

M A S V

The State of User-Generated Video 2024 Report

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Executive Summary

We wanted to understand the strength and scope of the user-generated video market, what's working for creators and marketers, what's resonating with consumers, along with how prevalent is the unauthorized use of user-generated video by brands and influencers.

So MASV surveyed creators, frequent social media users, and marketers/communicators to gauge the impact of user-generated video – along with how often brands or influencers steal creator content for use in their own campaigns. We also spoke with video creators, marketers, media analysts, and legal experts.

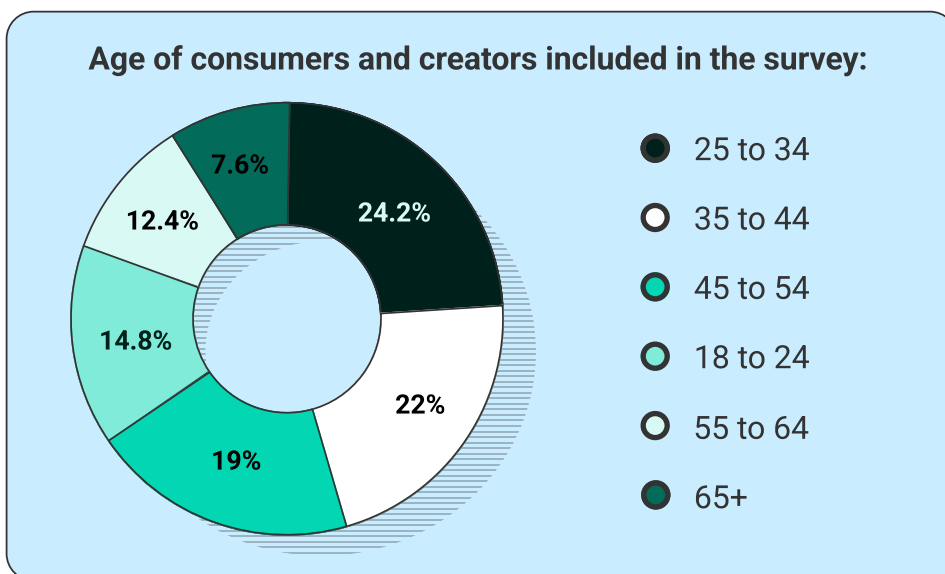
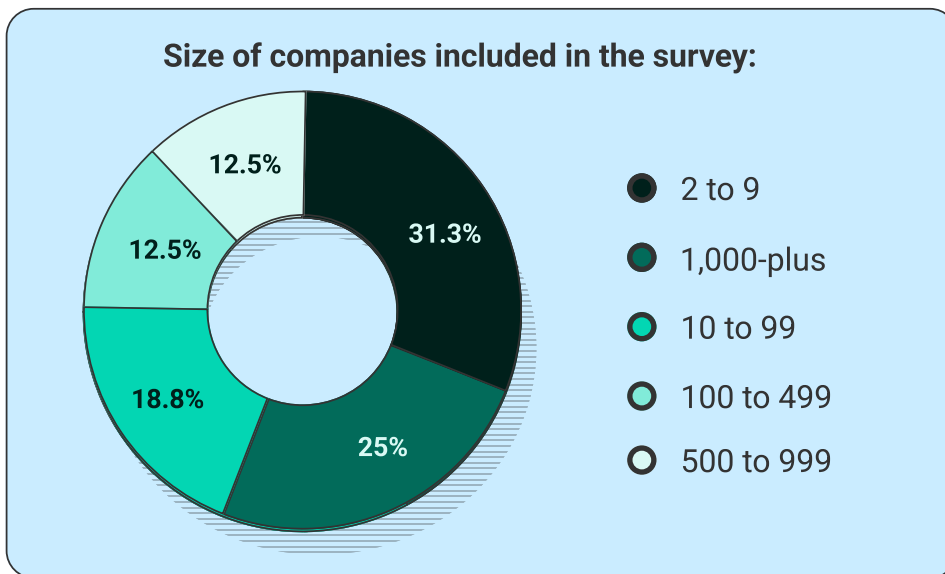
Here's What We Found:

- User-generated content (UGC) is an extremely useful marketing tool for many companies, with **85%** of consumers saying they rely on user-generated video before making a purchase.
- A further **81%** of consumers say user-generated video is more trustworthy than professionally created brand content or content from influencers, with **three-quarters** adding that they trust user-generated video more than any other type of UGC.
- In a year where marketing budgets are under pressure, **98%** of marketers say they will either increase or keep the same budget for user-generated video in 2024.
- Unauthorized UGC use, however, is pervasive: **Around half the creators we surveyed (47%)** who have had their videos used by brands or influencers in marketing or social media campaigns had their content used without permission.
 - **73%** of those weren't paid for use of their content in marketing campaigns.
 - Around **35%** weren't even credited or mentioned for use of their content.
 - And nearly **40%** of creators say they know another creator who has had their original content used by brands without permission.
- Creators overwhelmingly feel this isn't right: **95%** of creators we surveyed say brands or influencers should ask for permission before using their content. Of creators who have had their content used without permission, nearly **70%** say they were disappointed or very disappointed in the brand or influencer who used it.
- A further **68%** of creators say brands who use user-generated video without permission aren't trustworthy.
- It's imperative for brands and influencers to listen to the creator community to build strong relationships and goodwill. But at the same time, **44%** of marketers indicated that there is no risk or only a minor amount of risk in using a creator's user-generated video without permission; more than 20% indicated that their organization never or rarely gives credit to a creator when using their content.

Methodology

MASV partnered with market research firm Dynata to survey more than 500 creators, frequent social media users, and marketers/communicators in the U.S. and U.K. in early April 2024. We wanted to gauge the impact of user-generated video – along with how often brands or influencers steal creator content for use in their own campaigns.

We spoke with a wide range of consumers, creators, and companies.



Our Experts

We are also in the debt of the creators, media watchers, legal experts, and other stakeholders who graciously agreed to be interviewed for this project. Here's who we spoke with:

- **Angus Nguyen**, creator ([avatarangus](#))
- **Samuel Chen**, creator ([SupaSenpai](#))
- **Anum Rubec**, creator
- **Alex Lefkowitz**, founder of [Tasty Edits](#) (a video editing service that works primarily with creators)
- **Marc Bjerring**, co-founder of [Spivo](#) (a video editing service that works primarily with creators)
- **Mark Penner**, a trademark & patent lawyer who specializes in the acquisition, protection, and enforcement of IP rights at [Fasken Martineau DuMoulin LLP](#)
- **Jillian Robinson**, senior global public relations manager at [Dash Hudson](#) (a social media management platform that works with brands and creators)
- **James Rubec**, head of product at [Fullintel](#) (a media monitoring and analysis company that tracks social and traditional media)

What is User Generated Content?

UGC, also known as fan-generated content, is a nebulous concept. But it's often defined as video, images, audio, or text created by everyday social media users that mentions or focuses on specific brands, organizations, products, or services. This includes content that is otherwise monetized through social media content monetization, or created with promotional products.

It is often unpaid, but not always. It is created by individual social media or internet users and uploaded to social media (such as TikTok, Instagram, Facebook, and X) or other websites.

Sometimes UGC comes in the form of a product review. Other times it's an unboxing. Other times it's fashion or makeup advice, video game tutorials, step-by-step instructions on changing the oil in your lawn mower, or original commentary on last night's professional sports match.

UGC can also appear as images, text, and audio. This report's primary focus is user-generated video.

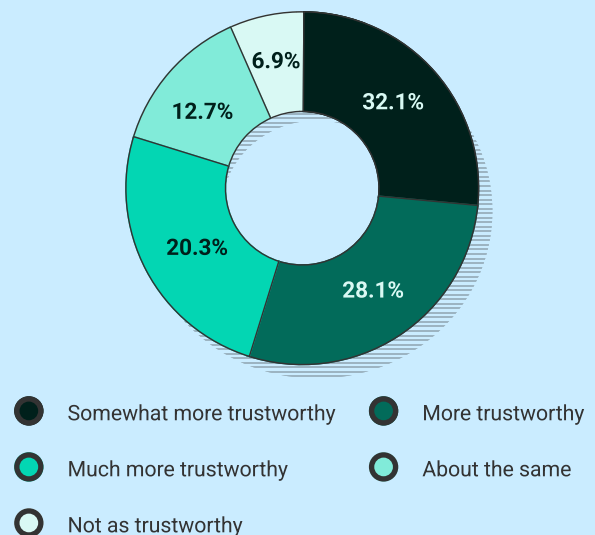
Who Creates User-Generated Video?

Creators of user-generated video almost all start their creator journey the same way: Creating brand-specific content about products, services, or organizations they are passionate about.

That's an important distinction because one of the most important elements of UGC is consumer trust. In our survey, most consumers said they consider user-generated video more trustworthy than official content produced by brands.

Dash Hudson's Social Media Trends Report also showed that creators drive 16x more engagement than brands on Instagram.

Consumers: How trustworthy do you consider brand-specific user generated video compared to official brand content?



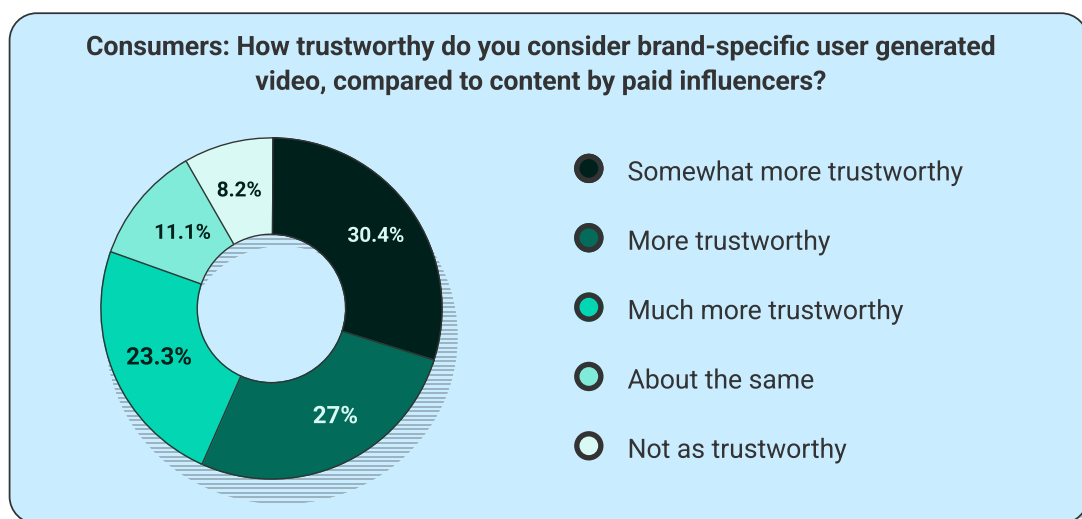
"The key to it all is that it needs to be authentic. It can't seem like they're shelling out or getting paid for it on the side." - **Alex Lefkowitz, Founder, Tasty Edits**

"If it feels like I'm selling the item in the video, a lot of people get turned off in the first five seconds. But if I say that I found the item and it looks organic, then it does much better." - **Samuel Chen, creator (SupaSenpai)**

Creators vs. Influencers

Creators are also somewhat different from influencers, who are often defined as social media personalities with large followings and expertise in a specific topic who usually make money from paid influencer marketing.

Our survey showed that consumers generally trust organic UGC over influencer marketing.

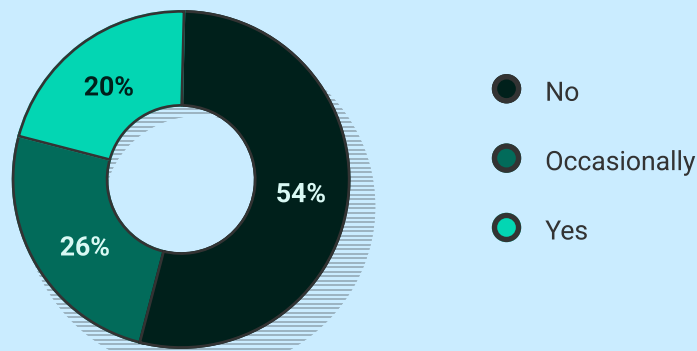


Gifted Products and Paid Videos

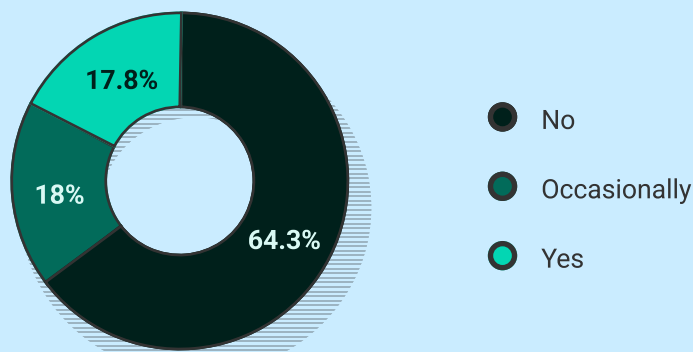
Unpaid creators who eventually get a brand's attention often get approached to produce sponsored videos or are offered free products in exchange for videos.

Most of our surveyed marketers and creators hadn't utilized gifted products in their videos, but a solid minority did.

Marketers: Have you ever provided free products or services in exchange for content from a video creator?



Creators: Have you ever been given free products or services in exchange for creating content for a brand or other organization?



This can be a very fine line to ride for creators who want to keep their authenticity but – understandably – also want to earn money from all their hard work creating videos. In some cases, they'll also pay to promote their videos through digital ads.

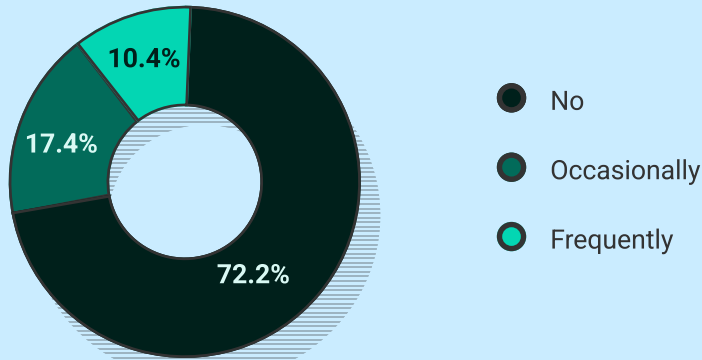
Many successful creators ultimately end up producing a mix of free and paid/ sponsored content. That was the case for all of the creators we spoke with – many of whom said they have more success, in terms of views and engagement, with their unpaid videos over overtly sponsored content.

"Most brands will reach out to me and say, 'You have the freedom to do the video in your style for your audience.' But some companies have very strict guidelines. And so I'm not super happy with the videos that I've contracted to put out with them, because they're basically ads." - Angus Nguyen, creator (avatarangus)

The fact that a video is paid must be disclosed on most social media or video platforms.

"What we really try to impress upon our customers is to give as loose guidelines as possible, and let the creators do what they do best – which is to create entertaining content." - **Jillian Robinson, Dash Hudson**

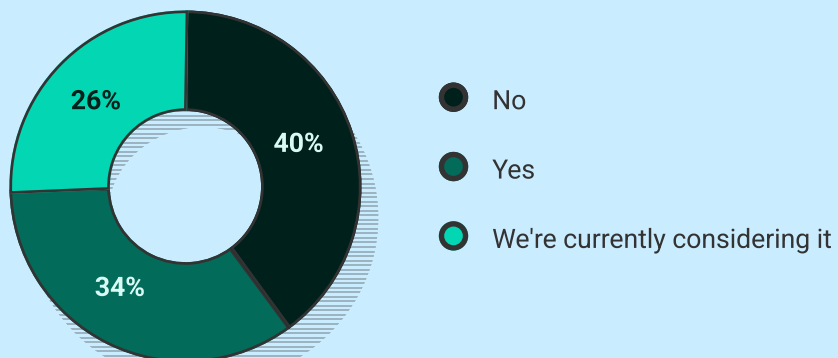
Creators: Do you ever get paid directly by organizations or brands to create videos for them?



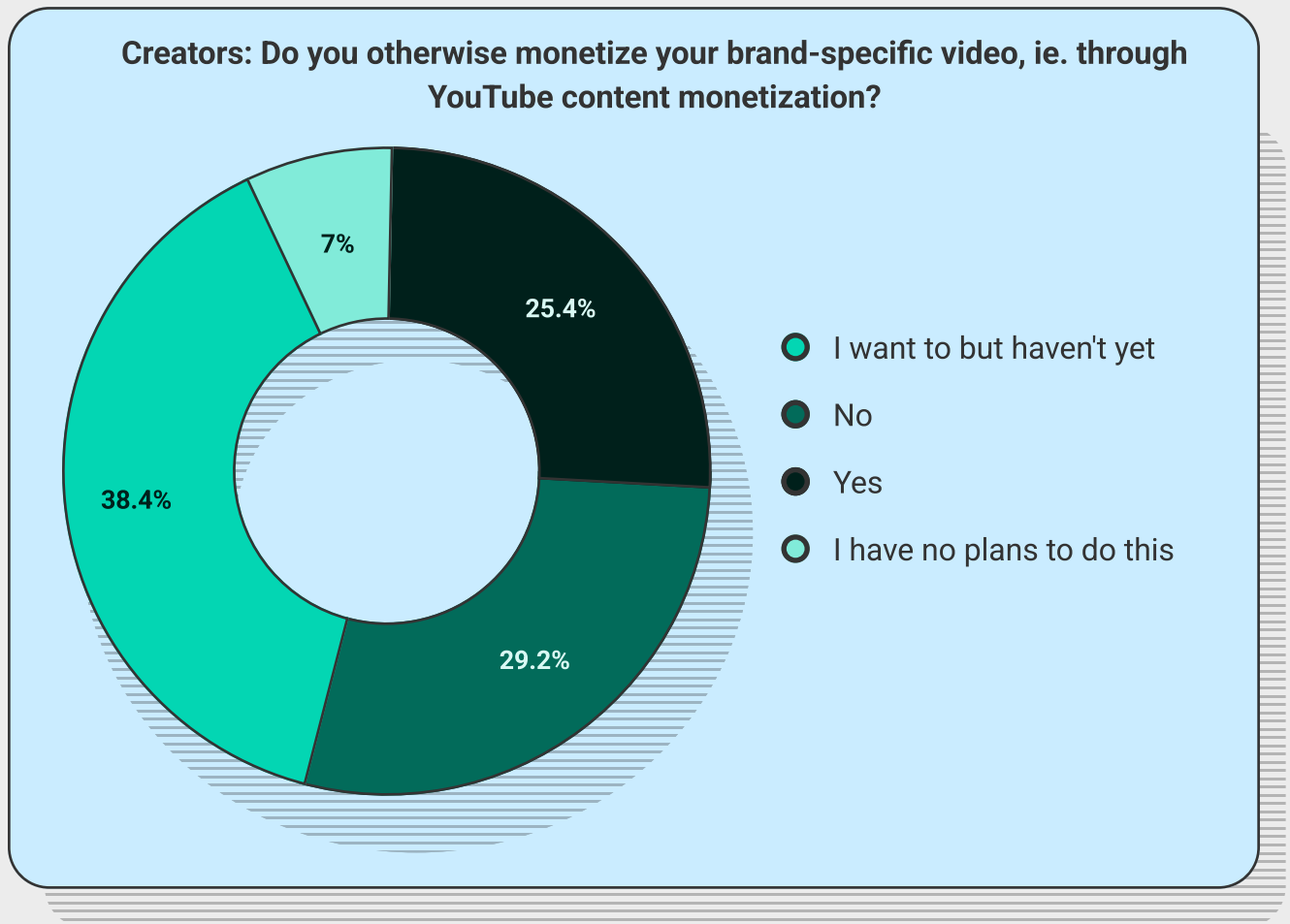
"I think (paid sponsorship) actually hurts more often than it helps. Because a brand will say, 'I want you to say specifically that this is the best sneaker you've ever worn in your life.' And it's just very clear that it's not authentic."

