

# LEVERAGING BRAND DEALS PLAYBOOK

From First Collaboration  
to Predictable Brand Income

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## INTRODUCTION

# The First Brand Email... Was Not What I Expected

I still remember exactly where I was when I got my first brand email.

I was sitting around a campfire with my family and some close friends of ours on a camping trip. It was one of those nights where everything slows down. The fire was crackling, someone tossed another log on, and the kids were running around the campground playing glow-in-the-dark tag, laughing and chasing each other through the dark.

It was peaceful.

I picked up my phone and noticed a new email. The subject line mentioned a collaboration. At first, I didn't think much of it. I opened it, started reading, and within about three seconds my facial expression must have completely changed.

My wife noticed immediately.

She said, "What is it?"

I kind of laughed and said, "You're not going to believe this."

It was for a certain adult toy. Yep you know the kind!

My first thought was:

Oh boy... what did I get myself into.

We all had a good laugh about it around the fire, and I hit delete as fast as I could.

## INTRODUCTION

But that moment was bigger than it seemed.

Because it showed me something important.

Brands were watching.

Up until that point, I had just been filming videos and uploading them to Amazon. I didn't know who was watching or if anyone even cared. But that email was proof that someone was paying attention.

It also taught me another important lesson.

Not every brand deal is one you want to accept.

The next email I received made a lot more sense.

It was for a cordless drill. That's right in my wheelhouse. Tools, farm equipment, camping gear. That's the kind of content I enjoy creating because it's what I actually use in my day-to-day life.

The brand interaction was great. They sent the drill. I filmed the video. I uploaded it.

And it never sold.

Not one sale. Strike two!

That was another turning point.

Because it taught me that just because a brand reaches out doesn't automatically mean it's going to be worth your time.

That's exactly what this ebook is here to help you understand.

## INTRODUCTION

We're going to walk through how brand deals actually work, what beginners experience first, how to evaluate collaborations properly, and how to transition from free samples with no compensation into paid partnerships that actually move the needle.

Brand deals are not just about getting free products.

They are about building relationships, building leverage, and eventually creating guaranteed income streams from the content you're already creating.

And like everything else in this space, there's a progression to it.

This guide will walk you through that progression step by step.



*- Mike Strahl*

## CHAPTER I

# The Natural Progression: From Uploading Videos to Working With Brands

When most creators first start uploading videos, brand deals aren't even on their radar.

You're focused on learning the basics.

Figuring out how to film properly. Learning how to speak clearly on camera. Understanding how to upload videos. Trying to make your first commissions.

In the beginning, everything feels new.

You're learning how Amazon's platform works. You're learning how buyers interact with your videos. You're figuring out what types of products you enjoy filming and what types of products you don't.

You're building your foundation.

For me, that foundation was built around the things I already did in my daily life. Farm equipment. Tools. Camping gear. Things I actually use.

That made filming easier because I wasn't forcing it.

I wasn't pretending to be interested in something I didn't care about. I was simply sharing products that fit naturally into my life.

And that's an important distinction.

Because authenticity is what builds trust.

## CHAPTER I

As you continue uploading videos, your content library grows.

At first, it's slow.

Then something interesting starts happening.

You begin receiving inbound emails.

These are brands reaching out to you.

Sometimes it's smaller brands. Sometimes it's products you've never heard of. Sometimes it's products that don't make any sense for your niche at all.

But the important part is this:

They're reaching out to you.

That means your content is being seen.

That means you're building visibility.

And that means you're moving in the right direction.

### **Why Offsite and Audience Building Changes Everything**

There's another shift that happens as you expand beyond Amazon and start building offsite platforms like YouTube.

At first, your YouTube channel might only have a few subscribers.

A few views here and there.

Nothing major.

## CHAPTER I

But over time, it grows.

And this is where things really begin to compound.

Because now, you're not just creating content for Amazon.

You're building an audience.

This audience becomes one of your most valuable assets.

Without an audience, brands are paying you for your ability to produce content.

With an audience, brands are paying you for your ability to influence purchasing decisions.

That's a completely different level of value.

And this is why building offsite is so important.

Not only does offsite generate additional affiliate income, but it builds the leverage that allows you to command higher brand deal rates over time.

This is how your income begins expanding beyond a single source.

Onsite income builds your foundation.

Offsite income builds your audience.

Brand deals turn your content and audience into guaranteed income.

And when all of these income streams begin working together, that's when you start building a true creator business.

This is the direction we're building toward.

## CHAPTER 2

# The “Say Yes to Everything” Phase

After that cordless drill collaboration, more emails started coming in.

At first, it was sporadic. Maybe one every couple of weeks. Then it turned into one every week. Then multiple per week.

And every time I saw one come in, it was exciting because it felt like progress.

It felt like the work I had been putting in was starting to get noticed.

So naturally, I said yes to almost everything.

If someone wanted to send me a product, I accepted it. If they wanted a video, I did it. I wasn't charging anything at that stage. I was just focused on building my content library and gaining experience.

And honestly, that phase was important.

