

Content
Creator
Course
BOOK 4

THE ULTIMATE GUIDE:
**MONETISE YOUR
SOCIAL MEDIA**



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Hey, we're Josh & Ruthie

You might know us from [@Life of Betts](#) on Instagram, where my wife Ruthie and I share our adventures as full-time travel and adventure lifestyle content creators. We share bucket-list destinations, hidden gems, and our love for travel. Our passion is to inspire others to embrace a life of adventure and creativity through our content! Over the past four years, we've not only grown our pages to over 500,000 followers, but also built a thriving business. One thing that's truly **changed the game for us** is learning to turn our passion into income. Having a large following doesn't necessarily mean you are making lots of money. Through lots of trial and error, thousands of pitches, negotiations with brands and building various different income streams from our content we have been able to build a **seven figure business** that also gives us the freedom for us to do what we love and get paid to do it. We are living out our dream and now we want to **share with you exactly how you can do the same.**

In this ebook, we're going to teach you some of the best ways you can start to make money from your content.

The Introduction

Welcome to the Creator Economy – where your influence is worth something! Let's start with the big picture. Social media might've kicked off as a way to share cute pics with your mates, but today it's become one of the **top platforms to build a brand, connect with people, and yes – actually make real money online**. Instagram in particular has come a long way from photo dumps and Valencia filters. These days, it's a **powerhouse where full-blown businesses** are being run from a phone. It's become a key player in what's known as the creator economy. And while that might sound like a buzzword, this industry is no joke – it's currently **worth over \$21.1 billion per year, and it's growing fast**.

Here's the exciting part: this world of influencers and online income? It's still really new. Influencer marketing only started to take shape around 2013 – so in the grand scheme of things, we're just getting started. Now, you might be thinking, “Okay, but isn't it too late to start now? Isn't everyone already doing it?” We get it. The online space can feel **overwhelming** when you're scrolling past people with 100k followers and big brand deals. But here's the truth – **you are not too late**. In fact, this is one of the **best times to begin**. Brands are **actively looking** for fresh voices, real people, and diverse creators – **especially here in South Africa**, where the industry is still finding its feet. There's so much space to grow, evolve, and create something that's uniquely yours. Whether you're sitting with 500 followers or 5,000, you've got more power and potential than you realise.

Did you know Instagram's made it easier than ever to start monetising your content? Brands are now paying creators for Posts, Reels, and Stories – just to get in front of your audience. And that's only the beginning. You can also earn through:

- Affiliate marketing
- User-generated content (UGC)
- Selling your own products or services
- Offering exclusive content to subscribers

The opportunities are wide open – and the best part? You don't need a huge audience to start seeing results.

Instagram has already given you the tools with new features like Trial Reels and in-app Ads make it easier to reach people who genuinely connect with you – and that's what brands are really looking for. You don't need a massive following to make money – just the right people, fully engaged in whatever you're doing. Sound good? Great. Let's get started.

Understanding Influencer Marketing

Before we tackle all the ways you can make income through social media, let's make sure you have a clear understanding of one of the biggest income streams for online creators:

influencer marketing. Not too long ago, advertising meant **massive billboards and big TV budgets.** But the world's changed – and these days, brands are far more interested in something **much more powerful:** real people with real influence. Creators like you are **shaping** buying decisions in ways that traditional ads simply can't. And it all comes down to **engagement.**

Most **big brands understand** that when a creator shares something that actually fits their niche and audience, people pay attention. That's why **influencer campaigns work** - because the message is coming from **someone an audience already trusts**.

Let's look at Ruthie and I... We're all about the travel and adventure lifestyle. Our content reflects that, and it's attracted people who **love the same thing**. Therefore our audience **trusts us completely** when we share information, brands, and recommendations within these topics!

Now, let's break down how **influencers can be grouped by size, because yes - size does come into play**:

- Nano Influencers - 1K to 10K followers
- Micro Influencers - 10K to 100K
- Macro Influencers - 100K to 1M
- Mega Influencers / Celebs - 1M+

Do you know which category you fall into? Don't let those numbers freak you out - because guess what? **Follower count isn't everything**. In fact, some brands **prefer smaller accounts** with tight-knit, super-engaged communities. That's because these followers actually listen, respond, trust what you're saying - **and that's gold for brands**.

“Often brands prefer to work with Nano and Micro influencers” sound **too good to be true**? It's not! That's because the **engagement rate often outweighs the follower count**, especially when partnering with brands. (If you're wondering what engagement rate is, it's explained later in the book). I'll give an easy to understand example on the next page.

Let's say a shampoo company wants to launch in South Africa with a new shampoo for people with curly hair types. The brand is not just going to be looking for **anyone** with a million followers. Nope. They probably want a **beauty influencer!** Someone whose **cultivated an online audience** interested in the beauty industry, and at least 80% of their followers need to live in South Africa, because that's where the product's available. The influencer they choose needs to have a **high engagement rate**, especially on videos where they share reviews and recommendations around products, and their **niche** needs to be beauty and product related.

Relevance beats reach, every time.

Collaborating with Intention

When it comes time to research brands to collaborate with, ask yourself the following questions:

- Would my online audience actually care about this?
- Is it aligned with what they usually see from me?
- Does it fit my vibe and content naturally, or does it feel a bit off? Do I actually use & love this product /service?

These questions matter because, as exciting as it is to **land big-money brand deals**, it's also **your responsibility** to make sure the brand you're promoting is something you genuinely believe in. If it's not aligned with your values or your audience, you **risk damaging your reputation** and undoing all the hard work you've put in - and no one wants to be seen as a sellout.

How to Work Out Your Engagement Rate?

