MG empower.

The creator is *the channel.*

Influence, Affiliates & the Creator Economy.



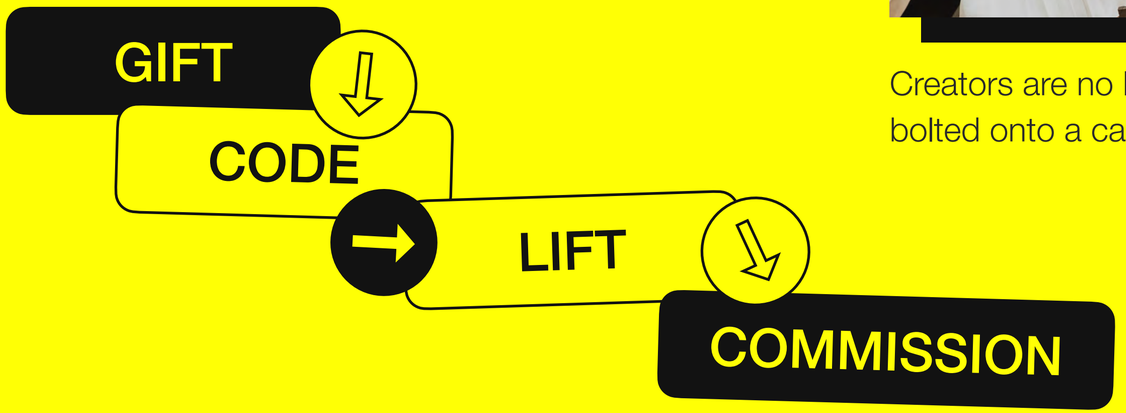
MG Empower 2026. All rights reserved

Introduction.

There was a time when ‘influencer marketing’ meant one gifted post and a fingers-crossed hope it moved the needle. That time is over.

That shift changes what ‘strategy’ has to mean. It's not just who you cast. It's how they're paid, what happens after they post, and whether the relationship survives past a single deliverable.

The mechanics behind every creator partnership that actually sells.





Creators are no longer a media line item bolted onto a campaign.



For a growing number of brands, they are the storefront - the review, the recommendation, the referral link, and the checkout, all coming from one trusted voice instead of one anonymous ad.

We've built real expertise running this end to end - casting, contracts, affiliate structures, whitelisting, reporting - and this is our thinking on how to do it properly, not just at scale.

MG empower.

MG Empower 2026. All rights reserved



MG empower.

MG Empower 2026. All rights reserved

CREATORS.

Why every brand suddenly has an *affiliate program.*

When '#ad' just means *nobody trusts* the post.

The creator economy is projected to nearly *double by 2027.*

Affiliate links are the *strongest currency* of 2026.



Nano-creators are quietly *outperforming celebrities.*

Gifting alone *doesn't move product* anymore.

Deinfluencing is the trend killing bad partnerships.

TikTok Shop is turning *creators into storefronts.*

MG empower.

