



DOI: <https://doi.org/10.38035/snefr.v1i1>
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Digital Marketing Strategy: Utilizing Social Media Influencers to Reach Target Consumers

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Abstract: Building connections and communicating have become easier thanks to social networking apps and contemporary technologies. The utilization of influencers is a crucial component that propels the prosperity of digital marketing platforms, particularly on social media. Effective marketing tactics try to stimulate sales by matching the products being marketed with the preferences of the target audience. The purpose of this study is to investigate how digital marketing influences customer behavior through social media influencers. AISAS asserts that all types of influencers—micro, macro, and mega—have the ability to produce compelling content that affects a sizable audience's purchasing decisions. An influencer's post likes and comments can be used to determine how the audience feels about them. Influencers use their own verbal and visual lingo to promote products; they frequently use eye-catching images and text. Netizens have the potential to be consumers since they are more likely to look for, buy (act), and evaluate things. This is especially beneficial for companies who use influencer marketing to market their goods. Instagram is expected to have 1,300 million users by April 2023, making it one of the top 3 social media networks worldwide. With 26.6% of adults over 18 using Instagram in Indonesia, Instagram is a valuable tool for influencer marketing. Influencers successfully mold a brand's image, which is why this kind of marketing is becoming more and more common.

Keyword: influencer social media, digital marketing, buying interest

INTRODUCTION

The rapid advancement of technology in the digital age has created significant challenges in various fields. One significant technology that can grow significantly is the internet. Bias nowadays eventually reduces the effort involved in producing the product. This contributes to the business's declining use of digital platforms for product promotion. The digital age, which was formerly primarily offline, is now primarily online. Nowadays, communication and building relationships via technology like social media applications are easier. Influencer marketing is one of the strategies used to gauge the success of content marketing using digital platforms such as social media. An influencer is a user that has social media accounts and

constantly posts messages to other users in an attempt to get them to re-post the same content (Yulianto, 2023).

A wide range of people can be considered influencers, such as public personalities, politicians, business owners, and elites. Influencers who are becoming more and more well-known stress the value of product promotion. Influencer marketing successfully persuades customers to buy locally produced goods. This is in line with a recent study (Cahya, 2022) that found positive effects of social media on consumer behavior. According to (Darmanto & Sari, 2022), digital marketing is effective in enticing consumers and increasing their willingness to buy based on the results of deskriptif analysis.

In the context of today's digital world, social media influencers undoubtedly have a significant advantage, but innovative products and content, along with sophisticated and engaging communication, make them indispensable in getting consumers to engage with the products in question. Many business owners realize that social media marketing alone cannot improve their product's effectiveness, but it can help and boost sales. If a large number of users and visitors visit the website and discuss the offers made, the impact on sales will be significant. One effective marketing goal is to increase a product's shelf life in the eyes of consumers so they will be more inclined to purchase the goods being offered (Handayani, 2023).

Therefore, the central question in this study is how digital marketing strategies employ social media influencers to impact consumers' purchase intentions, as shown by the above-mentioned Background. The purpose of this study is to understand how digital marketing strategies using social media influencers affect consumer purchase intent. In general, the value of research is expected to be able to provide business owners with information to help them grow and develop their enterprise. In addition to that, it can help business owners develop the best possible argument to increase buyer trust. Ultimately, businesses can increase sales through digital marketing by encouraging customers to make purchases through influencer social media posts (Handayani, 2023).

Based on research conducted by (Handayani, 2023), Ad Disclosure has a positive and significant impact on the degree of trust, loyalty, and purchase intent. In addition to that, trust and confidence have a positive and significant impact on the decision to buy. Overall, there is a positive effect that is significant with regard to buying behavior.

Furthermore, based on the research conducted (Amelia Ibnu Wasiat & Bertuah, 2022), Regarding customer online reviews, digital marketing, social media influencers, and online reviews have benefits and drawbacks. The benefits include increased buy intent and reduced criticism. The variable of customer online reviews hasn't, however, been developed into a mediating variable between digital marketing and other elements just yet.