All this talk about 'engagement rate' and you might be wondering what the heck this is... Let us explain because it's actually a very important statistic to include. Many brands will want to know this stat so we'll teach you any easy way to calculate it.

Let's say you have the following stats on your Instagram page:

Total Followers: 10,000

Total Engagements on Last 10 Posts: 1,200 (you can get this by adding up all the likes, comments, saves and shares on your last 10 Instagram posts)

Then use the following **engagement rate formula**:

Engagement Rate = (Total Engagements ÷ Total Followers) × 100

Engagement Rate = (1,200 ÷ 10,000) × 100 = 12%.

(This means that, on average, **12% of your followers engage** with your content.) Does that seem **low**? It's actually not!

Here's the **average engagement rate** for different types of influencers (according to Google)

- Nano-influencers (1K-10K followers): 2.71% to 5.43%.
- Micro-influencers (10K-50K followers): 1.81% to 5.19%.
- Mid-tier influencers (50K-100K followers): 1.24% to 4.98%.
- Macro-influencers (100K-500K followers): 3.85%.
- Mega-influencers (500K+ followers): 2.82%.

So anything higher than those stats means **you're already a step above** the average influencer! And if your stats are lower, that's okay, **they aren't set for life and you can improve them**.

Understanding Collaboration Terms

Before you can start setting your rates, and negotiating with brands... you need to have a **good understanding** of the **language and terminology** used between influencers and their collaborators. It's super important to remember, no matter how **exciting the offer** is, how friendly the marketing team is, or how shiny the brand name looks, it's crucial you **understand exactly what you're agreeing to**. Brands might throw **all sorts of terms at you**, and if you're not careful, you could end up **doing way more** than you signed up for and handing over way more content rights than you wanted to. When we first started working with brands, we'll be honest - we were **completely overwhelmed**. The contracts were packed with **legal jargon and strange terms**, and we didn't have a clue what half of it meant. Fast forward to now, and we know what to look out for. It's been a massive game-changer. Not only do we avoid getting **taken for a ride**, but we're also able to **negotiate better deals** with full confidence.

Here are some **key terms** you need to look out for (sometimes brands sneak them into the fine print so make sure to **READ** those contracts) -

Exclusivity Clause

This is when a brand **asks you not to work with their competitors** for a certain amount of time. Say you promote one dog food brand - they might want you to avoid working with or mentioning any other dog food brands for the next 3 to 6 months (or more). Totally fair if they're **offering enough value in return**. But if not? It could be a dealbreaker. This is easily negotiated when picked up early.

White-Listing - A brand gets access to your social media account's ad permissions so they can **run ads** through your profile. They **boost your posts** or **turn them into ads** using your handle. The ad appears as if it's coming from you, but it's **funded and controlled** by the brand.

If you're being whitelisted, you should **charge extra** - because the brand is:

- Leveraging your name/profile for paid ads
- Getting extended reach + authority from your audience
- Using your identity to sell

Usage Rights - This one's a biggie. It outlines **how and where** a brand can **use the content** you've created. Are they putting your photos on their website? Using your video in ads? Running your content for a year across all platforms? You **need to know-and be compensated for-what they're doing with your content** and for what timeframe they are allowed to use it.

Deliverables - This is just a **fancy word** for what you're being asked to create. It could be one Reel, two IG Stories, and a blog post - whatever it is, make sure it's **crystal clear in writing**.

Keeping an **eye out for key terms** in contracts can save you a lot of stress later on. A smart move? Use tools like ChatGPT. When a brand sends over a contract, drop the text into ChatGPT and **ask it to review the terms** - specifically flagging any usage rights, exclusivity clauses, whitelisting, or red flags. It's a quick and effective way to make sure you **understand exactly what you're agreeing to** before signing anything, like having a lawyer in your pocket!

And remember, while influencer marketing might feel like a newer space, the concept of **charging for usage rights** is nothing new. Photographers have been doing it for years – essentially **licensing their images** to brands for marketing use. Why? Because buying full ownership of a photo can be incredibly expensive. Instead, brands **pay to use** the content for a specific time period, which ensures the **creator is fairly compensated**, the **brand is legally protected**, and everyone walks away happy. Brands are very familiar with this **concept—it's been industry standard for ages**. But unfortunately, some take advantage of newly growing creator industry by slipping full rights clauses into contracts. So, refer back to and use this chapter to **make sure you are well informed and fairly compensated**.

How To Set Your Rates

Now that you have a clearer idea of what the creator economy and influencer marketing actually is, as well as all the terminology that can be found in contracts...let's talk about **setting your rates**. We know it can feel daunting at the beginning to send out your rate card – and it's even harder when there's barely any information online about how to price your work. But at some point, there needs to be a shift in your journey where you **take the leap and start charging**. This moment looks different for everyone. For us, it happened after landing our first paid collaboration with just 7,000 followers. From that point, we made the decision to **stop doing trade exchange jobs altogether**.

It was scary to start sending out our rates, but we quickly found that the **more we said no to free work, the more paid opportunities came our way.**

When it comes to calculating your rates for influencer marketing, there are a **few key things** to consider:

1. **Your number of followers & engagement rate**
2. **The type of content & amount of handover involved**
3. **Usage rights, exclusivity, and whitelisting**
4. **Your expertise and experience** - have you studied in this field? Do you have a few years of hands-on experience? Your skill set and the value you bring to a brand matter.
5. **Time commitment & effort involved** - this includes: the equipment you need (cameras, drones, tripods, phones.), monthly subscriptions like editing software (e.g. Adobe, Lightroom,), how many hours it will take to shoot and edit, travel time, fuel costs, and other logistics if you're heading to a location.

