The Promotional Process of Tourism Movement: Between the Communication Specialist as a Professional Competence and the Social Influencer as a Creative Practice.

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Abstract:

The paradoxical structures and arrangements brought about by communication technologies across various dimensions of social life have long been an open subject of debate, characterized by complexity and interconnectedness. Every modern technological revolution in communication media has been accompanied by new generations of professionals, users, optimists, and skeptics alike. With the emergence of each new communication medium, divergent and fragmented discourses proliferate in the production of digital content, aiming to generate immediate impact. This is evident in the individual differences and academic qualifications that distinguish communication specialists and social actors (influencers), whether in marketing, promotion, guidance, or advocacy. These distinctions manifest primarily through the persuasive techniques employed, the promotional strategies utilized, and the mechanisms adopted in crafting communicative content to achieve targeted objectives. This article seeks to examine the persuasive strategies adopted by communication specialists and social influencers, assessing their effectiveness and efficiency in tourism promotion.

Keywords: Persuasive strategies*;* Tourism promotion*; Communication* specialists*;* Social influencers.

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Introduction:

Persuasive techniques emerge as intentional, strategically designed communicative efforts aimed at influencing individuals' cognitive dimensions. These techniques operate in environments where choice is available and alternatives abound, employing all feasible means to modify beliefs, values, or inclinations. **(Hegab, 2003, p. 370)**. It constitutes a set of communicative procedures imbued with persuasive means, argumentative proofs, and affective patterns aimed at influencing the cognitive, emotional, and psychological dimensions of the target or potential audience. The ultimate objective is to alter their communicative dispositions by furnishing them with ideas that shape attitudes, modify (or reinforce) behaviors, and sustain existing perceptions.

Thus, persuasive techniques form the cornerstone of successful communicative and marketing strategies for tourist destinations, promoting them through modern methods that generate excitement and intrigue in general—and captivation and attention in particular—among consumer societies, which often lack critical discernment. Consequently, tourism producers face growing challenges in reaching these audiences amid increasing plurality, diversity, and intense competition. This difficulty stems from the alternatives afforded by communication technologies, which empower consumers (recipients) to compare, evaluate, and—based on these assessments—make bold and proactive decisions (i.e., take action). This dynamic is largely driven by social influencers: ordinary individuals who share their lived experiences through words, images, or videos across diverse media platforms. The authenticity, potency, and uniqueness of their content resonate deeply with audiences, compelling them to follow and internalize these narratives. **(Al-Mourabit, 2005, p. 22)**. Certainly, then, influencers are those who enjoy vast social reach due to their communicative activity across digital media, where they share photos, videos, and stories reflecting diverse content. This garners admiration from a large audience of engaged followers who interact with and are influenced by them. This phenomenon stems from the growing attention uniquely commanded by the influencer, owing to their aesthetic appeal and persuasive power, driven by their performative skills and spontaneous verbal eloquence in delivering their communicative message. Their goal is to achieve the desired and sought-after outcome, consistently amassing more subscriptions to secure fame and financial profits.

Consequently, they have managed to play significant roles, leveraging the opportunities provided by digital platforms and social spaces, using them as tools for self-expression and crafting the tourism content they desire—effectively becoming content creators and controllers of its dissemination and promotion. This has enabled them to adapt to and dominate these platforms, turning them to their advantage due to the fame they have achieved. All of this has come at the expense

of communication specialists, who have taken a passive stance, merely observing from afar and contentedly spectating the developments of this new communicative era—despite possessing skills derived from their academic training and professional expertise, which qualify them to create profound impacts in tourism promotion and marketing. After all, this is the domain of specialists, not merely creatives. The design of a tourism message relies on persuasive techniques and emotional appeals, selected rationally and articulated through expressive language—whether verbal or written—supported by compelling arguments and captivating evidence to achieve the intended effect. Specialists carefully select the appropriate communication medium to ensure smooth and engaging delivery, making the message resonate passionately with the audience without raising doubts about its credibility. Not just anyone can claim this title unless they hold an official and legally recognized position that allows them to perform their professional duties with full expertise. They must possess a set of technical and creative skills that elevate their ability to achieve defined objectives, including their active role in consistently and tactfully engaging with their audience**.** "A communication specialist is an individual who aims to influence people with ideas they have extensive knowledge of, believe in, and embody in their behavior and actions. They utilize all available media resources and various persuasive techniques to shape public opinion, following a deliberate, planned, and sustained scientific methodology**." (Amel, 2008, p. 52)**

