

INFLUENCER – THE NEW MARKETER

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Abstract:

Years ago there was a time, when marketers believed that targeting the masses was the most effective strategy. Large brand name companies spent millions of dollars to spam the world, and it worked. An enterprise would advertise to hundreds of thousands of people in hopes that a small fraction of them would ultimately buy their product, and guess what, they did. Marketers then used the revenue to reinvest profits in more and more advertisement, and guess what, it worked again.

Welcome to 2020 , the age of new marketing. The age where the consumers now have all the power and the consumers tells the marketers what they want. The problem is the marketers aren't always listening. Consumers have youtube, blogs, and other social media platforms from which they can scream out their distress or satisfaction.

So what is the new marketing? The new marketing is getting the group of influencer's to do what they do best, influence the masses. This is a smaller group of people, the people who post reviews on their blogs, the people who create youtube videos, the people who post in the forums and lead discussions. These are the new marketers.

Keywords:

Marketing, Influncer. SMIs

OBJECTIVES

Influencer marketing is prevalent in firm strategies, yet little is known about the factors that drive success of online brand engagement at different stages of consumer purchase funnel. Sponsored blogging affects online engagement (eg. Posting comments, liking a brand) differently depending upon blogger characteristics and blog post content which are further moderated by social media platform type and campaign advertising intent. The main objectives of this study are-

- To find out what influencer marketing is and the 4 M's of Influencer Marketing.
- To find out the advantages and disadvantages of Influencer Marketing.
- To find out the most famous influencers in India.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 INFLUENCER MARKETING

The world of marketing is always changing. It has to. As buyer expectations shift while technology continues to advance at a rapid pace, marketing cannot stand still. Marketing can drive even the most hardened entrepreneur up the wall. Branding, speaking your audience's language, choosing appropriate platforms for your product, and figuring out which marketing strategies are most effective for your target market can be a real challenge.

Referrals have long since been one of the most effective marketing strategies. If you have a problem and one of your friends tells you about a great solution for it, there is a good chance that you'll go buy it. Influencer marketing is just like that – only at scale.

Influencers have already built a loyal following of people who trust them. So when they tell their fans and followers about how great your product is, there is a much higher chance that their audience will convert, simply because they need the product and trust the influencer. Typically, the seller or marketer will give a special discount code just for the influencer's audience in order to track how effective the campaign is.

Here are a few inspiring stats about influencer marketing:

- 70% of teenage YouTube subscribers trust influencer opinions over traditional celebrities
- On average, businesses generate 469.14 Rs for every 72.17 Rs invested in influencer marketing
- 49% of consumers depend on influencer recommendations
- 89% of marketers say that ROI from influencer marketing is comparable to or better than other marketing channels

For these reasons, brands and influencers are now forging long-term relationships

1.1.1 Earned and paid media in the context of influencer marketing

Influencer marketing can be both earned and paid, depending on how well

executed and well coordinated the owned and paid media is. Earned influence is any type of influence that hasn't been paid for. It's when people talk about your brand naturally and organically, because you've earned it. This has nothing to do with the size of the influencer, it can be a regular customer with a small following or a big influencer. Earned mentions can be for example:

- Tweets about your services or products
- An Instagram photo with your product
- A blog post

Earned influence often appears more authentic and trustworthy, simply because it's not an ad. Your audience knows that the recommendation is genuine and not sponsored. And earned influence has to be, again — earned.

Paid influence is when you pay someone to talk about your brand or products. This is the most common type of influencer marketing. A classic example is when you find an influencer, and pay them to blog about your products or post an image of themselves and your products on their Instagram. They wouldn't have done it without being paid for it, so it's not earned influence.

This is a quick and easy way to increase your reach and it's a method used by a lot of B2C brands. This is the most effective way to send a message to people outside your core group of customers.

1.1.2 The 4 M's of Influencer Marketing

Marketing was built on the foundation of **The Four P's**: Product, Price, Promotion and Place. In today's B2B market however, the famous Four P's have been joined by The Four M's, which map out the basic steps in reaching influencers within a business. When used correctly, the Four M's can expand your reach and turn prospects into sales qualified leads (SQLs).