All of these things **play a role** in what you should charge - because your work is more than just a pretty picture. It's time, skill, investment, and creative strategy all wrapped into one. Don't be afraid to **ask for what you're worth**. If you've clearly proven your value and a brand rejects your terms, they're probably **not the right fit** anyway. And trust me - over time, you will **find brands that align** with your vision, **recognise your worth**, and **happily pay your rates**.

And lastly, don't forget to take into account **industry standards** for the country you're based in. These benchmarks vary depending on location and can help you set **realistic expectations** for both you and the client.

To give you a **starting point**, in South Africa, a rough baseline for micro to mid-tier influencers (based on follower count alone) is to charge **between R100-R500 per 1,000 followers**. This is definitely on the **lower end** compared to many first world countries, that's because **influencer marketing is still a relatively new concept** in South Africa. Therefore, use this as a **jumping off point** when you are first starting out and **don't be afraid to increase it as you go**.

Let's look at an example, if you set your rate at R250 per 1,000 followers and you have 10,000 followers, your **base rate** would be: **R250 x 10 = R2,500**. This is just the **base rate for content usage on your platform** (e.g. one feed post or one Reel). From there, add on the extras - **your experience, equipment, content type, usage rights, and travel costs**.

Check out the influencer rate calculator example on the following page.

Influencer Rate Calculator - South African Baseline

Use this table as a starting point to calculate your **base rate per content piece**, then add extras based on your content, time, and deliverables.

Follower Count	R100 per 1K	R250 per 1K (mid-range)	R500 per 1K (high-end)
1,000	R100	R250	R500
5,000	R500	R1,250	R2,500
10,000	R1,000	R2,500	R5,000
15,000	R1,500	R3,750	R7,500
20,000	R2,000	R5,000	R10,000
50,000	R5,000	R12,500	R25,000

You should still add on for:

- Content creation & handover (if the brand is reusing it)
- Usage rights, licensing, and exclusivity
- Story frames (charged separately, often R300-R1000 per frame)
- Travel/shooting/editing time
- Whitelisting or paid ad use

Understanding Add-On Fees for Creator Work

We've just covered calculating your base rate which **covers the content created and posted** on your platform. But when a brand wants **more control or more exposure**, that's when you charge **add-on fees**.

Exclusivity Fees

"We don't want you to work with competing brands during this time."

Formula:

Exclusivity Fee = Base Rate \times (Exclusivity Duration in Months $\times 0.3$)

Example:

- You charge R5,000 as a base rate.
- The brand wants 3 months exclusivity.
- Calculation: $R5,000 \times (3 \times 0.3) = R4,500$ exclusivity fee

This **compensates you for potential lost income** from similar brands you can't work with during that time.

Tweak by niche:

- Beauty, skincare, health = charge a higher multiplier (e.g. 0.4-0.5)
- Travel or lifestyle = stick with 0.3-0.35
- For small brands or non-competing products = consider **flat rate add-ons** (e.g. R1,500/month)

Usage Rights Fees

“We want to reuse your content on our channels.”

Categories:

- Social – reposting on their Instagram/Facebook
- Digital – email marketing, websites, blogs, etc.
- Print – posters, magazines, billboards, brochures

Formula:

Usage Fee = Base Rate \times Platform Multiplier \times Duration

Multiplier

Platform Type	Multiplier
Social Only	0.5
Digital	0.75
Print	1.5
Full Campaign (All)	2.5

Duration	Multiplier
3 months	1
6 months	1.5
12 months	1-2.5

Example:

- R5,000 base rate
- Brand wants to use content for 12 months on print and digital
- Usage fee = $R5,000 \times (1.5 + 0.75 = 2.25) \times 2.5 = R28,125$

Whitelisting Fees

“We want to run ads using your handle and content.”

Formula:

Whitelisting Fee = Base Rate \times (Ad Spend Multiplier + Duration Multiplier)

Ad Spend (Est.)	Multiplier
Under R10,000	0.25
R10K-R50K	0.5
R50K-R200K	0.75
R200K+	1+

Duration	Multiplier
1 month	0.5
3 months	1
6 months	1.5
12 months	2 - 2.5

Example:

- R5,000 base rate
- Brand plans to run 3-month campaign with R50,000 ad spend
- Fee = $R5,000 \times (0.75 + 1) = R8,750$
-

If you don't know ad spend, ask! Or charge a flat whitelisting fee starting from R2,000-R10,000 depending on your size.

Quick Reference Summary

Add-On	How to Charge
Exclusivity	$\text{Base Rate} \times (\text{Months} \times 0.3-0.5)$
Usage Rights	$\text{Base Rate} \times \text{Platform Multiplier} \times \text{Duration Multiplier}$
Whitelisting	$\text{Base Rate} \times (\text{Ad Spend Multiplier} + \text{Duration Multiplier})$

Influencer Rate Calculator

We've created an interactive Google Sheets Rates Calculator! Click the **button** below to access your rate calculator!

[CLICK HERE TO OPEN THE RATE CALCULATOR](#)

When it opens, go to: File > Make a copy to save your own **editable version**. This will allow you to **enter your own** follower count, select options from the dropdowns, and use the built-in formulas to **calculate your custom rates**.

How To Pitch To Brands

At this point in the four-book course, you should be feeling pretty confident when it comes to setting up a successful online page, creating viral Reels, building an epic media kit, understanding the basics of contractual agreements, and setting your rates. Now it's time to **start pitching and negotiating those brand deals!** So, let's jump in.

Step 1 – Find Your Favourite Brands

Start by making a list of 10 brands you already use and love – ones that naturally fit into your daily life and would make sense to feature on your page. When approaching any collaboration, make sure it works for **all three parties involved:** You, the Brand, and your Audience.

