

THE IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA AND INFLUENCERS ON MARKETING STRATEGY AND BRAND ENGAGEMENT

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ABSTRACT

The growth of social media has revolutionized the marketing landscape, empowering businesses to reach wider audiences and fostering more authentic connections with consumers. This research paper explores the profound impact of social media and influencer marketing on modern marketing strategies, examining how brands can leverage these powerful platforms to enhance brand engagement, build trust, and drive positive business outcomes. The paper delves into the key factors contributing to the success of influencer-driven campaigns, the evolving role of social media in shaping consumer behavior and brand perception, and the strategic considerations for integrating social media and influencer marketing into holistic marketing plans. Through a comprehensive analysis of industry trends, case studies, and academic research, this paper provides valuable insights for marketing professionals, brand managers, and scholars seeking to understand the transformative power of social media and influencer marketing in the digital age.

Keywords: Social Media Marketing, Influencer Marketing, Brand Engagement, Consumer Behavior, Marketing Strategy

1. INTRODUCTION

In today's digital era, social media has become one of the most influential platforms in the world of marketing. Platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and YouTube allow brands to engage with consumers in a more personal and direct way. Research shows that marketing activities through social media have a significant positive influence on brand loyalty, brand awareness, brand trust, and brand love. This suggests that brands that are active on social media can build closer relationships with customers, which in turn can increase consumer loyalty and engagement. Social media also facilitates the rapid dissemination of information and a wide reach. (Purwianti & Fionna, 2023)

By using influencer marketing, brands can reach a larger audience at a lower cost compared to traditional marketing methods. A study compared traditional marketing strategies to influencer marketing and found that influencer marketing is more effective in influencing buying interest in

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young audiences. This shows that influencers can serve as a bridge between brands and consumers, creating more relevant and engaging communication. Further, social media allows brands to share relevant content and get feedback in real-time. (Cindy Firstiananda Deka & Alifah Niser, 2023)

In this context, research shows that social media marketing not only increases brand awareness but also influences purchasing decisions through e-WOM (electronic word-of-mouth). Thus, brands can leverage feedback from consumers to adjust their marketing strategies, which can ultimately increase customer satisfaction and loyalty. In addition, the use of live features on apps like TikTok has become a new trend in digital marketing. Influencers who use this feature can interact directly with their audience, creating a more authentic and engaging experience. This shows that social media not only serves as a platform for promotion, but also as a space to build community and deeper interactions between brands and consumers. (Gabriella et al., 2022) (Jentayu & Monang, 2023)

The increasing popularity of social media has given rise to a new phenomenon in the world of marketing, namely influencer marketing. An influencer is an individual who has a loyal following on social media and is considered an expert or opinion leader in a particular field. Brands are increasingly aware of the potential of influencers to help them reach a specific audience and build trust among their followers. By leveraging influencers' influence and credibility, brands can develop marketing campaigns that are more effective and relevant to consumers (Rolando, 2025c, 2025f, 2025b; Setiawan & Rolando, 2025; Winata & Rolando, 2025).

The increasing popularity of social media has given rise to a new phenomenon in the world of marketing, namely influencer marketing. An influencer is an individual who has a loyal following on social media and is considered an expert or opinion leader in a particular field. Brands are increasingly aware of the potential of influencers to help them reach a specific audience and build trust among their followers. Research shows that influencer marketing can increase the effectiveness of marketing campaigns in a way that is more relevant and appealing to consumers. By leveraging influencers' influence and credibility, brands can develop more effective marketing campaigns. Influencers have the ability to create engaging and authentic content, which can increase consumer interest in the product or service being promoted. A study shows that creative advertising content and influencer characteristics contribute positively to the brand selection of a product. (Zelia & Moch Sabur, 2023) (Varlina et al., 2023)

This shows that collaboration between brands and influencers can yield better results compared to traditional marketing strategies. Furthermore, research also shows that the combination of traditional marketing and influencer marketing can create a responsive strategy for young audiences. Influencer marketing has a significant impact on buying interest and advertising effectiveness among the younger generation. This shows that influencers not only serve as a bridge between brands and consumers, but also as agents of change in the way consumers interact with brands. In addition, influencer marketing also plays an important role in building customer loyalty. Marketing activities through social media can increase brand awareness, brand trust, and brand love, all of which contribute to customer loyalty. (Cindy Firstiananda Deka & Alifah Niser, 2023) (Purwianti & Fionna, 2023)

Thus, influencers can help brands to not only reach new audiences but also maintain strong relationships with existing customers. In this context, the use of live features on platforms such as TikTok further strengthens the role of influencers in marketing. Influencers who use this feature can interact directly with their audience, creating a more authentic and engaging experience. This shows that social media not only serves as a platform for promotion, but also as a space to build community and deeper interactions between brands and consumers. (Jentayu & Monang, 2023)

While influencer marketing has grown rapidly in recent years, this landscape continues to evolve rapidly. In choosing the right influencers, brands are now paying more attention to the alignment of brand values with the profiles and content shared by influencers, as well as their ability to reach target audiences that are in line with the brand's marketing strategy. In addition, brands are

also increasingly paying attention to transparency and ethical issues in partnerships with influencers, such as clear disclosures about sponsored content (Rolando, 2024b, 2025d, 2025a; Wigayha & Rolando, 2024, 2025).