The four M's of Influencer Marketing are –

1. Make the Influencers

Find the influencers for each potential buyer and make them brand advocates to move companies toward a purchase decision.

To connect to potential customers, you'll need to create **brand advocates** out of these influencers by meeting them on their level through engaging marketing tactics. Leverage the credibility of your leadership team; have your executives reach out to discuss how your product or service can benefit their company. Look into the benefits of referral marketing and to get even more granular, invest in account-based marketing to lock in highly qualified leads.

2. Manage the Impact

Once you find your influencers, consider the impact you have on their view of your brand and what they may pass on to their superiors.

To continually optimize your identified web of secondary influencers, you need to manage the impact they have on your buyer. By connecting with influencers, you may believe that buyers will be more inclined to make a purchase, however there is a chance that our influencers are creating an **opposite or null effect**. Ask the following questions of your influencer marketing efforts to keep track of the possible impact they have on buyers.²

- Did my efforts cause an increased negative or positive view of our product?
- Did my efforts move the influencer along to the next stage of the purchase life cycle?
- Did my efforts take the influencer off the purchase path altogether?
- Did my efforts disrupt or enhance our brand message?

3. Monitor the Relationships

Monitor the relationship and conversations between your influencers and prospective clients to gain valuable feedback.

Influencer monitoring is designed to gauge the positive or negative conversations that exist around a brand, as well as how influencers are talking about your offering to your buyers.

Similar to social media monitoring, influencer monitoring is designed to gauge the positive or negative conversations that exist around a brand, as well as how influencers are talking about your offering to your buyers. Monitoring will give you a holistic view about their principles, outlook and **what matters most to them** and their company, such as cost savings, operational efficiencies or client satisfaction.

By determining **where your influencers stand**, you can adjust your outreach accordingly. Rather than leading with the benefits of your product or service, you may want to start a conversation with them by addressing their concerns and specifically combatting each of their perceived pain points.

4. Measure the Results

Measure your results to improve future marketing initiatives.

Measurement is the most important piece of information for performance marketers. In this case, it's the ability to gauge your **return on marketing investment** (ROMI) from your influencer marketing efforts. Consider the ROMI formula and isolate the financial gain generated by your influencer marketing efforts.

With secondary influencers at play, it's likely that the deals you close as a result of influencer marketing are **more strategic** and of a higher net worth. In addition to ROMI, other influencer marketing measurements you want to track may include:²

- Which industries and influencers drove the most deals?
- What message permeated through a group of influencers the most?
- How many messages did certain personas need to move to the next stage?
- How effective were our targeting and tactics?

2. TOP SOCIAL MEDIA INFLUENCERS IN INDIA

1. Gaurav Chaudhary (Technical guruji)

Gaurav Chaudhary, known professionally as Technical Guruji, is an Indian YouTube personality based in Dubai. Chaudhary is notable influencer producing YouTube videos concerning technology in Hindi. As of January 2020, Gaurav Chaudhary and the Technical Guruji channel combined has accrued over 18 million subscribers on the platform. Many Indian mobile brands send their first sample models of new mobile phones and other devices (laptops, tablets) which are to be launched, to him for a review. After watching his reviews of the sets many viewers of his are able to convert to customers of those brands.

Youtube channel: Technical Guruji

2. Abhishek Sagar

Abhishek Sagar is a tech influencer is from Delhi claims to be a self taught white hat hacker and also a commerce graduate from India. He has great interest and adds videos on cybersecurity, tech news and happenings. Internet and Ethical Hacking is his passion. He had done collaborations with many indian mobile brands and reviews mobiles, laptops and other gadgets regularly. He started his blog on dec,20 2014 and has about 1941265 subbscribers.

Blog name: Technical Sagar

3. Ranjit Kumar

Ranjit Kumar is the host of the YouTube channel called Geekyranjit started on January6, 2011. Ranjit Kumar is an influencer who is based out of Hyderabad, also runs a gadget review website known as Tech2Buzz.com. He earlier had quit his job as an IT consultant to start his own YouTube channel Geekyranjit. In this channel he talks about the Android Tips and Tricks, Smartphone Review, Unboxing of New Smartphone, Gadgets Review, Electronic Products Review. He has 2,668,690 subscribers on YouTube and 2209+ videos.

