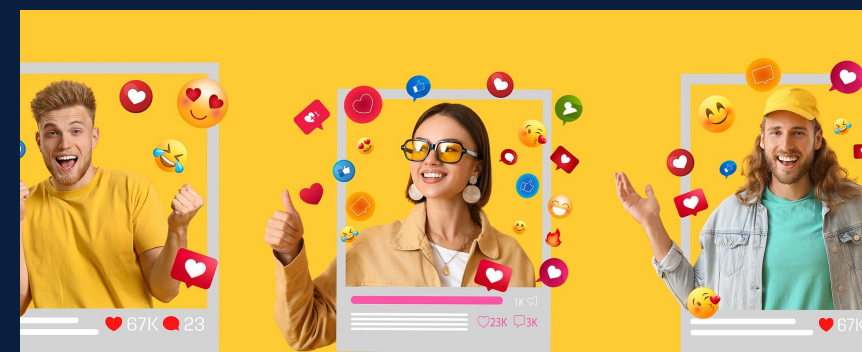


Resonance

Influencer relations has grown up.

B2B technology still treats influencer relations as a social add-on: a useful extra, a campaign tactic. Yet buyers now form opinions through expert creators, podcasters and practitioner communities long before they speak to sales. The channel carries far more weight than most budgets reflect.

A research report by Resonance and Agency · 2026



The adoption curve has already shifted.

Buyers form opinions through expert creators, podcasters, newsletter writers, technical educators and practitioner communities long before they speak to sales. In many categories these voices shape discovery, credibility and demand more directly than branded messaging can.

AI is changing how trust is built, and influencers are becoming a core part of the programme.

Our April 2026 research with 100 senior marketers confirms it: influencer relations has moved out of the experimental budget and into the mainstream B2B marketing mix.



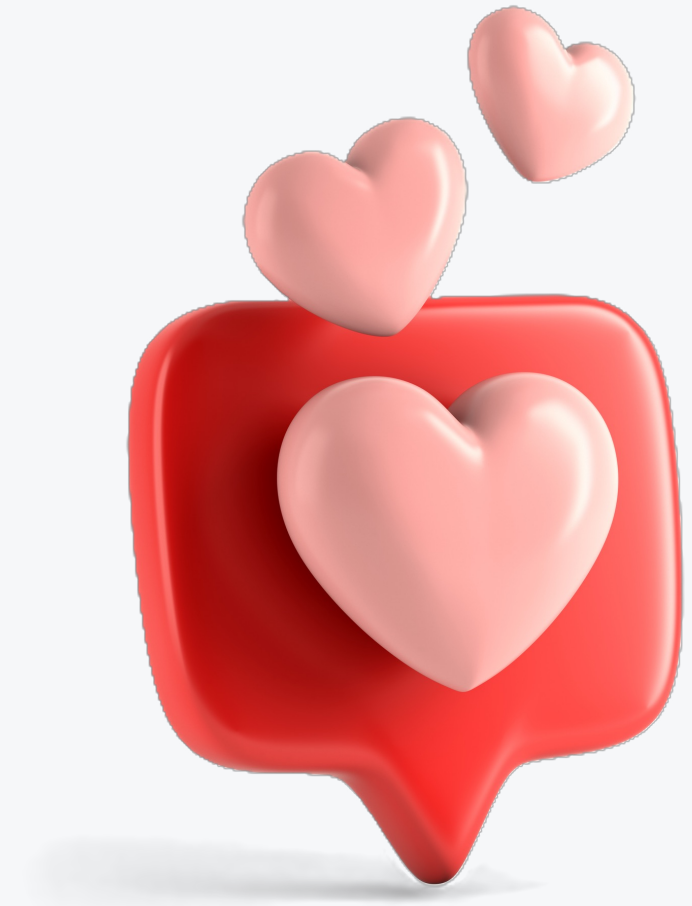
From creator campaigns to trust infrastructure.

The biggest mistake in B2B technology is to read influencer relations through a consumer lens. Celebrity endorsement, lifestyle reach and surface-level awareness do little here. Start with who you need to influence: your target buyer, your ICP.

The most valuable B2B influencers are usually practitioners, educators, operators, analysts, podcast hosts and technical experts. Their credibility comes from being useful, and they earn it through knowledge and expertise. Follower counts matter far less.

That is why podcasts, LinkedIn, YouTube, specialist newsletters and technical communities have become such important influence channels. Substack is growing fast and YouTube is becoming a dominant source of information. People go there to be entertained, and more and more often to decide who to trust.

Credibility comes from usefulness.



The B2B influencer is a different animal.

What LinkedIn's 2025 Influence Report found

Marketers rate peer and influencer recommendations above price competitiveness, household-name fame and advanced product features when judging what makes a B2B brand influential.

RESONANCE + AGENCY RESEARCH, APRIL 2026

59%

said industry practitioners and hands-on experts are among the most valuable independent voices.

45%

each for LinkedIn creators and YouTube, the joint top priority channels.

These channels are where trust gets built.



