



Retaining Digital Economy Partners:

Why Payments Are Critical to Creators and Influencers

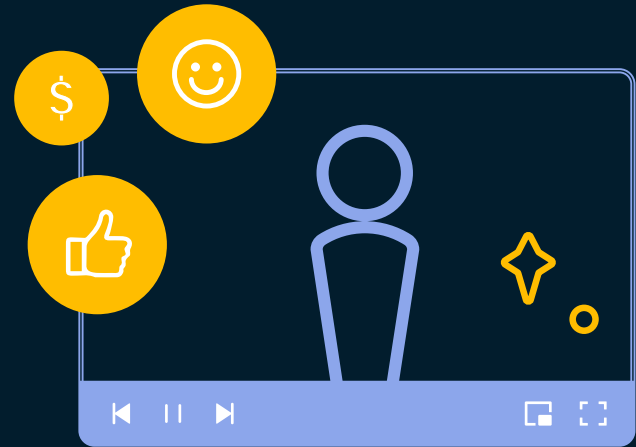


Table of Contents

SECTION ONE: Today's Digital Economy ▶

SECTION TWO: Payment Platforms: The Foundation for a Mutually Beneficial Relationship ▶

SECTION THREE: Are Payments Really the Biggest Perk for Influencers and Creators? ▶

SECTION FOUR: End-to-End Should Be End-to-End ▶

SECTION FIVE: Leave Nothing to Chance ▶



Today's Digital Economy

The digital economy isn't just booming. It's exploding.

TikTok alone had roughly [106,000 influencers](#) in 2020, and it's a relatively new platform. Instagram has [at least five times](#) this number, and chances are YouTube has five times that. A little imagination goes a long way, as they say, and the momentum of those joining the ranks of influencers is only expected to continue—but at a much faster pace. Some estimates put the number at upward of [50 million influencers and creators](#) worldwide.

This movement didn't appear out of thin air, of course. Though people say they use social media to stay in touch with family and friends, the various platforms have now become sources of entertainment. A 15-second video is an easy way to fill spare time.

However, it's not just the average, everyday person driving the creator boom. Marketers are seeing the opportunity to piggyback on the sway creators hold with their followers to sell goods. After all, [90% of consumers](#) are more likely to trust recommended brands, even if strangers are the ones recommending them.

Enter influencer marketing and, soon after, the digital economy.

But with creators becoming an increasingly powerful force within commerce, the tables have turned. No longer are brands dictating the terms. Creators understand their worth and are more than willing to walk away from a deal—another one is likely around the corner, after all.



In 2021, approximately [\\$3.7 billion was spent](#) on influencer marketing in the U.S., an increase of 33% from 2020.

Any business relying on the digital economy to get the word out must prioritize its influential partners' satisfaction. Things have changed, and creators are now in the driver's seat. Today, platforms must build best-in-class partner experiences to succeed and provide the most seamless experiences possible, allowing influencers and creators to focus on creating rather than the logistics of working with brands. Something as seemingly inconsequential as payments could make or break that relationship.

Payment Platforms: The Foundation for a Mutually Beneficial Relationship

The foundation of any great partner experience is built on payment execution. No one should be put in a position to ask for reimbursement for services rendered. But that's what you do when you don't deliver on your end of the deal. It serves as one of the most important touchpoints in a person's engagement with your brand. Not paying on time—every time—will eventually chip away at the relationship.

That's why a seamless payments experience is so critical. Get it wrong, and you could lose the ability to bring new influencers and creators into the fold. They do talk, and many are pushing for greater transparency within the industry. Some have even chosen to speak openly about their relationships with brands on their owned channels. Word will get out.

Most importantly, your success could be at risk. After spending months, if not years, building a brand reputation, you could lose that very quickly if your payments operation

is broken. It leaves your partners dissatisfied and open to taking their business elsewhere. Should they choose to find greener pastures, your competition will gladly take them in.

If you're at all familiar with the payments function of a business, no one needs to tell you that it's more detailed than merely issuing checks. The process of making payments can become quite complex, especially when much of it is still manual. Errors can easily be made, which can lead to late payments—not by days but by weeks.

