

Are Participants Allowed to Select a Contest Winner Online by Voting on Submissions?

 sweeppeasweeps.com/official-rules-center/are-participants-allowed-to-select-a-contest-winner-online-by-voting-on-submissions/

When it comes to judging a contest, you need a reliable way to pick a **contest winner**. However, there is a right way and a wrong way. Here's what you should know about selecting a contest winner by voting on submissions.

Who Should Choose a Contest Winner?

The first question you should ask in order to decide whether to allow voting on submissions is "Who is allowed to select a winner?" There are several requirements that a contest judge must meet in order to be eligible to choose a winner for a contest:

Define the Contest Judging Criteria

Firstly, a contest judge should have clear criteria upon which to rate a winning entry as defined per the contest official rules. The judge also needs to be able to provide a final decision on the contest winner entry by a set deadline so that the contest winner can be notified in a timely fashion.

No Affiliation With the Company or Its Sponsors

Furthermore, a judge should not be affiliated with the company hosting the contest or any of its sponsors to ensure that they can provide impartial feedback on the contest entries without any conflict of interest.

Given that a judge needs to at least meet these minimum criteria, it's best to hand-select a judge for your contest so that you'll be able to thoroughly interview them first to see if they can meet these and any other requirements you have for a position as a contest judge.

Here's Why You Should Not Let Participants Choose the Contest Winner

With all of the additional work needed to select judges for your contest, why not let participants select a contest winner online by voting on submissions? This is a bad idea for several reasons, namely:

1. **Mob Rule** – Your participants may select the contest entrant that's most popular rather than the one that deserves to win. Expect that your brand will be attacked by angry participants if you don't go with their pick.

2. **Your Contest Turns Into a Popularity Contest** – Influencers who have entered your contest will try to use their influence to sway the participants to select them as a winner. This could derail your marketing efforts and attract the wrong crowd.
3. **Your Contest Looks Rigged** – Most entrants will automatically assume that they have little to no chance of winning if they know they need to be popular to be considered.

How to Stay in Control of Your Contest

By selecting impartial judges for your contest and letting participants know upfront who will judge their entries, you'll be able to better control the outcome of your contest and ensure that it goes smoothly.

State upfront in your contest rules that any behaviors from participants (and their friends) that are designed to game the contest or promote their favorite entry will not be permitted including:

- Any actions that violate the social media platform's rules (bullying, falsely reporting posts)
- Excessive likes, commenting, spamming
- Providing incentives to other people to boost contest entries

and more. Any of these actions, if identified, should immediately void a participant's contest entry. You should also make sure to mention in your contest rules that you have the right to investigate any contest entries before announcing a winner.

Need help with sweepstakes or contest management? Call 305-505-5393 or email us with your questions.