Blog name: Geekyranjit

4. Anshita Juneja

Anshita is one of the best fashion influencers in India. She is the editor and founder of the blog “Vanity No Apologies”. She holds a Master’s Degree in Marketing after having graduated in 2011 from the University of Delhi with B.A. in Business Economics. You will see her work throughout the blog. Anshita started this blog in December of 2010 and became one of the most respected and awarded beauty blogs in India, it’s a fixture in the niche, receiving more than 800,000 visits/month. She posts reviews of many high end makeup brands like Lakme , Maybelline, Mac , Huda beauty , Sephora and many more.

Blog : <http://vanitynoapologies.com/>

5. Ankita Srivastava

Ankita is a fashion influencer who started her blogging journey in January 2011, while pursuing her Bachelors at IIT Bombay to share her love for makeup and beauty with the online community. After completing her engineering degree in 2012, she has devoted full time to building Corallista as a one-stop destination for beauty lovers looking for comprehensive reviews, looks, and tutorials online. In her blog, “Carollista” you will find product reviews on makeup, skincare, and occasional hair/body care products on this blog apart from Makeup Tutorials, Looks, Celebrity Makeup breakdowns and a little bit about my life outside of makeup.

Blog: <http://corallista.com/>

6. Kritika Khurana

Kritika is a fashion and travel influencer who has a degree in Fashion & Design from JD Institute of Fashion Technology. Not only she is a famous fashion blogger but also own an e-commerce store THE HYPE and has her own label – K_Kritika. Kritika loves Bohemian fashion & is a big fan of Swarovski jewellery. One of her major inspirations is blogger Erika Boldrin who experiments with panache and keeps her look always clean and elegant. Some of her brand partners are Shoppers stop, Oxylife, Nykaa, Manyavar etc

Blog: thatbohogirl.com/

7. Vikas Yogi

He is an automobile influencer whose blog is the first self-funded blog to cater to regular news, latest automobile updates and automobiles product reviews & comparisons in Hindi. He Provides pictures, specifications and prices of new cars, bikes etc . He gives all information about the product on one page itself. His blog was included in 2017’s ‘Top 10 Most Promising Automobile Portals’ as per Silicon India, India’s leading Business & Technology Magazine . He has 464465 facebook followers 2415 twitter followers.

Blog Name: Indiacarnews

8. Rohit Khurana

He is also an automobile influencer who has 117576 facebook fans , 6521 twitter and 46561 youtube views. He writes about Latest car and bike news, articles on automobile technology, automobiles comparison, best test drive reviews etc. his blog gives updates on new car, bike launches across the world and covers walk around videos of cars and bikes. He even showcases

motorsports events and displays pictures, specifications, prices, mileage information of new automobiles

Blog Name: Carblogindia

9. Sagar Patel and Nabanita Singha Roy

They have 538250 Facebook fans and 5234 Twitter followers with YouTube Views more than 17409 Their blog is the leading source of new cars, bikes' news and reviews with Comparison of different automobiles based on prices, features etc. and updates on new car, bike launches across the world .Exclusive videos on various automobiles are presented by them including car events and latest automobile industry news

Blog Name: Rushlane

3. LITERATURE REVIEW

1. Christian Hughes, Vanitha Swaminathan and Gillian Brooks, in the Journal of Marketing 2019 vol. 83(S), in their study “ Driving Brand Management Through Online Social Influencers: An empirical investigation of sponsored Blogging Campaigns , shed light on the key drivers for the success of Influencer Marketing campaigns and offer a novel contribution by examining the interplay of social media platforms and success factors. They found that while network blogger characteristics and content characteristics affect multiple types of sponsored blogger engagement, the level of platform involvement and the campaign intent matter for the degree of success. They used both field data based on a large data set of influencer marketing campaigns and a controlled experiment to show convergent evidence of the majority of the hypothesized effect by understanding this framework. To increase engagement companies can choose blogger more effectively matching their characteristics to campaign goals.