You

- Is this deal actually worth my time and energy?
- Do I genuinely believe in what they're selling?

The Brand

- Will they get real value (and actual results) from my content?
- Does this brand slot naturally into my niche?
- Would this partnership feel organic with the type of content I create?
- Do our values align?

Your Audience

- Will my followers care?
- Will they find this content useful?
- Is this something they'd actually want to see?

If it doesn't work for your audience, it won't work - full stop. If your followers aren't into what you're sharing, it simply won't perform. The **brand won't see a return**, which means they're **less likely** to work with you again - and they might even mention to other brands that they didn't have a great experience. Even worse, if you **keep promoting things that don't align** with your values or content style, your audience may start to **lose trust in you** - and that's hard to rebuild.

Step 2 - Slide into the DMs (direct messages)

Once you've got your list, start reaching out. Most brands that are up for influencer collabs will already have an active social presence. If they don't it might be a **red flag** that they're not quite ready to **understand the value** of social partnerships. Making contact through dms on social media also gives the brand an easy quick way to check out your page!

Here's a simple template to use when sending your first message to them (usually via their direct messages on social media):

“Hi [Brand Name] Team,

Hope you're well! Could you please send over the name and email address for your marketing manager? I'd love to send them an email about a potential collab opportunity.”

Short, sweet and professional. Keep it simple.

Let's say the brand replied to your DM with their email address - yay! Now it's time to send that **first email pitch**. We highly recommend setting up a business email address to keep things professional and organised. You can absolutely go the private domain route (like yourname@yourbrand.com), but if you're just starting out, something like yoursocialhandle@gmail.com is totally fine too.

This **first email is super important**. Keep in mind that most brands receive tons of generic pitches from 'influencers' every day - so you need to **stand out from the crowd**.

If you haven't had a chance to read our previous eBook on building a magnetic media kit, definitely give it a look. We go into depth on why a strong media kit is non-negotiable, and how - when done right - it does 80% of the talking for you. So, make sure your **media kit is sharp, well written, and up to date** - and always attach it to your email pitch. A great trick? Upload your media kit to Google Drive and include a clickable link in your email instead of attaching a large file. Big attachments can sometimes get blocked or sent to spam.

The next few pages will focus on scripts for pitching and closing deals. For the purpose of these examples I've used a made-up influencer called *Jack&Jesse_Explore* - a pretend page about travelling with pets.

Here are a few practical example scripts for pitching and closing deals. Let's start with that first email.

The 1st Email Pitch Formula -

Subject line: Collaboration Opportunity - [Your Name]
from [Page Name]

Email Body:

Hi [Company Name] Team,

If you're not the right contact, could you kindly forward this to your Social Media or Marketing Manager?

My name is [Your Name], and I run [Page Name] on [Your Main Platform], where I share [your core mission or what your platform is about]. I've built an engaged audience of [number of followers] who follow me for content around [insert niche and key content themes]. I create [type of content - e.g. short-form video, storytelling posts, tutorials] that focuses on [brief explanation of your niche and how your audience benefits].

I've been following [Brand Name] and really admire [mention something specific that shows you've done your homework - a campaign, product, or value]. I can immediately see the synergy between your brand and the content I create, and I'd love to explore potential ways we can work together.

I've attached my Media Kit for more information - it includes audience insights, example collaborations, and past results.

Looking forward to hearing from you.

Best regards,

[Your Name]

[Instagram/TikTok/Website link]

[Email address]

Here's an example using *Jack&Jesse_Explore* - a pretend page about travelling with pets.

Subject line: Collaboration Opportunity - Jack from
@Jack&Jessy_Explore

Hi [Brand] Team,

If you're not the right contact, could you kindly forward this to your Social Media or Marketing Manager?

My name is Jack from [@Jack&Jessy_Explore], a travel and pet-focused page where I share our adventures exploring South Africa with my Labrador, Jessy. We're on a mission to uncover the best places to travel with pets, while also helping people give their dogs the happiest, healthiest lives possible. Our community of over 10,000 dog-loving followers actively engages with our content, which focuses on dog-friendly travel, training tips, exercise routines, and nutrition advice. We really admire your commitment to providing healthy, sustainably sourced dog food that's also affordable - it aligns perfectly with what we stand for. I'd love to explore a potential collaboration and see how we can work together. Please find our Media Kit attached for more information.

Looking forward to hearing from you.

Best regards,

Jack

@Jack&Jessy_Explore
[jackandjessy@gmail.com]

Don't underestimate the power of follow-ups. Most of the deals we've landed came through consistent follow-up emails. Your initial pitch can easily get lost in a crowded inbox - if it even lands there at all. Many emails go straight to spam, which is why following up is crucial. Chances are, the brand **isn't ignoring you** - they just **haven't seen your email yet**. We've included two ready-to-use follow-up templates (Follow-up 1 and Follow-up 2), but in reality, it can take **up to four follow-ups** - five emails in total - before you receive a response. Treat your follow-ups with the **same importance as your original pitch**.

Follow-up template 1

"Hi _____ Team,

Hope you're doing well. Just wanted to follow up on my previous email regarding a potential collaboration?

Looking forward to hearing from you soon.

Warm regards,

Jack

@Jack&Jessy_Explore"

Follow-up template 2 (Send if no reply to the follow-up two days after sending)

"Hi _____ Team,

Hope you're doing well. Just touching base as we have not heard from you yet. Please can you let me know if you have received my previous email regarding a potential collaboration?

Looking forward to hearing from you soon.

