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THE VAMP VIEW 2026/7

10 VIEWS ON WHAT THE INTERNET IS
REWARDING NOW

Built from a decade of creator partnerships, campaign data and a front row seat to internet culture, The Vamp View is our annual perspective on where influence is heading.

EACH YEAR, WE ASK ONE QUESTION:

What is the internet rewarding now?

The answer shapes how brands earn attention, build trust and inspire action. Understanding it is what separates reactive marketing from intentional influence.

FOREWORD

Our industry is still trapped in a one-off campaign mindset: build a brief, contract creators, launch a campaign, chase results. Then the process starts all over again. But influence should compound.

Audiences are more selective and platforms evolve faster than planning cycles. Creator marketing has matured from a channel into something much bigger: an ecosystem.

The leading brands are building systems, connected networks of creators, content, communities and distribution that optimises over time. These strategies are designed to create relevance long after a campaign ends.

But they can only scale through intention and this requires evidence.

At Vamp, we've spent more than a decade helping brands navigate the creator space. Across thousands of creator partnerships, millions of audience interactions and campaigns delivered in more than 65 markets, we've built a unique view of how influence actually works.

Not based on assumptions or trends, but on behaviour.

Every creator selected, published content, audience response measured and outcome analysed.

Over time, data has become one of our greatest advantages. It helps us spot patterns while they're still emerging and understand where attention is moving, so we can build creator strategies based on observed behaviour instead of assumptions.

The Vamp View is an extension of that thinking.

The observations in this report are signals emerging across culture, creators, communities and platforms that are shaping the next chapter of influence.

Some come directly from our own data. Others from what we're seeing across the internet every day. Together, they reveal what the internet is rewarding now.

We created this report to help marketers move beyond reacting to change and start building for it so they can make decisions with greater confidence.

Because that's how we think about influence.

Creator relationships compound

➤ THE SIGNAL

Creators featured in three or more campaigns for the same brand delivered **62% higher engagement** and **41% higher audience recall** than creators used only once.

➤ THE SHIFT

Most marketing channels are built around bursts of attention. Creator relationships don't work that way. Across our data, creators consistently deliver stronger results the longer the relationship continues. Familiarity builds recognition. Recognition builds trust. Trust makes audiences more likely to listen when recommendations are made. The strongest creator recruitment approach looks less like media buying and more like long term talent partnerships.

✕ THE MISTAKE

Too many brands prioritise creator volume over continuity, treating every campaign as a new casting exercise.

★ THE REWARD

Brands investing in long term creator relationships build trust more efficiently than those constantly starting from zero.

➔ WHAT TO DO NEXT
Measure creator relationship health over time and treat long term partnerships as a strategic asset.

+62%
HIGHER ENGAGEMENT

+41%
HIGHER AUDIENCE RECALL



Familiarity builds recognition. Recognition builds trust.

Taste is replacing targeting

➤ THE SIGNAL

Creator partnerships built around shared interests outperformed demographic aligned partnerships by **68%** across engagement and conversion metrics.

➤ THE SHIFT

Audience planning is still often organised around demographic signals such as age, gender and location. Those inputs still matter, but they're becoming less useful as predictors of behaviour online. People rally around shared interests and identities. A run club, a skincare community or a gaming fandom often has more influence on behaviour than a traditional audience segment, because participation is driven by passion, not proximity. Nike Run Club has become exactly that, a community that shapes habit and identity. Valuable creator ecosystems are built around communities.

✗ THE MISTAKE

Many brands still approach creator selection as an audience matching exercise, assuming demographic alignment will automatically create relevance. In reality, cultural alignment is often a stronger driver of performance.

