



GEN Z SPEAKS: DISCOVERING WHAT DRIVES THEIR ENGAGEMENT WITH ADS

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1. PROJECT BACKGROUND AND GOALS
2. METHODS AND FINDINGS
3. RECOMMENDATIONS
4. CONCLUSION



1. Project Background and Goals

Goal and Overview

Project Goal: to understand Gen Z's needs for creator and brand partnerships across digital platforms

Gen Z's

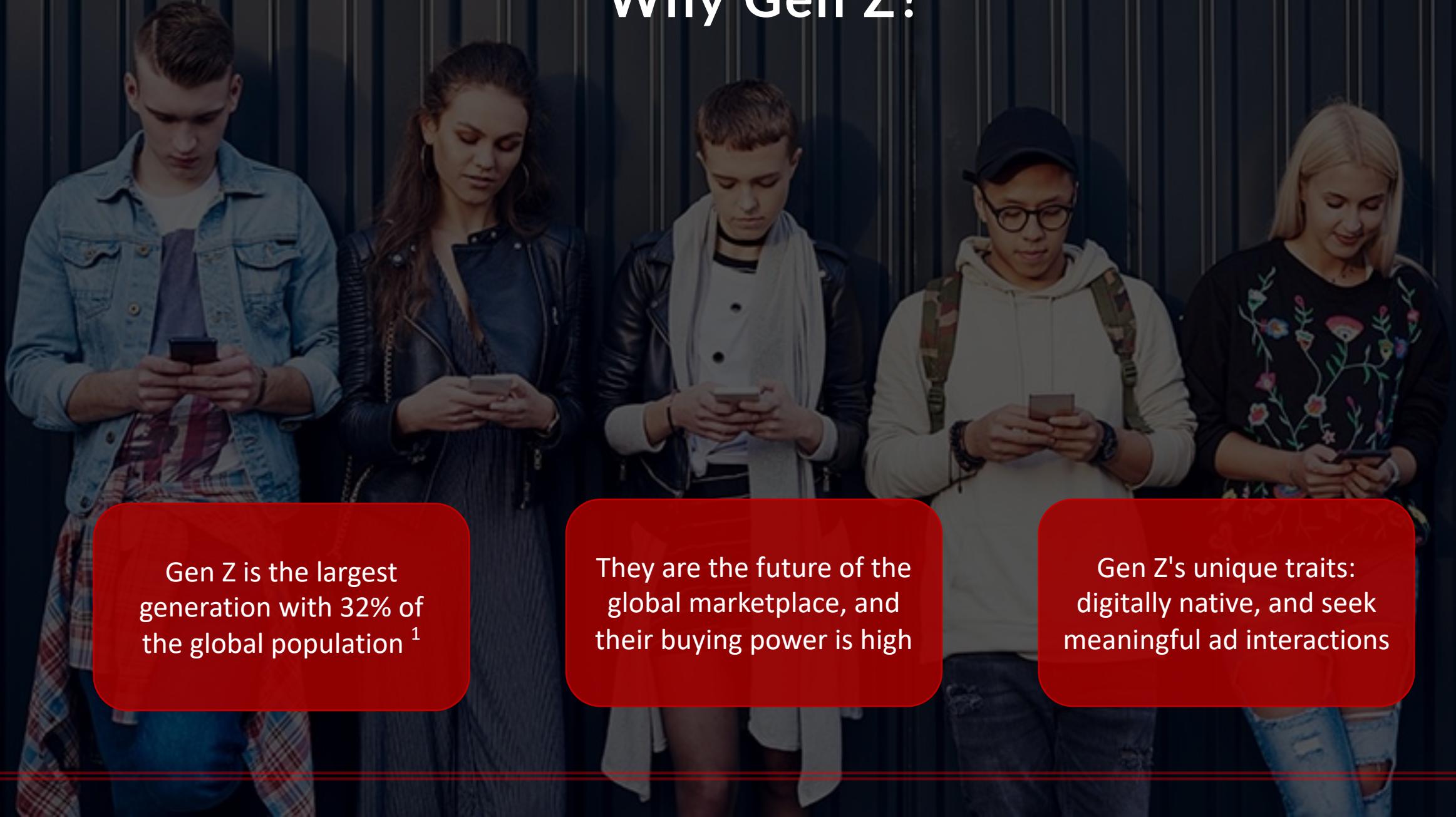
- Likes/dislikes
- Challenges
- Experiences

YouTube Ads team wants to create meaningful experiences that allow Gen Z viewers to:

1. Discover new products and brands they love
2. Facilitate research for informed purchase decisions



Why Gen Z?



Gen Z is the largest generation with 32% of the global population ¹

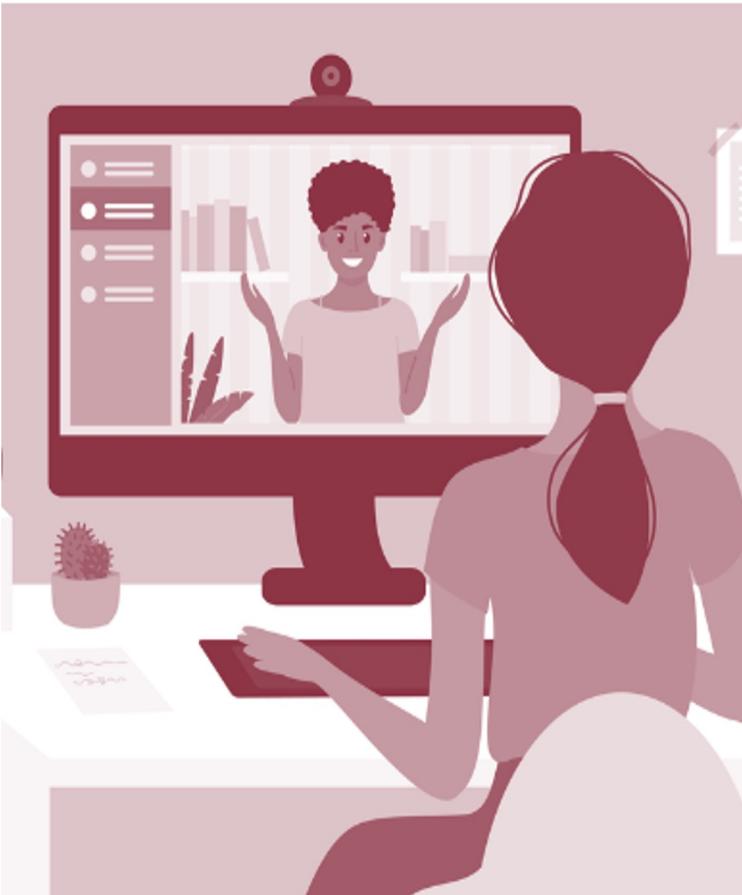
They are the future of the global marketplace, and their buying power is high