In recent years, influencer marketing has grown rapidly and has become one of the most effective marketing strategies. However, this landscape continues to evolve rapidly, prompting brands to be more selective in choosing the right influencers. Brands are now paying more attention to the alignment of brand values with the profiles and content shared by influencers. Research shows that alignment between brand and influencer values can increase consumer trust and the effectiveness of marketing campaigns. This shows that the right selection of influencers depends not only on the number of followers, but also on their relevance and credibility in the eyes of the target audience. In addition, brands are increasingly paying attention to transparency and ethical issues in partnerships with influencers. (Zelia & Moch Sabur, 2023)

Clear disclosure of sponsored content becomes critical to maintaining consumer trust. Research shows that transparency in marketing communications, including advertising disclosures, can influence consumers' perception of brands and increase their loyalty. As such, brands that are committed to operating ethically and transparently in partnership with influencers will be more likely to build long-term relationships with their customers. Brands are also starting to realize the importance of influencers' ability to reach a target audience that fits their marketing strategy. Influencers who have a relevant audience can help brands to achieve their marketing goals more effectively. (Purwianti & Fionna, 2023)

A study shows that influencer marketing has a significant impact on buying interest among young audiences, especially when the influencer is considered authentic and engages personally with his or her followers. This shows that influencer engagement and authenticity are key in creating a successful marketing campaign. Furthermore, research also shows that the use of social media and influencer marketing can improve product purchase decisions, especially among the younger generation. By leveraging platforms like TikTok, brands can reach a wider audience and interact with them directly, creating a more engaging and relevant experience. This suggests that brands must continue to adapt to changes in consumer behavior and leverage technology to improve the effectiveness of their campaigns. (Cindy Firstiananda Deka & Alifah Niser, 2023) (Varlina et al., 2023)

To effectively harness the potential of influencer marketing, brands need to develop strategies that are integrated with clear marketing goals. This involves several important steps, including the evaluation and selection of appropriate influencers, the development of relevant and engaging content, and the measurement of campaign impact. Research shows that a combination of traditional marketing and influencer marketing can create a responsive strategy, especially for young audiences. (Cindy Firstiananda Deka & Alifah Niser, 2023)

Thus, the selection of the right influencers, who have a value alignment with the brand, is essential to achieve marketing goals. In addition, the development of relevant and engaging content is also a key factor in the success of influencer marketing campaigns. Authentic and engaging content can increase audience engagement and drive buying interest. A study shows that the use of influencers in advertising, especially on platforms like YouTube, can significantly influence product purchase decisions among younger generations. (Mulyono & Rolando, 2025; Rolando & Chondro, 2025; Varlina et al., 2023; Zahran & Rolando, 2025)

This implies that the content produced by influencers should be tailored to the preferences and needs of the target audience to achieve optimal results. Measuring the impact of campaigns is also crucial for evaluating the effectiveness of influencer marketing strategies. Brands need to establish clear metrics to measure campaign success, such as increased brand awareness, audience engagement, and sales conversions. Research shows that marketing activities through social media have a significant positive influence on brand loyalty, which can be measured through various

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indicators. Thus, proper measurement can help brands to understand the impact of their campaigns and make the necessary adjustments to improve results in the future. (Rolando, 2024a, 2025e; Zelia & Moch Sabur, 2023)

Furthermore, building transparent and mutually beneficial relationships with influencers is also an important aspect of influencer marketing. Transparency in partnerships, including clear disclosure of sponsored content, can help build trust among audiences. Research shows that consumers' trust in brands can be influenced by how brands communicate and interact with influencers. Therefore, brands that are committed to operating ethically and transparently in their partnerships with influencers will be more likely to build long-term relationships with customers. (Purwianti & Fionna, 2023)

In developing an effective marketing strategy on social media, brands must focus on creating engaging content and engaging with the audience. Content that is engaging, relevant, and tailored to the platform can help brands build stronger relationships with consumers. Research shows that the use of different types of content, such as photos, videos, infographics, or user-generated content, can increase consumer buying interest. By leveraging a variety of content formats, brands can capture the attention of their audiences and drive higher engagement. (Varlina et al., 2023)

One of the important aspects of social media marketing is the ability to create authentic and engaging content. Relevant and engaging content can increase audience engagement and encourage deeper engagement. A study shows that marketing activities through social media have a significant positive influence on customer loyalty, especially when the content presented matches the audience's preferences. This shows that brands need to understand their audience and create content that suits their needs and expectations. (Zelia & Moch Sabur, 2023)

In addition, influencer marketing also plays an important role in content strategy on social media. Influencers can help brands reach a wider audience and create more engaging content. Research shows that the combination of traditional marketing and influencer marketing can create a responsive strategy for young audiences. (Cindy Firstiananda Deka & Alifah Niser, 2023)

By leveraging influencers, brands can increase the visibility and appeal of their content, as well as build stronger relationships with consumers. Measuring the impact of the content created is also very important. Brands need to establish clear metrics to evaluate the effectiveness of the content they create. Research shows that effective social media marketing activities can increase brand awareness and consumer purchasing decisions. Thus, proper measurement can help brands understand the impact of their content and make the necessary adjustments to improve future results. (Gabriella et al., 2022)

In addition to producing effective content, brands also need to consider the right time to post content and monitor their audience's response. Research shows that the timing and frequency of posts can affect audience engagement and the effectiveness of marketing campaigns on social media. By posting at the optimal time, brands can increase the visibility of their content and drive more engagement from the audience. (Cindy Firstiananda Deka & Alifah Niser, 2023)

Therefore, analysis of audience behavior and engagement patterns is essential in formulating a successful content strategy. Monitoring audience responses is also a crucial aspect of marketing strategies on social media. By using analytics tools, brands can track engagement metrics, such as the number of likes, comments, and shares, and understand how audiences respond to the content they create.

Research shows that marketing activities through social media have a significant positive influence on customer loyalty, which can be measured through various engagement indicators. Thus, careful monitoring allows brands to make the necessary adjustments in their strategies, thereby increasing the impact of their social content. Further, brands should also be prepared to make adjustments based on the feedback received from the audience. (Zelia & Moch Sabur, 2023)

Content that doesn't get the expected response can be analyzed to understand what's less appealing to the audience. Research shows that creative and relevant content is essential in capturing consumers' attention and driving engagement. Therefore, brands need to continuously adapt and optimize their content based on audience responses to achieve better results. (Varlina et al., 2023)

Develop arguments that are contrary to the views presented in this paper. While social media and influencers have great potential in marketing strategies, there are also concerns and challenges to consider. Criticisms that may be raised include issues of privacy, transparency, and authenticity of the relationship between brands and influencers. Additionally, an over-reliance on social media and influencers can distract from more traditional and proven effective marketing strategies. A balanced and integrated approach is needed to achieve optimal marketing results.