- **Alex Lefkowitz, Founder, Tasty Edits**

Marketers: Have you ever started formally working with an online creator after they created an unpaid user-generated video talking about your brand, products, or services?



Other UGC creators monetize their videos in other ways, such as running advertisements in accordance with YouTube's content monetization policies. YouTube channels need to reach 1,000 subscribers and 4,000 hours of viewing time in the last 12 months to earn money this way.



Which Industries Use User-Generated Video?

UGC is big business, with the global UGC software platform market expected to reach more than \$70B by 2031 (good for a sizzling 31.6% compound annual growth rate).

The creator economy – the creator and influencer business ecosystem – is even bigger, with a market value of \$250B in 2024, according to Goldman Sachs, and the expectation that it will balloon to \$480B by 2027.

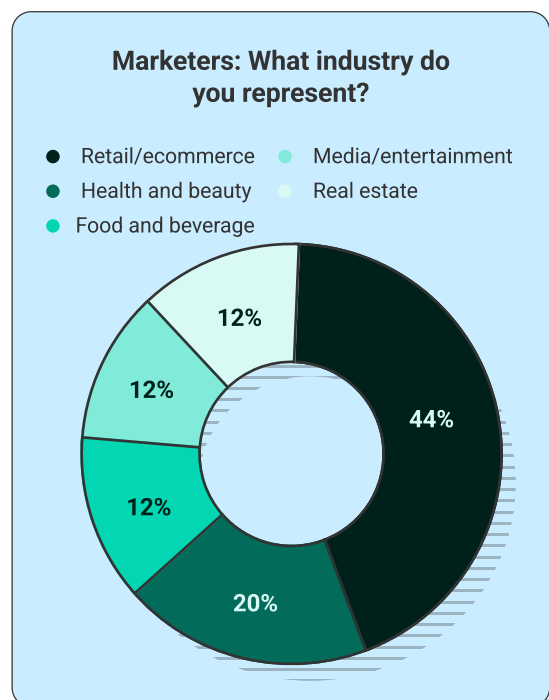
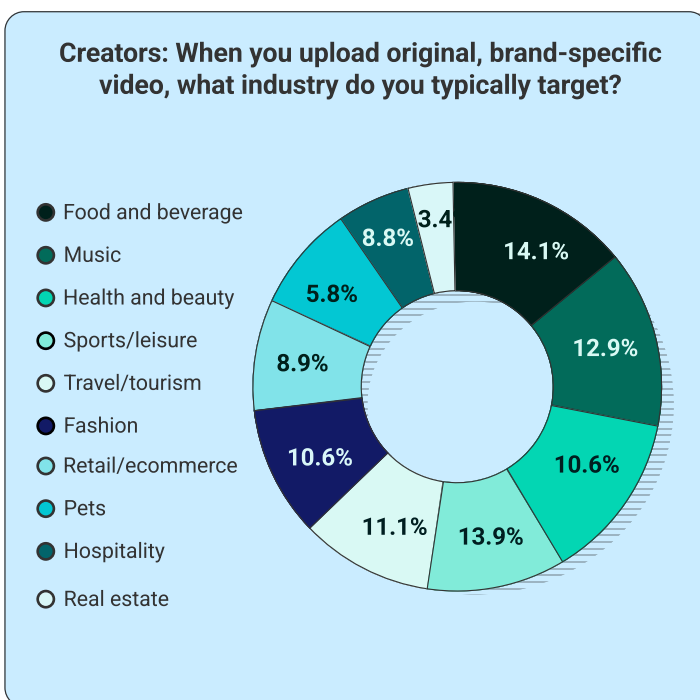
Part of that economy also includes video editing companies, such as Tasty Edits and Spivo, along with influencer agencies such as IMA, The Influence Agency, and Influencer, and Dash Hudson (which also offers a creator software platform).

"User generated video is the creator economy. It's what made the creator economy a thing." - Alex Lefkowitz, Founder, Tasty Edits

Most UGC software tools specialize in matching brands with creators or influencers in their space and measuring their effectiveness, and include names like Billo, Tint, and Upfluence.

The Top Industries for User-Generated Video

Our survey indicated a wide range of preferred business verticals for creators. The lion's share of marketers we surveyed who utilize UGC work in the retail/ecommerce and health/beauty industries.



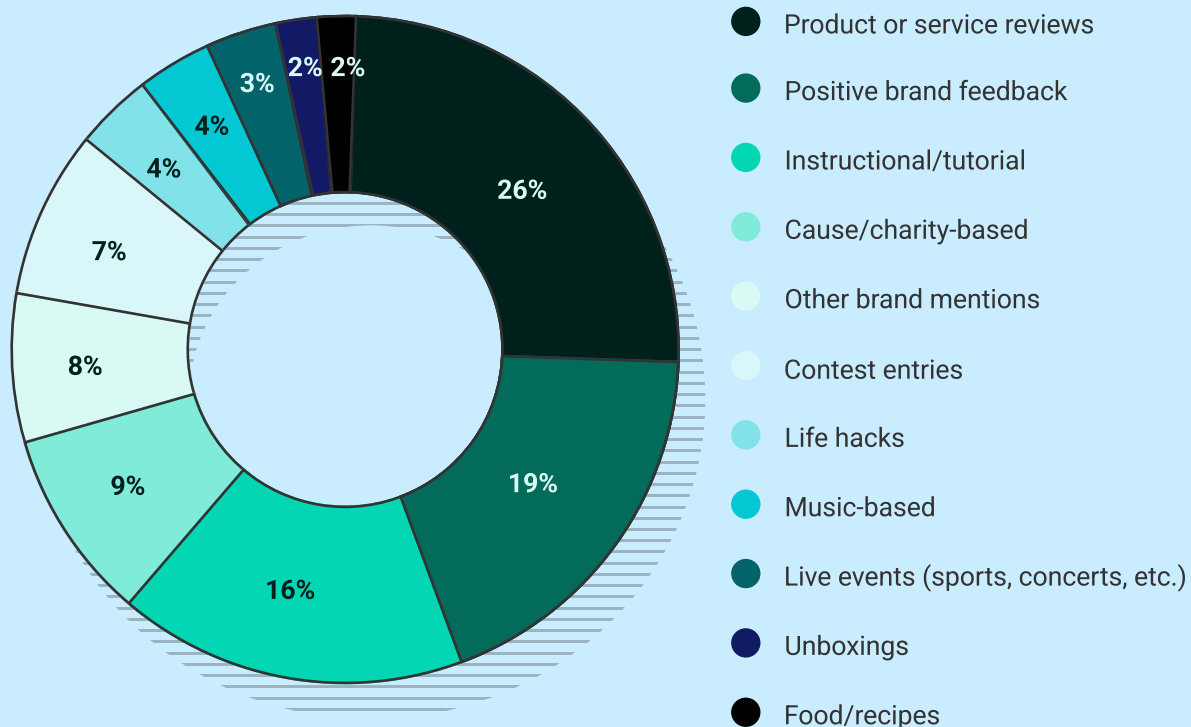
What Types of User-Generated Video Do Creators Make?

Creators and marketers produce and leverage a very wide range of user-generated video types, including product and service reviews, positive brand feedback, tutorials, music-based videos, and videos containing live sports or concert footage.

"I try to incorporate a lot of brands or products within something that I naturally do already. A lot of times it's a 'get ready with me' style of video, where I'm sharing different makeup products that I use. - Anum Rubec, creator

Creators, however, should always take note that producing negative product reviews could potentially give you legal trouble if the company can prove your review is malicious or defamatory.

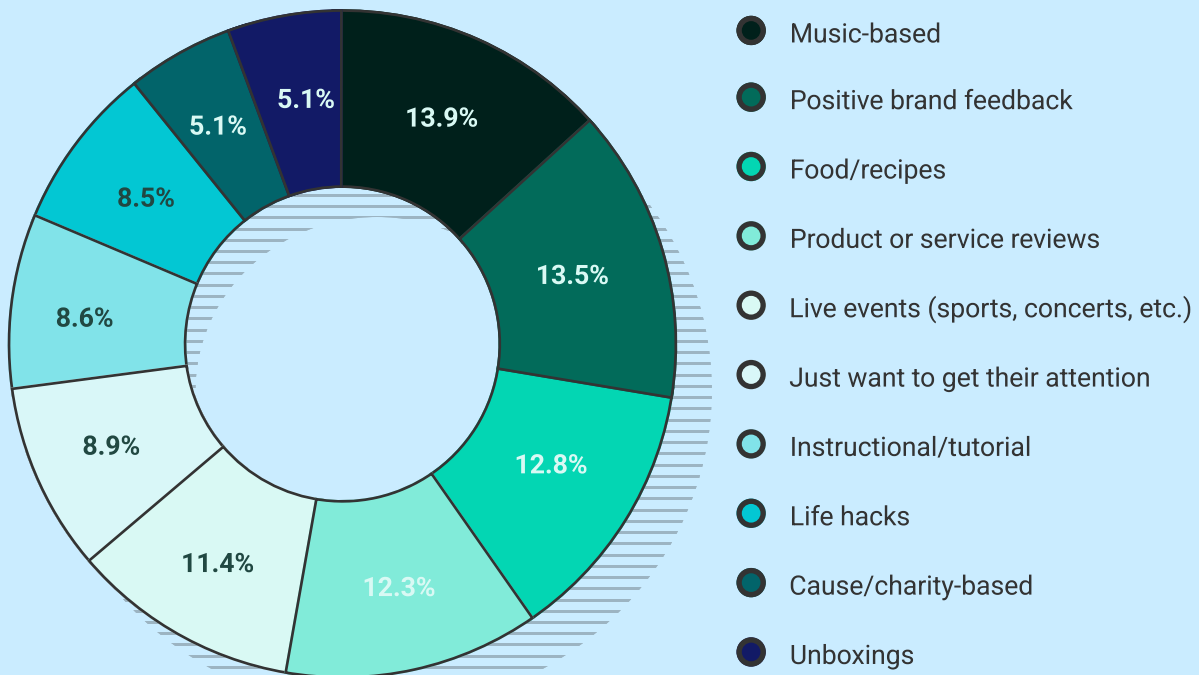
Marketers: What kind of user-generated video do you typically work with to drive engagement?



"These days, UGC is often more likely to happen in cause-based initiatives. The direct value is that you have people who want to share their story, and are motivated to use their story to help promote the cause that these organizations are driving."

- James Rubec, Head of Product, Fullintel

Creators: When you upload original, brand-specific video, what is your typical style of video?



Which Video-Making Tools Do Creators Prefer?

Everyone has a set of favorite tools, and video creators are no different. Most of our survey respondents named the usual suspects: Their smartphone, computer workstation, and good lighting (left out of the chart below).

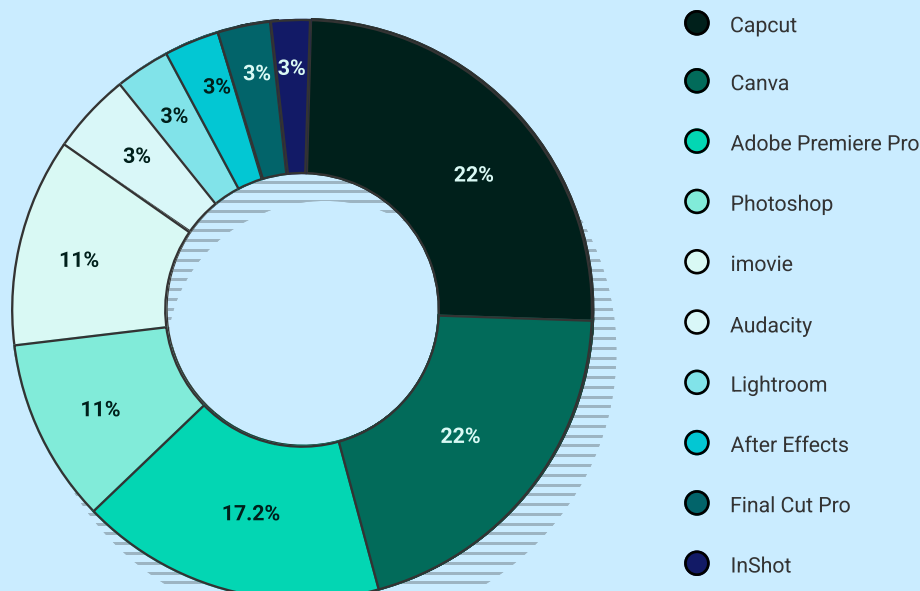
Free or relatively inexpensive SaaS video editing software such as Capcut, Canva, and iMovie, along with professional tools such as Premiere Pro, Photoshop, and Final Cut Pro were also prevalent.

Social platforms like Instagram and TikTok, for example, have rolled out built-in creator tools over the years.

"Once you get to a certain point (on Instagram) the professional dashboard adds new tools. So the more followers you get, the more tools are added. And once you get to a certain number of followers you have access to the Creator Marketplace."

- Angus Nguyen, creator (avatarangus)

Creators: Name up to three video-making tools you can't live without.



Some creators also named AI tools such as Invideo AI, Lensa, Leonardo AI, and VideoProc as indispensable for their workflows.

Creators named plenty of low-tech tools, as well, from tripods and camera sticks to old-fashioned coffee mugs to hold a smartphone as steady as possible when making recipe and food videos. Now that's innovation!

"I'll literally put my phone in a mug to hold it and smooth out the shot. Other creators use a napkin at the bottom of their phone to slide it along the table."

- **Angus Nguyen, creator (avatarangus)**

Which Platforms Are Most Popular for User-Generated Video ?

While TikTok has gotten the most press lately as the place to be for user-generated video, the creators we surveyed indicated they use other platforms slightly more often.

Some creators and marketers indicated they use platforms such as Pinterest, Vimeo, X, or Snapchat, but these were dwarfed by mentions of most other platforms.

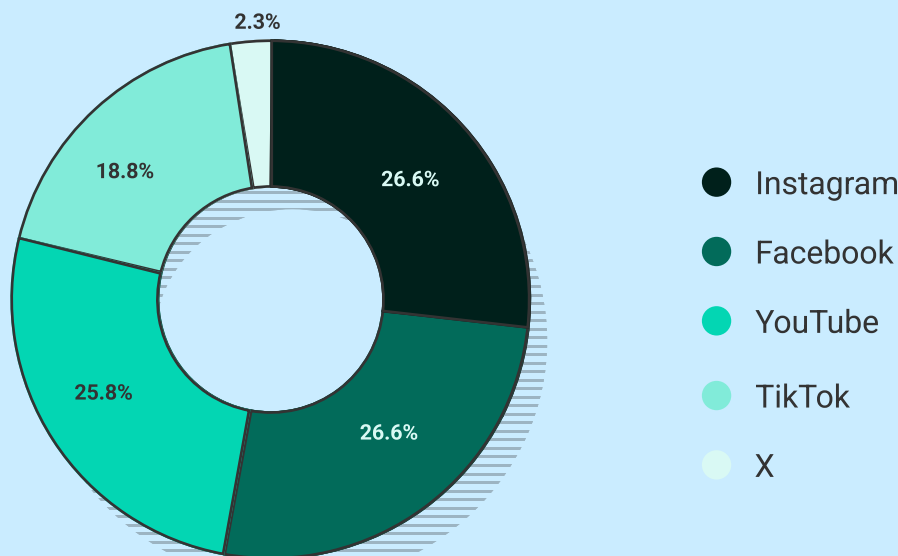
"A lot of creators will often pivot to what is the most exciting platform at the moment, because it's very, very tough to create content for every single platform."

- **Anum Rubec, creator**

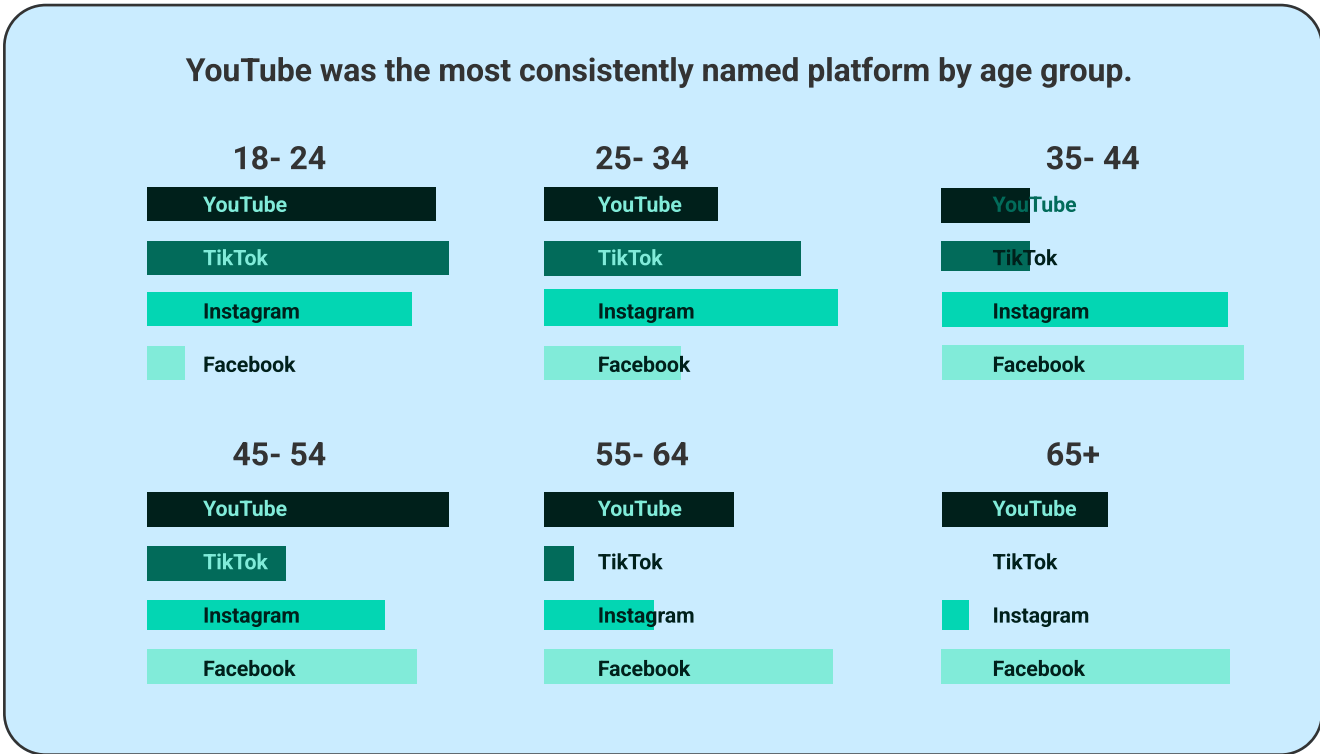
"TikTok punishes you if you're not successful on your first ten videos, so for me the platform I'm very most comfortable with is YouTube. That's because I make videos because I like it, not because I have a schedule. This is just a hobby."

