

Destination: Collaboration

Crafting a Win-Win Strategy
for Content Creators and Destinations

**Fort Dodge
Named
2023 Destination
of the Year
by the
Midwest Travel
Network**



*Visit
Fort Dodge* **IOWA**

**Fort Dodge Named
2022
Familiarization Trip
of the Year by
Midwest Travel
Network**

Introduction

Today we'll cover:

- Why you should work with content creators
- How to begin the conversation
- Best practices before and during the hosted visit
- How to protect your brand and reputation (for creators and destinations)
- Why you should build a relationship with a content creator
- Results of working with content creators
- Your role in the partnership
- How to support each other after the initial project



The Why

Reasons most marketers think of:

- **Media & PR Value**
- **Strategically-targeted audience**

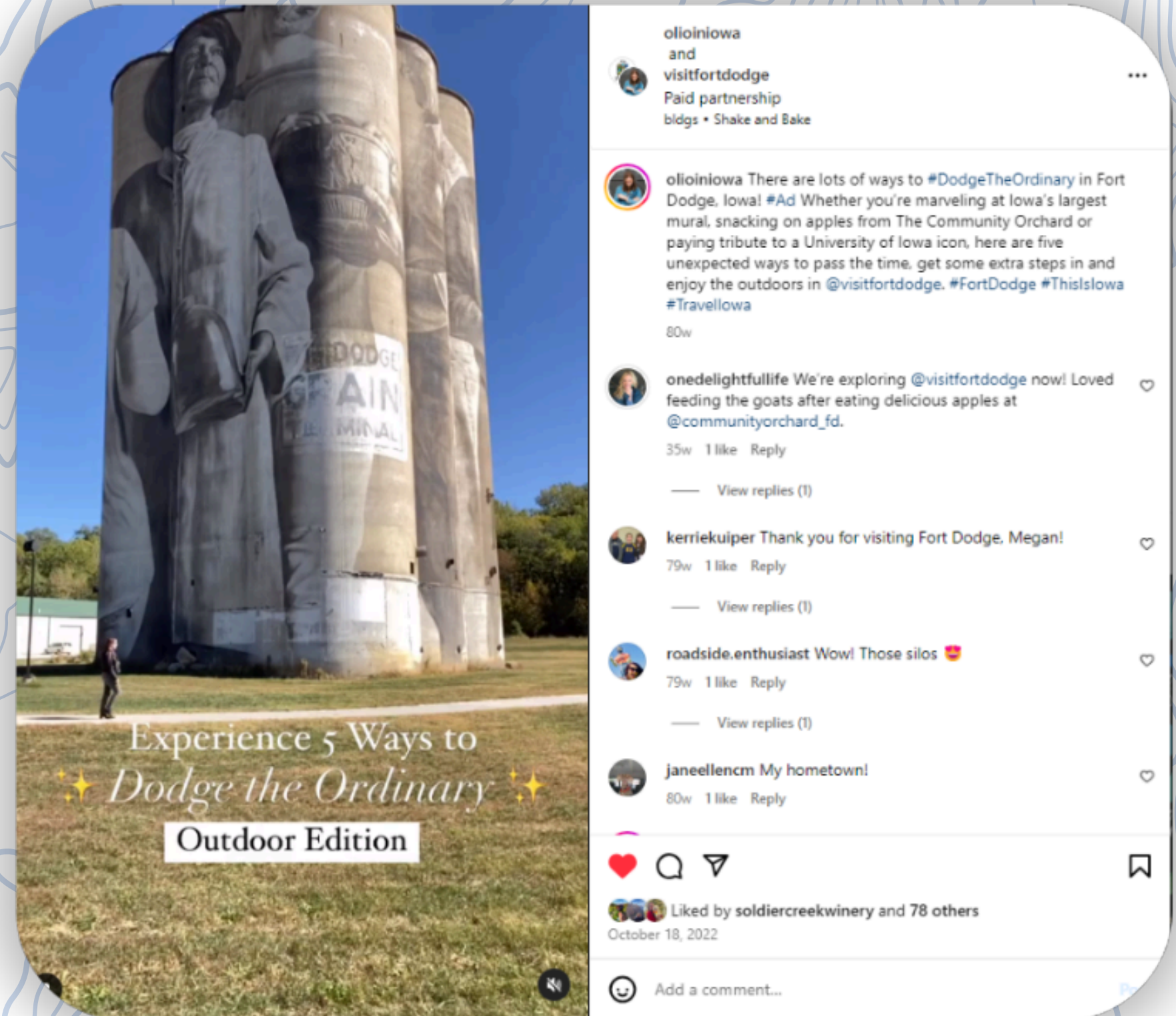
But there are so many more!

