

# Agentio

A man with a beard and glasses looking up, wearing a blue jacket, against a purple background.

## The Ultimate 2026 YouTube Creator Marketing Playbook

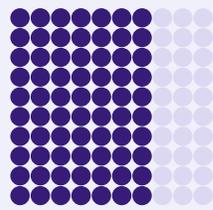
*What an analysis of 10,000+ YouTube integrations run on Agentio reveals about the right way to run and scale YouTube Creator Marketing programs*

January 2026

# YouTube is the center of gravity for Creator Marketing: mastering it is a strategic imperative

Creator Marketing has evolved from an experimental budget line item into a core growth pillar for modern Brands. In 2025, Creator Ad Spend reached almost \$40 Billion in the U.S., growing 4x faster than the total media industry<sup>1</sup>.

This evolution of spend reflects a fundamental consumer reality:



**70%**  
of consumers trust Creators recommendations more than direct Brand advertising<sup>2</sup>

As Creator Marketing spend grows, YouTube has emerged as the leading channel:

<b>Sponsorship Surge</b>	The number of Brand-sponsored YouTube videos has increased by 54% YoY in H1 2025 <sup>3</sup>
<b>Budget Leader</b>	U.S. Brands were forecasted to spend \$3.45B on YouTube Creators in 2025 <sup>4</sup> , outpacing Instagram
<b>Multi-format Gravity</b>	YouTube is the #1 platform streamed on TV <sup>5</sup> and the leading platform for podcast consumption <sup>6</sup>
<b>AI Search Authority</b>	YouTube is a top source for AI search <sup>7</sup> (AEO/GEO), crucial for discoverability and demand capture

**And with 120M+ YouTube Premium subscribers paying to skip ads, Creators are the only way for Brands to reach YouTube’s most engaged, high-value audiences.**  
Mastering YouTube Creator Marketing is now a strategic requirement for growth.

1. [Creator Economy Ad Spend to Reach \\$37 Billion in 2025, Growing 4x Faster than Total Media Industry](#), IAB, Nov 20, 2025; 2. [81% of consumers embraced influencer marketing in the past year, study finds](#), Marketing Dive, Feb 23, 2023; 3. [Creator Economy Boom: YouTube Sponsorships Surge 54% As Brands Shift Marketing Dollars To Influencers](#), Net Influencer, Oct 23, 2025; 4. [How Policy Shifts - from Tariffs to TikTok - Will Reshape Commerce and Advertising](#), EMARKETER, Mar 2025; 5. [YouTube, Netflix Ride the Wave of Summer Streaming Highs in Nielsen’s Media Distributor Gauge](#), Nielsen, Aug 2025; 6. [YouTube’s Growth As A Podcast Power Player](#), Westwood One, Jul 8, 2024; 7. [YouTube Owns AI Search: 200x More Citations Than Any Other Video Platform](#), Medium, Oct 18, 2025

# Three key principles to drive real growth through YouTube Creator Marketing programs

YouTube is the center of global culture. It is also the most powerful Creator Marketing channel available. Yet most teams struggle to unlock its full potential or find themselves unsure of how to get started, often defaulting to short-term tests that fail to scale.

**We analyzed more than 10,000 YouTube Creator integrations run on Agentio to build a YouTube Creator Marketing playbook based on what really works.**

Understanding these three principles separates programs that scale from those that stall:

# 1

## PERFORMANCE COMPOUNDS OVER TIME

~40% of views and ~30% of clicks happen 30+ days after go-live  
The ideal internal spend attribution window for YouTube integrations to accurately model unit economics is 90 days

# 2

## REPETITION DRIVES RESULTS

Click-Through Rate (CTR) improves by ~10% with every integration and Conversion Rate (CVR) is ~1.9x higher by the sixth integration  
Brands that cut spend early never capture full potential

# 3

## DIVERSIFICATION BEATS SINGLE BETS

Brands testing 10+ verticals see up to 2.3x higher success rates  
Focus on average video views, not subscribers, and use Macro-Creators to drive awareness, Mid and Micro for conversions

*Note: A YouTube integration is a paid sponsorship placement embedded directly within a YouTube Creator's video, where the Creator features, endorses, or demonstrates a Brand's product or service. Unlike YouTube Ads, YouTube integrations are native to the content and remain live as part of the video's organic distribution over time*

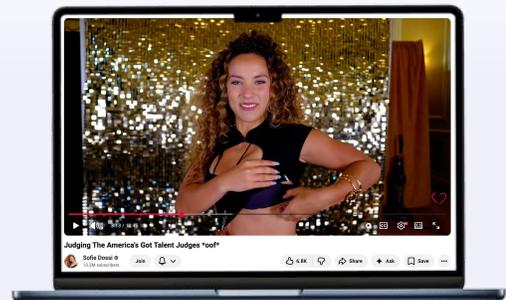
# Premium YouTube integrations - *run on Agentio*

*What YouTube Creator Marketing looks like in practice*

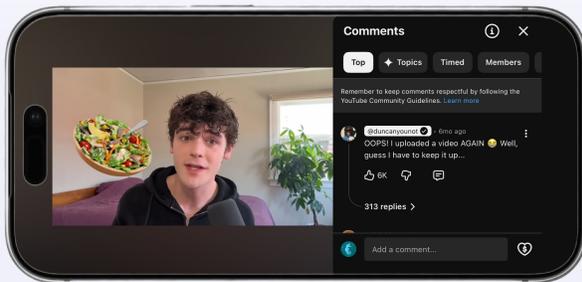
# SKIMS



**Sofie Dossi**  
@sofiedossi



[Click to stream](#)



[Click to stream](#)

# Uber Eats

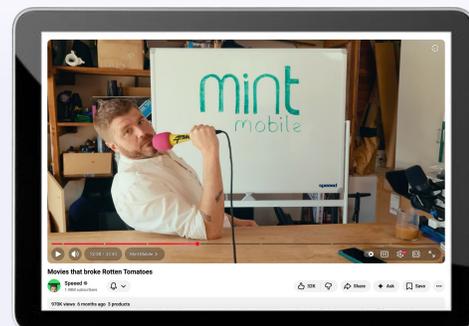


**Duncanyounot**  
@duncanyounot

# mintmobile



**Speed**  
@SpeedCo



[Click to stream](#)

---

# YOUTUBE PERFORMANCE COMPOUNDS OVER TIME

---

**40%**

of views and 30% of clicks happen 30+ days after the video go-live date. Macro-Creators have particularly long lifespans, with 46% of views happening after 30 days

**90 days**

the ideal internal spend attribution window for YouTube integrations to accurately model unit economics and to avoid mathematically undervaluing return

PERFORMANCE COMPOUNDS OVER TIME

## Stories from Agentio Clients



People engage with YouTube content in perpetuity. While integrations naturally see a spike on publish day, the views generated days and weeks later often deliver equal, if not greater, long-term value.