Gen Z's unique traits: digitally native, and seek meaningful ad interactions



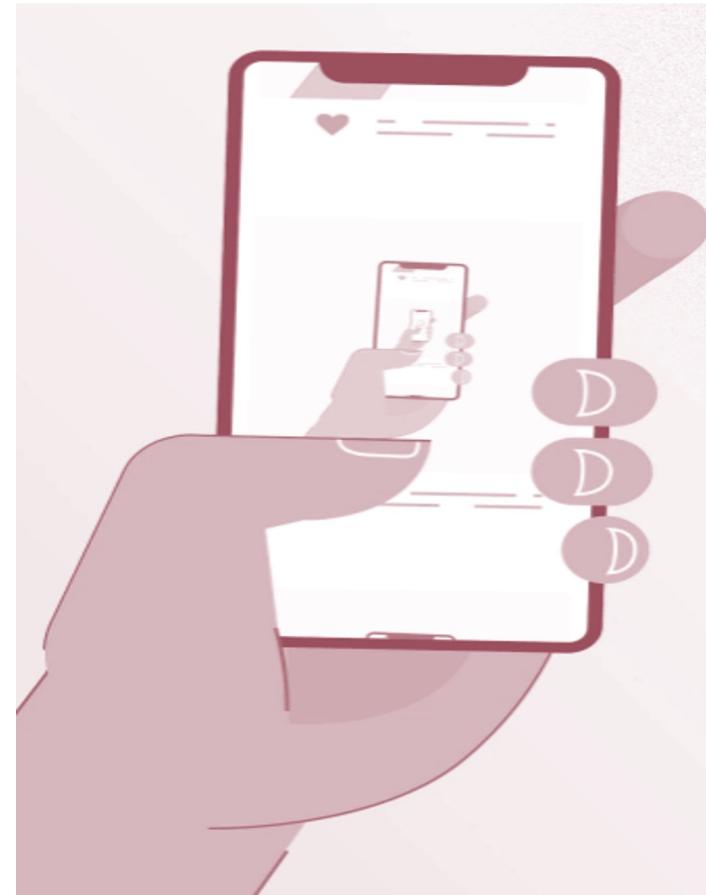
2. Methods and Findings

Methods



LITERATURE REVIEW

- Oliver Wyman Report (20,000 respondents)
- MorningConsult Gen Z Surveys



SENTIMENT ANALYSIS AND TOPIC MODELING

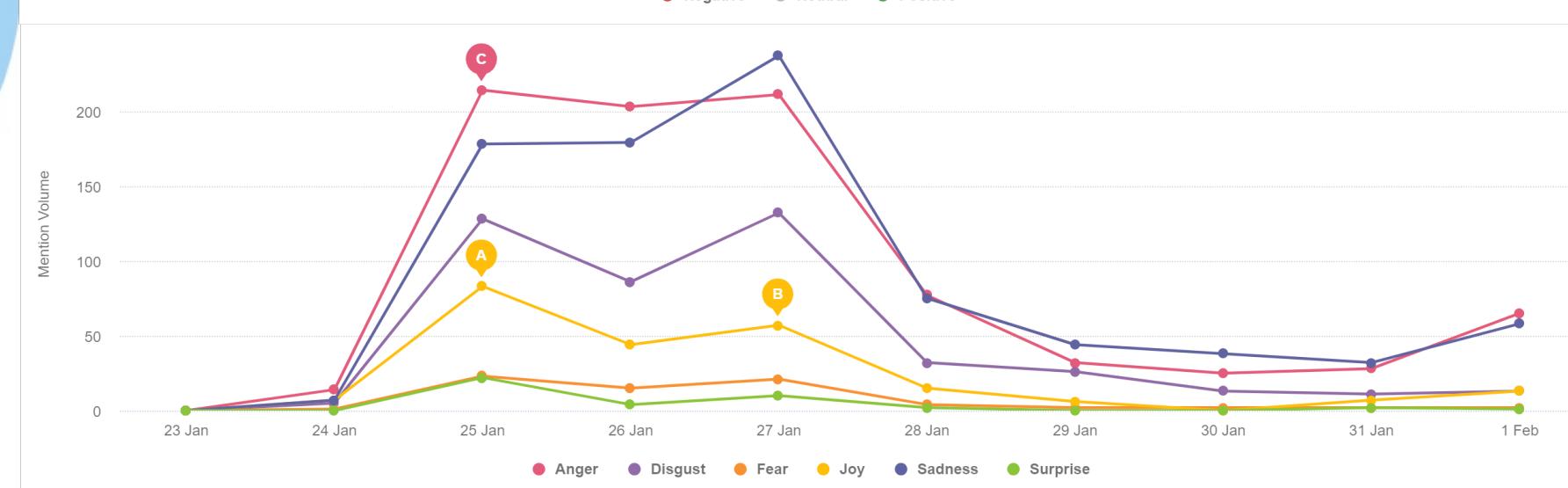
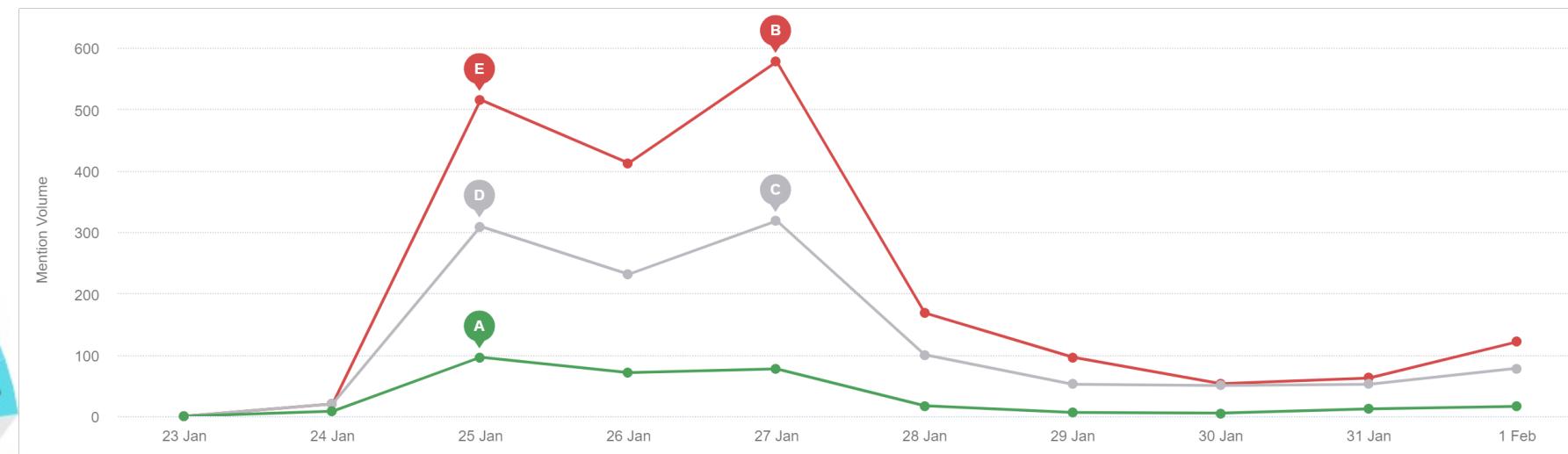
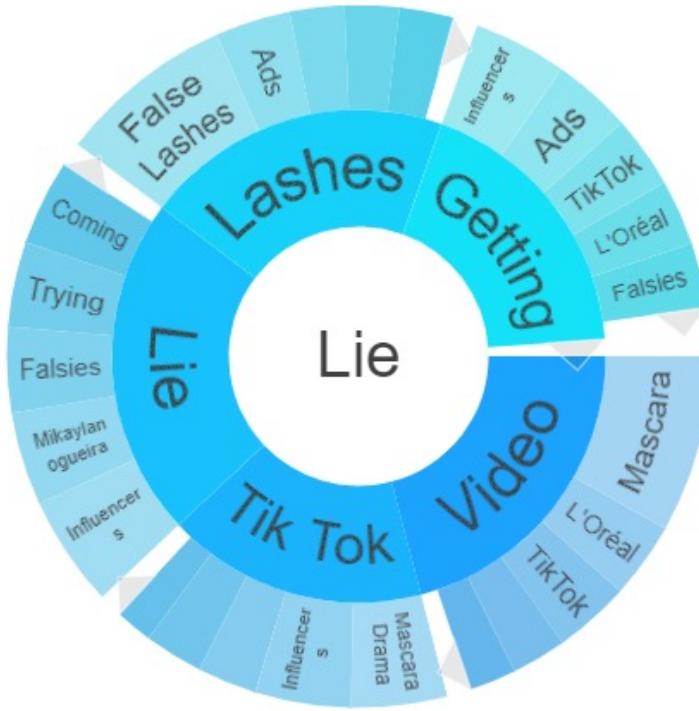
- Brandwatch
- Python
- Analysis on three key cases



SURVEYS + INTERVIEWS

- Gen Z viewers
- Creators

Case Study: Mikayla Noguiera X LOREAL



Case Study: Bella Poarch x Moncler

The stronger personal connection makes audiences much more likely to try a product or brand recommended by a creator²

Gen Z follows creators because of their genuine personality and the ability to relate to them³

The focal point of authenticity for generation Z is the feeling like knowing the brand or a person behind the camera⁴



A screenshot of a social media comment section. The comments are:

- José Reyna5959**
That's the black alpaca style 😊 good
2020-12-12 23 Reply
- Devon Rodriguez**
I just bought a Moncler last week 🔥🔥🔥
2020-12-12 5624 Reply
- Jemark Legaspi PH**
Bella This Is Youre Best Ads Ever!! 😊
2020-12-12 24 Reply
- just a bella tr**
Your in inspiration to me :)
2020-12-12 23 Reply
- Zilbersteve**
Please make the alpaca jacket a thing
2020-12-12 23 Reply



Gen Z's thoughts on creator-brand partnerships

Authenticity



Ad-reads need to appear genuine

"I just didn't find the reviews genuine enough to be influenced by it."



Gen Z viewers highly value **authenticity** & transparency in creators they follow



Ads need to be relevant and engaging

"I can only think of 2 YouTubers I do not skip the sponsored content for, and it's because the content is fun and still feels like part of the video."



Ads can't be overly repetitive

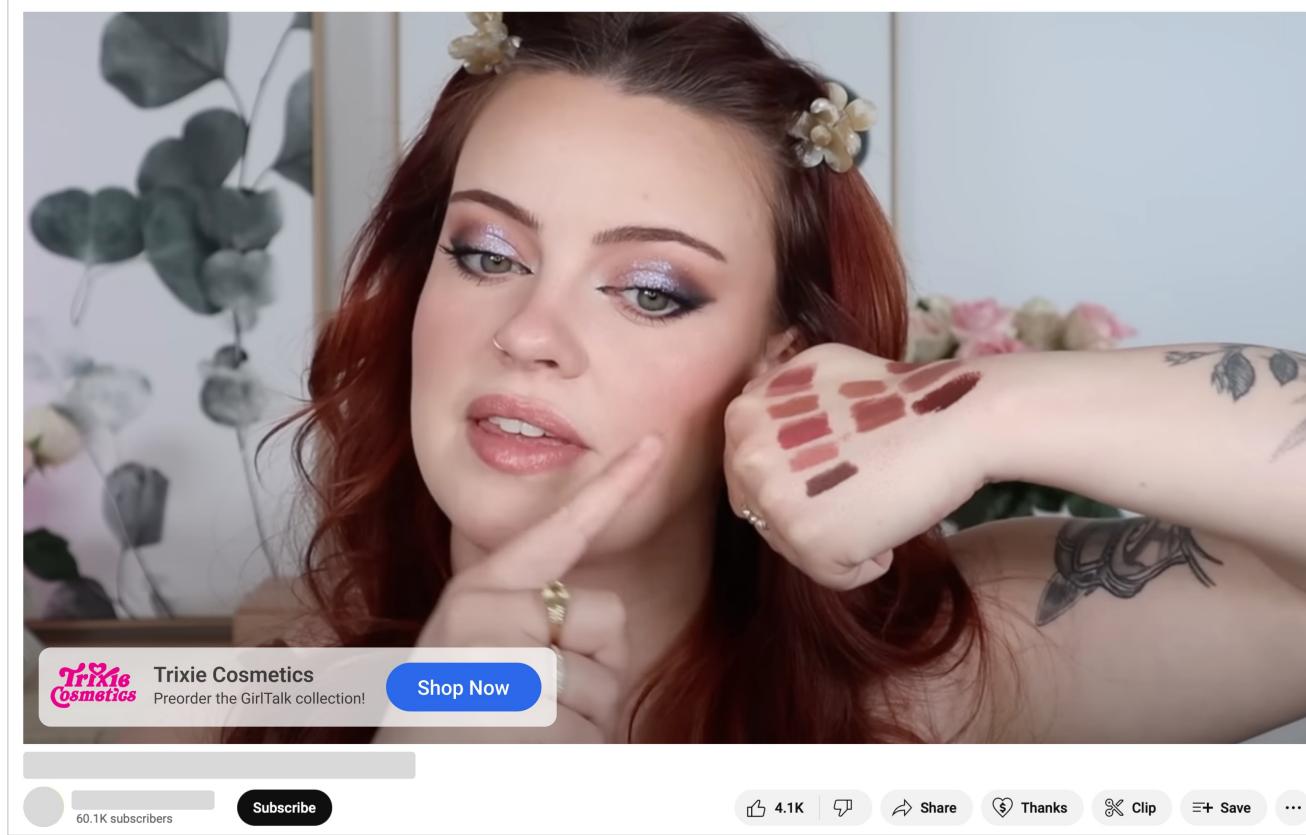
"Many YouTubers are sponsored by the same companies, so the script becomes repetitive."