Influencer relations is about narrative, reputation, third-party validation and share of voice, and above all about relationships. The output also travels. A strong creator collaboration can become social proof, sales enablement, event content, paid media, newsletter content, podcast clips, executive commentary and source material that shapes wider digital discovery.

The economics are starting to stack up.

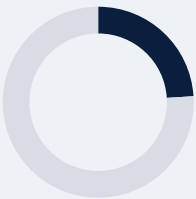
Influencer relations has faced one objection for years: fun and experimental, but hard to prove. Public case studies are still scarce, and the market is nowhere near full transparency on CAC, pipeline and payback. Even so, the direction of travel is clear and the results are getting harder to ignore.

Dell Technologies	2x engagement and more than 8,000 landing-page views by amplifying research through tech influencers.
Adobe	150% more LinkedIn form completions through expert-led activation on the platform.
SAP Tech Unknown	66% more podcast downloads and more than 52 million social impressions from a creator-led content programme.
Sprinklr	Reached 23.4 million people, drew nearly 100,000 engagements, beat MQL benchmarks and tied creator activity directly to ARR.
Goodcall	Cut CAC from \$185 to \$7 and drove more than 6,000 sign-ups through creator-led TikTok ads, one of the clearest hard-performance results yet.

Case examples: toprankmarketing.com/blog/b2b-influencer-marketing-rise

WHAT TEAMS TRACK TODAY

Resonance + Agency research, April 2026



24%

Track pipeline or revenue influence



38%

Track leads or MQLs

Always-on beats one-off. Every time.

The best-performing programmes treat creators as long-term relationships. They run sustained content programmes, repurpose creator content across paid, owned and earned channels, boost the strongest assets, and measure beyond impressions: registrations, form fills, lead quality, pipeline influence and revenue contribution.

CREATORIQ

57%

of mid-market brands run creator programmes from a central team or centre of excellence

61%

of industry leaders now centralise creator management in a dedicated function

RESONANCE + AGENCY RESEARCH, APRIL 2026

45%

increased influencer relations investment over the last 12 months

10%

have an established programme with a defined budget and process

48%

are still campaign-led or entirely unstructured

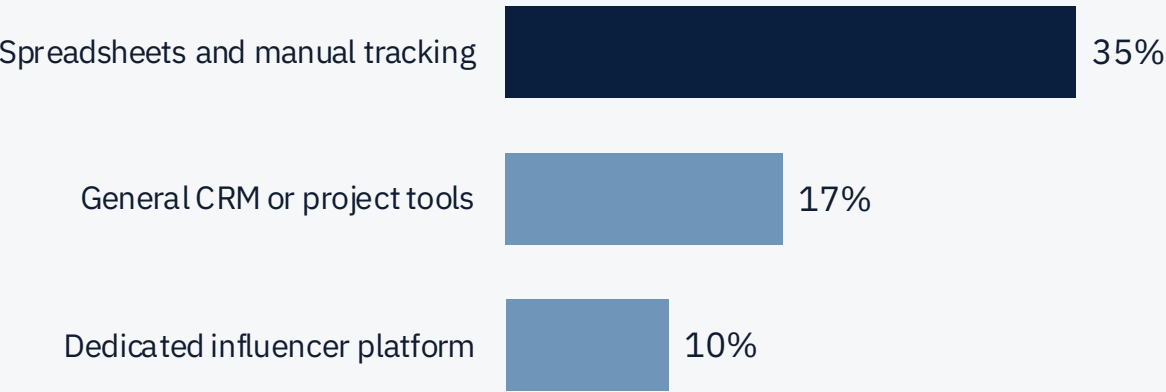
Trust isn't built in a day. One-off creator activity creates a spike. Always-on builds narrative position over time.

Most teams still run it on campaign-era tools.

Many B2B organisations still manage influencer relations with spreadsheets, static lists, screenshots, disconnected platform data and ad-hoc outreach.

That works for a single campaign. It breaks down once the programme is always-on and the board wants to see what it contributed.

HOW B2B TEAMS MANAGE THEIR PROGRAMMES



Resonance + Agency research, April 2026

Only one team in ten has a dedicated platform for the channel.

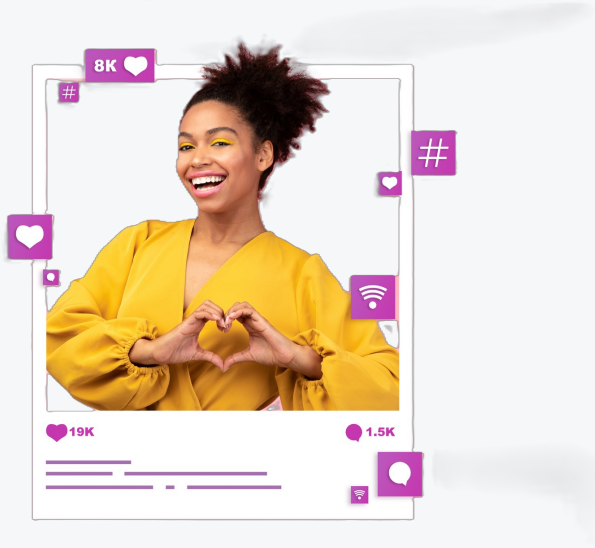
Three structural gaps holding B2B teams back.

