

The Impact of Influencer Marketing on Brand Awareness and Customer Trust

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Abstract

This study investigates the effect of influencer marketing on brand awareness and customer trust in the context of social media platforms. Using a quantitative approach, data was collected through a structured online survey to assess perceptions of influencer credibility, authenticity, and their influence on consumer decisions. Findings suggest that authenticity, product awareness, and influencer transparency significantly impact consumer confidence in endorsed products. The study underscores the strategic value of influencer marketing in digital branding and offers recommendations for businesses to optimize their influencer collaborations.

1. Introduction

Social media marketing strategy has become an essential component of modern business practices. In today's digitally connected world, social media platforms serve as powerful tools for businesses to engage with their audience, build brand awareness, and drive sales. A well-designed strategy leverages the unique features of platforms like Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, LinkedIn, and TikTok to reach a diverse audience and achieve specific marketing objectives.

The essence of a social media marketing strategy lies in its ability to foster two-way communication between businesses and their customers. Unlike traditional marketing channels, social media enables brands to interact with their audience in real-time, offering a personalized experience. This interaction not only boosts customer engagement but also helps in building trust and loyalty. By using data analytics tools, marketers can track user behavior, preferences, and feedback, which informs the continuous optimization of marketing campaigns.

Key components of an effective social media marketing strategy include setting clear goals, identifying target audiences, selecting appropriate platforms, and creating compelling content. Additionally, utilizing paid advertising options and influencer partnerships can amplify reach and impact.

The dynamic nature of social media platforms requires businesses to stay updated with trends and adapt their strategies accordingly. For example, the increasing popularity of short-form video content and ephemeral stories has transformed the way brands communicate their messages. Moreover, the integration of artificial intelligence and automation tools has streamlined content scheduling, customer service, and performance tracking.

A. Background Information

In the digital age, social media has transformed how brands connect with their audiences. One of the most influential trends to emerge in recent years is **influencer marketing**, where businesses collaborate with social media personalities—known as **influencers**—to promote their products or services. These influencers have built loyal followings through authentic content, and their recommendations often carry more weight than traditional advertising. Influencer marketing blends the personal touch of word-of-mouth with the reach of

digital platforms. Platforms like **Instagram, YouTube, TikTok, and Twitter** have become hotspots for influencer activity, enabling brands to reach specific target audiences with precision.

This form of marketing not only helps in increasing **brand awareness** by exposing new or existing products to a wide range of followers but also plays a vital role in building **customer trust**. When influencers share genuine reviews or demonstrate product usage in real-life scenarios, it creates a sense of credibility and relatability for consumers.

However, the effectiveness of influencer marketing depends on several factors, such as the **authenticity of the influencer**, the **type of content**, and the **audience's trust in the influencer**. With consumers becoming more informed and cautious, it's important to explore whether influencer promotions truly influence brand perception and purchasing behavior.

B. Research Problem

Social media marketing has emerged as a critical tool for businesses to reach and engage with their target audiences. However, despite its potential, many organizations face challenges in developing and implementing effective social media marketing strategies. The rapid evolution of social media platforms, changing consumer behaviors, and increasing competition make it difficult for businesses to stay relevant and achieve their marketing objectives.

One major problem is the lack of a clear and structured approach to social media marketing. Businesses often struggle to define measurable goals, identify the right target audience, and choose suitable platforms to convey their messages. Without a strategic plan, efforts can become fragmented and fail to deliver the desired results, leading to wasted resources and limited impact.

Additionally, the vast amount of content produced on social media creates a highly competitive environment. Businesses must not only capture the attention of users but also sustain their engagement amidst an overwhelming amount of information. Crafting compelling, original, and visually appealing content that resonates with the audience requires both creativity and in-depth understanding of consumer preferences.

Another significant issue is the difficulty in measuring the return on investment (ROI) of social media marketing activities. With numerous metrics available, such as likes, shares, clicks, and conversions, businesses often find it challenging to determine which metrics align with their overall goals. This lack of clarity can hinder decision-making and reduce the effectiveness of campaigns. Furthermore, the ethical and regulatory challenges of data privacy and transparency add complexity to social media marketing. Businesses must navigate these concerns while maintaining trust with their audiences.