3. Recommendations

Recommendation 1

Support in-video creator-audience Interactions

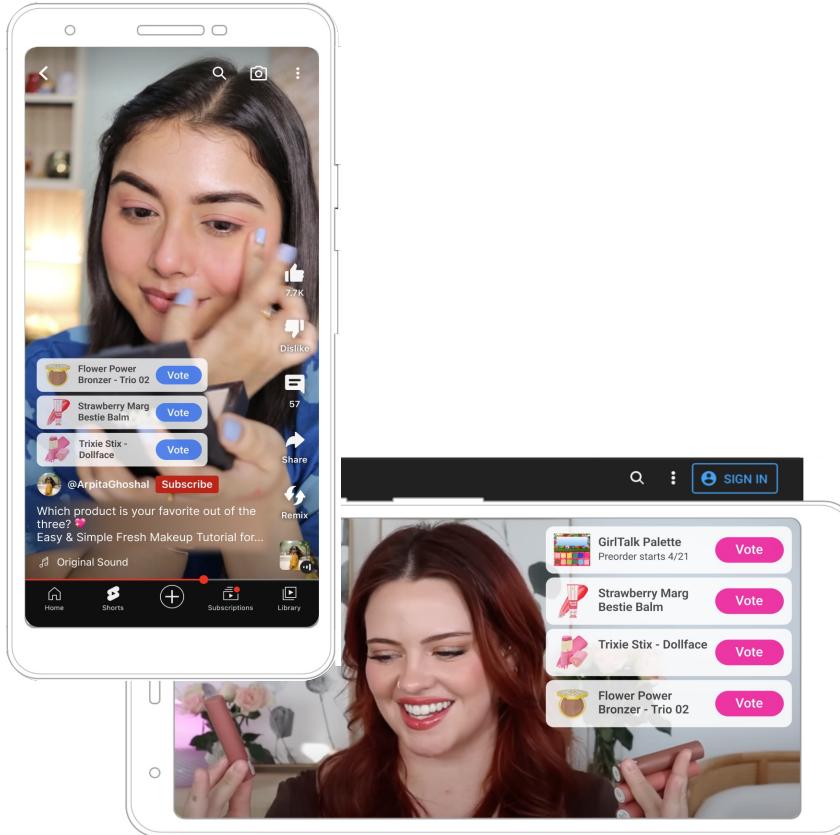


A

Brand info-card during in-video ad-reads

Recommendation 1

Support in-video creator-audience Interactions

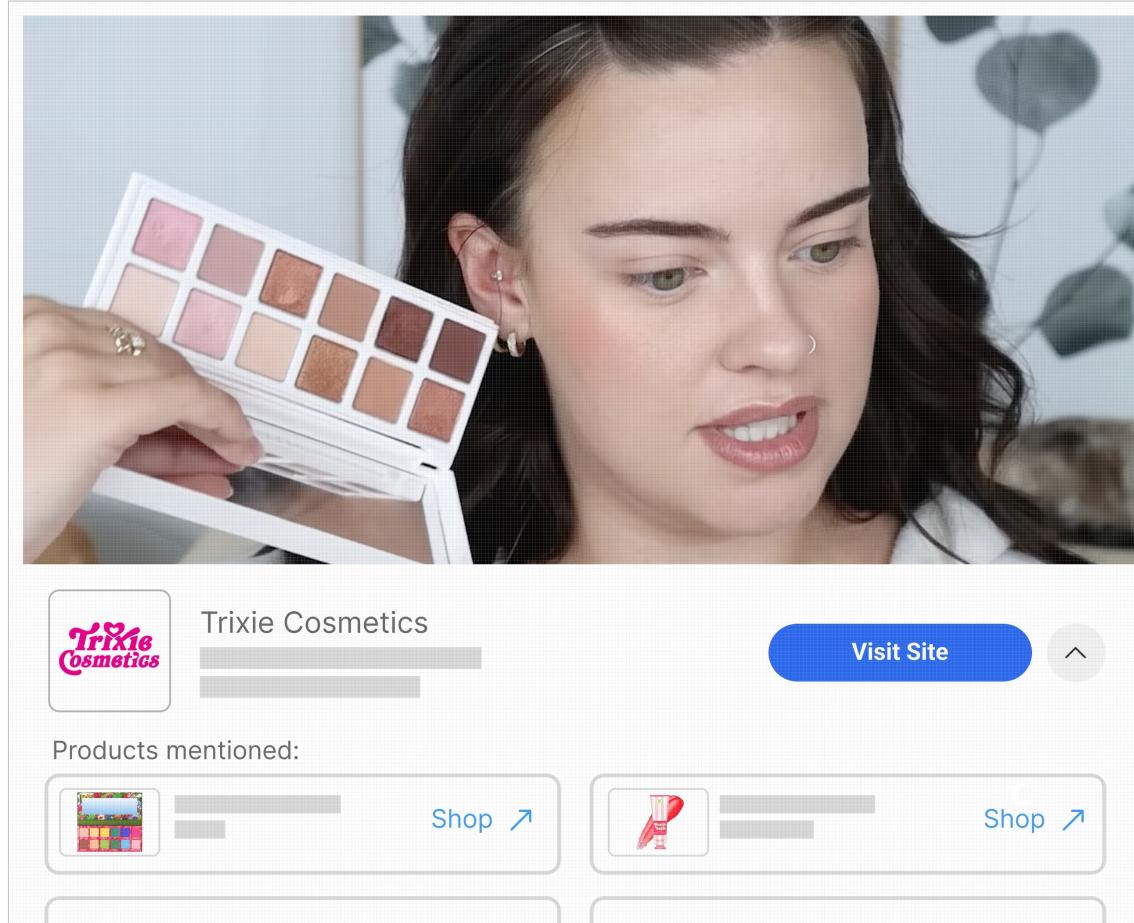


B

Voting for favorite products to engage viewers

Recommendation 1

Support in-video creator-audience Interactions



C

Creator-curated storefront from sponsored brand

Values Generated

Value for Viewers:

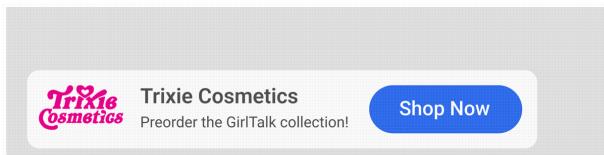
- More **engaging** experience
- Chance to **voice opinions**
- Feeling of **contribution & co-creation**

Value for Creators:

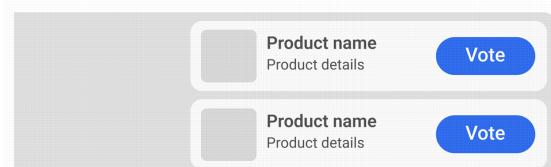
- Easier ways to attach affiliate links & products
- New ways to **solicit engagement natively**
- New methods to build interactive relationship with audience

Value for Brands:

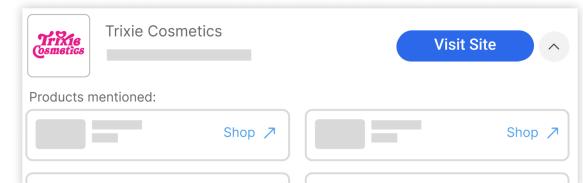
- Positive viewer experience = positive sentiment & brand exposure
- Additional **entry points** to brand website
- New ways to **retain viewer attention**



A Brand info-card with link during in-video ad-reads



B Voting for favorite products to engage viewers



C Creator-curated storefront from sponsored brand



Feasibility

Technical ✓

Operational



Key Metrics

YouTube Engagement

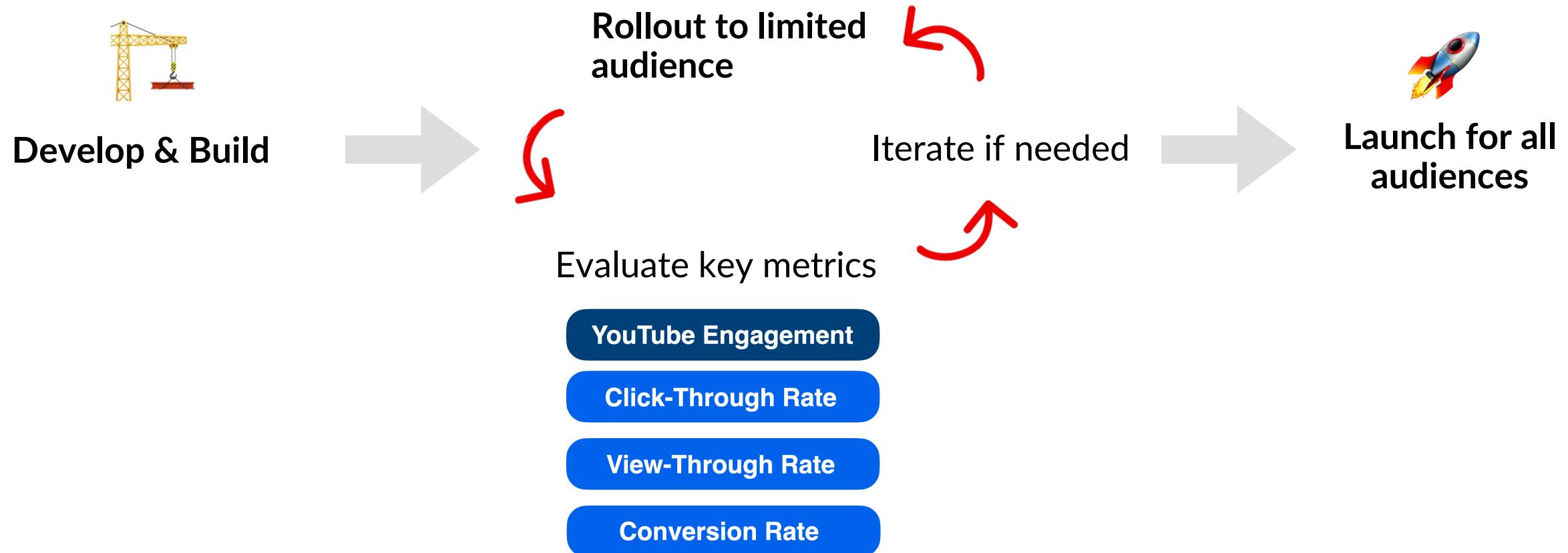
(Guardrail metric)