- **Samuel Chen (SupaSenpai)**

Creators: What platform do you use to upload video the most often?



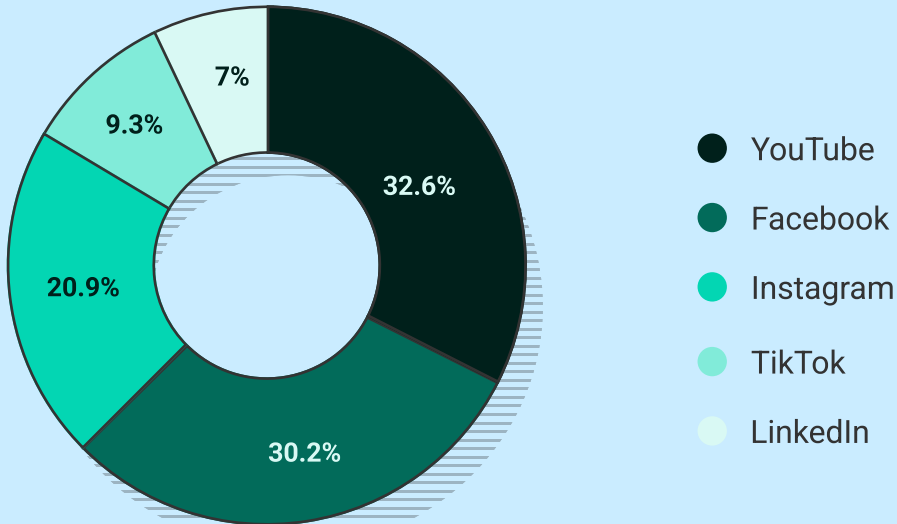
Creators' preferred social media platforms were heavily segmented by age, however, with younger creators naming TikTok and Instagram and older creators preferring Facebook.



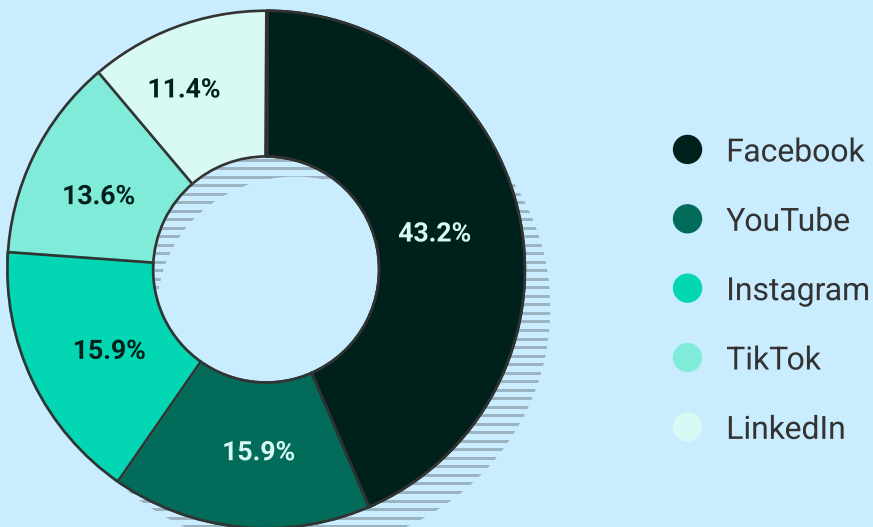
“One thing that creators have to do on Instagram and TikTok is we have to interact with similar content. If we don't do that, then brands are probably not going to see my videos. They're not going to see my profile. So we actually have homework to do every day.” - Angus Nguyen (avatarangus)

Meanwhile, Facebook and YouTube were the most consistently named platforms by marketers for both brand awareness and to drive sales.

Marketers: What platform do you prefer when leveraging user generated video to build brand awareness?



Marketers: Which social network or community drives sales the most when you post user generated video?

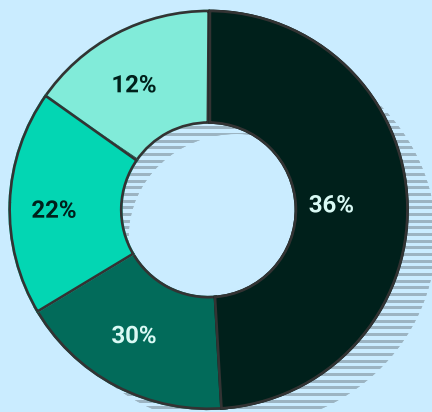


How Important is User Generated Video For Brands?

User-generated video is an increasingly important weapon in any marketing team's arsenal, with most marketers surveyed indicating they've only started using it relatively recently.

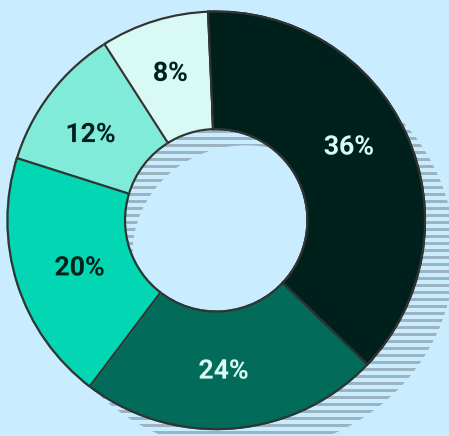
More than **65%** indicated user-generated video was either very or somewhat important to their overall marketing strategy. However, it's also worth noting that **20%** of the marketers we surveyed don't leverage it at all.

Marketers: How important is user generated video for your overall marketing strategy, compared to professional brand video?



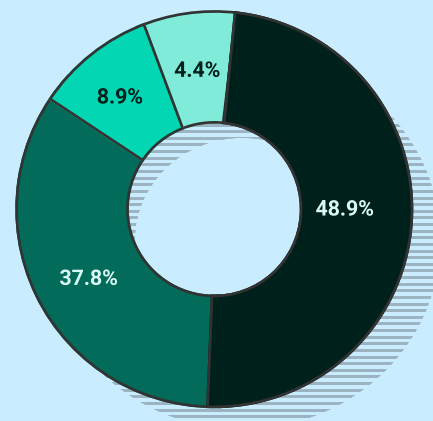
- Very important
- Somewhat important
- Not very important
- Totally unimportant

Marketers: How long has your company been leveraging user generated video?



- 1-2 years
- 2-5 years
- 6-10 years
- We don't leverage user generated video
- Just started recently

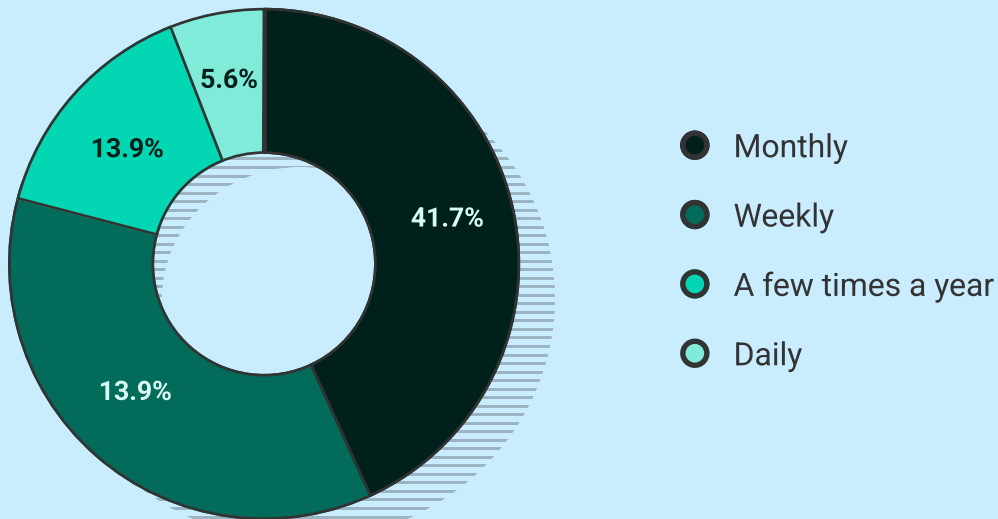
Marketers: If you use user generated video, what is your primary goal?



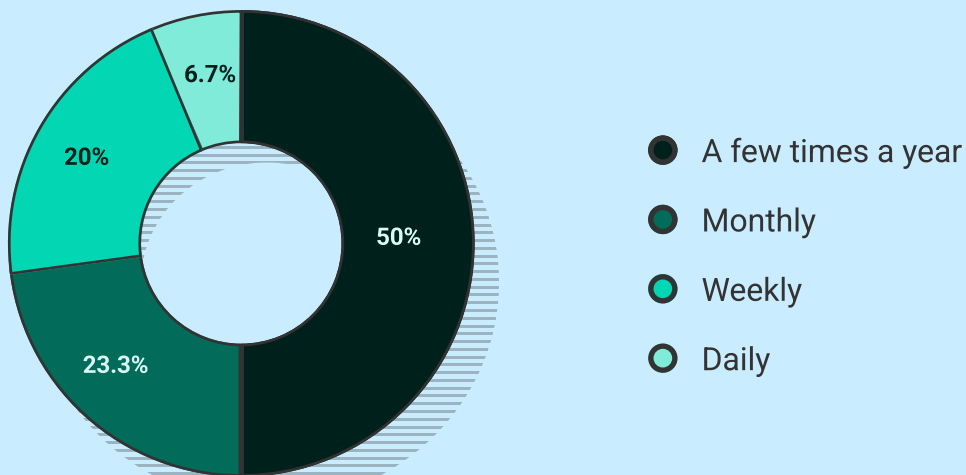
- Brand awareness/PR
- Generating leads and driving sales
- Social media engagement/followers
- Product education/adoption

More than **60%** of marketers in our survey who utilize user-generated video indicated that they leverage unpaid user-generated video either monthly or weekly. At the same time, around **40%** of all marketers surveyed said they never engage with paid creators.

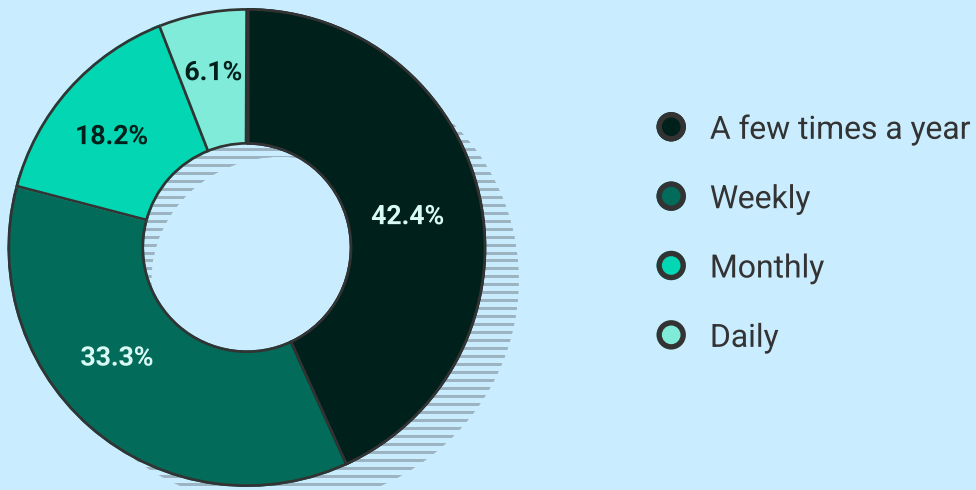
Marketers: If you use user-generated video, how often do you leverage unpaid video in your marketing campaigns?



Marketers: If you use user-generated video, how often do you work with paid online creators to create user-generated video for your brand?

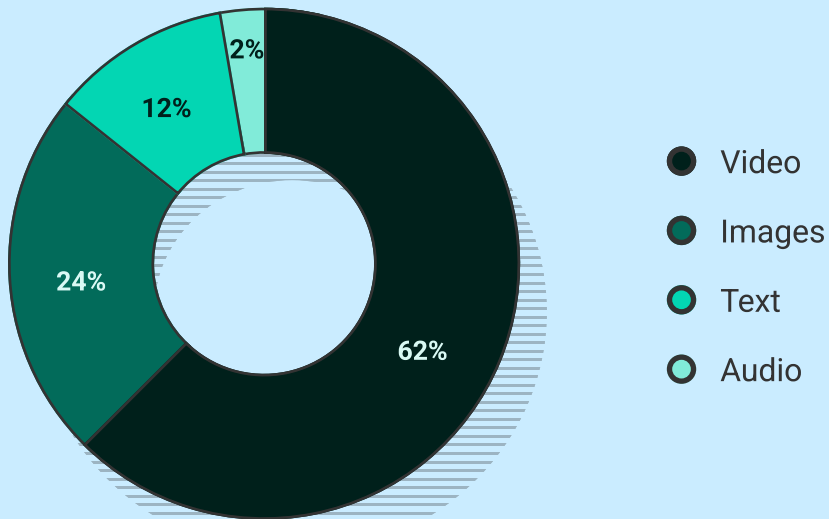


How often do you actively solicit your audience for user-generated video?

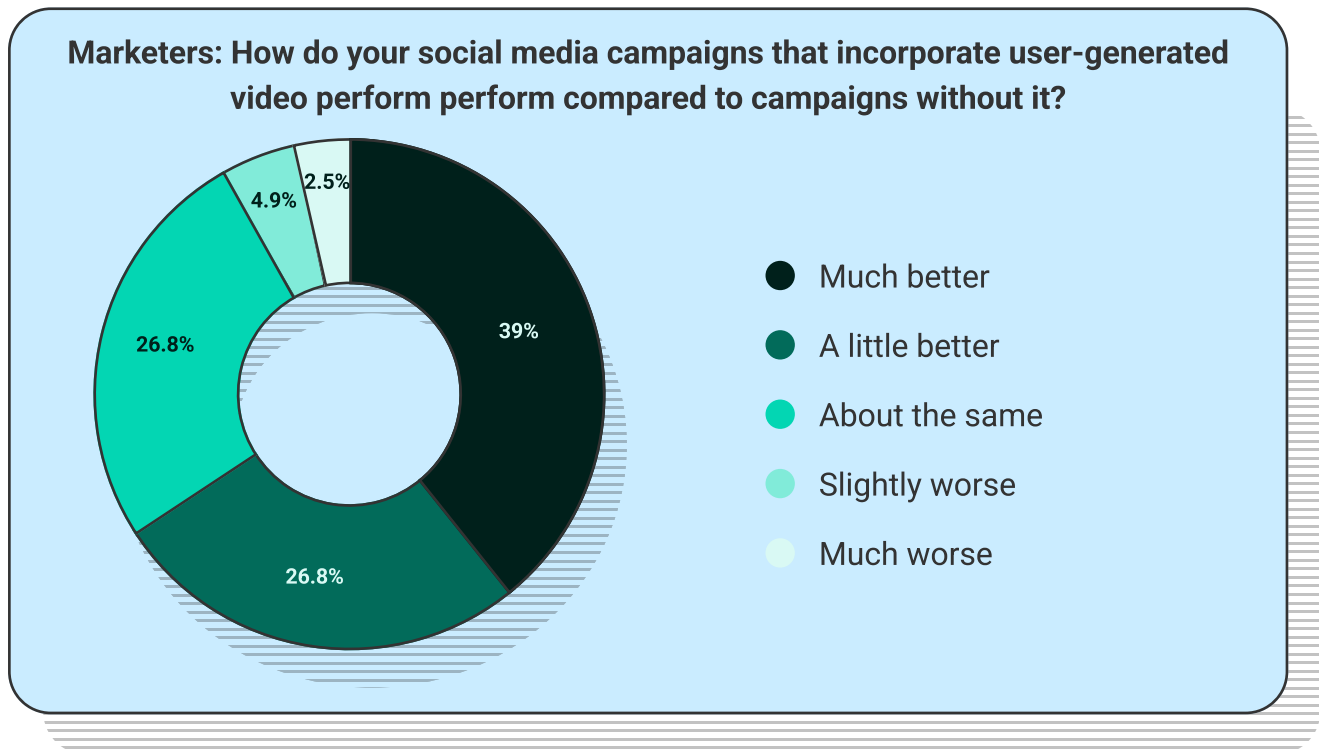


Video and images were identified by marketers as the most impactful user-generated medium.

Marketers: What type of UGC has the most impact with your target audience, in terms of user engagement?

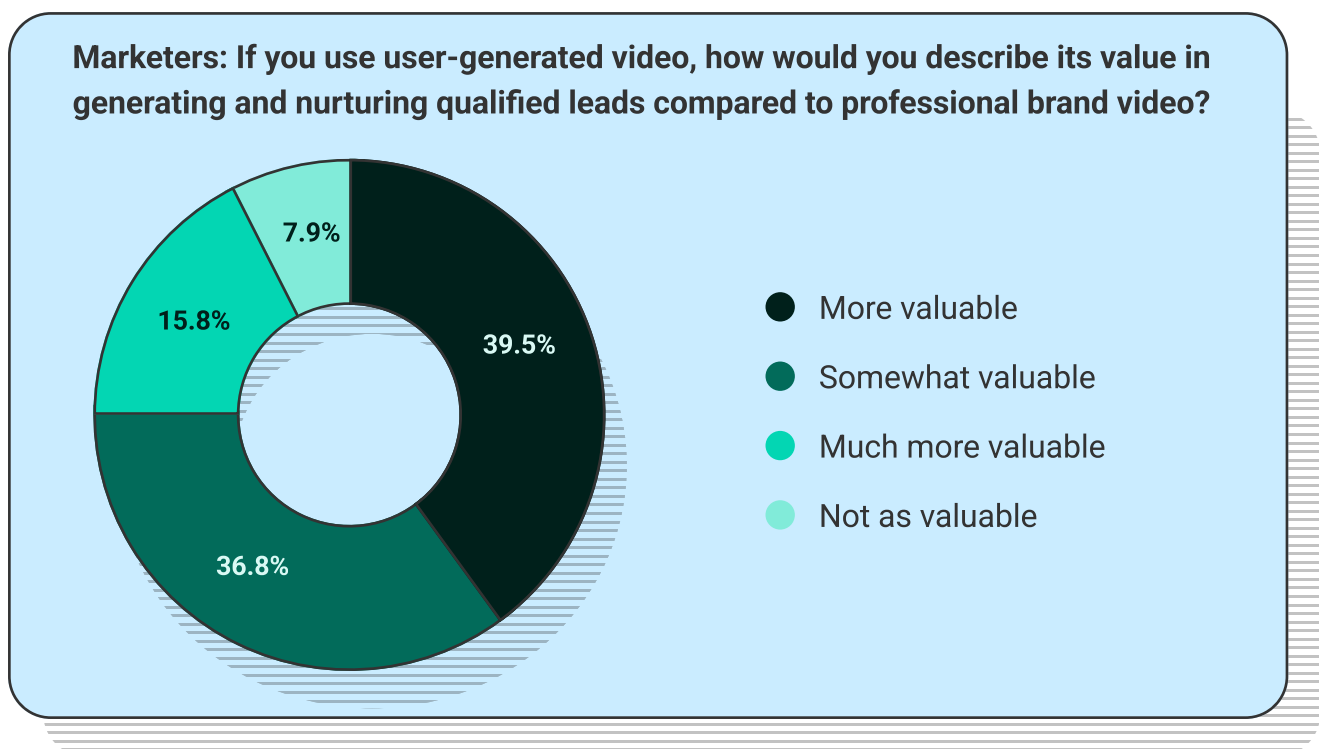


Slightly more than **65%** of marketers indicated that their social media campaigns involving user-generated video perform better. Only seven percent said they perform worse.