2. Morgan glucksman in his study “The rise of social media influencer marketing on lifestyle branding: A case study of Lucie Fink” (2017) studied that social media influencer promoter lifestyle brands are most successful interacting with consumers when they are authentic, confident and interactive in their content .While his research focused on lifestyle branding, the same likely holds true for many products that public relations agency and marketers promote from automobiles, to electronics , to household products.Through his extensive study he understood that the use of social media influencer marketing in lifestyle and public relations initiatives have broken the war between the consumer and the brand. Social media content before the rise of social media influencer advertising to brand customers was one sided. Before the days of social media consumer could only see a product through print advertisement, billboards ,radio ads and television commercials. Today consumer can interact with the product through social media watching a trusted source such as Fink use a product that allows consumers to feel as if they are making a more informed decision when making a purchase through research. It is evident that social media influencer marketing has in fact changed the way brand interact with consumers in a positive way.

3. Jana Tabellion and Franz-Rudolf Esch in their study “ Influencer Marketing and its Impact on the Advertised Brand”(2019) focus on those persons who grew more popular through their internet activities to differentiate from classical celebrity endorsement research. It examines the impact of influencer marketing on brands on an image based social media channel namely Instagram. Instagram is one of the most important social media channels to share text and pictures and therefore is very often used for product endorsements (Zabel and Pagel 2017). Thereby the author's make

several contributions to the extent literature dealing with source credibility. The research process the goal of elaborating various levels of an influencer credibility on the attitude towards the brand ,brand credibility, brand image, brand trust , purchase intention and willingness to recommend the brand.

4.Soffie biaudet in her study “Influencer Marketing as a Marketing tool - The process of creating an Influencer Marketing Campaign on Instagram” (2017)

Based on the information from the theoretical section of the study and the obtained empirical data the researcher here has been able to answer various research questions. For example ‘why does a brand need influencers?’ or ‘why Instagram and how to find the right influencers?’ . Both the theoretical material and empirical research from interviewing the company *Monochrome OY* highlighted that influencers recommending products are seen as more trustworthy than other marketing methods. According to *Hall(2016)* the built-in level of trust between influencer and reader is essentially impossible for a brand to build alone with the consumer. The researcher believes based on this thesis that this is one of the strongest arguments as to why a company should use influencer marketing as a marketing tool. Another interesting Discovery was that as many as 73% of finished Instagram users follow influencers on Instagram and that Instagram resonated with specially younger age groups.

5.Nathalie zietek in her study “Influencer marketing: The characteristics and components of fashion influencer marketing” (2016)

Investigated influencer marketing from an in-depth status quo perspective. Components of influencer marketing were identified by interviewing 4 experts from the fashion marketing industry about their current work within influencer marketing. The research question behind these interviews aimed on clarifying the main characteristics and components of influencer marketing therefore these interviews led to 4 core components : *Authenticity, Long term relationship, Co-creation and Micro-Influencer*. Within these core components eight subcategories identified which are: Brand fit, Exclusivity, Visual language, Passion, Trust, Price, Creative freedom and Communication. Nevertheless this feature shows that the component of micro influencers work was privatized by all exports and had a positive effect on other components.

6. The thesis titled “The impact of influencer marketing in the fitness industry on consumers trust” by Rebecca baranow(2019) had the main focus on the trust followers have in fitness related influencers on Instagram with the goal of answering the following research question: What are the factors that affect the trustworthiness of fitness influencers are most as perceived by instagram users? The data on the study showed that integrity plays an important role when it comes to trust in influencer marketing. Competence turned out to be also appreciated but not many followers feel as if that is what they are receiving . There are actually quite a few factors regarding trust that have been defined by other researchers for example Responsiveness, Morality, Predictability and many more. (*Mcknight , choudhary & karmar 2002*)