More specifically, according to Riset (Supriyanto et al., 2023), using social media as a marketplace and marketshare is very beneficial and helpful because it allows for uninterrupted communication with customers without requiring them to be present or provide feedback, and customers can also share information that they possess. obtained from the sale. Many people from various backgrounds find it easier to understand Instagram's social media because the platform offers a user-friendly interface through images and videos, making it simple for people to view advertisements or brosur that are posted on the platform.

METHOD

The method used in this study is called qualitative research. According to (Chairiri, 2009), qualitative research does not use statistics, but rather gathers, analyzes, and interprets data. This qualitative research focuses on social science understanding through holistic, multifaceted, and consistent analysis of human behavior. Therefore, in order to gather data related to the research topic, the authors use the method of field research, which is the collection of data from the study subject.

This is a descriptive analysis, which is a type of research where findings are presented and explained without conducting an examination of the object under study. Two (2) data sources, namely primary and secondary data, are presented in this research. According to (Fadilla & Wulandari, 2023), foundational data is defined as information obtained from sources, particularly through structured and unstructured interview. The purpose of purposeful sampling is to identify the research subject that will be used in this study. This technique is applied when study participants are identified in a specific way or have a particular problem so that the study can provide the most accurate data possible. Data secondarily priori is derived from non-linear or opaque sources, such as official government documents, official records, books, research findings in the form of reports, and so on. The study's secondary data came from books and journals.

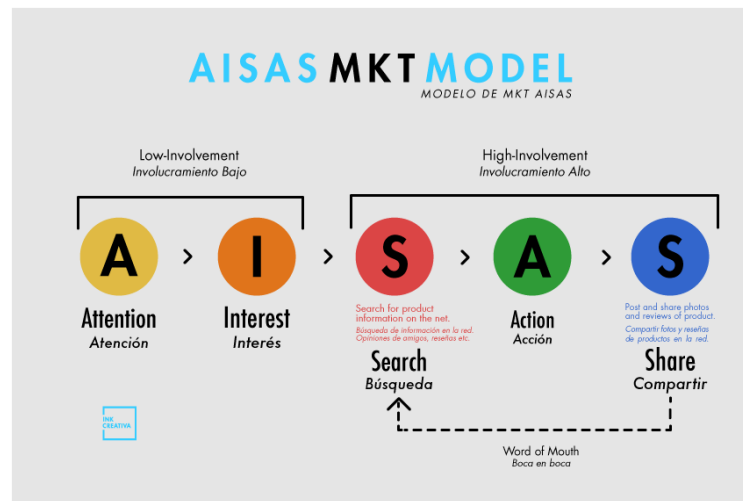
RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In this study, we employ social media influencers as digital marketers to increase consumer trust. Based on information gathered from primary data sources as well as secondary data, influencer marketing through social media can assist in increasing purchase intent.

Influencer marketing has already started to be used by a few major companies as well as Small and Medium-Sized Businesses (MSB) in social media posts in an effort to expand their brands. Influencers are selected not for their size but rather for the fact that they often utilize their own strategies to soft sell things, which later acts as a reference point to boost the followers' faith in them. This will undoubtedly raise the aforementioned product's brand awareness. This suggests that leveraging influencers to raise brand awareness is a crucial and successful commercial tactic. In order for consumers to comprehend a brand before making a decision, it needs to be raised in a reversible fashion. Customers will understand that customer service inquiries will be handled more quickly and easily if businesses regularly increase their promotions (Handayani, 2023).

Because influencers have the ability to build strong trust with their followers, they are considered an effective marketing strategy. Generally speaking, the generation Z and Y currently dominate the Instagram market. People in the millennium age and with internet access are more likely to have User Generated Content (UGC) as their online content. They gather information and base their decisions on customer reviews or testimonials from other users or customers by using social media. The target demographic whose purchasing power is based on the AISAS marketing communication model is the millennial generation. According to (Handayani, 2023), AISAS is an effective model for small audience target due to the advancement of internet technology. AISAS stands for Attention, Interest, Search, Action, and Sharing.