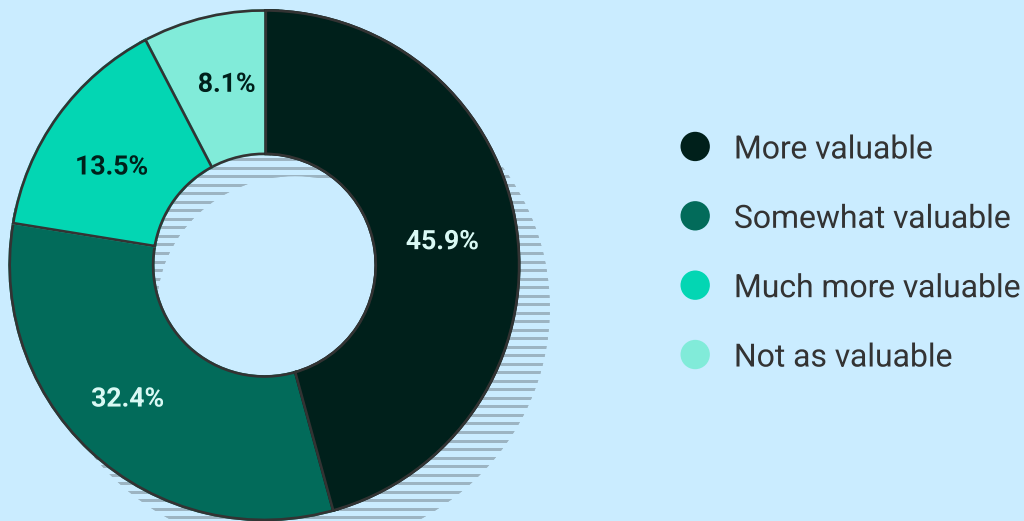


Marketers were largely in agreement that user-generated video’s value for generating and nurturing leads compared to professional brand video. A combined **71%** of respondents described it as either more valuable or much more valuable for generating and nurturing leads.

That number dropped slightly for converting leads into customers, however, at a combined **58%**.

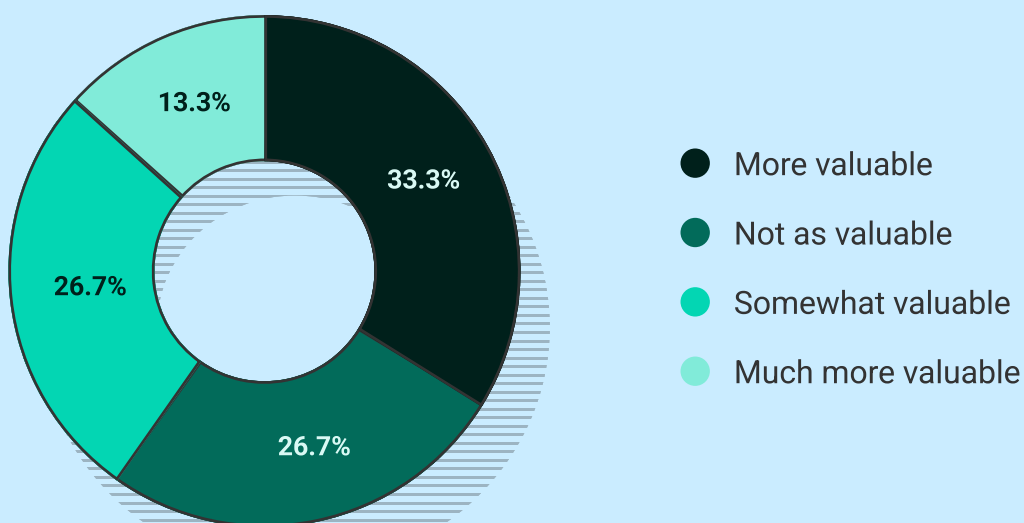


Marketers: How would you describe user-generated video's value in converting leads into customers, compared to professional brand video?



Marketers were somewhat divided about the value of user-generated video compared to paid influencer content, with a combined **46%** naming it as more valuable and **27%** saying it's not as valuable.

Marketers: How would you rank the value of user-generated video created by unpaid users compared to paid influencer content?

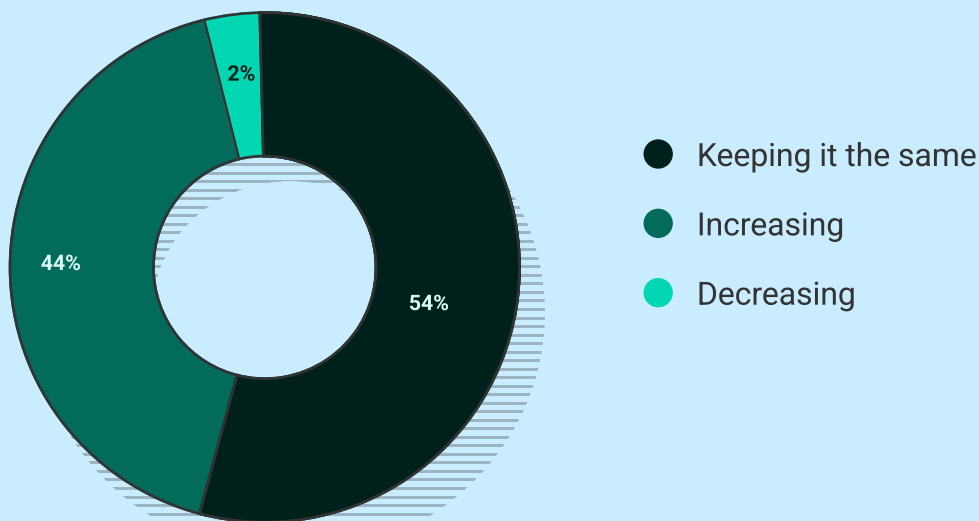


How Do Brands Use User-Generated Video?

It's not a secret that marketing budgets have fallen as the Covid hangover hits many companies' bottom lines and the economy slows.

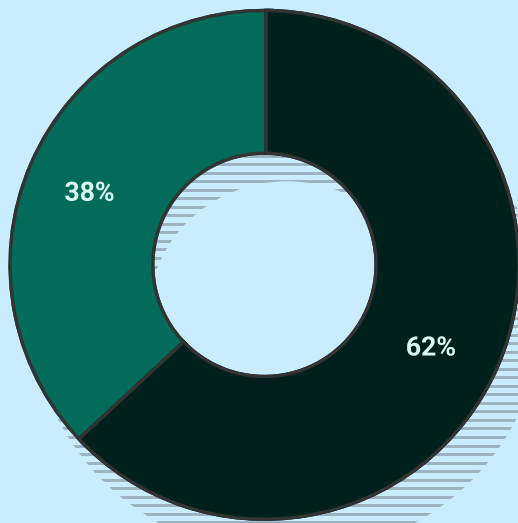
Notably, however, most of our marketers indicated they would either keep their user-generated video budget the same or increase it in 2024.

Marketers: If you use user generated video, have you or do you plan to increase or decrease your budget around it in 2024?



Most marketers also indicated enthusiasm for expanding their use of user-generated video this year. Not a single marketer we surveyed indicated they want to use less user-generated video than last year.

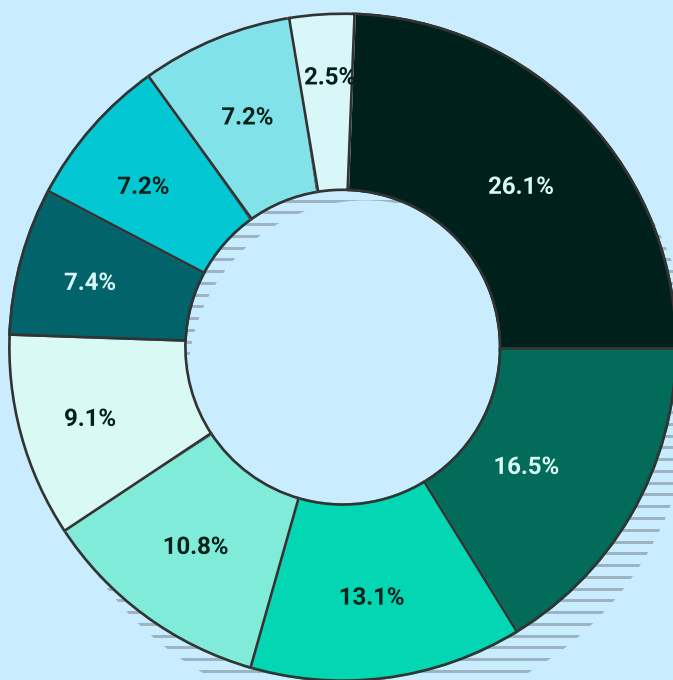
Marketers: If you use user generated video, how would you describe your plans for it in 2024?



- We want to use more user generated video
- We'll keep things about the same as last year

According to creators, the majority of marketer repost user-generated content on the same or another social media platform, but a significant number also used it as their own video without permission.

Creators: How did the organization, brand, or influencer use your video?

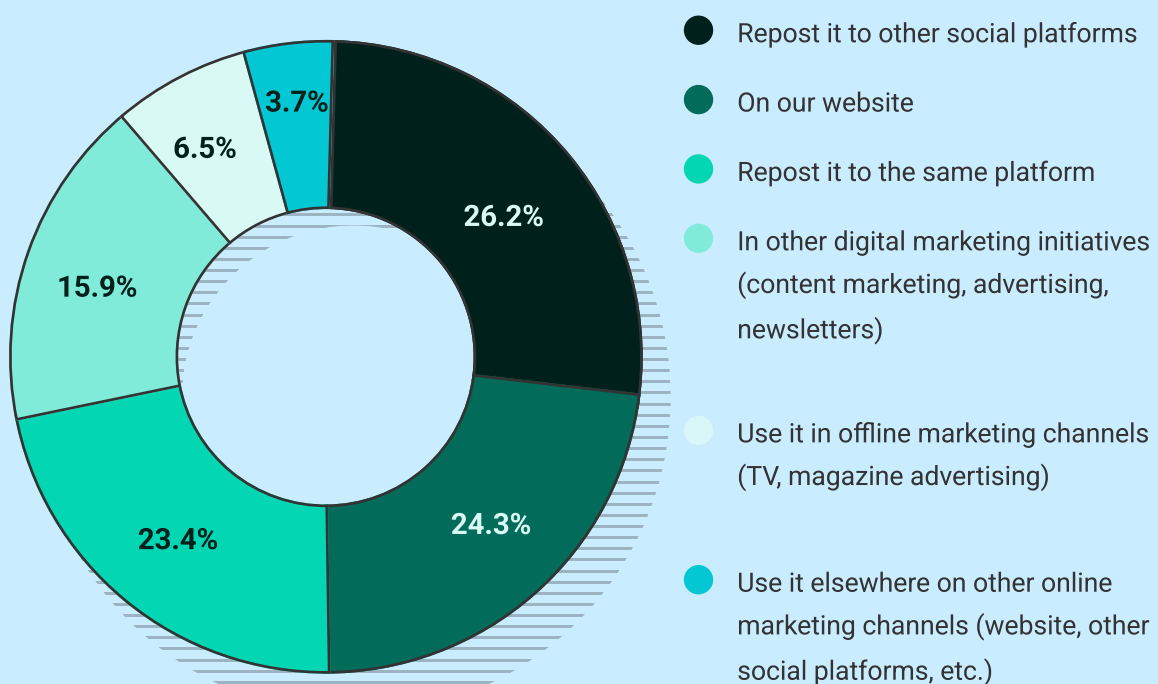


- Reposted it on the same platform
- Reposted it on another platform
- Used it as their own video without permission
- Used it in a contest
- Used it in news coverage
- Added it to a collage of other UGC
- Replayed it during a live game, concert, or other event
- Used it in other marketing or advertising materials
- I'm on their website!

"You've got to be really clear and upfront with the creators of how their content is going to be used. If you're using a (UGC) platform, that means making sure that whatever requirements you have are within their terms and conditions."

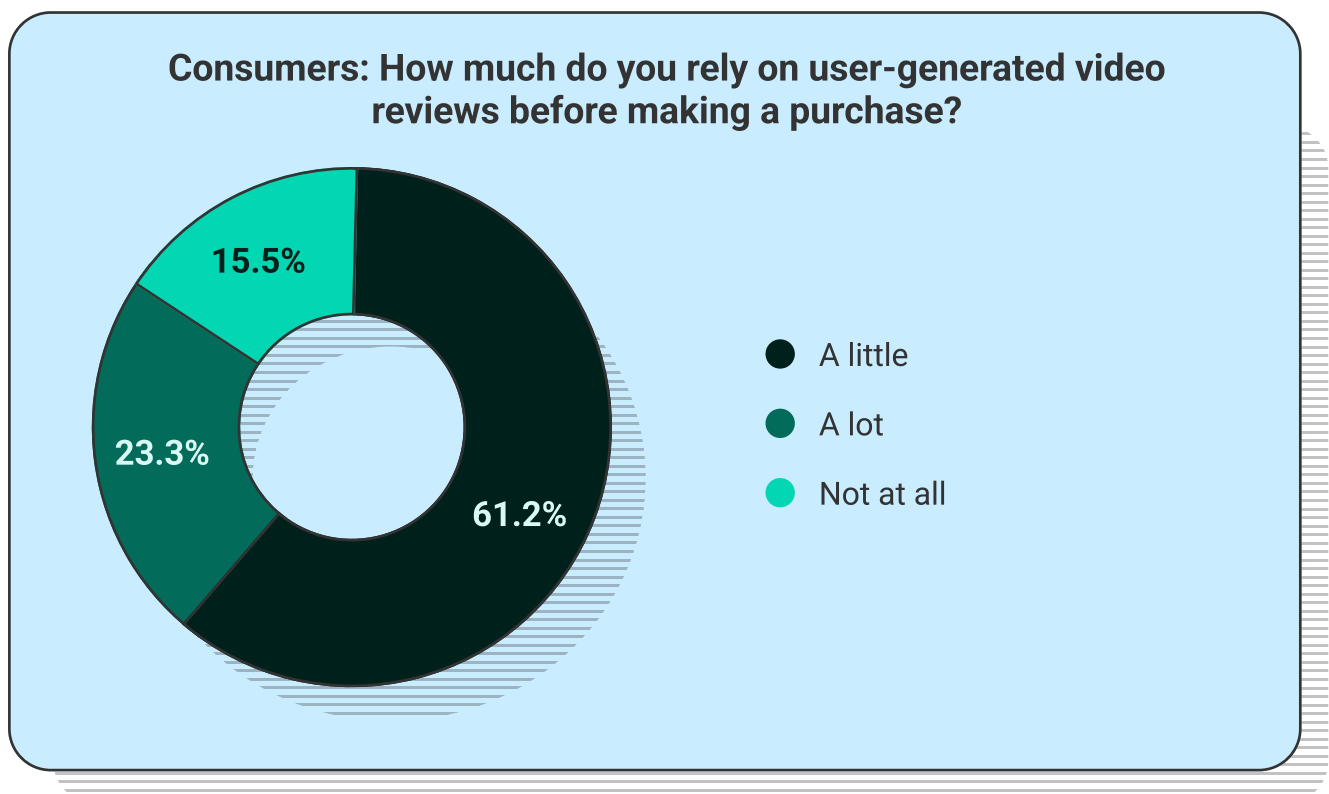
- **Marc Bjerring, Co-Founder, Spivo**

Marketers: How do you use your audience's user generated video to help promote your brand?



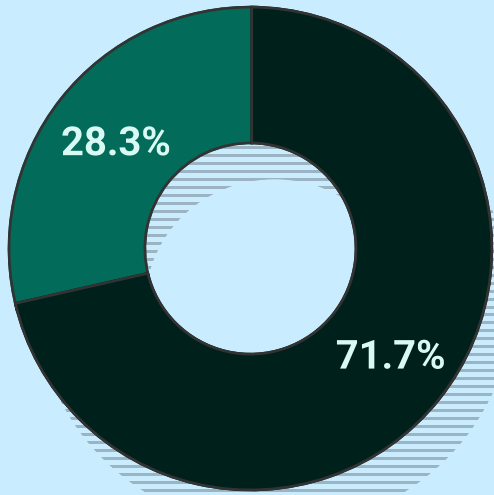
How Effective is User-Generated Video, According to Consumers?

Consumers say user-generated video is an effective tool in their purchasing decisions, with just 16% indicating they don't rely on it before making a purchase.



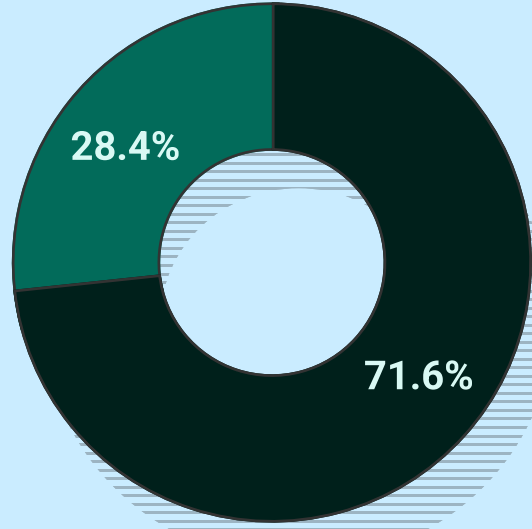
The majority of surveyed consumers said they are more likely to purchase a product or service and follow an organization on social media if they use user-generated video.

Consumers: Are you more likely to purchase a product or service if the company reposts or otherwise uses user-generated video about the product or service?



