

The reality of being a PROFESSIONAL CONTENT CREATOR IN BANGLADESH



ILLUSTRATION: ZARIF FAIAZ

Rakin shares his thoughts on overcoming societal biases: "When we started, we had to fight through a lot of scepticism and hesitation. It's a new profession; like any new field, it takes time for people to accept it."

MEHNAZ IRTIKA

Digital content creation in Bangladesh has undergone a remarkable transformation, shifting from a casual pastime to a viable professional career. However, as more individuals pursue this path, questions arise about the sustainability, impact, and acceptance of content creation as a legitimate profession. Let's take a look at how the evolution of content creation, while promising, is fraught with challenges that extend beyond the screen, and how these obstacles are tackled by local content creators.

The essence of content creation

The essence of successful content creation lies in authenticity and passion, not merely the pursuit of fame or fortune. "Don't rely on being famous. Start making content based on the niche you're passionate about. Newcomers are bandwagoning on trends and promoting their lifestyle over-focusing on their content, which we need to break away from," says Rakin Absar, a digital content creator active since around 2012.

Mahim Ahmed, known for his cooking content on Instagram, also underscores the importance of consistency and originality. "Essential skills include having a unique selling proposition (USP). Do what you're good at and be consistent," he says. "New creators are coming up much faster now, so you must stay on top by consistently uploading good content. Let the algorithm recognise you."

Kaarina Kaisar, a digital content creator with over five years of experience, says that she started her journey on a budget, which helped her focus on the quality of content rather than the equipment. "I don't have a team; all I have is my phone," she adds. "Start slowly and humbly. Short form content is trending now, and you don't need a fancy setup to start."

Societal perception and combatting criticism

One of the significant hurdles content creators face in Bangladesh is societal perception. Despite the growing recognition of digital content as a legitimate career, many still view it with scepticism. Rakin reflects on this challenge, "Most people do not take this as a profession, which is why they say what they say online. The general public needs to be educated about this being a legitimate profession."

The societal bias is further complicated by gender dynamics, as Kaarina explains. "It's almost evident that women are not preferred as content creators for the general audience; it's very easy to receive hate without context. What frightens me is that the people who are promoting hate speech are those from educated backgrounds with minimal knowledge of content."

Addressing the broader misunderstanding about the role and impact of influencers, Mahim adds his own take to the discussion: "A good influencer has an impact on people's lives. If someone's learning something from me, that's what I'd regard as a good influencer."

Dealing with negative perception

The general perception of content creators in Bangladesh is mixed, often split between admiration and disdain. According to Kaarina, there is a strong support system among fans, but also a lot of negativity, especially towards female creators. "I've personally faced hate comments for simply existing in the content creation field," she says.

Mahim points out that the perception gap is partly due to a lack of understanding. "Many people still don't see influencers as professionals. They think we're just doing silly things online." However, he believes that a good influencer impacts lives positively. "It's about educating the public on the value of our work," he adds.

Rakin shares his thoughts on overcoming societal biases: "When we started, we had to fight through a lot of scepticism and hesitation. It's a new profession; like any new field, it takes time for people to accept it. We need to keep showing the positive impact of our work and hope that over time, the perception will change."

Recently, the role of influencers in political and social events has been a topic of debate. Kaarina recounts a recent experience of attending a youth forum hosted by the Prime Minister, which sparked controversy among a notable percentage of the local audience. She says, "Much of the general audience didn't acknowledge that the program wasn't just for influencers; it included young representatives from various sectors. The backlash was uncalled for since we didn't bribe our way in; we were honoured to be invited and recognised for our

contributions."

This incident highlights the tension between public perception and the evolving role of influencers in society. While some view their presence at such events as a positive sign of recognition, others remain sceptical. Kaarina reflects that negative comments mostly stem from a lack of understanding about what content creators do and the value they bring. "It's important for the public to see that influencers can have meaningful engagements beyond social media," she adds.

Monetisation and its challenges

While content creation can be monetised, the path to financial stability is often uncertain and challenging. The fluctuating nature of monetisation means that creators must navigate a landscape of variable income and platform-dependent earnings. Kaarina points out, "One thing is for sure: consistency pays off. Local brands will want to affiliate with you if you're consistent, even if you're slow on the algorithm."

Successful monetisation often hinges on producing clean, engaging content that resonates with audiences. Mahim highlights the importance of this approach: "Clean and friendly content eventually makes it big. You'll grow and get monetisation opportunities if your content helps others or provides a pleasant experience."

Across the board, content creators stress that financial success should not be the primary motivator. Instead, passion and authenticity should drive content creation, with monetisation seen as a potential byproduct of sustained effort and quality output. By focusing on what they love and staying true to their unique voices, creators can build a loyal audience and achieve long-term success in the digital space.

The role of platforms

Rakin Absar began his journey on Vine and later transitioned to YouTube, adapting his content to fit the strengths of each platform. Mahim Ahmed initially found success on Facebook. He reflects, "Facebook is easy to use because you can invite all your friends, and they can support you right away. My friends were very supportive, and they shared my content within their circle."