With Agentio, over the past year alone, we've driven millions of video views beyond the initial 30-day reporting window, **meaning we are earning millions of incremental impressions at no additional cost**. No other platform delivers this kind of sustained impact.



**Maddy Tank**  
*Senior Director of Brand at Maev*



### Growth that compounds

52% of Bombas' lifetime YouTube integration impressions come from views generated more than 30 days after the video go-live date.

An evergreen lift that is compounding performance over time. Bombas isn't just renting ad space, they're owning Creator real estate.



PERFORMANCE COMPOUNDS OVER TIME

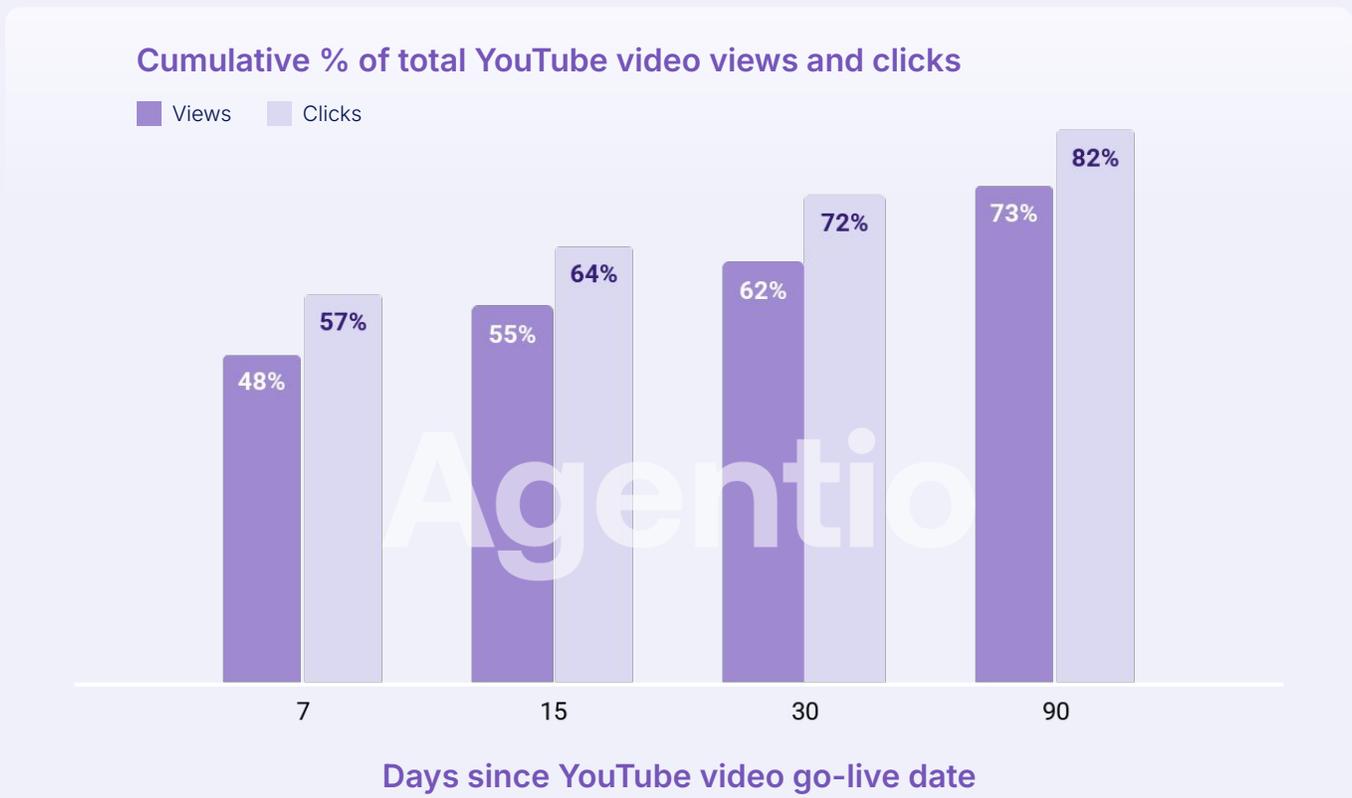
# YouTube Creator integrations are owned real estate, not rented reach: they accrue value over time

YouTube does not behave like a social feed. It behaves like a library and a search engine. Once published, a video stays indexed, recommended, and rediscovered.

Creators' integrations function more like search results than posts. A sponsored integration placed today continues capturing high-intent viewers for weeks or months:

- 38% of views occur after 30 days from the go-live date
- 27% occur after 90 days
- 28% of clicks happen after 30 days

**Fully expensing spend in a single month and evaluating performance too early can mathematically undervalue the return of the program and lead to wrong decisions.**



Views: The total number of times a YouTube video is viewed  
Clicks: Direct link clicks and QR code scans generated from YouTube integration