The research is important to generate deeper insights into the impact of social media and influencers on marketing strategies. Although this article focuses on positive impacts, further study is needed to explore the challenges and risks that may arise from inadequate use of social media and influencers.

The aim of this research is to provide a more comprehensive understanding of this topic and help brands create balanced and effective marketing strategies in today's digital age.

Research question:

1. What are some of the concerns and challenges in using social media and influencers in marketing strategies?
2. How can brands create a balanced approach between leveraging social media/influencers and traditional marketing strategies?
3. What are the long-term impacts of over-reliance on social media and influencers in marketing strategies?

The significance of the research, providing a more comprehensive insight into the potential and risks of using social media and influencers in marketing, helps brands create an integrated and balanced marketing strategy in today's digital age, identifying best practices and models that brands can adopt in managing relationships with influencers effectively and transparently.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

For this study, we will conduct a comprehensive systematic review by collecting and analyzing literature related to social media topics, influencer marketing, and marketing strategies. We will conduct an in-depth study to gain a broader understanding of the latest issues and trends in the use of social media and influencers in marketing strategies.

Research sources will be obtained from various academic databases, including the Publish or Perish database, which will include a series of qualitative and quantitative studies. Its search keywords will include "Social Media", "Influencer Marketing", "Brand Engagement", "Marketing Strategy", and "Social Media Marketing", with a target to collect at least 634 relevant documents.

Search results will be filtered based on specific inclusion and exclusion criteria, such as the publication time range from 2019 to 2024 is currently 200. The selected literature must also be relevant to the main topic of the study, covering areas such as "Social Media", "Influencer Marketing", and "Brand Engagement" with a total search of 200 documents. This screening process will ensure that only the most relevant and up-to-date documents will be used in subsequent analysis.

The final step includes assessing the quality of the selected research using standard criteria, such as the relevance and rigor of the research design, data collection methods, and analysis techniques. After screening, abstracts, and full reading of 200 documents, 45 documents met the inclusion criteria and were included in the synthesis.

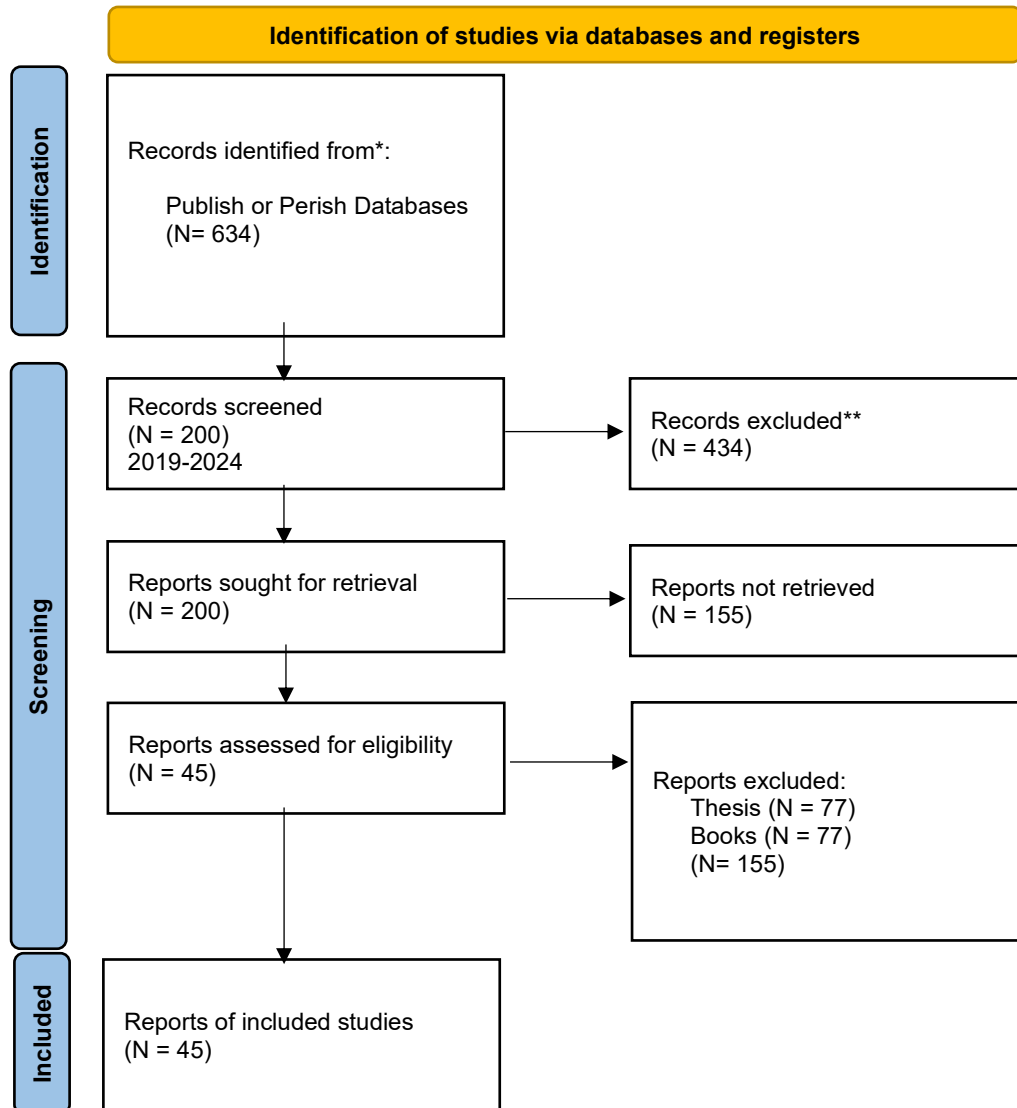


Figure 1. PRISMA Flowchart of selected identification and studies

The data extraction and structuring process will be developed based on the PRISMA checklist, which will include information about the author, year of publication, title, objectives, methodology, key findings, and implications for each literature source analyzed. The data synthesis process will utilize thematic analysis to identify key themes emerging from the collective literature. Through this approach, I will seek to generate a comprehensive understanding of how social media and influencer marketing affect brand marketing and engagement strategies.(Eka et al., 2024)