However, with platforms like TikTok, content creators often face distinct challenges. Mahim Ahmed, who expanded his reach to TikTok—even grabbing a 'Content Creator of the Year' award on the platform—initially encountered negative stereotypes associated with being a "TikToker". He says, "It's up to the creators to change that perception."

He also states that in the next 4-5 years, content creation as a career choice can go big, with prominent figures setting the stage to represent Bangladesh on international platforms.

The future

Content creation goes beyond mere visibility; it is a demanding and rewarding profession that requires authenticity, passion, and unwavering resilience. As societal perceptions evolve and the digital landscape expands, aspiring creators must be ready to confront the true challenges of this dynamic field. By embracing these realities head-on, we can encourage a more informed and accepting audience, paving the way for a supportive environment that nurtures the next generation of content creators.

JOBS SPOTLIGHT

Grameenphone

Growth Lead, App Engagement



Deadline: May 30

Eligibility:

● Graduate in BBA/CSE/EEE, or Bachelor's degree in a related field.

Minimum experience: 4-6 years

IDLC Finance PLC

Brand Strategist, Marketing Communications



Deadline: June 3

Eligibility:

● Bachelor's degree with experience in brand building/development/strategic projects

Minimum experience: 4-6 years



Swisscontact

Officer/Senior Officer, Environmental & Social Compliance

Deadline: June 8

Eligibility:

● Bachelor's degree in any relevant discipline such as Economics, Development Studies, Environmental Science, or any other relevant social science subjects.

Minimum experience: 2 years

Shanta Holdings Limited

Sr. Executive/Assistant Manager



Deadline: June 1

Eligibility:

● Bachelor of Business Administration (BBA) in Human Resource Management.

Minimum experience: 3-6 years

FOR MORE DETAILS AND THE APPLICATION LINKS, SCAN THE QR CODE BELOW.



QUOTE OF THE DAY



You must be the change you wish to see in the world.

- MAHATMA GANDHI

MENTORSHIP 101: 5 key tips for new mentors

Ask anyone, and they will say that mentorship is a particularly tricky skill to master. Not only does it involve having someone else rely on you for guidance and support, but any mistake the mentee ends up making is a direct consequence on the mentor as well. Whether professionally or academically, if you're a new mentor struggling to get your feet off the ground, here are five things to keep in mind to step up your mentorship game.

Commit to the role

Before you jump into mentoring, remind yourself that this is a time-consuming role, and more often than not, you will have to take hours out of your busy day to teach and guide your mentee. As such, ensure you have the time and willingness to dedicate to this craft. A successful mentor must be consistently available and engaged to build a trusting relationship with their mentee. As per a Forbes article on the benefits of mentorship, feeling supported by mentors helps employees feel more invested and fulfilled in their commitment to the company.

Develop a structured action plan

Identify specific goals and objectives for the mentorship. This helps both parties stay focused and measure progress effectively. Setting SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound) goals can provide clear direction and purpose. Also, establish regular check-ins to review progress towards these goals. Use these sessions to discuss what's working, what isn't, and how the approach might need to change.

Foster open communication

Maintain a dialogue that is open, honest, and supportive. Encourage your mentee to share



ILLUSTRATION: ZARIF FAIAZ

their thoughts and concerns without fear of judgement. Pay attention, show empathy, and provide thoughtful responses. This demonstrates that you value your mentee's input and are invested in their growth. According to the Udemy course 'A Practical Guide to Mentorship', a key step towards being a great mentor is to foster a caring mindset that is present, curious, and patient with the needs of the mentee.

Provide opportunities for growth

Help your mentee find opportunities to develop new skills and gain experiences that will advance their career. This might include recommending them for projects, encouraging them to attend workshops, or connecting

them with key individuals in your network. Keep in mind that each mentee is unique, with different strengths, weaknesses, and career aspirations. Tailor your mentoring approach to meet the individual needs of your mentee, providing customised support and guidance.

Lead by example

Demonstrate the behaviours and attitudes you wish to instil in your mentee. Your actions often speak louder than words and can greatly influence their professional development. As such, always show integrity, work ethic, and a positive attitude in your own work. Stay updated on new mentoring techniques and strategies, and be willing to refine your approach based on new insights.

CONTENT PILLARS TO FOLLOW FOR BUDDING CREATORS

EDUCATIONAL/INFORMATIVE CONTENT

The information pillar aims to educate and provide valuable knowledge and insights to the audience, helping them solve problems or gain expertise in a specific area.

ENTERTAINING/ENGAGING CONTENT

The entertainment pillar aims to engage audience using fun, humorous, inspiring, or emotionally appealing content to captivate their attention, evoke positive emotions, and create a memorable experience.

INSPIRATIONAL/MOTIVATIONAL CONTENT

The purpose of this pillar is to inspire and motivate the audience by sharing stories of personal success, growth, and overcoming challenges, encouraging them to pursue their goals and aspirations.

ILLUSTRATION: ZARIF FAIAZ