MG Empower 2026. All rights reserved

Brands are racing to sign

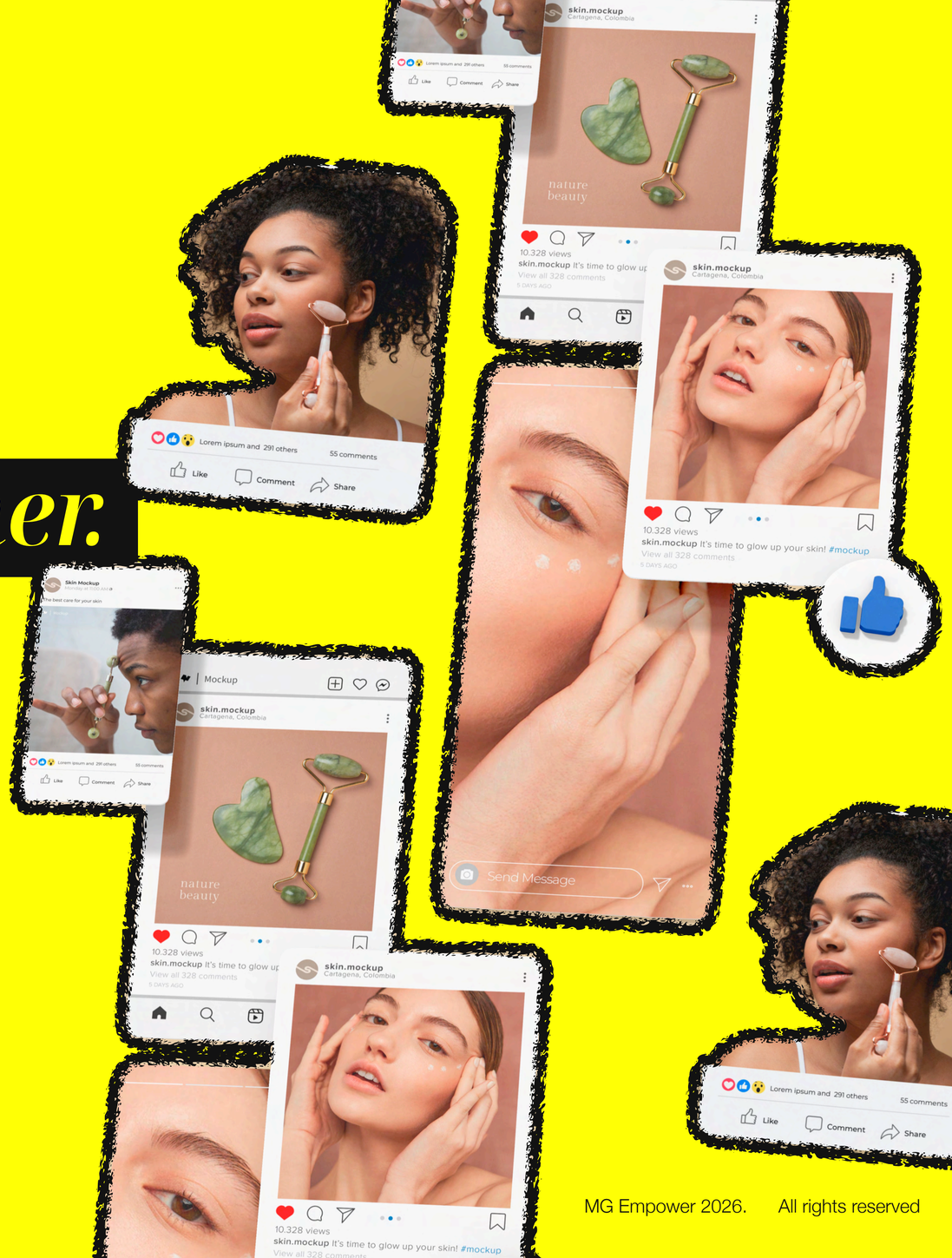
every creator with a following.



MG empower.

reserve

But... We live in a feed saturated with *#ad* *#sponsored* and *#partner.*

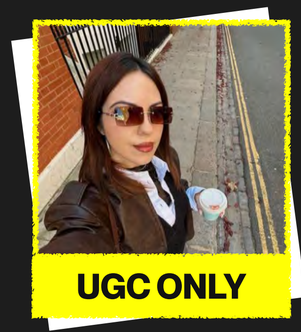


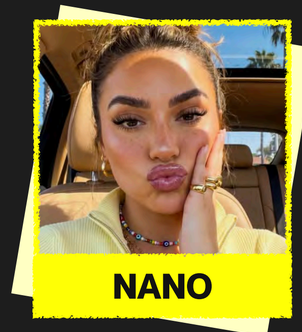
Audiences can spot a paid post from a mile off.
The question isn't whether they know it's an ad.
It’s whether they trust the person delivering it anyway.

MG empower.

MG Empower 2026. All rights reserved

The current fragmented *creator-scape*, with *nano, micro and macro tiers and a new platform every year,* makes it harder for brands to know who's actually worth paying.


UGC ONLY


NANO


MICRO


MID-TIER


MACRO


MEGA / CELEBRITY

MG empower.

MG Empower 2026. All rights reserved



BUT...

has the industry's *obsession* with 'influencer marketing' *rendered it meaningless?*