The target market will see the advertisement more intently before making a purchase, which will pique their curiosity about the goods and make them want to find out more. The customer refines their search results and completes purchases during the process. Participants give some background details. Customers post reviews, comments, and queries online after making a purchase to provide more information. Other prospective buyers refer to the resources offered as a reference when deciding what to buy.



Picture 1: AISAS Model

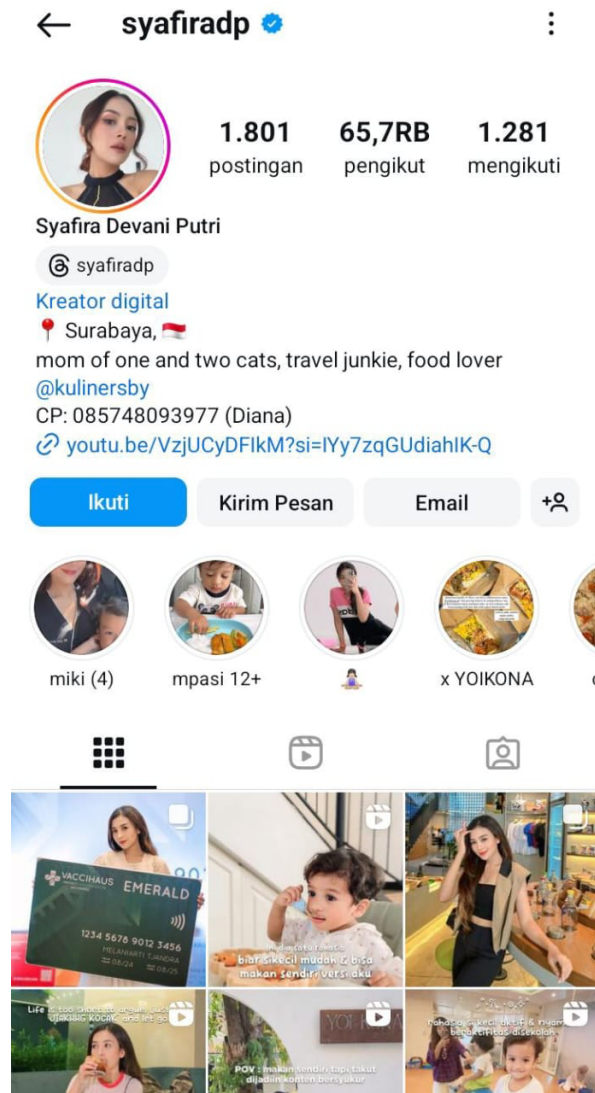
(source: <https://socialmediaplaybook.blogspot.com/2018/05/mengenal-AIDA-dan>)

Target audiences can be efficiently narrowed through the use of influencer marketing strategies. Influencer followers frequently show their devotion or respect for their role model. Because they will be connecting with the influencer, the target audience will be closely associated with the brand if the influencer's material is relevant to that particular brand. When a food brand partners with a food influencer, for instance, the followers that the influencer gains will be connected to their shared love of food. An influential person who is successful should give their audience fascinating and reliable stuff.

Influencer followers frequently show their devotion or respect for their role model. Because they will be connecting with the influencer, the target audience will be closely associated with the brand if the influencer's material is relevant to that particular brand. For instance, if a food brand partners with a food influencer, the influencer's interest in food will be correlated with the number of followers that the brand gains. An effective way for influencers to gain trust from their followers is to provide them with interesting content. A silent conversation in the posting's comment section will also demonstrate trustworthiness. The other benefit from developing an influencer marketing strategy is content that is both substantial and captivating. Influencers share a lot of content, including tutorials, photo essays, and identity-revealing posts about their daily lives. This enhances the influencer's reputation, maximizes user interaction, and makes the company's brand seem more unique and creative rather than merely dated.