It allowed me to film products I wouldn't have purchased myself. It allowed me to expand into different categories. It helped me become more comfortable on camera and more efficient with my filming process.

But there's something that doesn't hit you right away. Every single collaboration takes time.

At first, it doesn't seem like a big deal. But then the emails start stacking up. The packages start arriving. Some products are easy. Others require assembly. Others require learning how the product works before you can even explain it.

And suddenly, your time starts getting pulled in multiple directions.

## CHAPTER 2

You're answering emails, tracking packages, testing products, filming videos, and trying to keep everything organized.

This is where you begin to realize that free product doesn't always equal value.

Some products are great. Others sit on a shelf and never get used again. Some videos generate commissions. Others don't move the needle at all.

That cordless drill was a perfect example. Great product. Great interaction with the brand. But it never sold.

This taught me a lot. I spent a few hours on that project and never saw a dime. To top it off I couldn't even get it to sell on marketplace because it showed me that just because a brand reaches out doesn't automatically mean it's going to translate into income. Sometimes it's just wasted time.

And that's when my mindset started changing. My time is worth something.

### The Moment You Start Valuing Your Time Differently

There comes a point where you start looking at inbound emails differently.

Instead of thinking:

**"This is awesome, another free product."**

You start thinking:

**"Is this actually worth my time?"**

Because every collaboration has a cost.



## CHAPTER 2

Even if you're not spending money, you're spending time.

Time to communicate with the brand.  
Time to wait for the product to arrive.  
Time to learn the product.  
Time to film it properly.  
Time to edit and upload the video.  
Time to track and record each item for taxes.

And once you start building momentum with your content, that time becomes extremely valuable.

Because every hour you spend filming something that doesn't align with your niche or doesn't move the needle is time you could have spent creating something that does.

This is where creators begin making the transition from saying yes to everything to becoming selective.

You start asking better questions.

Is this a product I actually want?

Does this fit my niche and the content I want to create?

Is the product valuable enough to justify my time?

Can I negotiate a flat rate fee or is this something I should simply decline?

This is one of the most important transitions you'll make as a creator because once you begin valuing your time properly, you begin making decisions that support long-term growth instead of short-term excitement.

You stop chasing free products and you start building a business.

## CHAPTER 3

# Learning to Evaluate Brand Deals Properly

At some point, something changes.

You stop feeling excited every time a brand reaches out, and you start feeling cautious instead.

Not because it isn't exciting anymore, but because you now understand something most beginners don't realize yet.



Not every brand deal is worth your time.

This is where you transition from reacting emotionally to evaluating opportunities logically.

And this is one of the most important skills you can develop as a creator.

Because from this point forward, every collaboration becomes a business decision.

## CHAPTER 3

**One of My Personal Filters: Can This Deal Pay Me Back?**

One of the simplest ways I began evaluating early brand deals was asking myself one question:

Can this deal pay me back for my time?

There are several ways this can happen. The first is through resale value.

If a brand sends you a product worth \$300, and you know you can sell it afterward for \$200, that may justify your time investment, even if you aren't receiving a flat rate fee. This approach helped me early on. Not every product was something I needed long term. But if it held resale value, it still made financial sense.

The second is negotiating a flat rate fee.

Even a small flat rate of \$25 to \$50 begins changing the equation. Now you're being compensated directly for your time, regardless of whether the product generates affiliate sales.

The third is long-term potential.

Sometimes, establishing a relationship with a brand can lead to ongoing paid collaborations.

I've had situations where I agreed to do the first video without compensation to establish the relationship, and that brand later came back and paid for multiple future videos. This doesn't always happen, but when it does, it can turn into a reliable income source.

The key is understanding what you're gaining from each deal.

Is it immediate compensation?

Is it resale value?

Is it long-term partnership potential?

Or is it simply not worth your time?

## CHAPTER 3

### **Not All Products Require the Same Level of Effort**

Another major factor in evaluating brand deals is understanding how much effort a product requires.

Some products are extremely easy to film.

You open the box, explain what it does, show how it works, and you're done.

Other products require significantly more effort.

Products that require installation. Products that require assembly. Products that require technical understanding or troubleshooting.

These types of products should command higher compensation.

Because you're investing more time, more effort, and more expertise into creating that content.

This is something many beginners overlook.

They accept the same compensation regardless of the product complexity.

But as you gain experience, you begin recognizing when something deserves higher compensation and when something is simple enough to accept at a lower rate.

This awareness allows you to protect your time while still building valuable relationships.

## CHAPTER 3

**This Is Where You Begin Taking Control**

This phase is where creators begin shifting from reactive to intentional.

Instead of saying yes to everything, you begin making calculated decisions.

You accept collaborations that align with your goals.

You negotiate when appropriate.

You decline offers that don't make sense.

And most importantly, you begin treating your content creation like the business it actually is.

Because from this point forward, your time, your content, and your growing audience all have real value.

And learning how to protect and leverage that value is what allows brand deals to become a meaningful income stream.



## CHAPTER 4

# Understanding Your Value as a Creator

At some point, something subtle starts to change.

It doesn't happen overnight. It happens gradually.