Discovery is weak	Teams often don't know which expert voices shape their category across LinkedIn, podcasts, Substack, YouTube and technical communities.
Context is weak	Even when they know the names, they lack a live view of what those people are saying, which topics are rising, or where a brand could credibly contribute.
Measurement is weak	Most organisations still can't connect creator activity cleanly to CRM, pipeline, revenue influence or wider brand visibility.

RESONANCE + AGENCY RESEARCH, APRIL 2026

31% say measurement and proving ROI is the biggest blocker to scale

41% say better measurement and reporting would most improve their programme



Too many brands still treat it as outsourced hype.

THE FAMILIAR MISTAKES

Chasing the largest audience over the strongest authority

Brand messaging over useful expertise

Reach over business relevance

Creators booked like campaign inventory

Influencer activity siloed from the wider comms and demand engine

WHY THE WRONG CREATOR IS A REAL RISK

In AI, cybersecurity, cloud, infrastructure and developer tooling, the wrong creator can be worse than no creator at all. A technically weak voice may deliver reach while eroding trust. A technically strong voice with poor governance can create brand, compliance or security risk.

Sprout Social’s contract guidance now treats deliverables, compensation, usage rights, disclosure and exclusivity as core clauses. The FTC in the US and the ASA and CAP in the UK continue to insist that influencer ads are clearly identifiable.

A campaign with no content rights or measurement design generates noise and leaves nothing usable behind.

What the brands getting it right do differently.

They treat influencer relations as a blend of media intelligence, relationship strategy, content operations and measurement design.

01

Know which creators matter

Map the voices your buyers actually listen to, ranked by authority.

02

See which topics are accelerating

Spot the conversations gaining pace before the category catches up.

03

Understand what creators publish

Follow what those voices say week to week, and why it lands.

04

Find credible openings

Identify where your spokespeople can contribute with real expertise.

05

Agree rights and disclosure

Write proper usage rights and disclosure terms into every partnership.

06

Measure the whole journey

From trust and visibility through to demand capture and commercial impact.

Why this matters even more in the AI era.

For comms and marketing leaders the brief has widened. Coverage and campaigns still count, but the job now includes understanding and influencing the whole ecosystem of voices that shape how the brand is seen.

Influence no longer stops at the original post. A credible creator mention can shape how a buyer sees a category on LinkedIn, hears about it on a podcast, meets it in a newsletter, searches for it on YouTube, or later asks an AI assistant about it.

Not every post becomes a measurable pipeline event. Creator-driven trust signals are still part of the wider discovery environment.

WHAT THE PLATFORMS ARE BUILDING

LinkedIn BrandLink	Expanded into a more formal publisher and creator environment.
TikTok × HubSpot	Lead quality and pipeline measurement through the HubSpot integration.
YouTube Creator Partnerships	Creator discovery, permissions and performance analysis made far more native.

The most forward-looking teams are connecting influencer activity to these wider visibility systems.



From influencer marketing to influencer operations.

B2B technology needs better systems for influence: discovering relevant voices, monitoring what they publish, spotting shifts in the conversation, finding guest opportunities, managing outreach, and linking creator activity to measurable business outcomes.

The most forward-looking teams want to see how creator conversations overlap with journalist attention, social discussion, category momentum and AI-era brand discovery.

They want one view of how their brand is showing up, where authority is being built, and which outside voices are moving the conversation.

How Agency operationalises influence.

Resonance built Agency to help B2B technology brands with exactly these challenges. It starts from the idea that PR and brand visibility now need operational infrastructure, in a market where influence is shaped across media, social, influencer channels and AI answer engines, well beyond the press release and the campaign report.

Influencer intelligence

Monitors LinkedIn, YouTube, Substack, podcasts, Instagram and TikTok. Analyses the content, ranks posts by relevance and surfaces the topics rising in your category early.

Opportunity identification

Finds the podcasts, newsletters and creator formats where your spokespeople can credibly contribute, matched to the topics that are gaining ground.

Integrated measurement

Connects creator activity to journalist, news, competitor and social intelligence and AI visibility, giving one view of how your brand shows up.

The winners will have the best system for understanding which voices matter, where trust is being built, and what that activity does for visibility, demand and pipeline.

The new competitive advantage.

Influencer relations in B2B technology is past the early stage. Adoption and spend are up. Always-on models outperform campaign-led ones. The most relevant channels are increasingly clear, and the measurement conversation has moved well beyond vanity metrics.

Side tactic

Campaign-era workflows. Spreadsheets. Ad-hoc outreach. One-off creator buys. Reach without business relevance.

Operational muscle

Always-on programmes. Systematic discovery. Content rights. Measurement from trust through to pipeline and revenue contribution.

The real divide runs between brands that still treat influencer relations as a side tactic and brands building the operational muscle to use it properly. Resonance and Agency help B2B technology brands build that muscle.



Resonance

Talk to us about influencer relations.

hello@resonancecrowd.com

resonancecrowd.com · agency.com.pr

London · Manchester

Resonance

