



PODCAST | SEASON 1 | EPISODE 4

## How partnering with influencers can benefit your brand

### What to listen for:

What's a travel influencer, anyway? And how can partnerships with influencers help travel brands broaden their reach and build trust?

Get answers to these questions and more in our interview with influencer expert Jade Broadus. Jade is the vice president and creative director of Travel Mindset, a niche agency specializing in influencer marketing for the tourism and lifestyle industry. She's also an influencer herself and the creator of Vagabond3, an award-winning travel blog with over 150,000 followers.

### Section title:

Introduction

### Transcript text:

[00:00:04] **Sally** The travel experience is powered by all of you. Welcome to Powering Travel, brought to you by Expedia Group. I'm Sally Smith.

[00:00:11] **Brandon** And I'm Brandon Ehrhardt. Together, we'll explore how experts are evolving the industry and discover the latest trends in hospitality. So bypass that rental car counter, your convertible is waiting. Powering Travel is next.

[00:00:29] **Sally** Welcome back to another episode of Powering Travel. Today, we're covering a topic that might feel mysterious to a lot of people, but we're talking to an expert who can help break it down. Influencer marketing can really help grow marketing strategies beyond conventional ways. Now, Brandon, I know you weren't able to make the interview because you were moving, but I am interested to hear your thoughts and perspective on the conversation as I feel like I learned quite a bit.

[00:00:56] **Brandon** Yes, a key benefit of being on this show is I get to listen to the interviews. Even the ones I'm not a part of, because I was moving — unanimous bottom three activity you can do as an adult is moving. So not only was I bummed to have missed the conversation, I was also doing something so incredibly unpleasant. Influencer marketing is a really cool topic and I think it's one that the industry partially understands. Influencers almost like it that's a pejorative in some ways, in some context where it's like, oh, it's a bad thing to be an influencer. Actually, it's really cool. If you give me two reviews and one of them is written and one of them is something I can engage with on Instagram or TikTok or via a blog, I am going the second route ten times out of ten. It is such a more in-depth and relatable review that you understand context. You know who the person is, what they like, what they don't like, what they're really generally about. And you can say, hey, does this map to what my interests are? And so I think we should lean into this as an industry and we jump into a lot of cool topics today. So let's not waste any more time.

[00:02:00] **Sally** We are joined today by Jade Broadus, the vice president and creative director at Travel Mindset, a niche marketing agency that specializes in influencer marketing for the tourism and lifestyle industry. From overall creative strategy to social media and influencers, online and offline activations and every little decision in between, Jade helps develop the most engaging and innovative marketing campaigns. With her team, Travel Mindset has managed and executed more than 800 marketing campaigns for clients such as country, state and city DMOs and CVBs from all over the world, Fairmont Hotels, Accor Hotels, Virgin Atlantic, Celebrity Cruises, and many more. In addition to Travel Mindset,

Jade herself is an influencer and is the CEO of Vagabond3, an award-winning travel blog with over 150,000 followers. Jade has quite an impressive background in this space, and I'm excited for our audience to listen in. So Jade, I'm very excited to chat with you today because I think what you do and what you specialize in is very fascinating. And I often get a lot of questions about this type of marketing from partners across the industry. So I am excited to learn a lot from you today, and I think our listeners are too.

[00:03:13] **Jade** I'm stoked to be here, so I can't wait.

[00:03:16] **Sally** Well, let's start out with if you could tell us a little bit about Travel Mindset. What do you specialize in? What type of clients do you support? I would love to learn a bit more.

[00:03:26] **Jade** Yeah. So Travel Mindset is kind of a unique beast in the industry because we are one of the only influencer marketing agencies that specialized in the travel industry since 2013, before 'influencer' was even a word people were using all the time. You had bloggers and vloggers and thought leaders on Twitter and stuff. Pinterest had just kind of exploded at that time. And then it just quickly shifted where we started introducing these writers on location, but bloggers on location, traveling to the destination, creating content for the destination, and then just have kind of morphed as the industry has changed, which I think is really great for all of our clients because we have all of this different experience with different types of clients and kind of the evolution of influencers. And now with TikTok and Instagram reels, it's just really, it's a fun industry to be in.

[00:04:27] **Sally** It's really changing all the time. I agree. Just hearing you talk about the early days made me think about how long I've been on social media and how different things have been. I'm curious to know, what do you think the difference is, between a brand having an engaging content strategy on social media versus partnering with an influencer to promote on their behalf?