1. Micro Influencer

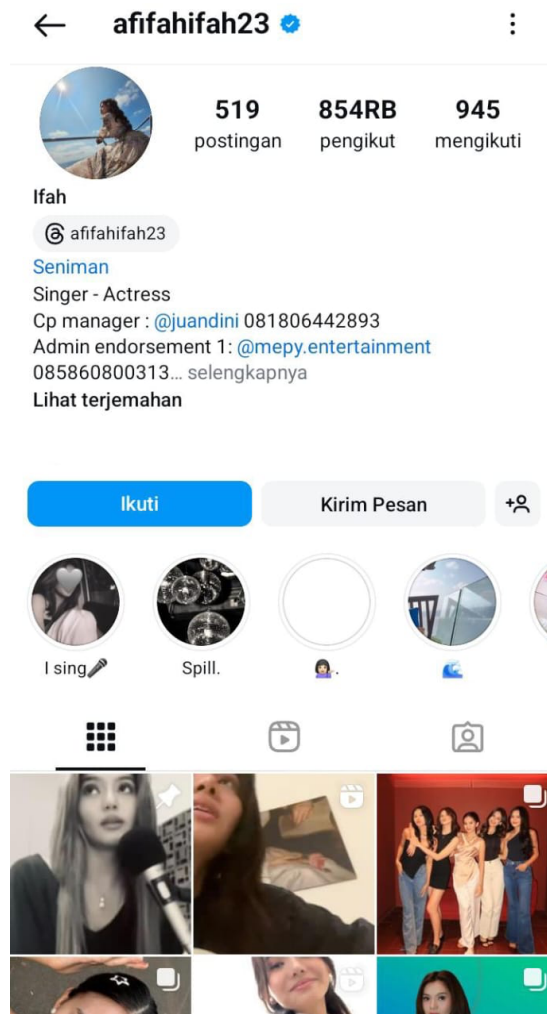
Influencer this type has a few followers below 100K. This type of influencer is generally the most closely related to the customer. When compared to other types, micro influencers have a rather high threshold for trust. Micro-influencers are very useful for businesses who want to increase sales and can persuade their target audience to make purchases. The example of this micro influencer is Syafira Devani Putri. With an emphasis on culinary content and collaboration with several Indonesian food brands, @syafiradp has the following total Instagram followers: 65,7 K.



Picture 2: Micro Influencer
(source: Instagram)

2. Macro Influencer

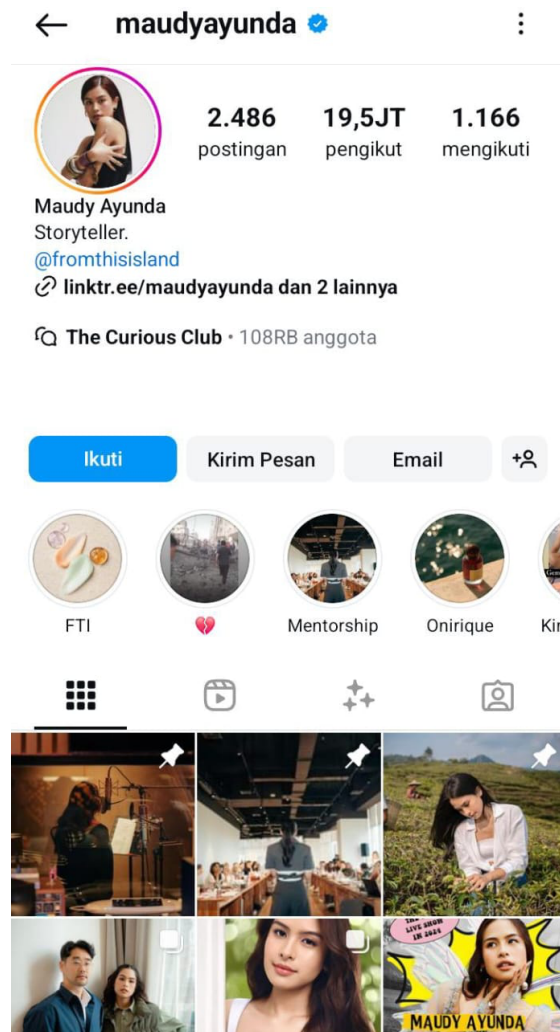
A macro influencer is an individual with a large following on social media, typically between 100,000 and 1 million users. In the context of consumer purchasing intentions, macro influencers are important because they have the ability to draw in large audiences, heighten consumer apprehension, and negatively impact purchase decisions. Participants frequently follow the recommendations of macro influencers who are seen as experts in their field, so their promotions might encourage interest in and desire to purchase goods or services. The example of this macro influencer is Afifah Iffah. Account @afifahifah23: Influencer who frequently creates videos on fashion, kecantikan, and lifestyle. In addition to that, she frequently collaborates with various influencers and has an approximate 854.000 total Instagram followers.



