

FROM DEPENDENCE TO INDEPENDENCE

THE RISE OF THE INDEPENDENT CREATOR

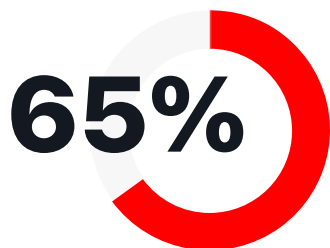
We set out to undertake the largest independent study of creators ever done. We wanted to better understand their current challenges and what a sustainable and successful future could look like.

What we found was both surprising and encouraging.

While many creators are hitting a glass ceiling when it comes to growing their businesses, we discovered an emerging vanguard of "Independent Creators."

They are forging a different path focused on cultivating direct models and communities that are both passionate and profitable – ushering in a new era of opportunity, experimentation and reasons to be optimistic.

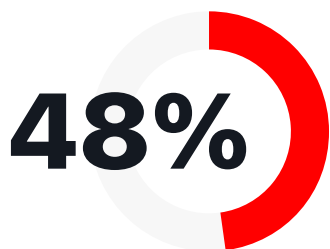
WHAT DID THE LARGEST SURVEY OF CREATORS FIND?



Creators are hitting a glass ceiling.

Only 35% of creators surveyed feel that they're earning a reasonable income for the time and effort.

This means 65% — yes, 65% — of creators feel overworked and underpaid.

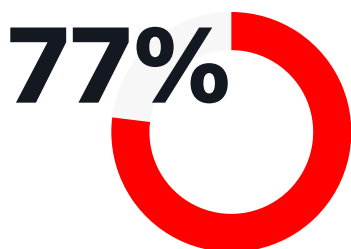


They are tapped out of work hours.

Creators feel like they have *less than 1 more hour a day* to give to content creation before it would "not be worth it."

48% say they've experienced "big emotional lows" as a creator.

25% doubt they'll be able to reach their financial goals without burning out.



The financial gains they have made feel precarious.

77% of creators worry about being dependent on social media platforms for their earnings.

71% say that a dip in earnings from an algorithm change would have "serious effects" on their life.



HERE'S WHERE THINGS GOT INTERESTING.

As more creators are getting wise to an increasingly exhausting and uncertain (some might even say “rigged”) future, something fascinating is happening.

A new “Independent Creator” is emerging and playing by very different rules.

These new Independent Creators aren't just going direct, but choosing platforms where they own their relationships and can connect their fans and followers *to each other* in their own “network effect” – making their communities, content, and subscriptions more valuable and interesting with each new person who joins.



Principle #1



They own a direct relationship with their audience, rather than renting it from a social media platform.

57% of creators see direct revenue (subscriptions, tips, memberships) as more crucial to their future than social platform revenue.



Principle #2



They earn money from cultivating communities, not just building audiences.

21% of creators earn revenue from an online community where followers pay to interact with each other (not just the creator).

These creators are seeing more success faster, especially on an emerging class of tools and technologies that make “100 true fans” a compelling reality.



Principle #3



They are building their own network effect rather than stay on the content conveyor belt demanded by big social platforms to succeed.

77% of creators say their ability to earn revenue has improved since they launched a community that followers pay to join.

And they're getting it done without the massive followings and constant posting required of Big Social — the median paid membership community has only 200 members.

ALL POINTING TO A NEW CREATOR MANIFESTO AND TECTONIC SHIFT.

Independent Creators are pointing to a very different future where creators:

1. **Own, don't rent.**
2. **Go niche, not broad.**
3. **Cultivate communities, not audiences.**
4. **Build a network effect, not a content conveyor belt.**

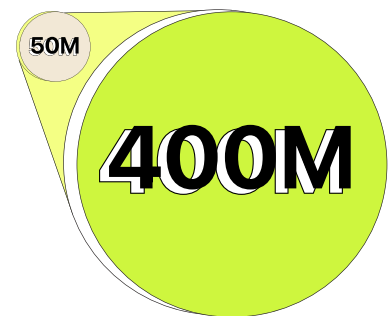
On this new path, it's clear that Independent Creators are becoming not just a new force in entrepreneurship but a bridge to a future that unbundles the current centers of social power. They are taking with them new member ownership models, community monetisation possibilities, experimental economies and more.

ONE MORE THING. THE TRUE NUMBER OF CREATORS MAY BE SEVERELY UNDERESTIMATED.

In this new world, there's no reason why any person, with even the most modest of followings, can't become a revenue-earning Independent Creator.

That means that the conservative estimate for this new breed of Independent Creator could be 8x the 50m creators typically banded about.

Mind. Blown.



Stay tuned for our full research findings, our mammoth whitepaper and our presentation that weaves it all together dropping on October 26, 2021.

NON
FICTION



THE FINE PRINT

Nonfiction is the independent research firm who produced these research results.

Their quantitative sample was collected over a one-week period in October of 2021 totaling 1,624 completed responses, using a 95% confidence level and a 2.5% margin of error based on the population of the US.

Their approach utilized a technique called "known sampling" in which the identity of respondents is verified for accuracy.

In order to focus on the financials of creators, they screened out creators not currently earning any income. Since this sample was taken from the creator market broadly and not skewed by any involvement with a particular creator platform, we believe that this is the largest open-field study of revenue-generating creators done to date.

Funding for this research was provided by Mighty Networks, who were not permitted to approve findings throughout the research and were contractually prevented from having any edit privileges or contingencies over the report.

While some of the findings of this study are aligned with Mighty's vision for the future of creators, the report equally considered futures where Mighty Networks is not the beneficiary. The research looked at a future where competitors or new entrants win out — or where social platforms gobble up the market.

While there's always a possibility for bias in funded research, all parties have sought to ensure the accuracy and objectivity of these findings that we believe are novel and stand true.