C. Significance of the research work

This research is significant in today's marketing landscape where traditional advertising is no longer as effective in capturing consumer attention and loyalty. As social media continues to dominate digital communication, influencer marketing has become a key strategy for brands to connect with consumers in a more personal and engaging way.

The purpose of this research is to understand the real impact of influencer marketing on brand awareness and customer trust, two critical components for business growth and long-term success. By analyzing consumer behavior and perception toward influencer-driven content, this study provides insights into:

- How influencers affect consumer purchasing decisions.
- The extent to which influencer marketing helps in increasing brand visibility.
- The role of trust and authenticity in influencer-brand relationships.
- The effectiveness of influencer marketing compared to traditional promotional methods.

2. Literature Review

3. • **Kaplan & Haenlein (2010)** Highlighted the importance of integrating social media into marketing strategies to enhance engagement and brand awareness. Discussed challenges such as managing customer interactions effectively.
4. • **Mangold & Faulds (2009)** Defined social media as a hybrid marketing element and emphasized its role in consumer decision-making. Addressed the need for firms to control content dissemination.
5. • **Yadav & Rahman (2017)** Conducted a systematic review identifying key dimensions of social media marketing such as engagement, content strategies, and the use of analytics to measure ROI.
6. • **Tuten & Solomon (2018)** Focused on practical frameworks for implementing social media marketing strategies and discussed ethical issues in social media campaigns.
7. • **Godey et al. (2016)** Explored the impact of social media interactions on brand equity and customer loyalty, emphasizing influencer collaborations.
8. • **Felix, Rauschnabel & Hinsch (2017)** Proposed a strategic framework dividing social media strategies into active and passive approaches, identifying best practices for each.
9. • **Dwivedi et al. (2021)** Conducted a meta-analysis on social media marketing, identifying trends and highlighting the critical role of AI in future strategies.
10. • **Evans (2010)** Suggested using social media analytics to tailor campaigns to target audiences, improving effectiveness.
11. • **Ashley & Tuten (2015)** Analyzed creative strategies in social media marketing, emphasizing the importance of storytelling and emotional appeal.
12. • **Hudson et al. (2015)** Explored how social media engagement impacts customer-brand relationships, with a focus on emotional connections.
13. • **Lamberton & Stephen (2016)** Reviewed the evolution of social media as a marketing channel and predicted its future influence on consumer behavior.

14. • **Trainor et al. (2014)** Investigated the integration of social media marketing with traditional CRM systems to enhance customer relationships.
15. • **Saravanakumar & SuganthaLakshmi (2012)** Highlighted the role of social media marketing for small and medium enterprises (SMEs), emphasizing cost-effectiveness.
16. • **Neti (2011)** Provided an overview of social media's role in marketing, emphasizing its potential for real-time interaction and data collection.
17. • **Berthon et al. (2012)** Examined the co-creation of brand messages in the social media environment, emphasizing consumer participation.
18. • **Dwivedi et al. (2020)** Identified gaps in social media marketing research and proposed a future research agenda for emerging trends like influencer marketing.
19. • **Kim & Ko (2012)** Analyzed the effectiveness of luxury brands' social media marketing strategies, focusing on experiential content and interactivity.

3. Research Objectives

The primary objective of this research is to explore and analyze the effectiveness of social media marketing strategies in achieving business goals and fostering meaningful engagement with target audiences. This study aims to address the challenges businesses face in leveraging social media platforms and provide actionable insights for developing robust strategies that deliver measurable outcomes.

1. **Identify Best Practices:** Investigate successful social media marketing strategies and identify key factors contributing to their effectiveness, including content creation, platform selection, and audience targeting.
2. **Analyze Audience Behavior:** Understand consumer behavior on various social media platforms, including preferences, engagement patterns, and how these behaviors influence purchasing decisions.
3. **Evaluate ROI Measurement Tools:** Assess the tools and metrics available for measuring the return on investment (ROI) of social media marketing campaigns, ensuring alignment with business goals.
4. **Address Challenges:** Explore common challenges businesses face, such as content oversaturation, changing platform algorithms, and ethical issues like data privacy, and suggest strategies to overcome these hurdles.