Picture 3: Macro Influencer
(source: Instagram)

3. Mega Influencer

Indonesian artists are now entering the world. Because they encourage netizens to interact with social media accounts on the internet, their lifestyle is intriguing to see. Impact Usually, this type of content consists of artwork or literary works with more than a million followers. As an aside, this type of yields income as a secondary influencer. Because they have extensive knowledge, mega influencers are very beneficial to business owners who want to raise awareness. For example, Maudy Ayunda is an Indonesian student, athlete, writer, and activist who is well-known for his achievements in the academic field as well as his background in the entertainment. Along with her career in the fields of education and nursing, Maudy Ayunda was also frequently a mentor due to her strict attention to matters of education and gender. Maudy Ayunda has 19.5 million Instagram followers as of right now, making her a major influencer. Maudy Ayunda has a crucial role in influencing consumer attitudes, especially among young children and market vendors who are concerned with education, healthy living, and beauty.



Picture 4: Mega Influencer
(source: Instagram)

According to this information, influencers who use social media to communicate tend to draw more attention to products that use videos as these videos already have extensive text, audio, and photo content. It is said that social media influencers increase consumer trust, which leads to real and genuine purchases. With the advancement of technology, business owners are using innovation to open up new markets and influence the next generation of millenials in the real estate industry.

Social media influencers have a significant impact on every campaign, particularly those with high levels of credibility that reassure customers. Influencers have clear product descriptions with videos that highlight how they affect consumers' purchasing decisions. They also have audio and visual influencers that can increase consumers' purchasing decisions. Furthermore, integrating influencers into marketing strategies can help other people create a resolute moment, which in turn can increase sales revenue for business owners (Handayani, 2023).

Based on the study's findings on literature and non-stop interview, the influencer might affect their followers either gradually or quickly. When an influencer is hired by a business to promote a product or service, they do not limit their daily posting goals. If they feel compelled to promote the new regular item, their posting will be highlighted. They will determine the best time to submit requests they would like to make in order to encourage followers. According to audience statistics, they usually tend to feel pain around 12 p.m. or 6 p.m.

It is ideal to use social media during this time because it is highly harmful. Utilizing information that is appropriate for the message that the individual want to express through the images they share, or electronic word-of-mouth, is another technique. These influencers will refrain from posting content that is inconsistent with the photographs or use derogatory language in an effort to draw in more visitors. But typically, they'll post crisp, clear images along with a story that accentuates good memories from their own lives that could encourage and help others. Additionally, you can ask others who follow you for a retraction or share anything.