[00:04:50] **Jade** Yeah, so I think you have to have both. But when an influencer promotes for you, you're getting that third-party recommendation. You're getting the trust that the influencer has with their audience. Before we even go any further, I think we should define an influencer, right? For me and for us, an influencer is a person who has the power to affect the purchase decisions of others. It all goes back to that trust. You have to think if you're watching someone drop their kid off at school or talk about the next round of vaccines or talk about just any of the struggles of daily life and they trust what they say with those products, then they're also going to trust what they say if they're flying to a new destination and they say it's safe to go to or they're picking Fairmont Hotels over another brand because their loyalty is with them. You're going to get that third-party trust. That's different than something you're going to find on a review site like TripAdvisor that you don't know the person. This is someone that you follow throughout their entire life. So that trust is then given to your brand.

## Section title:

Post-pandemic travel

## Transcript text:

[00:05:57] **Sally** It's very interesting and true. What does behavior with social influencers look like when it comes to planning and engaging in travel? Have you seen anything change post-pandemic? It's to your point, you have people you follow, whether it be on Instagram or Facebook or whatnot. Yes, you're a part of their daily lives. You're interacting with their content. But when they do travel, what behavior do you see or do you follow as far as being inspired and then to purchase that travel or that trip?

[00:06:24] **Jade** Yeah, I think it's changed a lot since the pandemic, just based on like safety measures and especially as we were kind of coming out of that. I think people were looking to influencers to do it first, like almost be the guinea pigs of, okay, well exactly how difficult is it to go to Europe? Like that testing back to get into the United States? Like, is it worth it? What happens if you test positive? And really just watching those people live through those kind of situations. Now that the guinea pig situation is kind of dying down, you really just have people wanting to get out and explore. And so where are these influencers choosing to go now that they can go? I think we've seen a lot of the influencers that we work with are really getting more, more into the brand loyalty. If they've been to a destination before that they loved and they found

that was safe to travel to before, well, they're going to go back. And being able to say, like, why I chose to go back to this destination again or why I chose this airline again for my first overseas trip is really resonating with audiences and just kind of building that loyalty even more between them.

[00:07:41] **Sally** Well, I think it's interesting what you mentioned, too, about the guinea pigs and traveling. I absolutely experience that. A lot of my friends were following influencers. Yes, they were traveling abroad last summer and they were getting kind of that raw, unfiltered, what it's like versus trying to search on a website here, there are read through restrictions or whatnot, they were seeing it, watching the videos and getting it, getting to put themselves in the shoes quickly on. Okay, what's it going to be like for me if I buy that ticket and I go? So I think it's really interesting that you called that out.

[00:08:10] **Jade** Well, yeah. And it's funny because for hotels, for example, so many hotels came out with their clean pledge. Like they were all doing this new cleaning procedure. And what did that actually look like when you were at the property? If no housekeeping is coming in and you're staying in a five-star property, does that change the experience? It's so glossy, right? You don't actually know what that looks like once you're on property. And I'd rather kind of see it through the eyes of someone else first before I choose to spend all of the money to have that experience.

[00:08:51] **Brandon** All right. Excellent. Couple of first points there. The cleaning piece touched such a nerve with me. I think that there was this huge push to drive confidence to the traveler by pairing with a brand and saying, oh, we're partner with Lysol or partner with Clorox. And that is nice, but it does not answer the question, how clean is the property today? And that is the kind of information you can get from someone on property and even better if you're doing it through a video medium like Instagram or TikTok. So I thought that was an incredible point that she made because guest experience is also something that Expedia Group focused on heavily. Really pivoting into something called the traveler experience, which answers the question how well can we predict your stay, your future stay based on the past stays in the millions of data points we have. And it turns out really well. So if you think about pairing kind of a traveler experience score that someone would experience on a site with something with a visual medium, and you're going to have all the answers that you need to be really, really confident when you show up on property. Sally, what's your take here? Am I off base?

## Section title:

Influencer inspiration

## Transcript text:

[00:09:59] **Sally** I think you're totally right, Brandon. I think it's interesting to think about when these influencers are on property or traveling. What is the accuracy of their experience compared to some of the marketing materials and photos and videos that you may have on your website or on your other social media platforms? How do they compare? Because that's going to be very telling to the traveler if they are following these influencers. What's great is that in this next section, Jade is going to talk about a couple ways to activate these influencers and how they can partner with your marketing goals and what you want to achieve in the message that you want to tell in a really impactful way. So stay tuned for that.

