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How to Get Permission to Use User-generated Content from UGC Contests & Sweepstakes

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Get Permission to Use User-generated Content from UGC Contests and Sweepstakes

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With [user-generated content](#) (UGC) making it cost-effective to personalize marketing, brands use social media contests and giveaways to create UGC content on-demand. Consumers sharing UGC increase brand awareness and sales so it's no wonder that brands are leveraging this powerful form of [social proof](#).

Boost Your Marketing With UGC From Contests and Sweepstakes

User generated content contests deliver high quality [marketing assets](#) that you can use again and again. Furthermore, UGC is created in all forms including photos, video, audio, product reviews, testimonials, and written content. UGC is so valuable that [93% percent of consumers](#) say that UGC guides their purchasing decisions.

via [GIPHY](#)

You Need Permission to Use Contest User-generated Content

However, before you can use contest UGC in your marketing strategy, you need to make sure that your company obtains usage permission. Consumer consent is required to use UGC. Here's what you need to know about sweepstakes and contest marketing and UGC usage rights and permission.

Read on to learn why you need consumer consent for UGC, how to obtain permission to use user-generated content legally, and how to collect and manage UGC usage permissions for your participants and fans.

IN THIS ARTICLE:

- Do you need permission for user-generated content?
- What are user-generated content examples in sweeps and contests?
- Who owns social media contest user-generated content?

What Is User-generated Content (UGC)?

A whopping [87% of brands](#) say that they use user-generated content for authentic branded content that is both timely and free. This is because contests, sweepstakes, and giveaways provide a sustainable source of UGC that brands can leverage in their marketing after they obtain permission from the creators.

UGC Rights Management can also help you to ensure that user-generated content is properly and legally repurposed in your brand's marketing strategy so that you don't face any legal consequences.

What Are Examples of UGC in Sweepstakes and Contests?

Examples of user-generated content that brands may generate during sweepstakes include:

- Participant photos and gifs
- Shorts and videos
- Written customer testimonials and product reviews
- Fan [social media posts](#)
- Participant audio files and music

Fans may simply get inspired by your brand and decide to create UGC on their own. They may submit UGC as a contest entry or use it to encourage others to participate in your social media contest.

User-generated content is also the type of content that you should use to promote your brand because it helps to establish authority, trust, and promotes authenticity when it comes to engagements with your brands. UGC also provides the [social proof](#) that drives consumer purchase decisions.

Sweepstakes administrators do legal compliance.



Find sweepstakes & contest company quotes here.

Who Owns UGC from Giveaways and Sweepstakes?

According to United States copyright law, any idea that is fixed in a tangible means of expressio is protected. From that, it has followed that many types of digital content are in fact copyright protected by the law. The creator of the user-generated content is the owner of the material.

The creator only grants a license to the social media platform itself to post the consumer's content. However, that license does not extend to your brand. This is why you need to obtain consumer consent for sweepstakes, raffle, and contest UGC usage in your marketing strategy.

via [GIPHY](#)

Do You Need Permission to Share or Use User-generated Content in your Marketing?

After your sweepstakes or social media contest ends, you may be wondering how to reuse all of that branded UGC content that your fans create. Just because the content mentions your brand, doesn't mean that your brand has the right to take that UGC and use it wherever you want.

Get Permission Before Sharing UGC From Sweepstakes and Contests

Before you share UGC from a contest, such as in your social media campaign or email marketing, you need to get consent from your participants in advance. That is why it's important to work with a social media contest administrator to assist you with obtaining liability release forms from your participants.

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Many UGC rights management platforms can help your brand acquire and manage content rights for sweepstakes and contest participants at scale. Not only does it help you avoid legal hassles, you'll ensure that the [proof](#) that you have customers' consent will include a timestamp, region, IP address, and other [PII](#).