Warm regards,

Jack

@Jack&Jessy_Explore"

When a Brand Reaches Out to You

Sometimes, a brand will **make the first move** – and that's always exciting. But even if they reach out on social media, it's important to **move the conversation to email** as quickly as possible. Here's our advice:

- Acknowledge the message promptly. Brands appreciate a quick, friendly response.
- Always direct them to email. Instagram DMs are great for introductions, but they're **not ideal** for managing deliverables, timelines, or payments. Email gives you a professional paper trail to refer back to – and helps keep everything clear.

If they reach out via DM and seem like a good fit, here's how you might respond:

Brand:

“Hey Jack, love your content! We've been following you for a while and really enjoy your storytelling through the eyes of your doggy, Jessie. We'd love to know if you'd be open to a collab – we think there could be some great synergy!”

You:

“Hey [Brand]! Thanks so much – that means a lot. I'd love to hear more about what you had in mind. Could you pop me an email at Jack@J&JExplore.com so we can chat details properly? Super excited to connect!”

Hopefully, this encourages the brand to send you an email with more detail – like a brief or a clear idea of what they’re hoping to achieve. At this point, they may ask for your media kit or your rates, or they might suggest a trade exchange. Here are **two common scenarios** and how to respond:

Scenario 1 – They ask for your rates (Yay!)

Great news. Now’s your chance to respond with an email that outlines your pricing, matches their brief, and links to your media kit (ours includes our rate card, which we show you how to create in Book 3).

Scenario 2 – They suggest a trade exchange

In this case, you’ll need to decide if the offer is actually worth your time and effort. You might not want to create a campaign in **exchange for a free dog shampoo** – but if they’re flying you and your pooch out to Mauritius on an all-expenses-paid trip, it may be a different story! Only you can decide what you’re comfortable offering in return for your work – both in creating the content and marketing it to your audience. For context, we **no longer accept trade** collaborations within our own country, but when we’re travelling internationally – especially in developing regions – we often consider it. That’s because we know we can generate income in other ways while we’re there. Sometimes it’s not about the money – it’s **about the experience, the content opportunities, and building a portfolio you can later monetise.**

Don't be disheartened if a brand initially offers a trade - this is often just a starting point. With the right response, you can absolutely turn it into a paid opportunity. We've converted countless trade offers into paid campaigns simply by clearly communicating the value we bring. You'd be surprised how many brands suddenly "find the budget" once they see what's possible with the right creator. And even if they can't pay you this time, a thoughtful, professional reply - paired with a great media kit - puts you **front of mind** for future campaigns when the **budget is there**.

Here's an example of how you could respond...

"Hi [Name],

Thanks so much for reaching out.

This sounds super exciting, lots of tail wags from Jessie! I know a collaboration with your brand would be a great fit, as it aligns perfectly with what my audience loves. At the moment, I don't take on trade collaborations. Each piece of content I create is the result of careful planning, creativity, and time - and it's taken years to build the trust I have with my community. That connection is a big part of why my campaigns perform so well and consistently deliver strong results for the brands I partner with. I've attached my media kit with current collaboration options and examples of past results. Feel free to have a look and let me know your thoughts - I'd love to find a way to work together.

Look forward to hearing from you soon.

Warm regards,

Jack (and Jessie)

@Jack&Jessy_Explore"

The brand might actually not have budget, and therefore cannot proceed with you but I bet they will **appreciate your professionalism and reach out in the future.**

Earlier in the book, we unpacked the common terms and legal jargon found in influencer contracts, and showed you how to calculate your rates based on each one. Now, let's dive into **how to confidently negotiate those terms with brands.**

First up was exclusivity fees.

Let's continue with the pet niche example. A big dog food brand wants to work with you, but they **want exclusivity for six months.** During that time, you might get offers from other pet brands but you'll have to say no. That's income you are now **missing out on.** So what do you do?

Use This to Your Advantage: Negotiate Like a Pro

If you're giving up potential earnings, that needs to be **discussed beforehand and reflected in the total fee of the collaboration** (use the rates calculator to work out your fee).

Understand exactly what's being asked.

Get the **full picture** from the brand.

1. How long is the exclusivity period?
2. Does it cover all your platforms, or just one?
3. Who/what counts as a competitor? (is it just food items, or all other pet related brands?)

Everything should be clear and in writing.

Estimate what you're giving up.

Think about the kind of offers you typically get. If you regularly work with brands in the same niche, **exclusivity could be costing you lots of money, so speak up.**

Ask for more money (and do it nicely).

If a brand is asking for exclusivity, you could say something like: “I totally understand the value of exclusivity and the importance of brand alignment. That said, it does mean I’d **need to turn down potential work** with similar brands during the exclusivity period. I’d be happy to agree to this, but I’d love to **revisit the rate to ensure it fairly reflects** the potential income I’d be passing up.”

Adjust the Deliverables

If the brand’s budget is tight, you could offer to reduce the number of deliverables instead of increasing the fee. For example:

- Remove a reel or one of the posts
- Switch a feed post for a story
- Shorten the length of video content

This way, **they can afford the exclusivity fee** within their budget **without asking you to take a financial hit.**

Shorten the Exclusivity Period

If the brand can’t afford a full 3-month exclusivity, suggest shortening the duration to something more manageable - like 2 weeks or 30 days. It’s still valuable to them but much more realistic for you.

Ask to Remove Exclusivity Altogether

If the budget simply doesn't match the ask, it's okay to push back and suggest **removing the exclusivity clause entirely**. You can explain that you're **still committed to producing high-quality content**, but you can't agree to limitations that aren't fairly compensated.

The same approach can be used for usage rights and whitelisting. If you see either of those words on a contract or brief with the brand, **flag them and have a chat**.