[00:10:41] **Brandon** The thing that I want to come back to is when we think about influencers, and I talked about this in the open, it being like a pejorative and people saying, oh, they just want a free stay. Actually, it's a way better representation of your property to have something through a visual medium than just a review. Largely, these are people that are out trying to spread the good word of travel and trying to introduce people to new properties. And it's a business. There's a way that businesses can be successful and also help travelers find your property, find your car rental agency, find whatever line of business that you work at. So let's hop into that.

[00:11:23] **Sally** How do you capture the types of travelers you're looking to attract for your business, whether it's families or pet friendly or whatever it might be? What's the best way for folks to go about choosing the right partnership?

[00:11:36] **Jade** Yes, I'd say start with your goals first, before you even think about the type of influencer. If you've never worked with an influencer before, what do you need them to do for you? Some of our clients just need new content with fresh, maybe diverse faces. Using influencers can be a great thing in your strategy and success level. Everything will be

monitored by how much content was created. But if you need to book a hotel room or you want a certain flight sold that maybe is underperforming, you really need to pick an influencer that has those results already in a similar field. So a lot of influencers could maybe sell a 75-dollar t-shirt but can they make someone actually purchase the 500-dollar hotel room? Really start looking at the content like, is it the type of content that you're, if you're a luxury brand, you would attract luxury travelers and then start digging into the analytics. So there's a ton of different kinds of influencer marketing platforms or discovery tools, and they're all great for looking at the raw data. But the thing that those platforms cannot tell you are all of those engagements. So you really have to still ... there's like a huge manual process to this. You probably need a dedicated person to handle your influencer marketing because it's hours of time of vetting and then negotiating the contracts, setting an itinerary, all of that stuff.

[00:13:18] **Sally** Well, I think it's good to be realistic and share that because as someone that looks through social media, also, when I am looking for inspiration, it can even just feel overwhelming because there's so much content out there. So hearing you say you need to be purposeful, you just set your goals, work backwards, whatever it might be, I think that's really important for everyone to know to make sure they're partnering with the right people to achieve the goals.

[00:13:42] **Jade** Yeah. And even since the pandemic, I would say the creator space, influencer space in general has exploded. When TikTok launched with its "no algorithm algorithm," anyone who had five followers could have videos that were going viral. And now even with Instagram reels, kind of Instagram just wanting to change to not really being a photo platform anymore. The influencers who once had, you know, maybe a lot of attention and a lot of reach with their photo posts, they're not being seen anymore. So I think another big differentiator with specifically travel influencers because technically someone who loves food, well, if they're choosing to go somewhere new, they're a travel influencer, too, there in the culinary space they love, you're going to follow them and potentially book a trip to New Orleans or New York or Columbia, South Carolina. They have an amazing pimento cheese trail, by the way.

[00:14:41] **Sally** It's amazing.

[00:14:42] **Jade** Shout out to Columbia. I love your pimento cheese. But yeah, I mean, if you're huge into the Southern food scene, you need to go to Columbia and you might need that more food influencer to kind of convince you of the why. The big difference we're seeing is a lot of the more travel-specific influencers still have blogs and that is a big difference because they know SEO. They know the long game of all of this. Their posts are probably ranking on the first page of Google. And I think that deliverable should not be underestimated, especially if you're a vacation homeowner and you find that, there's one girl I'm thinking of off the top of my head, born traveler. She does the California-specific stuff. She does tons of the top Airbnbs in this location, the top Vrbs in this location. And her posts are always first page of Google. So if you have a vacation home rental in that area, you would be really smart to partner with her to get on that list because people are trusting her recommendations and not just on social, like through Google, like when they're actually probably booking the property.

[00:16:01] **Sally** That's really interesting. And a lot of questions come from what you just said, too, because when I was researching Travel Mindset, you have some really powerful statistics. Some of them you've shared, that potential travelers are 71 percent more likely to make a decision based on social media referrals. And that influencer marketing generates 13X more ROI than traditional forms. So a question came up, how do you know it works? And you've mentioned a couple of things, right, of what you want to ask someone before you partner with them. How do things turn into sales? How are people engaging on their site? But for people that might be hesitant or overwhelmed or just uncertain about what the ROI is going to be, how do you make them feel comfortable in driving a strong return?

