



# A CONCEPTUAL INTROSPECTION INTO THE UPSIDE AND DOWNSIDE OF INFLUENCER MARKETING ON PUBLIC AT LARGE

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## ABSTRACT

The use of social media is ubiquitous and has been proven to have a significant impact on the lives of teens and young adults alike. Social media has evolved from its traditional role as a photo gallery and a platform for thought dumping into a marketing space primarily driven by influencers, the people who influence. Influencers hold a strong grip on people across social media platforms through the content, opinions, ideas, and uniqueness they bring to the table. They are well-known to have an impact on people, especially the younger generation. Influencer marketing closely ties in with social media marketing. Most opinion leaders collect their audience on social platforms. Social media channels give you access to a vast audience, with half of the world's population using social networks. Ten years ago, influencer marketing was limited to celebrities, and a handful of dedicated bloggers. Today, the social media influencer has risen to the top, saturating the market. And while their followings may vary in size, these influencers pack a punch. Their tight-knit communities foster authentic connections, leading to higher trust and engagement. The aim of this research paper is to study the positive and negative aspects of influencer marketing on people in general. The paper is primarily based on secondary data. Influencer marketing has become a popular strategy for businesses looking to reach a wider audience and increase brand awareness. Think of influencers as modern-day digital billboards. It involves partnering with individuals who have a large following on social media platforms to promote products or services. And while influencer marketing has its benefits, it also has its downsides.

Keywords: internet, social media, social media influencer, marketing, youth, digitalization

## INTRODUCTION

Influencer marketing is a type of marketing strategy that uses influencers to promote products and services. These so-called influencers have large followings on social media platforms and are considered experts in their respective fields. The goal of influencer marketing is to leverage the credibility and popularity of influencers to reach a wider audience and increase brand awareness. Social Media Influencer is a content creator with many followers and influence on social media platforms. These influencers build their reputations by creating content on social media and demonstrating their knowledge and trustworthiness on specific topics. Influencer marketing is not a new concept. In fact, it's been around for decades, but has evolved significantly in recent years with the rise of social media. Influencers The earliest form of his marketing dates back to the 18th century, when he was endorsed by royalty to promote certain products. In the early 20th century, celebrities were used to promote products on radio and television. But it was with the advent of the internet and social media that influencer marketing really took off. The first influencer marketing campaign is widely known as Burger King's 2004 "Obey Chicken" campaign. The campaign featured his website with a person in a chicken costume performing every action requested by the user. This campaign was very successful and paved the way for future influencer marketing campaigns.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

The web-based climate of informal communities permits clients to share and associate inside rich interest-based networks. Communications are made by loving, remarking and sharing their substance (Shamsudeen and Ganeshbabu, 2018). This peculiarity is likewise applied in powerhouse promoting. This methodology depends on the utilization of forces to be reckoned with on networks and on generally electronic verbal exchange to diffuse data and interface adherents with brands (Pophal, 2016). Powerhouse promoting is extremely present on Instagram as the stage is extremely visual and permits powerhouses to share content and draw in with the devotees (Jaakonmäki, Müller and Vom Brocke, 2017).

Thanks to the communications established between companies and consumers within social media, interactions between them are more personal in comparison to more traditional ways of marketing and advertising such as TV advertising for example (Shamsudeen and Ganeshbabu, 2018).

Social media influencers have been defined by many scholars in numerous ways. Freberg et al. characterized social media influencers as a new type of independent third-party endorser who shapes audience attitudes through blogs, tweets, and the use of other social media. Abidin construed social media influencers as a form of microcelebrities who document their everyday lives from the trivial and mundane to the exciting snippets of the exclusive opportunities in their line of work, thereby shaping public opinion through the conscientious calibration of persona on social media. De Veirman et al. defined social media influencers as people who built a large network of followers and are regarded as trusted tastemakers in one or several niches. Ge and Gretzel denoted social media influencers as individuals who are in a consumer's social graph and has a direct impact on the behavior of that consumer. More recently, Dhanesh and Duthler described social media influencers as people who, through personal branding, build and maintain relationships with their followers on social media, and have the ability to inform, entertain, and

influence their followers' thoughts, attitudes, and behaviors. When these definitions are taken collectively and espoused through a marketing lens, *social media influencers are essentially people who develop and maintain a personal brand and a following on social media through posts that intertwine their personality and lifestyle with the products (e.g., goods, services, ideas, places, people) that they promote, which can influence the way their followers behave (e.g., attitudes, perceptions, preferences, choices, decisions), positively (e.g., purchase) or negatively (e.g., do not purchase).*

## **OBJECTIVES**

The aim of this research paper is to study the positive and negative aspects of influencer marketing on people in general. Also to study the core concept of influencer marketing.

## **METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY**

This study is descriptive in nature and is based on several studies done on secondary data and sourced from the publications of various government and private organizations. Use of information available on authentic websites, publications, and research articles is made. The analysis is primarily based on secondary data available on various relevant platforms.

## **DISCUSSIONS**

Influencer marketing has emerged as a notable technique that many brands are using to connect with and attract customers. More and more brands are using influencers to promote their products and services. In fact, 71% of advertisers believe that influencers involved in promoting products generate quality traffic and leads. Influencers can contribute to rapid brand growth because they have many followers who trust them. They are experts at creating visually appealing content and have a loyal audience interested in specific topics like fashion and fitness.

They also know their audience like the back of their hand. So when an influencer promotes a brand or product, their followers are more likely to trust their recommendation and make a purchase.

