

The Influence of Online Influencers on Consumer Purchase Intention

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ABSTRACT

With the development of information technology that shows no stopping point, it seems that social media appeared as an online platform that have been used by all marketers as their “Market media” to connect with consumers. Marketers are also discovered the broad impact and enormous potential of online influencers to promote brands and products and reach a wide audience, which is considered as one of effective marketing strategy in building consumer purchase intentions because many people trust credible online influencers, and influencers can shape consumer decision making, opinions, attitudes and behaviour. This type of research is a literature study that aims to determine the influence of online influencers on consumer purchase intentions. Hoping that marketers can understand how online influencers can shape consumer purchase intentions to apply these marketing strategies. The study results show that online influencers significantly impact the purchase intention of consumers or potential consumers, but marketers must choose the right platform to reach the right target consumers.

Keywords: Online Influencers, Purchase Intention, Consumer Purchase Intentions

1. INTRODUCTION

According to Campbell and Marks [1], more and more consumers are using wide network available for them on social media to get information about a product, and they will determine if the product is needed and compare whether the development of that brand is better than other brands before deciding to buy the product. As a result, many companies turn more of their marketing resources into this domain to reach a broad audience. According to Hall [3], to fully exploit the potential of social media for marketing purposes, a large part of their advertising budget goes to paying online influencers to promote their products. Furthermore, Brown et al. [1] said that purchase intention refers to the tendency of consumers to buy products and is a signal indicative of actual consumer shopping behaviour. According to Chang and Wildt [8], buying interest is formed under the assumption of pending transactions and is often considered an essential indicator of actual buying. Based on research on endorsements, Bergvist & Zhou [6] shows that consumers are more positively supported by brands and products endorsed by people they believe are credible. Influencer credibility plays an important role in consumer responses to brand attributes and purchase intentions. Thus, online influencers can drive consumer purchase intention motivation.

According to Brown and Hayes [5], online influencers are users on social media who have built credibility in a particular industry through their activities in this medium. According to Keller and Berry [9], they have access to a large consumer audience who follow their social media activity regularly and are generally considered trustworthy by other users. These influencers, found on most social media platforms (e.g. Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, Twitter and YouTube), use their extensive network to present themselves, including ideas, images, expertise, and often, sponsored products.

According to Harrison and Phua [2], influencers also influence consumer decision-making, opinions, attitudes, and behaviour. Thus, using them in marketing is considered a more effective strategy than many others. Since the research shows that influencers influence potential customers, companies use influencers as part of their marketing strategy and incorporate them into the business model by engaging them directly in content products. According to Beneke et al. [4], purchase intention represents the possibility that someone will buy a certain product based on the interaction between customer needs, attitudes and perceptions of the product or brand. Purchase intention can be considered consumer interest to buy a specific product. In other words, purchase intention

determines the strength of the consumer's willingness to accept.

According to Hsu [8], it is essential to recognize consumers' purchase intentions because consumers' actions are usually predicted through their intentions. Purchase intention is a behavioural consequence of the brand equity dimension. Furthermore, Wu et al. [7] purchase intention acts as a relationship between the concentration of consumers in buying a product and the likelihood of buying. Online reviews influence consumers' perceptions of brand equity and thus ultimately influence consumers' purchase intentions.

2. METHOD

In this study, we're using a qualitative approach. Qualitative approach is widely used in social science, which can study phenomena that occur with qualitative data. According to Sugiyono [1], research using technical qualitative analysis is inductive, namely based on the data obtained and developed into a hypothesis. Furthermore, the data that has been collected will be described and analyzed so that the problems can be answered in a systematic and directed manner. The reason the researcher uses qualitative methods is that the data obtained are in the form of qualitative data, aiming to describe, summarize various conditions, situations, or phenomena that exist in the community that is the object of research so that the results of the study can get an accurate picture of the influence of online influencers on consumer purchase intentions clearly and in-depth.

The data collection technique used by the researcher is library research—the data obtained from books, scientific journals and other media. In addition, it can also conduct a literature review, namely by studying references from previous articles related to the research title. This research technique is carried out online with the help of internet technology. The internet can make it easier for researchers to get information about online influencers and consumer purchase intentions, starting from data available from various sources. The second data collection technique used by the researcher is the content analysis which is a method for conducting observational research and aims to systematically evaluate the contents of various recorded forms of communication.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

According to Thorne [2], influencer marketing utilises opinion leaders to spread word of mouth about their brands and products to the target audience. According to Meng and Wei [5], online influencers are usually perceived as opinion leaders with strong reputations and public familiarity. The use of online influencer marketing can encourage conversations between brands and online users, which in turn can influence consumers decision-making processes.

In addition, Abidin [3] interactions between online influencers and online users tend to be more credible than traditional advertising because persuasive messages are often seamlessly woven into the daily narrative posted on influencers' social media. Product endorsement by online influencers is often perceived as more authentic and trustworthy. Therefore, audiences are less resistant to advertising messages.

According to Utz, Graham, Jin and Phua [8] nevertheless, the popularity of an online influencer can affect the impact the feels among online users. Studies have shown that inferences about popularity can influence public evaluations of sources of trust. Electronic word of mouth studies show that attitudes and a product are highly determined by consumers regarding product endorsers. Several studies have also shown that online influencers play an important role in influencing buying behaviour. According to Bergkvist and Zhou [6] consumers prefer brands and products positively if the endorser is considered credible.

Currently, technology is increasingly advanced and practical in every way, including the ease of purchasing products in online or offline stores. However, technology in selling these products online or offline must be assisted by effective marketing. Effective marketing is no longer just distributing brochures or doing promotions and discounts on the several social media platforms that we have. However, we also have to look for an online influencer to help grow our business to be seen and known by various consumers.