This has sparked debate within the new communicative landscape, where controlling its inputs and keeping pace with its exponentially growing outputs has become increasingly difficult due to the shifts and fluctuations that have altered the specialist's position in terms of authority and influence. Their role has been supplanted by social media influencers, compelling us to re-examine the evolving functions and manifestations of the communicator in light of the structural transformation of the communicative scene. This shift has been facilitated by modern mass media platforms, leading to a blurring of roles and responsibilities and leveling the playing field among various actors within communication dynamics. These changes have introduced new criteria for interpreting these relationships in an environment characterized by volatile interactions and information flows, where controlling variables, managing key players, or even identifying their identities and assessing their authority over content has become nearly impossible.

As a result, influencers have emerged as a strategic choice—even a necessity—imposed by the competitive demands of tourism. This has altered the course and methods of communicative processes and professional practices, particularly in the actual deployment of persuasive techniques by non-specialist influencers. Their approaches are often governed by personal factors, profit-driven motives, and social status tied to fame and stardom. Consequently, their posts and

content can produce divergent effects: sometimes beneficial in stimulating tourism, and other times harmful, misleading, or damaging to a destination's reputation.

In contrast, communication specialists, by virtue of their academic training and professional expertise, are qualified to employ persuasive techniques with the aim of revitalizing tourism activity and effectively marketing destinations. Their communicative strategies are designed to create social impact, not driven by profit or social status but rather by the pursuit of demonstrating their academic and professional competence. Nevertheless, both the communication specialist and the influencer, in reality, have distinct orientations and methods in their tourism discourse.

Given the above and in pursuit of our research objectives, it is essential to address the following central question:

Do the persuasive techniques employed in tourism promotion by social media influencers hold genuine effectiveness, or does true efficacy lie with the communication specialist?

Two subsidiary questions emerge from this central research problem, as follows:

- **What are the persuasive techniques employed in tourism promotion, and where does their effectiveness lie in the practices of both communication specialists and social media influencers?**
- **What are the fundamental differences between communication specialists and social media influencers in activating and revitalizing the tourism sector?**

1. Persuasive Techniques and Their Effectiveness in Tourism Promotion Between Communication Specialists and Social Influencers:

Tourism promotion, underpinned by persuasive techniques, constitutes the primary tool for generating and enhancing demand for tourism products, their attractions, , and archaeological sites.. These elements are introduced and promoted through engaging methods that stimulate both the psychological and physiological needs of tourists, transforming these needs into behavioral motivators and purchase drivers to acquire such privileges. Consequently, this process contributes to achieving high levels of satisfaction with the services offered in the market.

This necessitates the deployment of strategic and persuasive appeals by both communication specialists and social influencers to ensure the success of tourism promotion—a topic we will explore in our first section.

1-1- Optimal Choices of Persuasive Strategies and Appeals Employed by Communication Specialists and Social Influencers and Their Contributions to the Success of the Tourism Message:

Persuasive strategies are among the most crucial measures utilized by both communication specialists and social influencers to attract, engage, and shape the opinions of the target audience towards the tourism concept advocated by the communicator. Accordingly, this study will first present the key persuasive strategies that contribute to the success of the tourism message, followed secondly by an examination of persuasive appeals

a. Persuasive Strategies Employed by Communication Specialists and Social Influencers in the Success of Their Tourism Message:

The researchers identified the most effective persuasive strategies that contribute to successful tourism promotion.

