

การนำมาใช้ของการตลาดอินฟลูเอนเซอร์ผ่านโซเชียลมีเดีย: กรอบแนวความคิด

ADOPTION OF SOCIAL MEDIA INFLUENCER MARKETING: A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

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การนำแคมเปญการตลาดอินฟลูเอนเซอร์ผ่านโซเชียลมีเดียมาใช้ นับเป็นวิธีการในการทำตลาดดิจิทัลที่ทรงพลังอย่างยิ่ง เมื่อแบรนด์สามารถปรับตัวเข้ากับการเปลี่ยนแปลงได้รวดเร็วตามการเปลี่ยนแปลง จะทำให้เส้นทางในการขับเคลื่อนธุรกิจของแบรนด์มีความเป็นไปได้มากขึ้น แพลตฟอร์มโซเชียลมีเดียถือเป็นช่องทางการสื่อสารที่สำคัญช่องทางหนึ่งในการสื่อสารระหว่างแบรนด์และผู้บริโภค อินฟลูเอนเซอร์ คือ บุคคลซึ่งมีความสามารถในการดึงความสนใจจากหลากหลายกลุ่มธุรกิจ การผสมผสานระหว่างแพลตฟอร์มโซเชียลมีเดียและการตลาดแบบอินฟลูเอนเซอร์ ทำให้แบรนด์ต่าง ๆ เป็นที่รู้จักในวงกว้างมากขึ้น อินฟลูเอนเซอร์เข้ามามีบทบาทโดยเพิ่มการมีส่วนร่วมของกลุ่มเป้าหมายที่แบรนด์วางไว้ และการกระตุ้นให้ผู้ติดตามเลือกซื้อสินค้าจากแบรนด์ที่มีการทำความร่วมมือกัน ผู้ติดตามเชื่อว่าความสัมพันธ์ของตนเองเหมาะสมกับสไตล์ของอินฟลูเอนเซอร์มากกว่าคนที่ไม่มีชื่อเสียงแบบเดิม ซึ่งเรียกว่า ความสัมพันธ์แบบกึ่งมีส่วนร่วมทางสังคม จากมุมมองของทั่วโลกจะเห็นได้ว่าจำนวนผู้ใช้โซเชียลมีเดียเติบโตอย่างรวดเร็วมากกว่าจำนวนผู้ใช้อินเทอร์เน็ตทั่วไป บทความนี้มีวัตถุประสงค์เพื่อให้ความรู้เกี่ยวกับแหล่งที่มาของความน่าเชื่อถือ ซึ่งเป็นตัวแปรพื้นฐานที่จะขยายไปสู่ความเข้าใจที่ลึกซึ้งและครอบคลุมยิ่งขึ้นเกี่ยวกับการตลาดอินฟลูเอนเซอร์ผ่านโซเชียลมีเดีย (SMI)

คำสำคัญ : แหล่งที่มาของความน่าเชื่อถือ การตลาดอินฟลูเอนเซอร์ผ่านโซเชียลมีเดีย การรับรู้แบรนด์

ABSTRACT

Using social media influencer marketing campaigns is a powerful digital marketing technique. The disruption era has forced all business sectors to adopt a digital mindset. The faster brands adapt to change, the more feasible the path to driving businesses forward. Social media platforms are regarded as the primary means of communication among brands and consumers. Influencers are individuals who draw the attention from various business sectors. With the combination of social media platforms, Influencer marketing is becoming more widely known among brands. Influencers have an essential role to increase target market engagement by

encouraging followers to purchase products from collaborating brands. Followers believe their relationship fits the style of influencers rather than traditional big names, called para-social relationship. In terms of global view, the number of social media users has grown more rapidly than the number of internet users. The aim of this article is to provide knowledge about sources of credibility, which will be the basic variables to be extended for a deeper and more comprehensive understanding of social media influencer marketing (SMIs).

Keywords : Source of credibility, Social Media Influencer Marketing, Brand Awareness

Introduction

The global pandemic of coronavirus (Covid-19) is changing global consumer behavior from traditional to more digitalized in how they spend their days. The global pandemic affects not only consumer lifestyles, but also business operations. Companies are keen on employing social media and artificial intelligence (AI) to implement a digital-based business strategy. The term "Disruption" has been utilized to define this movement.