Usage Rights Reply

"Thanks for sending over the contract! I noticed it includes extended usage rights. I'm happy for the brand to use the content externally, but since this goes beyond organic usage on my own channels, I do charge an additional fee based on the type and duration of use. Could you let me know more about how and where the content will be used so I can quote accordingly?"

Whitelisting Reply

"Thanks so much for the contract! I saw that it includes creator licensing/whitelisting terms. Since this allows the brand to run paid ads through my handle, I do charge an additional monthly fee to reflect that. Happy to tailor this depending on the duration and platforms you're planning to run ads on - let me know what you had in mind!"

Two Last Contract Clauses to Include

1. Get Payment Terms in Writing

Always confirm your fee, payment schedule, and any late fees in the contract. For example:

- Fee: “R30,000 for 3 Instagram posts and 2 Stories.”
- Payment schedule: “50% upfront, 50% on final delivery.”
- Late fees: “If payment isn’t received within 30 days, a 10% late fee applies.”

This ensures you’re protected if things get delayed or go quiet after posting.

2. Include a Dispute Resolution Clause

Even if you never need it, it’s smart to have something like: “In the event of a disagreement, both parties agree to attempt resolution through mediation before pursuing legal action.”

It’s a simple safeguard that avoids unnecessary stress and cost if issues arise.

And last but not least, it’s not just your signature that’s important on those contracts... make sure to get your hands on the final signed copy with both your and the brands signatures.

Final Checks Before Launching the Collaboration

1. Have you confirmed what’s expected?

Make sure all deliverables and content expectations are clearly defined:

- Deliverables: Be specific – e.g. “2 Instagram posts and 1 Story per month for 3 months.”
- Tone & style: Should the content feel fun, serious, educational, or casual? Align on this upfront.

- Approval process: When are drafts due? How many rounds of edits are allowed?

2. Have you set clear timelines?

- Protect yourself by locking in realistic, flexible deadlines:
- Content deadlines: “First post due within 14 days of receiving the product.” This gives leeway in case of shipping delays.
- Campaign duration: “Campaign runs over 6 weeks, with posts scheduled in weeks 1, 3, and 5.” A timeline keeps everyone on the same page.

How To Create and Send an Invoice For Your Work

Contract negotiations complete, it's now time to send an invoice and get paid (yay!). Invoicing on time shows brands you're **organised, professional, and intentional** about your work. It also protects you by clearly outlining the agreed deliverables, fees, and payment deadlines. And if you've never done it before—don't panic. **It's easier than it sounds.**

What to Include in a Professional Invoice

Your invoice should clearly communicate three things:

- Who you are
- What you're charging for
- How and when you expect to be paid

We'll break it down on the next page for you.

- **Your Information (a.k.a. Letterhead)**

Full name or business name

Email and phone number

Registered address (or postal address)

Your bank details

Your logo (optional, but adds a polished feel)

- **Client Information**

Brand or company name

Contact person's full name

Email and phone number

Business address

VAT number (if applicable, ask the brand)

- **Itemised Breakdown**

List everything you're providing, clearly and professionally.

For example:

1 Instagram Post – R2,500

3 Instagram Stories – R1,500

Usage Rights (30 days) – R1,000

Subtotal: R5,000

VAT: R750

Total: R5,750

- **Payment Terms**

Spell out exactly when payment is due.

Some examples: "Payment due within 7 days of invoice"

"50% deposit upfront, balance due on delivery"

"Full payment required before posting"

Also include your preferred payment method (e.g. EFT) and repeat the key terms in the email when you send the invoice.

Something like:

"As mentioned, payment is required within 7 days of invoice to confirm the campaign."

To create your invoice, Canva.com offers tons of free invoice templates you can customise with your branding, download as a PDF, and reuse for future clients.

Choosing Your Payment Structure

There's no one-size-fits-all. Set your terms based on what works for you and the project.

Full payment upfront – Great for short-term or one-off campaigns.

50/50 split – 50% to lock in the campaign, 50% once content is delivered.

Invoice after posting – Riskier, but often requested by brands. Make sure to **get everything in writing**.

We personally prefer deposits upfront, especially for travel-based jobs where we're incurring costs (accommodation, fuel, etc). But ultimately, the key is to be clear from the beginning.

Dealing with Late Payments

Unfortunately, chasing invoices is a reality for many South African creators. A clean, professional invoice helps minimise delays, but it's also worth **setting reminders** to follow up, **repeating terms** in your emails, **including late payment fees** (if appropriate). If a brand is hesitant to pay upfront – don't panic. Just reassure them with your media kit, testimonials, and past work. Professionalism builds trust. Invoicing isn't glamorous, but it's essential. We suggest saving yourself time and stress by creating a branded invoice template (you can reuse) and setting clear payment terms.

Once you've ticked all those boxes, it's **time to celebrate**- because you're officially a total rock star! Now comes the fun part: creating epic content for a brand you genuinely love, knowing the legal stuff is locked in and you're being compensated fairly for your time, effort, and creative skill.

We know it can feel totally overwhelming in the beginning, so I've included a real-life example of one of the first major collaborations Ruthie and I landed with a big-name brand a few years ago-just to encourage you! (Yep, this one's 100% real.) **This brand reached out to us via email** (we've removed names for privacy)-

“Good day Josh and Ruthie,
I hope you are doing well. My name is ___, and I am an Influencer Campaign Manager at ___. We are working on a very exciting campaign for one of our clients in the Motor Vehicle industry, and we would love to partner with you on it as one of our influencers. The campaign is about taking the car and exploring hidden gems, documenting the experience and how the car makes the experience fun. I know that you usually travel in your Van, will you be able to execute this campaign? The scope of work for this campaign is

- 3x Instagram Videos, cross-shared on TikTok
- 3 months of Usage and Exclusivity

Please let me know if you have worked with any car brand in the past 3 -6 months. Please let me know if you would be keen to partner with us on this campaign.”

