



Contemporary Management Practices

ECOFUSION MARKETING

STRATEGIES FOR INDUSTRY 4.0 SUSTAINABILITY

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9 Effect of Fashion Influencers on Gen Z Consumer's Attitude and Brand Loyalty

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DOI: 10.4324/9781003734741-12

Introduction

In March 2024, India had over 820 million active internet users and 462 million social network users, which is 32% of the country's populace (Statista, 2024). This rise of social networks has significantly altered the way businesses market products. Instead of just using famous people, businesses now work with social media influencers (SMIs) to endorse their offerings. This has developed into a big part of their marketing strategy (Chetioui et al., 2020). The amount spent on influencer marketing (IM) has grown rapidly. Social network has turned out to be a means of promotion that altered how businesses reach their audience. It allows sellers to connect with customers in any location (Lipsman and Rich, 2012). The presence of online communities has become a vital component of promotional plans. Leveraging corporate profiles on the web and sponsoring content on digital platforms have yielded positive results (DeVries and Carlson, 2014). Hence, many companies have set up social network profiles to connect with buyers and display their offerings through engaging content.

An SMI has numerous and involved audience on digital networking sites who may not be widely recognized outside of their online presence. Influencers share content in specific areas, like cuisine, adventure, wellness, or style, on online networks (Haenlein, Anadol et al., 2020). Individuals interested in a particular field may follow the SMI to get the latest trends. By uploading original content, some persons may gain popularity online with many followers. This leads to the rise of SMIs. Marketers are keen to understand SMIs, as they may be a tool for online promotions (Cheung et al., 2022). The rise of SMIs boosted the partnerships between brands and online personalities. Famous people from TV, movies, or music might become well-known through traditional ways and then use social media to stay in touch with their fans. However, SMIs build their digital presence by sharing content on online platforms (Djafarova and Rushworth, 2017). SMIs build a more intimate connection with their followers. Hence, they can be more successful at promoting products than old-style personalities. They seem down-to-earth by sharing their experiences and engaging with their followers (Coco and Eckert, 2020). Most SMIs generate original content that consumers like regularly and include paid promotion into their daily posts. Online influencers have emerged as a prominent type of digital personality, able to shape opinions and buying choices of many viewers and are often seen as trustworthy by their audience (Breves et al., 2021). Followers of SMIs often develop a strong kinship and admiration for their way of life and habits, since they create and share their experiences online (Djafarova and Rushworth, 2017). SMIs frequently focus on specific topics like beauty, fashion, or travel and share their lives or ideas with their followers online. As a result, people may see them as leaders in their field when they gain a large following. SMIs can also share and recommend products through brand partnership. This is a popular tactic where influencers endorse products to affect people's opinion toward brands (Lou and Yuan, 2019).

Approximately 88% of advertising funds are allocated to IM (IM Trends Report, 2022). This implies that many businesses are starting to see value in working with SMIs. Businesses partner with SMIs to connect with their desired audience by paying them for content that promotes their products. This helps increase awareness and interest in buying (Global Yodel, 2017). Compared to famous people, buyers are more inclined to buy goods endorsed by regular people. This trend is especially true for people aged 18–34. Many experts think IM works because traditional ads are not as effective as they used to be, and people trust online content created by others more when making purchasing decisions (Campbell and Farrell, 2020).

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