PERFORMANCE COMPOUNDS OVER TIME

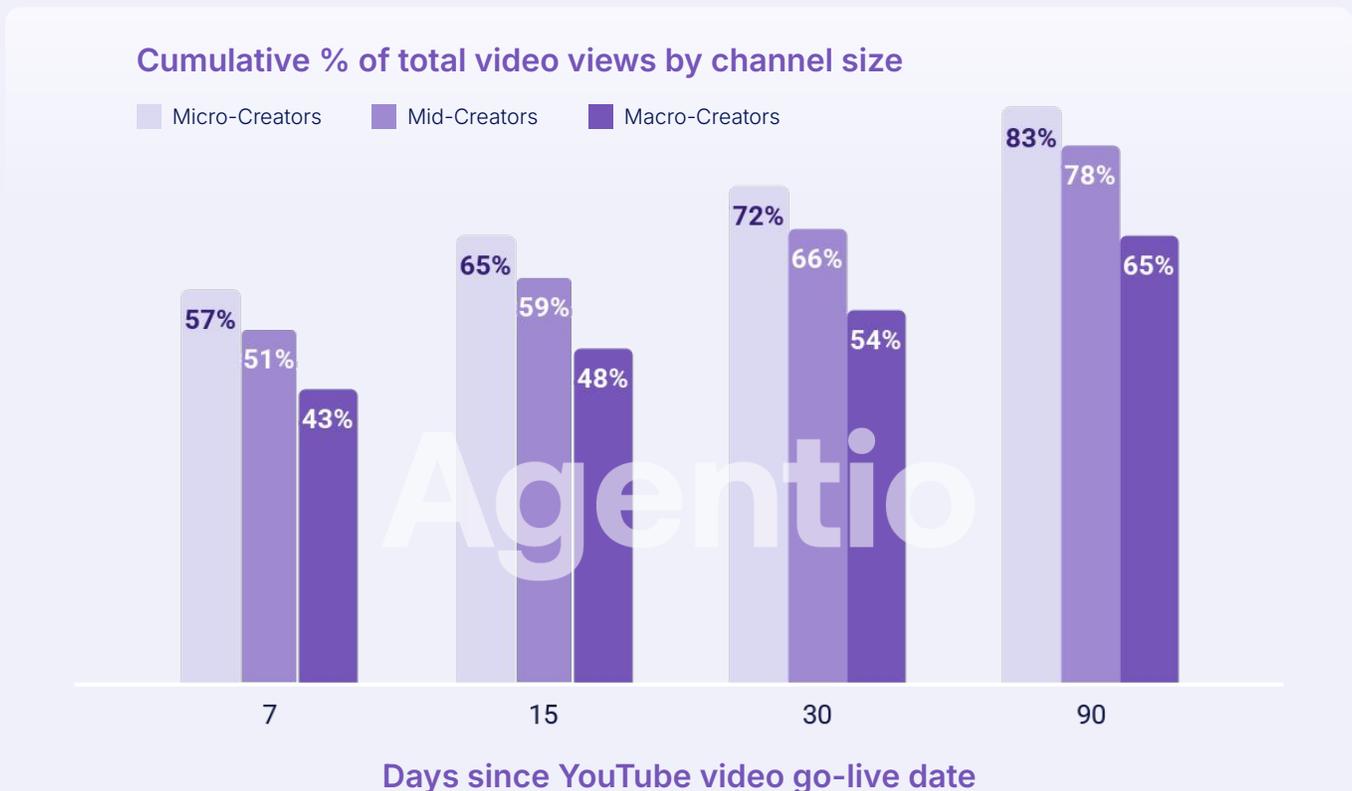
# Macro-Creator performance compounds through search authority and content gravity

The larger a Creator’s channel, the longer their content tends to keep driving results.

Macro-Creators (YouTube channels averaging 300k+ views per video) benefit from high domain authority, stronger search ranking, and deeper content libraries. Their integrations resurface more often and for longer.

As a result, nearly half of Macro-Creator views arrive after day 30, compared to roughly 30% for Micro-Creators (channels averaging less than 50k views per video).

**Agentio dynamically amortizes spend for each integration based on precise data for each individual channel. This way, Brands see accurate ROI from day one.**



*Based on a 7-month historical average of the number of views in the first 30 days after posting, Creators are defined as follows:  
 Micro-Creator: A channel averaging <50k views per video  
 Mid-Creator: A channel averaging 50–300k views per video  
 Macro-Creator: A channel averaging 300k+ views per video*

PERFORMANCE COMPOUNDS OVER TIME

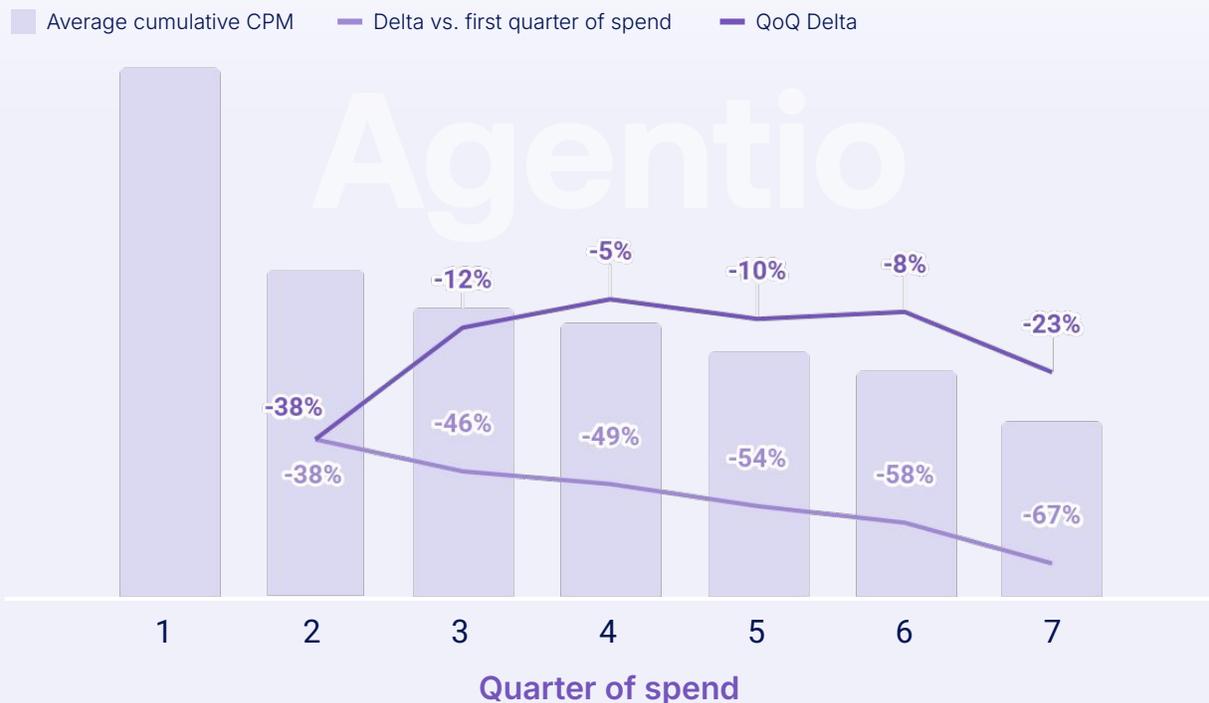
# As a result, Brands experience a 54% YoY reduction in cumulative CPM even when scaling spend

As shown, YouTube integrations generate a meaningful share of views 30 days after their go-live date. **However, it is best practice to pay Creators based on expected views delivered in the first 30 days only.** This means that after that window, effective CPM for YouTube integrations continues to decline.