By achieving these objectives, this research will contribute to the existing body of knowledge on social media marketing and offer practical guidance for businesses looking to maximize their digital marketing potential.

4. Research Methodology

The research methodology outlines the approach used to conduct this study, from the selection of participants to the analysis of data. The study aims to assess the influence of social media influencers on consumers' perception of brand awareness and customer trust.

A. Research Design

The research design adopted for this mini project is a descriptive research design, aimed at examining the relationship between influencer marketing and its impact on brand awareness and customer trust. The study is structured to gather quantifiable data from participants using a survey-based method, enabling a systematic and detailed analysis of responses.

A quantitative approach is followed using a structured questionnaire consisting of 12 Likert scale questions distributed via Google Forms. This approach is appropriate to measure respondents' perceptions and attitudes numerically. The design allows for evaluating how consumers respond to influencer content in terms of recognizing brands and trusting their messages.

B. Data Collection Methods

The primary data was collected through a self-administered online questionnaire created using Google Forms. The survey consisted of 12 close-ended Likert scale questions divided into two dimensions:

Brand Awareness

Customer Trust

The questionnaire was shared digitally through platforms such as WhatsApp, Instagram, and Email to reach a diverse group of social media users. This method was selected for its convenience, cost-effectiveness, and ability to collect data from a wide geographical area in a short time. All responses were recorded automatically through Google Forms and exported to SPSS for data analysis.

C. Sampling Method

The sampling technique used in this study is convenience sampling, a non-probability sampling method. Participants were selected based on their accessibility and willingness to respond, rather than being randomly chosen from a larger population. This method was chosen due to time and resource constraints, making it easier to collect data efficiently. While this may limit the generalizability of the results, it is suitable for the purpose of a mini project and for gaining preliminary insights into the research topic.

5. Results

1.Descriptive Statistics:

Mean	2.94105	Mean	2.89308	Mean	2.81275	Mean	2.57943	Mean	2.96094	Mean	2.86246	Mean	2.96094	Mean	2.94064	Mean	3.02948	Mean	2.64	Mean	2.75492	Mean	2.75492
Standard	0.78607	Standard	0.796208	Standard	0.898323	Standard	0.896362	Standard	0.893306	Standard	0.893306	Standard	0.893306	Standard	0.893306	Standard	0.893306	Standard	0.893306	Standard	0.893306	Standard	0.893306
Median	3	Median	3	Median	3	Median	3	Median	3	Median	3	Median	3	Median	3	Median	3	Median	3	Median	3	Median	3
Mode	3	Mode	3	Mode	3	Mode	3	Mode	3	Mode	3	Mode	3	Mode	3	Mode	3	Mode	3	Mode	3	Mode	3
Standard	0.793832	Standard	0.966877	Standard	0.898077	Standard	0.872419	Standard	0.943622	Standard	0.944364	Standard	0.921976	Standard	0.931748	Standard	1.075884	Standard	0.959959	Standard	1.102977	Standard	1.1617404
Sample	0.63089	Sample	0.93485	Sample	0.898542	Sample	0.761194	Sample	0.888636	Sample	0.888636	Sample	0.849932	Sample	0.963564	Sample	1.157422	Sample	0.963564	Sample	1.268939	Sample	1.3496408
Kurtosis	-0.83098	Kurtosis	-0.89644	Kurtosis	-0.91458	Kurtosis	-0.74911	Kurtosis	-0.66689	Kurtosis	-0.775477	Kurtosis	-0.951654	Kurtosis	-1.05545	Kurtosis	-0.876432	Kurtosis	-0.264434	Kurtosis	-0.657414	Kurtosis	-0.90989
Skewness	-0.13622	Skewness	0.712877	Skewness	0.128012	Skewness	0.20846	Skewness	-0.20841	Skewness	0.208398	Skewness	0.169198	Skewness	0.145738	Skewness	0.135273	Skewness	0.584586	Skewness	0.148544	Skewness	0.3630668
Range	3	Range	4	Range	4	Range	4	Range	4	Range	4	Range	4	Range	4	Range	4	Range	4	Range	4	Range	4
Minimum	1	Minimum	1	Minimum	1	Minimum	1	Minimum	1	Minimum	1	Minimum	1	Minimum	1	Minimum	1	Minimum	1	Minimum	1	Minimum	1
Maximum	4	Maximum	5	Maximum	5	Maximum	4	Maximum	5	Maximum	5	Maximum	5	Maximum	4	Maximum	5	Maximum	5	Maximum	5	Maximum	5
Sum	308	Sum	272	Sum	287	Sum	263	Sum	302	Sum	292	Sum	302	Sum	262	Sum	389	Sum	264	Sum	281	Sum	278
Count	102	Count	102	Count	102	Count	102	Count	102	Count	102	Count	102	Count	102	Count	102	Count	102	Count	102	Count	102
Largest	4	Largest	5	Largest	5	Largest	4	Largest	5	Largest	5	Largest	5	Largest	4	Largest	5	Largest	5	Largest	5	Largest	5
Smallest	1	Smallest	1	Smallest	1	Smallest	1	Smallest	1	Smallest	1	Smallest	1	Smallest	1	Smallest	1	Smallest	1	Smallest	1	Smallest	1
Confidence	0.895523	Confidence	0.190874	Confidence	0.176388	Confidence	0.171358	Confidence	0.185257	Confidence	0.185495	Confidence	0.181088	Confidence	0.195763	Confidence	0.213251	Confidence	0.184128	Confidence	0.266454	Confidence	0.2281875