In today world, social media has a substantial impact in elevating the business strategies of all industries. It is defined as the most basic media tool for obtaining trustworthy information from a variety of platforms (Ong and Ito, 2019, 132-144). Social media has proven to be an invaluable tool for both established businesses and market newcomers. Furthermore, social media contains an abundance of reliable information that can be used as a strategic tool to increase brand value, such as brand awareness and sales (Chahine and Malhotra, 2018, 1526-1549). Brand awareness is an effective marketing strategy that guides customers to make an intuitive choice for a brand and its products. Brand awareness links a customer's actions or activities to a specific product, which is also linked to a specific

brand. It is a major contributor to brand trust and revenue generation. Companies that have a strong brand can achieve optimal sales in a sustainable manner (Pandjaitan, 2018, 736-738), so it is critical for brands to increase brand recognition.

Over the last decade, social media has evolved from a recreational activity and networking tool to a simulated representation of the real world. Everything can now take place on social media platforms, from a casual conversation to a formal purchase. As a result, all brands must not only be present on social media, but also create a positive brand image and engage in conversations with consumers. Whether you see it as a benefit or a drawback, social media has made brand communication a two-way street. Consider the days when only traditional advertising was available. Customers could only be reached by advertising in traditional media and waiting for them to visit the stores. Customers can always keep up to date on social media platforms. Instead of being one-way, social media now allows consumers to have their voices heard by allowing them to comment, ask questions, and share their opinions with others. Traditional marketing focused on the four Ps (Product, Placement, Promotion, and Price), but

social media marketing added a fifth P: People. Consumers actively participated in social media marketing (SMM) campaigns, sharing their positive and negative opinions. (Desk, 1) According to the findings, influencer marketing had a direct impact on overall brand equity, brand awareness, and consumer brand engagement, with the latter somewhat moderating the relationship between influencer marketing and overall brand equity (Ali and Alqudah, 2022, 651-658).

Research Objectives

1. To integrate the framework of source credibility regarding Social Media Influencers (SMIs).
2. To present the conceptual framework of source credibility on Social Media Influencers (SMIs) towards brand awareness.

Scope of Study

The purpose of this paper is to study the utilization of Social Media Influencer Marketing, which consists of three independent variables: attractiveness, trustworthiness, expertise, and brand awareness.

Literature Review

Social media marketing

Social media marketing is the promotion of a product or service through social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and LinkedIn. It entails creating and sharing content, interacting with users, and running advertising campaigns to reach a specific demographic. Social media marketing can be a powerful tool for increasing brand awareness, generating leads, and driving sales. It enables businesses to connect with their customers

on a more personal level, cultivate relationships, and build a loyal following. Firms should have a clear strategy in place for social media marketing, including goals, target audiences, and metrics for measuring success. They should also create high-quality content regularly, interact with their followers, and use social media advertising to reach a larger audience. Social media marketing effectively enhances customer-marketer communication and enables activities that increase brand awareness (Hafez, 2021, 1353-1376). If a brand guides users in easily identifying with a specific brand community, strong relationships between consumers and the brand will be fostered, resulting in customer loyalty (Ebrahim, 2020, 28-308). Overall, social media marketing is an important component of modern digital marketing, and companies that ignore it risk falling behind their competitors. Social media marketing involves monitoring social media platforms for mentions of brands or product and engaging with the audience to address their questions, concerns, and feedback. Social media marketing can be an effective way to reach a large audience and build brand awareness, but it requires a strategic approach and ongoing effort to be successful.

Social Media Influencer Marketing

There are numerous methods for increasing brand attitude; social media marketing is one of the most recent and widely used in today's digital world. Influencer marketing is one of the collaborative activities that has resulted from social media marketing. As evidenced by many followers, many social media users have established an online reputation. By creating appealing and distinct social media profiles. They established a strong online

identity by sharing their interests and opinions on social media networking sites such as Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, and TikTok. These well-known social media users, also known as social media influencers (SMIs), are known as influencers. Influencers can range from celebrities to ordinary people who use innovative methods to deliver content via social media platforms. Influencers' content may include knowledge, entertainment, or simply a video log (vlog). When those contents go viral, the influencers' fans will begin to follow them. These individuals appear to have a significant influence on the decisions of their followers. As a result, advertisers frequently approach them to promote products, brands, organizations, or even ideas on their social media platforms. Influencer marketing is the name given to this marketing strategy (De Veirman, Cauberghe, and Hudders, 2017, 798-828).

Social media influencers (SMIs) with a large number of followers on their accounts can become reviewers to improve brand exposure and consumer confidence (Andreani et al., 2021, 18-26). Influencers can provide better consumer engagement and insight because they can encourage followers to buy products from collaborative brands. SMIs have been studied through various lenses. Scholars who have studied SMIs as a marketing tool regard SMIs posts as Electronic Word of Mouth (eWoM) (Li Y, 2011, 1-45; Hu and Liu, 2015, 157-158).