When measured on a cumulative basis<sup>1</sup>, CPM decreases over time even as Brands scale spend. Brands that increase investment<sup>2</sup> in YouTube Creator Marketing programs observe:

- 16% QoQ reduction in cumulative CPM
- 54% YoY reduction in cumulative CPM after one year
- 67% reduction in cumulative CPM after seven quarters of uninterrupted investment

Average cumulative CPM by quarter of spend for Brands with increased spend



1. Total cumulative spend to date divided by total cumulative views across all integrations to date, multiplied by 1,000

2. "Increase in spend" is defined as >1.0x YoY quarterly spend. The average year-over-year increase in spend for Brands included in the analysis is 2.6x

PERFORMANCE COMPOUNDS OVER TIME

## *Takeaway:* Amortize spend and measure performance over time

YouTube Creator integrations persist and accrue value over time, generating views, clicks, and conversions long after the initial placement goes live.

To accurately model unit economics, YouTube spend should be viewed through an amortization schedule that aligns with the views curve.

Shift your internal spend attribution window for YouTube integrations to 90 days to avoid mathematically undervaluing your return.

### How Agentio helps

**Agentio automatically prices YouTube integrations based on expected views delivered in the first 30 days.**

**Once videos are live, Agentio dynamically amortizes spend for each integration based on historical data for each individual channel.**

Cost-related metrics are adjusted according to the ratio of views to the projected total views at the 90-day mark. This way, Brands see accurate ROI from day one.

[Book a Demo →](#)



2

# REPETITION DRIVES RESULTS

**+10%**

average improvement in Click-Through Rate (CTR) with every additional integration with the same Creator

**1.9x**

lift in Conversion Rate (CVR) by the sixth integration compared to the first one with the same Creator

**55%**

average portfolio CPM reduction after one year of consistent spend on YouTube Creator Marketing

REPETITION DRIVES RESULTS

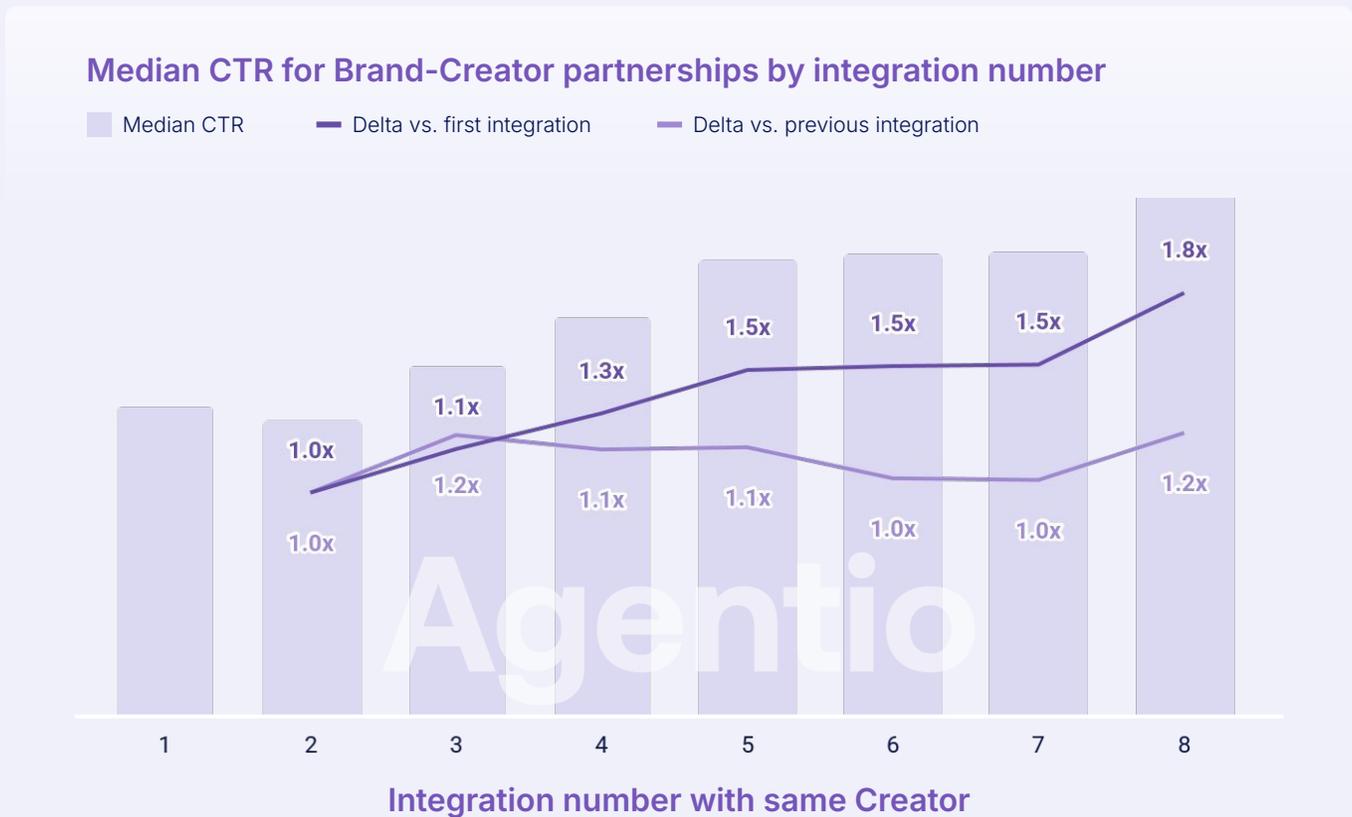
# Repeated exposure to the same Creator builds trust and drives higher performance

When Creators are brought in as actors for one-time performances instead of ongoing partnerships, the audience sees an ad, not an endorsement. As a Brand shifts from *sponsor* to *partner*, performance improves

This is reflected in Click-Through Rate (CTR) trends:

- After the second integration, each additional one increases CTR by 10%
- By the eighth integration, median CTR is 1.8x higher

This is the opposite of creative or ad fatigue. On paid social, performance declines with repeated exposure. On YouTube, performance improves because Brands are building trust.



