

## **Influencers Marketing Via social media and its role in enhancing the competitive advantage**

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### **Abstract:**

The tremendous development in the field of technology and innovative modern applications has led to enhancing the role of influencer marketing campaigns in addition to raising the level of simulation and developing visual content for influencers to be more creative and innovative. Influencer marketing has a prominent and effective role, as it constitutes a competitive advantage through social media, as it has been able to compete, bypass, and outperform traditional marketing means. With the diminishing effectiveness and ability of traditional marketing means to interact with recipients, institutions have faced difficulty in reaching the target groups easily and efficiently.

With the continued growth of social media in terms of usage, influence, and advertising spend, with the increase in technological developments and the huge amount of time that recipients spend on social media, advertisers are motivated to search for effective and innovative advertising and marketing strategies to take advantage of social media that has an enormous reach to recipients, one of these strategies that have emerged recently is influencer marketing, as this type of marketing is the most preferred method and one of the most influential on the recipient's purchasing behavior.

Influencer marketing is a marketing strategy practiced by prominent personalities of influencers and celebrities on social media by exploiting the technological infrastructure of these electronic communities as well as the influencer's fame, personality and the confidence of his followers in order to reach the recipient appropriately and effectively. Influencer marketing combines two important types of marketing, namely social media marketing and content marketing, where the influencer relies on publishing his content through his personal accounts on social media. Social media can provide important information about the demographics, size, organizational structure and areas of the target group, to highlight certain details in order to direct messages to specific target groups or influence their perceptions, decisions or behavior.

The advertising messages provided by the influencer are often seen as more credible, persuasive and experienced due to the influencer's flexibility in interaction and his/her ability to build a positive mental image of the advertised products and create a competitive advantage for organizations. Influencer marketing depends on the influencer's creative skills and ability to develop the advertising idea and present it more appropriately to the target group through the use of an interesting and effective method capable of improving brand awareness and expanding its reach, which is an important aspect of any effective marketing strategy.

### **Statement of the problem:**

The research problem lies in trying to answer the following question:

- Defining the concept of marketing by influencers on social media from a macro perspective, and what is the size of its impact on the recipient?

- What are the most prominent and influential personalities on social media and the most effective and influential on the recipient?
- How can influencer marketing contribute to creating competitive advantages for advertising institutions?

### **Objective:**

The research aims to identify the concept of influencer marketing and its elements through social media, analyze the characteristics of influencers, reveal the extent of confidence in the advertising content provided by the influencer, and determine its role in creating a competitive advantage for institutions.

### **Importance:**

The importance of the research is clear by dealing with influencer marketing and understanding its feasibility and effectiveness by studying how to activate it in advertising and its impact on the purchasing behavior of the recipient and its effectiveness in building and promoting innovative competitive advantages for institutions.

### **Hypothesis:**

The search assumes that:

- Studying the effectiveness and ability of the influencer's personality to influence the purchasing behavior of the recipient and understanding the nature of the mutual relationship between him/her and the followers may contribute to understanding the role that influencer marketing plays in creating an innovative, effective, more personalized and appropriate advertising message for the target group.
- Influencer marketing contributes to creating competitive advantages for advertising institutions.

### **Methodology:**

The research followed the descriptive analytical approach through the theoretical framework and analysis of the results of the opinion poll form for some advertising models to verify the hypotheses of the research.

Influencer marketing is a type of word of mouth marketing, where advertising messages are transmitted through influential people through social networking sites to their followers, and marketing through influencers is not a new method, but what is new in this field is social positioning. These sites have contributed to the increase in the importance of this type of marketing in the modern era and have increased its depth and impact, and it has become easy to interact with any advertising content.

An influencer through social media can be defined as a person with a large social presence and the ability to influence the decisions made by his followers and the power to control the description and dissemination of new trends due to his having an active audience that follows him through social media channels, which makes him the focus of the attention of many organizations to include him in their marketing strategies.

There were many definitions of influencer marketing, and one of them was the set of marketing methods or efforts made by the institution by relying on influential people in society to promote its products and achieve its marketing objectives.

Or it is a type of marketing, which basically depends on focusing marketing efforts on the use of influencers on social networking sites so that they are able to convey the advertising message intensively to the target audience. It is a marketing strategy that enhances the ability and spread of institutions, and it is one of the most effective ways that organizations can use it to increase awareness of it and increase its competitiveness.

E-word of mouth marketing differs from word-of-mouth marketing in being through personal communication, not through direct communication between the recipient and the advertiser, but through influencers express their impressions and opinions about products through their publications on social media.

To encourage the benefit of electronic word of mouth and its positive impact on recipient behavior, advertisers offer sums of money to some people to write positive product recommendations on review sites or the product's website, and as a result, influencer marketing has become a popular marketing strategy.