Your videos start looking better. You become more comfortable on camera. You speak more naturally. Your filming process becomes faster and more efficient.

You stop overthinking everything and most importantly, you start building momentum.

This momentum shows up in different ways.

Your video library grows. Your Amazon commissions become more consistent. Your YouTube channel starts gaining subscribers. Your videos begin getting views regularly instead of sporadically and brands start noticing.

We aren't just attracting small brands anymore. Now we are catching the eye of better brands, brands that have actual marketing budgets.

This is when your value begins increasing because you're no longer just someone uploading a few random videos.

You're someone who has proven they can create helpful content consistently.

You've demonstrated that you understand how to present products properly.

And that makes you valuable. Are you seeing the bigger picture yet?

## CHAPTER 4

### Why Your Experience Alone Has Value

Even before you have a large audience, your experience creating content has value.

Brands need content.

They need videos showing their products in real-world situations. They need videos explaining how their products work. They need content they can use to help customers make buying decisions.



And that's exactly what you're providing. You're saving them time.

You're saving them production costs.

You're providing authentic content created by a real user instead of a scripted commercial. **That alone has value.**

This is why brands begin offering flat-rate fees once you've demonstrated consistent content creation. They aren't just paying you for views.

They're paying you because creating quality content takes time, and they would rather pay you to do it than try to produce it themselves.

## CHAPTER 4

**How Your Audience Begins Increasing Your Leverage**

As your offsite presence grows, your value increases even more.

Your YouTube channel becomes one of the biggest leverage points you can build.

Even if your audience starts small, it compounds over time.

Each video adds to your library. Each subscriber increases your reach. Each viewer represents someone who trusts your opinion.

And that trust is incredibly valuable to brands because brands don't just want content, they want influence.

They want exposure to people who trust the person presenting their product.

This is why offsite platforms are so important. Without offsite, you are limited to production value. With offsite, you combine production value with audience value. That combination allows you to begin commanding higher flat-rate fees over time.



## CHAPTER 4

### **Niche Authority Multiplies Your Value**

Another factor that dramatically increases your value is niche authority.

When you consistently create content around a specific category, you become known for that category.

For me, that's tools, farm equipment, camping gear, automotive gear, and DIY-related products.

That's what I use in my daily life. That's what I understand. And that's what I enjoy creating content around.

Because of that, brands in those categories are far more likely to reach out.

They know my audience aligns with their product.

They know the content will be authentic.

They know I understand the product category.

This makes the collaboration more valuable for both sides.

This is why staying consistent within your niche helps accelerate brand deal opportunities.

You're no longer just another creator.

You become a creator known for something specific.

And that niche authority becomes one of your strongest assets.

## CHAPTER 4

**This Is Where Flat Rate Deals Begin Becoming Normal**

This is the phase where flat rate offers begin becoming more common.

At first, it might be small amounts.

\$25

\$50

\$100

But this is where the shift begins.

Because now, you're no longer just receiving free product.

You're receiving direct compensation.

And as your experience and audience continue growing, those flat rate offers begin increasing.

This is the natural progression.

You start by building experience.

That experience builds confidence.

That confidence builds authority.

And that authority builds leverage.

This leverage is what allows brand deals to become a meaningful income stream.

## CHAPTER 5

# Turning Free Products Into Paid Brand Deals

## The Moment Everything Changes

At some point, something shifts.

The emails themselves haven't changed much. They still come in offering free products. They still say things like, "We'd love to collaborate," or "We can send you a sample."

But you've changed.

You're no longer brand new. You've filmed dozens, maybe hundreds, of videos. You know how long it takes to properly test an item, set up your camera, record clean audio, and deliver something you're proud of.

You also know something else now. This takes real time, real effort, and real energy.

For the first time, you begin to see these emails not just as opportunities to receive products... but as opportunities to provide a service.

Because that's exactly what you're doing.

You are creating content that helps brands sell their products.

And once you understand that shift, everything changes.

You stop thinking like someone hoping for free products.

You start thinking like someone running a business.

## CHAPTER 5

**Recognizing When You're Ready to Charge**

Most creators don't realize when they've crossed the line from beginner to professional.

They assume they need a massive YouTube channel or tens of thousands of followers before they can charge. **That's not true!**

Your ability to charge starts long before that.

The moment you can consistently create:

- Clear, helpful product videos
- Confident on-camera delivery
- Clean audio and lighting
- Professional, trustworthy content

At this point, brands are no longer taking a risk on you.

They are investing in you.

They need creators who can produce authentic content that helps customers feel confident buying their product.

And it's often far more efficient and cost-effective for them to work with you than to produce that content themselves.

This is where your mindset needs to evolve.

You are no longer just accepting products.

You are delivering a service.

And services get paid.

## CHAPTER 5

### **Your First Paid Deal Doesn't Need to Be Huge**

Your first paid deal probably won't be \$500.

And that's okay.

Most creators start in ranges like:

- \$25 per video
- \$50 per video
- \$75 per video
- \$100 per video

Not because that's your ceiling.

But because that's your starting point.

The goal at this stage isn't to maximize every dollar.