- **Enticement Strategy:** involves the skillful use of persuasive messages through rich visual cues, the provision of supplementary information, or attractive designs characterized by persistence, insistence, and repetition—all contributing to the creation and comprehension of a compelling visual image that motivates the desired behavior.. **(Al-Sharbini, 2019, p. 464)**
- **Psychological Strategy:** This strategy assumes that the tool of persuasion lies in modifying the individual's internal psychological structure to prompt actions desired by the persuader. It operates by addressing the target audience on psychological, emotional, and affective levels, playing on their needs, fears, and behaviors with the aim of altering or activating the cognitive factors related to the specific subject.
- **Meaning Construction Strategy:** This strategy refers to social normalization processes based on the oral transmission and circulation of words, aimed at formulating, organizing, or modifying specific meanings, or embedding new meanings within a society that may not align with its prevailing norms. Social influencers, acting as ambassadors of their respective countries, often engage in this practice. They possess the capacity either to damage reputations or to reinforce customs and traditions that contradict the dominant social norms and the established ethical values recognized in those regions. Alternatively, they can also activate and stimulate tourism movement within these areas by positively shaping such meanings. **(Al-Sharbini, 2019, p. 465)**
    - **Strategy of Emphasis and Mitigation:** This strategy involves emphasizing a particular attribute that one party seeks to highlight while downplaying or minimizing the points emphasized by the opposing party.

Our perspective aligns with the scientific viewpoint that the optimal effectiveness of persuasive strategies resides with the communication specialist rather than the influencer. This is because the latter lacks a solid persuasive foundation, and their communicative content is often constructed upon unscientific methods, including bias, generalization, incomplete citation, distortion, and an overreliance on rhetoric and ornate expression. Furthermore, they tend to exploit personal vulnerabilities that trouble them as individuals, sometimes exaggerating through fearmongering and intimidation, with a pronounced focus on emotional appeals. Additionally, a range of persuasive techniques has recently proliferated within vlogging—a novel form of misleading advertising—that uniquely and profoundly manipulates audiences by eliciting feelings of weakness and sympathy in a striking and disturbing manner.

b. Persuasive Appeals Employed in the Success of the Tourism Message by Communication Specialists and Social Influencers :

Persuasive appeals constitute one of the most critical components in the persuasive process,. Their role is to ensure that the message is contextually coherent, harmonized, and functionally aligned with the communicative objectives. Accordingly, persuasive appeals have been categorized into two fundamental types.

- **Emotional Appeals**: These appeals target human emotions, feelings, and psychological impulses, aiming to stimulate internal affective drives. A defining characteristic of emotional messaging is its ability to exploit individual needs and motivations through the use of emotionally charged language and slogans.. **(Warda, 2023, p. 269)** . This approach is particularly preferred in cases of tourism advertising aimed at promoting specific destinations, as well as in counter-campaigns that seek to rehabilitate the image of destinations whose reputations have been tarnished. It is also effective in addressing the fears individuals may harbor regarding certain locations rich in tourism potential and archaeological landmarks, especially when such areas are remote or inadequately secured. Moreover, this method proves more impactful when the target audience possesses lower levels of education or limited awareness of these destinations..
- **Rational Appeals** : refer to persuasive strategies that target the human intellect and logical reasoning. In this context, the message focuses on tempering emotions and presenting logical arguments, weighing differing opinions, and evaluating contrasting perspectives. It relies on calm, precise language with minimal generalization, emphasizing individual cognition over collective emotionality. This type of appeal is grounded in facts, statistics, and deductive reasoning that leads to clear conclusions.