#### **The influencer is characterized by several characteristics, which are as follows:**

- Influencing the behavior of recipients: The influencer has sufficient experience that allows him/her to provide advice and suggestions about products and preferences for them through the details of his/her daily life.
- Loyalty of followers: The extent of the influencer's strength is not determined only by the number and size of his followers, but is determined by the extent of their loyalty to him, as he works to gain the trust and loyalty of his audience by providing targeted content.
- Excellence in a specific field: the influencer cannot be familiar with all fields, so he must go along with the tendencies of his followers and with their interests more than others, and the most important thing is to gain an audience with whom he shares the same interests, as the value of the influencer comes from the interaction of his followers.
- Creativity: The influencer is a creative visual content creator, so he must have a unique personality and be distinguished by innovation, diversity, keeping up with everything new, passion, credibility, and leadership.

#### **The reasons that push advertisers to opt for influencer marketing campaigns through social media can be summarized as follows:**

- The spread of social media: Advertisers have been forced to find new and unique ways to reach the target group through social media with its continued growth and significant impact on the purchase decisions of recipients. Advertisers are seeking effective strategies to obtain the largest possible return. One of these strategies in recent years has been influencer marketing, especially after exposure to traditional media has become limited with the advent of modern media.
- Low cost: Influencer marketing campaigns are a cost-effective method that focuses on a specific target group rather than targeting the market as a whole.
- The credibility of the advertising message: the advertising message appears through the influencer to be more credible due to the influencers enjoying the element of experience, which

may prompt the followers to interact with it. Marketing with influencers is basically a virtual word of mouth and the recipients often perceive the advertising messages and interact with them positively because they come from a person who is trusted on social media.

**The most effective marketing techniques that influencers rely on can be summed up as follows:**

- Advertising through the sharing of achievements: that is, integrating the advertising idea into the visual content of the influencer when celebrating the awards or sharing the influencer's followers with his victories and achievements and integrating this achievement with the advertised product.
- Using optimism and positive energy: The process of integrating a product with a charge of optimism or positive energy is an effective marketing technique, where recipients interact with entertaining content that contains hope and the product is implicitly and not explicitly mentioned.
- Advertising through Nostalgia: investing the innate nostalgia for the past in the marketing content, i.e., merging the memories of the past with the product. A great resonance and interaction occur between the recipients, based on the fact that the majority have an innate tendency and nostalgia for the past in terms of attitudes and intellectual legacies, especially in the case of products that had a presence in the past and have an extension in the present, where the "Nostalgia" creates a common ground between the influencer and his followers and the product being advertised as if they have a common history and cultural heritage.
- Integrating the product into the influencer's lifestyle: I. e, advertising products related to their influencer activity by implicitly employing the product in the visual content as a tool in their daily lifestyle, as getting used to using a product within the influencer's lifestyle makes the product more popular and distinctive.
- Advertising using innovative media: such as the use of innovative technologies by some influencers such as infographics, animations, short videos, and panoramic images, as this increases the effectiveness of the advertisement and shows the product features easily without going overboard with the explanation.

**Pros and cons of using influencer marketing:**

**First: The Pros of Influencer Marketing: Influencer marketing has several marketing benefits, including:**

Building an effective and mutual dialogue: Marketing with influencers is characterized by providing a space for dialogue and building relationships between the influencer and his followers, and this feature is not provided by traditional one-way marketing methods, and dialogue is usually through comments or answering inquiries in short videos or live videos through social media.

- The positive social impact of the influencer: that is, taking advantage of the relationship of trust between the influencer and his followers and his effective influence through the participation of followers of the ads broadcast by the influencer. When the advertisement reaches another recipient through social media ads, it will not affect him, as in the case of publishing the advertisement by the person who loves him and trusts thus increase the category receiving the advertisement.

- Speed of introducing new products: Influencers have a clear and effective role in the event of launching a new product or a start-up company by creating awareness of the identity of the product and the organization very quickly through their circles of influence.
- Ease of focusing on the target group: It is easy to reach the target groups through influencer marketing, because the core of the marketing process is choosing the influencer according to its relationship to the identity of the product and the interests of its followers.
- Diversity of influencer marketing methods: Unlike any other marketing strategy, influencer marketing is characterized by the diversity of methods and techniques that the influencer uses to deliver the advertising message efficiently, including posts, tweets, comments, sharing, storyboards, as well as photography with products and their experience.