CTR (Click-Through Rate): Calculated as total clicks and QR code scans divided by views  
Analysis performed on all Brand <> Creator partnerships with 8 integrations

REPETITION DRIVES RESULTS

# Real incremental conversions unlock through sustained exposure to a Creator's audience



Average change in CVR relative to first integration by integration number



CVR (Conversion Rate): Calculated as total conversions (e.g., purchase, sign-up) divided by total clicks and QR code scans

REPETITION DRIVES RESULTS

# YoY CPM decreases by up to 55% for Brands that spend on YouTube Creators consistently

An analysis of Brands that spend on YouTube Creator Marketing consistently shows that consistency pays off. These Brands see systematic efficiency gains relative to the first quarter of spend over time:

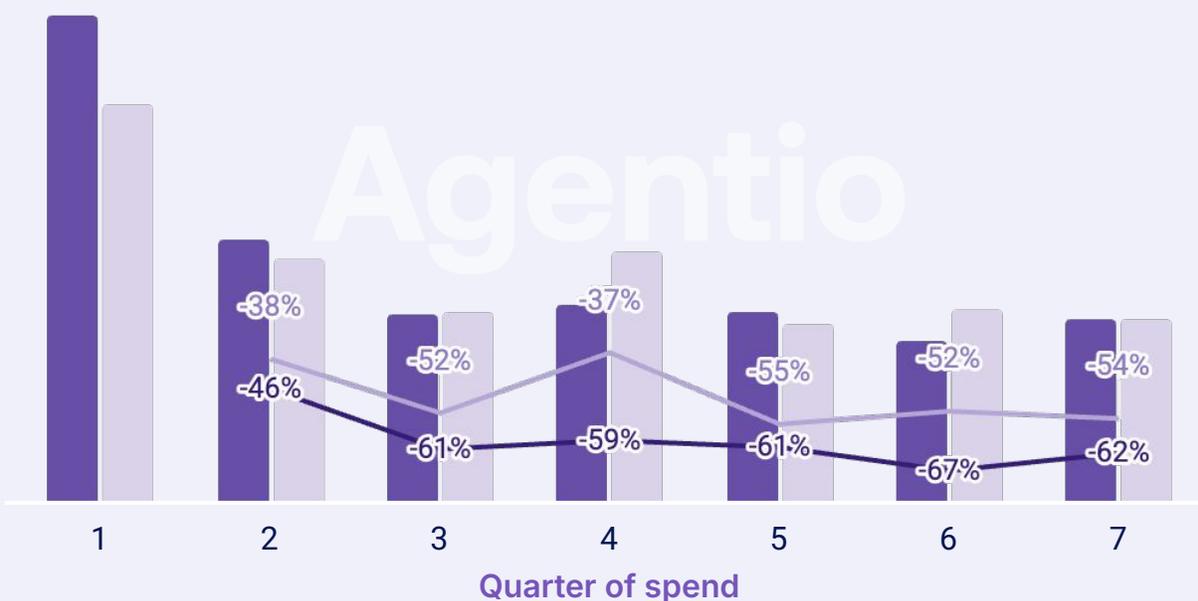
- A 38% reduction in CPM after two full quarters
- A stable 52-55% CPM reduction in the second year

These effects are even stronger for Brands that scale spend, as we observe:

- A 46% reduction in CPM after two full quarters
- A sustained 60%+ reduction in CPM after a full year

### Average CPM by quarter of spend

- Average CPM, consistent spend
- Average CPM, increased spend
- Delta vs. first quarter of spend, consistent spend
- Delta vs. first quarter of spend, increased spend



Note: "Long-term investment strategy" is defined as a minimum of \$40k per month in spend on YouTube Creator integrations for at least four consecutive quarters. "Increase in spend" is defined as >1.0x YoY quarterly spend. The average year-over-year increase in spend for Brands included in the analysis is 2.6x

REPETITION DRIVES RESULTS

## *Case Study:* with Agentio, Bombas slashed CAC while increasing spend by 327%

Bombas partnered with Agentio to build an always-on YouTube Creator program.

**The challenge:** Bombas wanted to scale YouTube advertising, but they were struggling with saturated audiences, rising CAC, and operational lift from managing Creators manually

**The approach:** Using Agentio's platform, Bombas executed 450 integrations in under 12 months, generating more than 165 million views with an 83% view-through rate

**The results:**

### 90%

**Net-new customers**

Agentio tapped into communities Bombas hadn't reached before, delivering a first-time customer rate of over 90%,

### 2.0x

**CAC efficiency over campaign lifecycle**

Bombas scaled spend without seeing diminishing returns. By leaning into always-on momentum, CAC improved by 2.0x

### 5.3x

**ROAS improvement**

Thanks to premium Creators and better matching, integrations run on Agentio improved AOV, delivering a 5.3x higher ROAS

**Learn more →**

about how Bombas scaled their YouTube Creator program with Agentio

**Book a Demo →**

to build your own scalable, performance-driven Creator program



REPETITION DRIVES RESULTS

## *Takeaway:* Brands that cut spend early never capture full potential

Brand-Creator partnerships typically require multiple integrations to reach their full potential. Stopping and starting campaigns forces Brands to constantly rebuild audience trust from scratch.

Adopt a testing framework that evaluates Creators over multiple integrations, rather than single placements.

When possible, move high performing Creators to 6-12 month contracts. This helps improve performance by driving down CPM, increasing CTR, and decreasing CPC.

### How Agentio helps

Agentio provides real-time full-funnel reporting so your Brand can easily track performance and saturation signals across Creators and categories.

We help you partner with Creators seamlessly, starting new partnerships or renewing existing ones in a matter of minutes.