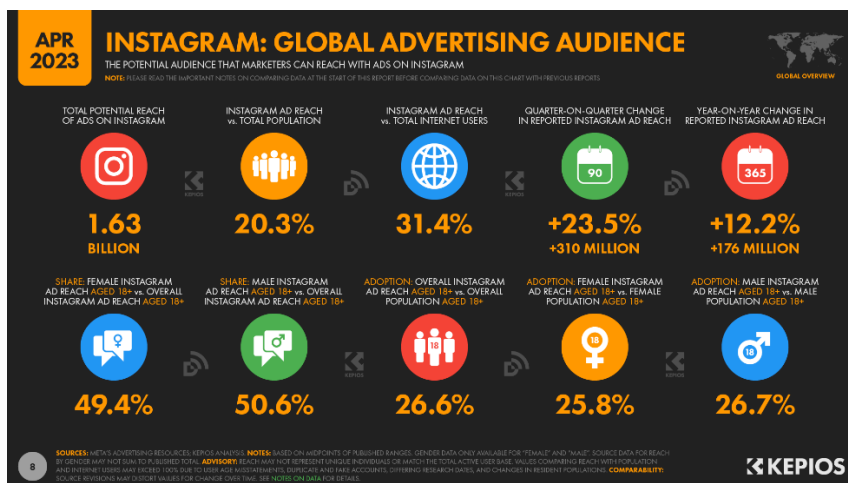
However, some of this influencer's followers claimed that they are occasionally motivated by the things that this influencer says and does. For instance, individuals are more likely to love new products they buy if they have seen influencer endorsements for them. But, other users prefer to ignore the critical information being offered in favor of only viewing the photographs and comments that influencers make, making them unwilling to engage in the conversation. Because influencers claim to be able to persuade followers to offer information that followers require, their interactions with followers on Instagram can be classified as a sort of social media communication in addition to personal communication.

4. Indonesian Instagram users as of 2023

According to data released on the Meta surveillance portal, as of early 2023, Instagram had 99.66 million Indonesian users. This graph shows the average growth rate of Instagram ads in Indonesia over the course of the year, with 31.4% of the total population. However, Instagram's user base declines for users above the age of 13, making it extremely helpful to realize that 26,6% of Indonesian adults who are over the age of 18 use the platform as of 2023.

It is also necessary to mention that, by the beginning of 2023, local internet users will account for 20.3% of Instagram's ad revenue in Indonesia (depending on usage). By the beginning of 2023, women accounted for 25,8% of Indonesia's Instagram audience, while men made up 26.7%. The Meta data protection scheme is limited to publishing anonymous user data for women and men.

The statistics and growth of Instagram are crucial for the year 2023, as the number of followers on Instagram can reach 1.63 million by April 2023, placing it in the top 3 social media platforms globally in terms of "activity." In Q2 2023, Meta reportedly saw data that was based on assumptions about Instagram's growth. As a result, at this point, Meta is unable to provide reliable guidance regarding the growth of Instagram users' account from year to year. However, the most recent data indicates that approximately 12.2% of all Bumi people use Instagram at this time. In addition, as the company limits the platform's use to users who are at least 13 years old, the percentage of Instagram users who meet the condition of possibility will likely be higher than what is stated above.



Picture 5: Instagram User Data April 2023
(source: <https://datareportal.com/essential-instagram-stats>)

CONCLUSION

Each of the three AISAS pillars—mikro, macro, and mega influencers—can create content that appeals to internet users. Numerous likes and comments that could serve as a measure of followership on each influencer account highlight this point. Influencers can also convey various promotions using their own visual language and vernacular. This is explained with the use of content and photos that can pique the interest of potential customers. Potential customers that are more likely to look for products, make purchases, and follow brands more closely can have a negative impact on businesses that target influencers. As a result, influencers are seen as an effective kind of advertising since they may produce content to promote brands and their own characteristics, which leaves a lasting impression on their customers. Statistics and Instagram growth are crucial for the year 2023, as advertising can reach 1,300 million Instagram users by April 2023, placing it in the top 3 social media platforms globally. Instagram's user base for users over 13 years old has increased, therefore it's helpful to know that 26,6% of Indonesian adults who are above the age of 18 use the platform as of 2023.

Research indicates that credible social media influencers can increase consumers' willingness to buy. Due to this, businesses need to identify social media influencers who can be trusted, as customers will have more confidence in an advertisement if it is one that they believe to be genuine.

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