We were SO excited to receive this email, and immediately got to work creating the perfect response.

Our reply -

“Hi ____,

Thank you so much for considering us for this campaign! How exciting :) We love exploring the great outdoors, and visiting hidden gems is right up our alley! Our audience is mostly South-African travel and adventure enthusiasts so this is definitely something they will resonate with. We can most certainly park the van for a few days and explore in another vehicle. We are currently exploring the Western Cape and have a trip up to Mpumalanga planned for August. Once we have an idea of the dates for this campaign we can plan some really epic adventures accordingly. I have linked our media kit here for you. We usually charge separately for content creation, Instagram and Tiktok posts but have included all three at R3000.

We charge R3000 to create and share each video (will include cross-sharing to TikTok)

We charge a % for usage - Organic Social: 15% Paid Social: 30% Digital: 30% Offline: 60% (see media kit for information)

We charge the full amount per month for exclusivity.”

And then came time to add the quote, we were so nervous because we had never quoted a brand on exclusivity rights before and we really wanted to get the deal. But we were brave and calculated exactly as the brand had asked according to our Media Kit.

“Quote

3 x Instagram Videos (cross-shared on TikTok) at R3000 each = R9000

Organic Social Usage at 15% of R9000 = R1350 per month x 3 months = R4050

3 months Exclusivity at R9000 per month = R27000
Total = R40 050”

And within a **few minutes** the brand responded...

“Good day Ruth,
I hope you are well.

We are happy to move forward with you at that cost of R40 050.00, we will be giving you an extra R5 000.00 to use when exploring the hidden germs.”

Safe to say **we were over the moon!** The collaboration was a huge success-it aligned perfectly with our niche, we were paid fairly (which meant we could reinvest in creating even better content), and the **brand felt confident in the value we**

brought. Since then, we've worked on many more campaigns-most of them at much higher rates. We don't share this to brag, but to show you what's possible when you use the **right language and strategies.**

Ongoing Partnerships with Brands

So you landed your dream collaboration, negotiated the contract, invoiced like a champ, created epic content and posted it to your social channels... only it got **way fewer views than your usual posts** - and now you're feeling stressed. First of all, take a deep breath. This is so common and absolutely **not a reflection of your worth** or the quality of your content. Most brands already know that anything labelled as an ad or partnership often **performs a little lower** on social media due to the **algorithm and audience behaviour**. It doesn't mean the campaign flopped! If the numbers are way below what you hoped for, one easy win is to **boost the visibility** by adding a few extra Instagram Stories. This small, thoughtful gesture can really set you apart! Most brands want to **build long-term relationships** with creators, and by showing that you care about the results and are **willing to go the extra mile**, you're giving them a reason to come back to you for future campaigns. After the campaign we suggest you **keep in touch** by sending a friendly message thanking their team and letting them know you'd **love to work together** again. It can also be helpful to **show your value** by attaching a **short KPI report** (make it on Canva.com) with **screenshots of the contents reach, saves, shares, and comments** (yes, even if it's lower than you hoped). This really helps the marketing team **motivate on your behalf** for the next time the brand has a campaign and I promise **this will set you apart** from all the other creators!

Here's the thing: most people need to see or hear about something multiple times before they take action. It's not because your post wasn't great - it's because that's how human brains work. That's why once-off campaigns can sometimes feel hollow or a bit random - both for your audience and for the brand. It makes way more sense to build long-term partnerships with brands you genuinely love. **Your audience picks up on consistency** - if they see you using a product regularly over months or even years, it feels real. It builds trust.

When chatting to marketing teams, this is **great language** to use:

- “We love building long-term partnerships.”
- “Our goal is to become true brand advocates, not just one-off promoters.”
- “We’re focused on relationship-based content, not transactional deals.”
- “Our audience responds best to ongoing storytelling - seeing the same brand pop up naturally over time.”

And this doesn't mean a huge campaign every month (unless that's what they're after - amazing!). It could look like **subtle, consistent mentions woven** into your usual content. Maybe you're part of a brand ambassador programme, or featured in seasonal content rollouts. Maybe it's just an agreement to create **quarterly content** that shows real-life usage.

Mentioning this idea to the marketing team or brand is a great way to get a foot in the door, and hopefully **extend your partnership** with them far beyond that first campaign.

Multiple Streams of Income

UGC (User-Generated Content)

This is one of the fastest-growing spaces in the industry – especially if you’re just starting out.

UGC is all about creating content for the brand’s platforms, not your own. You’re **hired for your skills, not your reach** – meaning **follower count doesn’t matter here**. What does matter is your ability to create visually strong, relatable, story-driven content.

What brands love about UGC:

- It’s affordable and authentic
- They can use it across their social media, ads, and website
- You hand over the content rights – usually both edited and raw files

If you’re **great at filming reels**, showing a product in use, or capturing a vibe in under 30 seconds – UGC might just be your sweet spot.

Affiliate Marketing

Affiliate marketing means you earn a commission every time someone purchases through your unique link or code. Sounds great, right? It can be – but let’s be real: this setup isn’t always in your favour, especially if you’re a smaller creator.

Here’s when affiliate marketing can work really well:

- The product genuinely fits your niche and audience
- You’ve built strong trust with your followers
- You’re creating evergreen content that keeps performing month after month
- You’ve had a long runway to warm up your audience to the product before expecting conversions.