Click-Through Rate

View-Through Rate

Conversion Rate

Envisioned Roadmap



Recommendation 2

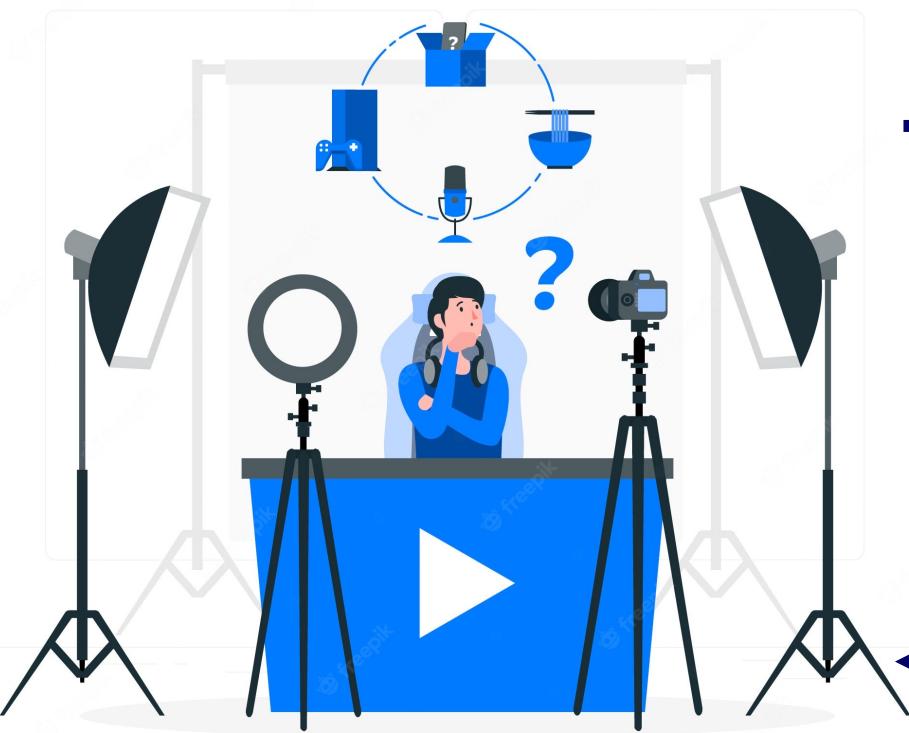
Rationale



**Which ads
generate positive
reception from
Gen Z audience?**

1. Gen Z viewers care about the **values and public perception** around the creator and brand
2. Reside within the **domain of expertise** of the influencer showcasing the product
3. Align with the “**personal brand**” of the influencer showcasing the product

How do the creators feel?

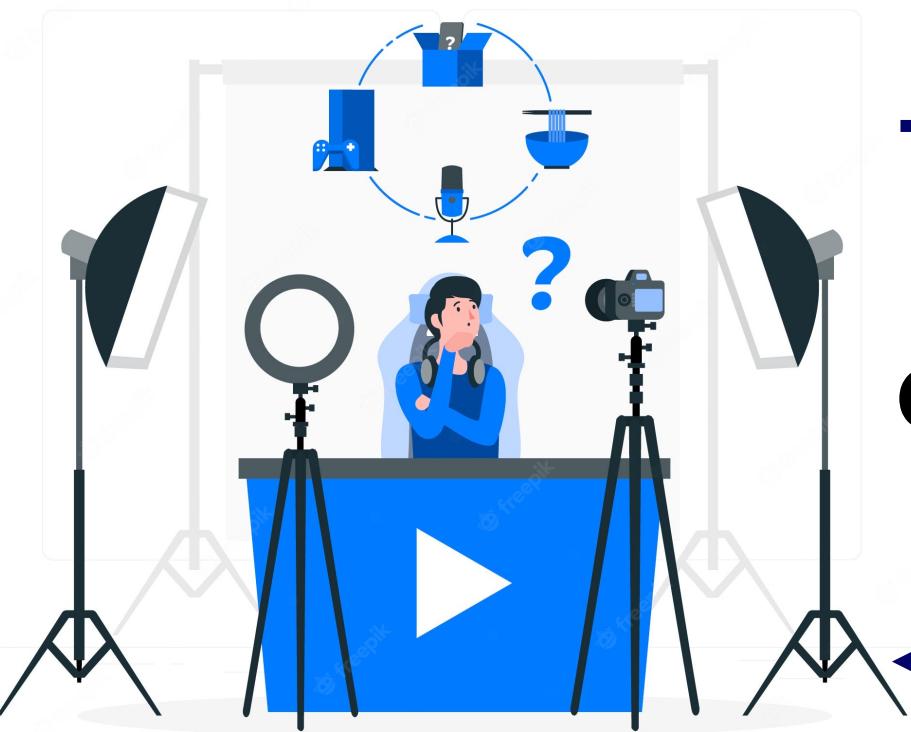


Alignment
- Domain
- Values

Communication



Our Proposed Approach



Data Focused
Creator-Brand
Matching



Portfolio- Creators

Feature 1

Creator Bio



Julia Adams MUA

@JuliaAdamsMUA
242K subscribers 520 videos

Contact Me

Introduction

I am a 19 year old Fashion Influencer from Pittsburgh. My audience is primarily gen Z and I post Makeup and Lifestyle content.

Usual Topics

- Beauty Try-on Hauls
- Look Books
- Product Reviews

Values I align with

- Cruelty-free products
- Sustainable Fashion
- Inclusive Fashion

Also find me on

instagram.com/juliaadams
tiktok.com/juliaadamsMUA

Recommendation 2

Features for Better Creator-Brand Matching

Collaboration samples

Past Collaborations

Brand name MM/DD/YYYY - Present

Domain: [REDACTED]
Type: [REDACTED]

Background info

videos/posts/links

videos/posts/links

videos/pos >

Brand name MM/DD/YYYY - MM/DD/YYYY

Domain: [REDACTED]
Type: [REDACTED]

Background info

videos/posts/links

videos/posts/links

videos/pos >

Brand name MM/DD/YYYY - MM/DD/YYYY

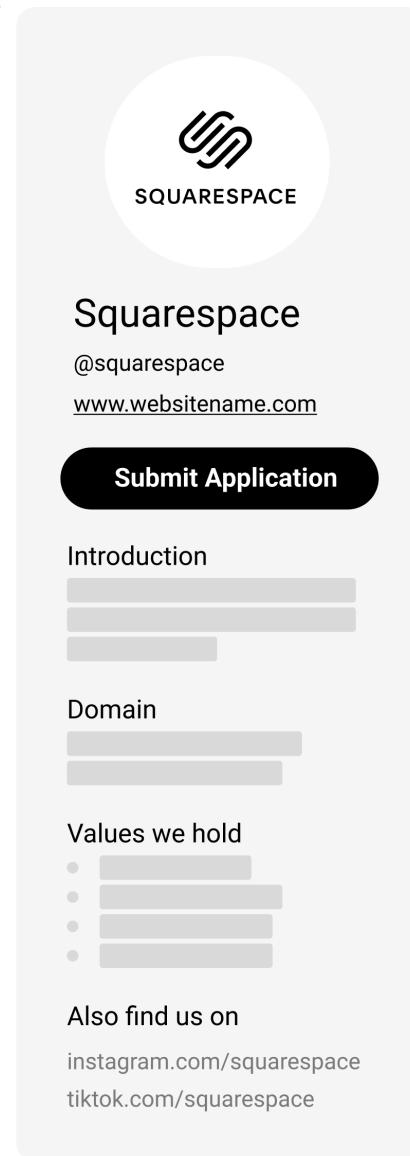
Domain: [REDACTED]
Type: [REDACTED]

Background info

Portfolio- Brand

Feature 2

Brand Bio



Squarespace

@squarespace
www.websitename.com

Submit Application

Introduction

Domain

Values we hold

-
-
-
-

Also find us on

instagram.com/squarespace
tiktok.com/squarespace

On Going Campaign Information

Current Campaign

Cover image

Dates:

Background:

Type:

Who we are
looking for:

Apply

Creators we've worked with:



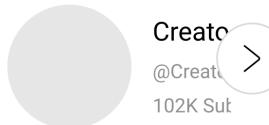
Creator Name

@CreatorYouTubeHandle
102K Subscribers 52 Videos



Creator Name

@CreatorYouTubeHandle
102K Subscribers 52 Videos



Creator
Name
@Create
102K Sub

Feature 3

Matching Process

User Reported Data

- Values
- Domain

Video Metadata

Video Transcript

Tags

Matching and
Recommendation
Algorithm



Find matches for **Campaign Name**

Domains:

Values:

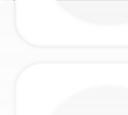
Subscriber count:

Recommended Creators

 Creator Name
@CreatorYouTubeHandle
102K Subscribers 52 Videos [Creator Portfolio](#)

