TODAY'S USER GENERATED CONTENT

How publishers, marketers, and agencies are leveraging user generated content (UGC) in marketing campaigns as part of their content marketing mix.

October, 2014

IAB – Content Marketing Task Force

Brought to you by:

The IAB UGC Working Group

What is User Generated Content?

User Generated Content, or UGC, is content that is generated by individual users or peers* that has the potential to create engagement and/or drive conversation.

* Peers = Individuals who are not "professionals." Smaller targeted bloggers are included in the peer definition although there is some industry debate regarding at what level a blogger is considered at the professional level.

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What's Driving Growth?

Top Reason #1:   Social media and other platforms built exclusively on UGC such as YouTube, Instagram, and TripAdvisor

"Ordinary people" have become avid content creators. Publishers, marketers, and agencies are taking notice.
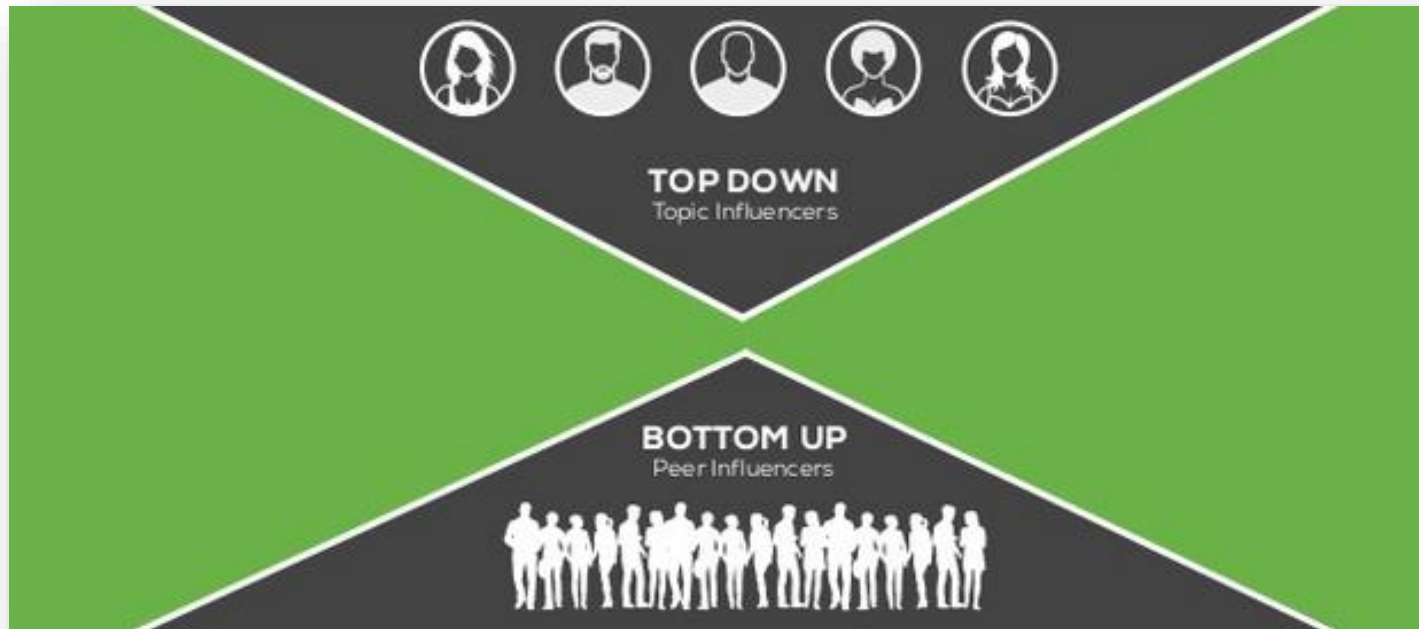
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What's Driving Growth?

