# The Sidemen launch Upside VC to back consumer tech startups with social media muscle



The Sidemen, renowned as Europe’s largest YouTube collective, have recently taken a monumental step into the world of venture capital with the launch of Upside VC. This venture capital firm is dedicated to supporting consumer technology startups, further cementing the Sidemen's influence not just in entertainment but also in entrepreneurship. Comprising prominent figures such as KSI, Miniminter, Zerkaa, TBJZL, Behzinga, Vikkstar123, and W2S, the collective boasts an impressive following of over 50 million and more than 50 billion views across various platforms.

Upside VC aims to make strategic investments between £100,000 and £500,000 in companies, including Howbout, Mile, and Nimbi. These investments are not merely financial; the Sidemen also leverage their extensive social media reach to promote the companies they back. This dual approach allows startups to tap into a built-in audience, facilitating growth in both visibility and customer acquisition. Jamie Elliott, general partner at Upside VC, highlighted the group's unique understanding of their audience: "It’s very rare to find anyone in this world who knows their fans and customers as well as the guys do."

The Sidemen's foray into business ventures is not new. The collective has already established multiple successful brands, such as Sidemen Clothing, a chain of fried chicken restaurants called Sides, and even a breakfast cereal. Perhaps most notably, KSI co-created Prime, an energy drink that has rapidly gained popularity among younger consumers. This wealth of entrepreneurial experience positions the Sidemen as not just influencers but savvy investors in the evolving landscape of the creator economy.

Their investment strategy emphasises interaction with burgeoning companies in the social media and creator economy sectors, reflecting a growing trend of celebrities entering venture capital. Startups often struggle to reach their target audiences and refine their products, but the Sidemen’s extensive network offers not just capital but also insights from their own experiences in content creation and audience engagement. This approach marks a significant shift where creators become crucial stakeholders in the businesses they support, creating a feedback loop that can accelerate innovation.

Furthermore, the recent participation of Upside VC in backing POCKLA, an advertising technology startup, underscores the Sidemen's commitment to this new venture. POCKLA has developed an AI-driven platform designed to assist brands in crafting relevant content swiftly by analysing vast social media data. The inclusion of such forward-thinking companies in Upside VC's portfolio illustrates the collective's intent to remain at the forefront of engaging, real-time marketing solutions.

Through Upside VC, the Sidemen are not only diversifying their business interests but also fostering an ecosystem where startups can thrive with the backing of a powerful creator network. This venture solidifies their role as key players in the intersection of media, technology, and entrepreneurship, poised to shape the future of consumer engagement.

As the Sidemen navigate their new investment landscape, the synergy between their established brand and the innovative spirit of the startups they support presents exciting opportunities for growth and development in the ever-evolving digital marketplace.

### Reference Map

1. Paragraphs 1, 2, 3, 4
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7. Paragraphs 3, 4

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://peopleofcolorintech.com/articles/sidemen-youtube-collective-launches-new-venture-capital-firm/> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://peopleofcolorintech.com/articles/sidemen-youtube-collective-launches-new-venture-capital-firm/> - The Sidemen, Europe's largest YouTube collective, have co-founded Upside, a venture capital firm supporting consumer tech startups. The group, comprising KSI, Miniminter, Zerkaa, TBJZL, Behzinga, Vikkstar123, and W2S, has over 50 million followers and 50 billion views across all social media channels. Upside VC has made investments ranging from £100,000 to £500,000 in companies like Howbout, Mile, and Nimbi. Supported companies will receive financial backing and promotion across the Sidemen's social media platforms, aiding in follower expansion and customer base growth. Jamie Elliott, general partner at Upside VC, praised the Sidemen's deep understanding of their audience, stating, "It’s very rare to find anyone in this world who knows their fans and customers as well as the guys do." The Sidemen have also ventured into various businesses, including Sidemen Clothing, Sides (a fried-chicken restaurant chain), and a breakfast cereal. KSI co-created Prime, an energy drink popular among teenagers.
3. <https://sifted.eu/articles/sidemen-vc-fund> - The Sidemen, a group of celebrity YouTubers with over 20 million followers, are venturing into venture capital by raising a fund named Upside VC. Two members, Joshua Bradley (Zerkaa) and Vikram Singh Barn (Vikkstar), were previously listed as directors of Upside VC. The Sidemen are exploring various investment opportunities, emphasizing the symbiotic relationship between startups and content creators, and have shown interest in companies in the social media and creator economy sector, potentially leveraging their extensive networks and experiences in media and entertainment to support portfolio companies.
4. <https://www.contentgrip.com/sidemen-invest-in-pockla-ai-content-platform/> - POCKLA, a London-based adtech startup helping brands create content with creator-level speed and relevance, has recently raised £1.6 million (around US$2 million) in seed funding. The round was led by Venrex, with participation from Sidemen’s VC arm Upside Ventures, along with Love Ventures, Shuttle, and Syndicate Room. The funding will be used to scale POCKLA’s proprietary AI engine and expand its team to support more social-first consumer brands. POCKLA is designed to help advertisers keep pace with culture by analyzing millions of social data points to surface real-time, emotionally resonant moments. The Sidemen's backing of POCKLA signals a growing convergence between creator-led media and next-gen adtech.
5. <https://www.moonfire.com/stories/the-rise-of-the-venture-creator/> - The Sidemen, with over 244 million followers across their various channels, have used their influence to launch multiple brands, including a restaurant chain, breakfast cereal, and a vodka brand. They have also launched a $10 million venture fund, Upside VC. Their audience serves as a testing ground, allowing them to iterate quickly and at scale. In the last couple of years, they have successfully launched a Christmas number one single and a reality show, Inside, which garnered more views on its first episode than Love Island, for a tenth of the cost. This constant innovation and feedback loop is invaluable, and their strength as investors lies not just in their distribution but in the expertise they bring as producers and creators.
6. <https://axies.digital/youtubers-turned-vc/> - The Sidemen, a group of celebrity YouTubers, have ventured into the world of venture capital with their new firm, Upside VC. They are exploring various investment opportunities, emphasizing the symbiotic relationship between startups and content creators. The Sidemen have shown interest in companies in the social media and creator economy sector, potentially leveraging their extensive networks and experiences in media and entertainment to support portfolio companies. This move aligns with a broader trend of celebrities entering the venture capital arena, offering founders access to extensive networks and invaluable insights into branding and running media and entertainment companies.
7. <https://traded.co/vc/deal/sidemen-launch-upside-vc-with-investment-interests-in-social-media-sector-amount-undisclosed/> - The Sidemen, a group of celebrity YouTubers with over 20 million followers, have ventured into the world of venture capital with their new VC firm, Upside VC. Notably, two members, Joshua Bradley (Zerkaa) and Vikram Singh Barn (Vikkstar), were previously listed as directors of Upside VC. The Sidemen are exploring various investment opportunities, emphasizing the symbiotic relationship between startups and content creators, and have shown interest in companies in the social media and creator economy sector, potentially leveraging their extensive networks and experiences in media and entertainment to support portfolio companies.