

## The Influencer Marketing Mix: Methods and Implementation Mechanisms .

Wisseme Belhadi<sup>1\*</sup>, Chaima Arribi<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Emir Abdelkader University of Islamic Sciences – Constantine, Laboratory of Advocacy Studies and Communication (Algeria)

[w.belhadi@univ-emir.dz](mailto:w.belhadi@univ-emir.dz)

<sup>2</sup> Echahid Cheikh Larbi Tebessi University, Laboratory of Environmental Studies and Sustainable Development (Algeria)

[chaima.arribi@univ-tebessa.dz](mailto:chaima.arribi@univ-tebessa.dz)

*Received: 14./06/2024*

*Accepted: 30./12/2024*

*Published: 17/01/2025*

### Abstract:

This paper explores the progressive advancements and impacts of information and communication technology, specifically the Internet and social media, on marketing and promotional strategies for products, institutions, and organizations, with a particular focus on the food industry and general food products. Marketing paradigms have evolved from traditional direct methods to influencer-driven social media marketing.

This study is structured around three primary topics: an examination of the social media marketing mix, an analysis of key methods of influencer marketing on social media, and a review of the stages of building an influencer marketing strategy.

**Keywords:** Marketing Mix; Social Media; Influencers; Marketing Strategy.

---

*\*Corresponding author*

## INTRODUCTION:

The influence of celebrities on daily life has become a subject of extensive discourse, especially given the technological advancements in social media platforms. These platforms continuously introduce new features and capabilities that enhance communication quality and interaction with followers. In this context, celebrities on social media wield greater influence on the public compared to traditional celebrities.

Platforms such as Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, and Twitter have become conduits for individuals to share experiences, garner fame, and thus give rise to social media influencers. These influencers command large online followings and engage substantial interactions and interest. They leverage their popularity across various fields by developing personal brands akin to those of traditional celebrities, thus attracting a continuously expanding follower base.

Notably, the reach of social media influencers extends beyond their direct followers to include secondary audiences who share their content, significantly amplifying their influence. This group includes bloggers and Instagrammers focused on appearance and beauty, YouTubers, and other content creators who discuss a wide array of topics such as travel, technology, cooking, and food.

Some influencers also share aspects of their personal lives for diverse purposes or produce their own audio-visual works, thereby diversifying digital production, broadening its societal impact, and penetrating various social strata. Currently, "food institutions" related to food products have garnered particular interest from social influencers, who attract significant consumer attention due to their direct linkage to daily consumer products.

Through strategic content on food, these influencers have seen an increase in popularity, fame, and viewership numbers, surpassing traditional media platforms amidst intense competition. From this perspective, this research paper seeks to illuminate the influencer marketing mix, its prominent methods, and the implementation mechanisms of influencer marketing.

The central question of our study is:

- What constitutes the influencer marketing mix, and what are its methods and implementation mechanisms?

This question is further explored through the following sub-questions:

1. What is the social media marketing mix?
2. What are the methods of implementing influencer marketing on social media?
3. What are the stages of building an influencer marketing strategy?

### **Research Objectives:**

This research paper seeks to achieve a set of goals, the most important of which are:

1. Discuss the significance of influencer marketing on social media for general and specifically food-related institutions.
2. Emphasize the importance of adopting a distinct social media marketing mix.
3. Identify the methods encompassed within the influencer marketing mix.
4. Explore the mechanisms for implementing the influencer marketing mix.

### **Study Methodology:**

This research paper aims to analyze the influencer marketing mix and identify the effective means and mechanisms for its implementation in the context of modern digital marketing. To achieve this goal, a descriptive-analytical research methodology will be followed, relying on data collection from various sources, including academic literature in foreign languages,

previous studies, and reports related to influencer marketing, in order to gain in-depth insights into the applications, methods, and strategies of influencer marketing.

### **Study Tools:**

In our research paper, we relied on a variety of books and scholarly articles in both Arabic and foreign languages, published in reputable journals.

### **The First Topic: The Social Media Marketing Mix**

The conceptual framework known as the Four M's of Influencer Marketing has been developed to modernize and, to some extent, supplant the traditional four elements of marketing. As technological capabilities expand, the landscape of marketing also transforms, necessitating the development of more refined theories to guide the burgeoning marketing activities, particularly influencer marketing on social media platforms (Al-Hariri, 2019, p. 166). We delineate these elements as follows:

#### **1. Identification and Creation of Social Media Influencers (Market Influencers):**

This critical initial step is where business institutions and various brands utilizing the influencer marketing mix on social media should start. This phase involves "creating influencers" by engaging with individuals who possess the capacity to influence consumers at any stage of the buying decision cycle.