Top Reason #2:

Technology that informs content development and content distribution

Technology enables real-time listening, rapid activation, monetization, and scalability.
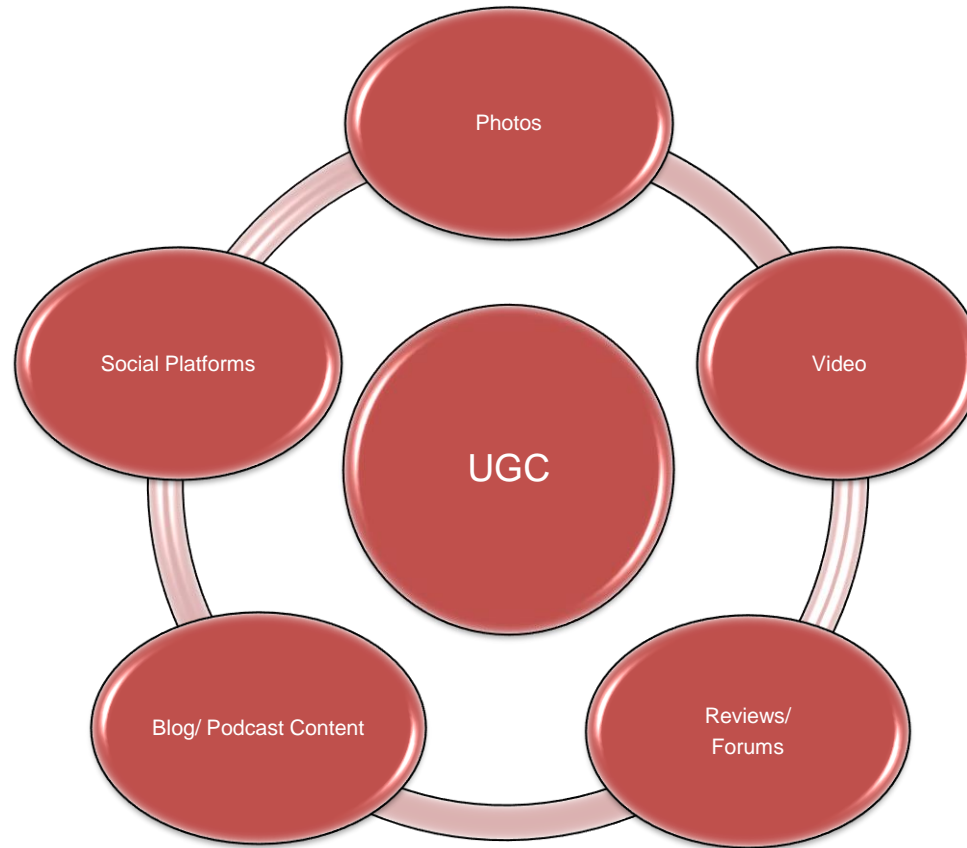
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Two Sources of UGC

Source: IPSOS/Media CT Report, 3/14

And it can be organic or paid

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Main Types of UGC

Key Benefits of UGC

1. Heightened Consumer Trust
2. Stronger Brand Affinity and Engagement
3. More Earned Media
4. Stronger SEO
5. Research Opportunities
6. Cost-Efficient Content Pipeline

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Key Benefits of UGC

1. Heightened Consumer Trust

Numerous studies have shown that word-of-mouth and other peer recommendations are viewed as being more trustworthy, memorable, and influential than traditional brand copy. Trust is an important factor leading to increased loyalty, conversion, and even purchases. This is particularly important for higher ticket priced items.

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Key Benefits of UGC

2. Stronger Brand Affinity and Engagement

Consumers are drawn to UGC opportunities for a variety of reasons including a desire to be a thought leader, a need to be part of a group, a want to show off their creativity, and in some instances a gain of status or financial rewards for participating. An engaging UGC campaign can yield more time on site with higher satisfaction with either the site itself or the brand "sponsor." For publishers, more traffic can lead to more paid advertising on their site.

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Key Benefits of UGC

3. More Earned Media

UGC campaigns are ripe for earned media opportunities which draw more people to your site, either repeat or new visitors.

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Key Benefits of UGC

4. Stronger SEO

UGC is proven to be an effective way to increase search engine indexing, particularly in relation to a social SEO campaign.

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Key Benefits of UGC

5. New Research Opportunities

Marketing and media plan efforts can be enhanced and strengthened by listening to what consumers have to say in UGC environments. This can inform strategies, media plans, and competitive intelligence. Many tools are available to help publishers/brands listen to the UGC conversation and potentially act on it in near real time. This includes customer service.