7. The thesis titled “Social media micro influencer marketing and purchase intention of millennials: The role of perceived authenticity and trust” by Renata Abreu (2019) showed that 52.7 percent of the respondents followed micro influencers on Instagram that is interested in fashion. There is a balance among those who think that few followers product authenticity and those who believe that in fact more followers do it. The majority however are neutral. This suggest that the millennials might not take the number of followers into consideration to decide if an influencer is authentic or not. The literature has presented conflicting positions. The correlation analysis however shows that the majority among those who are neutral regarding the importance of the number of followers to identify perceived authenticity believe that the influencers who were not financially

associated with brands are perceived to be more authentic. The results of the survey shows that most of the millennials believe that influencers that make a recommendation without getting a parent financial advantage from company seem to be more trustworthy.

4. THEORETICAL DISCUSSION

4.1 Advantages of Influencer Marketing

1) No Need for Big Budgets

You heard it right! When working with micro-influencers, many will collaborate for incentives such as samples or an experience, like a stay in a bed and breakfast if your business is a home-based hotel. If they prefer payment, it will be much lower than what an A-lister would charge for the same deal.

2) Influencer Marketing Influences Your Consumers' Purchases

This is a key benefit of using influencer marketing, and it's been proven to really work. There's a more personal and human element to it that makes consumers feel differently about various brands, and that's the very same emotion that's relied on for one to make a purchase.

3. When You Want to Gain Consumer Trust

Influencers speak to loyal followers who watch their videos and read their posts about products. They trust in their opinions over time. Once an influencer promotes a brand with a discount code or giveaway, their followers will be intrigued. And in the instance of a fairly new business, these types of endorsements are effective in boosting the brand's authority on the market.

4. Address the Right Audience

Collaborating with influencers related to your business will lead to an increased audience. You'll want to promote your messages to individuals in your niche.

Many clothing brands will choose to work with fashion influencers who have an eye for style. Hordes of fashion lovers will be drawn to the lines that are advertised on the social pages.

5. Expands Your Reach

Get your brand and/or product publicized to a large audience by working with influencers relevant for your offering. Thousands of people may connect with you. Influencers are mostly followed based on passion, insight, ideas, together with the entertaining posts they publish. Their followers anticipate new posts, which they like, share and repost.

4.2 Disadvantages Of Influencers Marketing

1) Choosing the Wrong Influencer

According to a survey, 61% of marketers find it difficult to identify the right influencers for their campaigns. The truth is, getting it right takes some time and effort, and if done wrong, it could cause great damage to the reputation of your brand.

2) The Uncertainty of Results

You may sign a contract with an influencer who has published successful content in the past, but fails to produce effective content for your business. The audience won't engage, and any money invested will be a loss.

3) Measuring Your Progress

Online programs will automate this task so you can easily measure any income received from your marketing efforts. Analysis is crucial so improvements can be made in the future, or you can even decide to switch to a different market.

4.3 Campaigns

1. *Baggit – #PlayTheLifeGame*

Baggit wanted to engage with the audience and build interaction for their new SS collection launch. The campaign included a Baggit event with bloggers showcasing the products, a Q&A with them, and simultaneous interactions and content sharing. The campaign also had influencers sharing their stories, re-tweeting brand's tweets, and bloggers posts. The campaign delivered 5,531,042 impressions. Unique Twitter accounts reached during this campaign were more than 2.8 Million. More than 185 users participated in the campaign and they collectively generated more than 2765 conversations.



2. *Allen Solly – #ShootForSolly*

Allen Solly launched their campaign, #ShootForSolly to promote their Allen Solly Chinos collection. The objective was to attract young consumers and portray Chinos as an alternative to jeans and as a crossover between work & social. The campaign tagged #ShootForSolly paired 11 eminent personalities from different walks of life with 11 budding photographers in a one day shoot that was styled, planned and executed between the 'model' and the photographer. These 22 participants created buzz on social media. The hashtag #ShootForSolly reached 73,493 people and generated 712,203 impressions. On Facebook, #ShootForSolly had 1,16,279 unique engaged users with 28,69,430 as total reach and 32,71,202 total impressions.



