

Code of Ethics:

Guide to Responsible Influencer Marketing Practices

FOR CONTENT CREATORS AND INFLUENCERS

Presented by  CLARK

With the advertising landscape in full flux, influencer marketing has taken the lead and completely changed the game, with brands and influencers now joining hands to showcase products and services in the most compelling ways. Although there is a prevailing wave of excitement, ethical concerns have surfaced thanks to a handful of creators resorting to misleading practices or failing to openly disclose their affiliations with brands. Infused with skill and purpose, our Code of Ethics for Responsible Influence comes forth as a groundbreaking statement of accountability in the field of influencer marketing.

The goal of this ever-evolving document is to set ethical and responsible standards for influencers and brands alike. Its primary objective is to foster transparency and ethics in our professional practices while focusing on the protection of consumers against misleading advertising.

This Code of Ethics will outline the three principles of clear, responsible and ethical collaboration.

1. Transparency

2. Ethical Conduct

3. Sustainability



Summary

PART

1

Transparency

PART

2

Ethical Conduct

PART

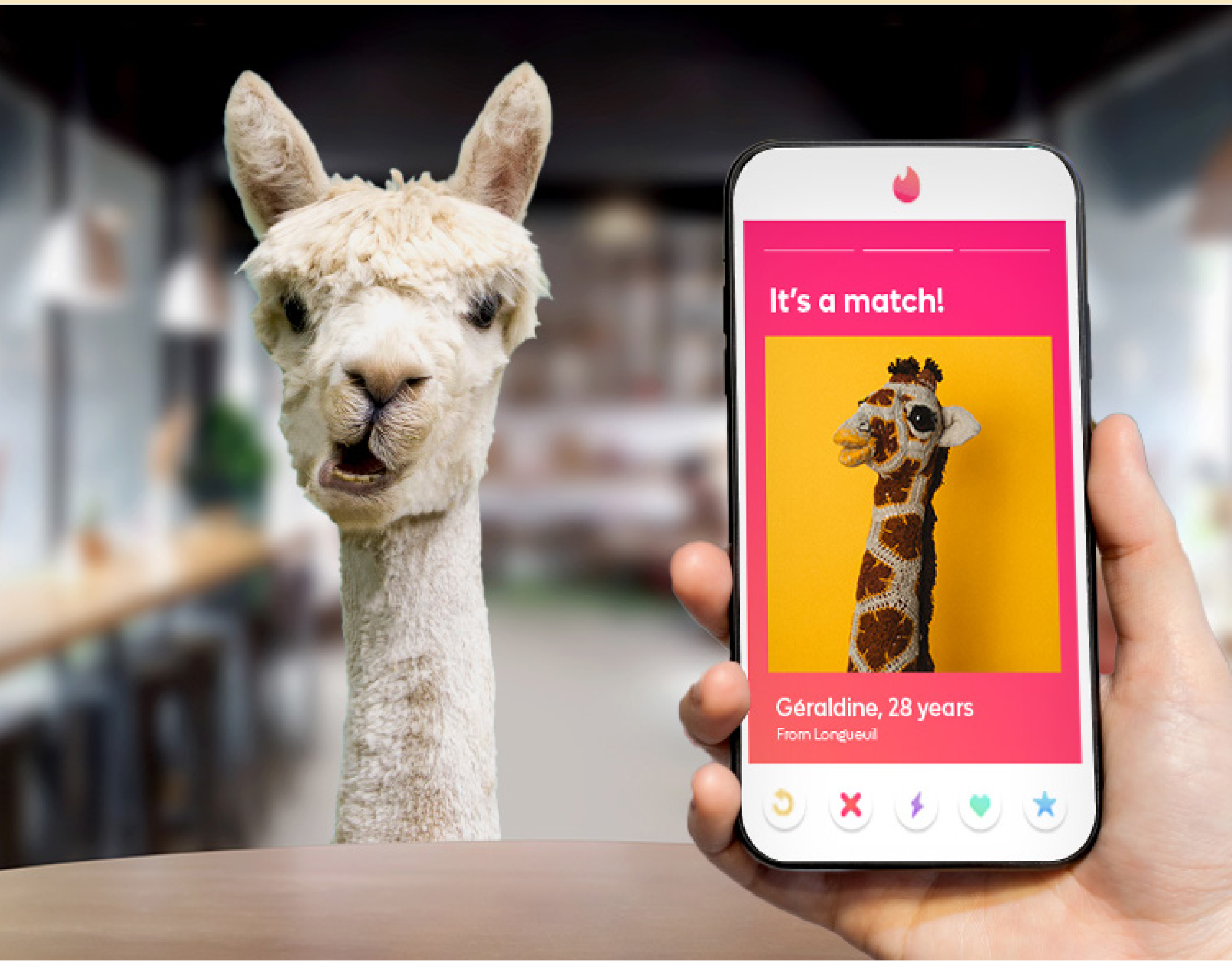
3

Sustainability



1. Transparency

Would you catfish on a date?