[00:16:44] **Jade** Yes. So first, we always just like to have that conversation of, what does success look like to you? Are you going to say video views? That's all that matters, video views or is it just engagements or page views to your own site, like referrals to your own site? Once we know that and we can figure out, okay, well, what cost per engagement is going to be successful? It's not really apples to apples. If you do a Facebook ad campaign that is obviously different than working with an influencer who you're getting brand new, unique content from, you're getting a distribution channel with a dedicated, specific audience. You can even repurpose their content on your own channels. And I think that's something that's way undervalued in the industry. But then you can do a cost per engagement, cost per view. And those still exist just like you would if you had your own video that you put on Facebook and you can then put it in the same Excel. And I would bet because just based on our other clients, the influencer content always outperforms the brand's content. And now with influencers creating videos so often they know the latest trends and so they can kind of keep on top of that. They want their content to perform well because they want the algorithms to still care about them. They have every incentive for the content to be amazing and no incentive to underperform. So I think if you're hesitant about using an influencer, ask them for recommendations from other clients. Like, okay, I saw in your channel that you worked with Fairmont or you worked

with Marriott. Can you get that whoever you worked with to send us a recommendation for you? Or can you put us in touch with them? You're hiring them just like a job, so go ahead and treat it like that.

## Section title:

Partnering with an influencer

### Transcript text:

[00:18:43] **Sally** And it's interesting to hear you say that they want to succeed and they also want to partner with folks to build trust and credibility for their followers. So you watch the content on social and you think, oh, that was that looks so easy and what a fun trip. I was going to ask you because you're mentioning a couple of different things. Is there a particularly memorable collaboration that comes to mind that was really fun or just pops out in your brain as just a really great partnership and collaboration that you've done in the past or recently?

[00:19:15] **Jade** Yeah, we've done a couple of these things called InstaMeet where we get a bunch of Instagrammers together, they meet up in a particular place and share. What I like about them is they can, one, tell their followers that they're going to be in a specific place. These always end up creating some great relationships that then they end up oversharing on the trip. So the clients are really happy. But one in particular that we've done this now, we did it for years every single spring with Virgin Atlantic and Visit Manchester in Britain. And it was a different city that Visit Manchester had a new direct flight from. So San Francisco, Boston, New York, Los Angeles. And we brought all these different kind of niche influencers. So we had some that were adventure influencers, some that were more like photography, heavy lifestyle, hotel influencers, foodies. And we flew them direct to Manchester. So they were able to talk about Virgin's inflight experience and the lounge experience and then getting to Manchester and just how different Manchester is from London, like it's so different, has a completely different scene. And then we would have these little get-togethers in all different places in northern England, so Liverpool or even over in Wales. And they were just always so fun. I mean, Virgin is such a fun client in general, but Manchester is so quirky and everyone that works at Visit Manchester would just like really roll out the red carpet for these influencers. You just have the best experiences and I think where the campaigns always seemed to kind of go above and beyond is that all of the partners, the hotels, the restaurants, the activities that we were working with, they all really participated too. So they would send someone from their team to the meet-ups. They were kind of joining in on the conversation on Twitter or on Instagram, LinkedIn to all of the different influencers. So the influencers were then resharing those partners and it just it was electric every time it happened. I think when in doubt, try to make the experience amazing and the influencers will provide even more content.

[00:21:46] **Sally** That sounds so fine. And listening to you talk instead of launching the new flights are saying this is what Manchester is and this is the marketing that I'm going to put out there. Now you have several perspectives, several conversations in several points of view about what Manchester is and what there is to do and how you get there. It really broadens that message. It's kind of my takeaway from listening to you.

[00:22:12] **Jade** Yeah, absolutely. And some of the influencers had their audiences like we're crossover. So we had some people that were in San Francisco that we noticed, you know, 40 percent of their audiences were the same. And the reason to do that is because then their audiences had crazy FOMO, right? Fear of missing out. Like, wait a second. You know, one of my favorite influencers is in Manchester right now and then you keep scrolling. Wait, they're also in Manchester? What's in Manchester? Why do I need to go right now? I feel like I should be there with them. And yes, that part is really fun.