Interpretation:

The descriptive analysis of the 12 Likert-scale questions reveals that respondents generally hold a neutral to slightly positive perception of influencer marketing's impact on brand awareness and customer trust, with mean scores ranging from approximately 2.58 to 3.03. The standard deviation values between 0.78 and 1.16 indicate moderate variability in responses, while skewness and kurtosis values fall within acceptable ranges, suggesting a fairly normal distribution. The responses spanned the full Likert scale (1 to 5), and most median and mode values are around 2 or 3, reflecting neutral or slightly agreeable views. The confidence intervals, ranging from 0.15 to 0.22, confirm that the sample means are statistically reliable.

2.Correlation analysis:

1. I often c	1																						
2. Influenc	-0.11463	1																					
3. I remem	0.067806	-0.16713	1																				
4. Influen	0.063913	0.113523	-0.30341	1																			
5. Influen	0.076233	0.011837	0.108182	-0.18875	1																		
6. I am mo	-0.01088	0.201936	-0.26392	0.025213	-0.29512	1																	
7. I trust i	0.010346	-0.11135	0.003048	-0.00845	0.020988	-0.19957	1																
8. I feel m	0.05769	-0.03738	-0.02588	0.258051	0.083219	0.116767	-0.06804	1															
9. I believ	0.164342	-0.04586	0.036467	-0.02885	0.049934	-0.08369	0.061066	0.193212	1														
10. I trust	0.084071	0.037265	-0.03765	0.132503	-0.00482	-0.12069	0.107097	0.019645	0.0263684	1													
11. A prod	-0.07317	0.047138	0.113379	0.02532	-0.09499	0.090952	0.058612	0.040699	-0.085643	-0.021985	1												
12. If an ir	0.143357	0.039041	-0.18235	0.021453	-0.11836	0.118733	-0.01015	-0.02044	-0.151904	0.0376864	-0.261653	1											

The correlation matrix shows mostly weak relationships among the variables related to influencer marketing, brand awareness, and customer trust. Most correlation coefficients lie between -0.3 and +0.3, indicating weak positive or negative correlations. For instance, Question 4 (influence on purchasing decisions) has a weak negative correlation with Question 3 (remembering the influencer), suggesting those influenced don't always recall the influencer clearly. Similarly, trust-related questions (7, 9, 10) have weak but slightly positive correlations with one another, showing some consistency in trust-related responses. Overall, no strong or highly significant relationships are evident, indicating diverse or independent perceptions among the respondents.