(Okasha:, 2020, p. 100) Rational appeals are often employed through various techniques, such as appeals to the desire for discovery and knowledge, appeals to competitive advantage, appeals to attributes or features, and appeals based on pricing. **(Warda, 2023, p. 269).**

After presenting the persuasive appeals, it becomes evident that each type of appeal corresponds to a specific set of persuasive techniques that align with and complement it, there by enhancing effectiveness and impact within the promotional process.

c. Types of Persuasive Techniques Employed in Tourism Promotion:

Persuasive techniques are primarily divided into two main categories, which can be summarized as follows:

- **Rational Persuasive Techniques:** present information in a factual and objective manner, supported by convincing logical evidence. Human cognition processes information through two components: the conscious, aware part known as the "conscious mind," and the other part referred to as the "subconscious mind." Psychological research indicates that approximately 60% of our daily behaviors and actions are driven by the subconscious. **(Al-Hilali, 2003, p. 66)**
- **Deceptive Persuasive Techniques:** This form of communication does not involve the objective and accurate transmission of information to the recipient. Instead, it is based on distorting and falsifying certain factual aspects presented by the sender, employing a deliberately deceptive persuasive approach designed to exert a profound influence on the recipient's decision-making process. **(Amer, 2005, p. 17)**

d. Characteristics of Persuasive Techniques Employed in Tourism Promotion:

If tourism persuasion is considered an art with its own methods, types, primary channels, and fundamental appeals, it nevertheless remains a form of planned communication aimed at achieving a specific outcome. Accordingly, its techniques possess a set of essential characteristics that can be identified as follows:

- Persuasive techniques require logically structured and objectively organized evidence, marked by clarity of ideas, proximity of meaning, and soundness of argument. These arguments must be coherently linked to the content, aligned with the overall message, and relevant to the external world and its realities. Such alignment fosters a stronger connection with the audience and enhances tourists' desire to engage in tourism. **(Shahinaz, 2015, p. 110)**

- Consideration of the visual coherence among the elements constituting tourism promotion is essential.
- Taking into account the demographic characteristics of the target audience is imperative.
- Considering the psychological and emotional state of the recipient during the presentation of tourism products is essential.
- Conciseness; whereby the message incorporates symbolic elements that are harmonious, coherent, and consistent with the recipient's environment or the prevailing social system. **(El-Sayed, Abdo El-Sayed, & Amal Mohamed Siraj, 2015, p. 247).**

2. Fundamental Differences Between the Communication Specialist and the Social Influencer in Activating the Tourism Sector:

Amid the rapid evolution of the contemporary media landscape, it has become increasingly important to distinguish between key communicative actors—particularly the communication specialist and the social influencer. While their roles may occasionally overlap, their foundational differences in training, methodology, and function set them apart. The communication specialist, grounded in academic expertise and institutional ethics, engages in strategic, research-based messaging. In contrast, the influencer, emerging from the digital media environment, builds influence through popularity and personalized engagement.

Understanding this distinction goes beyond theory, as it directly impacts how public opinion is shaped and behaviors are influenced. The influencer often lacks the analytical depth that characterizes the specialist's work, raising concerns about credibility and effectiveness. With influencers playing growing roles in social, developmental, and tourism contexts, a critical evaluation of each actor's role, scope, and impact has become essential.

Table No. 01: Fundamental Differences Between the Communication Specialist as a Professional Competence and the Influencer as a Creative Practice:

The essential distinctions between	Communication specialist	Social influencer

From a conceptual change perspective	-The communication specialist continues to glorify the work of new media across its various platforms and technological features, while still reinforcing classical concepts—such as gatekeeping, the unidirectionality of message sources in tourism communication, and hierarchical communication structures—that have been extensively deconstructed in digital audience studies. These outdated frameworks limit the effectiveness of the communicator's role and responsibilities within contemporary media environments.	-The social influencer has emerged as a key subject of study by challenging the traditional authority of communication professionals. This shift has redefined roles and introduced new concepts such as digital gatekeepers, opinion leaders in alternative media, citizen journalists, and participatory journalism. These changes mark both an epistemological break and a fundamental disruption of the traditional communication model, transforming individuals from passive viewers to active, interactive content creators.
In terms of nomenclature: **In terms of nomenclature**	-The multiplicity of descriptors attributed to the communicator or communication specialist provides us with a conceptual guide to a set of terms employed by numerous scholars as alternatives to 'opinion leaders'. These include: • **'Thought leader:** used by Lazarsfeld and colleagues in 1944. • **'Gatekeepers:** introduced by Kurt Lewin in 1952. • **'Local influentials :** used by Lionberger in 1953. • **'Leaders:** as employed by Marsh and Coleman in 1954. • **'Persons of influence :** introduced by Merton in 1957. • **'People of impact'**, used by Amery and Azur in 1958, • **'Burning candles'**, a metaphor introduced by Ross in 1958, • **and 'Communication keys'**, used again by Lionberger in 1960.	-The variety of labels attributed to such figures, in our view, serves as a referential framework that reflects the diversity of terminology adopted by numerous scholars and researchers in place of the term 'influencer'. These include: • **'Informal leaders:** a term used and referenced by Wikelund in 1952. • **'Information leaders :**introduced by Sheppard in 1960. • **'Taste-makers :**employed by the Public Opinion Group in 1959. • **'Style engineers :**coined by Coleman. • **'Idea adoption leaders :**introduced by Rogers in 1960. • **Content creators.** • **Social influencers.** • **Digital network gatekeepers.** • **'Significant others :**a concept proposed by George Mead in his theory of self and identity. -These descriptors point to a form of informal communication that does not necessarily convey collective societal thinking, nor does it center accurate information as the core of its content. Rather, the material disseminated often diverges from the intellectual, cultural, and developmental objectives of society.

	-These various designations reflect a conceptual orientation toward formal communication.	
In terms of authority (nature Source and effectiveness of his authority	-He represent the paradigm of traditional authority. -He derives his authority from his professional reputation and area of expertise -The authority is manifested in his ability to persuade others to adopt the promoted idea and to internalize it in a sustained and enduring manner.- There has been a decline in the roles associated with the set of tasks undertaken by the specialist — namely the editor	-He represent the paradigm of new authority. He derives his authority from the interaction occurring between the influencer and their followers -This form of authority is embodied in his capacity to induce individuals—willingly and without coercion—to adopt and emulate their way of life. Granting full authority to the tourism content creator—namely, social influencers or the new digital tour guides—has led to fundamental changes in roles and responsibilities, accompanied by a profound overlap within the core of the tourism communication process.
From the perspective of centralized decision-making	-The reduction of his roles, the narrowing of his areas of focus, and the limitation of his sphere of influence can be attributed to professional pressures and the legal obligations explicitly stipulated in this regard.	-The expansion of his roles, the multiplicity of his positions, and the diversification of his influence are attributed to the creative freedom afforded by virtual spaces that operate beyond the reach of formal regulatory authority.
From the perspective of academic credentials, professionalism, and credibility:	He has an academic formation due to their specialized scientific training in the discipline (Professional competency) **which** positioned him as the most suitable and competent within his respective fields of expertise He is regarded as a credible and grounded point of reference	He tends to operate with spontaneity and are generally without formal academic or professional training (Creative practice) -He was produced by the narcissistic culture of capitalist societies, as part of a professionalized process **-**He is perceived as an acquired reference within virtual spaces.
With regard to their foundational frameworks:	**-**Historically rooted, originating in the art of rhetoric and persuasion.	-Primarily associated with the medium, technology, the nature of the published content, and the level of interaction.
The manifestations specific to both the communication specialist and the social influencer.	-Multiple individuals are involved in the decision-making process of publishing and editing, starting with the person responsible for the operation, passing through the editors, and culminating with the editors-in-chief	- In contrast, the influencer is only obligated to be satisfied with themselves and the work produced that they intend to promote.
In terms of communication skills:	-Proficiency in communication skills, including the principles and etiquette of dialogue, with a mandatory adherence to professional ethical standards.	- He is neither obligated nor compelled to adhere to professional ethics, as such ethics lack legal legitimacy in their context due to the absence of regulatory authority.
In terms of affiliation, content quality, and quality assurance:	-The communication specialist maintains unwavering loyalty and a sustained sense of affiliation to the institution in which they are employed.	- The social influencer's loyalty and affiliation are often temporary and momentary, typically directed toward those who offer the highest compensation.
In terms of their mode of expression:	-His expression is meaningful and grounded in symbolic memberships derived from the	- His expression is confined to a promotional connotation aimed at achieving fame solely for the purpose of profit generation.