## Section title:

Choosing channels

### Transcript text:

[00:22:48] **Sally** How do you choose the right channel? Because whether it's YouTube, TikTok, Instagram, Facebook, certainly I feel like I need to get on more channels. Or at least maybe I need to download TikTok. I'm a little behind.

[00:23:01] **Jade** Oh my gosh. Download it. I mean, you'll waste hours of your life, but it is such a unique platform. It's learning what you like. It makes the For You page that's why it's so almost intoxicating. Because it knows what you want before you even know that you want it.

[00:23:25] **Sally** I love it. A lot of people have told me that about TikTok that you have to get on. And although I see a lot of the reels posted on Instagram, which is typically my predominant social media platform. But with all the different avenues, I'm sure there's different ways to attract different consumers. But do you have to be across it all, or can you specialize? Like, how do you pick your channel?

[00:23:46] **Jade** Yeah, I would say definitely specialized. Don't try to do it all. Even with influencers, not all influencers are created equal. Not all of them are on every single channel. So if you're a new budget airline, let's say, and you're flying out of Burbank to random destinations, you just need awareness that you exist. So it might be really great to partner with some people who have a high probability of going viral on reels or on TikTok because the algorithms are not just about their current followers, it really is about what people like and then the videos find them, you're going to be able to increase that awareness very quickly. If you just decide to do like a static post on Instagram, unless you put a big budget behind that one photo, you're just not going to see that high ever reach. What you did three months ago might not work anymore. And as frustrating as that is, even Facebook, I would say unless you're going to put some ad dollars behind it, you might not have the success that you want there. But then, going back to those blog posts and the long SEO benefits that you can have, if you're like, okay, we're really going to dedicate to just making sure that our property is on the first page of Google anytime someone searching and this is a 6-to-8-month commitment we're making. Like be realistic. Like it's going to take time, but it will pay off.

## Section title:

Budgeting for an influencer collaboration

## Transcript text:

[00:25:24] **Sally** How does a budget like this in partnering with an influencer differ from traditional marketing budgets? If someone were just to think of, okay, I want to start partnering more, I want to get into this, how do I look at my spend in traditional versus online influencer social?

[00:25:43] **Jade** Yeah, I just saw an interesting graphic. It is basically like a traditional publication that was 50,000 dollars included, like a full-page ad. So that's an ad that goes into the traditional magazine. Maybe it's seen by, let's say, their circulations, two million people. We know tons of clients, they'll say our board loves those ads, but you can do no defining success by that. Once except for the two million subscribers, there's no way to track what those people did. There's no way to say they spent X amount of time with your ad. But with influencer content, I can tell you all of that stuff and more. Like it's so exciting. For 50,000 dollars you could have four to eight influencers visit your destination, create 200 pieces of content and reshare it across all of your platforms for months up to years. Whereas that one ad was kind of a one-hit wonder. You can look at the comments on an Instagram post and, and go to each individual person and be like, who are these people? Like a one, they said they're going to Maui next month. Okay. Well, I'm just going to go ahead and start commenting on some of their posts. Like you can start having a direct interaction with a potential customer, whereas with that traditional ad you never could do that.

[00:27:18] **Sally** Well, I think it's about data to what you mentioned. I think in general that's so important to everything that we're doing and making decisions. I know at Expedia Group, we try to lean into a lot of data and analytics to help make the most impactful decisions for your property similar to what you're saying. Just you need to understand, is it working? Who are these customers? Because I think knowing more about your customer is also of utmost importance, how you're going to market and who is your current customer and who could be your potential future customer.

[00:27:49] **Jade** That is going back to what channel to go. And that's an interesting thing about TikTok right now. The highest new user of TikTok is over 35. Again, like you said, it all goes back to the data. I mean, TikTok releases so much

data about what their users are doing and how much time they're spending with each piece of content that if you're hesitant about it, that can quickly dispel, I think, any hesitation.

[00:28:18] **Sally** So it sounds like you're talking to me with data. It's time to download TikTok. Perfect. I'll get on it this weekend. So couple more questions. You have a really unique vantage point with your experience in hospitality, lifestyle, travel. Where do you see travel influencer marketing evolving with the industry? Like what is the next couple of years potentially look like for this marketing niche?