Authenticity

Any opinions expressed by influencers must be sincere and based on concrete experience. Before agreeing to a collaboration, ask yourself if you would be a customer or consumer of that brand or product. Content creators also undertake not to overuse filters or special effects that could alter their authentic image, and to remain natural and authentically themselves.

👍 Being a consumer of the brand

👎 Excessive use of filters

Who wants to be known as a walking billboard?



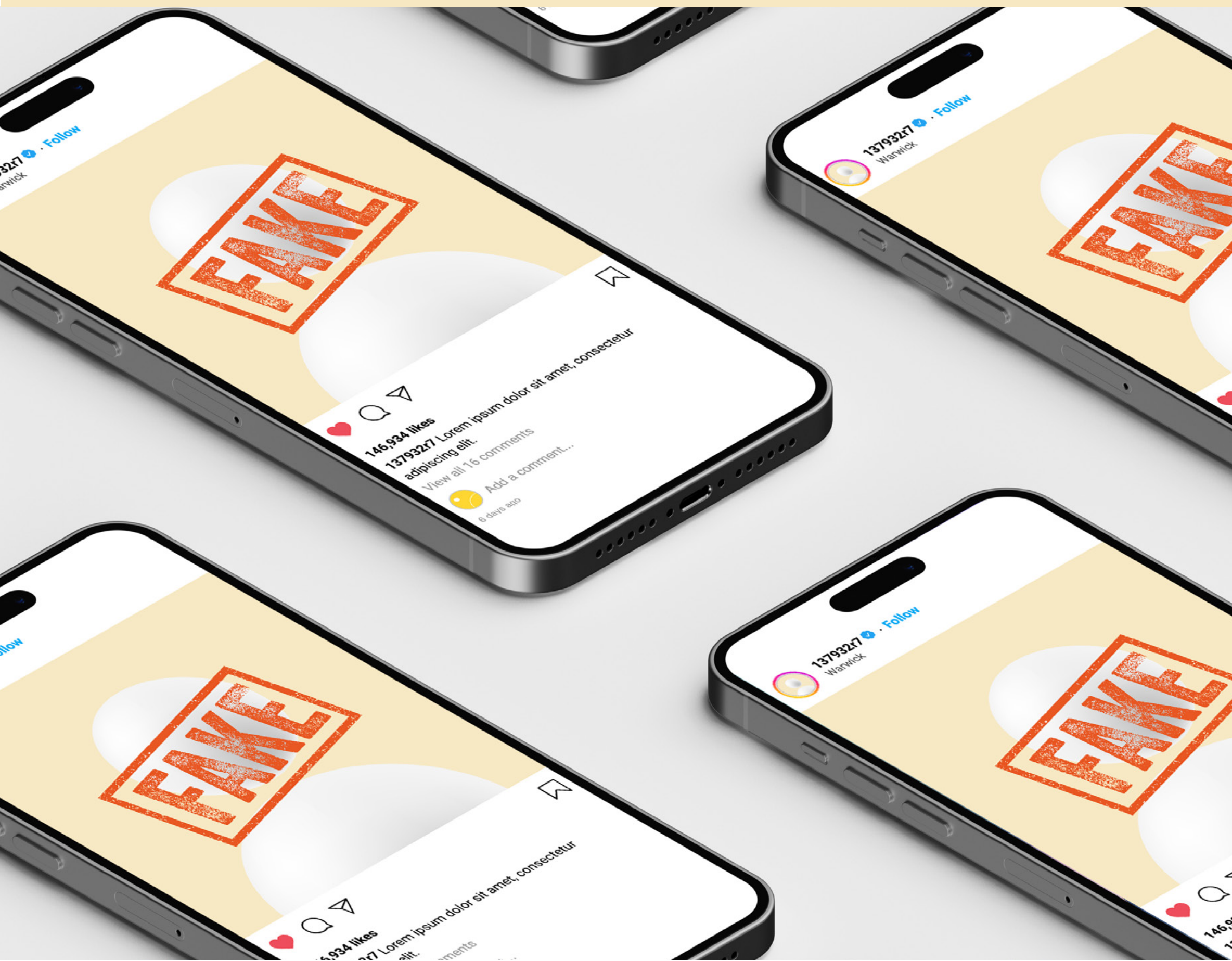
Frequency of Partnerships

The influencer undertakes to maintain a balance between sponsored and non-sponsored content. We recommend that at least one post out of every two be non-sponsored. This quota of partnerships must be adhered to at all times, except during commercial holiday periods or depending on the sector of activity.



Maintaining a balanced ratio of organic and sponsored content

What's better: facts or fake news?



Community

Influencers must guarantee that their community was built organically and authentically. This means that they state and certify that they have never used deceptive, dubious or unlawful methods to artificially inflate their number of subscribers, views or engagement rates on their social networks.