To accurately gauge the stage at which the consumer is within the buying lifecycle, brands must adopt a customer-centric approach in all influencer marketing initiatives. Gathering this information is crucial as it enables the brand to understand the motivations that propel the consumer to advance through different stages of the buying process. (Nafee, 2019, p. 158)

Social media influencers are influential figures within the community, commanding a substantial following across various social platforms. These

influencers range from celebrities in arts, sports, politics, and media, among others.

An influencer, from a marketing perspective, is someone who can significantly impact others through their online presence, actions, behavior, and ideas expressed via blogs and social media accounts. They earn the trust of their followers (their fans) through their influential opinions and actions, thereby influencing their followers' behaviors and attitudes towards specific companies or brands. (Aziz, 2020, p. 545)

The influencer campaign typically unfolds in two pivotal stages:

- **Distillation Phase:**

This stage marks the initial publication of the message and sets the trajectory for whether the campaign will succeed. The transmission of the message to the influencer is not straightforward due to the potential noise and interference from social media. To navigate through this phase effectively, the brand must collaborate closely with the influencer to ascertain key audience insights such as:

- \_ The typical online duration and preferred platforms of the audience.
- \_ Their interactions and the subjects they discuss.
- \_ Anticipated actions post-interaction.

- **Ripple Phase:**

In this stage, the influencer's community amplifies the message, spreading it through their networks and creating a wave of brand awareness and promotional content. This ripple effect is critical for the sustained visibility and impact of the marketing message.

When defining the core audience for the brands as part of a specific campaign, the subsequent step involves activating the most suitable influencer to relay the message. Influencer marketing transcends merely having a vast follower base; it involves positioning the consumer as the

influencer and comprehending the nuances behind their purchasing decisions.

The selection process in this stage employs strategic filters to ensure that the brand aligns with the right influencers who can authentically connect with the target audience. (Refaat, 2020, p. 383)

## **2. Managing a Good and Strong Relationship with Influencers on Social Media:**

Once an organization has identified the influencers it intends to engage for its marketing campaign, it is imperative to establish and maintain robust and positive relationships with them. This relationship management begins with convincing influencers of the brand's merit and motivating them to promote it across their social media platforms.

Understanding the influencers' interests and ensuring these align with the organization's objectives is crucial. It is important for the organization to recognize that influencers are protective of their followers and will not endorse products unless they believe in their benefit to their audience.

As suggested by Keller & Berry, before leveraging influencers for brand promotion on social media, a company must first effectively market its brand to these influencers.

This can be achieved through various strategies such as providing them with firsthand experiences of the brand, or offering special incentives like gifts and discount coupons that they can pass on to their followers. (Refaat, 2020, p. 384)

The management of these relationships is guided by the Influencer Relationship Management (IRM) model, which draws inspiration from the Customer Relationship Management (CRM) model.

This model focuses on establishing strategic partnerships with influencers on social networks to facilitate testimonial advertising and targeted promotional messaging about products. The overarching goal of influencer

marketing, according to this model, is to enhance brand awareness, establish product credibility, and ultimately drive consumer purchases.

The IRM model encompasses seven foundational pillars for managing relationships with social media influencers: (Al-Hariri, 2019, p. 166)

- **Product:** The product stands as the cornerstone of influencer marketing, targeting trust-building between the consumer and the product as a precursor to influencer involvement. Therefore, influencer marketing acts as an extension of the trust already established between the product and its consumers.
- **Influencer:** This involves selecting the appropriate influencer who can effectively market the product. Considerations include their relevance to the product, their influence extent, demographic reach, previous campaign engagements, activity on social networks, and overall online presence.
- **Knowledge:** This relates to the influencer's comprehensive understanding of the product, including its features, history, application methods, brand awareness, and both its tangible and intangible attributes.
- **Calendar:** Strategic timing and scheduling of the marketing campaign on the influencer's social media are critical. The schedule should begin with an intense promotional buzz and taper off strategically. It includes managing the timing of posts, comments, or tweets, and coordinating actions like shares, likes, subscriptions, or group memberships.
- **Message:** Crafting marketing messages that resonate with the influencer's lifestyle and daily activities ensures the product is seamlessly integrated into their social media content. Selecting the right influencer is crucial as it lays the foundation for the marketing strategy.