After gathering the appropriate literature, I will conduct an in-depth analysis of the content, methodology, and findings of the studies. I will identify the main themes, patterns, and insights that emerge from this body of literature. The final stage of this systematic review will include a synthesis of the findings and a discussion of the practical and theoretical implications of this study. I hope that the results of this research will make an important contribution to academics, marketing professionals, and brands interested in navigating this dynamic digital marketing landscape.

The criteria for assessing the quality of the research will include the relevance and novelty of the topics explored in this study. The topic of social media and influencer marketing continues to evolve rapidly, so a recent and comprehensive study is indispensable to provide an in-depth understanding of the potential and challenges of leveraging these channels. This research focuses on the current issues faced by brands in implementing a balanced marketing strategy by combining the use of social media and influencers. This topic is particularly relevant for marketing practitioners and academics who want to explore best practices in navigating the ever-evolving digital marketing landscape. As well as the challenges that need to be considered to maximize the results of investment in social media and influencer marketing.

The criteria for exclusion of the types of documents to be considered for this systematic review include textbooks, editorials, and presentation materials, which tend to be inadequate to achieve comprehensive research objectives. Such documents typically do not provide the depth of analysis and empirical insights needed for high-quality, systematic reviews.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

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| Comparison of Strategies Cindy Firs +14 Manuhara Journal: Research Center for Management and Business Sciences Manuhara- Vol.2,+No.1+Januari+2024+hal+279- 287.pdf 2023 · 0 quotes | - To compare how influencer marketing and traditional marketing strategies influence young audiences' purchase intention | - Analyzing previous research findings through a qualitative lens - Emphasizing the meaning and context of the existing literature - Connecting the literature review with theoretical analysis - Building on and developing insights from previous studies |
| Comparison of Strategies Cindy Firs +14 Manuhara Journal: Research Center for Management and Business Sciences Manuhara- Vol.2,+No.1+Januari+2024+hal+279- 287.pdf 2023 · 0 quotes | - To compare how influencer marketing and traditional marketing strategies influence young audiences' purchase intention | - Analyzing previous research findings through a qualitative lens - Emphasizing the meaning and context of the existing literature - Connecting the literature review with theoretical analysis - Building on and developing insights from previous studies |

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| <p>Analysis of the Utilization of Social Media and Mega Influencers on the Brand Selection of a Product Vivi Varlina +5 Eligible : Journal of Social Sciences No+(4)+hal.+193-208+Vivi+Varlina.pdf 2023 · 1 quote</p> | <p>- Examine the influence of social media (specifically YouTube ads) on purchasing decisions for Pantene products among Generation Z (ages 18-24) - Examine the influence of influencer marketing (specifically using Keanu Angelo as a mega influencer) on purchasing decisions for Pantene products among Generation Z</p> | <p>- Using inferential statistics to analyze relationships between variables - Collecting data through a survey of 100 respondents from Generation Z (ages 18-24) across Indonesia - Setting a 10% standard error due to the diverse characteristics of the sample - Using a questionnaire as the data collection instrument, measuring YouTube ad exposure (IY), influencer marketing (IM), and purchase decision (Y) using a Likert scale</p> |
| <p>ANALYSIS OF INFLUENCER MARKETING COMMUNICATION IN THE USE OF LIVE FEATURES ON Jentayu Tiktok Application +3 Indonesian Journal : Informatics and Communication Management 343-Article Text-1419-1-10-20230718.pdf 2023 · 1 quote</p> | <p>The study objective is to analyze the influencer marketing communication methods used on the TikTok live feature to attract customers for their businesses.</p> | <p>The methodology used in the study is a descriptive research approach, which aims to obtain accurate understanding through interpretation of the existing problems and situations in the community, such as relationships, activities, settings, and phenomena involved in the process. The researchers specifically analyzed the communication in influencer marketing through the use of the live feature on the TikTok application.</p> |
| <p>THE EFFECT OF SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING ACTIVITIES ON CUSTOMER LOYALTY Zeyna Zelia +1 Trisakti Economic Journal 107+179928.pdf 2023 · 1 quote</p> | <p>- Analyze the influence of social media marketing activities on customer loyalty - Analyze the influence of social media marketing activities on customer loyalty through the customer equity drivers (CED) of value equity, brand equity, and relationship equity</p> | <p>- Hypothesis testing research design - Survey questionnaire for data collection - Non-probability purposive sampling, targeting Instagram users who have accessed the Tokopedia Instagram account and shopped on the Tokopedia platform - Confirmatory</p> |

