don't have to graft to get to grips with the **key advertising rules**. We don't want to get all aggy with you, so we've written an **ABC cheat sheet** to help celebs and influencers stay loyal to their followers.

AUTHENTICITY
We know authenticity is key to engaging with your followers. Part of that is letting them know when you're advertising them something.

BRANDS
When a brand pays you to promote their products or services (either with money or with gifted stuff) you're advertising, and your post needs to make that clear.

CONTROL
If you're paid for a post or you're posting about a gift you received you must make clear it's an ad. If you don't the ASA will take action where a brand has controlled your message.

DISCOUNT CODES
These count too. If you're being rewarded for sales from a discount code or affiliate link in a post you need to say this is an ad. If only some of the links or content relate to the promoted product you need to make clear which parts of the post are an ad.

ENFORCEMENT
We and the CMA are active in ensuring transparency. If it's covered by the ASA, other rules apply to things like alcohol, gambling, slimming products or any items offering health benefits. For example, you're not allowed to advertise slimming products to under-18s. Make sure you're working with a brand who knows the rules.

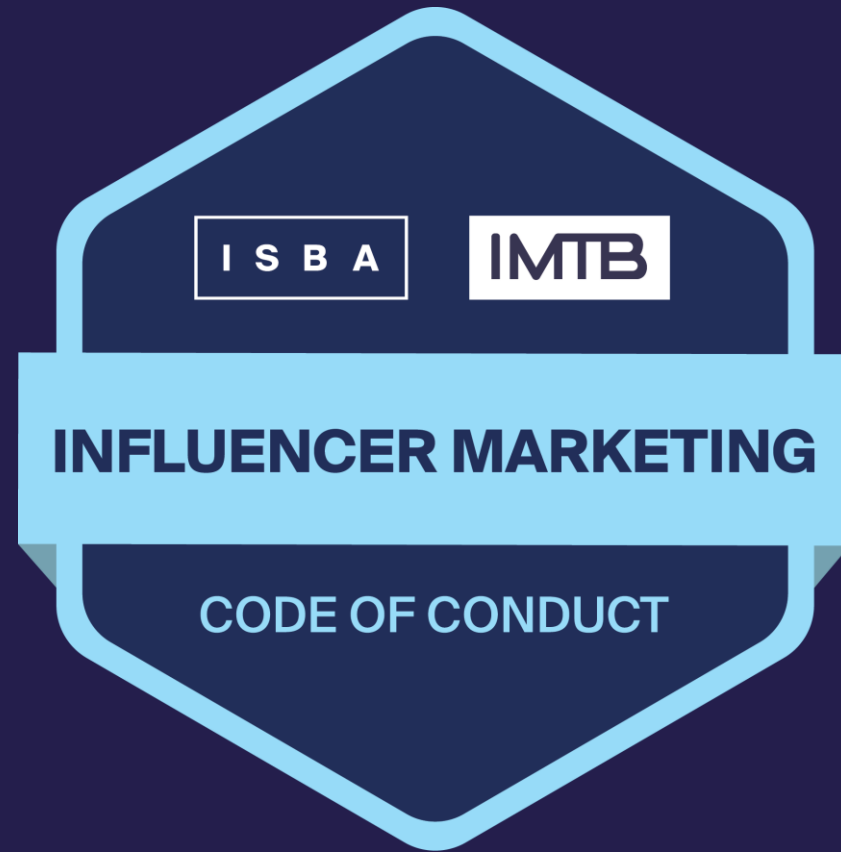
FOLLOWERS
Don't just assume your followers know when you're advertising something. They're not mind-readers. Spell it out clearly.

GIFTS
Gifted products and freebies count as payment-in-kind. If your post features a freebie you've been given to promote to your followers, you need to label your post as an ad.

HASHTAG
If you're using a hashtag make sure it's **clearly visible upfront, don't hide it away**. Doing that will ensure that you're being true to yourself and your followers. Don't take the chance of getting the ASA aggy. If in any doubt, add #ad/advert/advertisement. It's what it is.

ASA CAPV
For more information about declaring ads on social media please visit asa.org.uk/influencers





The code provides guardrails for responsible influencer marketing



**‘People aren’t stupid. Content creators aren’t
beamed down from space to make ads. We
need to treat consumers like geniuses.’**

