



From zero to viral

Trainer's guide

Learning outcomes

The main topic

An online influencer or content creator is a person who produces engaging content on digital platforms such as YouTube, Instagram, TikTok and streaming platforms to build a community of followers. Influencers use their presence and credibility to affect purchase decisions and trends, often collaborating with brands for marketing purposes. Their content can range from entertainment and lifestyle to education and niche hobbies.

Pedagogical objectives

- Participants will learn how to effectively engage with different audiences.
- Participants will apply key digital marketing techniques to optimise reach and engagement.
- Participants will understand how to draft a content creation, branding and communication plan that connects brand identity, outreach and networking.
- Participants will develop critical thinking and strategic planning skills.
- Participants will demonstrate effective communication and pitching skills.



Frame

Type

Physical ER with documents

Timeframe

1 hour (including briefing and debriefing)

Participants

Minimum: 3 participants

Maximum: 6 participants

Topics

Content creation; community/audience engagement; brand building; digital communication; monetisation and sponsorship

Skills required

Game Master

- Adaptation (to guide participants throughout the phases and assess their success depending on their choices).
- Understanding of digital communication strategies and components of an effective content creation, communication and branding plan for influencers.

Participant

- None



Game Master's role

For this escape game, the Game Master should have an active and guiding role, supervising the participants' progress and providing hints if necessary to give all players a fair chance at succeeding and to ensure adequate learning and understanding of the topic before, throughout and after the escape game.

They act as an influential brand representative. Their goal is to evaluate the participants' ability to create a sustainable content creation, digital branding and communication plan. Throughout the game, they can provide more or less guidance, offer hints when participants are stuck or going in the wrong direction and ensure participants stay on track while fostering learning and reflection.

For that, they should simply "trap" the group in the room, explain the brief context of a collective of online influencers that struggle to reach success, and then ensure that they understand the context and stakes before letting them explore the room as the countdown starts. They should recommend that participants write down and adapt their ideas (on a whiteboard or paper pages) to keep track of their choices and draft the plan step by step to prepare a clear and convincing final pitch.

After the set time (45 minutes) has passed, after the participants have pitched their plan and justified their choices, the Game Master should organise a debrief to clear up what the participants have learned, regardless of whether they successfully convinced them. They can go back to analysing each document to assess that the participants are able to justify their answers and explain their reasoning.



Inclusivity check

To ensure this escape game is inclusive and accessible for participants with learning disorders or disabilities, consider the following key elements:

- ✓ **Physical accessibility:** Ensure the venue is wheelchair accessible and that all the necessary items are reachable (not too high or far to access).
- ✓ **Visual and auditory support:** Ensure that the materials use large print, high contrast, or digital formats compatible with screen readers. If videos are involved, provide subtitles or interpretation.
- ✓ **Simple and clear instructions:** Use clear, concise language and visuals. Avoid complex wording to support participants with learning disorders.
- ✓ **Flexible participation:** Offer varied roles that cater to different strengths, allowing participants to choose tasks that suit their abilities and foster responsibility without becoming overwhelming.
- ✓ **Sensory considerations:** Avoid sensory triggers like loud noises or flashing lights. Provide a quiet space for participants needing breaks to refocus.
- ✓ **Support and adjustments:** Be ready to offer extra assistance, specific hints and guidance or tailored support based on individual needs.
- ✓ **Feedback loop:** Collect feedback from participants to continuously improve adaptability, accessibility and inclusivity.



Hints and solutions

Phase A

Hints

- You've caught the eye of a big brand, but they won't work with just anyone. Let's see if you can craft an efficient strategy that's not only creative but also grounded in what our brand wants.
- Make sure to explore different aspects of the strategy: content creation, branding, communication, audience engagement, monetisation and networking. Maybe you can even assign roles or jobs to each member of the team, such as content planner, brand designer, data analyst, etc.
- Can you find anything useful in the room? Like in these drawers/folders/boxes?

Note: For each of the other phases, in case participants haven't found all the Annex documents and haven't identified all the necessary elements to include in their plan, remind them and guide them towards the hidden spots without too many hints but giving them a chance to find the resources they need to work efficiently. If needed, the Gamer Master may help players identify each step of the creation of their plan or pitch, to establish a roadmap and clarify what they need to focus on.

Solutions

- Annex documents hidden around the room in drawers, folders and boxes.
- A whiteboard or paper pages on which to take notes to organise the search.