● Yes ● No

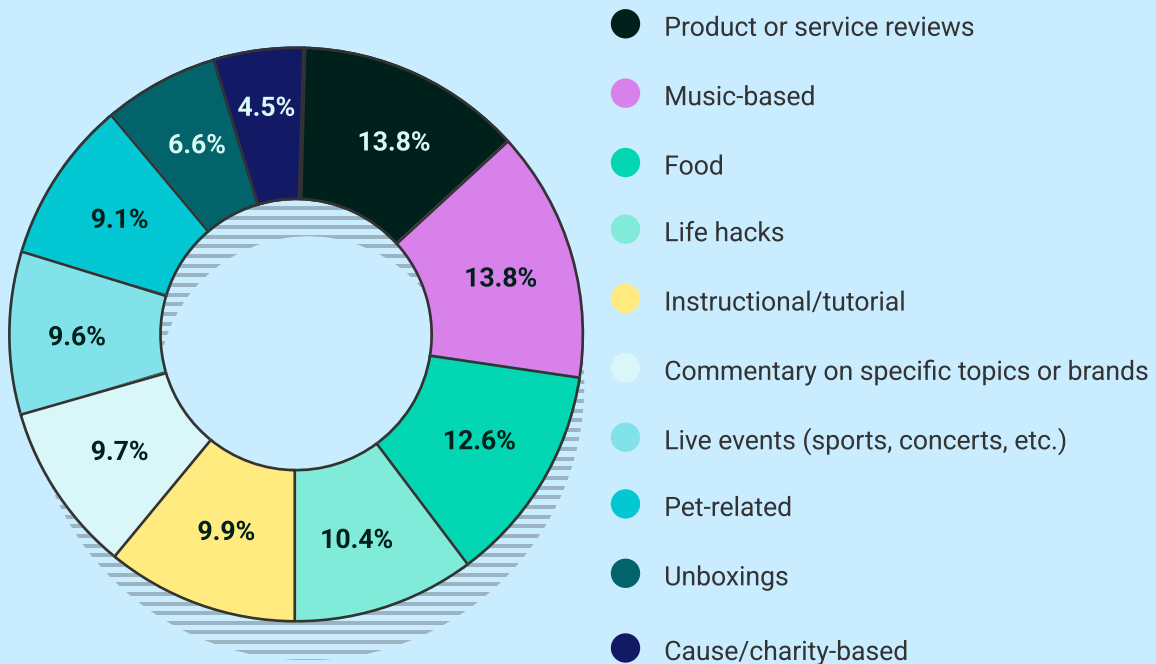
Consumers: Are you more likely to follow an organization on social media if the company uses user-generated video?



● Yes ● No

In terms of the types of user-generated video consumed by users most often, contest-related videos fell just outside the top ten, just after cause/charity-based videos.

Consumers: What type of user-generated video do you consume the most often?

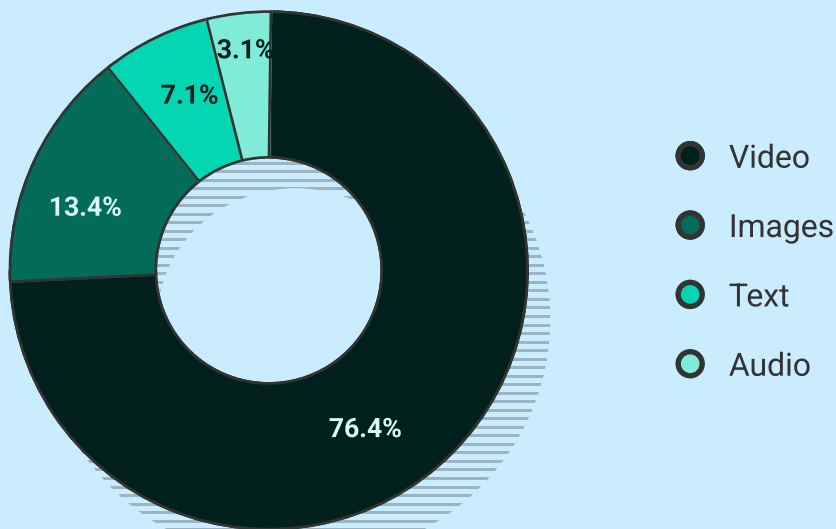


How Trustworthy is User-Generated Video?

As was the case with the marketers we surveyed, creators named video and images as the most trustworthy user-generated mediums.

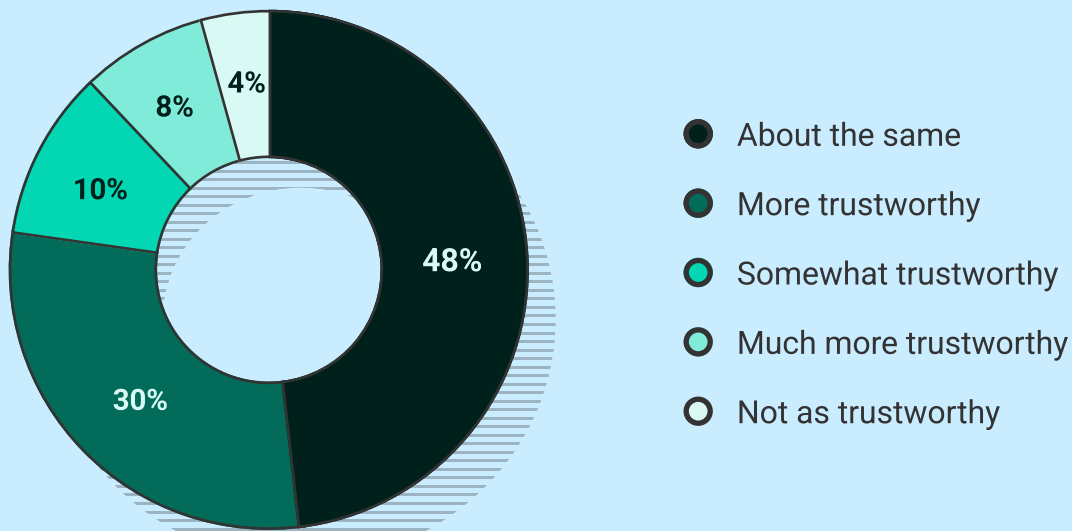
A combined **38%** of marketers said user-generated video is more trustworthy to their audiences than other types of UGC, with just **4%** indicating it's less trustworthy.

Consumers: What kind of user-generated content do you consider the most trustworthy when browsing the web or social media?



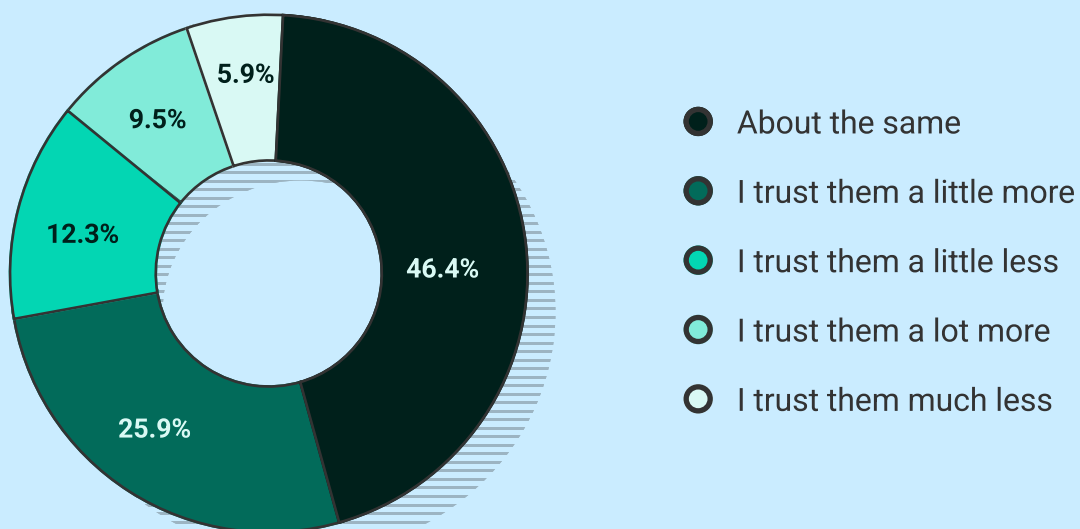
"Trust and authenticity on social media is absolutely critical in this day and age – folks can snuff something out if it feels like it's sponsored or planned, and so finding the right style of UGC that is actually real UGC, not a paid influencer, is so critical to brand success." - **Jillian Robinson, Dash Hudson**

Marketers: How much would you say your target audience trusts user generated video compared to other types of UGC, such as images, text, and audio?



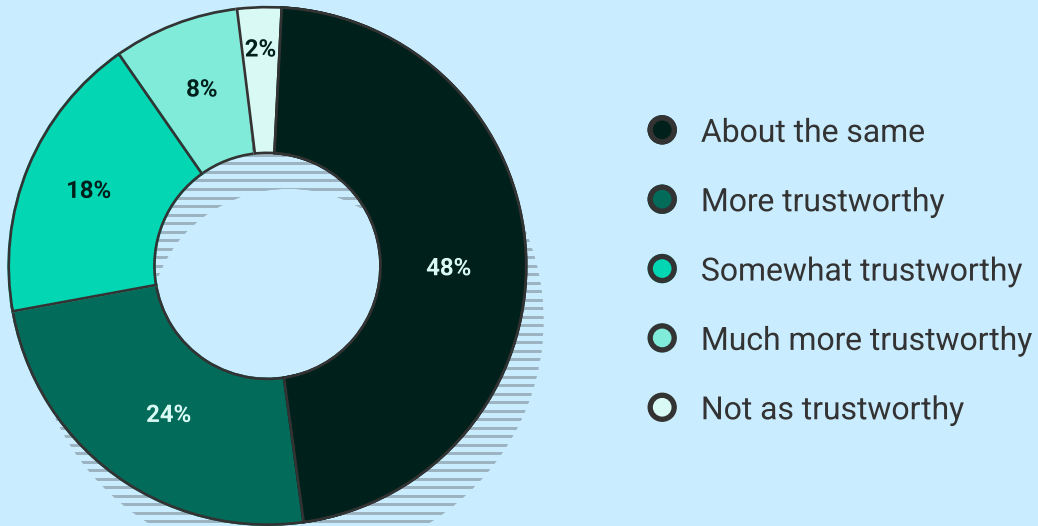
A combined **40%** of consumers said they consider brands who use user-generated video more trustworthy than organizations that don't. However, nearly **20%** also said they trust these organizations less.

Consumers: How trustworthy do you consider brands and organizations who utilize user-generated video, compared to those that don't?



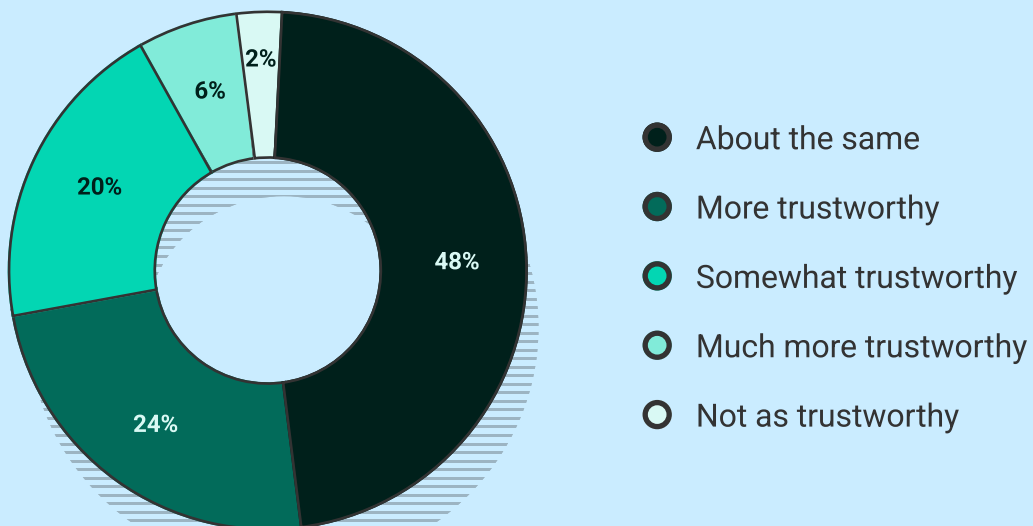
The results were similar for marketers, with the majority saying they're about the same, but only a small number indicating it's less trustworthy.

Marketers: How would you rank the trust level, among your audience, of user generated video compared to paid influencer content?



"UCG efforts are better done with general consumers as opposed to influencers because it's even a greater level of authenticity when it's Melinda, the 42-year-old soccer mom." - **James Rubec, Fullintel**

Marketers: How would you rank the trust level, among your audience, of user-generated video compared to official brand content?



Stolen User-Generated Video: How Bad Is It?

It's not hard to find cases of unauthorized content use on social media. Just check out the [#stolencontent](#) hashtag on [TikTok](#), for example.

According to [Copyrightuser.org](#), a U.K.-based resource that educates creators on copyright best practices, virtually all types of UGC (including literary, musical, dramatic, and other works) are copyrighted works.

"This means that, for example, if you draw a cartoon and upload it to Instagram," the organization says, "and a company sees this and wishes to use it in an advertising campaign, they would have to approach you first for permission and possibly payment."

The same thing goes for user-generated videos. And as we'll see, brands or influencers who don't ask for permission court potentially significant reputational and even legal risk.

Publicly Available Doesn't Mean Free to Use

MASV spoke with Fasken Martineau DuMoulin LLP's Mark Penner, a trademark & patent lawyer who specializes in the acquisition, protection, and enforcement of IP rights, to learn how companies should use user-generated video while staying on the right side of copyright.

Penner says the main issues for any IP rights case are: Who owns it, what are you allowed to do with it, and are you breaching anybody's rights when you use it or reproduce it.

But he says the biggest mistake many brands or individuals make is assuming that something that's publicly available on the internet is free to use.

"And based on fair use or fair dealing, you might actually be able to do that," he says, adding that because each copyright case is unique, there is no simple answer on what creators and brands can and can't do. "It requires a more sophisticated analysis than just, 'I downloaded this and therefore it's free to use,'" he adds.

The Jurisdictional Question

The details of copyright law differ between jurisdictions, with the U.S., U.K., and Canada (for example) governed by differing statutes. That potentially adds complexity for creators and brands that often digitally cross international borders simply by interacting with or sharing content on social media.

But the broad strokes of copyright law in most jurisdictions are very similar. “The general rule is that if you create it, you're the copyright owner,” says Penner.

We outline a set of best practices for brands and creators who want to use or share user-generated content in this report’s final section.

Fair Use and Fair Dealing

Some of those who use unauthorized content can claim “fair dealing” (in Canada and the U.K.) or “fair use” (in the U.S.). These more or less provide the same level of protection, but differ slightly:

- The fair dealing exception allows people to use copyrighted works for research, criticism, review, news reporting, education, satire, or parody, as long as what’s done with the work is “fair” (what is fair, of course, is completely up for debate).
- The fair use exception allows people to use limited portions of a copyrighted work for similar purposes. Again, whether this use qualifies as fair under the law completely depends on the circumstances.

Creators can claim either fair use or fair dealing when hit with a copyright claim over content they’ve shared on social media, for example. But that is no solace for brands using content for commercial purposes.

All three jurisdictions (the U.S., U.K., and Canada) also use the concept of moral and economic rights in copyright law. These rights assert that the owner of a work has the right to be credited and to earn compensation from their works.

In the U.K. and Canada, moral rights also bestow the right of integrity, which means others can’t change or augment your copyrighted material.

None of this should be considered legal advice. Anyone considering using UGC for their brand should seek legal counsel to determine their rights and comfort level around user-generated content.

How Often Do Creators Get Their Videos Used Without Permission by Brands?

Marketing teams today are under tremendous pressure to not just drive organic traffic, leads, and conversions, but also to relentlessly create content.

Part of that pressure comes from their organization, but it's also driven by the algorithms of the social media platforms themselves. TikTok, for example, recommends creators and brands post videos one to four times per day.

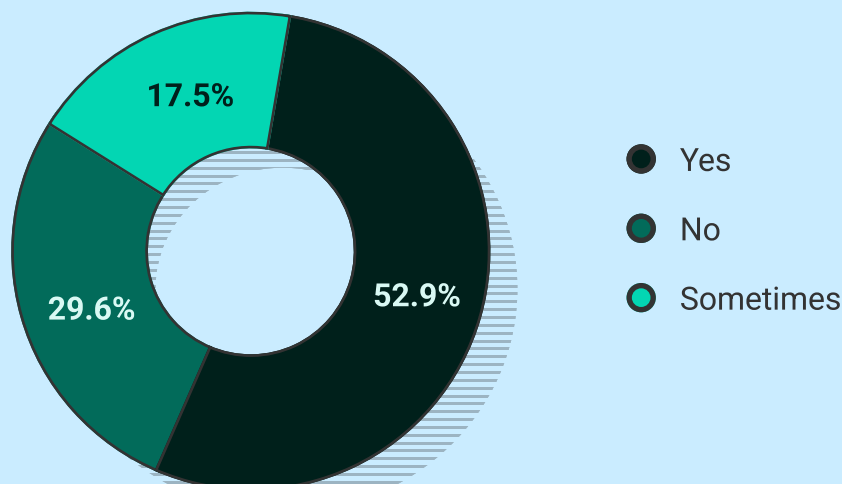
That's a lot of work for marketing teams who must also perform dozens of other tasks every day. There really is no excuse to use unauthorized content, but the reality is that much of this bad behavior is likely driven at last in part by these pressures.

"Brands' media teams are often understaffed, and I think it's still thought of as sort of an infantile role within a marketing team. But that's changing, with Millennials now starting to step into CEO roles, and they've grown up with this stuff and understand the value. Social teams are starting to get more investment as a result."

- Jillian Robinson, Dash Hudson

A combined **47%** of creators who have had their content used by brands or influencers say they've had their videos used without permission.

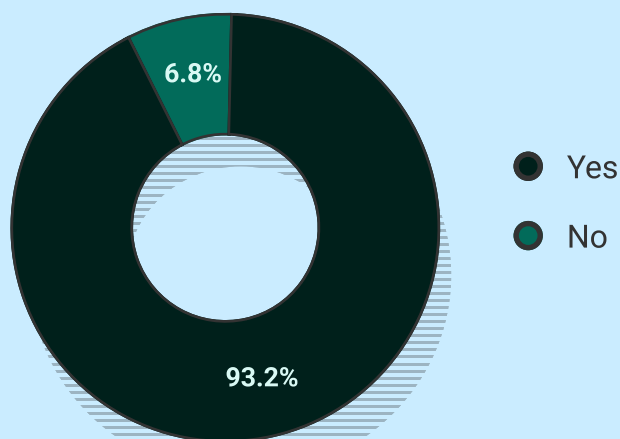
Creators: If the brand or influencer used your video, did they ask permission?



"(Unauthorized use of content) is ubiquitous across industries. It's done by brands often. It's done by other influencers. It's also done by the media. It's a major problem, and it's an ethical and legal boundary that brands specifically shouldn't cross."