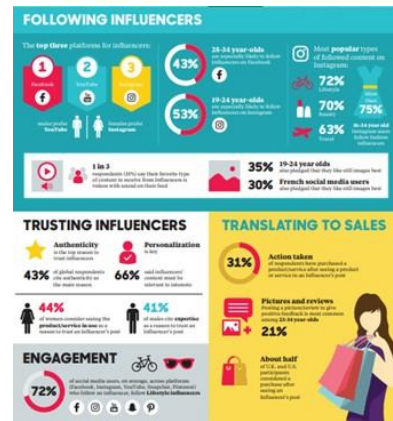


Figure 1 Following Influencers
Source: olapic.com

It can be seen from the picture above, that top three platforms for influencers are first occupied by Facebook, then followed by YouTube and finally Instagram, with a percentage of 53% aged 19-24 years choosing to follow online influencers on Instagram. This is because for those aged 19-24 years, Instagram is a modern window to share stories as well as photos and videos to closest friends or followers on social media. Instagram can also be a business tool that can bring profits. For example, like sharing photos

of a product that we sell and market through Instagram and use the services of online influencers who are famous on Instagram so that the products we sell can grow and our products are more famous than other. Meanwhile, those aged 25-34 years prefer to follow online influencers on Facebook because for those aged 25-34 years, Facebook has a simple appearance and is not too complicated compared to Instagram. This is because the segmentation of Facebook is more for adults, different from Instagram which is more for teenagers. According to Confos and Davis [1], social media communication has become much more penetrating to people than traditional media, especially teenagers.

Then men usually prefer YouTube and women prefer Instagram, because women have an interest in buying fashion and lifestyle products from what online influencers market. According to Meng and Wei [5], online influencers are usually considered opinion leaders with solid reputations and public familiarity. Social media is marked by the rise of online influencers competing to become the best influencers with experiences that have more attraction and trust from buyers, so that online influencers can benefit. Abidin, Schau, and Gilly [2], found that human celebrities positively impact youth attitudes towards brands and low-involvement product advertisements. Research has shown that online influencers are even better able to change their followers, attitudes and behaviour towards a brand because they are perceived as more accessible, trustworthy and intimate than mainstream celebrities.

According to Xu Rinka and Pratt [4], companies used to take advantage of celebrities' fame and social status to promote their brands. However, advances in social media platforms led to upward recognition from influencers. Online influencers attract purchase intention from customers because most customers see it from several reviews and opinions from online influencers. According to De Veerman et al. [6], consumers always respect the opinions of others. However, social media platforms and above have empowered ordinary clients to share their opinions and experiences with their peers. Influencer marketing is different from traditional word of mouth marketing in that it allows marketers to gain more control and insight over marketing results. Marketers can access some views, likes, comments, influencer posts, and feedback related to their products and services.

According to Erkan and Evans [9], E-word of mouth (E-WOM) is more effective when made by a recognized personality and strongly impacts online consumer purchase intentions. Therefore, the presence of online influencers significantly impacts the purchase intention of a person. Consumers or potential buyers with products being sold, this can be seen from the number of followers on social media, online influencers whose followers are, on average, a potential customer or buyer who wants to see the results of product reviews and product ratings that are being posted and like on social media for online influencers.

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the research that has been done, we can conclude that technology developments in the digital-era have a very large impact, especially in the marketing world because almost everyone have social media to find out information out there, use online shopping applications, and others, so that they can buy products from online without the need to leave the house indirectly. This life process makes people have the habit of shopping online. Even in online shopping, people have a habit that often occurs in each of our lives that before buying a product always searching first. Finding out something products from various product reviews with the current platforms instagram, youtube, and tiktok, which are currently popular indirectly that people who often shop online (prospective consumers) often trust more when the goods they want to buy have been reviewed by influencers, artists, celebgrams or youtubers (content creators) who have many followers. With marketing skills from influencers and others, we often see that a product must be bought or tried because it has various benefits and others. Influencers are also able to influence the decision of potential consumers to be encouraged or tempted to buy a product that is targeted. Making potential consumers also have a long enough mind to spend money on shopping for a product if it is not purchased afraid of regret. Finally, the mindset of potential consumers is often hearing this word "It is better to buy now than regret it later". This makes the motivation of potential consumers to have a strong desire to buy a product without any doubts at all, meaning: very confident.

Social media makes influencers, celebrities, artists, YouTubers (content creators) often compete to endorse a brand to attract the attention of potential consumers so that potential consumers also have reasonable confidence in choosing a product they want. There are often incidents that prospective consumers have doubts about buying goods if the goods have not been reviewed, so that many entrepreneurs are competing to do endorser influencers, celebrities, YouTubers, artists to promote an item, so that the advertisement can be glimpsed by potential consumers. This is an effective strategy at this time and require a large enough cost to promote a brand in the marketing world, it makes entrepreneurs dare to invest in the product brand if a product being advertised produces eggs or high sales by endorsed influencers. Usually, influencers, YouTubers, celebrities, artists who have a strong appeal, many followers, and have marketing skills will be recruited by the company to be contracted in a big brand. For example, Erigo Local Brand endorsed by Raffi Ahmad so that for content creators, influencers and artists have a tremendous opportunity to work in the world of social media or entertainment.

Based on the results of the research that has been done, we can advise that in online shopping (especially for prospective consumers), they must be careful with the strategies issued by the company in promoting a brand so as not to be provoked because buying a product must also

match the desired needs. They have to pay attention to details in choosing a product and not in a hurry to get a good product. Meanwhile, entrepreneurs who want to advertise must also learn the science of advertising. Find out who the audience is and find the right influencers to promote a product that your company has made to generate large profits and make the best products, so that the people can enjoy them.

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