Why Top YouTube Creators Are Meeting With CMOs Ahead of the Upfront

Ahead of the upfront, top creators are creating new media buying opportunities.

This week, Spotter, a creator-centric technology and partnership company, is launching the first Spotter Showcase. In this invite-only event, elite YouTubers will present to top CMOs, giving unique access to their content and advertising opportunities. The program includes names such as MrBeast, Dude Perfect, Kinigra Deon, and more, with conversations led by Colin & Samir, who are also producing the event alongside the Spotter team.

And though the event is happening in upfront season, don't call it an upfront.

"In our press release, we didn't say upfront once, but in all of the press, it's just talking about 'upfront,'" Nic Paul, president of Spotter, told ADWEEK.

According to Paul, the company is leaving the upfront to YouTube and its Brandcast event, which heavily features many of the top creators. Meanwhile, the Spotter Showcase is more about education, awareness, and giving brands unprecedented access to specific creators rather than securing commitments.

"This event, while, yes, there are big package opportunities that we've been working on with our creator partners—obviously, we license the content, so we have participation in all of it, and we want to drive dollars—however, it first comes with education, the 'why,' and really opening up to the brands," Paul said. "Let us show you

how large these opportunities are and why you should consider these creators as the networks and the hit TV shows of today.”



With YouTube becoming the No.1 streamer for the last two years, according to Nielsen, and weekly creator uploads being treated like cultural events, Paul said now is the perfect time to launch the showcase. In addition to CMOs and chief brand officers, the attendees include investment leads at agencies and holding companies, with the goal of showcasing the power of investment with creators as well as the breadth of opportunities.

“What we wanted to do is come out and really showcase leaders within their verticals. And that’s exactly what this is, whether it is scripted, whether it is family, whether it is more exploration and journey, and the largest sports creators in Dude Perfect,” Paul said. “We do want to make a big splash, and we believe these are the creators to do it.”

The event will include exclusive looks at the creators’ content calendars as well as data, and Spotter is also setting up meetings where brands can get face time with creators, according to Paul.

“Creators that want to align with certain brands, and vice

versa, we’re trying to make sure they connect,” Paul said. “There are opportunities, and let’s just kick off the conversations.”

Spotter’s mission to educate brands on creators continues beyond the showcase. For instance, Paul noted that the company has held creator dinners and panels at the Cannes Lions International Festival of Creativity in the past. Meanwhile, this year’s Cannes event will also include panels and discussions to enlighten and create awareness.

“We definitely want [marketers] walking away with an understanding that creators need to be more and more a larger part of their, not just strategy, but investment,” Paul said.



The Spotter Showcase takes place on March 27 in NYC.

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