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Key Benefits of UGC

6. Cost-Efficient Content Pipeline

In this era of content marketing, it can be challenging to develop enough quality content to fill the pipeline. UGC is both cost-efficient and cost-effective, with the primary cost being labor to monitor the UGC activity. Content could also include UGC output that can be used in advertising campaigns in digital, print, TV or OOH, which can represent significant production cost savings.

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UGC Best Practices

Outline and Discern the Content Ecosystem

Key questions to ask:

- Where is your audience going for content?
- How are you monitoring content trends?
- What type of relationship are you trying to build?
- Are there proper metrics for success?
- Have you defined your own voice/space?
- Do you have an established policy, process or partner to help you understand rights, validation, acquisition, and proper attribution?

> ***Be wary of paralysis by analysis – test, learn, and be human***

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UGC Best Practices

Three Ways to Celebrate Your Fans

1. Highlight the Fun, Free Content Submitted

- Did a fan send in a funny photo that represents your brand? They should be your **Fan of the Week!**

2. Build Relationships With Your Brand Loyalists

- Did your fan send in a clever tweet? **Chat With Them!**

3. Empower Ambassadors for Larger Initiatives

- Did a fan go above and beyond for your brand? Encourage them to be a **brand ambassador**!

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UGC Best Practices

#Trend Where Your Fans Are Talking

- **Discover Where Your Fans Are Spending Their Time**

- **Identify Influencers Who Enjoy Your Brand & Fit the Niche**
  - These **influencers can be anyone**: a pro-athlete, a DIY blogger or a YouTube star

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UGC Best Practices

You Win! Contests & Promotions

- **Set Internal Goals**

- **Seed and Promote Among Fans**

- **Crown The Winner and Measure Your Results**

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UGC Best Practices

Content Engineering

- Leverage crowd content in real-time

- Analyze content trends and act quickly

- Find stories that inspire action

- Ensure swift development of micro-content

  - Validated & licensed UGC
  - Sponsor-initiated fan content
  - Editorial mash-up

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UGC Marketing Uses - Examples

UGC Marketing Examples - Influencer Campaigns

- Keurig social influencer campaign via Klout identified influencers who were rewarded with a free brewer "perk" resulting in significant earned media
- Hershey's Spreads campaign with CrowdTap inspired consumers to create thousands of pieces of content in exchange for status and rewards
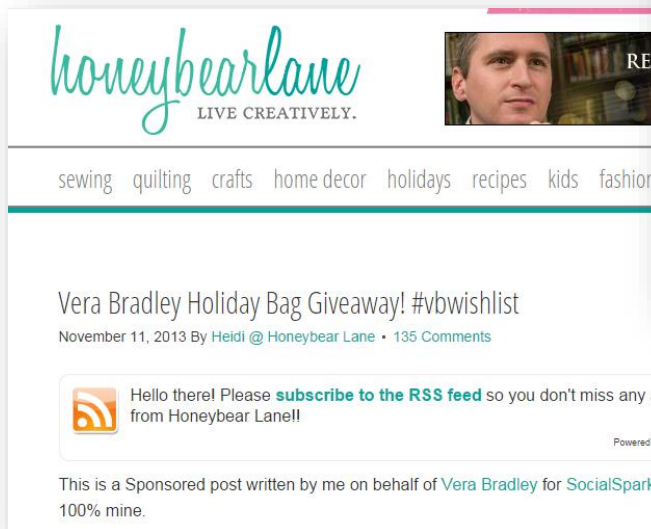
UGC Marketing Examples - Crowd Sourced Content