- **Social Media Platforms:** It is vital for brands to identify primary and secondary social media platforms to optimize their marketing campaigns effectively.
- **Monitoring:** Continuous evaluation and assessment of the influencer's contributions are essential. This includes monitoring their marketing activities and measuring outcomes such as product sales trends, brand awareness levels, return on investment, and overall user engagement.

Influencers are categorized based on the nature of their influence or the content they produce, encompassing pioneers, artists, fashion models, musicians, health and beauty enthusiasts, business and finance experts, technology and science aficionados, and those involved in public and political discourse. (Aziz, 2020, p. 547)

### 3. **Monitoring Influencers in Social Media Campaigns (Monitoring I.M.C):**

For an organization to conduct a successful marketing campaign via influencers on social media, it is not sufficient merely to identify and select appropriate influencers or to cultivate robust relationships with them. It is equally crucial for the organization to actively monitor these influencers and their promotional activities.

This includes identifying strengths and weaknesses, addressing any challenges or obstacles that arise during the campaign, and resolving these issues promptly to ensure campaign efficacy.

Organizations can track the performance of their chosen influencers and the value they add to the brand on social media using various tools and applications designed for this purpose. Services like Nimble or Batchbook provide capabilities to monitor influencers over the internet. (Brown & Fiorella, 2013, p. 152)

In this context, the brand meticulously monitors the influencer campaigns. When evaluating an influencer's marketing campaign, the brand must

emphasize outcomes over mere effort, as this approach offers a more robust framework for achieving objectives.

Utilizing search analytics, listening tools, personalized messaging, and targeted landing pages, marketers can begin to identify market segments that yield the highest return on investment. This allows them to customize the brand message effectively and pinpoint influencers who significantly influence consumer behavior and decision-making processes at any given time. (Brown & Fiorella, 2013, p. 157)

There are several critical factors that brands must monitor to identify potential weaknesses in their relationships with influencers: (Aziz, 2020, p. 547)

- ✓ **Awareness:** This includes the potential for blog posts as well as social shares, news articles, interviews, and mentions that are related to the brand's products.
- ✓ **Reaction:** Monitoring reactions involves tracking metrics such as the number of website visitors, word-of-mouth recommendations, and increases in social media followers.
- ✓ **Action:** This encompasses conversion factors and other quantifiable activities that can be tracked and enhanced through strategic collaborations."

#### **4. Measuring the Influencer Marketing Campaign on Social Media (Measuring I.M.C):**

It could be argued that the most critical stage of the influencer marketing mix is akin to monitoring but focuses on the measurement of campaign effectiveness. Measuring the impact of influencer marketing has become more straightforward compared to traditional methods, thanks to the precision that social media offers.

Social platforms allow for marketing to pre-targeted audiences and provide the tools to measure these activities accurately. Through careful

measurement, a brand can gather invaluable data about the success of the campaign and justify the performance level of its collaborations with influencers.

The metrics that brands must consider in any influencer marketing campaign on social media include: (Aziz, 2020, p. 548)

- ✓ **Investment:** This encompasses the pre-campaign costs involved in matching influencers with the company. Brands need to assess the setup costs and use these figures as metrics to reflect the financial return or the brand awareness generated by the campaign.
- ✓ **Resources:** It is vital to measure the workforce involved, including the number of employees engaged, the hours devoted to the campaign, and the training time each influencer requires to familiarize themselves with the brand's products and demographic culture.
- ✓ **Product:** Providing free samples of the brand's products to influencers and their audiences is a common practice. The associated costs should be considered when planning the financial aspects of the campaign.
- ✓ **Ratio:** Companies should measure the ratio of responses an influencer receives when engaging with the brand's message compared to their overall following. This provides a more precise metric of return.
- ✓ **Impact:** Effectiveness can be gauged by tracking the number of visits to specific websites or targeted pages, the frequency of brand or product mentions online, the increase in brand recognition aided by new fans, followers, and newsletter subscribers, and the content downloaded in conjunction with the company's website. Considering that the customer's buying cycle may extend beyond the campaign duration, it is crucial for the company's strategy to include ongoing measurement of the influencer marketing campaign's influence on the purchase pathway. (Erkan, 2016, p. 36)

## **The Second Topic: Methods of Implementing Influencer Marketing on Social Media**

### **1. Electronic Word-of-Mouth (E.WOM):**

The internet has changed and facilitated the way people communicate. For instance, it has made sharing opinions and personal experiences more convenient, bringing a pioneering new perspective to the traditional Word of Mouth (WOM), now known as Electronic Word of Mouth (E.WOM).