The goal is to establish yourself as someone who charges for their work.

Once you cross that line, everything becomes easier.

Because now brands see you differently.

You're no longer just another creator accepting samples.

You're a professional providing content as a service.

And that positioning alone changes the types of opportunities you begin to attract.

## CHAPTER 5

**Why Brands Are Willing to Pay You****Brands aren't paying you because you're famous.**

They're paying you because you solve a problem for them.

They need content all the time!

They need videos that show their products being used in real homes, by real people, in real-world situations.

Customers trust that more than scripted commercials.

They trust creators.

And brands know that.

Hiring a creator like you allows them to:

- Get authentic content faster
- Avoid expensive production teams
- Avoid hiring actors
- Avoid renting studios
- Avoid complex production logistics

You are efficient.

You are relatable.

And you are effective.

That combination is incredibly valuable.

And the sooner you understand that, the sooner you begin positioning yourself correctly.

## CHAPTER 5

### **This Is Where the Real Income Begins**

Free products can be helpful in the beginning.

They help you learn.

They help you build experience.

They help you grow your content library.

But they are not the destination.

They are the starting point.

The real opportunity comes when you transition from accepting products...

to getting paid to create content.

Because now, every video has two forms of income potential:

1. Affiliate commissions from Amazon
2. Flat rate production fees from brands

You are stacking income streams on top of the same piece of content.

This is where things begin to accelerate.

This is where content creation becomes a real business.

And this is only the beginning.

## CHAPTER 6

# Learning to Structure Brand Deals Like a Professional

## Moving From “Getting Paid” to Charging With Intention

By now, you’ve crossed a line.

You’re not just accepting free products anymore.  
You’re getting paid. That’s a big step!

But this is also where a lot of creators plateau.

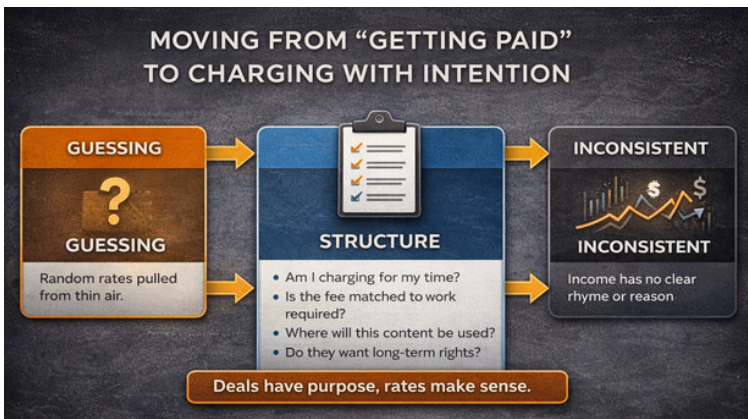
They start charging... but they don’t actually know why they’re charging  
what they’re charging.

So they guess.

And guessing is what keeps income inconsistent.

The real shift here isn’t just getting paid.

It’s learning how to structure deals on purpose.



## CHAPTER 6

### **How Do I Know What to Charge?**

This is the question every creator asks.

There isn't one universal rate.

But there is a framework.

Every deal should make you think through four things:

- Your time
- Your skill
- Your platform
- How the content will be used

If you're only thinking about one of those, you're undercharging.

When a brand hires you, they aren't just buying a video.

They're solving a problem.

If they created this content internally, they would need:

- Equipment
- A production team
- Editing
- Logistics
- Talent

You simplify that entire process.

That has value.

CHAPTER 6

**Why Flat Rates Cap Your Income**

Here’s where creators unintentionally limit themselves.

- A brand offers a flat rate.
- You agree.
- You deliver.
- You move on.

Every deal looks the same but not every deal is the same.

Some brands just want content created and posted.

Others want to use your content in their own marketing.

Others want access to it for months. Maybe even years.

Those scenarios are not equal.

If you charge the same amount for all of them, you’re leaving money on the table and most creators don’t even realize it.



## CHAPTER 6

**A Smarter Way to Structure Pricing**

Stop thinking in one number.

Start thinking in layers.

## Layer 1: Production

This covers filming, editing, and delivery.

## Layer 2: Placement

Where is this content going?

Amazon only?

YouTube?

Multiple platforms?

## Layer 3: Usage

Are they running ads with it?

Using it on their website?

Including it in email campaigns?

How long do they want access?

Every added layer increases value.

You are not charging for "a video."

You are charging for how that video works for the brand.

That mindset changes everything.

CHAPTER 6

**Am I Charging Enough?**

Let me give you a gut check.

Ask yourself:

- Would I feel frustrated delivering this at this rate?
- Does this feel rushed for the compensation?
- Is the brand likely making significantly more from this than I am?
- Did I factor in communication, revisions, and editing time?