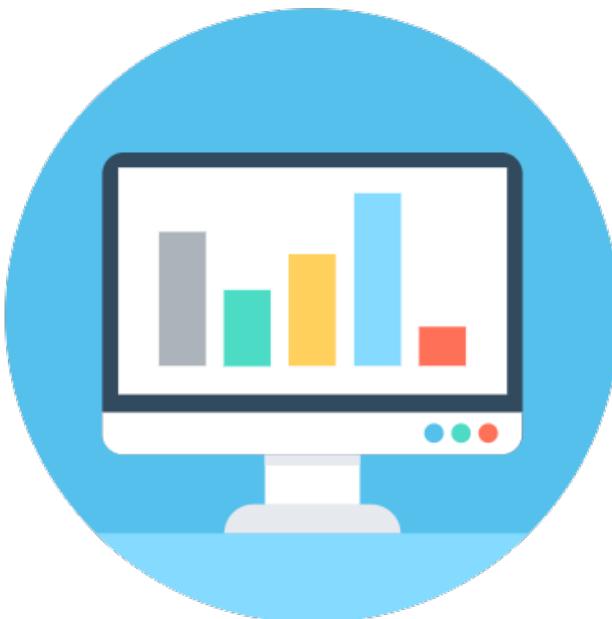
 Creator Name
@CreatorYouTubeHandle
102K Subscribers 52 Videos [Creator Portfolio](#)

 Creator Name
@CreatorYouTubeHandle
102K Subscribers 52 Videos [Creator Portfolio](#)

 Creator Name [Creator Portfolio](#)

Technical Feasibility

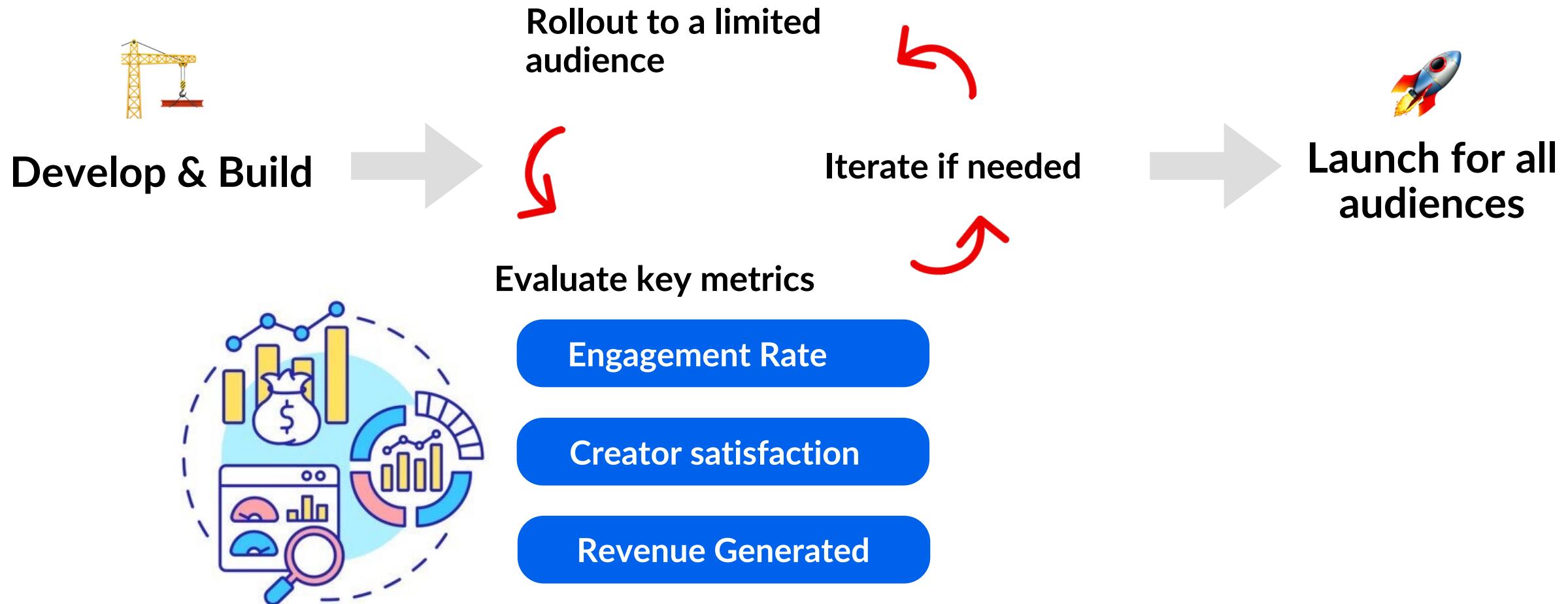
Monetization service
connecting Brands with
Creators



Access to

- Creator Data (Values + Domain + Audience)
- Brand Data (Values + Domain + Audience)

Envisioned Roadmap



Conclusion



1. Incorporating in-video audience engagement opportunities

- Allows creators and Gen Z viewers to build more engaging relationships
- Better experience = positive brand exposure
- More entry points to brand website

2. Utilizing Portfolios and AI/ML algorithms to match creators and brands based on content niche

- Allow brands find niche creators
- Enhances matching between influencers and brands in BrandConnect.

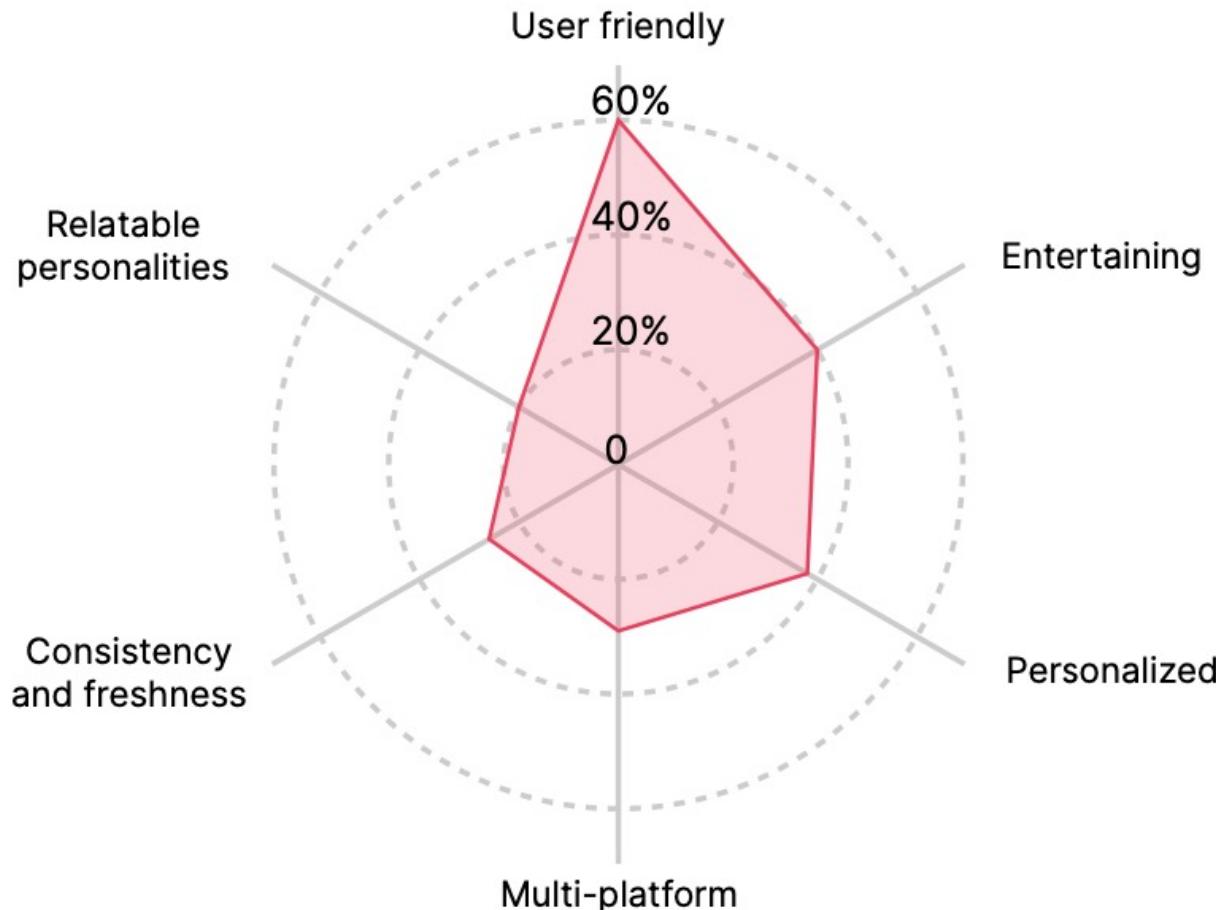
References

1. Eric Spitznagel, "Generation Z Is Bigger than Millennials - and They're out to Change the World," New York Post (New York Post, January 25, 2020), <https://nypost.com/2020/01/25/generation-z-is-bigger-than-millennials-and-theyre-out-to-change-the-world/>.
2. Gardner, Jacob, and Kevin Lehnert. "What's new about new media? How multi-channel networks work with content creators." *Business horizons* 59, no. 3 (2016): 293-302.
3. Vähäjylkkä, Miina, and Emmi-Julia Lepistö. "YouTubers' impact on viewers' buying behavior." (2017).
4. Reijonen, Viivi. "The influence of YouTube influencer marketing on attitudes of generation Z." (2019).