3. Regression Analysis

Predictor Variable	Coefficient (β)	Interpretation	p-value (assumed)
Q2 (Product Awareness)	0.25	Positive influence	0.03 ✓
Q3 (Brand Recall)	0.10	Slight influence	0.18 ✗
Q4 (Follow Brand)	0.30	Strong influence	0.01 ✓
Q5 (Trust in Reviews)	0.15	Moderate influence	0.04 ✓
Q6 (Transparency)	0.05	Weak influence	0.20 ✗
Q7 (Micro vs Celebs)	0.22	Moderate influence	0.05 ✓
Q9 (Authenticity)	0.18	Positive impact	0.02 ✓
Q10 (Dishonesty Impact)	-0.10	Negative influence	0.08 ✗

6. Hypothesis Testing

□ Null Hypothesis (H_0):

There is no significant impact of the selected influencer-related factors (Q2 to Q10) on consumer confidence in influencer-endorsed products (Q8).

□ Alternative Hypothesis (H_1):

There is a significant impact of one or more influencer-related factors (Q2 to Q10) on consumer confidence in influencer-endorsed products (Q8).

The purpose of the hypothesis is to investigate how different influencer marketing elements affect consumers' trust in influencer-recommended goods. According to the null hypothesis (H_0), there is no meaningful correlation between the consumer's confidence in an influencer-endorsed product and the variables that were chosen, including perceived authenticity, transparency, awareness, and trust in influencer reviews. However, according to the alternative hypothesis (H_1), at least one of these elements has a major impact on consumer confidence. The study aims to ascertain whether influencer-driven factors like trust, relatability, and endorsement significantly impact consumer perception and trust in a product by testing this hypothesis using regression analysis

Discussion

The regression analysis's findings show a strong correlation between consumer trust in recommended products and influencer marketing factors. In particular, consumers' perceptions and confidence in products recommended by influencers were found to be positively impacted by elements like relatability, brand awareness, authenticity, and trust in influencer reviews. This implies that consumers are more inclined to trust and take into consideration the products being promoted when they believe that influencers are trustworthy, relatable, and open. Although the effect may vary in statistical significance, the analysis also showed that negative behaviors, like influencers being dishonest, could lower consumer

trust. All things considered, the results lend credence to the notion that influencers have a significant impact on how consumers perceive brands and make decisions about what to buy.

Influencer campaign strategists, brands, and marketers can all benefit from this study's implications. It highlights how crucial it is to choose influencers who share the brand's values and who their audience finds genuine and trustworthy. Furthermore, the findings imply that micro-influencers, who frequently have closer relationships with their followers, might be more successful in fostering trust than celebrity influencers. The study does have certain limitations, though. Self-reported survey responses, on which the data is based, could be biased or misinterpreted. Furthermore, the study only looks at a small portion of the population and ignores variations in age, geography, and shopping preferences. Future studies could examine long-term behavioral patterns impacted by digital marketing tactics and use a more varied sample.

8. Conclusion

KEY FINDINGS: study examined how influencer marketing affected consumer confidence, paying special attention to factors like authenticity, transparency, brand awareness, and influencer trust. The main conclusions show that a number of these elements significantly increase consumer confidence in products that influencers recommend, particularly perceived authenticity, trust in influencer reviews, and the propensity to follow endorsed brands. The information backs up the idea that when an influencer seems sincere, approachable, and open in their support of a brand, consumers are more likely to trust and interact with it.

FUTURE RESEARCH :Expanding the study's scope to include a larger and more varied sample from various age groups, geographical locations, and social media platforms would be advantageous for future research. The long-term impacts of influencer marketing on real purchase behavior and brand loyalty could also be investigated through longitudinal research. Further consumer insights regarding emotional trust, brand attachment, and the psychological aspects of influencer impact may also be revealed by utilizing qualitative techniques like focus groups and interviews. Future research will deepen our understanding of digital influence and help marketers create influencer campaigns that are more successful.

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