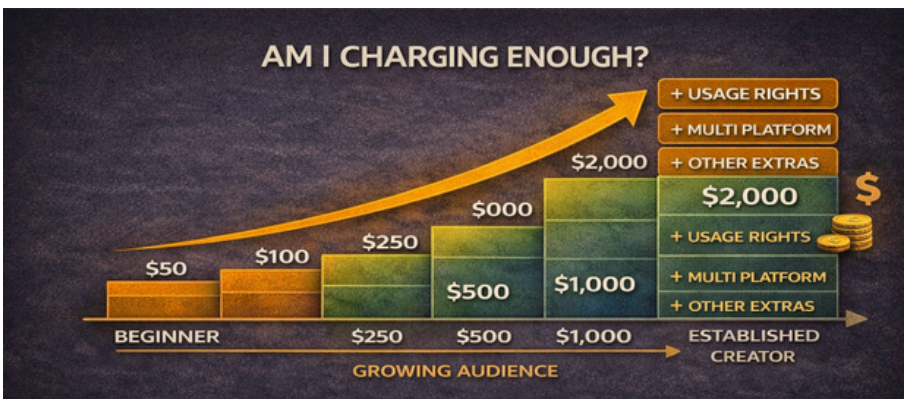
If something feels off, it usually is.

Professional creators don't just accept numbers.

They evaluate them.

This is where you move from accepting collaborations...

To structuring partnerships.



## CHAPTER 6

**Usage Rights: Where Income Can Multiply**

Usage rights are one of the most important concepts creators need to understand.

When you create a video, you own that content.

A brand paying you to create the video does not automatically mean they own unlimited rights to use it however they want.

If a brand wants to use your content for their own marketing purposes, that carries additional value because your content is now helping drive sales beyond your own platforms.



This is why usage rights should be treated as a separate component of your deal structure. Not every brand will request them but when they do, it's important to recognize the increased value of your content.

This is one of the key ways experienced creators increase their income without increasing their workload. They structure deals based on how the content will be used not just based on the act of creating it.

## CHAPTER 6

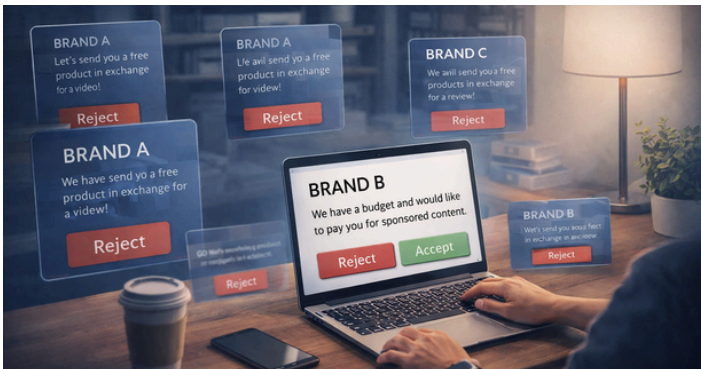
**Creating Deal Structures That Scale With You**

As your experience grows, your deal structure naturally evolves.

Instead of treating every collaboration as a one-off transaction, you begin thinking long term.

You begin recognizing opportunities to:

- Build ongoing relationships
- Establish repeat collaborations
- Work with brands that align with your niche
- Prioritize deals that support your long-term growth



You also begin recognizing which brands are worth your time and which are not.

Not every opportunity deserves your attention.

Focusing on quality partnerships instead of quantity allows you to maintain efficiency while increasing income.

This is how creators avoid burnout while continuing to grow.

By working smarter, not simply working more.

## CHAPTER 6

**This Is Where Creators Begin Separating From Beginners**

At the beginning, creators accept opportunities to gain experience.

At this stage, creators begin structuring opportunities to maximize income.

This is where your mindset fully shifts.

You are no longer simply accepting collaborations.

You are evaluating partnerships.

You are protecting your time.

You are positioning yourself professionally.

And you are building a system that allows your content to generate income from multiple directions.

This is what transforms brand deals from occasional opportunities into a reliable income stream.

And this is where creators begin building long-term stability through their content.



## CHAPTER 7

# Turning Professionalism Into Predictable Income

At this stage, something important starts to happen.

You are no longer just reacting to opportunities. You are operating with intention.

You understand your value. You protect your time. You structure your deals properly. And because of that, brands begin to see you differently.

You are no longer just another creator.

You are someone they can rely on.

This is the shift that turns brand deals from occasional bonuses into consistent income streams because when brands find creators who deliver quality content, communicate clearly, and act professionally, they do not want to start over with someone new. They want to keep working with the person they trust and that is where long-term partnerships begin.



## CHAPTER 7

### **Why Brands Come Back to the Same Creators**

Brands are constantly looking for creators who make their job easier.

Every new creator is a risk. They do not know if that person will deliver. They do not know if the content will be usable. They do not know if the creator will represent their brand properly.

But once you prove yourself, that uncertainty disappears.

You become an asset.

I have personally experienced this many times. What started as a single product collaboration turned into multiple paid opportunities with the same brand over time. Not because I chased them. But because I delivered quality work and made the process easy for them.

When brands trust you, they return.

And when they return, income becomes more predictable.

This is how creators begin stacking income streams on top of each other.

Not from one viral video.

But from building relationships that continue to generate opportunities.