- James Rubec, Fullintel

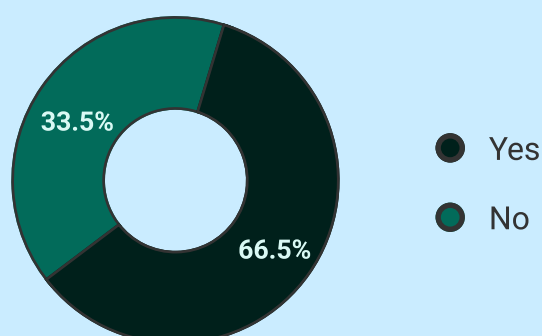
Creators: Should organizations, brands, or influencers always ask permission before using or sharing your video?



And while there's obviously a difference between simply resharing a post on the same social media channel and downloading a video to be used in an advertisement, the results show it's still considered best practice by creators to always ask for permission.

Same goes for giving credit as the content creator. Not giving credit, if you recall, could be a violation of the moral rights of creators we discussed in the previous section.

Creators: If the organization, brand, or paid influencer used your video, did they give you credit as the content creator?



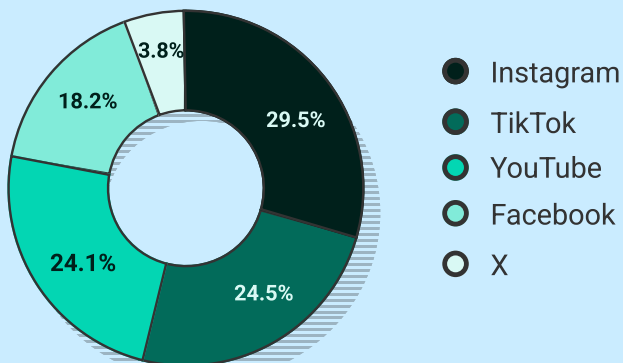
"(Unauthorized use) has happened to me quite a few times, but I've never gone as far as to reach out to them and send them a bill or anything like that. I think it really depends on the scope of what is being used and how it's being used, if they're making money off it, if they're making profit and sales, then of course, I'll want to get in touch with the team if I can find them" - Anum Rubec, creator

Augmenting or changing a creator's video without permission could also be a violation of their moral rights.

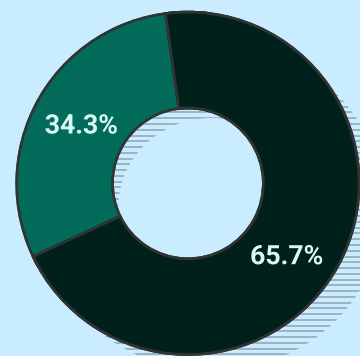
While Facebook was the most commonly used platform by creators overall (see previous pages), Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube were the platforms with the most unauthorized content use.

Unauthorized Content: Platforms and Industries

Creators: Where did you originally post the content that was reused without permission?

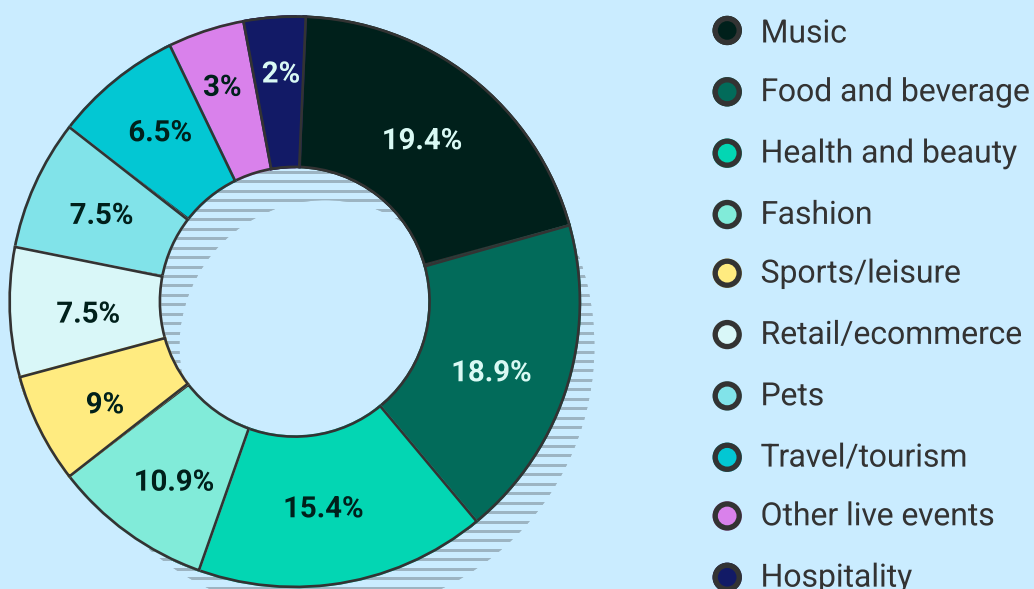


Creators: Did the organization, brand, or influencer augment or change your video in any way?



● No ● Yes

Creators: What industry did the reused content without permission apply to the most?

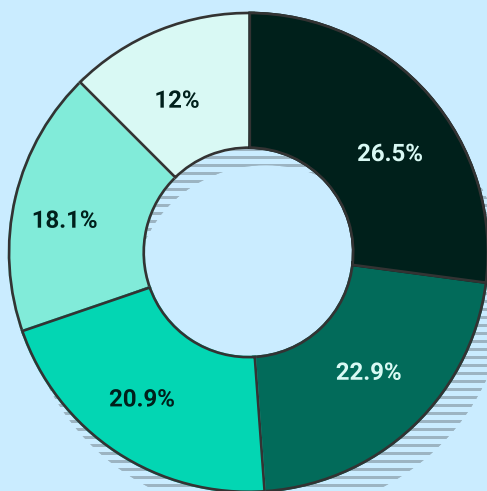


How Do Brands Work With Creators to Acquire User-Generated Video?

There are plenty of different ways brands acquire user-generated video. Sometimes brands take a one-on-one approach, reaching out to creators directly. Others use UGC platforms, creator/influencer agencies, or creator marketplaces on social media sites to find talent.

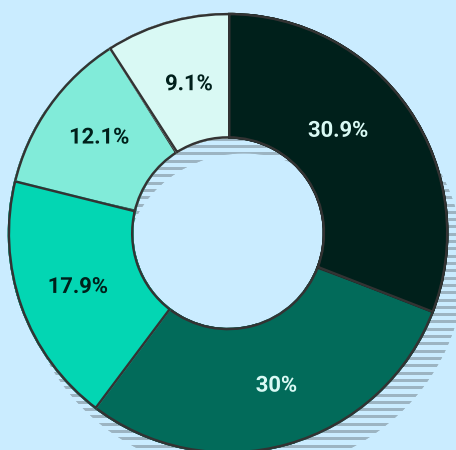
In terms of most marketers' process for acquiring content, most either repost content on the same social platform, ask their creators to use an online web uploader, or download content from social to be used elsewhere.

Marketers: What is your process for acquiring user generated video from your audience?



- We find and repost content on the same social platform
- We ask users to upload content using a web uploader/widget/web page
- We download content from social media or other websites to be used elsewhere
- We ask users to email or transfer us content using a file sharing app
- We use a UGC platform

Creators: How did the organization, brand, or influencer acquire your video?

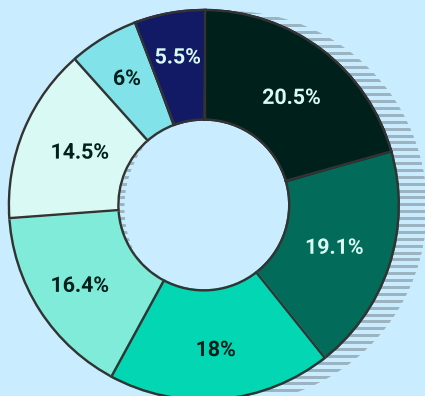


- They downloaded it from social media or an online community or another webpage and used it elsewhere
- They used a share button to share it on the same platform
- I uploaded it to their website or an associated webpage
- I sent it to them using a file sharing app
- I'm not sure how they acquired it

As we mentioned back in section one, a significant proportion of brands also provide gifted products to creators – which is the No. 1 way most creators prefer to be enticed into creating video.

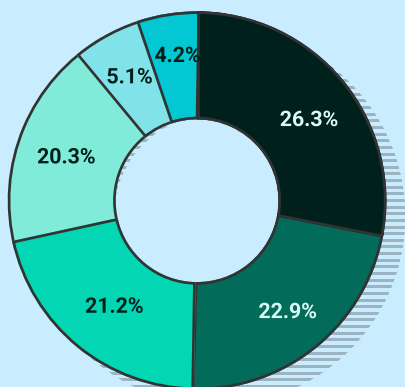
But a significant number of creators also indicated that providing a great product or service is enough to convince them to create a video.

Creators: What are the best three ways for a brand or organization to entice you into creating videos that mention them or their products/services?



- Product seeding/providing free product
- Approach me for a brand collaboration/paid sponsorship
- Provide a great product or service
- Involving me in giveaways or contests
- Using and promoting my unpaid videos (with permission)
- Using and promoting my unpaid videos (without permission)
- Approach me for a whitelisting (advertising) campaign

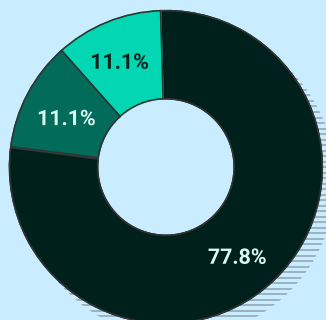
Marketers: What, in your opinion, are the best three ways to collaborate with creators of user generated video to drive engagement for your brand?



- Using and promoting their unpaid videos (with permission)
- Involving them in giveaways or contests
- Begin a brand collaboration/paid sponsorship with them
- Product seeding/providing free product
- Launching a whitelisting campaign
- Using and promoting their unpaid videos (without permission)

More than **20%** of marketers we surveyed said their brand rarely or never gives the original creator credit for producing the work.

Marketers: When you use an unpaid social media user's original video, how often does your organization give the original creator credit?



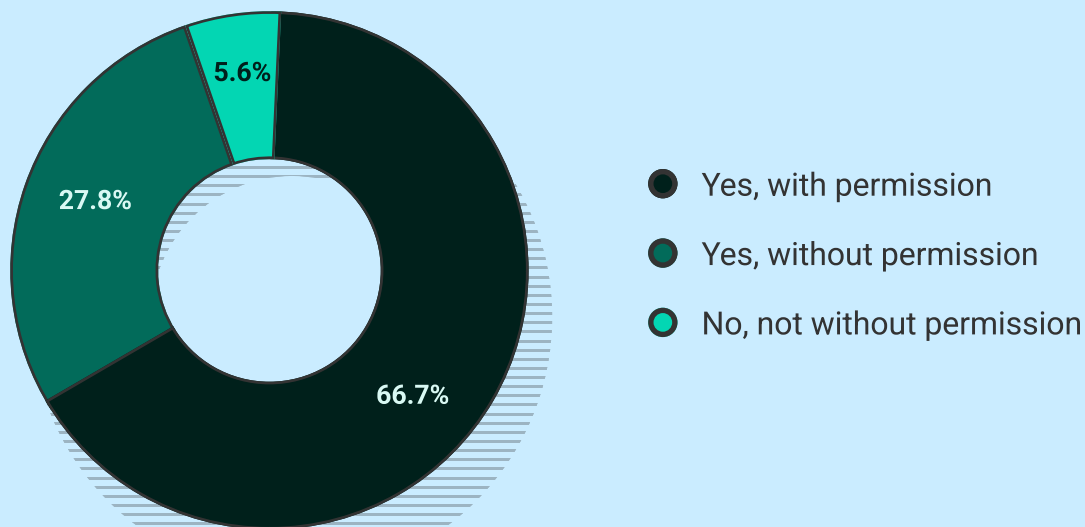
- Always
- Sometimes
- Never

How Often Do Brands Adhere to Responsible UGC Acquisition Best Practices?

We asked marketers in our survey point blank their opinions on responsible content acquisition. We wanted to know their thoughts on the best ways for brands to acquire user-generated video, along with gauging their comfort level around using user-generated video without the creator's permission.

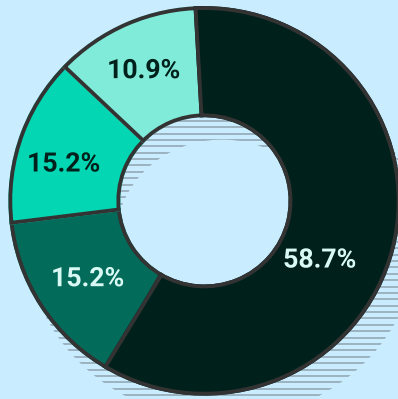
While most respondents indicated they're not comfortable using content without permission, a significant proportion seemed relatively at ease with the practice.

Marketers: In your opinion, is it okay to repost an unpaid social media user's original video on your social channels, for marketing purposes?



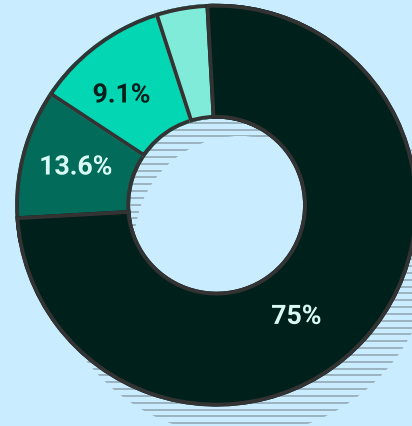
"What the standard practice has been is if a brand sees me using their product, they'll sometimes reach out to me and ask if they can repost a story. And I think that's fine – just always ask for permission." - Angus Nguyen (avatarangus)

Marketers: In your opinion, is it okay to augment or change an unpaid social media user's original video in your social channels or elsewhere, for marketing purposes?



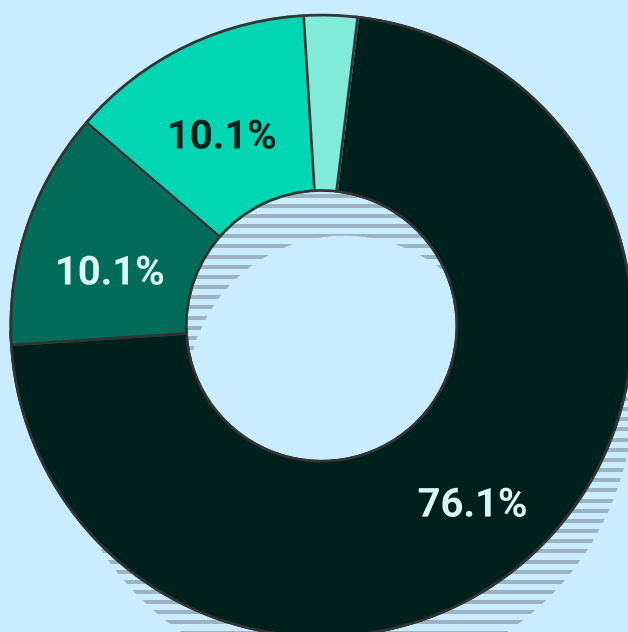
- Yes, with permission
- Yes, without permission
- No, not without permission
- No, not even with permission

Marketers: In your opinion, is it okay to download an unpaid social media user's original video from a social media site or online community?



- Yes, with permission
- No, not without permission
- Yes, without permission
- No, not even with permission

Marketers: In your opinion, is it okay to use an unpaid social media user's original video in your marketing activities?

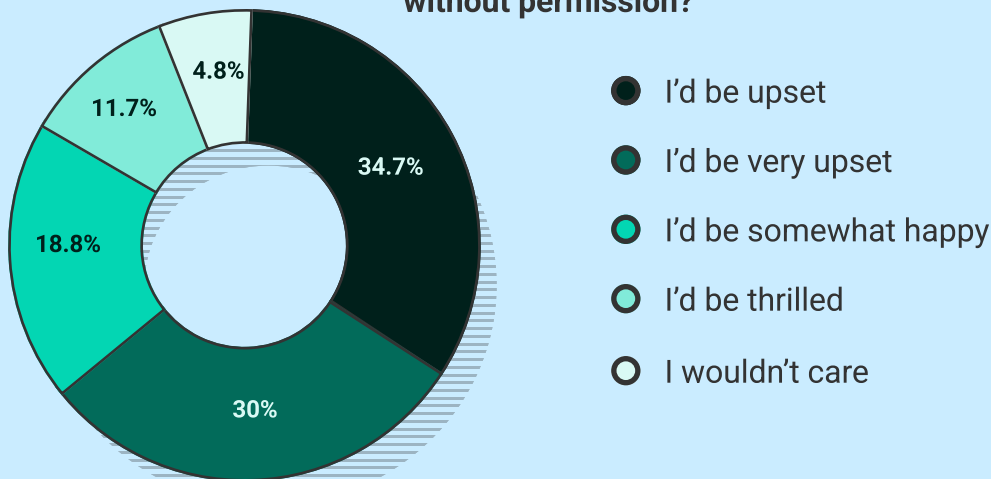


- Yes, with permission
- Yes, without permission
- No, not without permission
- No, not even with permission

How Do Creators Feel About How Brands Acquire and Use User-Generated Video?

We asked creators how they felt about their videos being reused by brands without their permission. A combined **65%** said they would either be upset or very upset. Brands, take note: By using UGC without permission, you could be alienating creators and your audience.

Creators: What would your opinion be if or when your online video was reused, repurposed, or otherwise published by a brand or paid influencer without permission?