[Book a Demo →](#)



# DIVERSIFICATION BEATS SINGLE BETS

**2.3x**

improvement in partnership success rate for  
Brands that test multiple channel verticals

**\$22**

average CPM for Macro-Creators (vs. \$28 for Mid and  
\$51 for Micro). Macro-Creators drive top-of-funnel  
reach and awareness most cost effectively

**2.7%**

average CVR for Micro-Creators (vs. 2.4% for Mid and  
1.8% for Macro). Micro-Creators drive conversions  
with highly engaged niche audiences

## DIVERSIFICATION BEATS SINGLE BETS

# Testing multiple channel verticals increases chances of finding successful partnerships

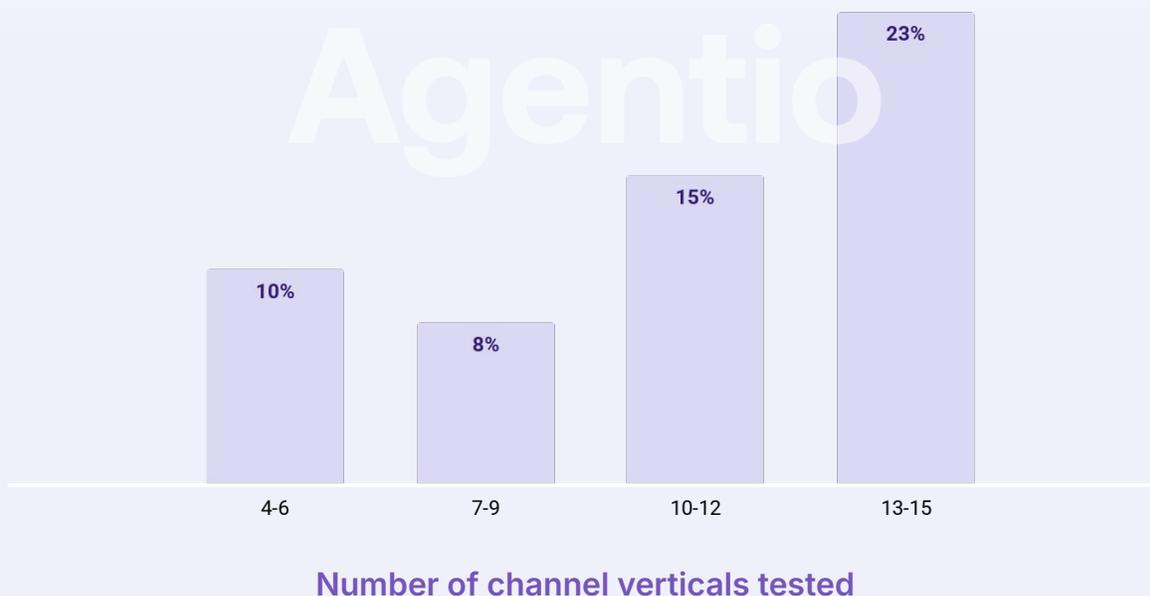
Once Brands identify a winning channel vertical, the instinct is to double down: flood the audience, capture all available demand immediately. But no single Creator or vertical can scale indefinitely.

A more effective strategy is to create long-term partnerships while simultaneously testing other Creators and verticals to plan for expansion.

Brands testing ten or more Creator verticals improve likelihood of finding successful partnerships by up to 2.3x. Partnership success rate further increases from an average of 10% when testing 4-6 verticals to an average of 23% when testing 13+.

**In other words: the broader the kinds of audiences tested, the higher the odds of partnering with Creators that perform.**

Average partnership success rate by number of channel verticals tested



*Partnership success rate: The share of Creator channels that receive renewal bids for each Brand. Calculated as the number of channels with renewal bids divided by the total number of channels tested*

*Channel vertical: The primary content category of a Creator's YouTube channel*

*Brand vertical: The industry or product category of the advertising Brand*

DIVERSIFICATION BEATS SINGLE BETS

# “Counterintuitive” Creator-Brand vertical pairings can drive strong conversions

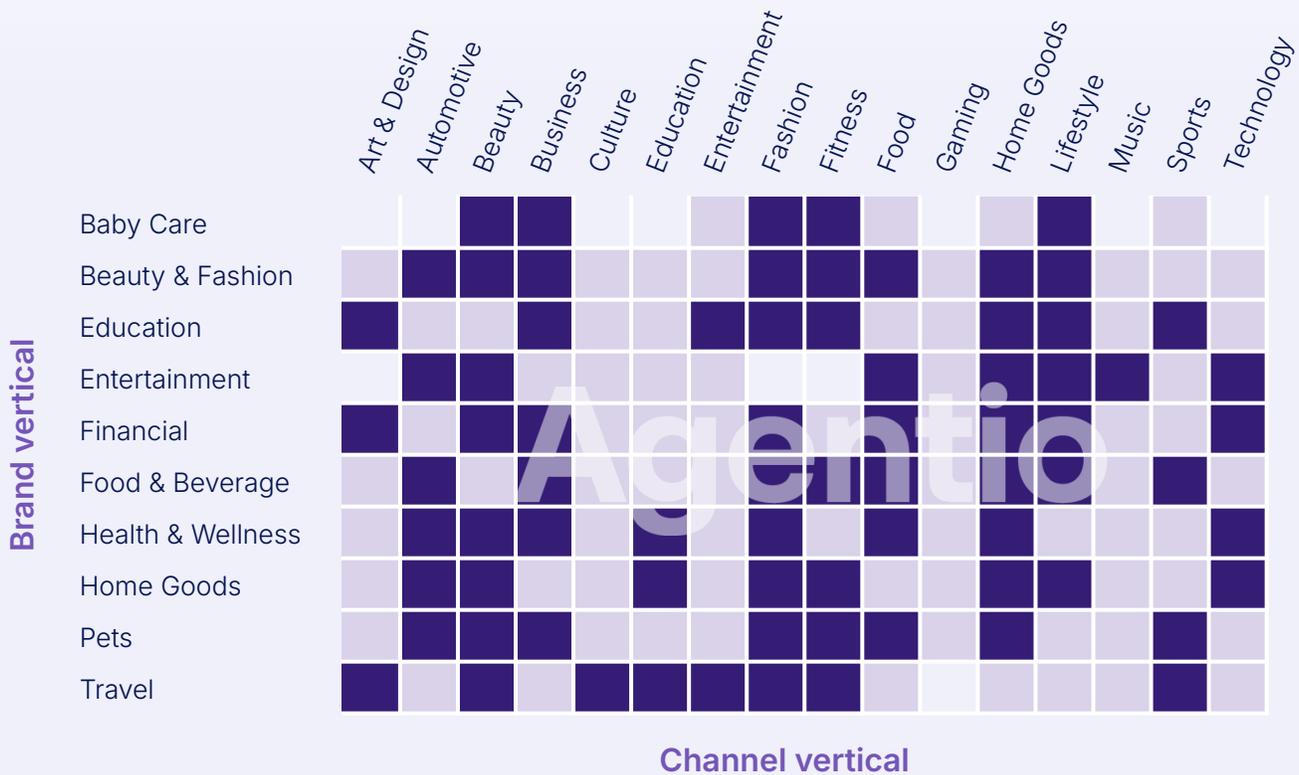
Many Brands never move beyond endemic YouTube channel verticals. As a result, they compete for the same audiences, bid up CPMs, and mistake familiarity for performance.