By instituting a scalable process to manage your end-to-end partner payouts operation, you'll not only have a better infrastructure to help your business grow, but also keep your business in the good graces of your partners. Besides, your team's time and energy are better spent on more strategic endeavors.



Are Payments Really the Biggest Perk for Influencers and Creators?

Simply delivering timely, accurate payments isn't good enough. Whether they're making \$5 or \$5 million, influencers and creators expect a top-notch experience. Expectations abound in the space, including:

Flexibility

If you partner with an influencer in Denmark, that individual expects options. Perhaps they prefer kroner or euros. Maybe they're fine with U.S. dollars. Remove any and all hurdles in the payment process from the start of the relationship.

Choice

Choice of payment method currency and advanced options, such as payment thresholds or early payments, have become the norm these days. The digital economy is a global economy, and having options speeds up the process.

Seamlessness

Payment errors can damage influencers' businesses and waste their time. Your payout experience must eliminate errors to eliminate partner friction. The last thing you want is for one of your partners to correct a mistake for you. It's not very professional.



Visibility

As a business yourself, you expect clear, real-time visibility into your payment status. The same courtesy should be paid to influencers and creators. Don't make them ask. Deliver instant access to this information, and that also goes for updating their payment preferences, seeing their payments history, etc.



Professionalism

The back-end payments experience is just as important as the front-end. All interactions should be branded to show that you own the experience—and that you're a reputable partner in the digital economy.

Beyond the relationship itself, the payments ecosystem requires [continual compliance review](#). A platform utilizes tens of thousands of regulatory rules that are updated as regulations change. Ensure everything is kept above board by investing in a technology solution that minimizes compliance risk while offering everything those in the digital economy seek in a partnership.



End-to-End Should Be End-to-End

Though this should go without saying, your business can only scale if you have the talent to sustain it—the power is in the influencer’s hands. A best-in-class partner experience takes into account all aspects of the payments operation, end-to-end.

But it’s also essential to future-proof your business by instituting the following strategies:



1. Streamline the partner onboarding process.

Offering an easy-to-use, white-labeled system puts the power in your partner’s hands where it should be. Enable the functionality for influencers and creators to input their vital payment

information at the very start of your relationship. Imagine if your partners could easily onboard themselves with a web-based, branded portal with rules to minimize payment errors.



2. Think globally.

You never know who your brand will partner with in the future. It could be a creator right around the corner or someone on another shore. Don’t worry about the headaches that normally come with expanding into new geographies. Rest assured that your system can manage new territories with ease. Transact and convert money in local currencies across multiple countries, all while providing your partners with the choice of unique payment methods.





3. Enable clear payment communication.

Who doesn't want real-time, branded status communications from partners? With the right platform, you can offer influencers and creators 24/7 access to a portal to view their current payment status, update payment preferences, and review payment history.



4. Offer reporting and reconciliation functionalities.

Easily integrate your payments operation with performance tracking platforms, allowing your brand to monitor performance marketing, view real-time analytics, and manage global payouts in one seamless experience.



5. Never forget compliance.

Even the strongest partnerships are fragile, more so in the digital economy. It's a competitive space. So, vet rules to ensure your partners don't have to worry about failed payments, inaccuracies, or fraud. Your technology solution should check everything automatically to prevent you from paying bad actors and ensure payment security.

Prioritizing partner relationships makes good business sense. And although your brand will need to put in the hard work of establishing and maintaining the myriad of aspects involved in the digital economy, leaving payment execution to manual processes just complicates matters.

Leave Nothing to Chance

The digital economy isn't going away. There's no disputing that fact. Investing in the right solutions that prioritize the partner experience will give your brand a competitive edge, especially with competition only increasing.

Whether your company supports 20, 200, or 2,000 digital economy partners, you need to ensure your payments operation is ready to scale quickly. Truth be told, partners are as crucial to the lifeblood of your business as your customers. So, ensuring they have the best experience working with you will secure the long-term health of your company.



Deliver Effortless Partner Payments for the Digital Economy

SHOW ME HOW

The Tipalti logo features a thick yellow curved line above the word "tipalti" in a white, lowercase, sans-serif font.

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