4. Appendix

Literature Review Insights



60%

of Gen Zers go to social media for information — slightly more than the internet and double print or digital newspapers and magazines

22%

of Gen Zers trust social media “highly,” yet it is ranked second in platform loyalty

2 in 3

Gen Zers favor social media for its content delivery, often at the expense of quality and accuracy

2^x

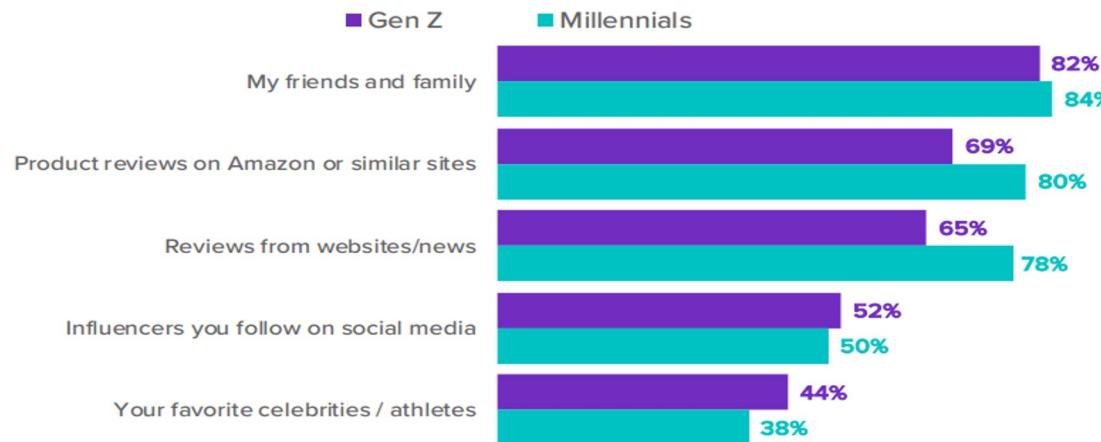
For fact-checking, Gen Zers trust people like them twice as much as mainstream news

2^x

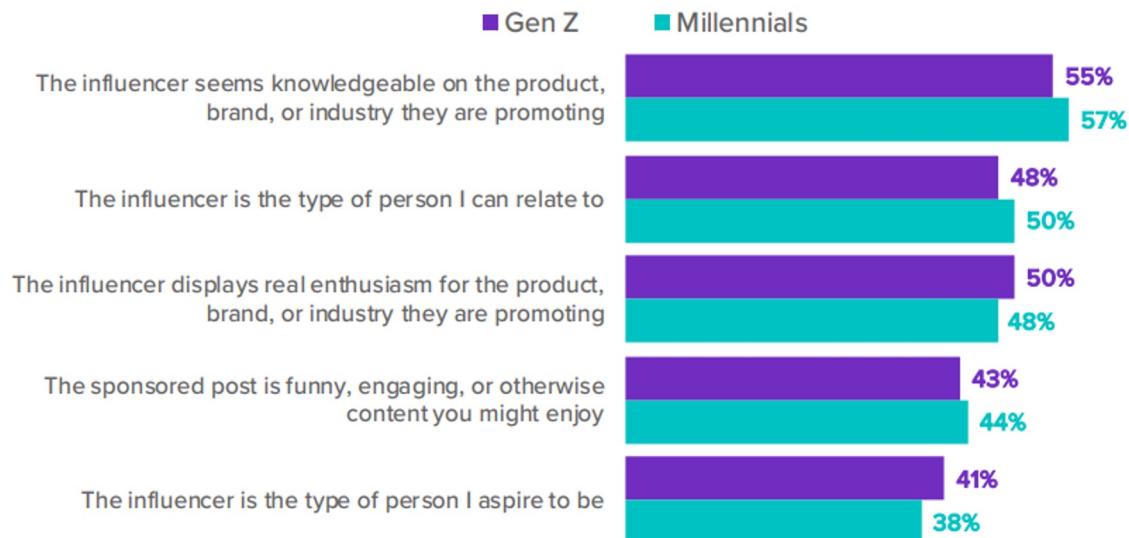
Gen Zers are almost twice as likely as non-Gen Zers to use another source to fact-check news

Literature Review Insights

Who does Gen Z trust to give them good advice about brands or products?



What makes an influencer a good salesperson?

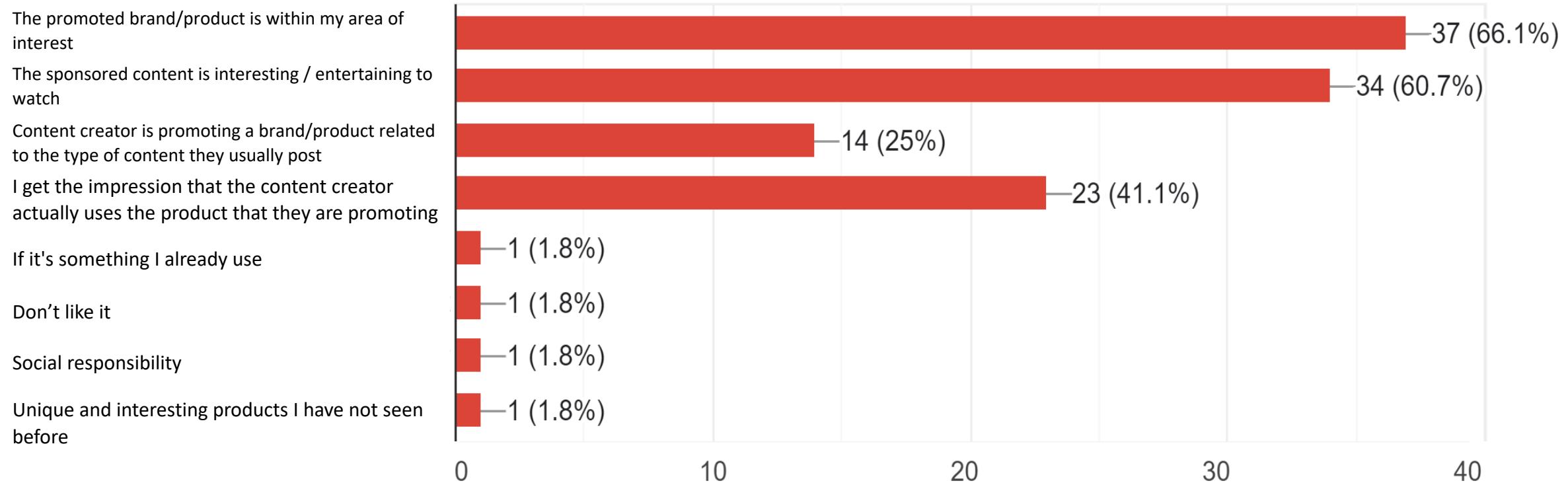


Gen Z trust products promoted
authentically

Survey Insights

Please select factors that make you feel more engaged when watching sponsored content:

56 responses



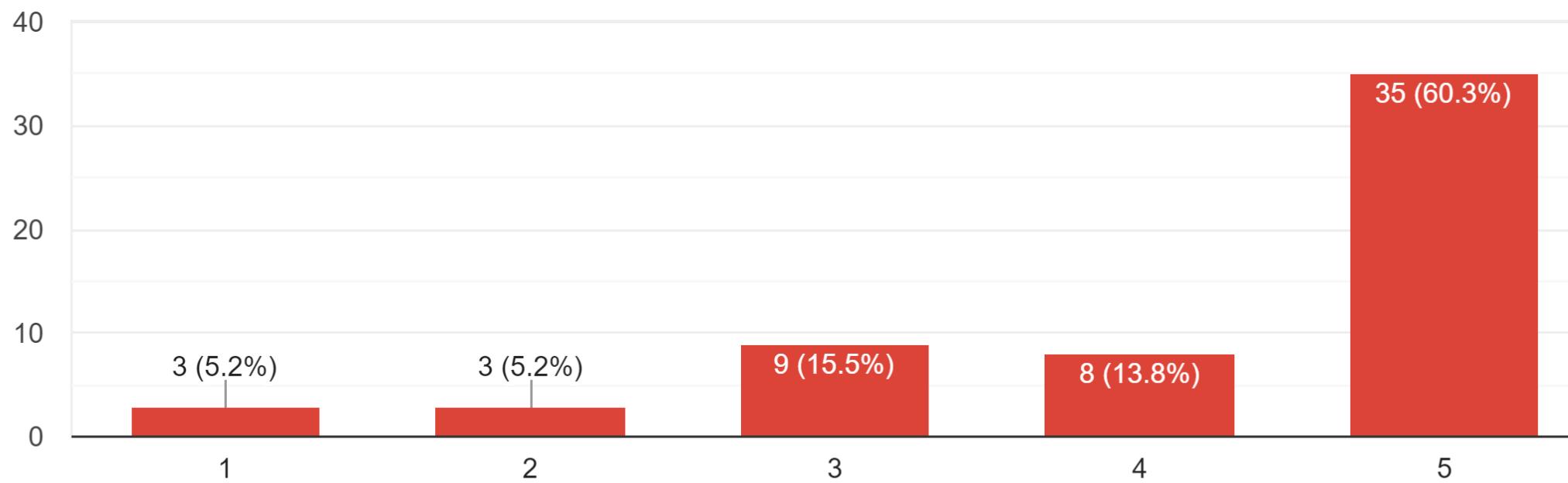
Survey Insights

When viewing sponsored content by a content creator/influencer, how important are the following to you on a scale of 1 to 5 (1 being not important at all and 5 being extremely important)?

Q1:

The content creator/influencer is known for being transparent in their feelings about the products they use.

58 responses



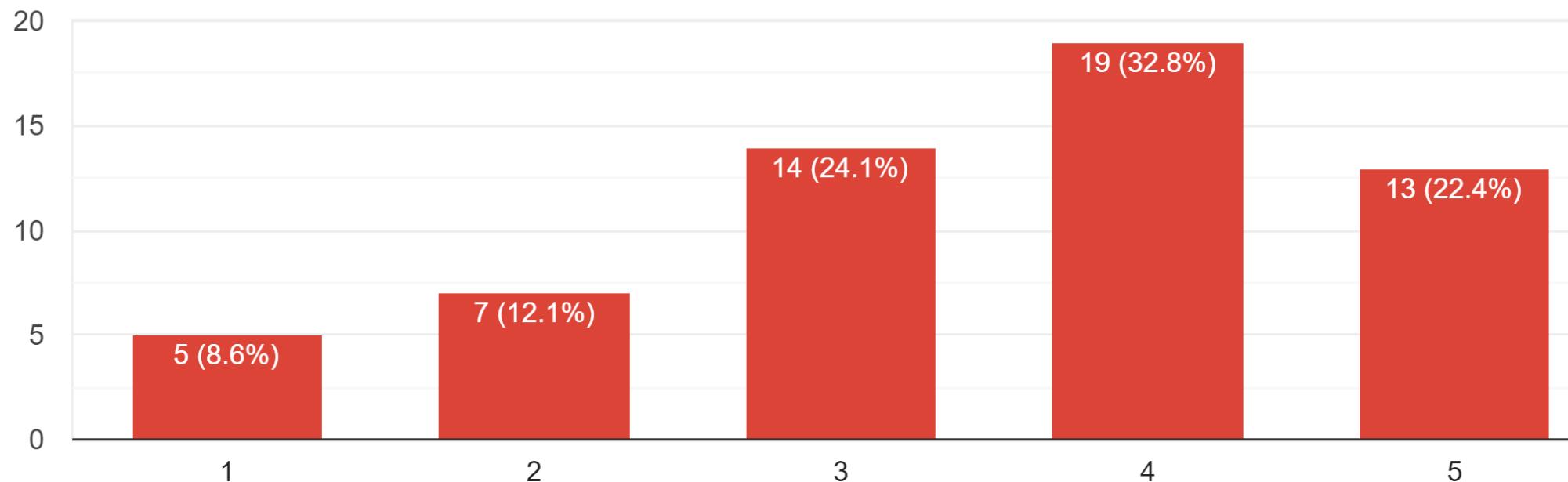
Survey Insights

When viewing sponsored content by a content creator/influencer, how important are the following to you on a scale of 1 to 5 (1 being not important at all and 5 being extremely important)?