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| | | factor analysis (CFA) within a structural equation modeling (SEM) framework, using the AMOS software, to test the validity of the research items |
| Analysis of the influence of social media marketing activity on brand loyalty by mediating brand awareness, brand trust, and brand love JMSAB 373 Lily Purwianti +1 1105-Article Text-4238-1-10-20231211.pdf Unknown Quotes | - To evaluate the effect of social media marketing activity on brand loyalty - To evaluate the mediating effects of brand awareness, brand trust, and brand love on the relationship between social media marketing activity and brand loyalty | - Purposive sampling technique to select the sample of fast fashion brand fans/users in Batam City - Online questionnaire data collection distributed via social media (Instagram, WhatsApp, Line) - Partial Least Squares (PLS) method for data analysis using Smart PLS software - Minimum sample size of 240 respondents determined by multiplying the number of questions by 10, with 260 respondents surveyed to avoid invalid data |
| THE INFLUENCE OF SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING, AND E-WOM ON PURCHASE DECISIONS THROUGH BRAND AWARENESS AS MEDIATION AT THE JANJI JIWA COFFEE SHOP IN SURABAYA Tabytha Prima +6 Scientific Journal of Management Students : JUMMA 3946-10380-1-PB.pdf 2022 · 7 quotes | - To analyze and examine the effect of social media marketing on purchasing decisions - To analyze and examine the effect of e-wom on purchasing decisions - To analyze and examine the effect of brand awareness as a mediator between social media marketing/e-wom and purchasing decisions | The study used a quantitative associative research approach, with a survey method using a questionnaire as the data collection tool and primary data sources. The data analysis was conducted using the Smart-PLS 3.0 software. The population was the loyal customers of Janji Jiwa Coffee Shop in Surabaya, and the sample size was 150 respondents, selected using purposive sampling with specific criteria. |

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Table 1. Result Comparison

3.1 Yield and Optimize Social Media Strategies for Maximum Impact

The findings from this systematic review show that social media and influencer marketing have become very powerful marketing tools and can have a significant impact on brand engagement and marketing results. The use of social media and influencers can help brands reach a wider reach, increase brand awareness, and drive deeper consumer engagement.

In today's digital age, marketing strategies through social media have become an essential component in building customer loyalty and influencing purchasing decisions. Various studies show that marketing activities on social media can increase brand loyalty, which is mediated by factors such as brand awareness, brand trust, and brand love.

Purwianti emphasized that brand awareness plays a significant mediating variable in the relationship between social media marketing activities and brand loyalty. This research shows that when consumers have a high awareness of a brand, they tend to be more loyal, which in turn benefits the company in terms of sales. (Purwianti & Fionna, 2023)

In addition, Zelia researched the influence of social media marketing activities on customer loyalty through customer equity drivers, which include value equity, brand equity, and relationship equity. This study uses Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) analysis in the Structural Equation Model (SEM), which shows that a structured approach to analyzing data can provide deeper insights into how social media affects customer loyalty. The results of this study are in line with Purwianti's findings, which emphasize the importance of brand equity in building customer loyalty. The use of influencer marketing is also one of the increasingly popular strategies in social media marketing. (Zelia & Moch Sabur, 2023)

Varlina points out that the use of influencer marketing, especially on platforms like YouTube, can significantly influence purchasing decisions, especially among the younger generation. This research highlights that influencer engagement can create an emotional bond between consumers and brands, which contributes to increased buying interest. (Varlina et al., 2023)

This is reinforced by Deka's research, which found that a combination of traditional marketing strategies and marketing through influencers can create a responsive and effective approach to capture the attention of young audiences. (Cindy Firstiananda Deka & Alifah Niser, 2023)

Gabriella et al. It also examines the influence of social media and electronic word of mouth (e-WOM) on purchase decisions, with brand awareness as a mediating variable. This research shows that e-WOM can amplify the influence of social media marketing by increasing brand awareness, which ultimately influences consumer purchasing decisions. This suggests that strategies that integrate e-WOM with social media marketing activities can have a greater impact. (Gabriella et al., 2022)

Finally, Jentayu highlighted the use of live features on the TikTok application by influencers as an effective marketing communication tool. This research shows that the use of live features not only increases interaction with the audience but also helps in building a strong personal branding. This shows that innovations in the use of social media platforms can increase the effectiveness of marketing strategies. (Jentayu & Monang, 2023)

In an effort to optimize social media marketing strategies and achieve maximum impact, a number of studies have been conducted that highlight various factors that influence purchasing decisions and customer loyalty. These studies show that elements such as brand awareness, influencer marketing, and electronic word of mouth (e-WOM) play an important role in shaping consumer behavior.

Gabriella et al. conducted a study that analyzed the influence of social media marketing and e-WOM on purchase decisions, with brand awareness as a mediating variable. This research was conducted at the Janji Jiwa Coffee Shop in Surabaya and involved 150 respondents. The results of

the study show that social media marketing and e-WOM have a significant influence on purchase decisions, where brand awareness serves as a bridge that connects the two variables. These findings underscore the importance of building brand awareness through marketing activities on social media to improve consumer purchasing decisions. (Gabriella et al., 2022)

Furthermore, Purwianti researched the influence of social media marketing activities on brand loyalty by mediating brand awareness, brand trust, and brand love. This study shows that brand awareness serves as a mediating variable that strengthens the relationship between social media marketing activities and brand loyalty. The results of this study show that companies that manage to build strong brand awareness through social media are more likely to gain high customer loyalty, which in turn can increase sales. (Purwianti & Fionna, 2023)

Deka also examines the comparison between traditional marketing strategies and influencer marketing in influencing buying interest in young audiences. This research shows that influencer marketing can build trust and accelerate consumer responses, making it an effective strategy in attracting the attention of young audiences. With a large following on social media, influencers can significantly influence consumer buying intent, suggesting that the use of influencers in marketing strategies can increase the desired impact. (Cindy Firstiananda Deka & Alifah Niser, 2023)

Zelia conducted a study that aimed to analyze the influence of social media marketing activities on customer loyalty through customer equity drivers. This study found that marketing activities on social media have a positive effect on customer loyalty, with brand equity and relationship equity as significant driving factors. (Zelia & Moch Sabur, 2023)

