**Guidelines for Disclosing Sponsored Social Media Posts**

It is important that you are transparent in your social media activity; you should always disclose when you have a financial (including payment, discounts, perks, and gifting), employment, personal, or family relationship with a brand your talking about online.

It’s about making sure your followers are aware when you’ve been paid or given something of value to promote a product — as opposed to recommending a product because you simply like it.

If you mislead your followers, you may be breaking consumer protection law, and could face enforcement action.

**#1. Place Your Disclosure So It’s Hard to Miss**

Your disclosure has to be obvious to anyone who is going to engage with your post; it can’t be buried within the hashtags or hidden beneath the “more” button.

In Stories, it’s important to superimpose the disclosure over the picture or video and make sure your viewers have enough time to read it. It can not be hidden amongst other text or underneath stickers or pictures.

For video it is important that the disclosure is mentioned and included in the description.

In a live stream, you should periodically mention the disclosure so that late-arrivals don’t miss it.

**#2. Use Simple and Clear Language**

“Thanks to xxxx for the free product”

AD / Advertisement / Sponsored as first word in text

Tagging a brand in the text or the photo is NOT enough; you must make the disclosure clear in the caption of your post too.

If you have relationships with several brands or businesses featured in the same post, then you must make sure you state all of these prominently and clearly

**#3. Use the Same Language Throughout**

In other words, the disclosure must be the same as the language in which you write the rest of the post

**#4. Share Honest Endorsements Only**

You can’t talk about a product or experience that you haven’t actually enjoyed and you can’t share a positive review if you’ve had a negative experience.

**#5. Be Transparent on All Platforms**

When promoting sponsored content on Instagram that originated on another channel (such as your blog), you must disclose the partnership in both locations.

*Complied by Sharon Garner, the Social Fit December 2019*

**For more information:**

UK: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/social-media-endorsements-guide-for-influencers/social-media-endorsements-being-transparent-with-your-followers>

USA: <https://www.ftc.gov/system/files/documents/plain-language/1001a-influencer-guide-508_1.pdf>

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