	social systems to which he belong.	
In terms of their communicative content:	-The more the content produced aligns with the target audiences, the greater the likelihood of expanding the audience base, increasing the acceptance and sales of the product.	-The more the content produced is suitable and aligned with user aspirations, the greater the engagement. Additionally, as followers specifically recommend and promote the content within their personal networks, the influencer's fame, reputation, and authority increase accordingly.
In terms of the nature of the message itself:	-The construction of the tourism message passes through multiple stages and departments, starting from the supervisory unit, to the testing phase involving programmers in the final broadcast following approval from the regulatory authorities responsible for the process -The delivery of tourism information and news related to programming, scheduling, and the allotted time frames. -Relying on a rigid adherence to a traditional, non-innovative paradigm devoid of creative spirit renders the content published moments ago obsolete in the present moments. - The communication specialist's content has become institutionalized and lost its credibility, as it is confined within frameworks that serve a singular directional agenda.	-The tourism message passes through two stages: the first involves the nature of the presented subject and the determination of its accompanying text, followed by its submission to artistic and aesthetic enhancements, , sound effects, and other modifications. - The delivery method involves directly presenting the tourism material to the audience without time intervals or prior exploratory studies. - Relying on an approach centered on renewal, creativity, and innovation in the presented tourism content, combined with a marked speed in updating information and immediate availability on adopted communication platforms, characterized by high flexibility, comprehensiveness, global novelty, and real-time presence—features that distinguish the work of influencers from that of specialists. -The capability of the influencer—who is essentially an ordinary individual—to produce tourism content has become more diverse, multifaceted, and refined. This content is collaboratively created by a broad audience base sharing either the same or differing orientations.
In terms of marketing approaches:	-The communication specialist is capable of reflecting direct marketing and enhancing the communication component by relying on the marketing mix.	- The influencer shows little concern and instead focuses primarily on the profit margin to be gained, often at the expense of the entity being promoted.
In terms of technology and its effectiveness:	-He has become a mode of continuous and subtle communication with their audience, and a means to build a network of relationships characterized by warmth, affection, loyalty, and a strong sense of belonging.	- He has turned it into a space for self-expression and self-presentation, aimed at maximizing likes, shares, and comments.