Jentayu adds a new dimension by analyzing the use of live features on the TikTok application by influencers. This research shows that live features can increase interaction with audiences and help in building strong personal branding. This shows that innovations in the use of social media platforms can increase the effectiveness of marketing strategies. (Jentayu & Monang, 2023)

Finally, Varlina researched the use of social media and mega influencers in influencing brand selection. This research shows that elements such as authenticity and brand fit are crucial in building strong relationships between influencers and brands, which in turn can influence consumer purchasing decisions. (Varlina et al., 2023)

Overall, the results of this study show that to optimize social media marketing strategies, it is important to consider various mediating factors such as brand awareness and brand equity. Additionally, leveraging influencer marketing and platform innovation can help achieve maximum impact. The integration of social media marketing strategies with activities such as e-WOM and the use of innovative features can provide more effective results in attracting and retaining consumers. By developing a comprehensive approach and leveraging a variety of tools and strategies, companies can increase the effectiveness of their social media marketing campaigns and strengthen relationships with consumers.

Furthermore, Jentayu highlighted the use of live features on the TikTok application by influencers as an effective marketing communication tool. The study found that the use of live features not only improves audience interaction but also helps build strong personal branding. This shows that innovation in the use of social media platforms can increase the effectiveness of marketing strategies.

To optimize social media marketing strategies and achieve maximum impact, various studies have been conducted that highlight various factors that influence purchasing decisions and customer loyalty. These studies show that elements such as brand awareness, influencer marketing, and electronic word-of-mouth information play a crucial role in shaping consumer behavior.

The research findings presented in this paper highlight the important role of social media marketing and influencer marketing in shaping consumer behavior and brand engagement. By integrating social media marketing strategies, e-WOM, and influencer marketing, companies can improve the effectiveness of their marketing campaigns and strengthen relationships with consumers.

The study showed a significant impact of social media marketing and electronic word-of-mouth (e-WOM) promotion on purchase decisions, with brand awareness serving as a mediating variable. This underscores the importance of building strong brand awareness through social media marketing activities to drive increased consumer purchases.

Furthermore, the study explores the influence of social media marketing activities on brand loyalty, which is mediated by brand awareness, brand trust, and brand love. The results show that utilizing social media to foster strong brand awareness can lead to higher customer loyalty, which ultimately increases sales.

The paper also examines the comparative effectiveness of traditional marketing strategies and influencer marketing in attracting young audiences. Influencer marketing has proven to be an effective strategy in building trust and accelerating consumer responses, making it a powerful approach to capture the attention of younger audiences. Influencers with sizable social media followers can significantly influence consumer purchase intent, thus emphasizing the importance of incorporating influencer marketing into marketing strategies.

In addition to its impact on purchasing decisions and loyalty, the study also investigated the role of social media marketing activities in driving customer equity drivers, such as brand equity and relationship equity. These findings suggest that social media marketing has a positive effect on customer loyalty, and this equity driver plays an important mediating role.

In addition, the study investigated the innovative use of live features on social media platforms such as TikTok by influencers. The study revealed that live features can increase audience engagement and support the development of strong personal branding, suggesting that the use of innovative platforms can increase the effectiveness of marketing strategies.

In conclusion, this collective research emphasizes the need for a comprehensive and integrated approach to social media marketing, leveraging factors such as brand awareness, influencer partnerships, and innovative platform features to maximize impact and strengthen consumer-brand relationships. By adapting to evolving social media trends and leveraging the power of emerging tools and strategies, companies can unlock the full potential of their social media marketing campaigns and forge deeper connections with their target audiences.

3.2 The Rise of Micro-Influencers and Niche Audiences

While celebrity endorsements and sponsorships from prominent influencers can be effective, research shows that micro-influencers with smaller but more engaged followers may be even more impactful for certain brands and campaigns. Micro-influencers with more focused and emotionally engaged followers can build a deeper connection with their audience, thus driving higher levels of trust and engagement. Additionally, micro-influencers tend to be more accessible and affordable in cost compared to high-end influencers, thus allowing brands to reach a wider market segment effectively.

In the context of "The Rise of Micro-Influencers and Niche Audiences," recent research shows that micro-influencers have a significant influence on digital marketing, especially in reaching more segmented and niche audiences. Micro-influencers, who typically have between 1,000 to 100,000 followers, are often considered more authentic and can build a closer relationship with their audience compared to large influencers.

Deka examines the comparison between traditional marketing strategies and influencer marketing, focusing on their influence on young consumers' buying interest. This research shows that influencer marketing, especially those involving micro-influencers, can increase trust and speed up purchasing decisions. Micro-influencers often have higher interactions with their followers, which allows them to influence purchasing decisions more effectively. (Cindy Firstiananda Deka & Alifah Niser, 2023)

Research by Clarinta also supports these findings by showing that the use of influencers in e-marketing strategies can increase the credibility and appeal of marketing messages. In the case

study of the Miniletics brand, influencers who are considered experts in their field can amplify the marketing message, which is crucial in capturing the attention of niche audiences. (Laisya Kezia Clarinta & Rusdi Hidayat, 2024)

Jentayu highlighted the use of live features on the TikTok app by influencers, which shows that micro-influencers can leverage this platform to interact directly with their audience. These interactions not only increase engagement but also help in building a strong personal branding, which is crucial in attracting niche audiences. (Jentayu & Monang, 2023)

Maharani researched the content strategies used by creators on Instagram to increase brand engagement. This research shows that creators who are able to present content with a creative approach, such as humor and satire, can build stronger relationships with their audiences. This suggests that micro-influencers, with a more personalized and creative approach, can be more effective in reaching niche audiences. (Maharani & Ardhanariswar, 2024)

Varlina added that the use of social media and mega influencers also affects brand selection. This research shows that elements such as authenticity and brand fit are crucial in building strong relationships between influencers and brands, which in turn can influence consumer purchasing decisions. Micro-influencers are often better able to display this authenticity, which makes them more appealing to niche audiences. (Varlina et al., 2023)

Purwianti and Zelia also highlighted the importance of brand awareness and customer loyalty in the context of social media marketing. These studies show that micro-influencers can help build strong brand awareness among niche audiences, which in turn can increase customer loyalty. (Purwianti & Fionna, 2023)(Zelia & Moch Sabur, 2023)

Overall, the results of this study show that micro-influencers have great potential in digital marketing strategies, especially in reaching niche audiences in a more authentic, efficient, and effective way. The use of micro-influencers can help brands create a stronger and more personal connection with their target consumers, thereby increasing the effectiveness of their overall marketing campaigns.