The goals of an influencer marketing campaign always vary depending on your business and situation, but it's a little different when building an internal employee advocacy program. However, your influencer marketing campaign should aim for at least one of his four goals: Increase brand awareness and strengthen brand image.

- Increase social engagement and interaction.
- Improve conversions (e.g. newsletter subscribers, free trial sign-ups, purchases, etc.).
- Get customer insights and data.

### **Pros of Influencer marketing:**

Influencer marketing has become a popular strategy for brands looking to connect with their target audience. Here are some of the benefits of influencer marketing.

1. Increase Brand Awareness- Collaborating with influencers can increase brand awareness and reach a larger audience. Influencers have already built engaged and loyal followings that help spread your brand's message. As consumers, we trust peer reviews and recommendations over branded content, and social media services' algorithms

increasingly prioritize authentic content from our friends and networks. On average, posts from friends and colleagues have higher engagement (more likes and comments) and are therefore more viral.

2. Increased brand trust- Influencers often have deep connections with their followers, and their support increases brand trust. When an influencer promotes a product or service, their followers are more likely to trust it and consider it.

3. Authentic Content Creation- Influencers are experts at creating authentic content that resonates with their followers. When working with influencers, brands can leverage this expertise to create authentic and engaging content that drives engagement and conversions.

4. Cost-effective- Influencer marketing can be a cost-effective strategy for brands, especially when compared to traditional advertising methods. Working with influencers can produce powerful results while being less costly than traditional advertising channels.

5. Target Audience- Influencers often have a specific niche or target audience, which can be beneficial for brands looking to reach a specific audience. By collaborating with influencers in your industry or specialty, you can reach a highly engaged and engaged audience with your message.

Overall, influencer marketing offers many benefits to brands looking to build their brand and engage with their target audience. By working with influencers, brands can increase awareness, increase brand trust, create authentic content, and target specific audiences while remaining cost-effective.

### **Cons of Influencer marketing:**

In recent years, influencer marketing has become a trendy way for companies to promote their products and services. It's no secret that social media influencers can be a powerful force in marketing. Not every influencer will love your product offerings, and some influencer audiences are bought. This can make it hard to produce a solid marketing campaign, as your ability to control the campaign will be tough. Collaboration is key to using influencer marketing successfully. When done right, partnering with social media influencers can be an effective way for businesses to boost visibility and reach new audiences.



1. Working with the wrong Influencers can do more harm than good- Collaborating with influencers who don't align with your brand values or target audience can negatively impact you. Their actions, controversies, or mismatched content can damage your brand's reputation and credibility. Working with influencers who have fake followers can severely harm your brand. Fake followers not only fail to engage with your content or convert into customers, but they also dilute the authenticity of your brand message. When your audience discovers the deceit, it can lead to distrust, negative sentiment, and damage to your brand's image. It is crucial to thoroughly vet influencers and ensure their followers are genuine to maintain brand integrity.
2. It is difficult to measure results- Measuring the true effectiveness and return on investment (ROI) of influencer marketing can be challenging. Unlike traditional marketing channels with robust analytics, influencer marketing metrics are often subjective and varied. Determining the impact on brand awareness,

- engagement, and sales requires careful tracking, customized metrics, and analysis. Most brands prefer tracking sales from their influencer marketing campaigns to mitigate this challenge.
3. High-Risk - People are unpredictable. You can spend a large amount of money to align your brand with someone with a squeaky clean image, but you don't know what they're going to do tomorrow. One of the reasons influencer marketing works is because people transfer some of the feelings they have for the influencer onto the product they're promoting.
  4. Promotion of Unrealistic Standards- Social media influencers often promote unrealistic beauty standards, leading to negative effects on body image and self-esteem. Exposure to idealized beauty standards on social media can lead to feelings of inadequacy and low self-esteem, as well as perpetuate unrealistic beauty standards that are unattainable for most people. According to a study, 88% of teenage girls believe in the unrealistic beauty standards promoted by the media. This can lead to negative body image, disordered eating, and even depression and anxiety. It is important to recognize that the images and ideals presented on social media are often unrealistic and unattainable and that everyone is unique and beautiful in their own way. To reduce harm on social media, it is recommended to unfollow accounts that promote unrealistic beauty standards, find a healthy community, and take breaks.
  5. Spread of Misinformation and Pseudoscience- The spread of misinformation and pseudoscience is a significant issue that arises due to the influence of social media influencers. Social media platforms provide a vast audience for influencers to share their opinions and beliefs, which can often be misleading or false. Influencers with a large following can spread misinformation and pseudoscience to their followers, who may not have the necessary knowledge or resources to fact-check the information. This can lead to the spread of false information and beliefs, which can have negative consequences on individuals and society as a whole. The spread of misinformation and pseudoscience can cause confusion, mistrust, and fear among people, leading to poor decision-making and even harm. Therefore, it is essential to be aware of the potential negative effects of social media influencers and to critically evaluate the information they share.

## CONCLUSION

Overall, while influencer marketing can be a valuable addition to your marketing strategy, it is important to consider the potential disadvantages before diving in. Influencer marketing is often seen as a short-term strategy that provides a temporary boost in visibility or sales. Once the influencer's content is no longer being promoted or shared, the impact may quickly fade. This means that businesses need to continually invest in influencer marketing to maintain its benefits. Influencers often have a specific niche or target audience, which can be beneficial for brands looking to reach a specific demographic. By working with influencers in your industry or niche, you can target your message to a highly engaged and interested audience. Influencer marketing offers a range of advantages for brands looking to

build their brand and connect with their target audience. By working with influencers, brands can increase visibility, improve brand trust, create authentic content, and target specific audiences, all while remaining cost-effective.

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