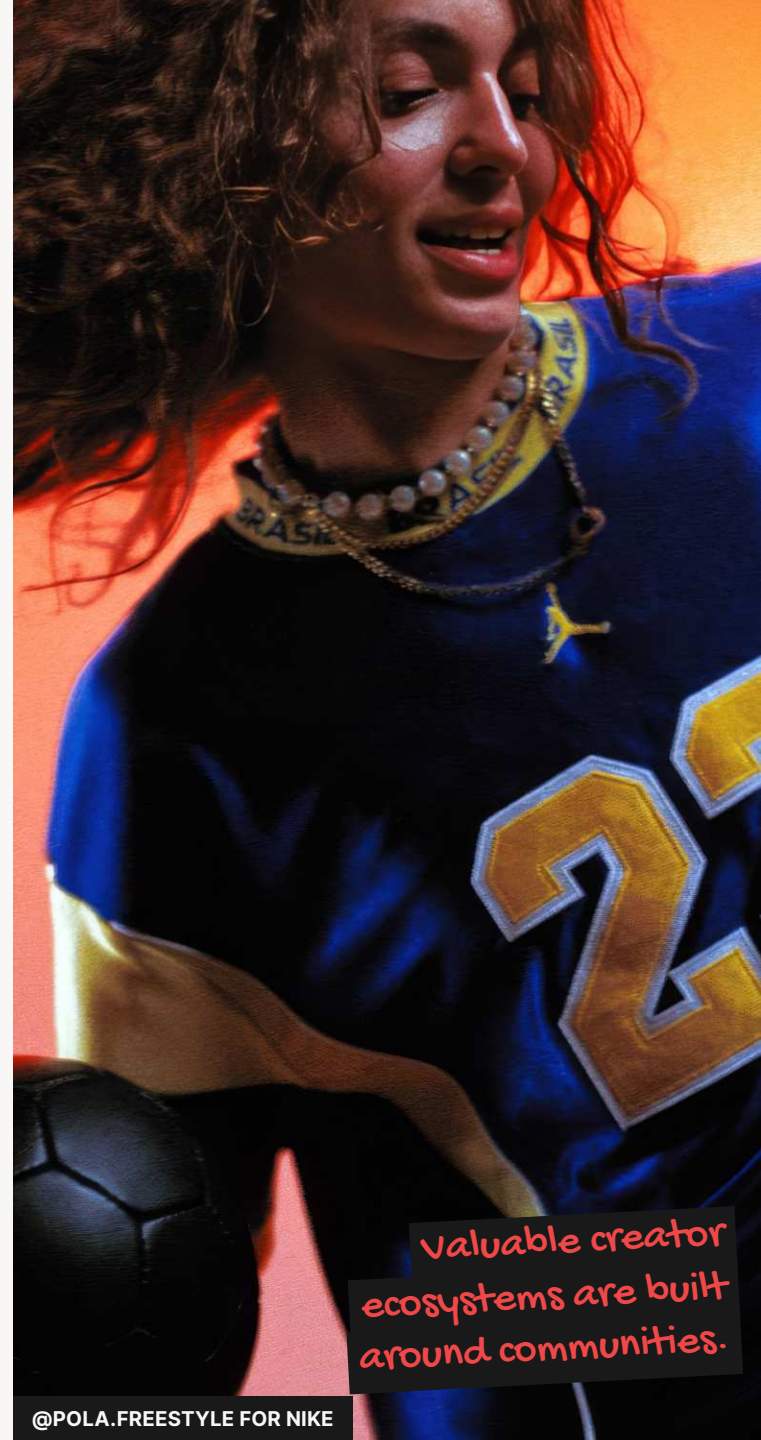
★ THE REWARD

Brands that understand the communities shaping culture will outperform those relying solely on traditional audience segmentation.

➔ **WHAT TO DO NEXT**
Build creator strategies around communities of interest, behaviours and cultural relevance.

68%

ACROSS ENGAGEMENT AND
CONVERSION METRICS



Valuable creator ecosystems are built around communities.

The feed can tell when something was made by a committee

➤ THE SIGNAL

Content created through collaborative briefing generated **2.7x higher engagement** than heavily scripted versions.

↻ THE SHIFT

Audiences are getting better at recognising when content feels manufactured. That's why the strongest creator work isn't tightly controlled. When creators are allowed to interpret culture, not just execute a script, it builds trust. It isn't the absence of strategy. It's what happens when brand intent and creator perspective align.

✕ THE MISTAKE

Attempting to create authenticity through tighter controls, longer briefs and more approvals. The result is often content that is strategically correct but culturally forgettable.

★ THE REWARD

Content that feels both intentional and native to the platform.

2.7x

HIGHER ENGAGEMENT THAN
HEAVILY SCRIPTED
VERSIONS

➔ WHAT TO DO NEXT
Invest more heavily in creator immersion than creator instruction.



Brands provide
context. Creators
provide perspective.

Participation is becoming more valuable than reach

➤ THE SIGNAL

Campaigns in the top quartile for comments, shares and saves delivered **3.4x stronger brand outcomes** than campaigns optimised primarily for reach.

➡ THE SHIFT

Traditionally success was measured through visibility. Now participation tells a more accurate story. Comments, shares, replies, saves and conversations signal something more important: audiences are actively shaping the content they engage with. The creator economy is one of the largest real time feedback loops for understanding human behaviour. Every comment section contains questions, frustrations, motivations and language that reveals how people actually think.

✕ THE MISTAKE

Most reporting frameworks still prioritise exposure over involvement. Yet participation is often a stronger indicator of influence than visibility alone.

★ THE REWARD

Brands measuring participation gain a more accurate understanding of what content is resonating and why.

➔ WHAT TO DO NEXT
Measure audience contribution as intentionally as exposure.

3.4x

STRONGER BRAND
OUTCOMES



AI is increasing the value of human perspective

➤ THE SIGNAL

Creator content centred on personal experience outperformed trend led content by **84%** across engagement and sharing metrics.