3.3 Ethical Considerations in Influencer Marketing

However, along with the growth of influencer marketing, there is also a growing concern regarding the ethical and transparency aspects of this practice. Research reveals that the lack of clear disclosure of the commercial relationship between brands and influencers can mislead consumers and lower trust.

In the context of influencer marketing, there are a number of ethical considerations that need to be taken into account to ensure that these practices are not only effective but also responsible. Research shows that the use of influencers in marketing strategies can bring ethical challenges, especially related to authenticity, transparency, and influence on audiences.

First, authenticity is one of the key aspects in influencer marketing. Deka emphasizes that personal engagement and authenticity are essential in influencer marketing. When influencers are perceived as inauthentic or only focus on financial gain, this can undermine the trust of the audience. Therefore, it is important for brands to choose influencers who truly reflect their values and products, as well as who have a genuine relationship with their followers. (Cindy Firstiananda Deka & Alifah Niser, 2023)

Furthermore, transparency in the relationship between brands and influencers is also a major concern. Clarinta points out that using influencers as experts in a particular field can increase the credibility of marketing messages. However, if this relationship is not clearly disclosed, consumers may feel cheated, which can damage the brand's reputation. Therefore, it is important for influencers to clearly express their partnership with brands, for example by using hashtags such as #ad or #sponsored. (Laisya Kezia Clarinta & Rusdi Hidayat, 2024)

Varlina highlighted that the use of social media and mega influencers must also consider the social impact of the message conveyed. Influencers have the power to influence public opinion and

consumer behavior, so they must be held accountable for the content they share. This includes considering how their messages might affect people's perceptions of certain issues, such as diversity, the environment, and mental health. (Varlina et al., 2023)

Maharani added that the content strategy used by creators must also consider ethics. In an effort to increase engagement, some creators may use controversial or provocative approaches, which can have a negative impact. Therefore, it's important for creators to strike a balance between grabbing attention and being responsible for their audience. (Maharani & Ardhanariswar, 2024)

Purwianti and Zelia also highlighted the importance of brand awareness and customer loyalty in the context of social media marketing. However, if the marketing strategy does not consider ethics, this can lead to unhealthy loyalty, where consumers feel trapped in a non-transparent or inauthentic relationship with the brand. (Purwianti & Fionna, 2023)(Zelia & Moch Sabur, 2023)

Finally, Jentayu points out that the use of live features on the TikTok application by influencers can increase interaction with the audience, but also bring ethical challenges. In this context, influencers must ensure that they are not only pursuing popularity, but also providing value and useful information to their followers. (Jentayu & Monang, 2023)

Overall, ethical considerations in influencer marketing are essential for building a healthy and sustainable relationship between brands and consumers. By paying attention to key aspects such as the authenticity of the relationship between influencers and brands, transparency in the disclosure of commercial partnerships, the social impact that content shared may cause, and the responsibility of influencers in creating informative and responsible content, brands and influencers can create marketing strategies that are not only effective in achieving business goals, but also ethical and socially responsible. By prioritizing marketing practices that uphold integrity and trust, brands and influencers can build stronger and more sustainable bonds with their consumers.

3.4 Harnessing the Power of User-Generated Content

In addition to using influencers in their digital marketing strategies, many brands have also leveraged user-generated content (UGC) as a valuable tool to strengthen brand engagement and build relationships. User-generated content (UGC) refers to various types of multimedia content, including photos, videos, reviews, testimonials, and stories created by consumers, not by companies or brands.

In the context of "Harnessing the Power of User-Generated Content (UGC)," research shows that user-generated content can be a highly effective tool in increasing brand engagement and influencing purchasing decisions. UGC not only creates a higher sense of engagement between brands and audiences, but also increases the trust and credibility of the brand in the eyes of consumers.

Maharani researched content creators' strategies on Instagram Reels and how they can increase brand engagement. This research shows that campaigns like #BerkahBersama not only succeed in attracting attention but also creating meaningful social movements. By utilizing creative approaches, including humor and satire, user-generated content can create closer interactions and stronger connections with audiences. (Maharani & Ardhanariswar, 2024)

Purwianti highlighted the importance of social media marketing activities in building brand loyalty. This study shows that brand awareness functions as a mediating variable in the influence of social media marketing activities on brand loyalty. UGC can contribute to increased brand awareness, which in turn can increase customer loyalty. When consumers see content generated by other users, they are more likely to feel connected to the brand and product. (Purwianti & Fionna, 2023)

Varlina also emphasized that the use of social media and influencer marketing can increase consumer buying interest. This research shows that user-generated content, especially those promoted by influencers, can influence purchasing decisions. Influencers who have a strong relationship with their audience can encourage users to create relevant and engaging content, which in turn can increase brand visibility. (Varlina et al., 2023)

Zelia conducted a study that aimed to analyze the influence of social media marketing activities on customer loyalty. This research shows that UGC can function as one of the drivers of customer equity, which includes value equity, brand equity, and relationship equity. By increasing engagement through UGC, brands can build stronger relationships with their customers. (Zelia & Moch Sabur, 2023)