Buying subscribers or artificial engagement

Would you rather invest your money or have to pay a fine?



Transparency

When an influencer enters a commercial collaboration, they must transparently inform their community. To do this, they must use clear and easily identifiable references. According to the Competition Bureau, those who fail to comply can face fines of up to \$750,000 and even imprisonment. It is essential to include the necessary terms such as “#ad,” “#sponsored,” “#XYZ_Ambassador,” “#XYZ_Partner” (where “XYZ” is the brand name)*.

These mentions should be placed first in the caption so they are easily visible to the influencer’s community. For detailed information on the current industry best practices in Canada developed by Ad Standards’ Influencer Marketing Steering Committee, please refer to the Disclosure Guidelines available [here](#).



Openly disclosing your partnerships

*These mentions are part of your legal obligations.



2. Ethical Conduct

Would you rather be known for your loyalty or your opportunism?



Loyalty

Influencers have an obligation to be loyal to the brands they collaborate with. This entails refraining from promoting competing products or services within the same industry, particularly in the week leading up to and following the campaign. Moreover, it is best to avoid simultaneous advertising for different clients on the same day, even if there is no conflicting interest.

It is equally crucial that this loyalty works both ways as brands must trust influencers and be transparent just as much as the opposite must be true.



Do not promote a competitor one week before and after the campaign.



Publish several branded partnerships on the same day

Would you risk upsetting a friend?



Respect

Influencers agree not to publish any content that might disparage or depreciate the image of the brand which they are collaborating with*. Furthermore, under the laws of Canada, it is strictly forbidden to publish any content that :

- pornographic
- obscene
- violent
- defamatory
- racist
- xenophobic
- offensive
- LGBTQ+-phobic
- or any content that could harm others.



Sharing inclusive, positive and engaging content

*Violators of these laws are subject to legal sanctions, including penalties and lawsuits.

*For more information, please consult the Quebec Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms (article 10) or the Civil Code.

*Would you ask a gardener for
hairdressing advice?*



Integrity

Influencers guarantee they will not publish any content that is misleading, inaccurate, deceptive or that does not accurately represent the qualities of the brand's products or services and therefore commit to testing these products before recommending them to their audience.



Trying a product or service before
recommending it

How would you feel if someone stole your work and sold it?



Copyrights

Influencers agree not to publish any content that would infringe the image or rights of third parties, particularly the intellectual property rights and personality rights of all parties involved in the influencer campaign.

Additionally, any music or sound incorporated in videos must be free from royalty obligations and suitable for commercial use.

Lastly, influencers must avoid incorporating logos or brands into content produced for commercial partners, with special consideration given to visible clothing items.

👍 Be rigorous and if in doubt, contact your legal advisor

👎 Use content for which you do not have the required authorizations or licenses



3. An Sustainable Approach

Is a hectic weekend halfway around the world really what you're dreaming of?



Awareness and Commitment

Sustainability begins with realizing the CO2 emissions produced by our actions or travels.

Influencers pledge to limit their environmental impact by minimizing their carbon footprint as much as possible. Here are a few ways to achieve this:

- Share your (dis)interest in a product with brands before accepting free-gifting opportunities.
- Avoid unnecessary waste.
- Prioritize in-person shopping over postal shipments.
- Choose trains over airplanes whenever possible.
- Prioritize public transportation over personal modes of travel.



Integrating ecological reflection into your creative process

What if you could avoid throwing away and repurchasing clothes for 20 years?



Responsible Alternatives

Influencers are encouraged to promote brands and services that offer reasoned alternatives in terms of consumption (small collections, upcycled and recycled materials, eco-friendly materials, and 100% certified materials).



Prioritizing partnerships with responsible brands

Would you marry a total stranger?



Reflection and Assessment

The influencer should undertake a basic research effort on the ecological and environmental effects of the product (carbon footprint, pollution levels, potential harm to biodiversity, etc.) before agreeing to a partnership. If such information is not available, we recommend that the influencer contact the agency or client.



Researching the production chain and origin of the product you intend to promote

This Code of Ethics was created, conceptualized and inspired by enriching discussions and the work of various industry professionals:

IN CANADA

- Influencer Disclosure Guidelines, Ad Standards' Influencer Marketing Steering Committee (2023)
- Competition Bureau Canada

IN FRANCE

- "Charte de la Relation Influenceurs", adopted by the Syndicat du Conseil en Relations Publiques (SCRCP)
- WOÔ — Creative Influence Marketing Agency: "Charte d'éthique du marketing d'influence"
- Code of Ethics of "Paye ton Influence" and "À Quand demain"
- Responsible influence certificate from the French advertising

I hereby declare that I have read the Code of ethics : Guide to Responsible Influencer Marketing Practices, and agree to abide by its principles. I understand that their purpose is to promote ethical and responsible influence on social networks, and to guarantee the transparency and honesty of my actions as a content creator.

Yes, join the pledge

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