(For contests, advertising, product development and more)
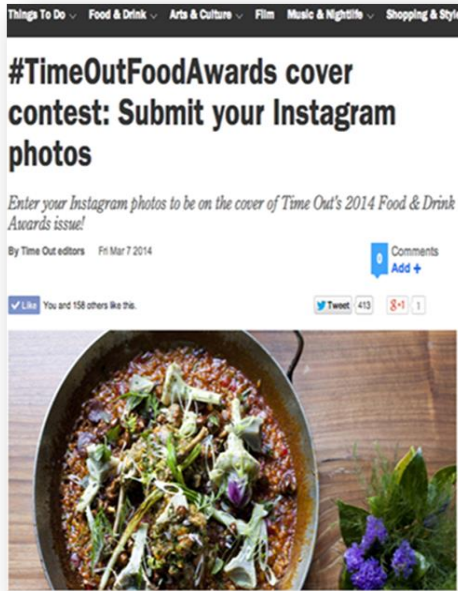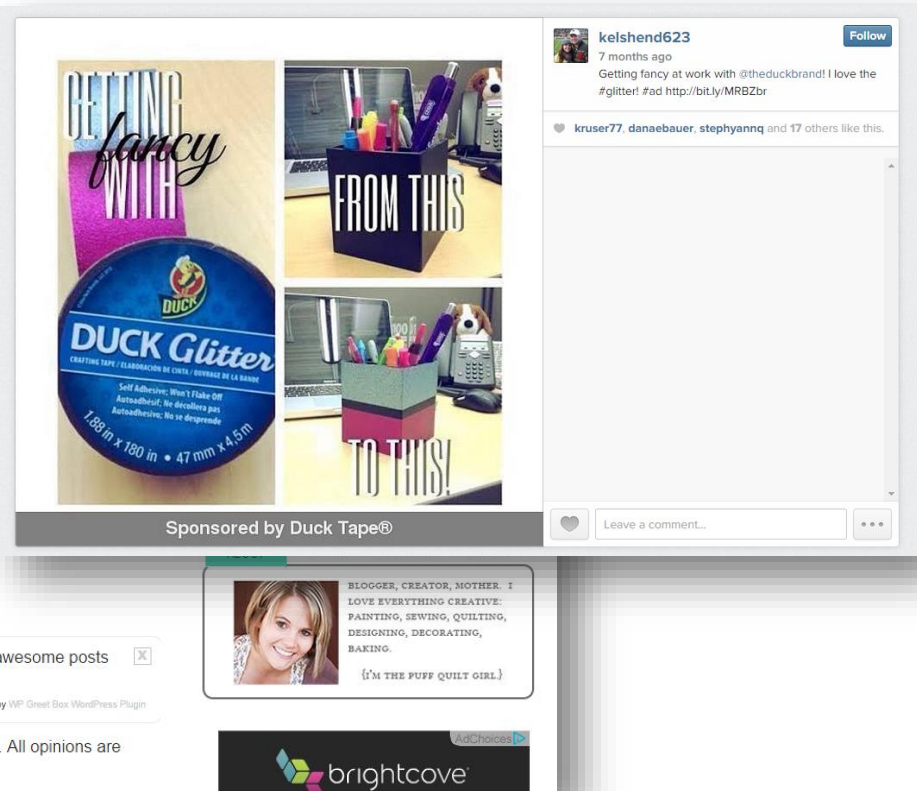
- TimeOut New York crowd sourced images from their Instagram followers for the chance to be on the front cover
- Long-running Doritos "Crash the Super Bowl" effort for crowd-sourced videos yields thousands of submissions, viral content, and an ad that runs on the Super Bowl
- EA Sports created the "Madden Giferator" for consumer engagement on their own site which was designed for social sharing

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UGC Marketing Examples - Sponsored Social: Incentivized Influencer Content

- Izea Sponsored Social campaigns on blogs and Instagram

# UGC Marketing Examples - User Reviews and Rankings
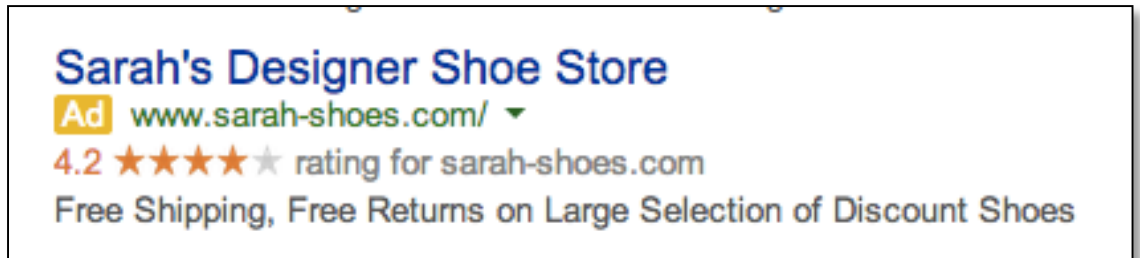
- Puerto Rico Tourism ad that tapped into the influence of TripAdvisor ratings on travel industry decision making
- Google Seller Ratings in Google search ads