MG Empower 2026. All rights reserved



Nobody can just *‘get an influencer’* anymore and expect it to *convert.*

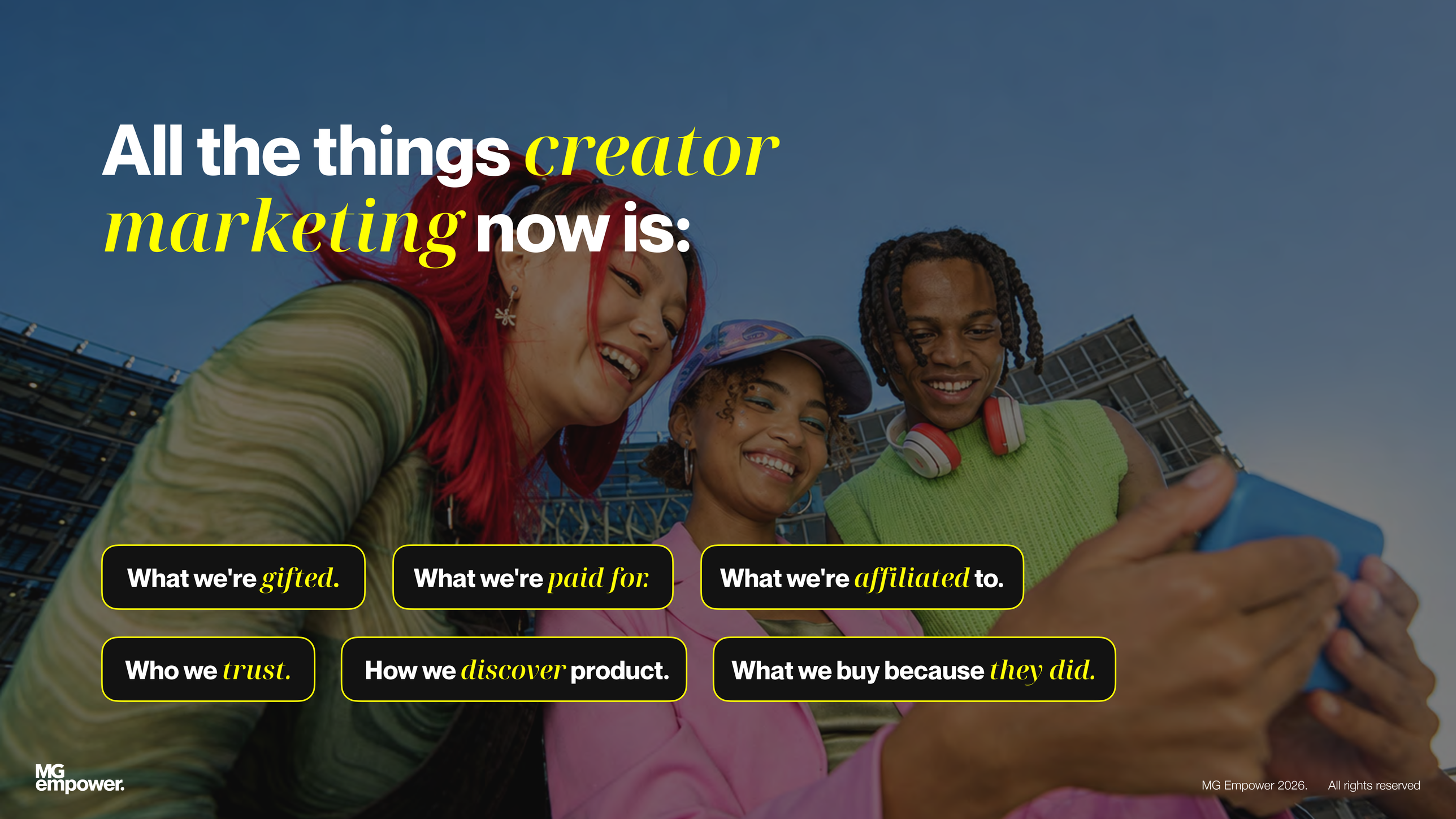


reach.
engage.
inspire.
influence.
drive awareness.
generate.
clicks.

MG empower.

MG Empower 2026. All rights reserved

All the things *creator marketing* now is:



What we're *gifted.*

What we're *paid for.*

What we're *affiliated* to.

Who we *trust.*

How we *discover* product.

What we buy because *they did.*

MG empower.

MG Empower 2026. All rights reserved

Despite its vast potential, in 2026, *'influencer marketing'* has become shorthand for a *gifted post* and a *discount code nobody tracks.*





Which makes sense: a free product is fast, cheap, and easy to brief. But without a tracked link, a fair commission and a real relationship, nobody - not the brand, not the creator - actually knows if it worked.

MG empower.

MG Empower 2026. All rights reserved

Creator commerce is pretty *important.*

Affiliate and commission-based partnerships now drive a growing share of creator revenue - brands only pay for what actually sells.



Audiences increasingly trust a recommendation from someone they follow over an ad from a brand they don't know.