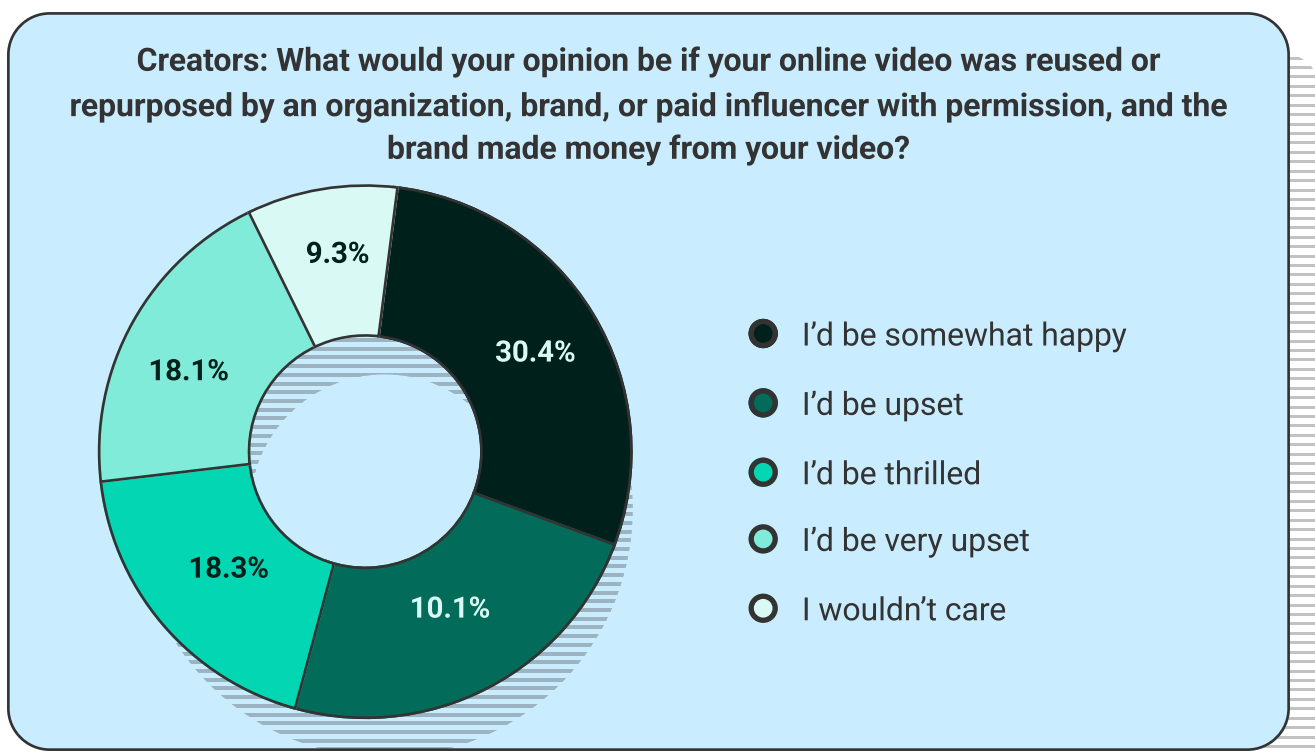
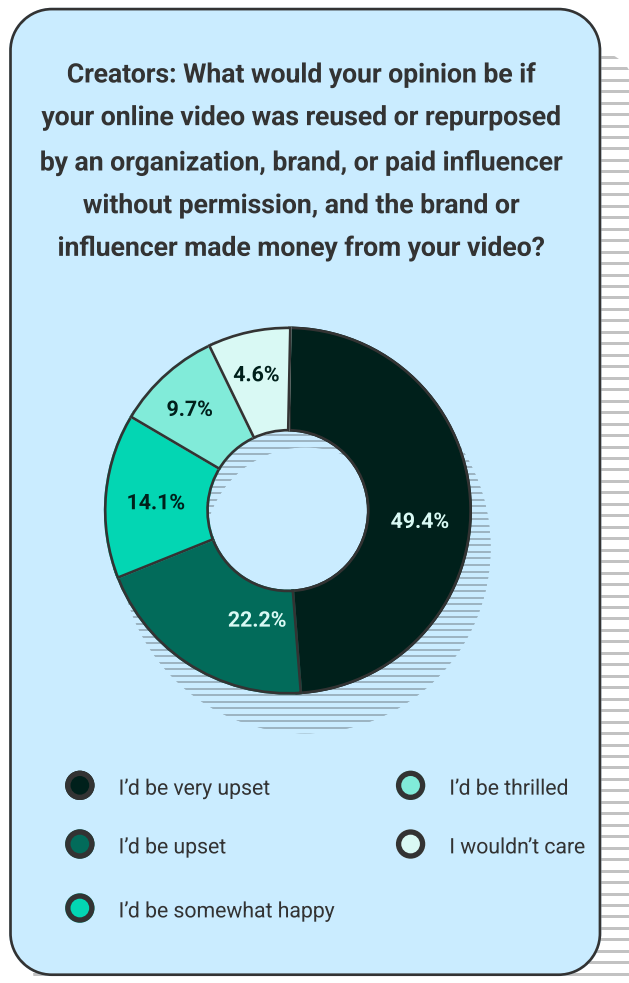
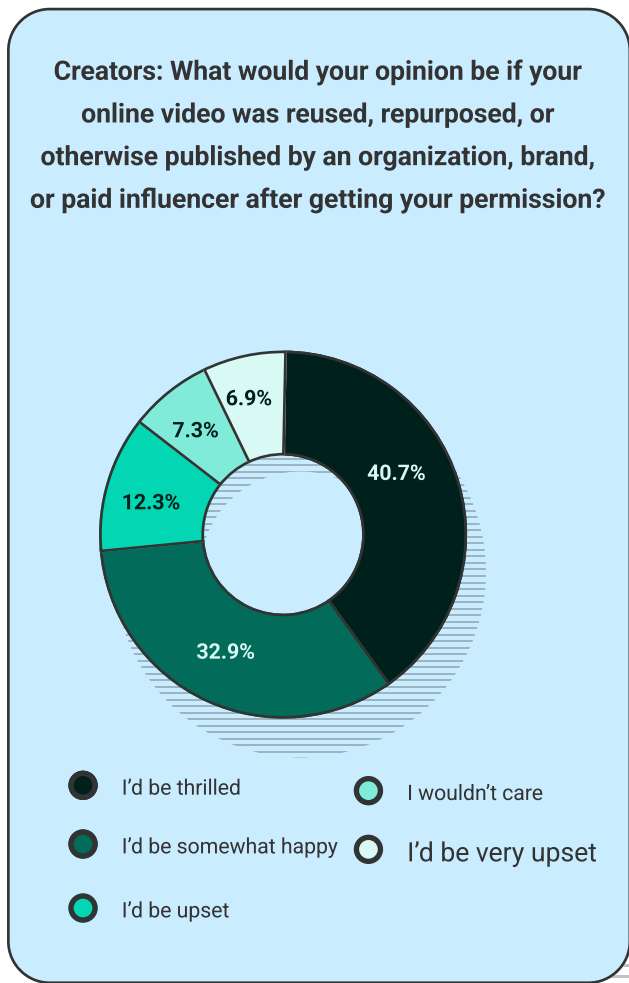


While the vast majority of creators we surveyed feel brands should always ask for permission, it's important to note that not every creator gets upset if their content is used without their permission.

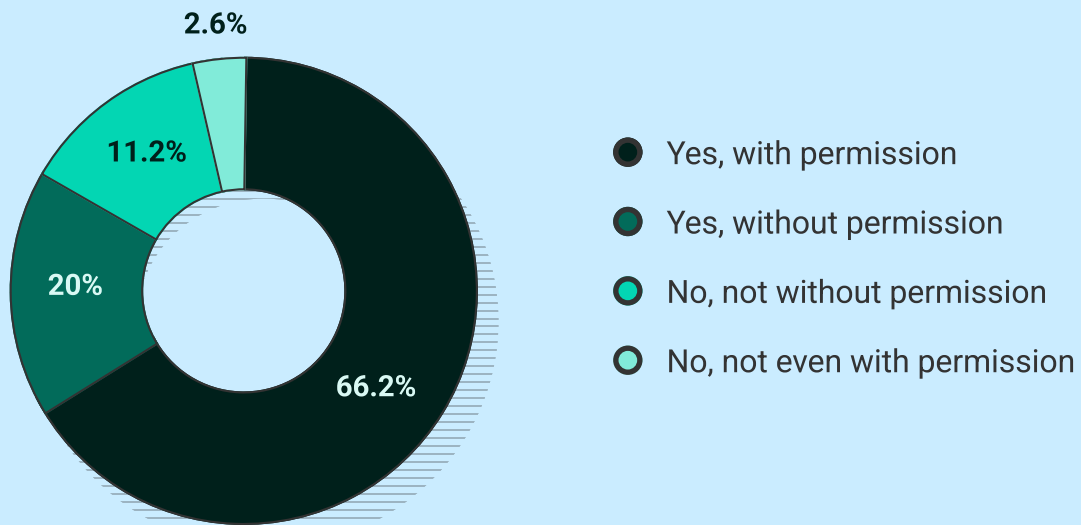
"For exposure and awareness, it's good to get your name around and get your brand across. But you also have to be careful with what they're doing with that content if they want it. There are other cases where they just download it themselves, and I don't know about it, and I see it or somebody points me to it. A lot of times it's harmless, but the grey area is when they don't mention the original creator."

- Angus Nguyen (avatarangus)

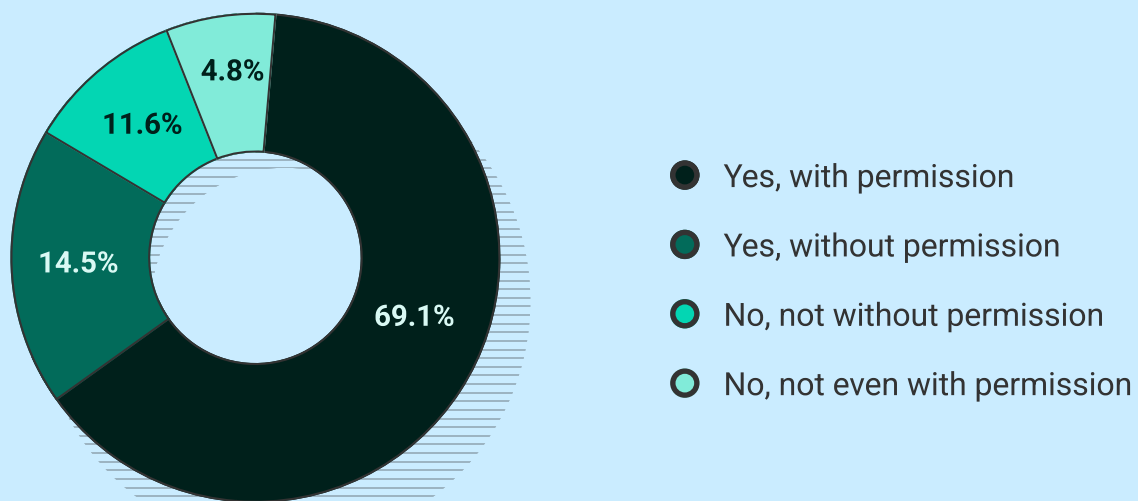
Clearly, though, getting permission in advance makes a big difference in how most creators feel about brands. Most creators say they'd be happy if a brand used their content with permission, but the opposite is true if the brand doesn't get permission.



Creators: In your opinion, should brands or paid influencers be allowed to use your online videos in their marketing materials, as long as the brand using the video is tagged in the content or you use/mention their products/services in the content?



Creators: In your opinion, should news outlets be allowed to use your online videos in their coverage?



"The risk is not just that it's bad for branding. It's bad for the influencer. It's bad for the online community. And for a media entity, distributing someone's photo or video without their approval and without payment could open them up to enormous lawsuits." - James Rubec, Fullintel

How Do Creators Feel About Social Media Policies?

Social media platforms have a special relationship with their creators, but their terms of service take a pretty big bite out of a creator's content. But to say that social media companies own the copyright on that content is not accurate.

Simply by posting on most social platforms, however, means creators typically automatically agree to that platform's content assignment clause.

These clauses grant social companies a royalty-free, unconditional, irrevocable, and perpetual worldwide license to use, modify, and pretty much do anything else with their content they care to do – including for marketing and advertising.

"If you have a non-exclusive, perpetual, royalty-free worldwide license, that's pretty close to ownership. You just can't say you own it. But I don't think that's an issue for the social media companies, because they just want to be able to use it."

- **Mark Penner, Fasken**

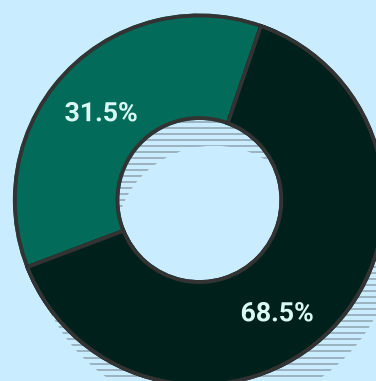
Social media companies can also use any user's user name and likeness for the same purposes.

So how do creators feel about that?

"No. 1 is to understand that when you're posting something online, what are the rights that you're giving away by posting."

- **Mark Penner, Fasken**

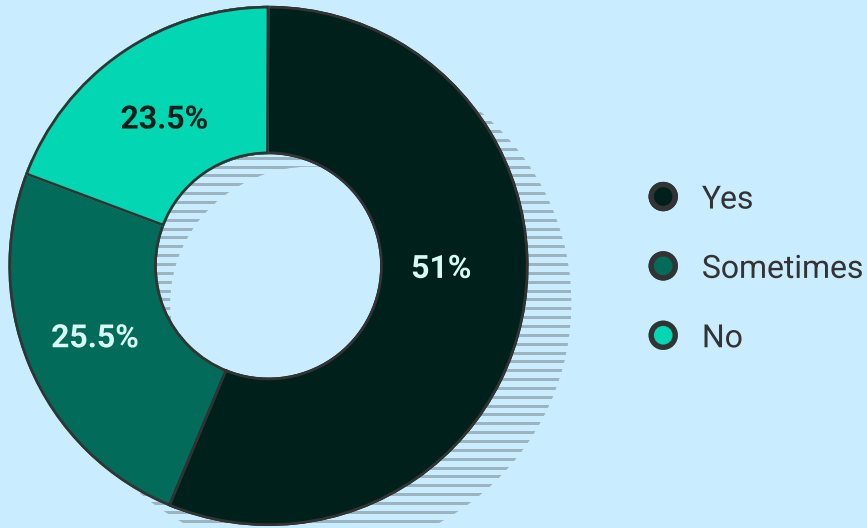
Creators: In your opinion, should social media companies have a license to use your videos once the content has been posted to their platforms?



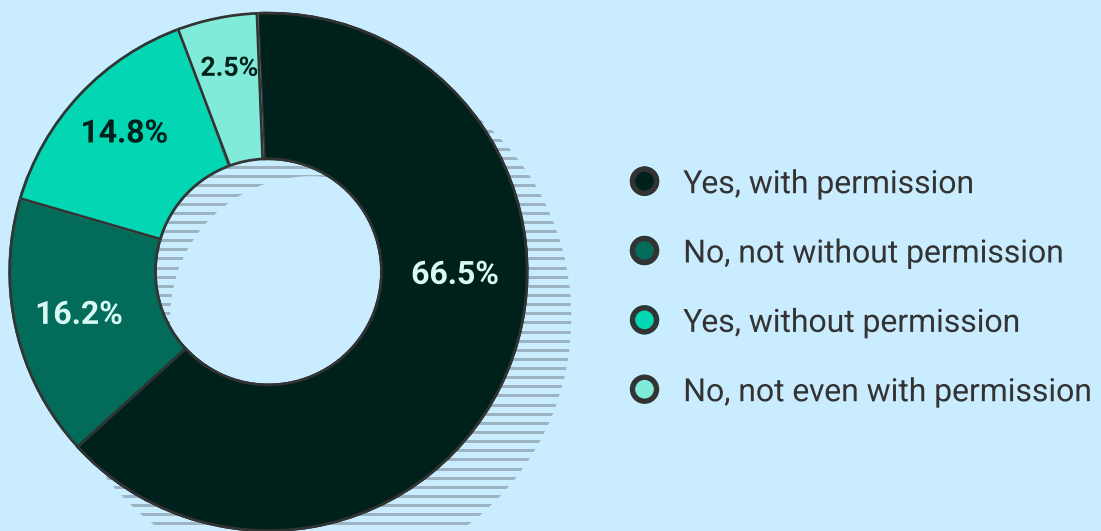
● Yes ● No

Most creators we surveyed said they read the terms of service on their social channels before posting video.

Creators: Do you ever read the terms of service of the social media sites you use before posting original video?



Creators: In your opinion, should social media platforms be allowed to use your videos posted on their sites in their advertising or marketing campaigns?



How Do Creators Protect Their Content?

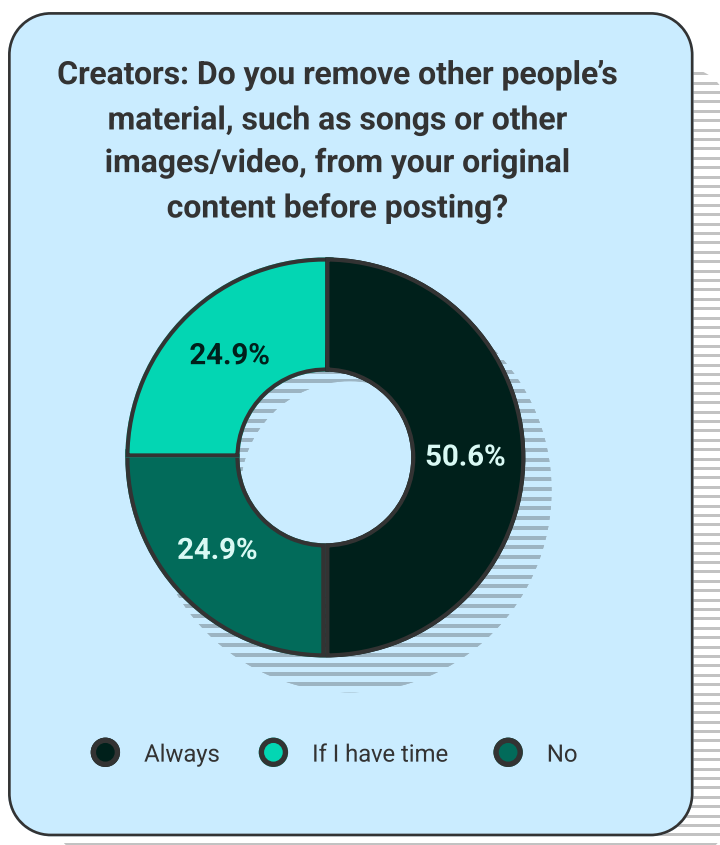
One complicating factor to all this is when a user incorporates other copyrighted content into their video, which can introduce risk for the creator.

As a rule it's best for creators to remove other people's intellectual property from their videos – not doing so could result in a copyright claim against the creator.

"A video has the video component, it has an audio component, there could be animation. So there could be a whole bunch of different works within the video," Penner explains, adding that brands that use creator videos containing third-party copyrighted works could be liable for damages.

But some creators rely on the use of copyrighted materials for their channels, such as sports commentary or video game tutorials.

While copyright holders such as sports leagues and broadcasters have the option of demanding this content be taken down (barring a fair use/fair dealing defense), many instead choose to work with content creators by promoting and running advertising on their user-generated video and giving them a cut. This helps promote the league and provides additional revenue streams while keeping creators happy.



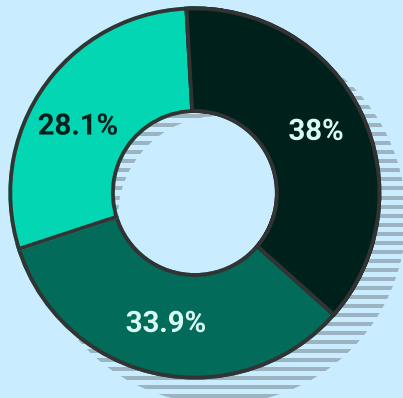
YouTube, for example, requires users to obtain permission from the copyright holder before a creator can use most third-party music in their videos.

But Penner, the IP lawyer, says rights holders should also be careful about coming down too hard on creators. "I've seen circumstances where a brand stops somebody from infringing," he says, "but then that person says, 'big company X came after a little guy – I'm just a creator. So you could win the legal battle but lose the PR war.'"