**Second: The negatives of influencer marketing: Organizations that go into influencer marketing face several obstacles, including:**

- Fake accounts that influencers resort to increase the number of their followers. The presence of “fake followers” makes it difficult to verify and measure the reliability of the influencer’s follower size. Therefore, the choice of the influencer is based on the extent of the interaction and not the numerical strength.
- The influence and credibility of the influencer weakens when he announces a large number of brands at the same time.
- Difficulty of regulatory issues related to disclosure requirements as a result of the nature of some advertisements.
- Followers sometimes question the influencer’s credibility with regard to his actual experience of the advertised product or is it just a paid advertisement, and to overcome this obstacle, the influencer must be chosen who has followers whose interests correspond to the identity of the product, with a continuous emphasis on the influencer’s use of the same product spontaneously and not in a pretentious or artificial way during the marketing campaign.

**There are several considerations that organizations must include when choosing influencer marketing within their marketing strategies, which are:**

- Finding the most compatible and appropriate influencers with the nature of the advertised product and the interests of the target group, and exerting more effort in this matter.
- Giving specific and explicit instructions to the influencer and clarifying the objectives of the marketing campaign completely so that he is not confused about what he should do in order to increase the effectiveness of the advertising message.
- The necessity of defining the methods of monitoring and measurement as they take a lot of time and their success depends on the ability to create a mechanism based on achieving a common interest that guarantees the loyalty of the target group.
- Influencer marketing represents a multi-dimensional experience to create a joint innovation of value for both influencers and the target group. The dimensions of that experience are multi-dimensional according to the recipients' response to include an enjoyable, cognitive, social, and personal experience.

**Factors or conditions that lead to a psychological connection between the influencer and the recipient and affect the strength of the mutual relationship between them, as follows:**

- The link between the influencer and his followers is an important precedent that allows him to influence them deeply, and the stronger the emotional bond between them, the more effective the influencer's influence on the followers to accept his opinions and his nomination for products.
- The results indicate the main reasons that affect the development of the relationship between the influencer and his followers. The more the influencer has a high ability to fulfill the needs of his followers in an ideal and efficient manner, the more his followers realize that he is a source of trust and strong psychological bonds with him, and the more he arouses their interest in new ideas, expands their horizons and inspires them to discover new things, the easier it is for his followers to realize that he is the type of person they want to be like.

There are many sources of competitive advantage for the institution, the most important of which is creativity, where the increase in the number of institutions that provide products and services with similar characteristics has led to an escalation of institutions' interest in creativity and focus on it to the point where it is considered a minimum competitive advantage, and the ability to innovate has become a renewed source of competitive advantage

Institutions build their competitive advantage when they are innovate and take steps that enable them to gain a decisive advantage over their competitors to attract the attention of recipients, and the ways and means adopted by institutions to achieve creativity are different, such as creating new and more quality products, or producing at the lowest costs or focusing on an innovative and unique marketing and advertising strategy, regardless of the way the organization takes to build its competitive advantage, the recipient must feel the value of the organization compared to competitors, and relying on influencer marketing in the marketing campaign is translated into a distinct value for the organization.

**Research results:**

Through the theoretical framework, the analytical study and the results of the questionnaire, we can conclude that:

- The influencer plays a very important role in pushing the recipient to associate with the product for his ability to communicate with a specific target group in an innovative and smooth manner that does not cause boredom, and this is what drives institutions to turn to influencers to advertise products as the influencer is a credible and trusting personality for the target group.
- The influencer interacts with his followers through one or more social media means by providing attractive visual content and providing videos or short stories or what suits the nature of the target group and serves the advertising idea.
- The impact of the content of the influencer's advertising message depends on the nature of the target group and on the suitability of the content of the advertising message to their interests and desires.
- The main reason for resorting to influencer marketing on social media is the mutual trust between the influencer and his followers, which increases the opportunity to create a competitive advantage for organizations where advertising messages are integrated into their lifestyle, experiences and uses, and explain their benefits and effectiveness, as it is the most effective marketing means for recipients.

**Research recommendations:**

- Institutions must pay attention to influencer marketing and realize the extent of its effectiveness in influencing and employing it to build and enhance its competitive advantages and create a positive mental image of it among the target group according to a well-formed marketing plan.
- You must take advantage of the advantages of social media to serve the objectives of the institution and announce its products through the latest methods and means that attract the attention of the recipient.
- The necessity of choosing the influencer that corresponds to the identity of the institution and expresses the nature of the advertised products and is flexible in interacting with the target group and responding to their inquiries tactfully to ensure the credibility and effectiveness of the advertisement.
- The need to build a strong and solid relationship with influencers to ensure the success of the following marketing campaigns on social media, in addition to developing plans to ensure that influencers are integrated into marketing methods so that they can build good and lasting relationships with the target group.
- It is necessary to adhere to the legislation and laws enacted by the Federal Trade Commission to regulate the relationship between the influencer and the institution and to provide control mechanisms so that marketing does not affect the recipient negatively by exposing him to misleading advertising.
- Encouraging more research and studies on the effectiveness of influencer marketing, as it is a relatively new type of marketing, which is expected to be more employed in the future due to the stability of its effectiveness in influencing.

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