Live and in-app shopping has turned creators into storefronts, collapsing the gap between ‘I saw it’ and ‘I bought it’ to a single tap.



MG empower.

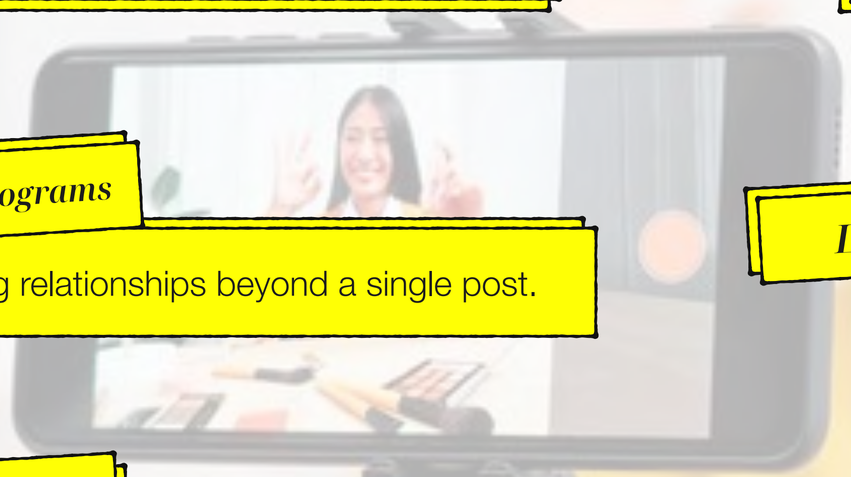
MG Empower 2026. All rights reserved



MG empower.

MG Empower 2026. All rights reserved

A non-exhaustive list **of what makes up the** *creator economy.*



Paid partnerships

Fixed-fee content in exchange for a deliverable.

Affiliate & commission

Performance-based pay tied to tracked sales.

Ambassador programs

Ongoing relationships beyond a single post.

Live shopping

Real-time selling through a creator's channel

Creator-led product

Creators shaping or co-owning the product itself

UGC & whitelisting

Creator content used in paid brand media.

MG empower.

MG Empower 2026. All rights reserved

SO *WHAT* NOW?

We don't want brands to be *creator tourists,* gifting a box and hoping.



We want them to *build relationships* that convert.

MG empower.

MG Empower 2026. All rights reserved

By treating *creators as partners,* not placements, brands can build *strategy that performs* through:

Casting for *fit.*

The right voice for the audience, not just the biggest one available.



e.g. niche fitness creators over celebrity reach

Structuring for *performance.*

Fair, tracked affiliate and commission models that reward what actually sells.



e.g. Amazon Influencer, LTK-style commission links

Building for *longevity.*

Ongoing relationships that compound trust, instead of one-off placements that reset it.



e.g. Alo Yoga's multi-year ambassador roster

MG empower.

MG Empower 2026. All rights reserved


The best creator content doesn't look like an ad. It looks like a **recommendation from a friend** who happens to have
40,000
friends.

Brands should always use *creator insight.* But they don't always need the *biggest name.*

MG empower.

MG Empower 2026. All rights reserved



Sometimes *one* *nano-creator* with the right audience is good enough.

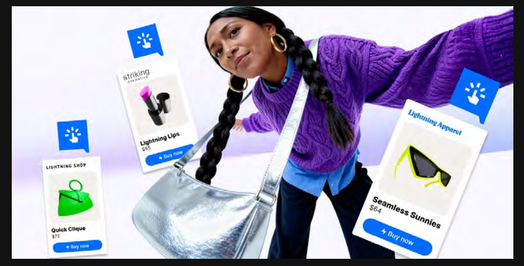
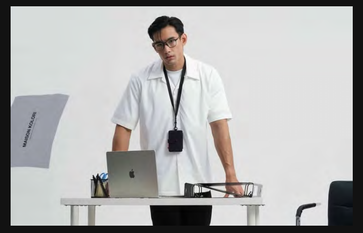
No *celebrity.*

No *agency fee.*

Just the right *2,000* people.

MG empower.

MG Empower 2026. All rights reserved

SOMETIMES BRANDS  THAT GO  ALL-IN ON *CREATORS* CREATE REAL  COMMERCE...

MG empower.

MG Empower 2026. All rights reserved

...BUT AT WHAT COST?



In the pursuit of scale, brands that used to *build trust* now buy reach, chase followers, and underestimate whether anyone's actually buying.

