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THE INFLUENCE OF SOCIAL MEDIA INFLUENCER ON CONSUMER BUYING BEHAVIOUR-THE STUDY OF GEN Z

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ABSTRACT

In this study, we look at the increasing impact of social media influencers on Gen Z purchasing decisions. Influencers have become extremely effective marketing tools as social media platforms grow more and more essential to contemporary communication. With an emphasis on elements like relatability, trust, and the influence of user-generated content, this study investigates how influencer endorsements affect Gen Z purchase decisions. With the help of surveys, interviews, and a review of the literature, this study identifies important trends and insights in the behavior of Gen Z consumers, with important ramifications for brands and marketers.

INTRODUCTION

In the digital era that continues to broaden rapidly, the role of social media in shaping consumer behavior is increasingly more important. One aspect that has obtained incredible interest is the impact of social media influencers on consumer behavior. The effect of social media influencers on customer behavior is a subject of growing interest. Several researchers have documented the effect of social media influencers on client behavior. For example, take a look at the impact of social media influencers on generation Z online consumer behavior, where influencers have a sizable impact on online buying habits, specifically on platforms like Douyin (Liu,2023).

Consumer behavior describes the actions, viewpoints, and decisions people make when they buy and use goods and services. Numerous factors influence consumer behavior, including private ones (such as individual desires, options, and ideals), social components (including the influence of one's own family, friends, and society), in addition to contextual elements (such as past experiences and shopping

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conditions). Bognar (2019). Additionally, the use of external factors, in conjunction with marketing, income promotions, and have an impact on different people, combined with social influential people in the media.

Social media influencers have been quite prominent in recent years, especially with Gen Z and have shaped trends in lifestyle, technology, fashion, and beauty. Their followers view these influencers as reliable information sources since they have sizable fan bases on social media sites like Instagram, YouTube, and TikTok. Although influencers are frequently used in marketing campaigns, little is known about how they directly impact Gen Z purchasing decisions. This study aims to close that gap.

LITERATURE REVIEW

How individuals find and use information on travel has been greatly impacted by the emergence of social media, particularly with the rise of social media influencers (SMIs). SMIs are significant information sources that affect perceptions, feelings, and travel experiences significantly, as well as how passengers make decisions. Trust has a significant impact on consumers' willingness to purchase travel-related goods and services as well as their acceptance of content produced by SMIs. Although previous research has examined the impact of SMIs on travel intentions and purchase decisions, less attention has been paid to the factors influencing consumer interaction with SMI-generated content and the role of SMI-based trust throughout the customer journey.

To bridge this gap, the study uses a model based on the customer journey theory to examine the direct and indirect effects of SMI trust on each stage of the trip decision-making process. The findings demonstrate that consumer trust in SMIs positively affects a number of critical stages of the customer journey, including desire, information seeking, weighing options, making a purchase, satisfaction, and sharing experiences. However, the study also highlights the need for additional research on how SMIs affect customer decision-making across a range of demographic situations, as well as the effects of other factors including perceived behavioral control and service quality. Despite several limitations, such as sample size and sampling methodology, the study provides practitioners and destination.

Numerous factors, including as product selection, information search, consumption, and post-purchase pleasure, influence decisions on what to buy, according to the scientific literature on online consumer behavior. Despite the fact that there are numerous e-marketing sponsorship options available, influencers are the primary subject of this study due to their crucial role in the promotional

mix. The impact of social media influencers on customers and the sales of the products they promote are measured by metrics such as likes, comments, and discount code redemptions.

Customers prefer influencer content in the form of videos and photos with explanations, according to study, which implies that products that influencers advocate are more appealing and effective at advertising. Despite being aware of influencer agreements, consumers are nonetheless receptive to suggestions from influencers. To maximize the impact of influencer marketing, businesses should consider long-term projects and carefully select influencers who align with their target audience and company objectives. Additionally, integrating influencer marketing with other marketing techniques helps optimize the impact of promotions while cutting costs.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To investigate how Gen Z consumers' shopping decisions are influenced by social media influencers.
2. To examine the elements that appeal to Gen Z in Social Media influencer referrals.
3. To investigate how influencer endorsements affect brand loyalty over the long run.