In terms of the intended purpose of the medium:	He can utilize these means to generate an immediate response that enables the institution to measure its impact on both target and potential customers. -Communication specialist is genuinely capable of constructing appropriate media that effectively address clients or consumers by highlighting the benefits and advantages of products and services within advertising messages. These messages are balanced with the cultural and social values and dimensions of the target groups, thereby meeting their needs and satisfying their desires—unlike the work of influencers.	-Social influencers primarily focus their activities on competing to attract the highest possible number of followers to their personal accounts. -In contrast, social influencers are generally incapable of analyzing and selecting the most suitable and effective media for themselves and their audiences, as they primarily pursue monetary gain and fame—that is, personal interest rather than collective or societal benefit.
In terms of their consideration for the audience:	-The communication specialist possesses the ability to understand consumer behavior, accurately identify their needs and desires, and diligently works to fulfill them at the appropriate time and place, ensuring quality and sought-after comfort in alignment with the targeted social class.	-Social influencers tend to focus on the showcased tourist destination and its aesthetic attractions, presenting the privileges, warm welcomes, and generous receptions they receive—elements that reinforce their key points in the marketing process.
In terms of public or audience relations:	His relationship with the audience has increasingly been marked by passivity, reflected in his disregard or indifference toward audience reactions. This has been a contributing factor in diminishing trust and in lowering the perceived quality of the tourism content they present.	It transitioned them from a passive relationship with his audience to an interactive, reciprocal, and participatory dynamic. This shift enabled the establishment of continuous communication by making optimal use of audience feedback through features such as commenting, content sharing, and active engagement.
In terms of impact and effectiveness:	-The process of influence is defined by continuous and subtle communication.	-The process of influence is determined by continuous presence within this space. Social influencers possess the ability to impact tourists' behaviors and purchasing decisions by identifying the factors that influence these processes through spoken words and images transmitted via communication media, particularly those specialized in tourism and travel.
The difference from the perspective of the social approach:	-The communication specialist creates tailored content according to the nature of his audience, considering their age groups, psychological and emotional needs for each segment . He aims to address the collective imagination and consistently link it to reality and its embodiment, which can only be effectively activated through a framework of values and symbolic affiliations	-Users, particularly adolescents, tend to compare themselves with content creators, namely influencers, engaging in self-evaluation. Repeated exposure to the nature of such content inevitably alters their perception of reality, as well as their value system and criteria for success, which in their imagination have become associated with travel, wearing the best clothing, and frequenting the finest restaurants. This often leads to significant disappointment at a potentially very late stage of cognitive development. Over time, the process of blind imitation and unattainable emulation becomes inevitable, resulting in cases of depression and loss of

	characteristic of the targeted audiences. This approach is essential to preserving social cohesion and preventing issues of social isolation and the consequent risks.	appetite, which naturally culminate in the problem of social isolation.

Source: Prepared by the researchers.

2.2- Points of Convergence Between the Communication Specialist and the Social Influencer:

Despite their differing professional backgrounds, both communication specialists and social influencers share core traits and functions that position them as central figures in shaping public opinion and constructing mass discourse. The communication specialist offers expertise in strategic messaging and audience analysis, while the influencer relies on digital presence and direct engagement. Their convergence lies in their shared goal of delivering persuasive, targeted messages that foster trust and influence attitudes and behaviors through various digital platforms.

Both actors emphasize audience-centric communication, recognizing the need to tailor discourse to align with public interests, values, and expectations. They also value credibility and the mental image conveyed in communication, enhancing message effectiveness. This overlap reflects a shift toward a hybrid communication landscape where academic knowledge intersects with personal influence, requiring adaptability to new media environments and evolving audience dynamics.

These developments raise a key question: Is the communication specialist becoming an influencer, or is the influencer emerging as a new opinion leader? Addressing this requires a dual analytical framework that clearly defines each role and identifies points of convergence—particularly vital in the context of tourism development and modern communication trends.

Conclusion:

Through the examination of this research paper, a nuanced and scientifically grounded perspective emerges—one that highlights contrasting and, at times, opposing profiles in the realm of content creation, communicative effectiveness, and the ability to generate interactive feedback. On one hand, communication specialists have traditionally held a prominent position within conventional media environments and enjoyed a respected status within their respective communities due to their influence on thought and behavior. However, their normative and value-based roles have diminished as a result of the rise of the virtual environment, which has introduced new communication platforms and

social media tools. These digital mechanisms have given rise to a new communicative category: social influencers. These individuals have become an inevitable necessity imposed by the digital context and reinforced by the competitive dynamics of the tourism sector, owing to their widespread popularity and remarkable persuasive power.

In conclusion, we affirm that social influencers have become a strategic option and an indispensable component of tourism competitiveness. Nonetheless, assigning such responsibilities to non-specialists in communication leaves the process vulnerable. Effective tourism promotion requires a high level of expertise and competency in identifying target audiences, understanding what appeals to them, what they desire, what they anticipate, and what they need at each stage of their life cycle. This, in turn, demands continuous and updated exploratory research to ensure alignment between expectations and realities—between anticipation and actual experience.

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