- **Earned media**
- **Secret visit**
- **Community ambassadors**
- **Resident perception**
- **Motorcoaches**

The How

Helpful Hints:

- Be professional and honest- it's business
- Explain your why and what
- Discover their why and what
- Do your research:
 - Do you like what you see?
 - Does their social space work for you?
 - Do they identify sponsored content?
- Determine budget BEFORE committing
- Discuss who is paying associated expenses
- GO THE EXTRA MILE!



The Business



DMO-Creator considerations:

- Be flexible
- Clarify expectations
- Customize experience
- Avoid overload
- Allow creative freedom
- Organize meet-ups
- Prepare for:
 - Negative experiences
 - Appointments
 - Plan B

DMO considerations:

- Provide the extras
- Ensure main links go through your website
- Does your destination require a contract with deliverables?
- Should you tell sites when creators/groups are coming or not?
- Again, Go the extra mile!

The Brand Promise

For the creator:

- Don't ask the destination to put their audience 2nd
- Time commitment vs energy commitment
- Health and Safety
- Balance expectations



For the destination:

- Balance asset expectations vs audience expectations
- Capacity of staffing the partnership

The Relationship



Why build a relationship?

- More effective
- Partnership develops
- Word of mouth
- Become an ambassador
- Expectations exceeded
- Idea sharing
- Learn from each other



The Results

Travel by Sara (Mason City, IA)
The Local Tourist (Chicago, IL)
The Walking Tourist (Omaha, NE)
Roadrunner Journeys (Mobile, AL)
Girl of 10,000 Lakes (MN)
Follow the Piper (Lansing, MI)
Iowa Road Trip (West Des Moines, IA)
Just Around the Bend (Decorah, IA)
Flint & Co (Hampton, IA)
Olio in Iowa (Windsor Heights, IA)
Travel Awaits (Maryland Heights, MO)
Roxie on the Road (Goodland, KS)
One Delightful Life (Wichita, KS)
Paige.Outdoors (PlainView, MN)
Iowa Gallivant (Iowa City, IA)
Simplify, Live, Love (Rural Eastern Iowa)
Des Moines Parent (Grimes, IA)
Wherever I May Roam (Mesquite, NV)



Storyteller Strategy:

Amplifying statewide and Midwest awareness of the Fort Dodge region through Visit Fort Dodge's DodgeTheOrdinary.com brand:

- Fort Dodge tourism assets were promoted through online content created by travel writer visits to Fort Dodge. Content is often re-released by content creators for several years after their initial visit.
- Fort Dodge area sites were featured in Sara Broers' books: 100 Things to Do in Iowa Before You Die, Perfect Day Iowa, and Midwest State Park Adventures as well as Megan Bannister's Secret Iowa: A Guide to the Weird, Wonderful, and Obscure.

The Follow-Up

What should content creators expect from you?

- Communicate obstacles to sharing
- Share content timely
- Comment on content
- Monitor for content release
- Ask for analytics
- Update the content creators

What can you do to help the content creators?

- Honest reviews
- Assist with launches
- Word of mouth
- And go the extra mile!!