The best-performing programs are designed to *discover* demand, not *assume it*. Some of the strongest results come from counterintuitive pairings.

Maintaining high CVR over time requires moving beyond intuitive category matching and testing broader Creator portfolios.

Median CVR by Brand and channel vertical

■ Better than Brand vertical median    ■ Worse than Brand vertical median



Read the matrix horizontally by Brand vertical. Dark purple cells indicate CVR values above the median for that Brand vertical. Non-colored cells indicate insufficient data (N/A)

DIVERSIFICATION BEATS SINGLE BETS

# Agentio identifies high-performing partnerships that traditional Brand intuition misses

Agentio leverages large language models (LLMs) to systematically evaluate Creator performance across historical content, prior Brand deals, and audience engagement signals. The platform predicts partnership success and matches Brands with Creators based on expected ROI, not category assumptions.

## Case in point

Agentio dynamically identified that Jacob Knowles, a lobster fisherman Creator in Maine, would outperform traditional Health & Wellness Creators for a leading supplements Brand.

Based on historical performance signals and content-audience alignment, the model flagged a non-obvious partnership that would not have surfaced through manual selection or category-based buying.

**That Creator has since become the Brand's best-performing partner.**



**Jacob Knowles**

@jacobknowles5421



DIVERSIFICATION BEATS SINGLE BETS

# A balanced portfolio of Micro, Mid and Macro-Creators helps Brands win across the funnel

Each Creator tier serves a distinct strategic purpose:

**Macro-Creators** efficiently reach large audiences, drive top-of-funnel reach and awareness, and deliver lower CPMs with more predictable results

**Micro-Creators** cost more on a CPM basis but convert better. This makes them great for lower funnel optimization. However, variance for key metrics is higher, and performance is harder to predict

**Mid-Creators** sit between the two, offering balanced economics with moderate CPM and strong CVR

**The optimal strategy uses both: Macro-Creators build pipeline and awareness, while Mid and Micro-Creators drive conversions.**

### Average CPM, CVR, ER, VTR and Integration Length by channel size

Low variance
  Mild variance
  High variance



	Micro <small>&lt;50k views per video</small>	Mid <small>50-300k views per video</small>	Macro <small>300k+ views per video</small>
Cost-per-mille (CPM)	\$51	\$28	\$22
Conversion Rate (CVR)	2.70%	2.40%	1.80%
Engagement Rate (ER)	6.20%	5.20%	4.20%
View-Through Rate (VTR)	83%	82%	85%
Integration Length	102s	84s	79s

Channel sizes are based on a 7-month historical average of the number of views in the first 30 days after posting. Similarly, ER (Engagement Rate) is calculated as (likes + comments + shares) divided by views in the first 30 days after posting, based on a 7-month historical average

DIVERSIFICATION BEATS SINGLE BETS

## *Takeaway:* Diversification is the only hedge against saturation

While you might see strong returns and be tempted to double down exclusively on a few “hero” Creators or verticals, eventually you will saturate that audience and performance will start to decline.

The only way to avoid diminishing returns over time is to continuously run tests by diversifying your campaign portfolio across Creators of different sizes and verticals.

Don't try to predict the perfect winner in a vacuum. The more you test, the higher the chances of unlocking strong partnerships for your Brand.

### How Agentio helps

**Agentio uses a proprietary LLM-powered Creator intelligence to identify the best Creators for each Brand, unlocking successful partnerships that might have been ignored.**

Our Clients continuously test multiple verticals and Creators at scale with maximum efficiency.

[Book a Demo →](#)