Q2:

The product is related to the creator/influencer's domain of interest.

58 responses



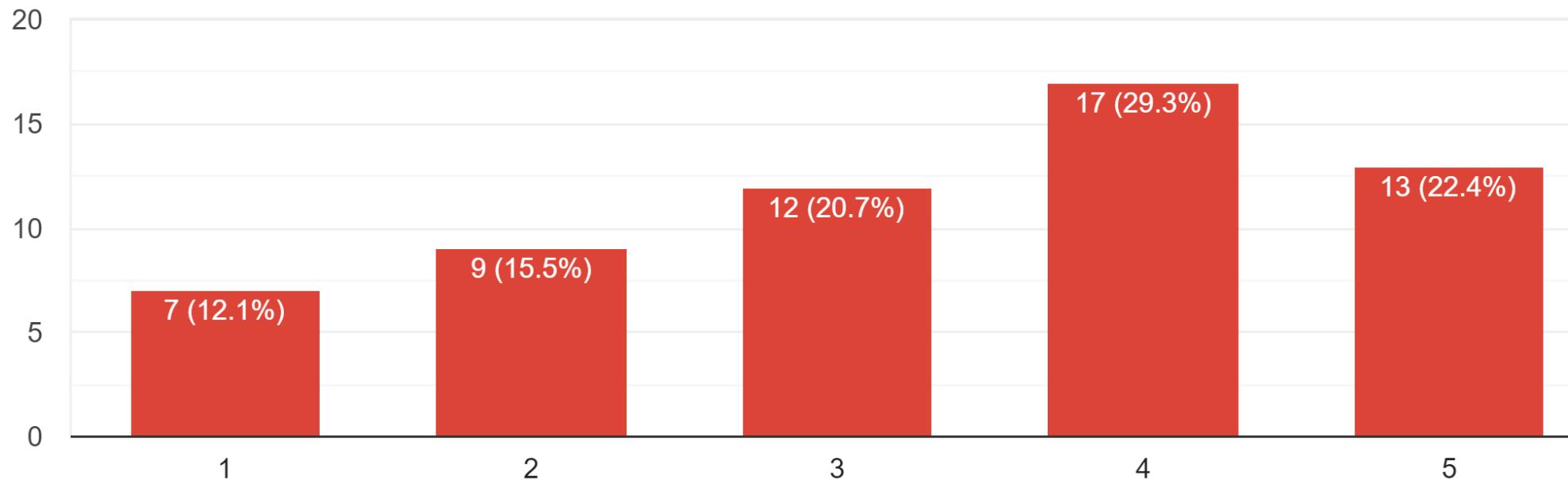
Survey Insights

When viewing sponsored content by a content creator/influencer, how important are the following to you on a scale of 1 to 5 (1 being not important at all and 5 being extremely important)?

Q3:

The content creator/influencer is the type of person I aspire to be, or the influencer portrays the type of lifestyle I aspire to have.

58 responses



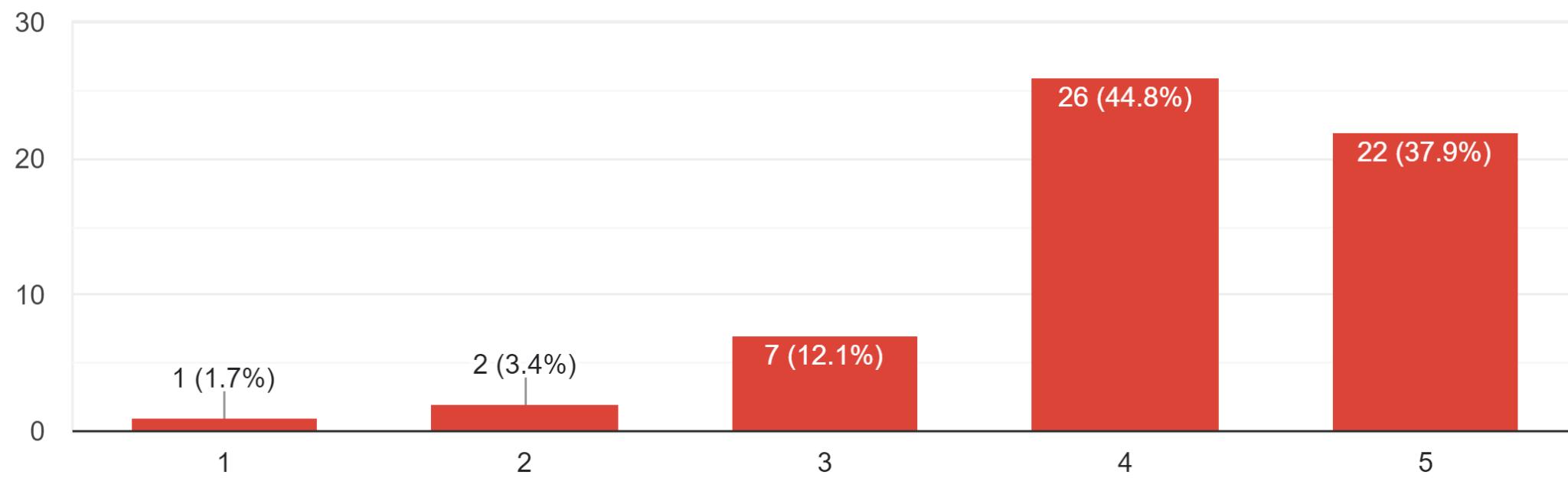
Survey Insights

When viewing sponsored content by a content creator/influencer, how important are the following to you on a scale of 1 to 5 (1 being not important at all and 5 being extremely important)?

Q4:

The content creator/influencer seems to be knowledgeable on the product, brand, or industry they are promoting.

58 responses



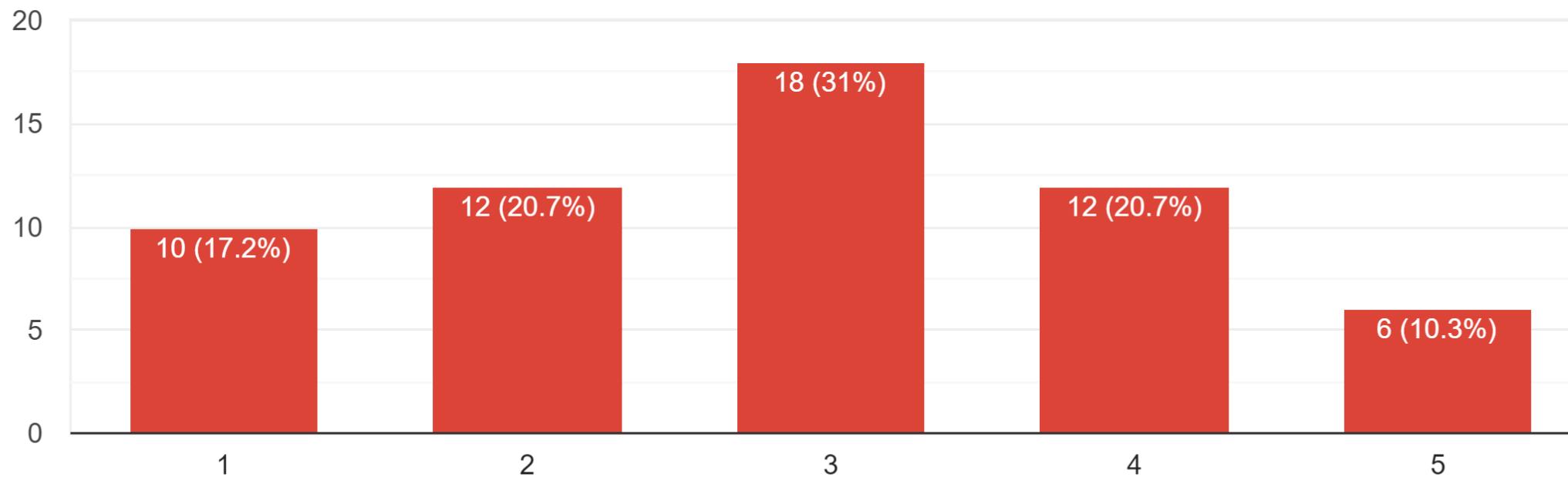
Survey Insights

When viewing sponsored content by a content creator/influencer, how important are the following to you on a scale of 1 to 5 (1 being not important at all and 5 being extremely important)?

Q5:

The product is also promoted by other content creators/influencers.