3. *Hotel Trident – #TridentSocialHotel*

Hotel Trident invited social media influencers in the hotel, using social media platforms for everything. Once they entered the hotel, they started Instagramming pictures and tweeting about their experiences. The activity resulted in more than 1.2 million impressions of #TridentSocialHotel on Twitter.

4. *Taco Bell – #MakePotatoGreatAgain*

Taco Bell launched #MakePotatoGreatAgain with Tanmay Bhatt to introduce Crispy Potaco – a combination of Potato and Taco. Sambit Dash, Head of Marketing for Taco Bell, Yum! Brands mentioned that Taco Bell only has 17 stores in urban areas and the audience for Taco Bell has been defined as millennials. Tanmay Bhatt posted short clips with his seasoning of humour. The hashtag stirred a buzz around potato, attracting influencers such as Karan Tacker and Lady Gabbar. #MakePotatoGreat received 24,522,245 impressions, according to Tweetbinder. Other food bloggers such as Mister Tikku, Food Talk India, and Munching Murmurs too were a part of the campaign on Instagram. Video posts and creatives were also shared on Facebook. The digital film on Facebook has 215k views with 1k reactions and hundreds of people commenting on it.

**LOVED IT @TacoBellIndia what a masterstroke to
#MakePotatoGreat**

– zunk yard (@gudlukdudekk) June 20, 2018



5. Duroflex – #7HourMarathon

Duroflex rolled out the campaign called 7 Hour Marathon to express the importance of at a stretch sleep for a healthy body while using influencers. The campaign started with Milind Soman tweeting that he plans to do a 7-hour marathon every day. The post received 5.1K likes on the brand's Facebook page and with 1,456 shares. The #7HourMarathon had 4.9M impressions, followed by online influencers promoting the #7HourMarathon message.



Thee tweet raised a few brows.



6. Axis Bank - #AxisThoughtFactory

Axis Bank launched a dedicated innovation lab called the ‘Thought Factory’. To cover the launch on various social media channels, Axis Bank teamed up with influencer.in and tied up with technology bloggers. The Thought Factory launch was attended and covered by them through live tweets and their blogs.



7. Nike – What’s inside Nike Air VaporMax?

Nike collaborated with an established YouTube channel, ‘What’s Inside?’. The channel created a series of sponsored videos, one of which was themed around what the channel is known for, cutting things in half. The ‘What’s inside Nike Air VaporMax?’ video garnered more than 6 million views and 47K likes. The campaign helped Nike build a buzz around the line of products.



8. Skittles – Exclusive the Rainbow, Taste the Rainbow

Skittles' Taste The Rainbow with Marcos Menendez was executed with the objective to get noticed and arouse curiosity amongst viewers. DDB Chicago conceptualised the campaign to make a Super Bowl ad but not on the Super Bowl. Skittles announced that they will make a Super Bowl ad for only one viewer, which will be seen only by that one Skittles superfan. A week later, they released four baffling videos starring David Schwimmer. Each video had the actor asking himself, "Is this the scene from the new Skittles ad which is going to be shown to only one person?" Then on February 04 i.e. the Super Bowl Sunday, the exclusive ad was shown to Marcos, the brand's super-fan. And a million viewers across the world watched how Marcos reacted to the ad via Facebook Live. The campaign received 1.5 billion media impressions and coverage in ABC's segment and won Gold in Cannes 2018 under Social & Influencer Lions.

CONCLUSION

Influencer marketing has successfully caused a radical shift in the marketing industry by emerging as a promising investment segment for brands to explore new-age promotional strategies. Apart from the traditional forms of marketing such as advertising and PR, influencer marketing has become one of the key pillars to planning an effective brand campaign across various sectors. In conclusion, influencer marketing provides brands with an efficient and focused approach to reach their target audience through multiple social media platforms. Effective and business-driven influencer marketing strategy can influence opinions, increase brand loyalty, and generate sales. It has become one of the most opted marketing strategy for most brands nowadays whether it may be in the field of cosmetics, automobiles, technology like mobile phones, speakers etc and lifestyle. More and more bloggers are emerging nowadays which gives the companies more options to market their products.

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