UGC Marketing Examples - Event Marketing
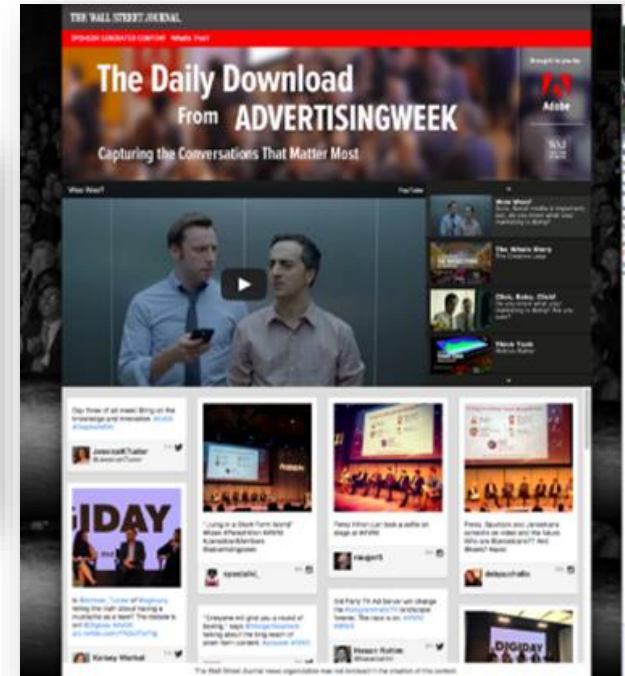
- Social media wall on site at the US Open, powered by IBM, shows live tweets to generate excitement and encourage social sharing
- On-line Wall Street Journal sponsored content campaign for Advertising Week event featuring customized content based on discovery across every social media platform. Done in conjunction with Storyful.

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UGC Marketing Examples - Intelligence/Social Listening
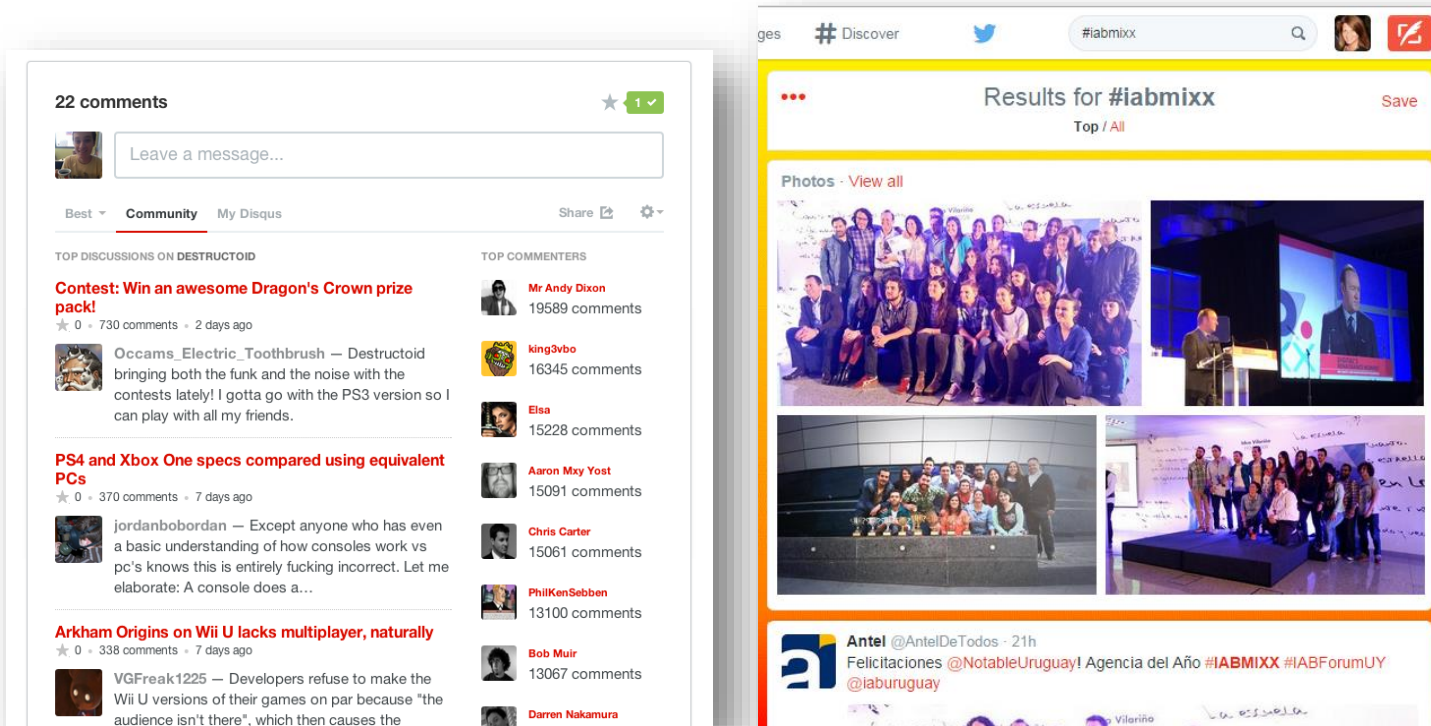
- Commenting section provides valuable insights in a place where the publisher or brand can moderate the conversation at their discretion
- Twitter hashtag monitoring for real time consumer feedback and engagement