This is defined as "any positive or negative statement made by potential, actual, or former customers about a product or company, which is made available to a multitude of people and institutions via the internet." Besides the term "Electronic Word of Mouth," it is also known as "Online Oral Word of Mouth." Since eWOM originates from individuals rather than companies, it represents a trusted option for gathering product-related information among consumers, more so than television, print, or online advertising forms. (Pasternak, 2017, p. 29)

The concepts of eWOM and traditional WOM share several important similarities, often associated with them in published academic research. These similarities concern the origins of communication, its impact, and content. It is generally accepted that both forms of communication are initiated by individuals, not commercial entities. Another significant advantage of WOM and eWOM relates to the parity of content and impact. The fundamental differences between offline WOM and online eWOM lie in context, timing, clarity, scope, strength of social ties, credibility, and anonymity. (Padmanabhan, 2019, p. 8)

### **2. Influencer Advertisements about the Brand (I.ADV):**

Influencer advertisements about the brand consist of content related to products and the brand, which influencers publish across social media platforms. It can be described as "the intentional incorporation of the brand within an entertainment medium."

In the context of influencer marketing, this means that companies with commercial intentions use influencers to distribute products in specific formats and shapes across digital media, including the marketing message conveyed by influencers to promote the product, comprising visual, auditory, and textual components.

Distributing products on social media facilitates the disclosure of information about the brand and showcases the brand being used or consumed by influencers to target potential consumers on popular social media platforms. Products can be promoted through content linked to the product, by conveying a positive sentiment towards the products or brands.

For example, the influencer testing the product and speaking about it positively or adding positive information or sentiments to the video description box on YouTube. (Schlemmer & Ziewiecki, 2018, p. 5)

On Instagram, product-related content can be in the form of a sponsored post, meaning it is a paid post, characterized by reaching a larger number of views quickly, with a clear focus on the product and its features.

On YouTube, influencers can upload a video where they are seen using the product, and during collaborations with brands, the video may be produced entirely in the usual manner for a YouTube user, but the content production or distribution is controlled by the brand itself. (Al-Hariri, 2019, p. 167)

This publication and sharing of the product increase awareness of the product and familiarize people with its attributes, thereby positively influencing purchase intentions.

On the other hand, there are several factors that affect influencer advertisements on social media, including: (Refaat, 2020, p. 389)

- ✓ **Unstable or varying influence:** The audience might not like some posts shared by the influencer, thus it is crucial for them to maintain continuity and constantly attract and engage the audience;
- ✓ **Harsh reactions and attacks:** Although influencer advertisements generally receive a large acceptance from some audiences,

sometimes there are ads that are not acceptable. If an influencer provides incorrect promotional information to the audience and deceives them, the audience dislikes this, and when people are deceived by "fraudulent performance," they lose trust in the influencer;

- ✓ **Transparency and disclosure:** Often, it is not disclosed that the content is sponsored, which requires clarity and transparency because the audience is highly aware and perceptive;
- ✓ **Issue of trust:** Researchers have realized that figures on social media are sometimes misleading, whether concerning content sharing (how many people like the content, share, comment, repost the content), and some influencers purchase followers with money to inflate their page statistics, thereby creating a credibility issue. This is pointed out by the saying, "When talking about social media metrics, if you torture the numbers long enough, they'll tell you anything."

### **3. Influencers' Experiences and Uses of the Brand (I.EXP):**

This involves the experiences and uses related to specific products or brands carried out by influencers, and displayed as part of their personal and daily lifestyles. These are published in the form of photos and videos on the pages and accounts of organizations or celebrities and influencers on social media platforms. (Refaat, 2020, p. 391)

### **The Third Topic: Stages of Building an Influencer Marketing Strategy**

Based on Refaat's study, an influencer is defined as someone who, either through expertise in a specific field or celebrity status, commands a substantial following on social media. It is essential to recognize that while all influencers are opinion leaders, not all opinion leaders meet the criteria to be considered influencers due to the pivotal requirement of having a large social media following.

Building an effective influencer marketing strategy involves several meticulously planned steps:

### **1. Defining Marketing Objectives:**

The first step is to establish clear, realistic, and measurable marketing objectives. These objectives can range from increasing product sales, boosting subscriptions to services, raising brand awareness, enhancing the perceived value of a brand, propagating a social idea, or even marketing a political ideology. Each goal should be quantifiable and set within a specific timeline to ensure effective tracking and adjustment of strategies.