Clarinta added that e-marketing strategies that utilize influencers can strengthen marketing messages by increasing credibility and appeal. UGC generated by users who feel connected to the brand can reinforce this message, creating a positive double effect on purchasing decisions. (Laisya Kezia Clarinta & Rusdi Hidayat, 2024)

Gabriella et al. Examining the influence of social media marketing and e-WOM on purchase decisions, with brand awareness as a mediating variable. This research shows that UGC can serve as a powerful form of e-WOM, which can increase brand awareness and influence consumer purchasing decisions. (Gabriella et al., 2022)

Deka highlights that authenticity and personal engagement are key aspects of influencer marketing. UGC generated by users who feel engaged with the brand can create a responsive and effective strategy in attracting the attention of young audiences. (Cindy Firstiananda Deka & Alifah Niser, 2023)

Finally, Jentayu pointed out that the use of live features on the TikTok application by influencers can increase interaction with the audience. User-generated content in this context can create a more interactive and engaging experience, which in turn can increase brand engagement. (Jentayu & Monang, 2023)

Overall, the results of this study show that harnessing the power of user-generated content can have a significant and multifaceted impact on marketing strategies. Not only can this increase customer engagement, trust, and loyalty, but it can also strengthen brand equity, drive brand awareness, and ultimately influence consumer purchasing decisions. By strategically integrating user-generated content into marketing initiatives, brands can create stronger and more meaningful relationships with their audiences, build a more credible reputation, and drive more positive business outcomes.

3.5 Leveraging Social Listening to Inform Marketing Decisions

In addition to using strategies that focus on user-generated content, many brands have also leveraged the "social listening" method to gain valuable insights that can shape their marketing strategies.

Social listening refers to the practice of monitoring and analyzing online conversations related to a particular brand, industry, or topic. By studying consumer feedback and preferences through social media, brands can gain a deeper understanding of their audience's needs, wants, and sentiments.

In the context of "Leveraging Social Listening to Inform Marketing Decisions," it's important to understand how listening to consumer voices through social media can provide valuable insights for marketing strategies. Social listening allows companies to collect and analyze data from various social media platforms to understand the sentiments, preferences, and needs of their audience. Research shows that this approach can improve the effectiveness of marketing campaigns and decision-making.

First, Deka emphasizes that understanding influencer influence can help companies develop more effective strategies and allocate resources wisely. By using social listening, companies can identify the influencers that are most relevant to their target audience and understand how audiences respond to the content they produce. This allows companies to tailor their messaging to better suit consumer expectations and needs. (Cindy Firstiananda Deka & Alifah Niser, 2023)

Furthermore, Clarinta shows that in the digital era, marketing strategies supported by influencers can be strengthened through social listening. By understanding how audiences interact

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with influencer content, companies can optimize their marketing messages to increase credibility and appeal. Social listening helps in identifying trends and topics that are hot among consumers, so that companies can respond quickly and relevantly. (Laisya Kezia Clarinta & Rusdi Hidayat, 2024)

Gabriella et al. Examining the influence of social media marketing and electronic word of mouth (e-WOM) on purchase decisions. This study shows that brand awareness built through social listening can function as a mediating variable in influencing purchase decisions. By monitoring conversations on social media, companies can identify opportunities to increase brand awareness and utilize e-WOM effectively. (Gabriella et al., 2022)

Purwianti also highlighted the importance of social media marketing activities in building brand loyalty. By using social listening, companies can understand the factors that affect customer loyalty, such as brand trust and brand love. The data obtained from social listening can be used to design more personalized and relevant campaigns, which in turn can increase customer loyalty. (Purwianti & Fionna, 2023)

Maharani researched content creators' strategies on Instagram and how they can increase brand engagement. This research shows that by following the SOME (Share, Optimize, Manage, Engage) model, creators can leverage insights from social listening to create content that is more engaging and in accordance with the needs of the audience. This shows that social listening is not only beneficial for companies, but also for content creators in understanding their audience. (Maharani & Ardhanariswar, 2024)

Jentayu added that the use of live features on the TikTok application by influencers can increase interaction with the audience. By leveraging social listening, influencers can understand what their audience wants and customize content in real-time, which can increase audience engagement and satisfaction. (Jentayu & Monang, 2023)

Varlina points out that creative advertising content and influencer characteristics contribute positively to brand selection. By using social listening, companies can identify the elements that appeal most to their audience and integrate them into their marketing strategy. (Varlina et al., 2023)

Finally, Zelia found that social media marketing activities have a positive influence on customer loyalty through customer equity drivers. By leveraging social listening, companies can better understand the factors that affect customer loyalty and design more effective strategies to retain customers. (Zelia & Moch Sabur, 2023)

Overall, the results of this study show that leveraging social listening can provide valuable insights for companies in informing marketing decisions, building more effective marketing strategies, increasing engagement with audiences, and building stronger and more meaningful relationships with their audiences. By using social listening, companies can better understand the needs, preferences, and sentiments of their audiences, and optimize marketing initiatives to achieve more positive business outcomes.

4. CONCLUSION

The research findings discussed in this paper highlight the significant impact of social media and influencers on marketing strategies and brand engagement. By leveraging social listening, companies can gain valuable insights into consumer preferences, sentiments, and behaviors, which can provide input in more effective decision-making and marketing campaigns. Social listening allows organizations to identify relevant influencers, optimize influencer-driven marketing strategies, increase brand awareness and loyalty, and foster stronger relationships with their target audiences.

Overall, strategic use of social listening can help businesses stay agile, responsive, and aligned with the evolving needs and expectations of consumers in the digital landscape. The limitations of this study include a focus on specific industries or geographic regions, and further

research is needed to examine the strategic application of social listening in different business environments.

Recommendations integrate social listening into the marketing decision-making process to gain deeper insights into audiences, preferences, and market trends and identify and work with influencers who best align with brand values and can effectively reach target audiences.

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