To Download Or Not To Download

Some platforms, such as TikTok, creators can turn off the ability for other users to download their content. This can be handy for creators to allow users to view their videos offline, for example.

Do you allow people to download your TikTok videos?

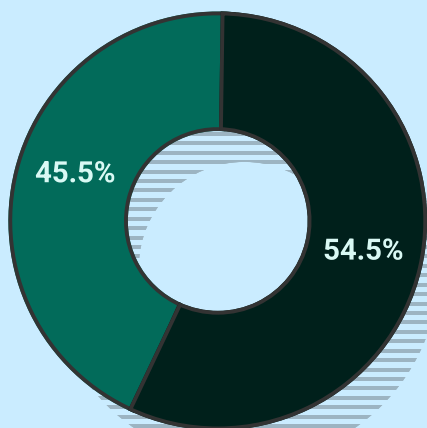


- Never
- Sometimes
- Always

But the creators we spoke with and surveyed largely agreed that that doesn't imply permission, especially for brands or other entities who want to use the content for marketing.

"A lot of influencers and creators will just download my videos and repost them (without permission) even with their own voiceovers and whatnot."
- Angus Nguyen, creator

Creators: If you allow people to download your videos, is it okay for influencers or brands to download and use them without asking you?



- No
- Yes

Either way, a determined user can employ other techniques to download a video, such as using screen recording or streaming software. There are plenty of guides out there showing how to download videos using third-party software while removing the creator's watermark at the same time.

To combat content theft some users put visible watermarks on their videos, but these can be easily removed by a tech-savvy individual.

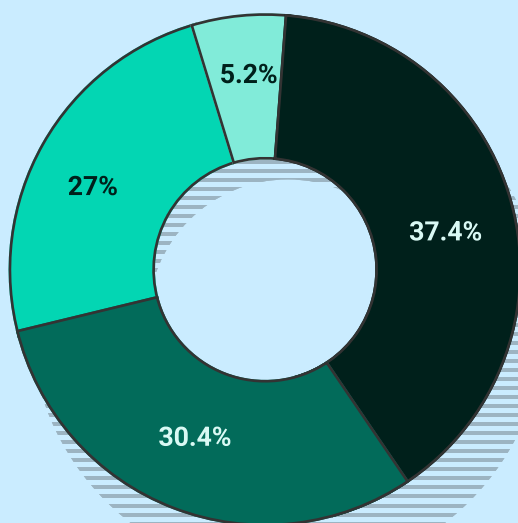
Many studios now embed forensic watermarks into their content, which are essentially impossible to remove without destroying the source material. But this technique can be expensive and out of reach for the average creator.

How Much Risk Do Brands Run By Not Asking Permission?

Most marketers we surveyed seemed to have a solid appreciation for the risk they run by not asking creators for use of their content.

As our survey results show on previous pages, brands run considerable reputational risk among creators by playing fast and loose with user-generated video. Still, **44%** of marketers we surveyed said they run no risk or only a minor amount of risk from using content without permission.

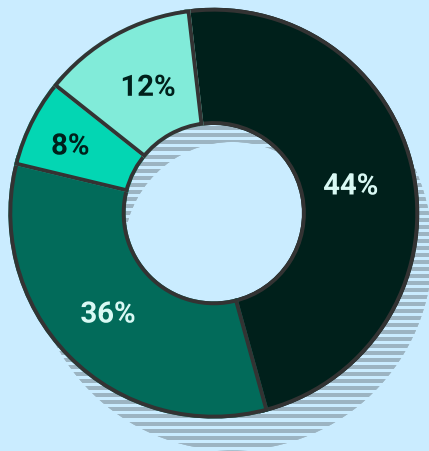
Creators: Do you ever read the terms of service of the social media sites you use before posting original video?



- They should ask permission and credit me as the creator
- They should ask permission, credit me, and compensate me monetarily
- Asking permission is enough
- I don't care if they ask for permission

"It's a lose-lose situation if you take content without permission. It's a win-win situation if you recognize the creator. And that's the key here – why are you risking your brand and your ability to grow more? The risk is that you can have significant community backlash." - **Samuel Chen, creator (supasenpai)**

Marketers: In your opinion, how much risk is inherent in using user generated video posted to social media or elsewhere on the internet without the content creator's permission?



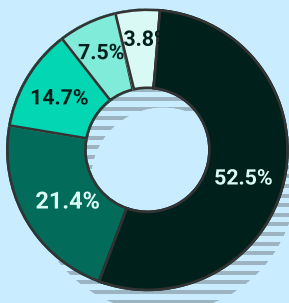
- A large amount of risk
- A minor amount of risk
- No risk at all
- Not sure

"You have to look at each situation separately, because the facts are different all the time – you can't really make a sort of blanket statement other than to say that there is a risk, and the risk could be significant."

- Mark Penner, Fasken

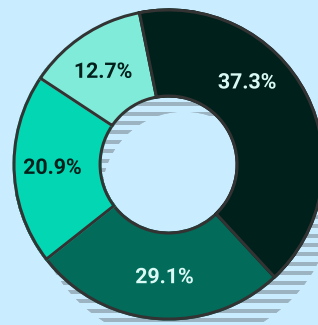
In Canada, for example, that risk could include statutory damages of up to \$20k per work infringed for commercial purposes. "And if something gets widely distributed, each one of those things could be potentially infringing," Penner says. "So something that's relatively innocuous, could become something that's that's an issue if it blows up."

Creators: What is your opinion of organizations that use video or other content from creators without permission, for marketing purposes?



- Not trustworthy
- About the same
- Somewhat less trustworthy
- More trustworthy
- Much more trustworthy

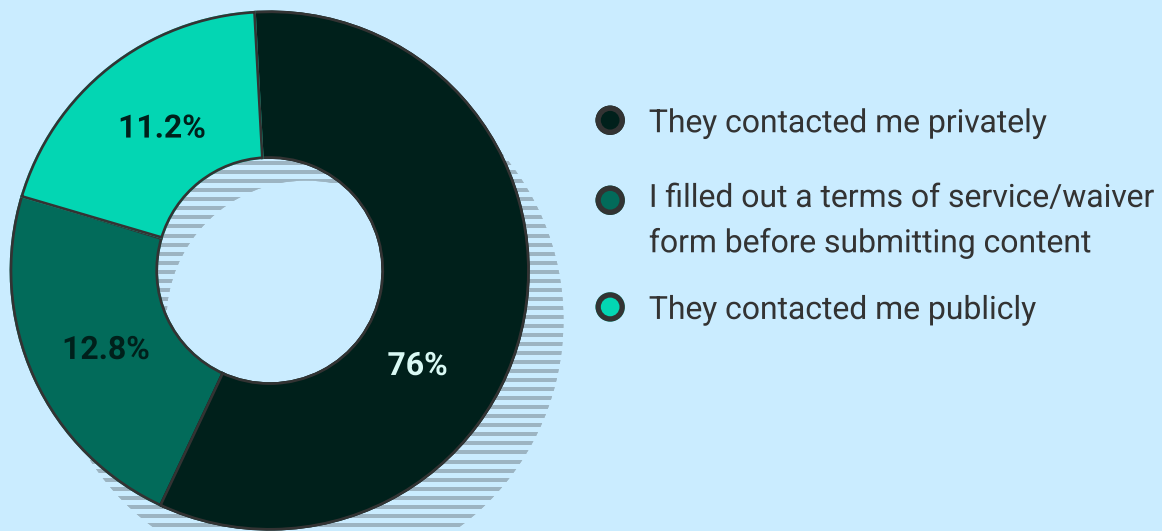
Creators: If the organization, brand, or influencer didn't ask for permission to download or otherwise use your video, what was your opinion on that?



- I was somewhat disappointed
- I was disappointed
- I didn't care
- I was happy

"The creator space is really small. So if content does get stolen, believe me, every creator will know about it. And so we kind of blacklist the agency or the brand."
- **Anum Rubec, creator**

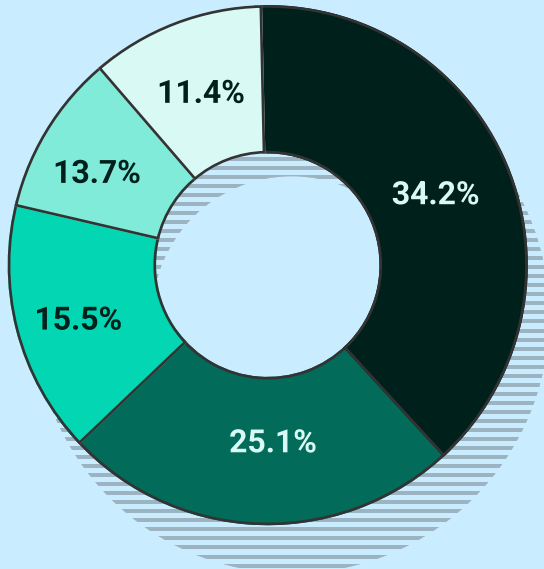
If the organization, brand, or influencer asked for permission, how did they do so?



"If they use my video I'm not mentioned as the creator, which also happens, that's when I'll usually send a DM or if there's an email address, I'll reach out to them sometimes and it usually gets resolved. But sometimes it's just a dead end and they're never going to get back to you." - **Anum Rubec, creator**

Still, most creators who had content used without permission either didn't do anything or informally asked the brand or influencer to take it down.

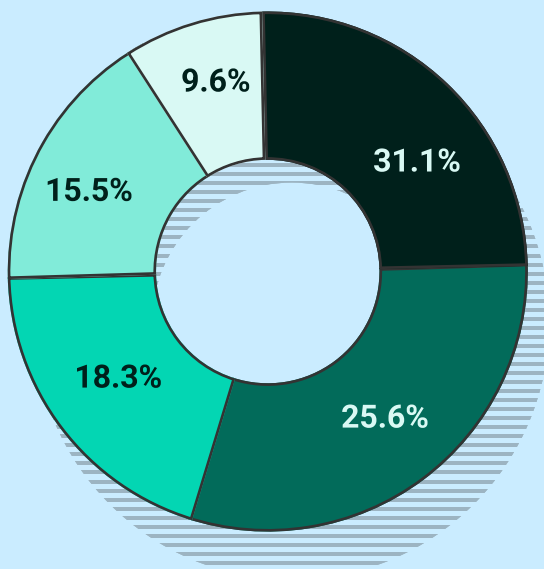
Creators: If the organization, brand, or influencer didn't have permission to use your video or image, what was your response when you noticed their use of your content?



- I didn't do anything
- I informally asked them to take it down
- I'm still deciding
- I sent them a formal cease and desist/takedown notice
- I asked them for payment

Most brands, after being served an invoice, seem to pay up. But many brands didn't seem to take these requests very seriously, with a combined **43%** either not responding, responding and doing nothing, or removing the content only after a significant delay.

Creators: If you asked them to take down your content, or for payment, what was the organization's response?



- They paid me for use of my content
- They removed the content quickly
- They didn't respond
- They removed the content, but it took a while
- They responded but did nothing

So What Should Brands Do?

The message we received from creators we surveyed and interviewed is clear: Most are very happy to have brands or influencers use their content, and even enter into sponsorships with them, but only if they ask for permission first.

Otherwise, brands risk serious community backlash and maybe even legal damages.

“But there are ways that you can mitigate and eliminate the risk,” says Penner, adding that brands need to be “really, really careful and understand that you may be doing something that is in breach of somebody's rights.”

Penner's advice to brands who leverage any kind of UGC is simple:

- Take your use of UGC seriously; to be on the safe side, always ask for permission, even if you're just reposting a creator's content. Penner's advice.
- Set up processes in advance to deal with any IP rights claims that may come your way, so you have a well-oiled system able to deal with these situations. “Ignoring is never a good strategy,” he adds.
- Implement a terms and conditions document that addresses permission and usage issues that creators must sign before you use any of their content.
- Always ensure that anything you use is only content the creator has rights to, so you're not breaching third-party copyright and incurring liability (such third parties often have more legal heft than creators).

Dash Hudson's Robinson says that using a UGC platform like her company's can also help mitigate risk, since creator agencies and UGC platforms generally include such terms and conditions stipulations, ensuring everyone is on the same page before the content gets used.

“(Using a UGC platform) has streamlined the process for a lot of our brands, especially ones that have very large volumes of user-generated content,” she explains. “It helps cut through the noise to find exactly the kind of content that they're looking for, and then get permission to be able to use it from the creators themselves.”

Spivo's Bjerring agrees, adding that "if you're doing it through a platform, those things will generally be fairly clear. If you're working one-on-one with a creator, like maybe through [TikTok Creator Marketplace](#) or whatnot, you'll need to make sure that their expectations are in line with yours with how you're going to be distributing the content."

"There are some, I would say, more experienced brands who work with influencers quite often and have a good system in place. Sometimes it's even kind of like a form or a website where you are submitting that piece of content and you can check off the boxes." - **Anum Rubec, creator**

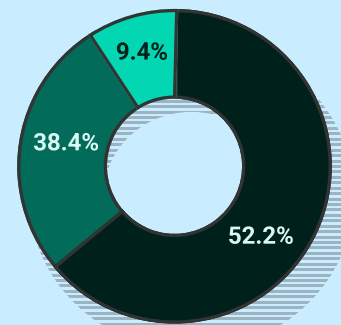
The Need For Easy, Fast, and Copyright-Compliant UGC Acquisition

What brands need to acquire UGC quickly and easily—while staying on the right side of copyright—is a secure platform capable of facilitating the exchange of user-generated video (and other types of UGC) between marketers and creators with as little friction as possible.

Marketers and creator agencies need an easy way to get creator sign-off for use of their content, along with total control of what kind of content can be uploaded (and when), along with the ability to add their branding and colors to ensure a seamless creator experience.

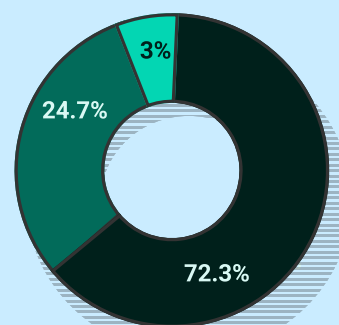
Companies can use a secure upload platform with built-in file upload forms to more efficiently work with creators to exchange valuable content while ensuring the content can be used in official marketing and advertising campaigns without legal, reputational, or financial issues.

How often have you used a file uploader tool or webpage to submit content to brands, for contests or other purposes?



● Sometimes ● Never ● Often

How important is security to you when providing video to a brand?

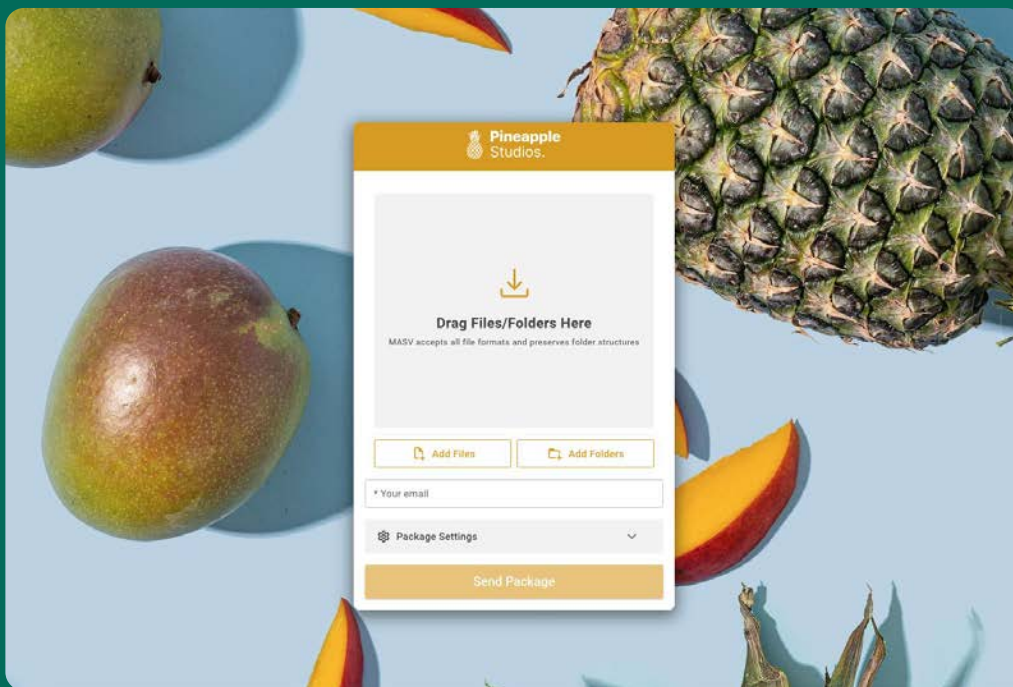


● Very important ● Somewhat important
● Not important

Whichever option you choose to facilitate your audience's content uploads, it's imperative that it's secure. That means it needs to ride on secure and private infrastructure, use strong encryption, and prevent unauthorized access with authentication and privacy controls like multi-factor authentication (MFA) and single-sign on (SSO) with SAML-based authentication.

Upload User-Generated Content Easily, Securely, With Explicit Consent and Total Control

A MASV Portal is a versatile large file uploader that provides a fast and reliable way to gather content from a browser. MASV Portals can be fully customized to your brand's look and feel and can be embedded on any website, making Portals the ideal solution for organizations who work with creators and need to upload UGC quickly, securely, and reliably.



Every Portal comes for free with:

- **Built-in and customizable file upload forms:** Add terms of service and waiver documents to acquire the creator's explicit permission to use the content without time-consuming back-and-forth. These forms should also define in clear terms how and where the creator's content will be used by the organization.

- **Enterprise-grade security:** Restrict file types, set a maximum file size, and implement an automatic portal deadline for time-sensitive use cases such as contests.
- **High performance and security:** Receive or send files quickly, securely, and reliably on high-speed cloud infrastructure that bypasses the public (and slow) internet.
- **A frictionless user interface:** MASV Portals' drag-and-drop user interface is so easy, uploading a file is as simple—maybe simpler— than sending an email.
- **No-code storage integrations and automations:** To help scale marketing and agency teams scale even further, Portals offer no-code integrations with popular cloud or on-premises storage and file-transfer automation so any uploaded files are instantly sent to your preferred cloud storage.
- **Enterprise-grade security:** Portals are secured with strong encryption and access controls and are built on AWS, the world's most secure cloud infrastructure.

Brands and influencers can use MASV Portals to embed a versatile, powerful file uploader right on their website or in software to collect user-generated content for promotions, social media, live broadcasts, and other use cases.

Organizations can also create branded Portals to receive multiple files from clients and team members for specific projects. Request a file upload by sharing a Portal link, embedding a form, or sending an email.

[Sign up for MASV](#) today and spin up as many Portals as you need for free.

"A MASV Portal is the best way to do any file transfers. And I'm not even saying that because I'm talking to you. It's just literally – that's my genuine opinion."

- Alex Lefkowitz, Founder, Tasty Edits