Those are the perks, but let's not ignore the downsides - especially on platforms like Instagram where you **can't add clickable links** to posts or Reels. That means unless someone heads to your bio, finds your link, and buys right then and there - **you may not get the sale**. Even if people do buy the product you recommended, it **doesn't guarantee** you'll get the commission. Why?

- They might Google it instead of using your link
- They might buy later and forget to go back through your affiliate code
- They might use a friend's link, or click a competitor's post that offered a better discount
- They might even shop in-store, where affiliate tracking doesn't work at all

So while affiliate income can be a **fantastic passive revenue stream**, it's not always reliable. That's why we recommend using affiliate marketing **as a bonus, not a base**. You should never feel pressured to accept "just affiliate" deals.

Here's what we suggest instead: Look for **hybrid deals** - where you're **paid a flat fee** to create the content **plus get a commission** on any sales. That way, your **time and effort are covered**, and you still have a shot at earning passively if the content converts well.

Your time and audience are valuable. Don't work for "maybe" money when you can be fairly compensated upfront.

Selling Your Own Products

This is hands-down one of the income streams we're most excited about. Why? Because it's 100% yours. You're not relying on brand deals or waiting for someone to say yes—you're building something from your own creativity, on your own terms. **Digital products are where most creators start.** Think things like:

- eBooks or downloadable travel guides (like ours!)
- Lightroom presets, Canva templates, Notion planners
- Email templates, media kits, social media calendars
- Online courses or live workshops

You don't need to hold stock or worry about shipping—just take what you **already know and package it** in a way that **genuinely helps someone else**. Once it's made, it can keep **selling in the background** while you sleep, travel, or work on other things. Not sure where to begin? Start by thinking about the questions you get asked all the time. That's often where the gold is. What are people always coming to you for? What shortcuts or tools could you create that would make someone's life easier?

But products don't stop at digital. Some creators **rent or sell their photos** as stock images, others **sell physical prints**, or **launch their own journals**, planners or calendars (especially in the wellness space). Some even partner with brands to **co-create a product line**—like clothing, coffee, skincare, you name it. If there's a brand you love and align with, this can be such an exciting direction to explore.

You've probably also heard of dropshipping—that's where you sell physical products, but a third party handles all the printing and shipping for you. You can design a t-shirt, mug, or hoodie, upload it to a store (like Shopify), and when someone buys, the manufacturer prints and sends it on your behalf. No boxes in your garage. Just **smart branding and marketing**. It's low-risk to get started, but you'll want to **focus on quality** and creating something people actually want.

There's no one-size-fits-all here. Some creators **love diving into product development and building a whole brand**. Others want something simple that can **tick away passively**. Start small. Keep it aligned to **what your audience already knows** and loves about you.

Exclusive Content & Subscriptions

If you've got a super engaged audience, you can offer exclusive content via:

- Instagram Subscriptions
- Patreon
- Buy Me a Coffee

You might share behind-the-scenes videos, bonus tutorials, early access to posts or private Q&As. It's a great way to deepen your connection with followers and get paid for the extra value you're offering.

Meta Ad Payments (Reels Bonus / In-Stream Ads on Facebook)

This one is a bit of a wildcard. If you're eligible, you can make money when Meta (Facebook and Instagram's parent company) attaches ads to your content—specifically your Reels on Facebook. **We actually do get paid through this program**, and even though we're based in South Africa, we still receive payments in USD. It's not a life-changing amount (we usually make around R2000- R5000 per month), but it's something! And if you consistently post original Reels that qualify for ads, it can add up over time!

Here's how it works:

You'll need to join Meta's Professional Dashboard and be eligible for Facebook Reels Ads or in-stream ads.

⚠ Note: Ads only run on original audio Reels. So if you're using trending audio (which is often copyrighted), Facebook won't allow ads on those. That's one of the reasons our earnings are limited—we love using trending sounds!

To sign up for Meta Reels Ads:

1. Switch to a Professional (Creator or Business) profile on Facebook.
2. Go to Professional Dashboard (on your Facebook Page).
3. Tap Monetisation → Check if you're eligible for Reels Ads or In-Stream Ads. (this can change, so check often!)
4. If you qualify, you'll be able to Set Up Payouts with your bank or PayPal (yes, it works in SA, we use FNB!)
5. Once approved, Meta will automatically run ads on your eligible Reels. You'll earn based on views and engagement.

Our Encouragement To You

You made it! 🥂

If no one has told you this yet—we are so proud of you. This whole journey? It takes guts. Your first pitch might feel scary. Your first affiliate link might flop. Your first UGC video might take hours to create. And guess what?

That's completely normal. Building something real—something that earns, that lasts, that matters—takes time. It's not meant to happen overnight. You grow by doing. You get better by showing up. You find your rhythm by trying, failing, learning, tweaking, and going again. If you've made it to the end of this course, you already have what it takes.

You don't need a million followers. You don't need a fancy camera. You don't need to wait until you "feel ready." You just need to start. And above all else—have fun with it.

Let it be creative. Let it be imperfect. Let it reflect you. Because when you love what you're doing, people can feel it. That's the magic. That's what builds trust. That's what makes people follow, engage, and buy.

So keep experimenting. Keep learning. Keep showing up. You're doing great.

We're cheering for you, and we'd love to hear how your journey goes.

Please DM us any wins (big or small!) on Instagram—we'd love to celebrate with you ❤️

With love,
Ruthie & Josh

& That's a Wrap!

Thank you for purchasing this Ebook, we loved sharing our knowledge and advice with you and truly hope this helps you feel more confident to start your journey as a Content Creator!



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