58 responses

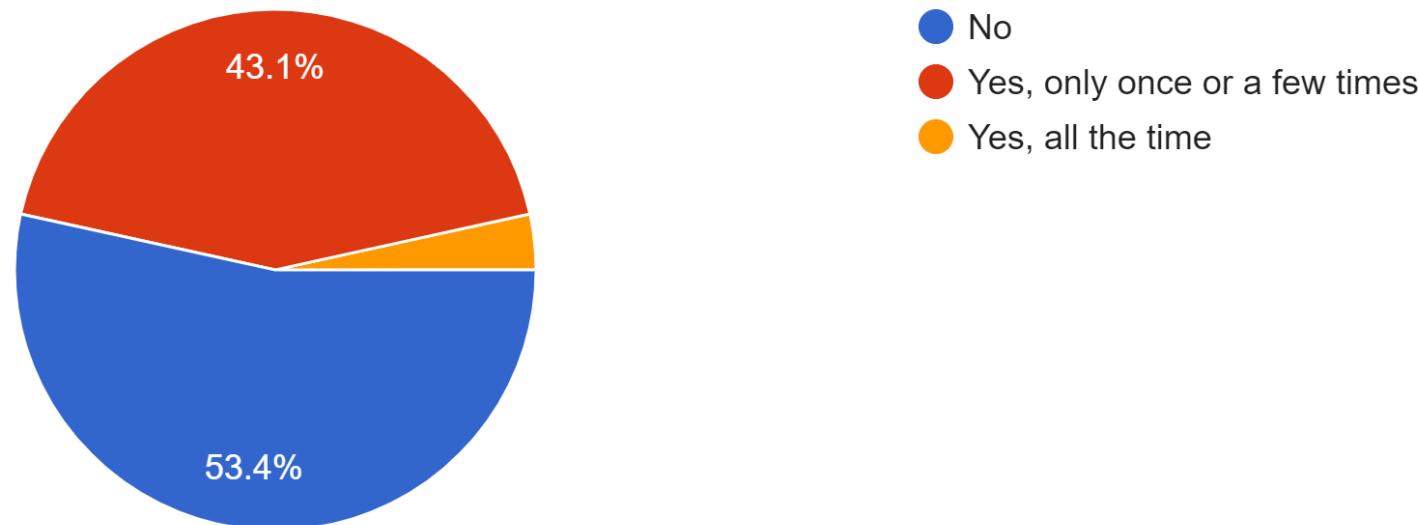


Survey Insights

Q6:

Have you ever purchased a product that was promoted by a content creator/influencer you follow?

58 responses

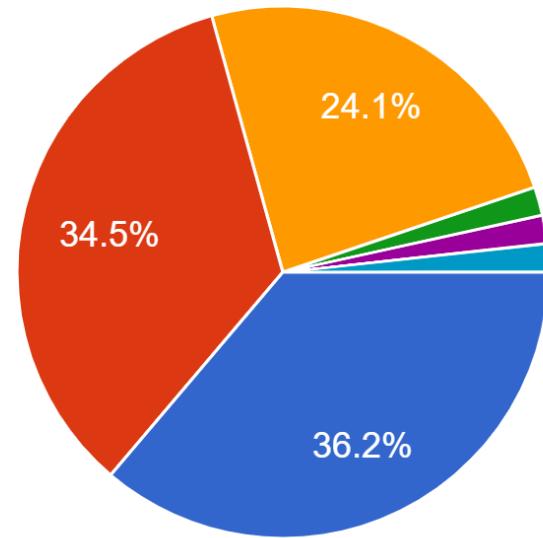


Survey Insights

Q7:

Do you think content creators/influencers should only work with brands that are in line with their content?

58 responses

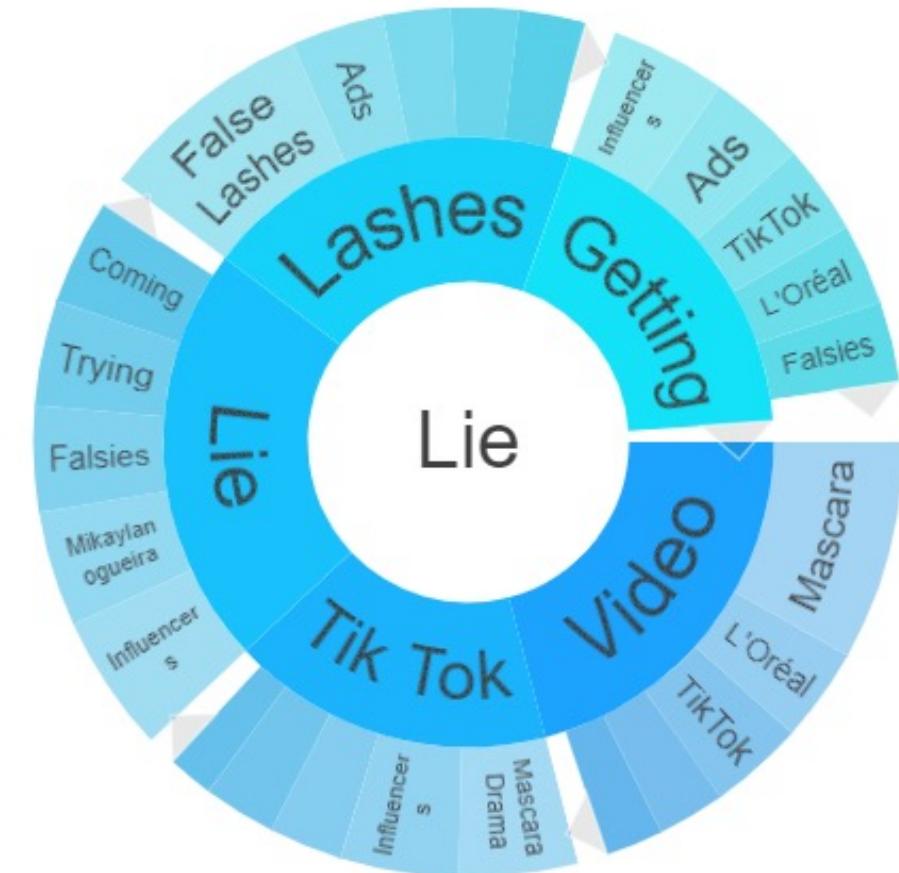


- Always; They should not promote products they have no domain knowle...
- Sometimes; They should predominantly partner with brands that align with thei...
- No; They should have the flexibility to partner with any brands of their choice...
- I think they should be able to do what they feel like doing. Sometimes it's ab...
- That or they actually actively use it
- They should work with people who rid...

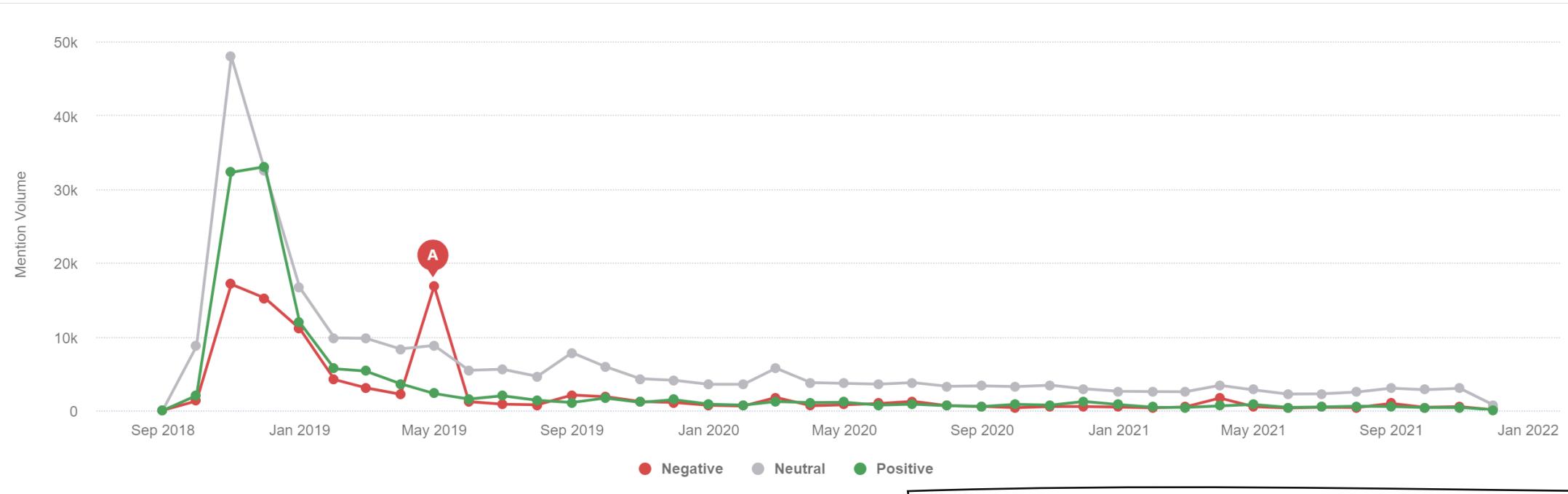
Mikayla x L'Oreal: Case Breakdown and Insights

- Mikayla Noguiera is a popular makeup influencer who grew her following through TikTok.
- On January 24th 2023, Mikayla posted a sponsored TikTok with L'Oreal reviewing the L'Oreal's Telescopic Lift mascara
- The ad was met with a largely negative reception from Mikayla's audience with the majority sentiment being negative (Anger / Sadness being the top emotions)
- From our analysis on Brandwatch, we observed Gen Z viewers did not like the ad because Mikayla **lied** in the video by using False Lashes to showcase the effectiveness of the mascara in elongating lashes.

Insight: Gen Z viewers prefer authentic feedback and reviews in Ads



Case Study: James Charles x Morphe



James Charles and Morphe split ways after sexual misconduct allegations

BEAUTY - BEAUTY NEWS

The announcement comes after the beauty influencer was accused of grooming minors on social media

19th April 2021



James Charles x Morphe: Case Breakdown and Insights

- James Charles is a gen Z make up influencer who grew his following through YouTube.
- Morphe is a make up brand, known for their influencer collaborations, make up palettes and make up brushes.
- In Nov 2018, James released a make up palette with Morphe which initially received a largely positive reaction.
- But, after James Charles fell into a social media controversy around his inappropriate behaviour around minors, the collaboration started to receive negative pushback from his audience.
- From our analysis on Brandwatch, we observed Gen Z viewers cares about the values of the creators they are supporting as opposed to other age groups.

Insight: Gen Z cares about the values and public perception surrounding a creator.

Case Study: Bella Poarch x Moncler (Additional Info)



Moncler's BubbleUp
Challenge: 2.3 billion views



The strategy achieved success by aligning creators with the specific product and target audience (Gen Z) they aimed to reach

Gen Z could express and make their voices heard