### **2. Identifying Suitable Influencers:**

Selection of influencers should be strategically aligned with the marketing objectives and the nature of the product. The selection process involves an assessment based on two main criteria: the influencer's relevance to the marketing objectives and their influence within the virtual sphere.

This involves analyzing various factors such as the demographic characteristics of their followers, engagement levels, personal charisma, response types in comments, and any existing promotional ties with competing brands. This thorough vetting ensures that the chosen influencer does not simultaneously endorse competitors, thereby maintaining a focused and effective promotional effort. (Aziz, 2020, p. 547)

### **3. Identifying the Appropriate Engagement Strategy:**

The interaction framework between the influencer and their audience is crucial. Motivating influencers involves providing them with unique experiences that they are inspired to share with their audience.

For instance, American Airlines might offer influencers a chance to experience their Admiral's Club, while Chevrolet could invite automotive influencers to test drive new vehicles.

These experiences encourage influencers to authentically share their genuine opinions and experiences, which can be more impactful than traditional advertisements. Engagement strategies might include:

- ✓ **Sponsored Posts:** The influencer receives a payment for each post made about the product.
- ✓ **Participation in Events and Activities:** This includes invitations to product launches or brand-related events to facilitate direct interaction with the product.
- ✓ **Lectures:** Influencers may give talks or brief lectures about the product's utility and applications.
- ✓ **Affiliate Marketing:** Influencers promote products and receive a commission for sales generated through their promotion.
- ✓ **Increasing Traffic:** Directing more visitors to the company's website or social media pages through links posted by the influencer.

#### **4. Avoiding Direct Promotion and Marketing:**

It is crucial to maintain the authenticity of the influencer's voice by avoiding overt or forceful promotion, which could potentially harm their credibility with their audience. Maintaining an influencer's trustworthiness is essential for the success of the marketing campaign.

#### **5. Measuring Achieved Marketing Results:**

The final stage involves the quantitative assessment of the marketing efforts. This can be achieved by setting specific performance indicators or using network analysis tools to evaluate the influencer's impact on their followers and the broader marketing objectives. (Brown & Fiorella, 2013, p. 166)

### **Conclusion:**

In conclusion, it can be asserted that influencer marketing has become one of the most prominent and effective tools in the modern digital marketing world. Through a blend of diverse tools, such as careful selection of influencers, identifying the target audience, and data analysis, brands are provided with unique opportunities to engage with their customers and build long-term relationships. The mechanisms for implementing this blend require precise coordination among various digital channels, whether through social media, blogs, or YouTube, to achieve maximum impact.

However, it is important to note that success in influencer marketing requires strategic planning and a clear vision for the content being delivered, in addition to the continuous measurement of campaign effectiveness to ensure the achievement of the desired objectives. Marketers must also consider potential challenges and risks, such as the danger of losing credibility or the mismatch between the marketing message and the influencer's image.

**Bibliography list:**

- Al-Hariri, K. H. A. (2019). Marketing through influencers on social media and its impact on the dimensions of brand value from the perspective of customers: A field study on university students in Yemen. *Arabian Journal of Management*, 4, December.
- Aziz, A. I. M. R. (2020). Effects of advertisers' use of influencer marketing phrases across electronic platforms on buying behaviors and its relation to consumer protection issues. *Egyptian Journal for Public Opinion Research*, (02).
- Brown, F. (2013). *Influence marketing: How to create, manage, and measure brand influencers in social media marketing*. Que Publishing.
- Erkan. (2016). *The influence of electronic word of mouth in social media on consumers' purchase intentions* (Doctoral dissertation). Brunel Business School, Brunel University.
- Nafee, C. (2019). The use of influencers on social media sites in advertising campaigns. *Egyptian Journal for Press Research*, 18, December.
- Padmanabhan. (2019). *Influence, or get influenced!: A systematic literature review on the effect of influencers, product-related content, and sponsorship disclosure on purchase intention* (Master's thesis). Faculty of Behavioral, Management & Social Sciences, University of Twente.
- Pasternak. (2017). *Electronic word-of-mouth in online brand communities: Drivers and outcomes* (Doctoral dissertation). College of Social Sciences, University of Glasgow.

- Refaat, M. M. M. (2020). Evaluating the effectiveness of influencer marketing methods on social media among university youth: A qualitative study. *Journal of Media Research*, October.
- Schlemmer, & Ziewiecki. (2018). Social media sellout: The increasing role of product promotion on YouTube. *SAGE Journals*, 4(3), 14 August.