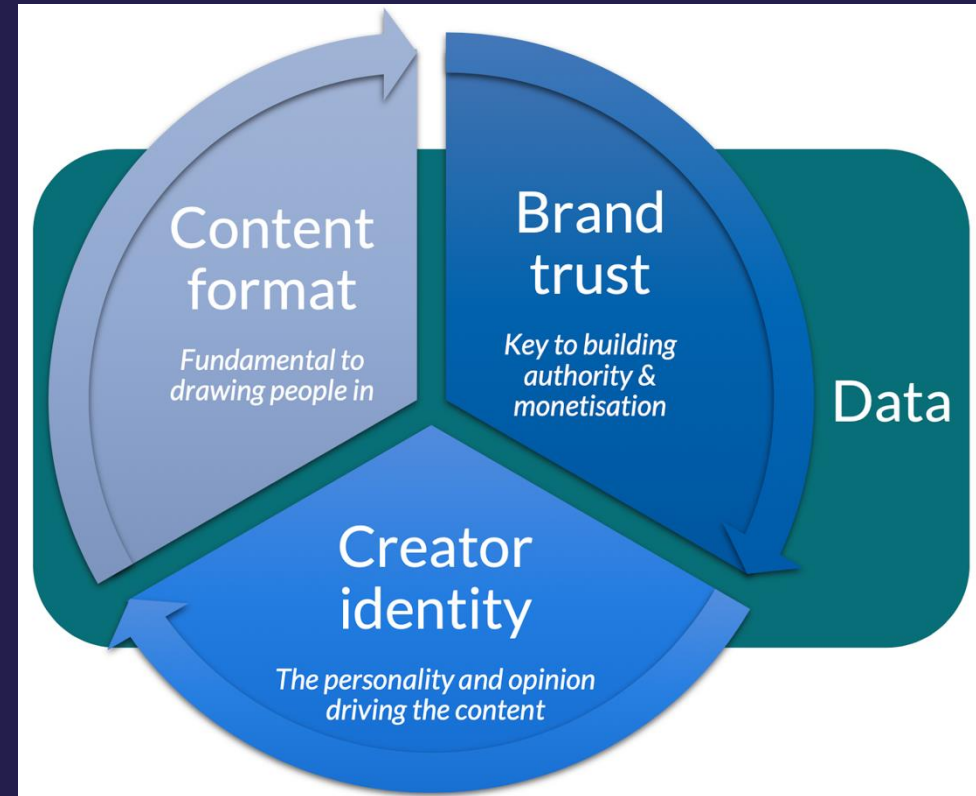
Em Wallbank, Creator





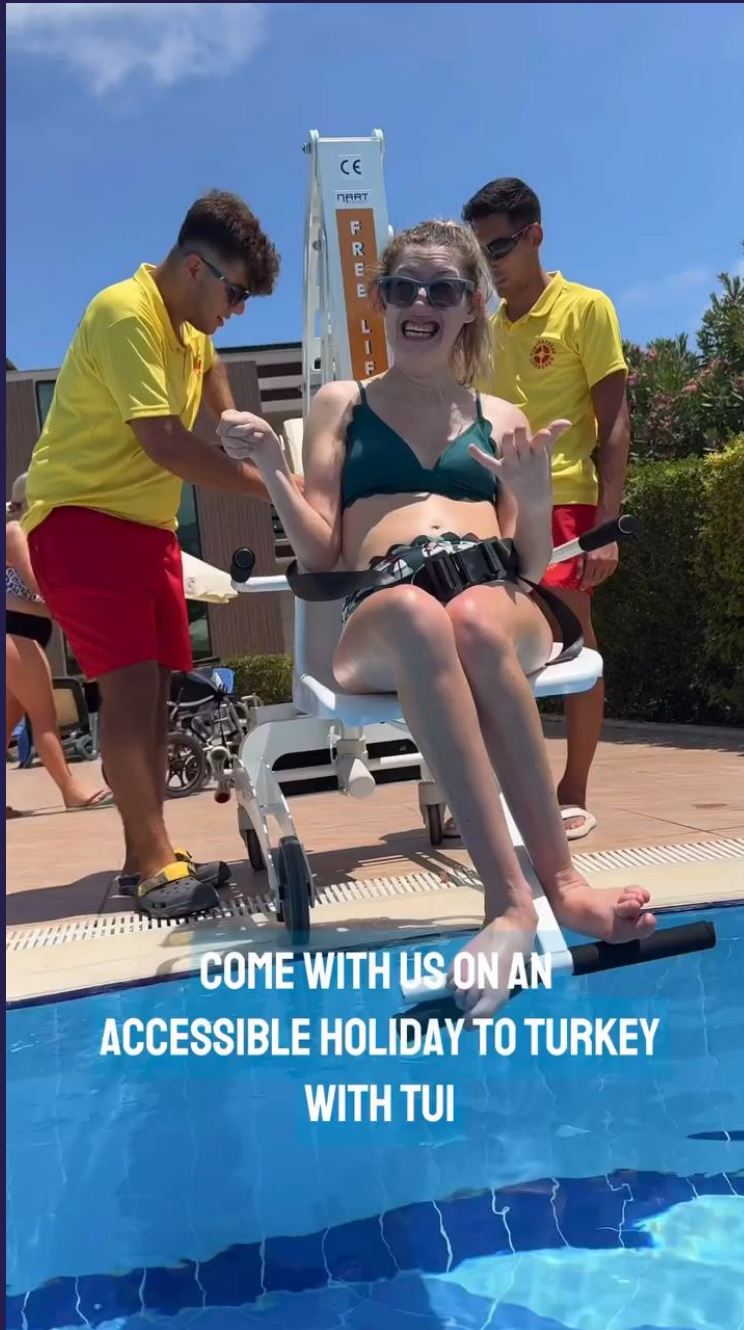
'Nurture trust with content creators like you're a gardener...'

**Emma Harman,
President EMEA,
Whalar**



Enders Analysis: Consumers, Creators, and Brands - Rewriting the media playbook, 2025





COME WITH US ON AN
ACCESSIBLE HOLIDAY TO TURKEY
WITH TUI

**TUI's award-
winning
accessible
holidays
influencer
campaign**



Thank you!



Matt Bourn

Director of Communications,
Advertising Association and Ad Net Zero

 Matt Bourn