## CHAPTER 7

### **From Random Deals to Reliable Income**

This is where content creation begins to feel different.

Instead of wondering when the next opportunity will come, you begin to develop consistent partnerships that provide ongoing income.

You start recognizing which brands align with your niche. Which products perform well. Which collaborations are worth your time.

And you focus your energy there.

This allows you to build a foundation where multiple income streams work together:

- Amazon onsite continues generating passive income
- Offsite content drives additional commissions
- Creator Connections adds bonus opportunities
- Brand deals provide upfront payments
- Usage rights create additional revenue layers

Together, these streams create stability.

And stability is what turns content creation into a real business.

You are no longer hoping it works.

You are building a system that does work.

## CHAPTER 8

# Inbound vs Outbound: Taking Control of Your Brand Deal Pipeline

## Understanding Inbound Opportunities and The Limits

Inbound opportunities are the emails that begin showing up once you've established yourself. These are brands finding you.

They've seen your videos. They've seen your storefront. They've seen your content somewhere, and they've decided you might be someone worth working with.

At first, this feels exciting. Because it validates that what you're doing is working. Once brands start to reach out you no longer feel invisible and it begins to validate all of the work you've been putting in.

It's important to understand something early. Not every inbound opportunity is a good opportunity.

Many brands will offer free product only. Some will offer very low compensation. Others won't align with your niche or your long-term goals. This is normal.

Inbound proves you are visible but inbound alone will always have limits.

Inbound is reactive. You are limited to whoever happens to find you. You are operating on their timeline, their budget, and their priorities.

This means your growth becomes unpredictable. Some months will have opportunities. Others will be quiet.

This is where many creators plateau not because they lack skill but because they are waiting instead of building.

Inbound creates opportunity, outbound creates control.

## CHAPTER 8

**Example 1: Poorly Written Inbound Email****Subject: Cooperation for video****Hello friend,**

**We are Amazon seller and have new product need video for Amazon. Product is portable power station 600W.**

**We want you make video for our product. We give you free product. You can keep it after video. If video good, maybe we have more cooperation.**

**Please tell us your price.**

**Best regards**

**Shenzhen Technology Co.**

Why This Email Is Weak

- No personalization
- No mention of your channel or niche
- No understanding of your audience
- No product details beyond the name
- No link provided
- No clear scope of work
- Focused only on getting content cheaply

This is extremely common with overseas sellers. The email is vague, transactional, and gives you no indication they've even looked at your content.

It's not necessarily malicious.

It's just lazy outreach.

## CHAPTER 8

**Example 2: Professional Inbound Email**

**Subject: Collaboration Opportunity – Portable Power Station for Outdoor Use**

Hi Mike,

My name is Daniel and I manage influencer partnerships for SummitVolt. We've been following your camping and outdoor gear reviews and really enjoyed your recent video on RV battery upgrades. Your hands-on testing style and real-world use demonstrations align well with our brand.

We are launching a new 600W portable power station designed specifically for campers and overlanders. We believe it would be a strong fit for your audience.

Here is the product link for reference:

[Portable Power Station 600W – Model SV600](#)

We would love to explore a paid collaboration that includes an Amazon shoppable video and potentially YouTube integration if it aligns with your schedule.

If this sounds like a fit, I'd be happy to discuss scope and budget with you.

Looking forward to hearing your thoughts.

Best regards,

Daniel

Influencer Marketing Manager

SummitVolt

## CHAPTER 8

## Why This Email Is Strong

- Personalized greeting
- Mentions your niche
- References a specific video
- Explains why the product fits your audience
- Provides product context
- Mentions paid collaboration upfront
- Clear and professional tone

This brand has done research.

They understand your content.

They see alignment.

That immediately changes how seriously you take the opportunity.



## CHAPTER 8

### **Outbound Is Where You Begin Choosing Your Future**

Outbound is when you begin reaching out to brands directly.

Instead of waiting for opportunities, you create them.

This is one of the most powerful shifts in your entire journey.

Because now, you are no longer limited to whoever shows up in your inbox. You can choose brands intentionally.

Brands whose products you already use. Brands whose products align with your niche. Brands whose products you know will perform well.

This allows you to focus on opportunities that actually move the needle.

Outbound opportunities are often far greater than inbound once you learn how to create proposals for these brands.

This is important because you are no longer sitting around waiting to be discovered. You are presenting yourself directly to the brand and showing them what value you can provide for their organization.

But outbound requires effort.

It requires research.

It requires understanding what a brand might be looking for and positioning yourself as someone who can help them.

This is where creators begin separating themselves.

Because outbound done correctly positions you as an asset.

Not just another creator asking for free product.

## CHAPTER 8

### Why Research, Media Kits, and Proof Matter

Outbound is not just sending emails.

Outbound is a proposal and proposals require preparation.

Before reaching out, you should understand the brand.

What products do they sell? What audience are they targeting? What type of content do they currently use?

Most importantly, how can you help them?

This is where your media kit becomes one of your most important tools.

Brands want confidence.

They want to know that you can deliver.