RESEARCH METHODOLGY

This study will employ a mixed methods approach, combining quantitative and qualitative data, to better understand the effectiveness of social media users in the manufacturing sector.

RESEARCH THAT IS QUANTITATIVE

Survey: We will administer online surveys to a range of clients from different demographic groups. The inquiry will examine:

- How customers' perceptions of social media influencers impact their degree of trust.
- The effect of endorsements on consumer behavior and product trust.
- Highlighted content and features that are most relevant to consumers.

SOCIAL MEDIA DATA ANALYSIS

We'll collect and look at social media data related to marketing campaigns. This will include: • Monitoring interactions (likes, comments, shares) on social media posts that promote a particular business.• Below target influence, brand and consumer awareness can be measured using brand sentiment analysis. •The reach and impressions that excellent content produces allow us to evaluate the success of our marketing campaign

By analyzing large volumes of data, we can identify patterns and trends, understand how business operations impact product loyalty generally, and understand how customers behave toward influencers.

QUALITATIVE RESEARCH (CASE STUDY)

In addition to quantitative data, we will use qualitative research via case studies. This will include:
• Selecting case studies: We will pick profitable business plans that clearly demonstrate their impact on society and produce results. devotion to the caliber of a product.
• Publish material: Considering the impact type selected, the material created, and the overall message of the product, we will analyze the campaign's content.
• Document review: We'll look at press releases, company paperwork, teamwork reports, and other documents related to the study materials.

The case study provides a comprehensive analysis of specific strategies used in effective marketing to foster brand loyalty.

Case study

1) Fashion Nova and the Power of Social Media Influencers-In the current digital era, social media influencers can have a significant impact on consumer behavior and brand performance, as demonstrated by the Fashion Nova case study. By effectively engaging with its target audience, generating buzz about its products, and utilizing influencer marketing, Fashion Nova has achieved remarkable success in a fiercely competitive industry. As customers continue to turn to social media for fashion inspiration and shopping guidance, businesses like as Fashion Nova demonstrate the value of using influencers to boost engagement, establish credibility, and ultimately impact consumer choices.

2) Apple's iPhone Launch and Influencer Marketing-As seen by Apple's iPhone launches, influencer marketing is effective in the technology sector in influencing consumer behavior and increasing sales. Through strategic alliances with influencers, Apple uses the power of authority, credibility, and social proof to pique customers' interest, create anticipation, and influence their purchasing decisions. In order to maximize reach, engagement, and brand advocacy in a cutthroat market, influencer partnerships are essential for companies such as Apple. This is a result of consumers and tech enthusiasts looking to influencers for guidance and insights.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, research on the impact of social media influencers on consumer behavior demonstrates the critical role that influencers play in shaping customers' beliefs, preferences, and purchasing decisions. Numerous studies and case studies demonstrate that social media influencers have a great deal of influence over their followers, which raises engagement, brand awareness, and ultimately sales. The findings demonstrate the effectiveness of influencer marketing as a powerful instrument that aids businesses in connecting with their target market, building a reputation for their brand, and cultivating client loyalty. By using influencers' credibility and trust, brands may more successfully spread their marketing messages and reach a larger audience with greater impact.

The report also emphasizes how crucial it is that businesses carefully select influencers who align with their beliefs and have a strong rapport with their target market. Because customers are growing increasingly discerning and value-driven in their purchasing decisions, influencer relationships necessitate a high level of authenticity and trust.

The report states that in the digital age, influencer marketing is probably going to continue to play a big role in influencing consumer behavior. Businesses must adjust their marketing tactics to the changing social media landscape and changing consumer preferences in order to effectively harness.