



# The Publisher Influence Standards.

A practical checklist for creator  
partnerships.

# DEVELOPING A PRACTICAL FRAMEWORK

**The Publisher Influence Standards are designed to bring structure, discipline, and clarity to how publishers and advertisers use creator partnerships.**

As creator marketing has grown, activity has increased, but outcomes are often inconsistent or unclear. Many publishers are active in the space, but without a clear framework for how influence should work across the funnel.

At the same time, publishers are under pressure to reach new audiences, convert efficiently, and build sustainable growth in a fragmented, digital-first landscape.

These Standards have been created to address that gap.

They mirror the structure and authority of traditional editorial standards, applying the same level of discipline to modern creator and social activity. The aim is to support commercially effective partnerships without becoming noisy, off-brand, or short-term in approach.

## **A Practical Code of Practice**

The Standards set out a clear approach to using creator partnerships to build trust, reach high-intent audiences, and drive measurable outcomes.

They are designed to support activity across the funnel, from awareness and advocacy through to conversion, subscription, and long-term audience growth.

## **Core Principal**

Attention alone is not the objective. Creator partnerships should deliver the right attention, from the right audience, in the right environment, with a clear path to action.

## **The Five Questions This Code Answers**

1. Are we reaching the right audience?
2. Will this activity drive meaningful action, not just interaction?
3. Does this reflect our editorial standards and brand values?
4. Does this build short-term performance and long-term value?
5. Can we measure success beyond vanity metrics?

The Publisher Influence Standards bring together publisher, industry body and practitioner perspectives to define a more consistent, effective approach to creator partnerships.



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Director, Co-Founder

 **pepper.**

 **PFF FESTIVAL 2020**

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# How to use this checklist

This checklist is designed to guide how creator partnerships are planned, executed, and evaluated.

it's broken down into three sections:

## before

a campaign: defining strategy and setup

## during

a campaign: managing quality and performance

## after

a campaign: measuring impact and scaling what works

## each stage is built across five core areas

### objective

Helps you define clear outcomes and ensure every partnership is built to deliver them.

### audience

Helps you reach the right audience with intent, not just maximise reach.

### editorial integrity

Helps you maintain trust while extending your brand through creator partnerships.

### test, learn, optimise & scale

Helps you identify what works, improve performance, and scale it effectively.

### reporting

Measure success based on impact, not visibility, and use it to improve future activity.

# BEFORE A CAMPAIGN

The success of any creator partnership is defined before it begins. Clear objectives, the right audience, and strong editorial alignment set the foundation for meaningful outcomes.

Use this checklist to ensure your approach is structured, intentional, and built to deliver results.



## objective

Have I clearly defined the primary objective?

Am I clear which stage of the funnel this supports?

Have I defined what meaningful success looks like?

Is the creator selection aligned to this objective, not just reach or popularity?

Are briefing, content format and messaging shaped by this goal?



## audience

Have I clearly defined the audience I need to influence, not just reach?

Am I prioritising audience quality, intent and relevance over scale?

Have I validated that this audience is likely to take the action I want?

Am I choosing this audience deliberately, rather than defaulting to size or familiarity?



## editorial integrity

Does this partnership feel like a natural extension of my brand's editorial voice and standards?

Have I assessed the creator's content, tone and behaviour for alignment and risk?

Will this content build trust with my audience, not undermine it for short-term gain?



## test, learn, optimise & scale

Have I built a clear testing approach across creators, messaging or formats?

Am I set up to identify what drives performance, not just what delivers engagement?

Do I have a plan to scale what works and stop what doesn't?



## reporting

Have I defined how success will be measured against the objective?

Am I set up to track meaningful actions, not just reach or engagement?

Will I capture both direct performance and indirect impact (i.e. halo impact)?

# DURING A CAMPAIGN

Performance is driven by how activity is managed in real time. Strong partnerships require continuous oversight, optimisation, and alignment to the original objective.

Use this checklist to maintain control and maximise results.



## objective

Is all activity clearly driving the defined outcome, not just engagement?

Is the content creating a clear and direct path to action?

Am I challenging any activity that doesn't contribute to the objective?



## audience

Is the content reaching the intended audience, not just generating broad visibility?

Am I seeing signals of intent (clicks, saves, conversions), not just passive engagement?

Am I resisting the temptation to increase reach at the expense of audience quality?



## editorial integrity

Does the content feel consistent with my brand's editorial voice, not forced or overly commercial?

Is the creator delivering in a way that maintains credibility with their audience?

Am I avoiding formats or tactics that could dilute trust (e.g. clickbait, misalignment)?



## test, learn, optimise & scale

Am I actively comparing performance across creators, formats or messaging?

Am I identifying which variables are driving outcomes, not just overall performance?

Am I adjusting activity in real time based on what is working?



## reporting

Am I tracking performance against the defined success metrics, not just surface-level data?

Am I focusing on actions that indicate real value (e.g. conversions, qualified traffic)?

Am I capturing learnings that can be applied immediately within the campaign?

# AFTER A CAMPAIGN

Performance is defined by how outcomes are measured and applied after the campaign. Strong partnerships require clear evaluation, actionable insight, and a focus on what drives results.

Use this checklist to assess impact and scale what works.



## objective

Did the campaign deliver against the defined objective (e.g. conversion, subscription, acquisition)?

What measurable actions were driven (e.g. clicks, sign-ups, purchases), not just engagement?

What does the performance tell me about how to approach this objective in future?



## audience

Did the campaign reach the intended audience, based on data not just reach?

Did that audience take meaningful action (e.g. click, save, convert)?

What does this tell me about which audiences drive the strongest outcomes?

Were there any unexpected audiences reached, and did they show value?



## editorial integrity

Did the content remain consistent with my brand's tone, standards and positioning?

Did the partnership strengthen credibility with both my audience and the creator's audi

Were there any signs of misalignment, risk, or reduced trust that need addressing?



## test, learn, optimise & scale

Which creators, formats or messages drove the strongest outcomes?

Which elements underperformed against the objective, and why?

What should be scaled, refined or removed in future campaigns?



## reporting

Have I measured performance against the defined success metrics and outcomes?

Have I captured both direct results (e.g. conversions) and indirect impact (e.g. halo impact)?

Are learnings clearly documented and actionable for future activity?

# NEXT STEPS

**The Publisher Influence Standards are designed to be applied.**  
The next step is to turn these principles into a consistent way of working across your organisation.

**01**

## **APPLY THE STANDARDS**

Use the checklist to structure your next campaign and define clear outcomes.

**02**

## **BUILD INTERNAL DISCIPLINE**

Embed the Standards into planning, briefing, and measurement.

**03**

## **RAISE THE BAR WITH PARTNERS**

Work with partners who can deliver against these Standards.

**04**

## **TEST, LEARN AND SCALE**

Continuously optimise and scale what drives results.

**05**

## **GET IN TOUCH**

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