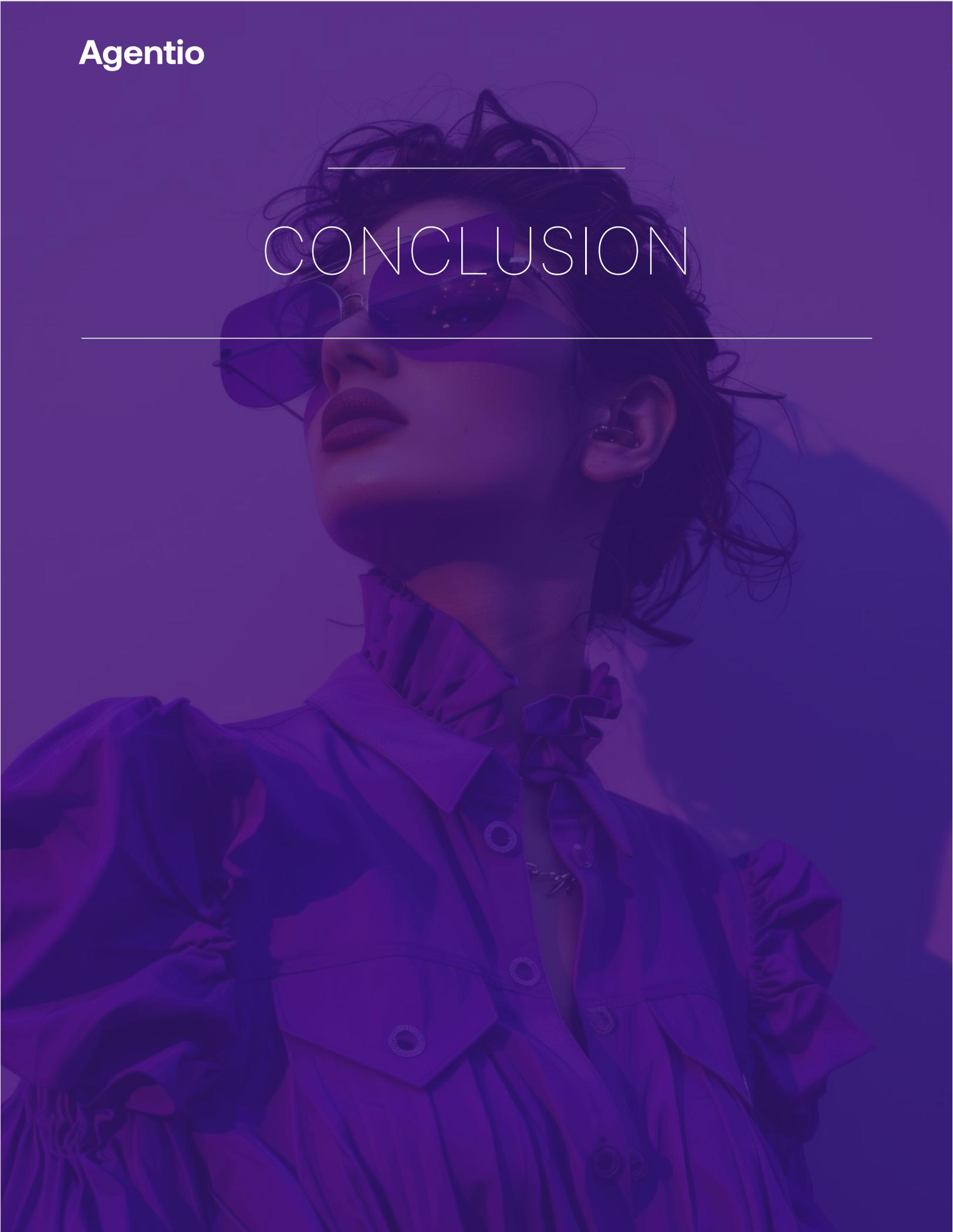


Agentio

---

# CONCLUSION

---



CONCLUSION

# The right YouTube Creator Marketing infrastructure unlocks repeatable, scalable growth

YouTube sits at the center of global culture, and Creator partnerships on the platform reward Brands that invest with consistency, scale, and long-term intent. To capture that opportunity, Brands need systems designed to support how Creator performance builds over time.

That means establishing:

- Measurement infrastructure that accurately evaluates performance across 90-day windows and reflects real view and conversion curves
- Partnership infrastructure that supports repeated integrations and long-term Creator relationships as they mature
- Portfolio infrastructure that surfaces non-obvious pairings that perform well and enables ongoing testing across verticals, balancing Creator size by funnel role

With the right infrastructure in place, YouTube Creator Marketing becomes a repeatable, scalable way to participate in culture and convert that participation into durable growth.

Agentio is the AI-native platform for Creator advertising. We remove the friction associated with sourcing, vetting, negotiating, approving, and scaling Creator partnerships. This way, teams can focus on growth instead of getting lost in operational friction.

[Learn more and book a demo at www.agentio.com](http://www.agentio.com)

Trusted by hundreds of Brands



## CONCLUSION

# Agentio helps Brands maximize return from YouTube Creator Marketing programs

Agentio is the AI-native platform for Creator advertising. We remove the friction associated with sourcing, vetting, negotiating, approving, and scaling Creator partnerships.

We've brought the programmatic playbook to the Creator economy for the first time.

Our technology is built on:

**LLM-powered Creator intelligence** that identifies Creators whose content aligns with your natural storytelling, pairing that with audience and performance data so your team can scale without losing its taste and instincts

**A DSP-like buying workflow** that standardizes pricing, automates bidding, Brand safety, product distribution, and content reviews. What would take a team six or more months to achieve manually takes ~48 hours with Agentio

**Full-funnel reporting** that feeds directly into cutting-edge tools so your Brand understands how Creator investment interacts with the rest of the media mix and knows when to lean into organic momentum vs. paid support

[Learn more and book a demo at www.agentio.com](http://www.agentio.com)

Trusted by hundreds of Brands

maev

AWAY

BOMBAS

OLIPO

WARBY PARKER

DOORDASH

Uber

MEJURI

HELLO FRESH

Coterie

David

TECOVAS

VUORI

The Farmer's Dog

Cash App

Quince

SKIMS

mintmobile

## CONCLUSION

# Glossary

**YouTube integration:** A paid sponsorship placement embedded directly within a YouTube video, where a Creator features, endorses, or demonstrates a Brand's product or service. Our analyses are based on 10,000+ integrations with Creator geography distributed as follows: 92% US, 5% Canada, 2% UK, and 1% other markets

**Views:** The total number of times a YouTube video is viewed

**CPM (Cost-per-Mille):** The cost incurred for every 1,000 views generated by a YouTube integration. Calculated as total spend divided by total views, multiplied by 1,000

**Cumulative CPM:** A lifetime efficiency metric calculated as total cumulative spend to date divided by total cumulative views across all integrations to date, multiplied by 1,000

**Clicks:** Direct link clicks and QR code scans generated from sponsored content

**CPC (Cost-per-Click):** The average cost paid for each click and QR code scan generated by an integration. Calculated as total spend divided by total clicks

**CTR (Click-Through Rate):** The percentage of viewers who click or scan the QR code after watching an integration. Calculated as total clicks divided by views

**CVR (Conversion Rate):** The percentage of clicks and QR code scans that result in a conversion (e.g., purchase, sign-up). Calculated as total conversions divided by total clicks

**ER (Engagement Rate):** Average audience engagement with a Creator's video. Calculated as (likes + comments + shares) divided by views in the first 30 days after posting, based on a 7-month historical average

**ROAS (Return on Ad Spend):** Revenue generated from integration divided by integration cost

**AOV (Average Order Value):** The average revenue generated per order. Calculated as total revenue divided by total number of orders

**CAC (Customer Acquisition Cost):** The average cost to acquire a customer, calculated as YouTube integration cost divided by the number of customers acquired

**Micro-Creator:** A channel averaging fewer than 50k views per video in the first 30 days after posting, based on a 7-month historical longform content average

**Mid-Creator:** A channel averaging 50–300k views per video in the first 30 days after posting, based on a 7-month historical longform content average

**Macro-Creator:** A channel averaging 300k+ views per video in the first 30 days after posting, based on a 7-month historical longform content average

**Partnership success rate:** Calculated as the number of channels with renewal bids from a Brand divided by the total number of channels tested by that same Brand

**Channel vertical:** The primary content category of a Creator's YouTube channel

**Brand vertical:** The industry or product category of the advertising Brand



**Agentio**