[00:28:45] **Jade** Yeah. So group tours kind of led by or hosted by influencers has been building steam for several years, but this year I've just seen this trend explode. And it doesn't matter how many followers they have, it's like people, 10,000 followers or 500,000 followers are introducing these group trips. I think after the pandemic, just everyone wants to know that the money they're spending is going to give them an amazing experience and they want that reassurance that it's going to be great. So if the influencers are hosting it, you have to think, okay, they've vetted the experience, they've probably done it before, they're taking it to all their favorite places. I really think that's going to continue to build and hotels can really capitalize on this by having influencers organize their own unique stays. Like, wouldn't it be interesting if you clicked on the hotel property website and instead of just like the best family adventures or like Memorial Day weekend, like no, it was Born Travelers Guide to Staying Here or the Bucket List Families Guide to Staying Here. And you can do everything that they did and know it's great. And then even maybe work with the influencers to sell that stay. But just getting a little bit more refined and intentional about how you're using the influencers just to actually sell these products going beyond the inspiration phase. We define group trips and it is kind of unique per influencer, but usually it's capped at around ten attendees, so it's a very personalized itineraries and it's small. So you're not having to lead hundreds of people through Marrakesh, just the main square, whatever. This is just ten people. But yeah, so pretty small and influencers are always traveling with them. So there's one in particular, Alex in Wonderland. She just got back from an incredible dive trip. So the whole trip was around, if you're not dive certified, you can get dive certified on the trip, plus, we're going to these three unique dive spots. And she's selling them for more than 3,000 dollars apiece. So she's kind of vetted all of the experiences. She stayed at all of the hotels before. She's done all of the dives before. Those type of travelers also like to do yoga in the morning. So maybe before a dive there, they're getting up for sunrise yoga. They're just adding the little things to each day that make it really unique and an experience you're going to talk about for a long time.

[00:31:32] **Sally** Yeah, absolutely. And I liked earlier how you touched on ... yes, that's the food and the amenities. But you can also work with them to talk about the sustainable efforts at the property or how you're giving back or whatever it might be to show, whatever it is you're trying to communicate to your audience in an authentic way. So I love that.

[00:31:51] **Jade** Yeah. I mean, I would say if you're a hotel, like look at the year going forward and think what are your pillars that you want to talk about and just make sure that you have one to two influencers per pillar at different times of the year. We're recording this at the start of Pride Month. And I know a lot of influencers, they're LGBTQ. They get inundated with requests to talk about the brand just during June. But wouldn't it almost be more impactful if you had them talking about you in September too, or December.

[00:32:23] **Sally** Absolutely, absolutely. Shows that commitment.

[00:32:25] **Jade** Yeah, exactly. It almost comes across worse if you're just using them during this one month.

## Section title:

Rapid-fire questions

Transcript text:

[00:32:31] **Sally** Jade, we want to shift gears and wrap up with a few fun questions. So I'd love to get your thoughts on this. Kind of whatever comes to mind first. And we just touched on this a little bit, but if you have anything else to add or if you just want to refer back to what we just chatted about. But what do you see as the next big trend powering the travel industry?

[00:32:52] **Jade** I think for everyone across the board, hotels, airlines, there's so many options now of where you can stay, how you can get there, that the more specialty experiences you can have, the better. So an ordinary property isn't where someone's going to choose to stay, what is going to make someone talk about you? For airlines, most people only talk about their experiences when it's bad. I think when we can start thinking more about our customers in that way and thinking about loyalty, then you're going to have to do a lot less spending on selling to them because they already want that luxury experience.

[00:33:39] **Sally** A theme that's come up on a couple of podcast episodes about how to have people recognize the value, feel unique, feel different, feel special, feel a part of something when they travel. And I think when they're watching the content, they also want to see that. They want to see it come up, come to life and also think, if I do that same thing, I'm going to feel that same way. I think it's fascinating that that's something we continue to hear. So what is one item that you cannot travel without?

[00:34:07] **Jade** Within the last six years, my daughter. I had to travel pretty quickly after having her. I mean, she went on our first trip at about six weeks and over 200 flights before she was two, because I just had a, you know, wear and take her with me. And she is the best traveler now. And going either new places or places I've been before and watching it through her eyes has enriched the travel experience for me so much.