➡ THE SHIFT

Content is becoming easier to create, distribute and replicate. As AI increases the volume of content, audiences are placing more value on lived experience, and original perspective. The internet craves more reasons to care, but content does not automatically create more connection, perspective does.

✕ THE MISTAKE

Assuming AI changes what makes content valuable. In reality, it amplifies what was already valuable.

★ THE REWARD

Creators with distinctive points of view become more valuable as content becomes more abundant.

➔ WHAT TO DO NEXT
Prioritise perspective when evaluating creators, not just production capability.

84%

PERSONAL EXPERIENCE
OUTPERFORMED TREND LED
CONTENT



The internet craves
more reasons to care.

Creators are becoming business partners

➤ THE SIGNAL

With less than half of creator income now coming from brand deals, and long term partnerships delivering **2–3x higher ROI** than one off campaigns, more brands are exploring revenue share and equity models that reward shared success rather than fixed fees.

➤ THE SHIFT

The most sophisticated partnerships think of creators as business partners. Creators understand the communities they influence and are contributing to the growth of the business itself. The progression is becoming clear: first creators become recurring partners, then strategic partners. The relationship between Eugene Healey and Tracksuit reflects that shift. What began as a creator partnership evolved into a long term commercial relationship built on shared ambition, and campaign delivery.

✕ THE MISTAKE

Treating creator compensation as a production cost rather than a partnership investment. Brands that continue negotiating creators down may be quietly losing access to the most culturally connected talent.

★ THE REWARD

Brands that negotiate every partnership the same way risk overlooking their most valuable creators.

➔ WHAT TO DO NEXT
Review your creator deal structures.

2–3x

HIGHER ROI THAN ONE OFF CAMPAIGNS

first creators become recurring partners, then strategic partners.



The most valuable communities are no longer public

➤ THE SIGNAL

Subscription communities and private creator ecosystems continue to grow, with Substack reaching **5M paid subscriptions** and **\$450M in creator revenue**, signalling the shift towards direct-to-audience monetisation.

➤ THE SHIFT

Public feeds optimise for reach, whereas private communities optimise for trust. As social media becomes more saturated, creators are investing in channels they own: newsletters, subscriber communities, private groups and membership platforms. The reaction to ongoing platform uncertainty, including discussions around TikTok’s future, exposed something larger than platform risk. It highlighted how many creators have spent years building audiences they don’t fully own. This prompted the shift from rented attention to owned relationships.

✗ THE MISTAKE

Applying broadcast thinking to environments built on trust.

★ THE REWARD

Brands that earn access to high trust communities gain a level of attention and advocacy that public campaigns rarely achieve.

5M

PAID SUBSCRIPTIONS

\$450M

IN CREATOR REVENUE

➔ WHAT TO DO NEXT
Map where your most valuable audiences actually spend their time.



Public feeds optimise for reach, whereas private communities optimise for trust.

The attribution model is the argument we keep avoiding

➤ THE SIGNAL

Creator exposure is undervalued by last click attribution models. While it can drive **20–60% lifts in branded search**, credit is often assigned to the final click, not the touchpoint that created demand.

⚡ THE SHIFT

Performance marketing trained marketers to expect clean attribution, but creator marketing doesn't work that way. Someone watches a creator's content, saves it, mentions it to a friend, searches the brand three days later and converts through a paid search ad. The creator receives no credit and the search ad receives all of it. The challenge sits in measurement, not creator marketing. The value often extends far beyond what platform reporting can capture.

✗ THE MISTAKE

Holding creator marketing to last click standards while applying softer measurement frameworks to other forms of marketing.

★ THE REWARD

Brands that use incremental testing, search uplift and brand impact measurement get a more accurate view of creator performance and build a stronger case for investment.