Obtaining Permission Is a Digital Rights Management (DRM) Legal Requirement

UGC falls under Digital Rights Management (DRM) which provides copyright protection for digital content, including photos, videos, music, and any printed materials created by a person. This means that you'll need to get permission to use any content that your fans share with you on social media platforms, such as TikTok, Instagram, [Twitter](#), Facebook, and YouTube. It's a legal requirement for you to get their permission to use their content.

via [GIPHY](#)

Get Explicit Permission to Use UGC From Sweepstakes and Contests

Always get explicit permission to use sweepstakes or contest UGC. While having your fans include a hashtag with their UGC shares, this is considered implicit permission and is not considered as foolproof when it comes [legal compliance](#).

Instead, make sure that you're always getting explicit permission by directly asking participants and fans for permission to use their UGC for your brand. Ensure that all participants have been clearly informed of the terms of the UGC Policy by referring them to your Privacy Policy and [contest Official Rules](#).

4 Ways to Ask for Permission to Use UGC

If you want to make sure that you have permission to use UGC from your contest or sweepstakes in your marketing strategy, follow these best practices for using UGC:

1. Have Participants Sign Liability Releases

These documents can be created and administered by a sweepstakes administrator to ensure that you have permission from your participants to use their UGC in writing.

This is extremely important as it's virtually guaranteed that you will want to use contest entries, photos and videos of the contest winner, and other UGC immediately following the winner announcement.

By obtaining permission from all new contest entrants, you can be assured that you have fulfilled the necessary legal requirements for UGC before your contest even ends.

A sweepstakes administrator can also help you keep track of the permission once it's obtained so that you can keep all of the documents on file, including UGC permission screenshots, for future reference. A log of UGC permissions from your contest could provide invaluable if there is a discrepancy.

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2. Credit the Creator

If fans, especially influencers, are submitting UGC to your contest, you should make sure that you credit the original creator of the content and provide a link back wherever possible. This might include a link to their social media handle being added in your Instagram caption, or making sure to tag them directly in a Tweet. You can also link to their website or to the original content itself, such as a TikTok video.

If you plan to share influencer UGC from your sweepstakes or contest, consider also asking the influencer how they want to be credited. By doing so, you can give your loyal followers free exposure while also boosting the trust and authority of your brand. This also motivates influencers to share your contest and brand with others, attracting even more participants.

3. Include UGC in Your Contest Rules Privacy Policy

Make sure that your [contest rules](#) are legally compliant when it comes to UGC by outlining your UGC policy in your [Official Rules](#) and privacy policy. It should explain exactly how your promotion will handle customer [personally identifiable information \(PII\)](#) that they share during your contest.

This will also help you to resolve any disagreements that may arise as a result of how the contest winners are represented in your marketing. You can use it to be transparent with all participants about how what they should expect from your brand if they are announced as a winner.

via [GIPHY](#)

4. Comment on the UGC to Ask for Permission to Use it

As a last resort, you can also leave a comment on the UGC that your brand would like to share. This is an easy way to get permission from consumers and provide visual proof that you did in fact obtain permission to use the UGC.

As an additional precaution, have participants and fans use a dedicated approval hashtag for UGC such as [#shareti\[BRAND\]](#). This provides proof that the fan did know that your brand would be repurposing UGC shared via the hashtag. Make sure to still ask. Permission to use user-generated content is still required even if the consumer uses the hashtag.

Boost Your Marketing Strategy With Sweepstakes and Contest UGC

The [majority of brands \(72%\)](#) say that UGC helps them to better connect with their customers and improves customers trust in their brands. In addition, [90% of consumers](#) say that they find UGC helpful. This means that you can leverage UGC to boost sales, brand awareness, and customer loyalty.

All of this adds up to a sweepstakes or contest UGC campaign that with obtaining permission to use UGC, you'll be able to personalize your marketing strategy and maximize ROI! In these easy steps, you can ensure that your brand benefits from all of that valuable sweepstakes and contest UGC, while also respecting your fans' and customers' privacy.

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