[00:34:38] **Sally** I love that. And bravo to you for traveling with her so young and so consistently. I think sometimes parents can feel a little overwhelmed about traveling, especially long-haul flights. But I love that you're doing that. That's incredible. Okay. And then finally, what's your most memorable trip? I'm sure this one's going to be hard for you, but if you had to pick one....

[00:34:58] **Jade** Yeah. So if I had to pick one, I would say the fairy tale road trip in Germany. So I flew into Copenhagen with my husband and daughter and then we drove down south and we visited so many places from the Grimm Brothers fairy tales that inspired the stories. So we went to Hamelin. We saw the Pied Piper town. My daughter was like four years old and my husband is dressed as Prince Charming and she is dressed as Cinderella. And that's just an experience I'll never forget.

## Section title:

Key concepts and takeaways

## Transcript text:

[00:35:30] **Sally** Incredible. What an incredible trip. Oh, my gosh. I love that. Okay. And Jade, I've learned a ton today. You can tell by all my questions. I was very excited to learn a lot more about this space. It's just very fascinating and can feel overwhelming. And I think you just brought a lot of clarity and purpose behind using this channel and partnering. So if partners are interested in working with you, what's the best way for them to get in touch?

[00:35:54] **Jade** Yes, they can go on our website [travelmindset.com](https://travelmindset.com). We have a "get in touch" page there or you can email me specifically at [jade@travelmindset.com](mailto:jade@travelmindset.com). Have I been chatty? You can see I love to talk about this. So if you have any questions or concerns or are just like, hey, I thought about doing this. I love the brainstorming. I love coming up with different, unique ideas. So happy to do that.

[00:36:24] **Sally** What an insightful conversation. It was so interesting to hear the variety of ways across the entire industry where influencers can partner. And what really stood out to me was the ability to use specific influencers to target the types of travelers that you might be looking for to grow your business. I also thought it was powerful that you can really get into the details of your brand strategy with an influencer and co-create or tell your story together. And as someone who loves data, it was great to hear Jade talk about how you can not only see the results of your partnership in the ROI with an influencer but also who your current and future potential guest might be.

[00:37:06] **Brandon** Yeah, it's so interesting. And I think five years ago, would you say, hey, this is going to be a super measurable return? I don't think that we were there yet. But we're there today and if you compare that with other ads or a traditional brand-driven social media campaign without an influencer, you'll see that there are some really healthy returns



there and something to your point, Sally, where you can really target the customers that you like. It's about elevating this customized experience. The same themes keep coming up in these episodes. And if you think back to the episode with Erin Zinser and you think about the importance of really paying attention to your travelers and making sure they're getting value for the money they spend... it all centers on making sure that they have a personalized and customized experience. It is not a race to the bottom. It is not, hey, how much can I discount this rate or this airline ticket or this car rental daily fee to be profitable. It's how can I maximize the experience. And I think that pivot away from the race to the bottom is when travel is going to get even more fun. I think for the past couple of years it's been a focus on exclusive deals, but it's really about how can I connect with the traveler, how can I speak to them in the language that they want to hear? Whether that is a literal language or that is by using a personality to influence them to come stay at my property. This is a really cool chapter and I'm excited that we can bring this to the audience. A final question I have, Sally, I heard it referenced a couple of times. Have you downloaded TikTok yet?

[00:38:36] **Sally** Brandon, I did it. Yes, I downloaded TikTok. I don't even know what day it is. I don't know what time it is. It's pretty incredible. It's been a lot of fun, so I have Jade to thank for that. But actually it's been pretty interesting. I'm following a lot of people that are travel influencers. I'm searching a lot of destinations. I'm learning a lot. But oh my goodness, the scrolling, it's got me.

[00:38:58] **Brandon** Okay. So a lot of my friends, my family, they have TikTok and I'm listening to the episode yesterday and I'm just like, do I do it? I'm worried I maybe get lost in this thing for hours. But I mean, I think that there's going to be some cool travel content I find along the way. There is so much more to unpack here and more potential to dive into this topic again in the next season. This is something that you want to hear more about, certainly something that we can go and source more opinions and guests on, so stay tuned.

[00:39:31] **Sally** We hope you enjoy this episode of Powering Travel. We want to hear from you. So connect with us at [poweringtravel@expediagroup.com](mailto:poweringtravel@expediagroup.com). Subscribe to get notified when new episodes are live and be sure to rate and review the show. A huge thank you to everyone Powering Travel. Thanks for listening.