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Legal Considerations

Every UGC use case will be different, so it is always best to consult your legal team with any questions prior to engaging a campaign.

What follows are some important considerations a marketer should consider before activating a campaign that includes any type of UGC.

The following information is offered only for general informational and educational purposes and does not constitute legal advice. You should not act or rely on any information contained in this document without first seeking the advice of your legal counsel.

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Legal Considerations

Nice UGC… Can I use it??
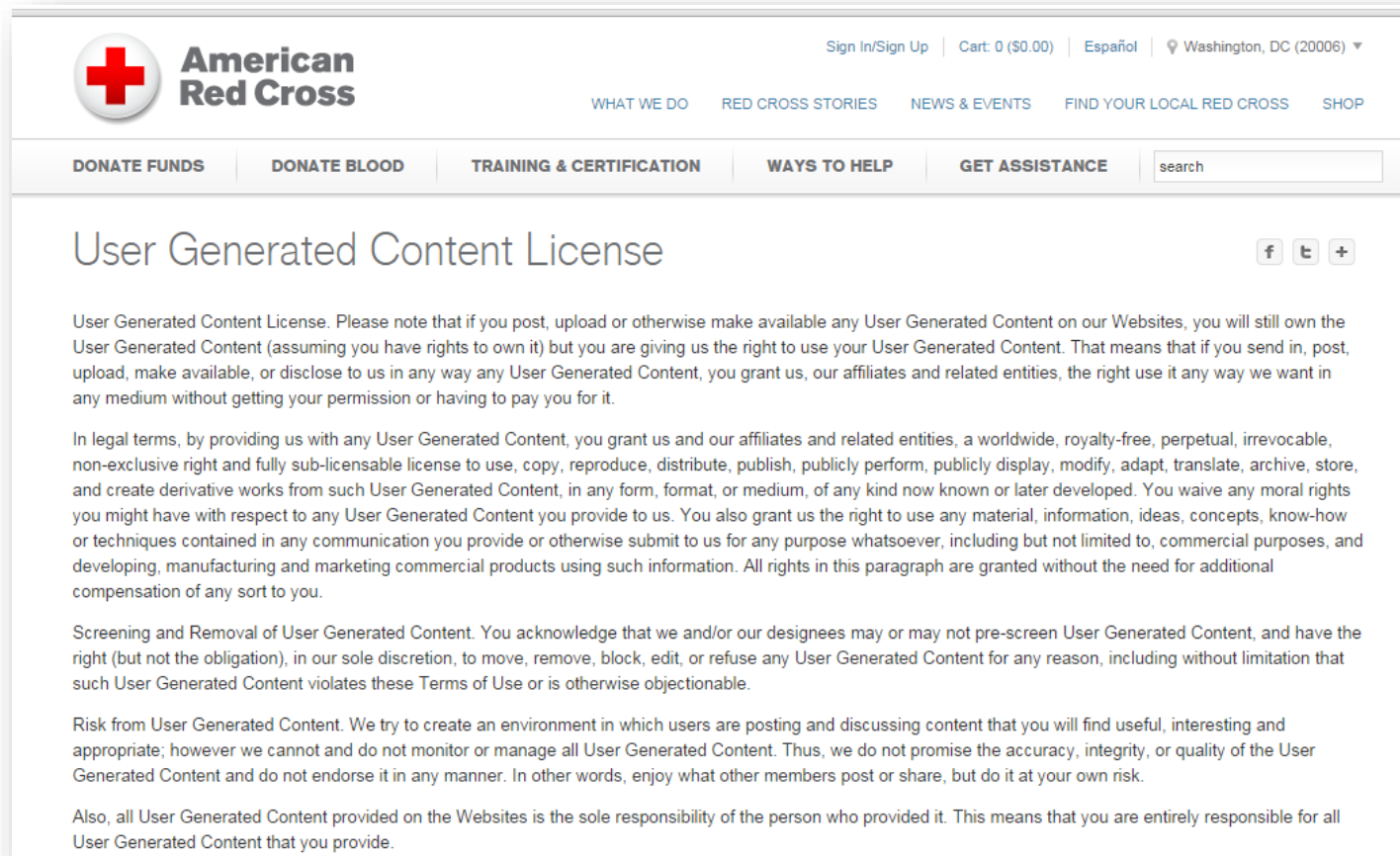
If your company did not create the image or words, regardless of form (photo, video – including Vines and GIFs, review, comment, blog, etc.) or location it is best practice to consult with your legal counsel about copyright, fair use, creative commons, and public domain image considerations.