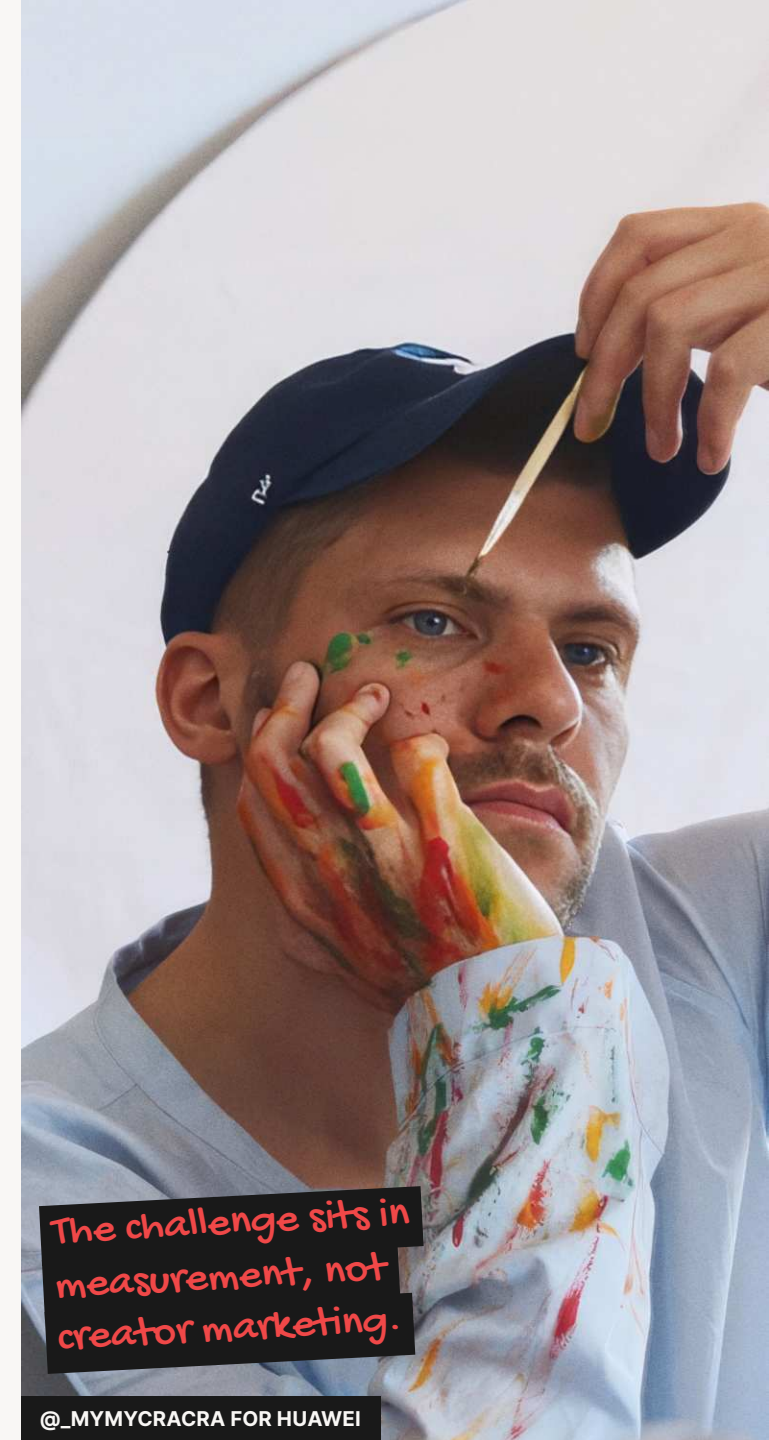


WHAT TO DO NEXT

Design measurement before campaigns launch and define what influence looks like across the full customer journey.

20–60%

LIFTS IN BRANDED SEARCH



The challenge sits in measurement, not creator marketing.

Relevance is outperforming production **value**

➤ THE SIGNAL

When audience relevance was equal, production quality accounted for **less than 4% of performance variance** across creator content.

➡ THE SHIFT

Access to creative tools is greater than ever. As production quality becomes expected, it stops being a differentiator. What performs best is content that feels timely, useful or culturally aware. Understanding audiences now creates more value than production complexity.

✕ THE MISTAKE

Prioritising execution over audience understanding.

★ THE REWARD

Brands focused on relevance create stronger outcomes without relying on ever increasing production budgets.

➔ WHAT TO DO NEXT

Invest in insight before execution.

<4%

OF PERFORMANCE
VARIANCE ACROSS
CREATOR CONTENT



Understanding
audiences now creates
more value than
production complexity.

Culture moves faster than planning **cycles**

➤ THE SIGNAL

The average lifecycle of social trends has shortened by **43%** over the last five years.

➤ THE SHIFT

Culture evolves continuously, but most organisations do not. The challenge is building frameworks capable of responding while relevance still exists. Brands like Duolingo have demonstrated that sustained relevance doesn't come from predicting culture perfectly. It comes from adapting as culture changes. Lasting relevance comes from adaptability, not speed.

✕ THE MISTAKE

Building marketing systems designed for certainty in an environment defined by change.

★ THE REWARD

Adaptability is becoming one of the strongest competitive advantages in creator marketing.

➔ WHAT TO DO NEXT
Build creator strategies that can evolve alongside culture.

43%

OVER THE LAST FIVE YEARS



Lasting relevance comes from adaptability, not speed.



THE VIEW · THE VAMP VIEW 2026/7

Creator marketing will be successful for brands that understand people better than platforms and treat data as a source of understanding, not just measurement.

They recognise attention, trust and participation as signals of human behaviour before they're metrics.

Because technology may shape the environment, but people still shape the outcome.

That's The Vamp View.

The conversation doesn't end here.

The Vamp View is designed to spark discussion. If you'd like to explore how these signals apply to you, we'd love to continue the conversation.

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