Perfect Day in Iowa with author Sara Broers

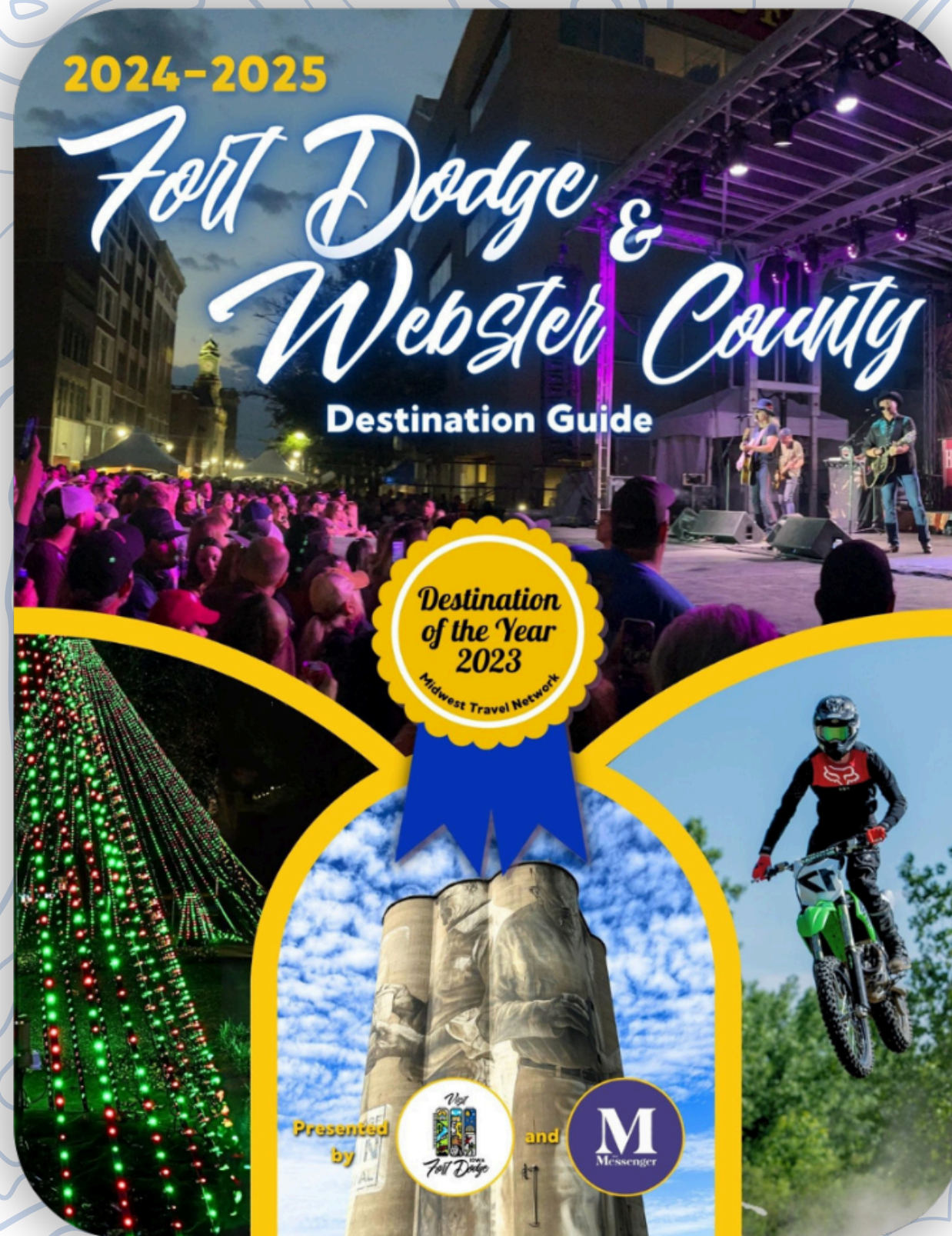
Updated: Apr. 25, 2024 at 8:58 AM CDT



Discover some of Iowa's best road trip stops with Broers, author of Perfect Day in Iowa: Day Trips.



The Future



How can this content be used for other projects?

- Testimonials
- Photo & video inventory
- Guides
- Social media take-overs
- Speakers
- Further collaborations
- Let your imagination go

Do you have any projects to share?



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Summary



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- **How to protect your brand and reputation (for creators and destinations)**
- **Why you should build a relationship with a content creator**
- **Results of working with content creators**
- **Your role in the partnership**
- **How to support each other after the project**





Visit Fort Dodge (Iowa)
Executive Director

Kerrie Kuiper

kkuiper@fortdodgeiowa.org

(515) 573-4282



Visit
Fort Dodge
IOWA

www.DodgeTheOrdinary.com