This means providing proof. As shown by my YouTube media kit on **Page 18** your media kit should help demonstrate:

- Your storefront and total video volume
- Your niche and expertise
- Your YouTube channel and audience, if applicable
- Your experience creating product-focused content
- And most importantly, links to similar videos you've already created

When brands can immediately see the quality of your work, uncertainty disappears and when uncertainty disappears, opportunities increase because you are no longer asking for a chance.

You are showing them exactly why working with you makes sense.

## CHAPTER 8

**Why Outbound Accelerates Everything**

Most creators rely entirely on inbound.

They wait.

They accept whatever shows up.

And their growth reflects that.

But creators who learn outbound begin building momentum.

They begin forming relationships intentionally.

They begin working with brands that align with their niche, their audience, and their long-term goals.

They begin building consistency.

Outbound allows you to pursue higher-quality brands.

It allows you to negotiate stronger compensation.

It allows you to build long-term partnerships faster.

And most importantly, it allows you to take control of your future.

Because outbound is not just an email.

It is a proposal.

And when done correctly, it transforms you from someone waiting for opportunities...

**into someone creating them.**

## Example Outbound Proposal Email

Subject: Content Partnership Proposal – Gerber Gear Camp Cooking Equipment

Hi Gerber Team,

My name is Mike Strahl, and I'm an outdoor and camping gear content creator focused on real-world product testing across Amazon and YouTube.

I've been researching Gerber's camp cooking lineup, specifically the ComplEAT Cook Set and your Dual-Fuel Camp Stove systems. These are exactly the type of durable, real-use products my audience is looking for, especially those building reliable camping and overland setups.

My YouTube channel, Handy Homestead Reviews, focuses on showing how gear performs in real outdoor environments so viewers can make confident purchasing decisions. Camping content has been one of the strongest-performing categories for my audience, and Gerber's reputation for quality makes it a natural fit.

I've attached my media kit PDF for reference, which includes examples of my storefront, YouTube channel, and related outdoor gear content.

I'd like to propose creating a multi-content package featuring two Gerber camp cooking products during an upcoming camping trip, where I can showcase their real-world performance and usability.

### Content Package Options

Option 1 – Amazon Video Package  
\$400

- 2 Amazon Shoppable Videos (one per product)
- Professionally filmed and edited
- Published to my Amazon storefront
- 1 Long-form YouTube video featuring both products (8-12 minutes)

## CHAPTER 8

Option 2 – Cross-Platform Video Package  
\$600

Includes everything in Option 1, plus:

- 10 professional lifestyle photos
- 2 YouTube Shorts (one per product)

Option 3 – Full Content Package  
\$1,200

Includes everything in Option 2, plus:

- Full usage rights to both videos in perpetuity

My focus is on creating authentic, real-use content that helps customers understand how products perform outside of a studio setting while also providing brands with long-term marketing assets.

If this aligns with Gerber's current marketing goals, I'd be happy to discuss further. If there are any other collaboration ideas that I have not already mentioned I'd be open to discussing this as well.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Mike Strahl

YouTube: [www.youtube.com/@handyhomesteadreviews](https://www.youtube.com/@handyhomesteadreviews)

Media Kit: Attached PDF

Email: [mike@creatorsleverageguild.com](mailto:mike@creatorsleverageguild.com)

## CHAPTER 9

# Usage Rights: Income Most Creators Don't Realize They're Giving Away

## What Usage Rights Actually Are

When a brand pays you to create a video, they are paying for the production of that content but that does not automatically mean they own the rights to use it however they want.

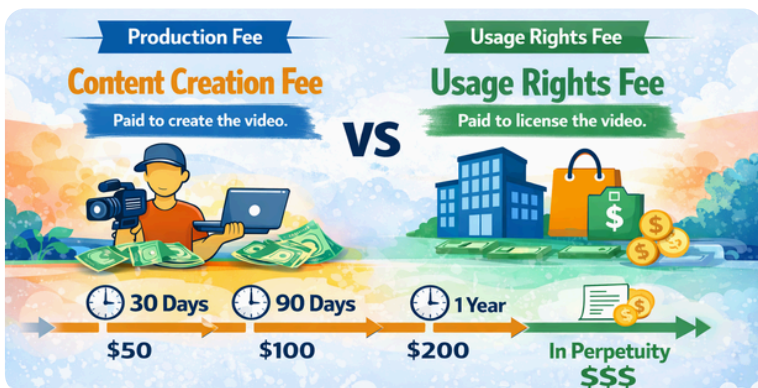
This is one of the biggest misunderstandings creators have early on.

There are two separate things happening in a brand deal:

- Payment for creating the content
- Payment for using the content

These are not the same thing. Creating the video is one service, allowing the brand to use that video in their advertising, website, or paid campaigns is another.

The second part is called usage rights. Most new creators unknowingly give this away for free, not because they have to, but because they don't know they can charge for it.



## CHAPTER 9

### **Where Brands Actually Use Your Content**

Once you create a video for a brand, its value doesn't stop at the moment you deliver it.

That video becomes a marketing asset.

Brands often want to use creator content in multiple places because it performs better than traditional studio-produced ads. It feels authentic, relatable, and helps customers make buying decisions with confidence.