“We paid for reach. Nobody can tell us if a single unit sold.”

“The creator didn't even like the product - you could tell.”

“Great follower count. Shame the audience was all other brands.”

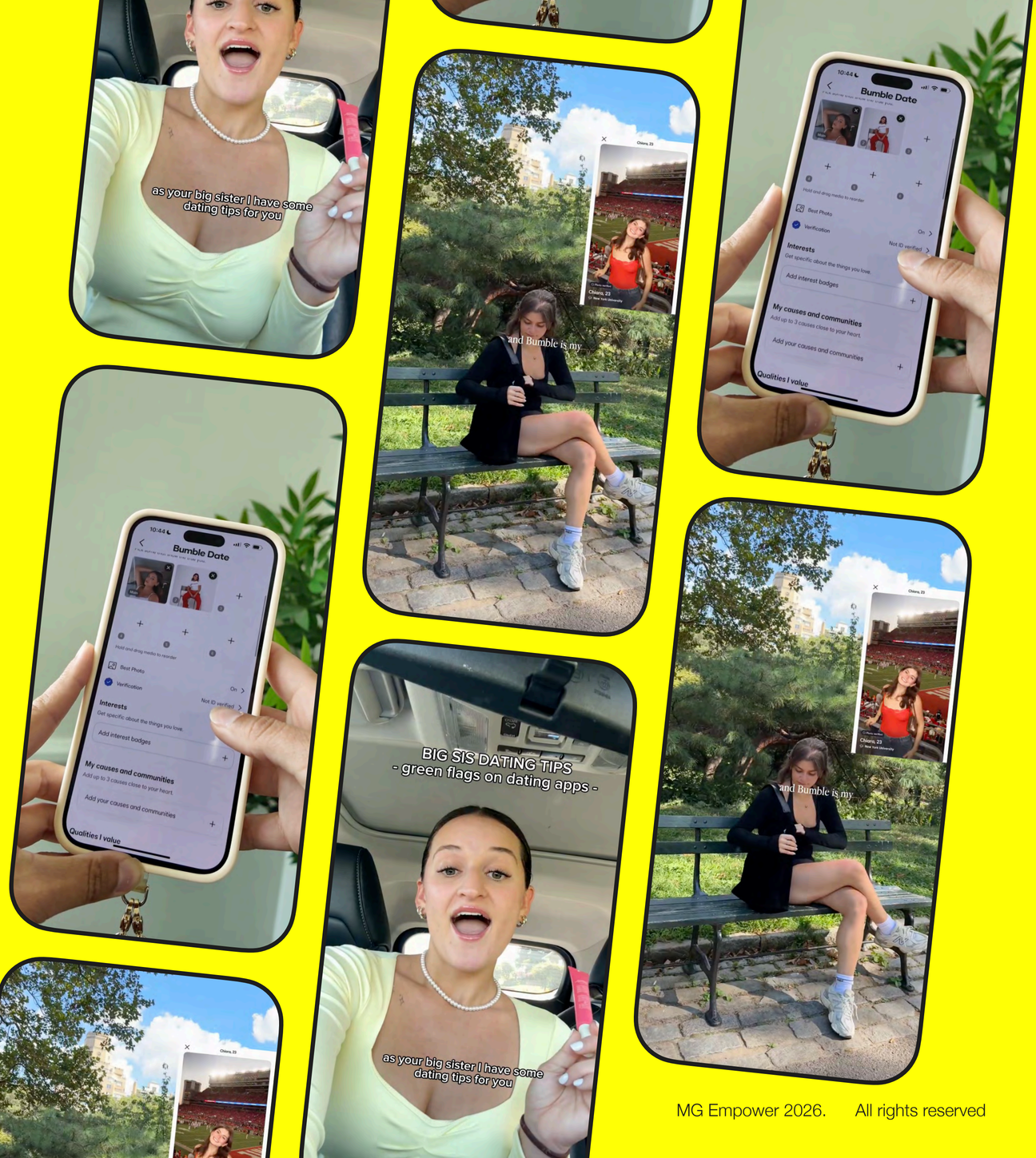
MG empower.

MG Empower 2026. All rights reserved

Creator strategy, defined.

The discipline of matching the right voice to the right audience, paying them in a way that rewards real performance, and giving them enough creative freedom that the content still sounds like them - not like a brand wearing their face.

