

The Rise of the Everyday Creator

In 2022, real people are redefining what it means to be successful in the creator economy.



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The Creator Economy was founded on the idea that normal people can build any life and any level of success they want on the internet. In the words of Paul Saffo, “We invent new technology and then use it to reinvent ourselves.”

Fitting, for a group of creatives who are currently reinventing an entire business world.

Although the content industry has been in a state of flux, and for a moment, huge celebrity accounts held all the power, smaller creators are now finding their foothold. And once again, they’re emerging as innovative champions and expert players of the long game.

Out with celebrities, in with real people.

In 2004, Chris Anderson’s Long Tail theory explained how consumers were shifting away from mainstream

markets in favor of less widely-known niche products.

They could find anything on the internet, so they were choosing to ind brands and services that they could relate to.

For digital natives, this meant a chance to succeed by monetizing their small personal brands in creative new ways. You no longer had to be a mainstream star to “make it.”

And it worked...for a while.

Although the Creator Economy was meant to give everyone an equal chance, it grew into an exclusive space where business was owned by the top 1% of creators with millions of followers. (Ironically, this goes against everything it originally stood for... but that’s business, baby.)

The result? Up until recently, “making it big” had become the definition of success for creators – literally and figuratively. The biggest channels with the most views made the most money. It was that simple.

But as leading creators grew so massively popular that they became celebrities in their own right, audiences began to look for alternatives. They wanted a more personal experience.

So they shifted their focus back to smaller niche channels, which offer something those leading creators can’t – close-knit communities built up around genuine, relatable, and valuable content.

The power of the everyday creator.

Now, “big” creators aren’t actually big at all. They’re regular people who are rewriting the rules to build long-term businesses and make a great living with more modestly-sized audiences.

They’re not celebrities. Instead, they’re businesspeople, college students, and stay-at-home parents with diverse backgrounds and interests – just like you and I.

Take Modern Millie, an online educator and coach who started out as a corporate worker dreaming of something more. With 234k YouTube followers, she’s a world away from leading creators with subscriber counts in the millions, but doing exceptionally well for herself.

And throughout her journey, she’s learned plenty of valuable lessons about what being a small creator means. Her advice to others hinges on the idea that size doesn’t make or break you in this business.

“Hitting 10k followers doesn’t change a thing,” she said.

“We think it’s some barrier we have to break through in order to do whatever it is you want to do. But that couldn’t be further from the truth.”



At the beginning stages of Millie’s journey, she was only thinking about how to hit 10k followers. That was her only goal because that’s when she’d “be legit”...right?

Well, the day came, and...

“I thought ‘Oh my gosh, this is it!’ and...guess what? Nothing changed. No magical thing happened, brands didn’t start emailing me, I didn’t make more money.”

According to Millie, what finally did kickstart her business was realizing that her total subscriber count was far less important than the power of her online presence.



For everyday creators in similar positions, success comes down to:

- Relatability.
- Accessibility.
- Expertise.

This power combo gives them an edge over celebrity-level content.

More importantly, it helps create deeper personal connections with followers. And those translate into higher engagement – the cornerstone of a small creator’s strategy.

The metrics of connection.

Although views and subscribers still play a part in measuring growth, engagement is now the benchmark for success. It’s the key indicator showing the strength of a creator’s connection with their audience.

Generally, the smaller the channel, the more powerful the potential to make those connections is.

Smaller creators tend to be more actively involved in their communities by facilitating discussions and encouraging likes, shares and comments.

Millie is extremely involved with her community. She regularly interacts with her followers, and gets people participating with opinions and ideas.

She even asks what kind of content they want to see in the future.

“Any time I see a comment that’s a really great suggestion, I screenshot it,” she said, noting the importance of fan feedback.

“Let me go with the flow here. Let me highlight my audience.”

And it works.

Good engagement = good business.

By actively listening and responding, Millie built valuable trust. She created a strong 2-way relationship with her followers, who regularly engage on all her platforms and are eager to be a part of the process.

As a result, she wields more influence and buying power.

In audiences of all sizes, engaged followers are the ones who make the highest impact on a creator’s bottom line.

These viewers have a personal connection, so they’re more likely to spend money with the creators themselves or through partner companies. In this way, niche brands that build a solid number of engaged fans can develop a stable income, and that’s a huge win.

But everyday creators (always the innovators) are taking it a step further and amplifying that potential in a pretty genius way.

Collaborating in a niche market.

In a busy content world with more than 50 million creators online, small creators are treating each other as teammates, rather than competitors.

They’re joining forces to create videos, guest star on each other’s channels, and become familiar faces for both sets of followers.

This lets them expand into each others’ audiences and create a larger ecosystem of fans that are all – you guessed it – very connected to the content and the creators themselves.

Modern Millie and Brock Johnson, an Instagram growth coach, have partnered up on 2 videos together already, both of which were met with very positive reactions.

This system works because Brock and Millie occupy the same niche.

While they each have a different specialization and style, their content addresses the same target audience. People watching one of them will be interested in what the other one has to say. That’s why supporting each other helps them expand their networks while maintaining an “everyday” feel.

Plus, a partnership adds an extra level of clout to the content. Both creators benefit from featuring another expert in the field. It adds more value for viewers, which just continues the cycle.

*Watch, follow, engage,
spread the word, repeat.*

We’ll leave you with this.

Small creators are the foundation and the future of the Creator Economy. They’re leveling the playing field by putting power and opportunities back in the hands of everyday people.

So if you’re an everyday creator with a vision, link up with other people working towards the same goals. You can build your network, trade advice, get inspiration, and more.

Above all, remember that your success is tied to your unique brand more than your popularity.

Widespread appeal and massive subscriber counts had their moment, but... everyday creators will always be the new black.