If you are considering a UGC campaign or contest with one of the major social media or image sharing platforms you should:
* Check both State and Local Laws
* Review, on a site-by-site basis, their specific contest and promotion rules/guidelines.
* Consider creating clear submission guidelines to make it as clear as possible what may or may not be submitted, and what one can expect after the submission.
* Establish a submission review process and ensure some mechanism is in place to quickly take down potentially infringing content (e.g., false claims, copyright issues, defamatory statements, profanity, etc.)

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Website UGC License Example

Legal Considerations

We're compensating individuals with gifts or cash in exchange for endorsement (UGC). Now what?

You will need to comply with the Federal Trade Commissions 16 CFR Part 255 which is the "Guides Concerning the Use of Endorsements and Testimonials in Advertising" to ensure that individuals, including bloggers, who are compensated in anyway disclose said compensation, and the source of the compensation, and that the endorsement represents "the accurate experience and opinion of the endorser."

The FTC also requires that advertisers engage in "reasonable monitoring of endorsers." You may also want to work with legal to develop contractual requirements with the endorser.

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Legal Considerations

What about UGC reviews and comments?

Moderation is at the discretion of a given site and guidelines can vary greatly from free form moderation to specific approvals for each post. One legal concern for reviews and comments relates to defamation, slander, and libel.

Best practice suggestions:
- Have a system in place to monitor the UGC which would include swift take-down and review of any content that could be deemed "objectionable" in accordance with published guidelines.

- If publishing a UGC review/comment from another source on your own site, or if you want to use a review/comment in your advertising, you need to understand the specific permissions needed for authorized use and/or attribution. **When in doubt, ask!**

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About the IAB

The Interactive Advertising Bureau (IAB) empowers the media and marketing industries to thrive in the digital economy. It is comprised of more than 650 leading media and technology companies that are responsible for selling, distributing and optimizing digital advertising and marketing. Together, they account for 86 percent of online advertising in the United States. Working with its member companies, the IAB evaluates and recommends standards and practices and fields critical research on interactive advertising. The organization is committed to professional development, elevating the knowledge, skills, and expertise of individuals across the digital marketing industry. The IAB also educates marketers, agencies, media companies and the wider business community about the value of interactive advertising. Founded in 1996, the IAB is headquartered in New York City.

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About the IAB Content Marketing, Native Advertising and Social Media Committees

Three IAB committees joined forces to provide thought leadership leading to this document. To learn more about these groups, visit the links below, and/or contact Susan Borst, Director of Industry Initiative at IAB - susan@iab.net

- IAB Content Marketing Task Force
- IAB Native Advertising Task Force
- IAB Social Media Committee

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