CUSTOMER STORIES AND CREATORS

Plan honest features with clear permission, useful briefs and visible disclosures.

A customer story can help someone picture a real visit. A creator can show the experience from a fresh perspective. Both work better when everyone understands the assignment, the relationship and where the finished content may appear.

Start with a useful question: what would a first-time visitor want to know? You might explain pickup, show a group order or explore how someone chose a dish. Invite the person to describe their actual experience. Give them room to decline participation or say something you did not expect.

Keep three decisions separate: consent from the person featured, permission to use the creative work, and disclosure of a relevant business relationship. One does not automatically settle the others. This is a practical planning guide; contract, privacy and publicity requirements depend on the situation and location.

AGREE

Set the purpose, scope, compensation and permissions.

→

CAPTURE

Record a real experience and accurate details.

→

PUBLISH

Check the edit, disclosure and permitted uses.

Make the relationship clear

Arrangement	What to make clear
Paid creator	The brand paid for the endorsement or content.
Gifted experience	A meal, product, discount or other benefit was provided.
Employee or family	The relevant relationship with the business.
Independent customer	Preserve the person's actual experience; do not invent a connection or opinion.

FTC guidance calls for clear disclosure of material connections viewers would not expect. A free meal can matter even when no cash changes hands. Put the disclosure with the endorsement, where people will notice it. For video, include it in the video; spoken and visible disclosure helps viewers watching in different ways. A profile note or buried hashtag is easy to miss.

Use required platform tools as well. TikTok requires its content disclosure setting for promotion of your own business and incentivized third-party promotion. A platform label alone does not automatically satisfy FTC guidance.

Write the brief around the experience. Give the creator confirmed hours, the correct menu name and the question to answer. Ask which parts they want to explore. Agree how factual corrections will be handled. Do not require praise that conflicts with their opinion, imply they tried something they did not, or script an unsupported result.

For consumer reviews, never condition a reward on a positive or negative rating. Review platforms may impose stricter rules. Creator testimonials and consumer reviews have different legal treatment.

Put the usable details in writing

Use a short written brief before the visit. A photographer generally starts as the copyright owner of their photograph, with exceptions such as qualifying work made for hire. Paying for a visit or receiving a tag does not specify the reuse rights your business needs. Ask the rights holder to agree to the intended uses.

Detail	Record the agreement
Deliverable	Format, approximate length, delivery date and who posts.
Permission	Where the business may use it, for how long, with what credit and edits.
Paid use	Whether ads, boosting or creator-account ad authorization are included.
Compensation	Fee, provided items, payment timing and what happens if plans change.

Ask featured people for permission before filming and explain the intended publication. Plan shots that avoid uninvolved diners and private screens. Keep the agreement with the asset so another staff member can check it later. For uncertain rights or a complex campaign, get suitable legal review before using the material.

Check music separately. TikTok says its licenses for music outside the Commercial Music Library do not cover commercial use. Do not assume a popular sound, creator permission or a track cleared for one placement covers every reuse. Confirm the music permission for each destination and planned ad use.

Choose one person to review delivery, one correction deadline and one contact for later concerns. These small decisions prevent a finished file from becoming an unclear handoff.

Worked example: a pickup collaboration

Hypothetical teaching example. A restaurant hires a local creator to demonstrate an evening pickup order. The fictional agreement covers one vertical video, a provided meal and a $200 production fee. These are sample planning terms, not recommended market rates or promised results.

The owner sends a brief with the pickup entrance, current ordering steps and a request to show what the creator actually experiences. The creator chooses the dishes. A staff member agrees to appear; other diners and order details stay out of frame. No customer testimonial is scripted.

The written license permits one organic repost per named restaurant account, each allowed to remain public for three months from its posting date, with credit and agreed caption edits. Ads, raw footage and additional edits require a separate agreement. The creator supplies a version without music so reuse can be checked separately.

Disclosure template for this fictional paid arrangement: Ad for [Restaurant]. They paid me to make this video and provided the meal. The creator places readable wording near the start, says it aloud and uses the applicable platform disclosure setting.

Before posting, the owner checks the pickup directions, menu details, permission scope and disclosure. An edit that changes the creator's meaning goes back for correction. After publication, the team records the live links, checks the disclosure survived, and reviews relevant questions and tracked inquiries at the agreed date. The fee purchases the agreed work; it does not establish a sales outcome.

Your partnership worksheet

Visitor question, participant and actual experience

Deliverable, posting account and deadline

Fee, gifts and disclosure wording

Person consent and creative rights holder

Allowed channels, edits, duration and paid use

Reviewer, follow-up date and outcome to check

Before approval, read the arrangement back in plain language. After publishing, check that the content still matches the agreement and current business details. Record questions answered and relevant inquiries alongside production cost. Keep permissions accessible to staff without circulating unnecessary personal information.

Checked October 6, 2026. These planning steps do not guarantee legal compliance or campaign results.

Sources and next steps

FTC: Disclosures 101 for Social Media Influencers | FTC: Consumer Reviews and Testimonials Rule Q&A | U.S. Copyright Office: What Photographers Should Know | YouTube Help: Protecting your identity | TikTok Help: Promoting a brand, product, or service | TikTok Help: Commercial use of music

Sources checked October 6, 2026. Original guide and hypothetical examples by Hustlerman. Platform features can change.

Get more free guides at hustlerman.com/resources. Print this worksheet or save a copy for your next planning session.

Built by The HolMor Group | Engineered to grow.