Phase B

Hints

- What would be the first thing to think about when planning how to create online content? What do you think is the first aspect you should define?
- What kinds of topics or areas will your content be about? How varied can your content be based on your skills and preferences? What types of content works best for that kind of topic? Which platforms would suit that type of content? What type of audience will be using these platforms to reach your content? Which trends will your content match, follow or benefit from?

Solutions

Using the documents in the Annex, which can be found in different hiding spots around the room, participants should establish the following aspects of their plan:

- Types of content to create and general topics or fields to explore based on their tastes, hobbies, skills and popularity
- Target audience to focus on based on the type of content (age, interests)
- Type of platforms to use in order to reach the target audience based on trends and audience data
- Strategies to match the brand's aim of reaching a large audience and having a positive impact (equity, inclusion and diversity)



Phase C

Hints

- What would be the next aspect to define before planning what to do? What would you want to achieve with your content? How would you achieve it?
- How often would you need to create content, interact with your community and adjust your plans to trends and events? What types of actions will you take to engage with your community?

Solutions

Using the documents in the Annex, which can be found in different hiding spots around the room, participants should establish the following aspects of their plan:

- Goals and aims: outreach, engagement, interactions, sales, expertise?
- Content creation calendar: frequency of posts on which platform (how often per week or month, which day and at what time), frequency of adjustments based on trends, algorithms, viral content and relevant events
- Community engagement strategies: polls, Q&As, interactive content, feedback and adaptation of content

Phase D

Hints

- What would be the next aspect to define in order to expand your plan? How would you achieve your goals and go beyond?



- How would you further develop your reach to a wider audience? How would you be able to monetise and fund bigger projects?

Solutions

Using the documents in the Annex, which can be found in different hiding spots around the room, participants should establish the following aspects of their plan:

- Potential collaborations with influencers and creators (within and beyond their platforms and niche)
- Potential brand sponsorships and product placements
- Content-related products: additional content, items, courses, merch
- Networking and monetising strategies that fit their goals and platforms

Phase E

Hints

- What would you need to establish your presence as content creators and influencers? What would you create to be unique and create your style?

Solutions

Using the documents in the Annex, which can be found in different hiding spots around the room, participants should establish the following aspects of their plan:

- Branding and visual identity: colours, logos, general style
- Bio and description to catch attention and promote other content (other platforms, products, events)



Phase F

Hints

- Now, you have to convince me that your choices for this plan are feasible and interesting enough for my brand to sponsor and fund your content.

Note: If hints from the previous phases weren't already used, involve them in this phase to guide the participants' pitch and have them identify if they missed some necessary elements or can develop their justifications and choices further.

Solutions

- The Game Master should discuss and question the participants about each choice they made in the previous phases and adapt their reaction based on how appropriate and effective the participants' plan would be. Some elements could be disregarded or missing, but they should have plans for the main elements that'd be necessary to become successful online and reach a large audience while matching the brand's expectations.
- Offer constructive feedback on their content creation, communication, branding and monetisation plans, pointing out strengths and areas for improvement. The goal is to help participants think critically about their approach to becoming successful online influencers and to acknowledge whether they understand the critical aspects of such plans.
- Participants should demonstrate a clear understanding of content creation tailored to a specific audience and provide an effective engagement plan that incorporates audience interaction techniques. Their final pitch should reflect an understanding of online content trends and needs.



Brief and Debrief

Brief (before the game)

Briefing is very important before entering an escape room. It is the moment where you explain the rules and how it works for those who don't know the game.

It also allows you to set the context and universe of the game, introducing the beginning and explaining to the players their mission. In this case, the Game Master would be in charge of ensuring that participants understand the context and what they have to do (during phase A) and will guide and confirm their answers throughout the escape game.

Don't forget to highlight the timeframe in case the participants don't pay much attention to the countdown and to potentially remind them of it, especially if they take too much time and haven't reached phase E as it gets too close to the end. Specify that the focus of the activity should be on creativity and teamwork rather than detailed efficiency or administrative requirements.

Debrief (after the game)

Debriefing will allow you to receive feedback on your scenario and see what needs improvement. It will also allow you to see what players learned and remembered from this game session and to ensure that they understood the reasoning behind the choices they made and the strategies they provided.

A good practice is to take some notes from players' and your experience so that you can go back to this information later.



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