Your content may be used across:

- Amazon product listings
- Brand websites and landing pages
- Organic social media posts
- Email marketing campaigns
- Paid advertising on platforms like Facebook, Instagram, or YouTube

Each of these placements helps the brand sell more product.

And that means the content you created continues providing value long after you've finished filming.

This is why usage rights exist because your content doesn't stop working after delivery.

## CHAPTER 9

### Understanding Usage Duration and Control

Usage rights define how long a brand is allowed to use your content.

This is where creators unknowingly give away long-term value.

Common usage timeframes include:

- 30 days
- 90 days
- 6 months
- 12 months
- In perpetuity (unlimited use, no expiration)

The longer a brand wants access to your content, the more valuable those rights become.

Because during that time, your content may be used repeatedly to help generate sales.

Especially in paid advertising.

Paid ads can run continuously and directly generate revenue for the brand.

Which means your content is actively contributing to their growth.

Usage duration should always be discussed and agreed upon clearly.

Because ownership and usage are not the same thing.

You created the content.

You control how it can be used.

## CHAPTER 9

### **Why Usage Rights Multiply Your Earning Potential**

Understanding usage rights changes how you approach brand deals completely.

Instead of being paid once for creating content, you now recognize that the content itself has ongoing value.

This allows you to structure deals more strategically.

Brands may pay for:

- Content creation
- Limited-term usage
- Extended usage
- Or full long-term licensing

This creates opportunities to increase compensation without increasing your workload.

You are still creating the same content.

But now, that content can generate multiple forms of income.

This is one of the major shifts that separates beginner creators from professional creators.

Because professional creators don't just create content.

They create assets.

And assets have long-term value.

## CHAPTER 10

# Where Brand Deals Fit Into Your Long-Term Income Strategy

## **Brand Deals Are an Extension of What You've Already Built**

Everything you've done up to this point has been building toward this moment. First you started by filming products you already owned. At the time, the goal was simple. Learn the process and get comfortable on camera. We needed to understand how Amazon's ecosystem worked.

You weren't thinking about brand deals yet. You were building experience.

Then something started to change. You became more efficient. Your filming improved. Your confidence improved. Your content became more natural.

At the same time, your content started generating income. First through Amazon onsite commissions. Then through affiliate links. Then through YouTube.

Brand deals are not a separate path from that. They are a continuation of the same process.

You are already influencing buying decisions. You are already helping customers understand products. You are already creating the exact type of content brands need.

Brand deals simply allow brands to compensate you directly for creating that content. Instead of earning only when something sells, you now earn for the production itself.

This adds a new income stream without requiring you to change what you're doing. You're simply getting paid in more ways for the same skillset.

## CHAPTER 10

**This Is Where You Begin Creating Content on Your Terms**

One of the most powerful shifts that happens at this stage is control.

Early on, most creators film whatever they have available. You are focused on building volume, gaining experience, and learning what works.

But now, you have options. You can choose which brands you work with. You can choose which products fit your lifestyle. You can choose which content aligns with your niche.

This changes everything. Instead of chasing random products, you begin building around products you actually use.

Camping gear you rely on. Tools you trust. Equipment that naturally fits into your daily life.

This makes content creation easier. It makes it more authentic.

And it makes it more sustainable long term.

There is a reason people say, "If you do what you love, you'll never work a day in your life."

This is exactly what that looks like.

You are no longer forcing yourself to create content just to stay active.

You are building around the things you genuinely enjoy.

And brand deals allow you to expand that even further.

## CHAPTER 10

### **Brand Deals Strengthen and Protect Your Overall Income**

One of the biggest risks creators face early on is relying too heavily on a single income source.

For many creators, that source is Amazon onsite commissions.

And while Amazon is an incredible platform, no single platform should ever be your only source of income.

Brand deals help solve that problem.

They add another income stream that works alongside everything else you've built.

Now, your income structure begins to look more balanced.

You have Amazon onsite income generating daily commissions.

You have YouTube generating affiliate sales and long-term traffic.

You have brand deals providing flat-rate payments for the content you create and in the future, you may add additional income streams like UGC, sponsorships, and direct partnerships.

This diversification creates stability.

If one platform slows down temporarily, the others continue producing income.

You are no longer dependent on a single system.

You are supported by multiple systems working together.

This is where content creation becomes sustainable long term.

# Final Thoughts: Always Be Building Forward

Brand deals are not the finish line, they are one of many income streams you can build from the content you create.

You started with Amazon.

You expanded into YouTube.

You added brand deals and in the future, you can expand even further through UGC, sponsorships, licensing, and additional platforms.

Each one adds another layer of security.

Each one strengthens your foundation.

Each one gives you more control over your income.

The most successful creators are not the ones who rely on a single platform.

They are the ones who continue expanding.

They continue building.

They continue thinking ahead because every video you create is not just content.

It is an asset. An asset that can generate income in multiple ways and over time, those assets build into something much bigger than individual deals.

They build into long-term stability. They build into independence.

They build into a business that belongs entirely to you.