It's not about the follower count on the invoice. *It's about the sales on the link.*



MG empower.

MG Empower 2026. All rights reserved

The long tail of a *good link.*

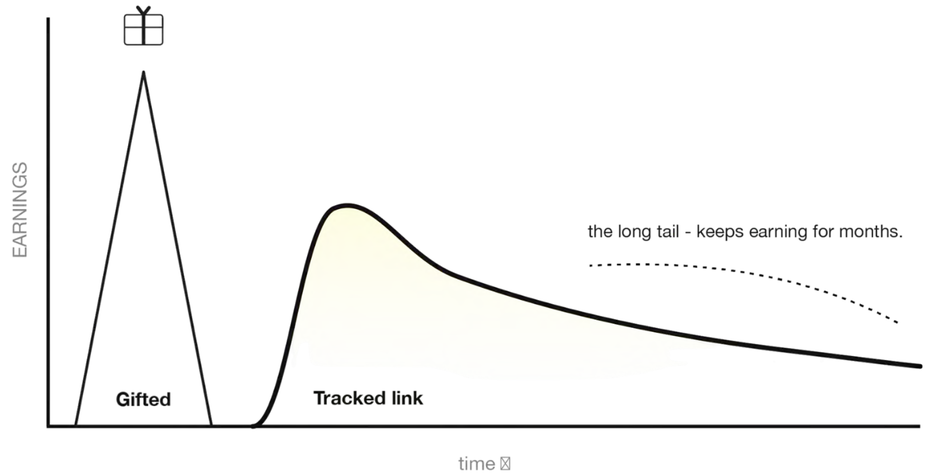
A gifted post earns its keep for a day. A tracked affiliate link, embedded in a piece of content someone actually searches for, can keep earning for months - and that's the part most brands under-plan for.

An ambassador relationship compounds the same way: the tenth post always performs better than the first, because the audience has watched the trust build in real time.



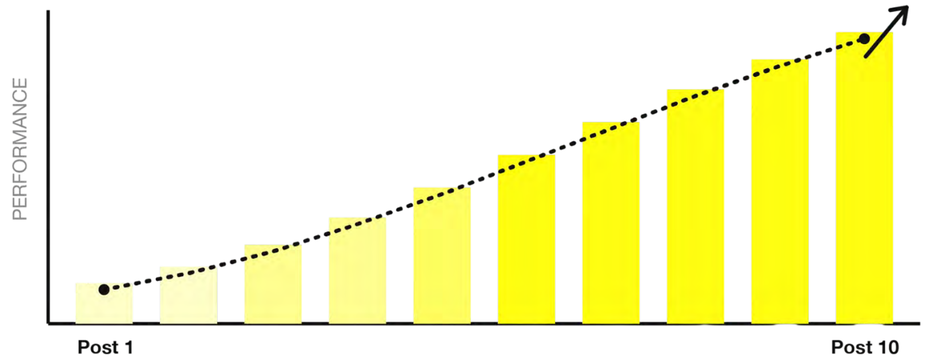
1 Gifted post vs. tracked link.

One spikes and dies. One keeps earning.



2 The ambassador compound.

The tenth post beats the first - trust builds over time.



MG empower.

MG Empower 2026. All rights reserved



A RECO-MMENDATION

is worth more than a reach number.

MG empower.

MG Empower 2026. All rights reserved



MG empower.

MG Empower 2026. All rights reserved

If you're ready to explore how *influencer and affiliate strategy* can unlock growth for your brand, get in touch.





At MG Empower, creator strategy is one of the disciplines we're proudest of. We handle casting, contracts, affiliate and commission structures, whitelisting and reporting end-to-end - so every partnership is built to perform, not just to post.

We believe the strongest creator content still comes from the creator, and we build every deal to protect that.

MG empower.

MG Empower 2026. All rights reserved

About MG Empower.







Integrated marketing agency, MG Empower is a global collective with diverse expertise and a deep understanding of culture to make work that matters - to brands and audiences worldwide, whether that work is fronted by a brand or a creator.

Our bespoke, agile and solution-driven approach is applied across influencer marketing, brand experience, strategy, creative and social media - bringing it all to life, on and offline, with energy like no other.

MG empower.

MG Empower 2026. All rights reserved

Thank you.

CONTACT US.

mg@mgempower.com

MGEMPOWER

MG-EMPOWER

MGEMPOWER

@MGEMPOWER

@MG_EMPOWER

MG Empower 2026. All rights reserved