Para-Social Relationship

The Nonreciprocal socio-emotional connections with media figures such as celebrities or influencers are referred to as para-social relationships (PSRs). PSR is characterized by the one-sided nature of the relationship. It can use social media, preexisting social

relationships, and form online friendships without having to meet in person (Cynthia, 2022, 1-15). The platforms positively influence multiple dimensions of collaboration of the brand among users.

Para-Social Relationship is often fueled by social media, where followers can interact with media figures through comments, likes, and direct messages. This interaction reinforces the feeling of closeness and intimacy between the audience and the media figure. PSR can have both positive and negative effects on individuals. On the one hand, it can provide a sense of connection, comfort, and inspiration, especially for those who are lonely, isolated, or going through a difficult time. On the other hand, it can lead to unrealistic expectations, disappointment, and even obsession, especially when the media figure's behavior or actions do not align with the audience's expectations.

Influencer marketing's rise has a significant impact on a brand's ability to raise its visibility. With this advantage, brands are increasingly interested in utilizing influencer marketing as a marketing tactic to increase brand awareness. Followers view their relationship to be more compatible with the lifestyle of influencers preferably than traditional celebrities (Jin et al., 2019, 567-579).

Relationship from the perspective of uncertainty reduction theory (URT) (Berger and Calabrese, 1974, 99-112). The URT could support the positive influence of endorser credibility on PSR. According to this theory, the growth of interpersonal relationships takes place in three phases, and the early phase is crucial in this process. According to the theory, the principal aim in the initial stage is to reduce uncertainty and thus increase predictability between

two strangers. The lower the level of uncertainty toward others, the higher the level of liking between communicators. As previously stated, credibility indicates the degree to which the receiver believes the influencer can be trusted and has expertise on the relevant topic.

Theory of the Research

The source credibility model by Deborah A. McGuire and Brian Wansink in 1998 and expanded upon by Barbara J. O'Hanion in 1990 (Ohanian, 1990, 39-52), is a theoretical framework used to explain how people perceive the credibility of information sources. The source credibility model has been widely used in the field of advertising and marketing to understand how consumers perceive the credibility of product endorsements and celebrity endorsements. The model suggests that the credibility of a source is based on three main factors: Attractiveness, Expertise, and Trustworthiness.

Attractiveness

The attractiveness of the message source is defined as the degree to which it is perceived as appealing or likable. This can be determined a variety of factors such as physical appearance, personality traits, social status, and similarities to the target audience. Attractiveness refers to the physical or social appeal of a source. A source who is seen as attractive or likable is more likely to be perceived as credible than someone who is not. Many studies have shown that attractive sources are more effective at persuading consumers than unattractive sources. This is thought to be because attractive sources are seen as more trustworthy, credible, and persuasive.

Attractive sources can also create positive feelings in the target audience, which can increase the likelihood that they will accept the message and take the desired action. (Seiler et al., 2017, 1-15). Consequently, it is worth pointing out that attractiveness is not sufficient to ensure message effectiveness. The source must additionally be perceived as reliable and knowledgeable about the topic being addressed. Furthermore, the primary audience must be capable of connecting to the source in some way, such as by sharing mutual interests or values. Overall, attractiveness is one of the key components of source credibility, and businesses can use this to their advantage by selecting endorsers or spokespersons who are perceived as attractive and appealing to their target audience. However, they should also ensure that the source is trustworthy and knowledgeable to maximize the effectiveness of the message.

Expertise

Expertise refers to the perceived level of knowledge or competence that a source has in a particular field or topic. A source who is seen as an expert in their field is more likely to be perceived as credible than someone who is not. It is the extent to which a person is perceived to be able to provide the correct information to another (Ismagilova et al., 2020, 1-41). Expertise and knowledge are essential in defining a profession (Saks, 2012, 1-10). Expertise is domain-specific because it tends to reflect gained knowledge in a specific area. Hoffman (1998) makes the essential fact that, in certain domains, there are different stages of certification an individual can acquire attesting to their expertise, similar to licensing in other professions. Businesses can use

expertise to their advantage by selecting endorsers or spokespersons who have relevant qualifications, experience, or credentials in the industry or topic being discussed. They can also highlight their own expertise by providing informative and educational content, sharing case studies or testimonials, and demonstrating thought leadership through industry publications or speaking engagements. Since expert knowledge is domain-specific and reflects insights obtained in a specific area, influencers must identify the relevant professional domain. Because the profession of a social media influencer tends to rely on a relational exchange with brands seeking their content creation abilities, influencers should be competent in the industries to which those brands are fitted. For example, a social media influencer who mainly posts content on cafe hopping would be expected to have expertise or experience in a cafe hopping rather than personal investment. However, it is important to note that expertise alone is not enough to ensure message effectiveness. The source must also be perceived as trustworthy and likable, and the message must be relevant and engaging to the target audience. By

combining expertise with other components of source credibility, businesses can create more effective persuasive messages that resonate with their target audience.

Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness refers to the perceived honesty, integrity, and sincerity of a source. A source who is seen as trustworthy is more likely to be perceived as credible than someone who is not. Customers view influencers as trustworthy when they demonstrate honesty and integrity. Self-branding, which, like commercially branded products, could perhaps gain from a unique selling point (USP) or identity that is adaptable to the demands and interests of consumers, is central to influencer trustworthiness (Khamis et al., 2016).

According to Brooks et al. (2021), dedication and the resulting trustworthiness have gradually developed as an assumption of influencer named Blair Fowler's self-brand. Furthermore, Fowler's capacity to navigate the influencer space in a personable and engaging manner is noteworthy.

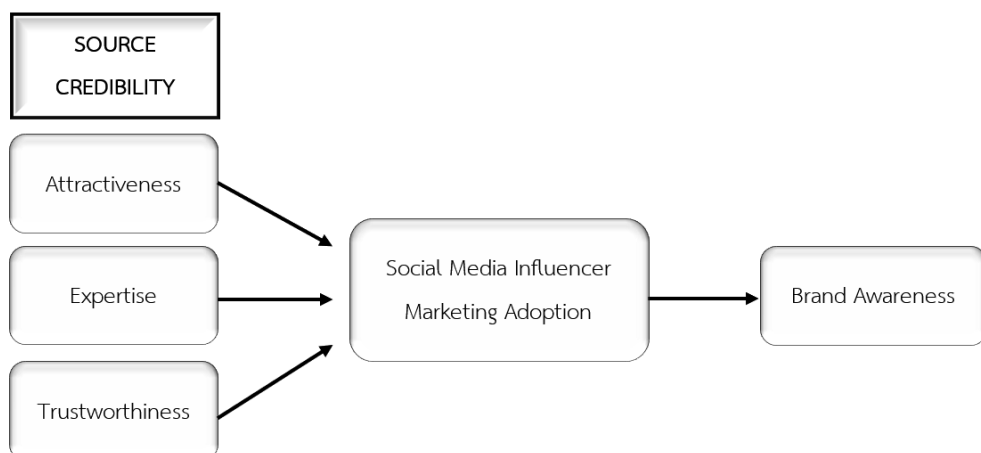


Figure 1 Conceptual Model

Brand Awareness

Brand Awareness

The degree to which a product's name is recognized by consumers is called brand awareness. Creating brand awareness is an important step in promoting a new product or revitalizing an old one. Ideally, brand awareness should include the features that distinguish the product from its competitors (Supomsinchai, 2022, 8-18). Basically, brand awareness is the ability of a consumer to identify and recognize one brand.

Awareness of a brand is crucial in how customers make purchases (Barreda et al. 2015, 600-609), which may serve as a decision-making methodology or shortcut. Influencer marketing allows brands to receive brand mentions from influencers, which can boost awareness among their potential customers and generate demand. Considering that brand awareness is one of the major purposes of influencer marketing and has a significant impact on purchasing habits.

Conclusion and Discussion

The post-COVID world has reshaped the entire business environment, including how brands engage with their customers. The global influencer marketing market is projected to expand in the future, as the number of individuals who utilize social media has increased massively. Influencer visibility is vital for brand awareness. Micro and nano influencers are more niche-focused and have a close connection with their followers. Consequently, it can support the business to raise awareness among their target audiences. According to the findings, trustworthiness, information quality, and entertainment value have strong direct effects on influencer credibility and considerable indirect effects on customers' purchase intention. Furthermore, the integrity and credibility of an influencer have a direct impact on consumers' purchasing intentions. (Saima & Khan, 2020, 503-523) Referencing on the conceptual framework, In-depth interviews with influencers in various fields in Thailand would be conducted to provide a better understanding of how to conduct social media influencer marketing in specific locations, which would aid producers or investors looking to set up business in Thailand.

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